# [JF21] Poseidon AC PKg

# 1AC

## 1AC Policy

#### The doomsday drone is here. Russia is serious about getting Poseidon in the ocean ASAP—most recent evidence means the aff is try or die.

[David Axe (1-21-2021), Forbes Aerospace and Defense Staff, “Russia Is Building Four Special Submarines To Haul Its Weird Doomsday Drone,” Forbes, [https://www.forbes.com/sites/davidaxe/2021/01/21/russia-is-building-four-special-submarines-to-haul-its-grotesque-doomsday-drone/?sh=298680943703]//CHS](https://www.forbes.com/sites/davidaxe/2021/01/21/russia-is-building-four-special-submarines-to-haul-its-grotesque-doomsday-drone/?sh=298680943703%5d//CHS) PK

Six years after Russia’s Poseidon doomsday torpedo first appeared in a television camera’s fleeting shot of a briefing book for Russian President Vladimir Putin, it’s still not totally clear why the Kremlin thinks the bizarre radiological weapon is a good investment.

But it is clear Moscow is serious about deploying Poseidon, a 79-foot-long, nuclear-powered underwater drone armed with a huge dirty-bomb warhead that could irradiate U.S. coastal cities and naval bases in the late stages of a civilization-ending nuclear war.

Not only is the Kremlin building a new base for storing as many as 30 Poseidons, it’s also outfitting at least four nuclear-powered submarines specifically for carrying the huge doomsday torpedoes.

Because Poseidon consumes so much of a launching vessel’s internal space, these four subs won’t necessarily be terribly useful in other roles. Poseidon is “grotesque,” to quote Kingston Reif, a nuclear expert with the Arms Control Association in Washington, D.C. But it’s also a big deal to the Russian submarine fleet.

Outside observers got their first glimpse of Poseidon in November 2015, during a television broadcast of a meeting between Putin and top military officials in the Black Sea city of Sochi.

A camera from government-owned Channel One captured a fleeting glance at a briefing book, in which were visible schematics for Poseidon and two different classes of carrier submarines—the Project 09852 Belgorod and the Project 09851 Khabarovsk.

Belgorod is the older of the pair. A modified, stretched variant of the Oscar-II-class cruise-missile submarine, the 604-foot-long Belgorod is one of the biggest submarines ever. She spent a staggering 28 years under construction and in trials before finally commissioning in 2020.

The Russian fleet reportedly has configured Belgorod for two main missions. She has fitting on her ventral hull for latching onto the Project 210 Losharik, an approximately 200-foot-long, deep-diving, nuclear-powered spy submarine.

Losharik is most famous for suffering a fatal fire in 2019. The Kremlin reportedly planned to repair the vessel and return her to service.

Belgorod’s other mission is to carry as many as six Poseidons in bow tubes. The idea would be for Belgorod to fire the Poseidons from the relative safety of Russian coastal waters after an exchange of nuclear missiles has devastated both Russia and the United States. The Poseidons would cruise across the ocean and, days later, explode along the American coast.

The three Khabarovsks—two under construction and one planned—reportedly also carry six Poseidons. It’s unclear whether the approximately 390-foot boats, which are shorter variants of the Borei-class ballistic-missile submarine—also possess the ventral bay for hooking onto a mini-sub such as Losharik.

The Russian submarine fleet slowly has been shrinking as fewer new vessels replace more numerous Cold War-vintage boats. In coming decades Moscow’s undersea fleet might stabilize at a sustainable structure of around a dozen each vessels of three major types—diesel-electric attack boats, nuclear-powered attack boats and nuclear-powered ballistic-missile boats.

That Moscow is willing to spend billions of dollars building four Poseidon-carriers—together representing more than a tenth of the overall future undersea fleet—is testimony to the importance Putin’s regime places on the doomsday torpedo.

Reif tried to make sense of it. He said he thinks Poseidon is a response to America’s own heavy investment in missile-defense systems that, in theory, could intercept nuclear-tipped ballistic missiles.

Missile-defenses don’t work very well in practice, but Moscow apparently isn’t taking any chances. Putin’s regime could view Poseidon and its launching subs as an underwater insurance policy against America getting lucky and shooting down ballistic nukes. “Their investment in these systems suggests a real concern about said defenses,” Reif said.

#### First is paradigm shifts—Poseidon creates aggressive posturing that sidesteps current treaties leading to escalation.

[Joshua M.M. Portzer (July 2020), Lieutenant Commander in the US Navy, “Kanyon’s Reach: Rethinking the Nuclear Triad in the Autonomous Age,” United States Naval Institute, Vol. 146/7/1409, [https://www.usni.org/magazines/proceedings/2020/july/kanyons-reach-rethinking-nuclear-triad-autonomous-age]//CHS](https://www.usni.org/magazines/proceedings/2020/july/kanyons-reach-rethinking-nuclear-triad-autonomous-age%5d//CHS) PK \*\*brackets for ableist language\*\*

Throughout history, weapon system advances have created paradigm shifts for militaries. Occasionally these shifts are tectonic, unlocking new domains for warfare. The aircraft carrier took air warfare across oceans. The satellite brought electronic warfare to space. The next harbinger of strategic warfare’s future: autonomous unmanned undersea vehicles (UUVs).

Russia has developed a submarine-deployed autonomous UUV (AUUV) that can travel thousands of miles and detonate a nuclear payload of several megatons in a foreign harbor—a capability that will be operational by the late 2020s.1 A strategic nuclear weapon that is deployed and detonated undersea is a true paradigm shift: Never before has a country’s nuclear kill chain remained exclusively undersea. Kanyon

The “Kanyon” weapon system—also referred to as Status-6 or Poseidon—first emerged in footage on Russian television in 2015. It is a nuclear-powered (N)-AUUV that can travel thousands of nautical miles (nm) at approximately 100 knots and can operate at a depth of 1,000 meters. While it may carry a conventional weapons payload, its nuclear warhead is approximately two megatons.2 Russia designed it as a strategic weapon to take out ports and coastal cities. It may deploy on up to four submarines (modified Oscar II class) in both the Northern and Pacific Fleets, with each submarine carrying up to eight Kanyon weapons.3

Unlike any other nuclear weapon, Kanyon detonates underwater and is nuclear powered.4 Washington references it in its Nuclear Posture Review 2018 (NPR) as a “new intercontinental, nuclear-armed, nuclear-powered, undersea autonomous torpedo.”5 Russian President Vladimir Putin included Kanyon in his 2018 national address, along with three other advanced nuclear weapon vehicles.6 Russia began undersea trials for Kanyon in December 2018.

The ramifications of Kanyon cannot be overstated. Consider the realm of nuclear treaties and deterrence. Kanyon could deploy by 2027. This is past New START’s expiration, even if it were extended to 2026. As Kanyon is an N-AUUV, it does not fit New START’s current weapons definitions, much like another new weapon, Kinzhal (an air-to-surface nuclear missile). Thus, it would not be subject to the treaty’s restrictions in current form.7 Furthermore, Kanyon is impervious to ballistic-missile defense because it travels by and detonates in the ocean. There is no option to detect a Russian launch of this weapon and then execute a counterlaunch. The United States would not know of the threat until it had detonated.

The U.S. Navy should find this weapon horrifying. Naval Station Norfolk is the world’s largest naval base and houses approximately 75 ships and 130 aircraft. A single Kanyon detonation at Norfolk could wipe out half of the United States’ aircraft carriers and roughly a third of the surface Navy without warning. A coordinated attack against both Norfolk and San Diego ports would catastrophically destroy [cripple] the Navy.

#### Second is second-strike credibility—Poseidon shreds it which leads to first strikes and arms racing. Russia is not a reasonable actor which turns their deterrence arguments.

[Joshua M.M. Portzer (July 2020), Lieutenant Commander in the US Navy, “Kanyon’s Reach: Rethinking the Nuclear Triad in the Autonomous Age,” United States Naval Institute, Vol. 146/7/1409, [https://www.usni.org/magazines/proceedings/2020/july/kanyons-reach-rethinking-nuclear-triad-autonomous-age]//CHS](https://www.usni.org/magazines/proceedings/2020/july/kanyons-reach-rethinking-nuclear-triad-autonomous-age%5d//CHS) PK

Kanyon calls these points into question. Consider an underwater nuclear attack against Naval Station Norfolk. Is a U.S. threat of a second strike credible? What if Russia denies the attack? Would Washington pull the trigger in the face of public Russian denial? And what of primacy? An attack on Norfolk would not destroy the U.S. nuclear arsenal; the United States could still volley a second strike. However, Kanyon is essentially undetectable. In terms of capabilities, then, the United States no longer holds primacy in nuclear weapons (or even parity). The U.S. nuclear triad still relies on the air domain for terminal delivery, and all U.S. delivery vehicles are detectable by Russian military technology. Last, Kanyon and its sister superweapons are evidence that while Russia may act rationally, it is not acting reasonably.11

Deterrence depends in part on rational actors, but it also assumes actors will act reasonably, insofar as they value international norms. But rationality and reasonability often are confused.12 Russia’s actions suggest that it is not acting reasonably. Weapons such as Kanyon show “Russia’s clear motivation to develop new offensive weapons to negate any perceived deterrent advantage sought by the United States.”13 Consider further that Russia wields 11 types of tactical nuclear weapons compared with the United States’ one, including at least one weapon that violated the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty.14 The Russians have conducted multiple nuclear attack exercises against countries such as Sweden.15 While scholars might claim these are symptoms of Russia’s anxiety caused by perceived disadvantages in relation to conventional Western forces, it adds to the argument that Russia is not interested in a gentleman’s game of international norms. If satisfaction is demanded on the world’s stage, Moscow is here to win big. Options for Deterrence

#### Third is artificial intelligence—it gets hacked, miscalculates, and causes a nuclear holocaust.

[Yonah Jeremy Bob (12-25-2019), Yonah Jeremy Bob is the Jerusalem Post's intelligence, terrorism and legal analyst and Literary Editor, “Scientists warn AI control of nukes could lead to ‘Terminator-style’ war,” The Jerusalem Post, [https://www.jpost.com/international/nuke-scientists-warn-ai-control-could-lead-to-terminator-style-nuke-war-612123]//CHS](https://www.jpost.com/international/nuke-scientists-warn-ai-control-could-lead-to-terminator-style-nuke-war-612123%5d//CHS) PK

The world may be inching closer to an era where a Terminator-style apocalyptic nuclear war could be possible due to yielding control over nuclear weapons to artificial intelligence (AI), according to publications by nuclear scientists and defense experts.

While numerous AI experts have told the Jerusalem Post over the years that people worried about AI turning on humanity as in the famous “Terminator” movies simply misunderstand the technology, the likelihood of AI making a catastrophic mistake with nuclear weapons is no fairytale.

A recent article in the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, a top group of nuclear scientists, as well as other recent publications by defense experts have said that Russia may already be integrating AI into a new nuclear torpedo it is developing known as the Poseidon, to make it autonomous.

According to the Atomic Scientists report, the US and China are also considering injecting AI deeper into their nuclear weapons’ programs as they modernize and overhaul their nuclear inventory.

There have been no express reports about Israel integrating AI into, what according to foreign reports, is an apparatus of between 80-200 nuclear weapons. But there have been reports of the IDF integrating AI into conventional weapons, such as its spice bomb carried by F-16s.

Part of the concern in the report was that integrating AI into nuclear weapons’ systems could become culturally inevitable once non-conventional weapons become more dominated by AI.

The nuclear holocaust risks that scientists and experts are writing about are not a hostile takeover by AI, but by AI getting hacked, slipping out of control by a technical error or badly misjudging a situation.

Such risks could be magnified by unmanned vehicles carrying nuclear weapons where there is no one on board and responsible for making the final decision to deploy a nuclear weapon.

As a secondary but still serious risk, AI integration into early warning systems could overwhelm human decision-makers who could be faster on the nuclear trigger finger to yield to the technology despite any human judgment doubts they might have.

Some studies have shown that AI and automated evidence in general can reinforce bubble-style thinking and make it more difficult for analysts to entertain alternate narratives about what might be occurring in murky and hi-stress situations.

An example that the article gives of human judgment’s importance was a 1983 incident when a Soviet officer named Stanislav Petrov disregarded automated audible and visual warnings that US nuclear missiles were inbound.

The systems were wrong and had Petrov trusted technology over his own instincts, the world might have gone to nuclear war over a technological malfunction.

#### Fourth is perception gaps—the Poseidon bloats Putin’s ego which destabilizes the globe—it’s impossible to defend against.

[Mark Episkopos (11-7-2019), Mark Episkopos is a national security reporter for the national interest, “Russia Is Preparing To Deploy Its Nuclear Doomsday Drones On Submarines,” The National Interest, [https://nationalinterest.org/blog/buzz/russia-preparing-deploy-its-nuclear-doomsday-drones-submarines-94151]//CHS](https://nationalinterest.org/blog/buzz/russia-preparing-deploy-its-nuclear-doomsday-drones-submarines-94151%5d//CHS) PK

The Russian Navy is on track to deploy up to 32 of its “Poseidon” thermonuclear drones across four submarines, according to Russian state media.

Citing a military insider source, [TASS](http://tass.com/defense/1039603) reported earlier this week that "Two Poseidon-carrying submarines are expected to enter service with the Northern Fleet and the other two will join the Pacific Fleet. Each of the submarines will carry a maximum of eight drones and, therefore, the total number of Poseidons on combat duty may reach 32 vehicles."

Poseidon is an underwater drone weapon, armed with a 2-megaton nuclear or conventional payload that can be detonated “thousands of feet” below the surface. This is meant to generate a radioactive tsunami capable of [destroying](http://russian7.ru/post/atomnyy-podvodnyy-bespilotnik-posey/) coastal cities and other infrastructure several kilometers inland.

Poseidon can remain submerged at up to one kilometer, [travels](https://rg.ru/2019/01/12/smi-rossiia-vooruzhit-submariny-32-apparatami-sudnogo-dnia-posejdon.html) at a maximum speed of 200 kilometers per hour, and is programmed to execute three-dimensional evasive maneuvers in response to interception attempts.

When unveiling Poseidon at his March 1st weapons address, Russian President [Vladimir Putin](https://www.rt.com/op-ed/434759-drone-nuclear-poseidon-submarine/) was especially keen to stress the drone’s maneuverability: “We have developed unmanned submersible vehicles that can move at great depths – I would say extreme depths – intercontinentally, at a speed multiple times higher than the speed of submarines, cutting-edge torpedoes and all kinds of surface vessels.”

While the full range of Poseidon-compatible submarines has not yet been revealed, the TASS report confirmed that one of Poseidon’s first fittings will be the Project 09851 Khabarovsk submarine. Oscar II-class submarines will also fit Poseidon "after their appropriate upgrade," though it isn’t clear how many Oscar-II vessels will be repurposed to this end. TASS asserts that the each of these submarines will be able to carry and deploy up to 8 Poseidon drones.

Poseidon’s precise mega-tonnage has varied wildly over the years, with [reports](https://www.businessinsider.com/russia-doomsday-weapon-submarine-nuke-2018-4) ranging from 100 to 2, but even several megatons would be enough to destroy major coastal cities if Poseidon works as described.

The more serious charge against Poseidon is that it doesn’t add anything to the Russian arsenal that traditional ICBMs and [hypersonic gliders](https://nationalinterest.org/blog/buzz/why-america-should-fear-russias-new-avangard-hypersonic-weapon-we-dont-have-any-defense) like Avangard don’t already offer. It is true, after all, that the latter boast a larger blast radius and reach the United States in less than an hour even as Poseidon takes several days at best.

However, there are strategic benefits to a weapon like Poseidon that may not be readily apparent. First and foremost, Poseidon enhances Russia’s nuclear threat by diversifying its first-strike capability. That is, the Russian military believes that it [travels](https://rg.ru/2018/12/25/rossiia-nachala-podvodnye-ispytaniia-bespilotnika-posejdon.html) too fast and too deep underwater to be intercepted by torpedoes or otherwise countered. To the Kremlin, Poseidon is yet another way to circumvent America’s [formidable](https://www.defensenews.com/pentagon/2019/01/11/what-to-look-for-in-the-upcoming-missile-defense-review/) strategic missile defense network.

But even if countermeasures can reliably prevent Poseidon from destroying coastal cities, it still possesses a large destabilizing potential. For example: detonating Poseidon off America’s coast will at the very least inflict mass political panic and military confusion, which can be used as cover for a different offensive operation.

Secondly, Russian [media](https://www.rt.com/op-ed/434759-drone-nuclear-poseidon-submarine/) have floated the possibility of Poseidon being deployed against aircraft carriers and other surface vessels; to this end, it can be armed with a conventional payload. Depending on Poseidon’s production costs and price-to-performance numbers, this can prove to be a more cost-effective way to neutralize carriers than swarms of conventional air and surface-launched missiles. Finally, the unconventional threat posed by Poseidon may be a source of Russian leverage in ongoing arms reduction talks with the US.

#### Fifth is miscalculation—the US perception of LAWs and their ‘de-escalation’ policy uniquely increases risks.

**Insinna ‘18** (Valerie Insinna, Valerie Insinna is Defense News' air warfare reporter. She previously worked the Navy/congressional beats for Defense Daily, which followed almost three years as a staff writer for National Defense Magazine. Prior to that, she worked as an editorial assistant for the Tokyo Shimbun’s Washington bureau. 1-12-2018, accessed on 12-7-2020, Defense News, "Russia’s nuclear underwater drone is real and in the Nuclear Posture Review", <https://www.defensenews.com/space/2018/01/12/russias-nuclear-underwater-drone-is-real-and-in-the-nuclear-posture-review/>) //recut CHS PK

On Nov. 27, 2016, U.S. intelligence detected Status-6 after it was launched from a Sarov-class submarine used to test and validate new tech, the [Washington Free Beacon reported](http://freebeacon.com/national-security/russia-tests-nuclear-capable-drone-sub/) in December 2016, citing unnamed Pentagon sources. Russian reports indicate it could be outfitted with a 100-megaton nuclear warhead. Status-6 was built by Rubin Design Bureau, the largest of Russia’s three submarine manufacturers. According to a document shown on Russian television, the drone has a range of 6,200 miles, a top speed in excess of 56 knots and can descend to depths of 3,280 feet below sea level, the Beacon reported. It was designed to be launched from at least two different classes of nuclear submarines, including the Oscar-class, which can carry four Status-6 drones at a time. The nuclear posture review reaffirms the United States’ commitment to the nuclear triad — or the country’s inventory of ballistic missile submarines, ICBMs and nuclear-capable bombers — but offers no sign that the Pentagon is interested in developing unmanned undersea vehicles capable of delivering a nuclear weapon. However, it has been widely speculated that the Air Force’s newest bomber, the B-21 currently under development, could be optionally manned. While the final draft of the Nuclear Posture Review could remove references to the Status-6 program, it appears the Pentagon confirmed the existence of the weapon as a way to illustrate what it sees as major advantage of the Russian nuclear weapons program: its diversity. The review notes that Russia is increasing the number of platforms that could be equipped either with a nuclear or conventional payload, allowing it to expand its nuclear arsenal without violating the New START treaty. It is also developing a ground-launched cruise missile and has multiple classes of nuclear submarines and varieties of ICBMs and air-launched cruise missiles. The United States is concerned about Russia’s continued development of “increasingly diverse and expanding nuclear capabilities,” especially coupled with Moscow’s perception that it could conduct a nuclear attack as a way to “ ’de-escalate’ a conflict on terms favorable to Russia,” the review stated. “These mistaken perceptions increase the prospect for dangerous miscalculation and escalation.”

#### **Sixth is the Arctic—Poseidon ensures US-Russian escalation in the region.**

Erdogan 20 [Dr. Aziz Erdogan is an expert in and written on a litany of different topics including, but not limited to, modern warfare and modern air and space power. He works at Beyond the Horizon, an organization that brings together rigorous research and extensive field security to influence and promote global peace and security.] “Poseidon – A Doomsday Scenario Stands Out,” May 7th, 2020, <https://behorizon.org/poseidon-a-doomsday-scenario-stands-out/>,//recut CHS PK

In September 2015, the Poseidon program became public for the first time, when the Russian state television “accidentally” showed a picture of Poseidon, nuclear-powered submarine drone, also known as unmanned underwater vehicle (UUV) or autonomous underwater vehicle (AUV). Whereas all nuclear weapons can kill thousands of people, and may leave radiation poisoning the environment for many years, Russia’s new apocalypse tornado, known as “Poseidon”, is designed to maximize this effect. Poseidon-A Doomsday Scenario Stands Out. On 1st March 2018, President Vladimir Putin publicly announced, for the first time, not only its new nuclear weapons but also six NextGen missiles in his State of the Nation address. One of the NextGen missiles is “Poseidon”, which is originally called “Status-6 Oceanic Multipurpose System”, by the Russians and Kanyon by NATO. It was named by President Putin in 2018 following a “naming contest” for Russia’s new weapons. He outlined the Russian efforts to develop an UUV which can deliver conventional and nuclear warheads and is able to destroy infrastructures, carrier groups and other enemy targets. Capabilities of Poseidon. There are two Russian new advanced strategic weapon delivery systems: Poseidon and Burevestnik. These two weapons differ in their design characteristics and their specific military function. Yet they are combined to provide long-range nuclear weapon delivery systems by means not used by other nations, and the common technical feature is that they both rely on the use of a compact nuclear power source. In February 2019, the former head of the U.S. Strategic Command General John Hyten raised concerns that Russia’s new nuclear delivery vehicles – the submarine UUV Poseidon, the nuclear-powered missile Burevestnik – would not be covered by the New START. He pointed out that these systems ultimately could pose a threat to the U.S. and that he believed the U.S. and Russia should extend the treaty in order to include them under the New START. Status-6 “Poseidon” torpedo is “robotic mini-submarine” with a diameter of 1,6 meter, and is an essentially underwater Intercontinental Ballistic Missile (ICBM). In 2015, Russian media sources gave detailed design specifications for Poseidon capable of travelling a distance of 10,000 km, reaching a speed of 100 knots (approximately 115 mph), and a maximum depth of 1000 m (3300 ft). The torpedo itself would be 1.6 m in diameter and 24 m long. It is about twice the size of a ballistic missile launched from a submarine and about 30 times the size of an ordinary torpedo. In 2018, they also started to report speeds of 60-70 knots (70 mph to 80 mph) for Poseidon, and a 2-Mt warhead, 165 fewer capabilities than originally announced, which is probably due to the maturing of the design. However, it is not clear whether Russia is capable of building a reliable miniaturized nuclear reactor for UUV. As Poseidon is expected to operate at depths of 1,000 m, it`s interception is extremely difficult with the current technology. Moreover, it seems that this UUV can operate under the Arctic ice pack, so it is much harder to detect and engage. Poseidon is the largest torpedo ever developed, with a size thirty times that of a heavy torpedo. Actually, the torpedo is so large that it can only be carried by a specially designed submarine. It can travel thousands of kilometers by using a tiny nuclear reactor to power a pump-jet propulsion system. Poseidon drone can allegedly be fitted with a thermonuclear warhead delivering around two megatons. The thermonuclear warhead of Poseidon is designed to destroy coastal sites such as ports, cities, and economic infrastructure. Poseidon has been tested 11 times so far; the last known test was conducted in November 2018 according to in the US intelligence assessment. The delivery of the weapon is expected in 2027 and will be transported by specially modified Oscar submarines. The first of these special submarines – the 09852 K-329 Belgorod project – was launched in April 2019. Belgorod will be the first carrier of Poseidon nuclear-powered submarine drones, which will participate in sea trials in June 2020, and the act of acceptance is planned to be signed in September 2020. The Belgorod will become the largest submarine in Russia and would be able to transport up to six Poseidon torpedoes. It is highly likely that the Poseidon will complete its tests by 2025 and enter operational service in 2027. When it is in service, Russia will have a new delivery system for nuclear weapons. It is obvious that Russia has dedicated considerable resources to the nuclear programme. It is not clear whether the Poseidon will serve solely as a delivery platform for nuclear warheads or may also be deployed for intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) missions. But, it is highly likely that Poseidon’s main goal would be to target and keep coastal cities at risk, where Avangard hypersonic missiles would hit the US hinterlands, particularly ICBM sites of the U.S. On the other hand, in order to counter Poseidon, the U.S. is developing its own UUV which is named Orca, the Extra-Large UUV (XLUVV) is based on Boeing’s Echo Voyager drone. The U.S. awarded a contract to Boeing to build it four XLUVV. It is scheduled to cruise the oceans of the world with its own Artificial Intelligence (AI) and technically could last as long as six months. It has a top speed of around 8 miles per hour underwater. The 15.5-meter long and 2.5m wide Echo Voyager has a range of nearly 7,500 miles, and it can dive to depths up to 3,000 meters deep. It has a diesel-electric propulsion system. Its batteries give it a range of more than 150 miles at a sustainable cruising speed of around 3 miles per hour. The development of UUV has been expedited as part of a number of on-going Russian efforts to circumvent US ballistic missile defence systems, in particular the Aegis Ashore systems located in Poland and Romania.

#### Seventh is Europe—Putin wants NATO gone. Poseidon uniquely allows him to strike European capitals—a first strike collapses the organization, leads to forced US draw in, and global Armageddon.

[Alex Lockie (2-11-2019), Senior Front Page Editor at Business Insider, “The real purpose of Russia's 100-megaton underwater nuclear doomsday device,” Business Insider, [https://www.businessinsider.com/the-real-purpose-of-russias-poseidon-nuclear-doomsday-device-2019-2]//CHS](https://www.businessinsider.com/the-real-purpose-of-russias-poseidon-nuclear-doomsday-device-2019-2%5d//CHS) PK

Davis called the Poseidon a "third-strike vengeance weapon" — meaning Russia would attack a NATO member, the US would respond, and a devastated Russia would flip the switch on a hidden nuke that would lay waste to an entire US seaboard.

According to Davis, the Poseidon would give Russia a "coercive power" to discourage a NATO response to a Russian first strike.

Russia here would seek to not only reoccupy Eastern Europe "but coerce NATO to not act upon an Article 5 declaration and thus lose credibility," he said, referring to the alliance's key clause that guarantees a collective response to an attack on a member state.

Russian President Vladimir Putin "has made it clear he seeks the collapse of NATO," Davis continued. "If NATO doesn't come to the aid of a member state, it's pretty much finished as a defense alliance."

Essentially, Russia could use the Poseidon as an insurance policy while it picks apart NATO. The US, for fear that its coastlines could become irradiated for decades by a stealthy underwater torpedo it has no defenses aginst, might seriously question how badly it needs to save Estonia from Moscow's clutches.

"Putin may calculate that NATO will blink first rather than risk escalation to a nuclear exchange," Davis said. "Poseidon accentuates the risks to NATO in responding to any Russian threat greatly, dramatically increasing Russia's coercive power."

Davis also suggested the Poseidon would make a capable but heavy-handed naval weapon, which he said could most likely take out an entire carrier strike group in one shot.

Russia has recently signaled its willingness to use nuclear weapons to coerce the West [with its violation of the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty](https://www.businessinsider.com/russia-threatens-us-with-nuclear-doomsday-device-after-inf-failure-2019-2), Davis said. These missiles are purpose-built for taking out European capitals from the Russian mainland.

But Russia has frequently engaged in nuclear saber-rattling when it feels encircled by NATO forces, and so far it has steered clear of confronting NATO with kinetic forces.

"Whether that will involve actual use or just the threat of use is the uncertainty," Davis said.

While it's hard to imagine a good reason for laying the kind of destruction the Poseidon promises, Davis warned that we shouldn't assume the Russians think about nuclear warfare the same way the US does.

#### Eighth is submarines—Poseidon uniquely allows Russia to safely target US SSBNs and launch World War III—the Russian military confirms.

[Peter Pry (6-5-2018), Executive Director of Task Force on National and Homeland Security, a Congressional Advisory Board dedicated to achieving protection of the United States from electromagnetic pulse (EMP), cyber-attack, mass destruction terrorism and other threats to civilian critical infrastructures on an accelerated basis. Dr. Pry is also the Director of the United States Nuclear Strategy Forum, a Congressional Advisory Board dedicated to developing policies to counter Weapons of Mass Destruction, “POSEIDON – Russia’s New Doomsday Machine,” American Center for Democracy, [https://acdemocracy.org/poseidon-russias-new-doomsday-machine/]//CHS](https://acdemocracy.org/poseidon-russias-new-doomsday-machine/%5d//CHS) PK

“Maskirovka” is an official and diligently practiced dimension of Russian military doctrine that seeks to achieve strategic and technological surprise by concealment and disinformation.[44]

Dictator Putin and Russian military commentary on POSEIDON lists its missions as:

–Making nuclear tsunamis to flood and radioactively contaminate U.S. coasts;

–Destroying U.S. naval bases and fortified submarine pens;

–Destroying U.S. aircraft carriers.

As explained above, POSEIDON is not really militarily necessary or practical for any of these missions. Russian nuclear missiles and bombers can already blast and radioactively contaminate U.S. cities coastal or otherwise, destroy U.S. naval bases and fortified submarine pens, and attack deployed U.S. aircraft carriers.

The only mission not mentioned for POSEIDON, the most obvious one, is attacking U.S. ballistic missile submarines (SSBNs) on patrol, hiding at sea.

During the Cold War, the USSR eventually achieved the ability to destroy all or most U.S. ICBMs, strategic bombers, and SSBNs in port by a surprise nuclear attack on their bases—but not submarines at sea. Many analysts credit the survivability of U.S. SSBNs at sea with deterring the USSR from launching World War III. [45]

The U.S. SSBN fleet during the 1980s Cold War numbered 36-41 vessels.[46]

Today, U.S. ICBMs, strategic bombers, and submarines in port are much more vulnerable to a Russian surprise nuclear attack than during the Cold War.[47] Today’s Trident SSBN fleet numbers only 14 vessels, scheduled to decline to 12 Columbia SSBNs in the future.[48] On any given day, half of U.S. ballistic missile submarines are in port, and half patrolling at sea.

On a day-to-day basis, the most credibly survivable leg of the entire U.S. nuclear Triad amounts to just 7 ballistic missile submarines, in the future declining to 6 SSBNs.

What if POSEIDON, a nuclear-powered drone, is intended to be always on patrol at sea, rarely or never returning to port—always tailing U.S. SSBNs to destroy them, on command, in a surprise attack? Advances in sensors and artificial intelligence make such a mission for POSEIDON plausible.

The POSEIDON prototype operates out of a mothership, which will be fatal for the robot-sub if it is intended to deploy from a port in wartime, as explained earlier. However, POSEIDON could deploy in peacetime for protracted patrols or lingering outside U.S. ports, like a mobile underwater mine, hunting U.S. SSBNs until D-Day.

POSEIDON makes more sense as a “release and forget” independent killer since the mothership would be destroyed if anywhere in the neighborhood of POSEIDON’s blast.

U.S. submarines are still stealthier and more elusive than Russian subs. But a 100-megaton warhead detonated underwater—because a nuclear shockwave couples to water far more efficiently than to air, and travels through water faster and farther—would have an enormous lethal radius against submarines.

Unclassified data from the YAHOO and BAKER underwater nuclear tests proves the vulnerability of submarines and even heavily armored ships to a nuclear shockwave transmitted through water. According to the Department of Defense in The Effects of Nuclear Weapons:

“An underwater shock acting on the hull of a ship tends to cause distortion of the hull below the waterline and rupture the shell plating, thus producing leaks as well as severely stressing the ship’s framing. The underwater shock also leads to a rapid movement in both horizontal and vertical directions. This motion causes damage by shock to components and equipment…Main feed lines, main steam lines, shafting and boiler brickwork within the ship are especially sensitive to shock. Due to the effects of inertia, the supporting members of foundations of heavy components, such as engines and boilers, are likely to collapse or become distorted. Lighter or inadequately fastened articles will be thrown about with great violence, causing damage to themselves, to bulkheads, and to other equipment.”

“For most cases of an underwater explosion the water shock will be the important factor in determining damage,” according to The Effects of Nuclear Weapons.[49]

Even assuming U.S. SSBNs are very robust, hardened to survive an underwater shockwave of 300 PSI (three times harder than the Atlas-F ICBM missile silo), the lethal radius of a 100-megaton warhead could be 100 kilometers or more. An atmospheric shockwave would destroy brick buildings at 5 PSI. An underwater shockwave from 100 megatons could deliver 5 PSI to a radius of several hundred kilometers.[1]

Russian SSBNs need not be at risk from POSEIDON because their intercontinental-range missiles enable them to strike the U.S. from a port or from their heavily defended bastion areas near a port, in the Barents Sea, and the Sea of Okhotsk. U.S. SSBNs armed with intermediate-range missiles must be in mid-ocean to reach their targets in Russia.[2]

While POSEIDON’s real mission might be anti-submarine warfare, there is an even better additional or alternative mission for a revival of a 100-megaton warhead like TSAR—including a better way to perform the ASW and doomsday missions. Indeed, POSEIDON might be an elaborate ruse, a disinformation campaign concealing the real mission for their 100-megaton warhead—in order to achieve decisive technological surprise.

#### Ninth is accidents—Russia’s Poseidon testing is terrible which leads to nuclear accidents and radiation leaks.

[H I Sutton (7-1-2020), Forbes Contributor on Underwater Warfare, “Russia’s New Super Weapons May Be Cause Of Radiation Leak,” Forbes, [https://www.forbes.com/sites/hisutton/2020/07/01/russias-new-super-weapons-may-be-cause-of-radiation-leak/?sh=bbd53bc5f8c2]//CHS](https://www.forbes.com/sites/hisutton/2020/07/01/russias-new-super-weapons-may-be-cause-of-radiation-leak/?sh=bbd53bc5f8c2%5d//CHS) PK

A recent nuclear leak may be related to new nuclear-powered strategic weapons Russia is developing. These are part of a range of new ‘super weapons’ unveiled by President Putin on March 1, 2018. Russia is testing a nuclear-powered mega-torpedo called Poseidon and a nuclear-powered cruise missile called Burevestnik. If either are to blame, then it would not be the first radiation spike caused by testing one of these weapons.

On June 23, the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO) revealed that scientists in Sweden had detected higher than usual levels of radiation. Based on analysis of the weather, the origin was projected to be in Northern Russia. Executive Secretary Lassina Zerbo tweeted that they had detected “3 isotopes; Cs-134, Cs-137 & Ru-103 associated w/Nuclear fission.” He went on to say that “These isotopes are most likely from a civil source.” and that it is “outside the CTBTO’s mandate to identify the exact origin.”

Russia's nuclear energy body has denied that the radiation originated from its two nuclear power stations in the region. However, it is not only civilian power stations that use nuclear reactors. Tom Moore, a nuclear policy expert and former senior professional staff member of the U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee, believes that these military reactors cannot be ruled out:

“CTBTO radionuclide monitoring is intended to discriminate explosive events and to complement seismic monitoring. Not to effectively rule in or rule out a source of radionuclides as being civil or military reactors.” Possible Cause: Burevestnik Cruise Missile

The first military system under development which comes to mind is the Burevestnik cruise missile. Its name means ‘Storm Bringer’ in Russian, after the Petral sea bird. It is more formally known by the designation 9M730 and NATO code name Skyfall. This is a nuclear-armed cruise missile that is designed to use a nuclear engine to give it virtually unlimited range. Burevestnik is the natural candidate because it is airborne, so any accident would likely release radioactive material into the sky.

This may have previously happened on August 9, 2019. There was a fatal radiation incident at the State Central Navy Testing Range at Nyonoksa. This is near to Severodvinsk in Russia’s arctic north, the same area that the CTBTO has pointed towards this time. Then it was caused by an explosion in a rocket engine. Many analysts believe that this was most likely related to the Burevestnik missile. Possible Cause: Poseidon Drone-Torpedo

The other weapon in the frame is Poseidon. This is a massive nuclear-powered torpedo that is intended to be launched from specially built submarines. At 60-78 feet long it is about twice the size of a Trident missile. Its designation is believed to be 2m39 and it is known in NATO as Kanyon. Its virtually unlimited range and high autonomy would make it hard to classify. The U.S. government has described it as an intercontinental, nuclear armed, undersea autonomous torpedo. It is a weapon worthy of a Bond villain that would literally go underneath missile defenses. Its threat is slow but inevitable doom to coastal cities such as New York and Los Angeles.

While Poseidon probably doesn’t have very much shielding on its reactor, it is normally underwater, so any radiation leak may not reach the atmosphere. But it would be lifted out of the water after a test launch, so there is room for an incident that could get detected hundreds of miles away in Scandinavia.

#### A single use causes extinction.

Lockie 19 [Alex, Senior Front Page Editor at Business Insider. “The real purpose of Russia’s 100-megaton underwater nuclear doomsday device.” Business Insider. February 11, 2019. https://www.businessinsider.my/the-real-purpose-of-russias-poseidon-nuclear-doomsday-device-2019-2/?fbclid=IwAR2\_pCU5-NG5lbhBdriP9OhMAj4zYPWEB8OPJ6rHHhHRi9HMjXl2ZBFdBkw]

Russia is said to have built a new 100-megaton underwater nuclear doomsday device, and it has threatened the US with it. The device goes beyond traditional ideas of nuclear warfighting and poses a direct threat to the future of humanity or life on Earth. Nobody has ever built a weapon like this before, because there’s almost no military utility in so badly destroying the world. But an expert on nuclear strategy told Business Insider the weapon might have a larger role in helping Russian President Vladimir Putin break down NATO with the threat of nuclear destruction. Since 2015, when images of a Russian nuclear torpedo first leaked on state television, the world has asked itself why Moscow would build a weapon that could end all life on Earth. While all nuclear weapons can kill thousands in the blink of an eye and leave radiation poisoning the environment for years to come, Russia’s new doomsday device, called “Poseidon,” takes steps to maximize this effect. If the US fired one of its Minutemen III nuclear weapons at a target, it would detonate in the air above the target and rely on the blast’s incredible downward pressure to crush it. The fireball from the nuke may not even touch the ground, and the only radiation would come from the bomb itself and any dust particles swept up in the explosion, Stephen Schwartz, the author of “Atomic Audit,” previously told Business Insider. But Russia’s Poseidon is said to use a warhead many times as strong, perhaps even as strong as the largest bomb ever detonated. Additionally, it’s designed to come into direct contact with water, marine animals, and the ocean floor, kicking up a radioactive tsunami that could spread deadly radiation over hundreds of thousands of miles of land and sea and render it uninhabitable for decades. In short, while most nuclear weapons can end a city, Russia’s Poseidon could end a continent. Read more: Why Putin’s new ‘doomsday’ device is so much more deadly and horrific than a regular nuke Even in the mania at the height of the Cold War, nobody took seriously the idea of building such a world-ender, Malcolm Davis, a senior analyst at the Australian Strategic Policy Institute, told Business Insider. So why build one now?

#### Even if the blast doesn’t, the following radiation does.

[Alex Lockie (3-15-2018), Senior Front Page Editor at Business Insider. “Why Putin's new 'doomsday' device is so much more deadly and horrific than a regular nuke,” Business Insider. [https://www.businessinsider.com/putin-doomsday-status-6-nuclear-weapon-2018-3]//CHS](https://www.businessinsider.com/putin-doomsday-status-6-nuclear-weapon-2018-3%5d//CHS) PK

"When a thermonuclear weapon is surrounded with ordinary cobalt (cobalt-59) metal," as Russia's Status 6 is rumored to be, "the fast neutrons escaping the explosion will instantly transmute it into radioactive cobalt-60, which would vaporize, condense, and then fall back to earth tens, hundreds, or thousands of miles from the site of the explosion."

How the doomsday bomb could make thousands of square miles uninhabitable for the better part of a century

The result would be a shroud of radioactive cobalt spreading indiscriminately across the planet. A cobalt bomb detonated in Washington DC could contaminate Canadian or Mexican soil. Schwartz estimates the cobalt would take 53 years to return to non-dangerous levels, and that other radioactive elements could persist for much longer.

"Any contaminated areas would be rendered essentially uninhabitable for that amount of time and people in shelters would not be safe if they returned to the surface for any period of time," Schwartz said. "If detonated in a populated area, decontamination costs would be astronomical."

In the US, nuclear modernization has meant for decades improving the [survivability, accuracy, and precision of nuclear systems to hit small targets with minimal collateral damage](https://www.businessinsider.com/us-vs-russia-nuclear-weapons-2016-9).

The Russian idea of nuclear superiority, as revealed by Putin, involves making the Earth uninhabitable and visiting unimaginably horrific destruction for the sake of instilling fear, or simply for killing.

#### Russia war escalates to extinction – regional nuclear wars don’t

Cotton-Barratt 17 [Owen Cotton-Barratt, et al, PhD in Pure Mathematics, Oxford, Lecturer in Mathematics at Oxford, Research Associate at the Future of Humanity Institute, 2/3/2017, Existential Risk: Diplomacy and Governance, https://www.fhi.ox.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/Existential-Risks-2017-01-23.pdf]

The bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki demonstrated the unprecedented destructive power of nuclear weapons. However, even in an all-out nuclear war between the United States and Russia, despite horrific casualties, neither country’s population is likely to be completely destroyed by the direct effects of the blast, fire, and radiation.8 The aftermath could be much worse: the burning of flammable materials could send massive amounts of smoke into the atmosphere, which would absorb sunlight and cause sustained global cooling, severe ozone loss, and agricultural disruption – a nuclear winter.

According to one model 9 , an all-out exchange of 4,000 weapons10 could lead to a drop in global temperatures of around 8°C, making it impossible to grow food for 4 to 5 years. This could leave some survivors in parts of Australia and New Zealand, but they would be in a very precarious situation and the threat of extinction from other sources would be great. An exchange on this scale is only possible between the US and Russia who have more than 90% of the world’s nuclear weapons, with stockpiles of around 4,500 warheads each, although many are not operationally deployed.11 Some models suggest that even a small regional nuclear war involving 100 nuclear weapons would produce a nuclear winter serious enough to put two billion people at risk of starvation,12 though this estimate might be pessimistic.13 Wars on this scale are unlikely to lead to outright human extinction, but this does suggest that conflicts which are around an order of magnitude larger may be likely to threaten civilisation. It should be emphasised that there is very large uncertainty about the effects of a large nuclear war on global climate. This remains an area where increased academic research work, including more detailed climate modelling and a better understanding of how survivors might be able to cope and adapt, would have high returns.

It is very difficult to precisely estimate the probability of existential risk from nuclear war over the next century, and existing attempts leave very large confidence intervals. According to many experts, the most likely nuclear war at present is between India and Pakistan.14 However, given the relatively modest size of their arsenals, the risk of human extinction is plausibly greater from a conflict between the United States and Russia. Tensions between these countries have increased in recent years and it seems unreasonable to rule out the possibility of them rising further in the future.

#### Thus, the Plan: The Russian Federation should ban autonomous drone submarines.

Schneider ‘20 (Mark B. Schneider; Senior Analyst with the National Institute for Public Policy. Before retirement from DoD Senior Executive Service, Dr. Schneider served in a number of senior positions within the Office of Secretary of Defense for Policy including Principal Director for Forces Policy, Principal Director for Strategic Defense, Space and Verification Policy, Director for Strategic Arms Control Policy and Representative of the Secretary of Defense to the Nuclear Arms Control Implementation Commissions. He also served in the senior Foreign Service as a Member of the State Department Policy Planning Staff; “The Barbarians in the Bay: Russia’s Nuclear Armed Drone Submarine”; <https://www.realcleardefense.com/articles/2020/07/25/the_barbarians_in_the_bay_russias_nuclear_armed_drone_submarine_115493.html>, RealClear Defense, 7-25-2020)//CHS PK

Noted Russian journalist Pavel Felgenhauer warned that Status-6 "may further embolden the Kremlin to push for a new world order of its liking by intimidating the United States and its allies.” The Washington Post editorialized that Russia’s underwater nuclear drone “should raise alarm bells.” The Post is certainly correct about the implications of this weapon, but it is not, as the Post characterized it, a “tactical nuclear weapon.” Nor is it a torpedo but rather a drone submarine. The best description of it is an arms control concept included in the START and New START Treaties – a “new kind of strategic offensive arm.” It is probably the most destructive weapon in human history. Its use would cause massive loss of life and cause grave global environmental effects. As Chief arms control negotiator Ambassador Marshall Billingslea said, the Poseidon is a “terrible” weapon and should be [banned](https://dialog.proquest.com/professional/professionalnewsstand/docview/2419576540/fulltext/172C8BEE5801BBBDD92/2?accountid=155509&site=professionalnewsstand&t:ac=172C8BEE5801BBBDD92/1&t:cp=maintain/resultcitationblocksbrief&t:zoneid=transactionalZone_17363421876).

#### Broad bans are ineffective—partial bans are crucial to stop dangerous weapons while setting the stage for a broader treaty.

Kallenborn 20 - Zachary Kallenborn (expert on drone swarms, weapons of mass destruction, and WMD terrorism. His work has been published in the Nonproliferation Review, Studies in Conflict and Terrorism, Slate, Defense One, and War on the Rocks), "A Partial Ban on Autonomous Weapons Would Make Everyone Safer," Foreign Policy, 10-14-2020, https://foreignpolicy.com/2020/10/14/ai-drones-swarms-killer-robots-partial-ban-on-autonomous-weapons-would-make-everyone-safer/ WJ

Instead of a broad ban on all autonomous weapons, the international community should identify and focus restrictions on the highest-risk weapons: drone swarms and autonomous chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear weapons, known as CBRN weapons. A narrower focus would increase the likelihood of global agreement, while providing a normative foundation for broader restrictions.

In 2018, the tech company Intel flew 2,018 drones at once in a Guinness World Record-breaking light show in Folsom, California. Earlier this year, Russia and China flew light shows of more than 2,000 drones too. The drones carried flashy lights and were meant as modern fireworks, but similar drones could be designed for war with thousands of guns, bombs, and missiles.

A thousand-drone swarm has a thousand points of potential error. And because drones in a true swarm communicate with one another, errors may propagate throughout the swarm. For example, one drone may misidentify a cruise ship as an aircraft carrier, then unleash the full might of the swarm on a few thousand civilians.

The same may occur if the drone correctly identifies the cruise ship as not a target, but the word not is lost, due to simple accident or adversary jamming. Swarm communication also leads to emergent behavior—collective behaviors of the swarm that do not depend on the individual parts—that further reduces both the predictability and understandability of the weapon.

As P.W. Singer, a strategist and senior fellow at New America, wrote in his book Wired for War, “a swarm takes the action on its own, which may not always be exactly where and when the commander wants it. Nothing happens in a swarm directly, but rather through the complex relationships among the parts.”

Drone swarms pose a greater threat to powerful militaries, because cheap drones can be flung one after another against expensive platforms until they fall. In 2018, a group calling itself the Free Alawites Movement claimed responsibility for launching 13 drones made largely of plywood, duct tape, and lawnmower engines that attacked Russia’s Khmeimim Air Base in Syria.

The movement claimed the successful destruction of a $300 million S-400 surface-to-air missile system. (The exact identity of the “Free Alawites Movement” is unclear. The only attacks it has claimed are the Khmeimim attacks and another drone attack on a Russian naval base in Syria on the same day. Sources have also attributed the attacks to the Islamic State, Hayat Tahrir al-Sham, and Ahrar al-Sham.)

Russian officials acknowledged the drones flew autonomously and were preprogrammed to drop bombs on the base but claim no damage was done. (The Russian officials did not comment on whether the drones communicated with one another to make a true drone swarm.) However, in Libya, Turkish Bayraktar TB2 drones disabled at least nine Russian air defense systems. The Bayraktar drones are considerably more advanced than those used in Syria, but they illustrate the same principle: Drones pose major threats to air defenses and other expensive systems.

An adversary could fling tons of drones against a $1.8 billion USS Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer in an attempt to disable or destroy it and still have a cost advantage. Facing such a threat, great powers should choose to lead—rather than resist—the arms control charge for certain weapons. Yes, great powers would give up the potential to unleash their own massive swarms, but swarms are likely to favor weaker powers. If swarms are most effective when used en masse against big, expensive platforms, then major powers that possess such expensive equipment stand to lose the most. Swarms might also be easier to control.

A key arms control challenge for autonomous weapons is knowing if a weapon is actually autonomous. At root, autonomy is just a matter of programming the weapon to fire under given conditions, however simple or complex. A simple landmine explodes when enough weight is put upon it; an autonomous turret fires based on analyzed information collected from sensors and any design constraints. With autonomous weapons, an outside observer cannot tell whether the weapon operates under predesigned rules or is being controlled remotely. However, no human can reasonably control a swarm of thousands of drones.

The complexity is simply too much. They must monitor hundreds of video, infrared, or other feeds, while planning the swarm’s actions and deciding who to kill. Such a massive swarm must be autonomous, may be a weapon of mass destruction in its own right, and could carry traditional weapons of mass destruction.

Discussion of autonomous weapons takes place under the auspices of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons, assuming the weapon fires bullets, bombs, or missiles. But an autonomous weapon could just as readily be armed with CBRN agents.

Autonomous vehicles are a great way to deliver chemical, radiological, and biological weapons. An autonomous vehicle cannot get sick with anthrax, nor choke on chlorine. Drones can more directly target enemies, while adjusting trajectories based on local wind and humidity conditions. Plus, small drones can take to the air, fly indoors, and work together to carry out attacks. Operatives from the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria were reportedly quite interested in using drones to carry out radiological and potentially chemical attacks. North Korea also has an arsenal of chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons and a thousand-drone fleet.

When robots make decisions on nuclear weapons, the fate of humanity is at stake. In 1983, at the height of the Cold War, a Soviet early warning system concluded the United States had launched five nuclear missiles at the Soviet Union. The computer expressed the highest degree of confidence in the conclusion. The likely response: immediate nuclear retaliation to level U.S. cities and kill millions of American civilians. Fortunately, Stanislav Petrov, the Soviet officer in charge of the warning system, concluded the computer was wrong. Petrov was correct. Without him, millions of people would be dead.

New restrictions on autonomous CBRN weapons should be a relatively easy avenue for new restrictions. A wide range of treaties already restrict production, export, and use of CBRN weapons from the Geneva Convention to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and the Chemical Weapons Convention. At minimum, governments could collectively agree to incorporate autonomous weapons in all applicable CBRN weapons treaties.

This would signal a greater willingness to adopt restrictions on autonomous weapons without a requirement to resolve the question of autonomous weapons with conventional payloads. Of course, a ban may require giving up capabilities like a nuclear “dead hand”—in the words of proponents, “an automated strategic response system based on artificial intelligence”—but nuclear weapons experts are overwhelmingly against the idea. The risks to great powers of increased CBRN weapons proliferation and accidental nuclear war are far greater than any deterrent advantage already gained with a robust conventional and nuclear force.

Placing autonomous weapons on the global agenda in the first place is a definite success—a global treaty can never be made if no one cares enough to even talk about it—but the question is what happens next. Do government experts simply keep talking or do these meetings lead to actionable treaties?

What combination of inducements, export controls, transparency measures, sanctions, and, in extreme events, the use of force are best suited to preventing the threat? Historically, comprehensive bans took decades—the global community took about 70 years to go from the Geneva Protocols against chemical weapons usage to states giving up the weapons—but autonomous weapons are growing and proliferating rapidly.

Countries might not be willing to ban the weapons outright, but banning the highest-risk autonomous weapons—drone swarms and autonomous weapons armed with CBRN agents—could provide a foundation for reducing autonomous weapons risks. Great powers would give up little, while improving their own security.

#### Russia will deploy the massive bomb even if it’s impractical—authoritarian psychology and history confirms.

[Peter Pry (6-5-2018), Executive Director of Task Force on National and Homeland Security, a Congressional Advisory Board dedicated to achieving protection of the United States from electromagnetic pulse (EMP), cyber-attack, mass destruction terrorism and other threats to civilian critical infrastructures on an accelerated basis. Dr. Pry is also the Director of the United States Nuclear Strategy Forum, a Congressional Advisory Board dedicated to developing policies to counter Weapons of Mass Destruction, “POSEIDON – Russia’s New Doomsday Machine,” American Center for Democracy, [https://acdemocracy.org/poseidon-russias-new-doomsday-machine/]//CHS](https://acdemocracy.org/poseidon-russias-new-doomsday-machine/%5d//CHS) PK

Indeed, according to U.S. calculations of “equivalent yield,” the TSAR is a bad investment.  The “equivalent yield” of a warhead having a yield (Y) less than one megaton is Y to the two-thirds power, whereas a warhead having a yield over one megaton is Y to the one-half power.  According to this math, 10 one megaton warheads supposedly could do as much blast damage as the 100-megaton TSAR.[[16]](applewebdata://211EBE9B-36BF-4BCB-8778-F13B2C89BB36" \l "_ftn16)

Truth in advertising, “equivalent yield” was used by U.S. arms controllers during the Cold War to dismiss Russia’s big advantage in high-yield weapons, and to argue for U.S. weapons of low yield.  Despite the best efforts of U.S. arms controllers to “educate” Moscow, Russia always preferred having weapons of higher yield than the United States.[[17]](applewebdata://211EBE9B-36BF-4BCB-8778-F13B2C89BB36" \l "_ftn17)

So why did Moscow build and test the TSAR?

Part of the explanation may be that totalitarian and authoritarian regimes, especially those led by a megalomaniac, have a tendency toward what might be called the “psychopathy of gigantism” in public works and military weapons—even if they are impractical.  The “great leader” of enormous ego and messianic aspiration, in every civilization throughout history, wants to build outsize monuments to himself.  Objects that will overawe subjects, terrorize and cow enemies, and immortalize the “great leader” in the memory of Man.

The Pyramids of Egypt and monuments of Ramses, the Great Wall of China, and the Palace of Versailles are a few examples of such works.

Tyrants and dictators, the man at the top of the pyramid of power, tend to like giant weapons too, even if they are militarily impractical. Perhaps the psychology of one-man rule biases the dictator to identify with his giant weapon, a singularity dominating the battlefield, as the dictator dominates his nation.  He wants his monster to live and win, even if his scientists and generals warn him the giant is a waste of resources.[[18]](applewebdata://211EBE9B-36BF-4BCB-8778-F13B2C89BB36" \l "_ftn18)

So in 1586, Russia built the Tsar-Cannon, weighing 40 tons with a bore one-yard wide, inscribed for “The grace of God, Tsar and Great Duke Fyodor Ivanovich Autocrat of all Great Russia.” Tsar Cannon, too heavy to move, never saw battle.[[19]](applewebdata://211EBE9B-36BF-4BCB-8778-F13B2C89BB36" \l "_ftn19)

Mehmed the Conqueror, Sultan of the Ottoman Empire, during his medieval siege of Constantinople in 1453, had a giant bombard requiring 60 oxen to move, 400 men three hours to load, that could throw a 600 pound stone one mile.  Reports conflict over whether the great Dardanelles Gun blew itself up.[[20]](applewebdata://211EBE9B-36BF-4BCB-8778-F13B2C89BB36" \l "_ftn20)

Hitler commissioned the Great Gustav railway gun, weighing 1,350 tons and able to hurl a shell weighing seven tons 29 miles, which did good service at the siege of Sevastopol but otherwise was a huge drain on scarce German resources.[[21]](applewebdata://211EBE9B-36BF-4BCB-8778-F13B2C89BB36" \l "_ftn21)  The Nazi dictator also had plans for the biggest tank ever conceived, the Land Monitor, weighing 1,000 tons, too large and heavy for roads and bridges, that would wade rivers and roll across fields and forests like a mobile steel fortress—a perfect target for Allied airpower.[[22]](applewebdata://211EBE9B-36BF-4BCB-8778-F13B2C89BB36" \l "_ftn22)

Everyone knows the tragic fates of Hitler’s giant battleship the Bismarck and the pride of the Japanese Navy, the Yamato, the largest battleship ever built, whose enormous 18-inch guns could out-range U.S. 16-inch guns by miles.[[23]](applewebdata://211EBE9B-36BF-4BCB-8778-F13B2C89BB36" \l "_ftn23)  As a child, I could not understand, it seemed impossible and somehow unjust, that giant battleships could be such easy prey to tiny aircraft and torpedoes.  Military dictatorships are likeminded, it seems, and never grow up.

Now Russian dictator Vladimir Putin apparently has taken out of mothballs the design of Russia’s gigantic H-bomb.

#### It’s uniquely more dangerous than any other nuclear weapon ever developed and continued modernization will make it more powerful—they’re testing a 200 MEGATON warhead with it. Russia’s intent is not a surrender, it’s total destruction.

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What makes it different from previous nuclear weapons?

Unlike nuclear missiles, Russia’s Poseidon is a submersible drone that can be deployed from one of Russia’s stealthy nuclear attack submarines. From there, the drone could traverse thousands of miles on its own before coming to rest on the floor of an American port. Once it received the command to detonate, the massive nuclear weapon on board would produce an explosion larger than any ever recorded, resulting in a massive tsunami of irradiated water ushering destruction for hundreds of miles inland. Defending against such a stealthy nuclear attack, it’s important to note, may be beyond America’s current defensive capability — something Moscow made sure to point out in its statements this week.

“Russia will soon deploy an underwater nuclear-powered drone which will make the whole multi-billion dollar system of U.S. missile defense useless,” MK.ru said, according to a BBC translation. “An explosion of the drone’s nuclear warhead will create a wave of between 400-500 meters (1,300-1,600 feet) high, capable of washing away all living things 1,500 kilometers (932 miles) inland.”

How powerful is it?

Perhaps the most interesting part of Russia’s recent statements regarding the weapon are new claims of a 200-megaton yield. Previous rumors had placed the Poseidon at around 100 megatons, which would already be twice as powerful as the largest nuclear weapon ever detonated in history. The new 200-megaton figure, however, makes the weapon four times more powerful than the 50-megaton Tsar Bumba Russia detonated in 1961.

To give you a sense of the magnitude of this weapon, if Russia’s Poseidon truly does house a 200-megaton nuclear weapon, it would produce an explosion roughly 15,000 times more powerful than the bomb the United States dropped on Hiroshima, Japan in [World War II](https://amzn.to/2TobYXx).

While the United States has gradually shifted its nuclear strategy toward the tactical use of [weapons](https://amzn.to/2QZLcSt) to mitigate foreign nuclear arsenals, the Poseidon hearkens back to the concept of “total war,” in which the intent would be to deliver as much destruction and loss of human life as possible to one’s enemy, rather than to simply force surrender. Detonating a 200-megaton nuclear weapon in New York harbor would kill millions, with no distinguishing between combatants and non-combatants. In fact, this weapon would almost certainly kill far more civilians than it would service members if detonated in most major American ports.

“It’s an insane weapon in the sense that it’s probably as indiscriminate and lethal as you can make a nuclear weapon,” Hans Kristensen, the director of the Nuclear Information Project at the Federation of American Scientists, [told Business Insider](https://www.businessinsider.com/russia-shows-off-a-nuclear-doomsday-torpedo-that-the-us-cant-stop-2018-7).

#### And this isn’t a false flag or Russian propaganda, the Pentagon has confirmed its existence.

[Alex Hollings [1-17-2019], Alex Hollings writes on a breadth of subjects with an emphasis on defense technology, foreign policy, and information warfare. He holds a master's degree in communications from Southern New Hampshire University, as well as a bachelor's degree in Corporate and Organizational Communications from Framingham State University, “RUSSIANS TOUT SUBMERSIBLE ‘DOOMSDAY’ NUKE WITH MASSIVE, RECORD YIELD — SHOULD WE BE WORRIED”, SOFREP, [https://sofrep.com/news/russians-tout-submersible-doomsday-nuke-with-massive-record-yield-should-we-be-worried/]//CHS](https://sofrep.com/news/russians-tout-submersible-doomsday-nuke-with-massive-record-yield-should-we-be-worried/%5d//CHS) PK

The Pentagon released its annual [nuclear](https://amzn.to/2R0MNaD) posture review last January, outlining the [nuclear](https://amzn.to/2R0MNaD) capabilities of foreign nations, particularly those that pose a threat to the safety and security of the United States. To the surprise of defense experts everywhere, a long-rumored Russian “doomsday” weapon, the [Ocean Multipurpose System Status-6](https://sofrep.com/98207/pentagon-documents-confirm-russia-developing-nuclear-submersible-doomsday-weapon/), found its way into the document, suggesting that U.S. Intelligence officials had finally confirmed the weapon’s existence.

Prior to that day, Russian leaks had suggested Moscow was developing a massive [nuclear](https://amzn.to/2R0MNaD) weapon with an unusual mode of delivery, but like most information “leaked” to the Russian media for marketing purposes, the weapon was awarded little in the way of legitimate attention. Last January’s revelation that the Status-6, which goes by the name “Kanyon” within the Pentagon and “Poseidon” within the Kremlin, could soon enter service with the Russian military raised more than eyebrows. This new weapon is like nothing ever seen before in a number of ways.

## 1AC LD

### 1AC—Crisis Stability

#### The doomsday drone is here. Russia is serious about getting Poseidon in the ocean ASAP—most recent evidence from a few weeks ago means the aff is try or die.

[David Axe (1-21-2021), Forbes Aerospace and Defense Staff, “Russia Is Building Four Special Submarines To Haul Its Weird Doomsday Drone,” Forbes, [https://www.forbes.com/sites/davidaxe/2021/01/21/russia-is-building-four-special-submarines-to-haul-its-grotesque-doomsday-drone/?sh=298680943703]//SLC](https://www.forbes.com/sites/davidaxe/2021/01/21/russia-is-building-four-special-submarines-to-haul-its-grotesque-doomsday-drone/?sh=298680943703%5d//CHS) PK

Six years after Russia’s Poseidon doomsday torpedo first appeared in a television camera’s fleeting shot of a briefing book for Russian President Vladimir Putin, it’s still not totally clear why the Kremlin thinks the bizarre radiological weapon is a good investment.

But it is clear Moscow is serious about deploying Poseidon, a 79-foot-long, nuclear-powered underwater drone armed with a huge dirty-bomb warhead that could irradiate U.S. coastal cities and naval bases in the late stages of a civilization-ending nuclear war.

Not only is the Kremlin building a new base for storing as many as 30 Poseidons, it’s also outfitting at least four nuclear-powered submarines specifically for carrying the huge doomsday torpedoes.

Because Poseidon consumes so much of a launching vessel’s internal space, these four subs won’t necessarily be terribly useful in other roles. Poseidon is “grotesque,” to quote Kingston Reif, a nuclear expert with the Arms Control Association in Washington, D.C. But it’s also a big deal to the Russian submarine fleet.

Outside observers got their first glimpse of Poseidon in November 2015, during a television broadcast of a meeting between Putin and top military officials in the Black Sea city of Sochi.

A camera from government-owned Channel One captured a fleeting glance at a briefing book, in which were visible schematics for Poseidon and two different classes of carrier submarines—the Project 09852 Belgorod and the Project 09851 Khabarovsk.

Belgorod is the older of the pair. A modified, stretched variant of the Oscar-II-class cruise-missile submarine, the 604-foot-long Belgorod is one of the biggest submarines ever. She spent a staggering 28 years under construction and in trials before finally commissioning in 2020.

The Russian fleet reportedly has configured Belgorod for two main missions. She has fitting on her ventral hull for latching onto the Project 210 Losharik, an approximately 200-foot-long, deep-diving, nuclear-powered spy submarine.

Losharik is most famous for suffering a fatal fire in 2019. The Kremlin reportedly planned to repair the vessel and return her to service.

Belgorod’s other mission is to carry as many as six Poseidons in bow tubes. The idea would be for Belgorod to fire the Poseidons from the relative safety of Russian coastal waters after an exchange of nuclear missiles has devastated both Russia and the United States. The Poseidons would cruise across the ocean and, days later, explode along the American coast.

The three Khabarovsks—two under construction and one planned—reportedly also carry six Poseidons. It’s unclear whether the approximately 390-foot boats, which are shorter variants of the Borei-class ballistic-missile submarine—also possess the ventral bay for hooking onto a mini-sub such as Losharik.

The Russian submarine fleet slowly has been shrinking as fewer new vessels replace more numerous Cold War-vintage boats. In coming decades Moscow’s undersea fleet might stabilize at a sustainable structure of around a dozen each vessels of three major types—diesel-electric attack boats, nuclear-powered attack boats and nuclear-powered ballistic-missile boats.

That Moscow is willing to spend billions of dollars building four Poseidon-carriers—together representing more than a tenth of the overall future undersea fleet—is testimony to the importance Putin’s regime places on the doomsday torpedo.

Reif tried to make sense of it. He said he thinks Poseidon is a response to America’s own heavy investment in missile-defense systems that, in theory, could intercept nuclear-tipped ballistic missiles.

Missile-defenses don’t work very well in practice, but Moscow apparently isn’t taking any chances. Putin’s regime could view Poseidon and its launching subs as an underwater insurance policy against America getting lucky and shooting down ballistic nukes. “Their investment in these systems suggests a real concern about said defenses,” Reif said.

#### First is paradigm shifts—Poseidon creates aggressive posturing that sidesteps current treaties leading to escalation.

[Joshua M.M. Portzer (July 2020), Lieutenant Commander in the US Navy, “Kanyon’s Reach: Rethinking the Nuclear Triad in the Autonomous Age,” United States Naval Institute, Vol. 146/7/1409, [https://www.usni.org/magazines/proceedings/2020/july/kanyons-reach-rethinking-nuclear-triad-autonomous-age]//SLC](https://www.usni.org/magazines/proceedings/2020/july/kanyons-reach-rethinking-nuclear-triad-autonomous-age%5d//CHS) PK \*\*brackets for ableist language\*\*

Throughout history, weapon system advances have created paradigm shifts for militaries. Occasionally these shifts are tectonic, unlocking new domains for warfare. The aircraft carrier took air warfare across oceans. The satellite brought electronic warfare to space. The next harbinger of strategic warfare’s future: autonomous unmanned undersea vehicles (UUVs).

Russia has developed a submarine-deployed autonomous UUV (AUUV) that can travel thousands of miles and detonate a nuclear payload of several megatons in a foreign harbor—a capability that will be operational by the late 2020s.1 A strategic nuclear weapon that is deployed and detonated undersea is a true paradigm shift: Never before has a country’s nuclear kill chain remained exclusively undersea. Kanyon

The “Kanyon” weapon system—also referred to as Status-6 or Poseidon—first emerged in footage on Russian television in 2015. It is a nuclear-powered (N)-AUUV that can travel thousands of nautical miles (nm) at approximately 100 knots and can operate at a depth of 1,000 meters. While it may carry a conventional weapons payload, its nuclear warhead is approximately two megatons.2 Russia designed it as a strategic weapon to take out ports and coastal cities. It may deploy on up to four submarines (modified Oscar II class) in both the Northern and Pacific Fleets, with each submarine carrying up to eight Kanyon weapons.3

Unlike any other nuclear weapon, Kanyon detonates underwater and is nuclear powered.4 Washington references it in its Nuclear Posture Review 2018 (NPR) as a “new intercontinental, nuclear-armed, nuclear-powered, undersea autonomous torpedo.”5 Russian President Vladimir Putin included Kanyon in his 2018 national address, along with three other advanced nuclear weapon vehicles.6 Russia began undersea trials for Kanyon in December 2018.

The ramifications of Kanyon cannot be overstated. Consider the realm of nuclear treaties and deterrence. Kanyon could deploy by 2027. This is past New START’s expiration, even if it were extended to 2026. As Kanyon is an N-AUUV, it does not fit New START’s current weapons definitions, much like another new weapon, Kinzhal (an air-to-surface nuclear missile). Thus, it would not be subject to the treaty’s restrictions in current form.7 Furthermore, Kanyon is impervious to ballistic-missile defense because it travels by and detonates in the ocean. There is no option to detect a Russian launch of this weapon and then execute a counterlaunch. The United States would not know of the threat until it had detonated.

The U.S. Navy should find this weapon horrifying. Naval Station Norfolk is the world’s largest naval base and houses approximately 75 ships and 130 aircraft. A single Kanyon detonation at Norfolk could wipe out half of the United States’ aircraft carriers and roughly a third of the surface Navy without warning. A coordinated attack against both Norfolk and San Diego ports would catastrophically destroy [cripple] the Navy.

#### Second is second-strike credibility—Poseidon shreds it which leads to first strikes and arms racing. Russia is not a reasonable actor which turns their deterrence arguments.

[Joshua M.M. Portzer (July 2020), Lieutenant Commander in the US Navy, “Kanyon’s Reach: Rethinking the Nuclear Triad in the Autonomous Age,” United States Naval Institute, Vol. 146/7/1409, [https://www.usni.org/magazines/proceedings/2020/july/kanyons-reach-rethinking-nuclear-triad-autonomous-age]//SLC](https://www.usni.org/magazines/proceedings/2020/july/kanyons-reach-rethinking-nuclear-triad-autonomous-age%5d//CHS) PK

Kanyon calls these points into question. Consider an underwater nuclear attack against Naval Station Norfolk. Is a U.S. threat of a second strike credible? What if Russia denies the attack? Would Washington pull the trigger in the face of public Russian denial? And what of primacy? An attack on Norfolk would not destroy the U.S. nuclear arsenal; the United States could still volley a second strike. However, Kanyon is essentially undetectable. In terms of capabilities, then, the United States no longer holds primacy in nuclear weapons (or even parity). The U.S. nuclear triad still relies on the air domain for terminal delivery, and all U.S. delivery vehicles are detectable by Russian military technology. Last, Kanyon and its sister superweapons are evidence that while Russia may act rationally, it is not acting reasonably.11

Deterrence depends in part on rational actors, but it also assumes actors will act reasonably, insofar as they value international norms. But rationality and reasonability often are confused.12 Russia’s actions suggest that it is not acting reasonably. Weapons such as Kanyon show “Russia’s clear motivation to develop new offensive weapons to negate any perceived deterrent advantage sought by the United States.”13 Consider further that Russia wields 11 types of tactical nuclear weapons compared with the United States’ one, including at least one weapon that violated the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty.14 The Russians have conducted multiple nuclear attack exercises against countries such as Sweden.15 While scholars might claim these are symptoms of Russia’s anxiety caused by perceived disadvantages in relation to conventional Western forces, it adds to the argument that Russia is not interested in a gentleman’s game of international norms. If satisfaction is demanded on the world’s stage, Moscow is here to win big. Options for Deterrence

#### Third is artificial intelligence—it gets hacked, miscalculates, and causes a nuclear holocaust.

[Yonah Jeremy Bob (12-25-2019), Yonah Jeremy Bob is the Jerusalem Post's intelligence, terrorism and legal analyst and Literary Editor, “Scientists warn AI control of nukes could lead to ‘Terminator-style’ war,” The Jerusalem Post, [https://www.jpost.com/international/nuke-scientists-warn-ai-control-could-lead-to-terminator-style-nuke-war-612123]//SLC](https://www.jpost.com/international/nuke-scientists-warn-ai-control-could-lead-to-terminator-style-nuke-war-612123%5d//CHS) PK

The world may be inching closer to an era where a Terminator-style apocalyptic nuclear war could be possible due to yielding control over nuclear weapons to artificial intelligence (AI), according to publications by nuclear scientists and defense experts.

While numerous AI experts have told the Jerusalem Post over the years that people worried about AI turning on humanity as in the famous “Terminator” movies simply misunderstand the technology, the likelihood of AI making a catastrophic mistake with nuclear weapons is no fairytale.

A recent article in the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, a top group of nuclear scientists, as well as other recent publications by defense experts have said that Russia may already be integrating AI into a new nuclear torpedo it is developing known as the Poseidon, to make it autonomous.

According to the Atomic Scientists report, the US and China are also considering injecting AI deeper into their nuclear weapons’ programs as they modernize and overhaul their nuclear inventory.

There have been no express reports about Israel integrating AI into, what according to foreign reports, is an apparatus of between 80-200 nuclear weapons. But there have been reports of the IDF integrating AI into conventional weapons, such as its spice bomb carried by F-16s.

Part of the concern in the report was that integrating AI into nuclear weapons’ systems could become culturally inevitable once non-conventional weapons become more dominated by AI.

The nuclear holocaust risks that scientists and experts are writing about are not a hostile takeover by AI, but by AI getting hacked, slipping out of control by a technical error or badly misjudging a situation.

Such risks could be magnified by unmanned vehicles carrying nuclear weapons where there is no one on board and responsible for making the final decision to deploy a nuclear weapon.

As a secondary but still serious risk, AI integration into early warning systems could overwhelm human decision-makers who could be faster on the nuclear trigger finger to yield to the technology despite any human judgment doubts they might have.

Some studies have shown that AI and automated evidence in general can reinforce bubble-style thinking and make it more difficult for analysts to entertain alternate narratives about what might be occurring in murky and hi-stress situations.

An example that the article gives of human judgment’s importance was a 1983 incident when a Soviet officer named Stanislav Petrov disregarded automated audible and visual warnings that US nuclear missiles were inbound.

The systems were wrong and had Petrov trusted technology over his own instincts, the world might have gone to nuclear war over a technological malfunction.

#### Fourth is perception gaps—the Poseidon bloats Putin’s ego which destabilizes the globe—it’s impossible to defend against.

[Mark Episkopos (11-7-2019), Mark Episkopos is a national security reporter for the national interest, “Russia Is Preparing To Deploy Its Nuclear Doomsday Drones On Submarines,” The National Interest, [https://nationalinterest.org/blog/buzz/russia-preparing-deploy-its-nuclear-doomsday-drones-submarines-94151]//SLC](https://nationalinterest.org/blog/buzz/russia-preparing-deploy-its-nuclear-doomsday-drones-submarines-94151%5d//CHS) PK

The Russian Navy is on track to deploy up to 32 of its “Poseidon” thermonuclear drones across four submarines, according to Russian state media.

Citing a military insider source, [TASS](http://tass.com/defense/1039603) reported earlier this week that "Two Poseidon-carrying submarines are expected to enter service with the Northern Fleet and the other two will join the Pacific Fleet. Each of the submarines will carry a maximum of eight drones and, therefore, the total number of Poseidons on combat duty may reach 32 vehicles."

Poseidon is an underwater drone weapon, armed with a 2-megaton nuclear or conventional payload that can be detonated “thousands of feet” below the surface. This is meant to generate a radioactive tsunami capable of [destroying](http://russian7.ru/post/atomnyy-podvodnyy-bespilotnik-posey/) coastal cities and other infrastructure several kilometers inland.

Poseidon can remain submerged at up to one kilometer, [travels](https://rg.ru/2019/01/12/smi-rossiia-vooruzhit-submariny-32-apparatami-sudnogo-dnia-posejdon.html) at a maximum speed of 200 kilometers per hour, and is programmed to execute three-dimensional evasive maneuvers in response to interception attempts.

When unveiling Poseidon at his March 1st weapons address, Russian President [Vladimir Putin](https://www.rt.com/op-ed/434759-drone-nuclear-poseidon-submarine/) was especially keen to stress the drone’s maneuverability: “We have developed unmanned submersible vehicles that can move at great depths – I would say extreme depths – intercontinentally, at a speed multiple times higher than the speed of submarines, cutting-edge torpedoes and all kinds of surface vessels.”

While the full range of Poseidon-compatible submarines has not yet been revealed, the TASS report confirmed that one of Poseidon’s first fittings will be the Project 09851 Khabarovsk submarine. Oscar II-class submarines will also fit Poseidon "after their appropriate upgrade," though it isn’t clear how many Oscar-II vessels will be repurposed to this end. TASS asserts that the each of these submarines will be able to carry and deploy up to 8 Poseidon drones.

Poseidon’s precise mega-tonnage has varied wildly over the years, with [reports](https://www.businessinsider.com/russia-doomsday-weapon-submarine-nuke-2018-4) ranging from 100 to 2, but even several megatons would be enough to destroy major coastal cities if Poseidon works as described.

The more serious charge against Poseidon is that it doesn’t add anything to the Russian arsenal that traditional ICBMs and [hypersonic gliders](https://nationalinterest.org/blog/buzz/why-america-should-fear-russias-new-avangard-hypersonic-weapon-we-dont-have-any-defense) like Avangard don’t already offer. It is true, after all, that the latter boast a larger blast radius and reach the United States in less than an hour even as Poseidon takes several days at best.

However, there are strategic benefits to a weapon like Poseidon that may not be readily apparent. First and foremost, Poseidon enhances Russia’s nuclear threat by diversifying its first-strike capability. That is, the Russian military believes that it [travels](https://rg.ru/2018/12/25/rossiia-nachala-podvodnye-ispytaniia-bespilotnika-posejdon.html) too fast and too deep underwater to be intercepted by torpedoes or otherwise countered. To the Kremlin, Poseidon is yet another way to circumvent America’s [formidable](https://www.defensenews.com/pentagon/2019/01/11/what-to-look-for-in-the-upcoming-missile-defense-review/) strategic missile defense network.

But even if countermeasures can reliably prevent Poseidon from destroying coastal cities, it still possesses a large destabilizing potential. For example: detonating Poseidon off America’s coast will at the very least inflict mass political panic and military confusion, which can be used as cover for a different offensive operation.

Secondly, Russian [media](https://www.rt.com/op-ed/434759-drone-nuclear-poseidon-submarine/) have floated the possibility of Poseidon being deployed against aircraft carriers and other surface vessels; to this end, it can be armed with a conventional payload. Depending on Poseidon’s production costs and price-to-performance numbers, this can prove to be a more cost-effective way to neutralize carriers than swarms of conventional air and surface-launched missiles. Finally, the unconventional threat posed by Poseidon may be a source of Russian leverage in ongoing arms reduction talks with the US.

#### Fifth is miscalculation—the US perception of LAWs and their ‘de-escalation’ policy uniquely increases risks.

**Insinna ‘18** (Valerie Insinna, Valerie Insinna is Defense News' air warfare reporter. She previously worked the Navy/congressional beats for Defense Daily, which followed almost three years as a staff writer for National Defense Magazine. Prior to that, she worked as an editorial assistant for the Tokyo Shimbun’s Washington bureau. 1-12-2018, accessed on 12-7-2020, Defense News, "Russia’s nuclear underwater drone is real and in the Nuclear Posture Review", <https://www.defensenews.com/space/2018/01/12/russias-nuclear-underwater-drone-is-real-and-in-the-nuclear-posture-review/>) //recut SLC PK

On Nov. 27, 2016, U.S. intelligence detected Status-6 after it was launched from a Sarov-class submarine used to test and validate new tech, the [Washington Free Beacon reported](http://freebeacon.com/national-security/russia-tests-nuclear-capable-drone-sub/) in December 2016, citing unnamed Pentagon sources. Russian reports indicate it could be outfitted with a 100-megaton nuclear warhead. Status-6 was built by Rubin Design Bureau, the largest of Russia’s three submarine manufacturers. According to a document shown on Russian television, the drone has a range of 6,200 miles, a top speed in excess of 56 knots and can descend to depths of 3,280 feet below sea level, the Beacon reported. It was designed to be launched from at least two different classes of nuclear submarines, including the Oscar-class, which can carry four Status-6 drones at a time. The nuclear posture review reaffirms the United States’ commitment to the nuclear triad — or the country’s inventory of ballistic missile submarines, ICBMs and nuclear-capable bombers — but offers no sign that the Pentagon is interested in developing unmanned undersea vehicles capable of delivering a nuclear weapon. However, it has been widely speculated that the Air Force’s newest bomber, the B-21 currently under development, could be optionally manned. While the final draft of the Nuclear Posture Review could remove references to the Status-6 program, it appears the Pentagon confirmed the existence of the weapon as a way to illustrate what it sees as major advantage of the Russian nuclear weapons program: its diversity. The review notes that Russia is increasing the number of platforms that could be equipped either with a nuclear or conventional payload, allowing it to expand its nuclear arsenal without violating the New START treaty. It is also developing a ground-launched cruise missile and has multiple classes of nuclear submarines and varieties of ICBMs and air-launched cruise missiles. The United States is concerned about Russia’s continued development of “increasingly diverse and expanding nuclear capabilities,” especially coupled with Moscow’s perception that it could conduct a nuclear attack as a way to “ ’de-escalate’ a conflict on terms favorable to Russia,” the review stated. “These mistaken perceptions increase the prospect for dangerous miscalculation and escalation.”

#### A single use causes extinction.

Lockie 19 [Alex, Senior Front Page Editor at Business Insider. “The real purpose of Russia’s 100-megaton underwater nuclear doomsday device.” Business Insider. February 11, 2019. https://www.businessinsider.my/the-real-purpose-of-russias-poseidon-nuclear-doomsday-device-2019-2/?fbclid=IwAR2\_pCU5-NG5lbhBdriP9OhMAj4zYPWEB8OPJ6rHHhHRi9HMjXl2ZBFdBkw]

Russia is said to have built a new 100-megaton underwater nuclear doomsday device, and it has threatened the US with it. The device goes beyond traditional ideas of nuclear warfighting and poses a direct threat to the future of humanity or life on Earth. Nobody has ever built a weapon like this before, because there’s almost no military utility in so badly destroying the world. But an expert on nuclear strategy told Business Insider the weapon might have a larger role in helping Russian President Vladimir Putin break down NATO with the threat of nuclear destruction. Since 2015, when images of a Russian nuclear torpedo first leaked on state television, the world has asked itself why Moscow would build a weapon that could end all life on Earth. While all nuclear weapons can kill thousands in the blink of an eye and leave radiation poisoning the environment for years to come, Russia’s new doomsday device, called “Poseidon,” takes steps to maximize this effect. If the US fired one of its Minutemen III nuclear weapons at a target, it would detonate in the air above the target and rely on the blast’s incredible downward pressure to crush it. The fireball from the nuke may not even touch the ground, and the only radiation would come from the bomb itself and any dust particles swept up in the explosion, Stephen Schwartz, the author of “Atomic Audit,” previously told Business Insider. But Russia’s Poseidon is said to use a warhead many times as strong, perhaps even as strong as the largest bomb ever detonated. Additionally, it’s designed to come into direct contact with water, marine animals, and the ocean floor, kicking up a radioactive tsunami that could spread deadly radiation over hundreds of thousands of miles of land and sea and render it uninhabitable for decades. In short, while most nuclear weapons can end a city, Russia’s Poseidon could end a continent. Read more: Why Putin’s new ‘doomsday’ device is so much more deadly and horrific than a regular nuke Even in the mania at the height of the Cold War, nobody took seriously the idea of building such a world-ender, Malcolm Davis, a senior analyst at the Australian Strategic Policy Institute, told Business Insider. So why build one now?

#### Russia war escalates to extinction – regional nuclear wars don’t

Cotton-Barratt 17 [Owen Cotton-Barratt, et al, PhD in Pure Mathematics, Oxford, Lecturer in Mathematics at Oxford, Research Associate at the Future of Humanity Institute, 2/3/2017, Existential Risk: Diplomacy and Governance, https://www.fhi.ox.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/Existential-Risks-2017-01-23.pdf]

The bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki demonstrated the unprecedented destructive power of nuclear weapons. However, even in an all-out nuclear war between the United States and Russia, despite horrific casualties, neither country’s population is likely to be completely destroyed by the direct effects of the blast, fire, and radiation.8 The aftermath could be much worse: the burning of flammable materials could send massive amounts of smoke into the atmosphere, which would absorb sunlight and cause sustained global cooling, severe ozone loss, and agricultural disruption – a nuclear winter.

According to one model 9 , an all-out exchange of 4,000 weapons10 could lead to a drop in global temperatures of around 8°C, making it impossible to grow food for 4 to 5 years. This could leave some survivors in parts of Australia and New Zealand, but they would be in a very precarious situation and the threat of extinction from other sources would be great. An exchange on this scale is only possible between the US and Russia who have more than 90% of the world’s nuclear weapons, with stockpiles of around 4,500 warheads each, although many are not operationally deployed.11 Some models suggest that even a small regional nuclear war involving 100 nuclear weapons would produce a nuclear winter serious enough to put two billion people at risk of starvation,12 though this estimate might be pessimistic.13 Wars on this scale are unlikely to lead to outright human extinction, but this does suggest that conflicts which are around an order of magnitude larger may be likely to threaten civilisation. It should be emphasised that there is very large uncertainty about the effects of a large nuclear war on global climate. This remains an area where increased academic research work, including more detailed climate modelling and a better understanding of how survivors might be able to cope and adapt, would have high returns.

It is very difficult to precisely estimate the probability of existential risk from nuclear war over the next century, and existing attempts leave very large confidence intervals. According to many experts, the most likely nuclear war at present is between India and Pakistan.14 However, given the relatively modest size of their arsenals, the risk of human extinction is plausibly greater from a conflict between the United States and Russia. Tensions between these countries have increased in recent years and it seems unreasonable to rule out the possibility of them rising further in the future.

### 1AC—NATO

#### Putin seeks the collapse of the American led international order—he’s identified NATO as the key target to attack.

Kagan, 19 - American resident scholar at the American Enterprise Institute, and a former professor of military history at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, less famous brother of our favorite neighborhood neocon Robert Kagan

Frederick W. Kagan, “CONFRONTING THE RUSSIAN CHALLENGE: A NEW APPROACH FOR THE U.S.,” Institute for the Study of War. June 2019. <https://www.politico.com/f/?id=0000016b-6eef-dc80-a3ff-ffff778c0000>

The Russian threat’s effectiveness results mainly from the West’s weaknesses. NATO’s European members are not meeting their full commitments to the alliance to maintain the fighting power needed to deter and defeat the emerging challenge from Moscow. Increasing political polarization and the erosion of trust by Western peoples in their governments creates vulnerabilities that the Kremlin has adroitly exploited.

Moscow’s success in manipulating Western perceptions of and reactions to its activities has fueled the development of an approach to warfare that the West finds difficult to understand, let alone counter. Shaping the information space is the primary effort to which Russian military operations, even conventional military operations, are frequently subordinated in this way of war. Russia obfuscates its activities and confuses the discussion so that many people throw up their hands and say simply, “Who knows if the Russians really did that? Who knows if it was legal?”—thus paralyzing the West’s responses.

Putin’s Program

Putin is not simply an opportunistic predator. Putin and the major institutions of the Russian Federation have a program as coherent as that of any Western leader. Putin enunciates his objectives in major speeches, and his ministers generate detailed formal expositions of Russia’s military and diplomatic aims and its efforts and the methods and resources it uses to pursue them. These statements cohere with the actions of Russian officials and military units on the ground. The common perception that he is opportunistic arises from the way that the Kremlin sets conditions to achieve these objectives in advance. Putin closely monitors the domestic and international situation and decides to execute plans when and if conditions require and favor the Kremlin. The aims of Russian policy can be distilled into the following:

Domestic Objectives Putin is an autocrat who seeks to retain control of his state and the succession. He seeks to keep his power circle content, maintain his own popularity, suppress domestic political opposition in the name of blocking a “color revolution” he falsely accuses the West of preparing, and expand the Russian economy.

Putin has not fixed the economy, which remains corrupt, inefficient, and dependent on petrochemical and mineral exports. He has focused instead on ending the international sanctions regime to obtain the cash, expertise, and technology he needs. Information operations and hybrid warfare undertakings in Europe are heavily aimed at this objective.

External Objectives

Putin’s foreign policy aims are clear: end American dominance and the “unipolar” world order, restore “multipolarity,” and reestablish Russia as a global power and broker. He identifies NATO as an adversary and a threat and seeks to negate it. He aims to break Western unity, establish Russian suzerainty over the former Soviet States, and regain a global footprint.

Putin works to break Western unity by invalidating the collective defense provision of the North Atlantic Treaty (Article 5), weakening the European Union, and destroying the faith of Western societies in their governments.

He is reestablishing a global military footprint similar in extent the Soviet Union’s, but with different aims. He is neither advancing an ideology, nor establishing bases from which to project conventional military power on a large scale. He aims rather to constrain and shape America’s actions using small numbers of troops and agents along with advanced anti-air and anti-shipping systems.

Recommendations A sound U.S. grand strategic approach to Russia: • Aims to achieve core American national security objectives positively rather than to react defensively to Russian actions; • Holistically addresses all U.S. interests globally as they relate to Russia rather than considering them theater-by-theater; • Does not trade core American national security interests in one theater for those in another, or sacrifice one vital interest for another; • Achieves American objectives by means short of war if at all possible; • Deters nuclear war, the use of any nuclear weapons, and other Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD); • Accepts the risk of conventional conflict with Russia while seeking to avoid it and to control escalation, while also ensuring that American forces will prevail at any escalation level; • Contests Russian information operations and hybrid warfare undertakings; and • Extends American protection and deterrence to U.S. allies in NATO and outside of NATO. Such an approach involves four principal lines of effort. Constrain Putin’s Resources. Russia uses hybrid warfare approaches because of its relative poverty and inability to field large and modern military systems that could challenge the U.S. and NATO symmetrically. Lifting or reducing the current sanctions regime or otherwise facilitating Russia’s access to wealth and technology could give Putin the resources he needs to mount a much more significant conventional threat—an aim he had been pursuing in the early 2000s when high oil prices and no sanctions made it seem possible. Disrupt Hybrid Operations. Identifying, exposing, and disrupting hybrid operations is a feasible, if difficult, undertaking. New structures in the U.S. military, State Department, and possibly National Security Council Staff are likely needed to: 1. Coordinate efforts to identify and understand hybrid operations in preparation and underway; 2. Develop recommendations for action against hybrid operations that the U.S. government has identified but are not yet publicly known; 3. Respond to the unexpected third-party exposure of hybrid operations whether the U.S. government knew about the operations or not; 4. Identify in advance the specific campaign and strategic objectives that should be pursued when the U.S. government deliberately exposes a particular hybrid operation or when third parties expose hybrid operations of a certain type in a certain area; 5. Shape the U.S. government response, particularly in the information space, to drive the blowback effects of the exposure of a particular hybrid operation toward achieving those identified objectives; and 6. Learn lessons from past and current counter-hybrid operations undertakings, improve techniques, and prepare for future evolutions of Russian approaches in coordination with allies and partners. The U.S. should also develop a counter-information operations approach that uses only truth against Russian narratives aimed at sowing discord within the West and at undermining the legitimacy of Western governments.

Delegitimize Putin as a Mediator and Convener.

Recognition as one of the poles of a multipolar world order is vital to Putin. It is part of the greatness he promises the Russian people in return for taking their liberty. Getting a “seat at the table” of Western-led endeavors is insufficient for him because he seeks to transform the international system fundamentally. He finds the very language of being offered a seat at the West’s table patronizing.

He has gained much more legitimacy as an international partner in Syria and Ukraine than his behavior warrants. He benefits from the continuous desire of Western leaders to believe that Moscow will help them out of their own problems if only it is approached in the right way.

The U.S. and its allies must instead recognize that Putin is a self-declared adversary who seeks to weaken, divide, and harm them—never to strengthen or help them. He has made clear in word and deed that his interests are antithetical to the West’s. The West should therefore stop treating him as a potential partner, but instead require him to demonstrate that he can and will act to advance rather than damage the West’s interests before engaging with him at high levels.

The West must not trade interests in one region for Putin’s help in another, even if there is reason to believe that he would actually be helpful. Those working on American policy in Syria and the Levant must recognize that the U.S. cannot afford to subordinate its global Russia policy to pursue limited interests, however important, within the Middle East. Recognizing Putin as a mediator or convener in Syria—to constrain Iran’s activities in the south of that country, for example—is too high a price tag to pay for undermining a coherent global approach to the Russian threat. Granting him credibility in that role there enhances his credibility in his self-proclaimed role as a mediator rather than belligerent in Ukraine. The tradeoff of interests is unacceptable.

Nor should the U.S. engage with Putin about Ukraine until he has committed publicly in word and deed to what should be the minimum non-negotiable Western demand—the recognition of the full sovereignty of all the former Soviet states, specifically including Ukraine, in their borders as of the dates of their admission as independent countries to the United Nations, and the formal renunciation (including the repealing of relevant Russian legislation) of any right to interfere in the internal affairs of those states

Defend NATO. The increased Russian threat requires increased efforts to defend NATO against both conventional and hybrid threats. All NATO members must meet their commitments to defense spending targets—and should be prepared to go beyond those commitments to field the forces necessary to defend themselves and other alliance members. The Russian base in Syria poses a threat to Western operations in the Middle East that are essential to protecting our own citizens and security against terrorist threats and Iran. Neither the U.S. nor NATO is postured to protect the Mediterranean or fight for access to the Middle East through the eastern Mediterranean. NATO must now prepare to field and deploy additional forces to ensure that it can win that fight. The West should also remove as much ambiguity as possible from the NATO commitment to defend member states threatened by hybrid warfare. The 2018 Brussels Declaration affirming the alliance’s intention to defend member states attacked by hybrid warfare was a good start. The U.S. and other NATO states with stronger militaries should go further by declaring that they will come to the aid of a member state attacked by conventional or hybrid means regardless of whether Article 5 is formally activated, creating a pre-emptive coalition of the willing to deter Russian aggression. Bilateral Negotiations. Recognizing that Russia is a self-defined adversary and threat does not preclude direct negotiations. The U.S. negotiated several arms control treaties with the Soviet Union and has negotiated with other self-defined enemies as well. It should retain open channels of communication and a willingness to work together with Russia on bilateral areas in which real and verifiable agreement is possible, even while refusing to grant legitimacy to Russian intervention in conflicts beyond its borders. Such areas could include strategic nuclear weapons, cyber operations, interference in elections, the Intermediate Nuclear Forces treaty, and other matters related to direct Russo-American tensions and concerns. There is little likelihood of any negotiation yielding fruit at this point, but there is no need to refuse to talk with Russia on these and similar issues in hopes of laying the groundwork for more successful discussions in the future. INTRODUCTION The Russian challenge is a paradox. Russia’s nuclear arsenal poses the only truly existential threat to the United States and its allies, but Russia’s conventional military forces have never recovered anything like the power of the Soviet military. Those forces pose a limited and uneven threat to America’s European allies and to U.S. armed forces, partially because many U.S. allies are not meeting their NATO defense spending commitments. Russia is willing and able to act more rapidly and accept greater risk than Western countries because of its autocratic nature. Its cyber capabilities are among the best in the world, and it is developing an information-based way of war that the West has not collectively properly understood, let alone begun developing a response to. That information-based warfare has included attempts to affect and disrupt elections in the U.S. and allied states. The complexity and paradoxical nature of the Russian threat is perhaps its greatest strength. It is one of the key reasons for the failure of successive American administrations and U.S. partners around the world to develop a coherent strategy for securing themselves and their people and advancing their interests in the face of Russian efforts against them. The West’s lack of continuous focus on the Russian challenge has created major gaps in our collective understanding of the problem—another key reason for our failure to develop a sound counter-strategy. American concerns about Russia are bifurcated, moreover. Many Americans see the Russian threat primarily as a domestic problem: Moscow’s interference in the 2016 presidential election, attempts to interfere in the 2018 midterm election, and efforts to shape the 2020 elections. The U.S. national security establishment acknowledges the domestic problem but is generally more concerned with the military challenges a seemingly reviving Russia poses to U.S. NATO allies and other partners in the Euro-Atlantic region; with Russia’s activities in places like Syria and Venezuela; and with Russia’s outreach to rogue states such as North Korea and Iran. Even that overseas security concern, however, is pervaded by complexity and some confusion. The recommendations of the current U.S. National Security Strategy (NSS) and National Defense Strategy (NDS) are dominated by responses to much-trumpeted Russian investments in the modernization of conventional and nuclear forces. At the same time, those documents acknowledge the importance of Russian capabilities at the lower end of the military spectrum and in the non-military realms of information, cyber, space, information, and economic efforts. Americans thus generally agree that Russia is a threat to which the U.S. must respond in some way, but the varying definitions of that threat hinder discussion of the appropriate response. Russia has entangled itself sufficiently in American partisan politics that conversation about the national security threat it poses is increasingly polarized. We must find a way to transcend this polarization to develop a strategy to secure the U.S. and its allies and advance U.S. interests, despite Russian efforts to undermine America’s domestic politics. AMERICAN INTERESTS—WHAT IS AT STAKE The Ideals of the American Republic The stakes in the Russo-American conflict are high. Russian leader Vladimir Putin seeks to undermine confidence in democratically elected institutions and the institution of democracy itself in the United States and the West.1 He is trying to interfere with the ability of American and European peoples to choose their leaders freely2 and is undermining the rules-based international order on which American prosperity and security rest. His actions in Ukraine and Syria have driven the world toward greater violence and disorder. The normalization of Putin’s illegal actions over time will likely prompt other states to emulate his behavior and cause further deterioration of the international system. Moscow’s war on the very idea of truth has been perhaps the most damaging Russian undertaking in recent years. The most basic element of the Russian information strategy, which we will consider in more detail presently, is the creation of a sense of uncertainty around any important issue. Russia’s strategy does not require persuading Western audiences that its actions in Ukraine’s Crimean Peninsula or the Kerch Strait, which connects the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov, for example, were legal or justified.3 It is enough to create an environment in which many people say simply, “who knows?” The “who knows?” principle feeds powerfully into the phenomena of viral “fake news,” as well as other falsehoods and accusations of falsehoods which, if left unchecked, will ultimately make civil discourse impossible. The Kremlin’s propaganda does not necessarily need its target audiences to believe in lies; its primary goal is to make sure they do not believe in the truth. This aspect of Putin’s approach is one of the greatest obstacles to forming an accurate assessment and making recommendations. It is also one of the most insidious threats the current Russian strategy poses to the survival of the American republic. The good news is that the war on the idea of truth does not involve military operations or violence, though it can lead to both. The bad news is that it is extraordinarily difficult to identify, let alone to counter. Yet we must counter it if we are to survive as a functioning polity. American Prosperity The debate about the trade deficit and tariffs only underscores the scale and importance of the role Europe plays in the American economy. Europe is the largest single market for American exports and the second-largest source of American imports, with trade totaling nearly $1.1 trillion.4 American exports to Europe are estimated to support 2.6 million jobs in the U.S.5 Significant damage to the European economy, let alone the collapse of major European states or Europe itself, would devastate the U.S. economy as well. American prosperity is tightly interwoven with Europe’s. American prosperity also depends on Europe remaining largely democratic, with market-based economies, and subscribing to the idea of a rulesbased international order. The re-emergence of authoritarian regimes in major European states, which would most likely be fueled by a resurgence of extremist nationalism, would lead to the collapse of the entire European system, including its economic foundations. European economic cooperation rests on European peace, which in turn rests on the continued submergence of extremist nationalism and adherence to a common set of values. Russian actions against Western democracies and support for extremist groups, often with nationalist agendas, reinforce negative trends emerging within Europe itself. These actions therefore constitute a threat to American prosperity and security over the long term. The American economy also depends on the free flow of goods across the world’s oceans and through critical maritime chokepoints. Russia posed no threat to those chokepoints after the Soviet Union fell, but that situation is changing. The establishment of what appears to be a permanent Russian air, land, and naval base on the Syrian coast gives Russia a foothold in the Mediterranean for the first time since 1991. Russian efforts to negotiate bases in Egypt and Libya and around the Horn of Africa would allow Moscow to threaten maritime and air traffic through the Suez Canal and the Red Sea.6 Since roughly 3.9 million barrels of oil per day transited the Suez in 2016, to say nothing of the food and other cargo moving through the canal, Russian interference would have significant impacts on the global economy—and therefore on America’s economy.7 Russia’s efforts to establish control over the maritime routes opening in the Arctic also threaten the free movement of goods through an emerging set of maritime chokepoints.8 Those efforts are even more relevant to the U.S. because the Arctic routes ultimately pass through the Bering Strait, the one (maritime) border America shares with Russia. Russian actions can hinder or prevent the U.S. and its allies from benefiting from the opening of the Arctic. Russia is already bringing China into the Arctic region through energy investment projects and negotiations about the use of the Northern Sea Route, despite the fact that China is a state with no Arctic territory or claims.9 NATO The collective defense provision of the NATO treaty (known as Article 5) has been invoked only once in the 70-year history of the alliance: on September 12, 2001, on behalf of the United States. NATO military forces provided limited but important assistance to the U.S. in the immediate wake of the 9/11 attacks, including air surveillance patrols over the United States, and have continued supporting the U.S. in the long wars that followed. NATO established military missions in both Iraq and Afghanistan in the next two decades, deploying tens of thousands of soldiers to fight and to train America’s Iraqi and Afghan partners. American allies, primarily NATO members, have suffered more than 1,100 deaths in the Afghan war, slightly under half the number of U.S. deaths.10 The non-U.S. NATO member states collectively spent roughly $313 billion on defense in 2018—about half the American defense budget.11 The failure of most NATO members to meet their commitment to spend 2 percent of their GDP on defense is lamentable and must be addressed. But the fact remains that the alliance and its members have spent large amounts of blood and treasure fighting alongside American forces against the enemies that attacked the U.S. homeland two decades ago, and that they provide strength and depth to the defense of Europe, which remains of vital strategic importance to the United States. The U.S. could not come close to replacing them without significantly increasing its own defense spending and the size of the U.S. military—to say nothing of American casualties. NATO is also the most effective alliance in world history by the standard that counts most: it has achieved its founding objective for 70 years. The alliance was formed in 1949 to defend Western Europe from the threat of Soviet aggression, ideally by deterring Soviet attack, and has never needed to fight to defend itself. The United States always provided the preponderance of military force for the alliance, but the European military contribution has always been critical as well. American conventional forces throughout the Cold War depended on the facilities and the combat power of European militaries, and the independent nuclear deterrents of France and Great Britain were likely as important to deterring overt Soviet aggression as America’s nuclear arsenal. The Soviets might have come to doubt that the U.S. would risk nuclear annihilation to defend Europe, but they never doubted that France and Britain would resort to nuclear arms in the face of a Soviet invasion. Has NATO become irrelevant with the passing of the Cold War and the drawdown of U.S. forces from Iraq and Afghanistan? Only if the threat of war has passed and Europe itself has become irrelevant to the United States. Neither is the case. Europe’s survival, prosperity, and democratic values remain central to America’s well-being, as noted above, and today’s global environment makes war more likely than it has been since the collapse of the Soviet Union. It is not a given that Europe will remain democratic and a part of the international rules-based order if NATO crumbles. The U.S. can and should continue to work with its European partners to increase their defense expenditures and, more to the point, military capabilities (for which the percent of GDP spent on defense is not a sufficient proxy). The U.S. must also recognize the centrality of the alliance to America’s own security, as both the National Security Strategy and the National Defense Strategy do.12 The maintenance and defense of NATO itself is a core national security interest of the United States. Cyber Russia is one of the world’s leading cyber powers, competing with the U.S. and China for the top spot, at least in offensive cyber capabilities. Russian hacking has become legendary in the U.S. thanks to Russia’s efforts to influence the 2016 presidential campaign, but Russia has turned its cyber capabilities against its neighbors in other damaging ways. Russia attacked Estonia in 2007 with a massive distributed denial-of-service attack. It attacked Ukrainian computers with the NotPetya malware in 2017, which eventually caused billions of dollars in damage, including in the Americas.13 It also employed cyberattacks in coordination with its ground invasions of Georgia in 2008 and Ukraine in 2014. Fears of Russian cyber capabilities are warranted. This report does not consider the Russian cyber challenge in detail because others with far more technical expertise and support are actively engaged in combating it, defending against it, and deterring it. Our sole contribution in this area will be to consider it in the specific context of information operations support for hybrid operations in the recommendations section below. This approach stems from the recognition that the Kremlin’s cyber operations largely serve as enablers for its larger campaigns, rather than as a main effort. One must note, however, that while deterrence with conventional and nuclear forces prevents attacks, the United States is subject to cyberattack every day and has not established an effective means of retaliation, and thus deterrence. Weapons of Mass Destruction Russia’s nuclear arsenal is large enough to destroy the United States completely. The U.S. currently has no fielded ability to defend against a full-scale Russian nuclear attack—nor can Russia defend against a U.S. nuclear attack. American missile defense systems, by design, do not have the characteristics or scale necessary to shoot down any important fraction of the number of warheads the Russians have aimed at the U.S. from land- and sea-based launch platforms. America’s security against Russian nuclear attack today rests on the same principle as it has since the Russians first acquired nuclear weapons: deterrence. Russia also lacks the ability to shoot down American land- or sea-launched missiles and may not even be able reliably to shoot down U.S. nuclear-armed fifth-generation bombers. Deterrence is extremely likely to continue to work against Putin, who is a rational actor without the kinds of apocalyptic visions that might lead another leader to opt for annihilation in pursuit of some delusional greater good.14 The U.S. must pursue necessary modernization of its nuclear arsenal to sustain the credibility of its nuclear deterrent forces, but there is no reason to fear that deterrence will fail against Putin if it does so.15 It is less clear that Russia will continue to abide by its commitments to abjure chemical weapons, however. Russian agents have already conducted several chemical attacks, bizarrely using distinctive, military-grade chemical agents in attempted assassinations in the United Kingdom.16 Putin has also given top cover to Syrian President Bashar al-Assad’s use of chemical weapons against his own people, despite Russia’s formal role in guaranteeing Assad’s adherence to his 2013 promise to destroy his chemical weapons stockpile and refrain from any such use.17 Periodic Russian-inspired “rumors” that Western military personnel and Ukraine—which has no chemical weapons program—were planning to use chemical weapons on Ukrainian territory raise the concern that Russian agents provocateurs might conduct false flag operations of their own.18 Russia has the capability to produce chemical weapons at will—as does any industrialized state—but it is now showing that it may be willing to do so and to use them. The Soviet Union also maintained a vibrant biological weapons program. Russia has not thus far shown any signs of having restarted it or of having any intent to do so. The completely false claims that the U.S. has built biological weapons facilities in Russia’s neighboring states raise some concern on this front, since they could theoretically provide cover for the use of Russia’s own biological weapons, but they are more likely intended to influence the information space and justify other Russian actions.19 Terrorism Russia poses several challenges to any sound American approach to counter-terrorism. In addition to Iran, the world’s most prolific state sponsor of terrorism, Moscow’s preferred partners in the Middle East are those whose actions most directly fuel the spread of Salafi-jihadi groups. Russia encouraged and supported systematic efforts to eliminate moderate, secular opposition groups in Syria to the benefit of the Salafi-jihadi groups. Putin aims to expel or constrain the U.S. in the Middle East and establish his own forces in key locations that would allow him to disrupt American efforts to re-engage.20 Russia is the co-leader of a political and military coalition that includes Iran, Lebanese Hezbollah, the Assad regime, and Iranian-controlled Iraqi Shi’a militias.21 Russia provides most of the air support to that coalition in Syria, as well as special forces troops (SPETSNAZ), intelligence capabilities, air defense, and long-range missile strikes.22 That coalition’s campaign of sectarian cleansing has driven millions of people from their homes, fueling the refugee crisis that has damaged Europe.23 The coalition seeks to reimpose a minoritarian ‘Alawite dictatorship in Syria and a militantly anti-American and anti–Sunni Arab government in Iraq.24 The atrocities Russian forces themselves have committed, including deliberate and precise airstrikes against hospitals, have increased the sense of desperation within the Sunni Arab community in Syria, which Salafi-jihadi groups such as ISIS and al Qaeda have exploited.25 Russia supported Assad’s campaign to destroy the non-Salafi-jihadi opposition groups opposing him—particularly those backed by the U.S.—to aid the narrative that the only choices in Syria were Assad’s government or the Salafi-jihadis.26 That narrative was false in 2015 when Russian forces entered the fight but has become much truer following their efforts.27 Russia backed this undertaking with military force, but even more powerfully with information operations that continually hammered on the theme that the U.S. itself was backing terrorists in Syria and Russia was fighting ISIS.28 The insidiousness of the Russian demands that the U.S. remove its forces from Syria is masked by the current U.S. administration’s desire to do exactly that.29 One can argue the merits of keeping American troops in Syria or pulling them out— and this is not the place for that discussion—but the choice should be America’s. At the moment it still is. The consolidation of Russian anti-access/ area-denial (A2/AD) systems in Syria, however, together with the prospect of the withdrawal (or expulsion) of American forces from Iraq (or the closure of Iraqi airspace to support U.S. operations in Syria), could severely complicate American efforts to strike against terrorist threats that will likely re-emerge in Syria over time.30 The more the U.S. relies on an over-the-horizon strategy of precision strikes against terrorists actively planning attacks on the American homeland, the more vulnerable it becomes to the potential disruption of those strikes by Russian air defense systems, whether operated openly by Russians or nominally by their local partners. RUSSIA’S OBJECTIVES Mention of Putin’s objectives or of any systematic effort to achieve them almost always elicits as a response the assertion that Putin has no plan: Putin has no strategy; there is no Russian grand strategy, and so on. The other extreme of the debate considers Putin a calculated strategist with a grand master plan. The question of whether Putin has a plan, however that word is meant by those who assert that he does not, has important consequences for any American strategy to advance U.S. interests with regard to Russia. The trouble is that it is not clear what it would mean for Putin to have a plan or to lack one. We must first consider that more abstract question before addressing whether he has one. To have a plan usually means to have articulated goals, specific methods by which one will seek to achieve those goals, and identified means required for those methods to succeed. Goals, methods, and means can range from very specific to extremely vague and can be more flexible or more rigid. Specificity and flexibility can vary among the elements of this triad, moreover—goals may be very specific and rigid, methods general and flexible, means specific and flexible, or any other logical combination. When considering the question of Putin’s plan, therefore, we must break the discussion down into these four components: Does he have goals? Has he determined methods of achieving his goals? Has he specified resources required for those methods? How specific and how flexible are his goals, his methods, and the resources he allocates? Putting this discussion in context is helpful. Does a U.S. president have “a plan”? Not in any technical or literal sense. Every U.S. administration produces not a plan, but a National Security Strategy that is generally long on objectives—often reasonably specific—and very short on details of implementation (methods). Different national security advisers oversee processes within the White House to build out implementation details to greater or lesser degrees, but the actual implementation plans (methods) are developed by the relevant Cabinet departments. Those departments are also generally responsible for determining the resources that will be needed to implement their plans. The White House must then approve both the plans themselves and the allocation of the requested resources—and then must persuade Congress actually to appropriate the resources in the way the White House wishes to allocate them. This entire process takes more than a year from the start of a new administration and is never complete—the world changes, personnel turn over, and annual budget cycles and mid-term elections cause significant flutter. The one thing that does not happen is that a president receives and signs a “plan” with clear goals, detailed and specified methods, and the specific resources required, which is then executed.31 Putin does not have more of a plan than the U.S. does. It is virtually certain that he also lacks any such clear single document laying out the goals, methods, and means that he and his ministers are executing. But does he have as much of a plan as Presidents George W. Bush, Barack Obama, and Donald Trump have had? By all external signs, he does.

Putin has clearly articulated a series of overarching objectives and goals for Russia’s foreign policy and national security. Putin has been continuously communicating them through various media, including Russia’s doctrinal documents, regular speeches, his senior subordinates, and the Kremlin’s vast propaganda machine for the past two decades.

Russia has a foreign policy concept similar in scope and framing to the U.S. National Security Strategy, a military doctrine similar to the U.S. National Defense Strategy, and a series of other strategies (such as maritime, information security, and energy security) relating to the other components of national power and interest.32 These documents remain very much living concepts and have gone through multiple revisions in the decades since the fall of the Soviet Union.

Through regular speeches, Putin consistently communicates his goals and the key narratives that underpin Russian foreign policy. He makes an annual speech to the Russian Federal Assembly that is similar in some respects to the U.S. president’s State of the Union address. Putin’s addresses tend to be even more specific (and much more boring) in presenting the previous year’s accomplishments and an outline of goals and intentions for the next year.33 Russia’s doctrines and concepts match Putin’s speeches closely enough to suggest that there is some connection between them. Putin also makes other regular speeches, including at the UN General Assembly, the Valdai Discussion Club, the Munich Security Conference at times, and during lengthy press conferences with the Russian media. These remarks are usually rather specific in their presentation of his objectives and sometimes, some of the means by which he intends to pursue them. Such speeches are neither less frequent nor less specific than the major policy speeches of American presidents.

The widespread belief that Putin is simply or even primarily an opportunist who reacts to American or European mistakes is thus erroneous. Nor is Putin’s most common rhetorical trope—that he is the innocent victim forced to defend Russia against unjustified Western aggression—tethered to reality.34 Putin’s statements, key Russian national security documents, and the actions of Putin’s senior subordinates over the two decades of his reign cannot be distilled into a “plan,” but rather represent a set of grand strategic aims and strategic and operational campaigns underway to achieve them.

Putin has remained open and consistent about his core objectives since his rise to power in 1999: the preservation of his regime, the end of American “global hegemony,” and the restoration of Russia as a mighty force to be reckoned with on the international stage. Some of his foreign policy pursuits are purely pragmatic and aimed at gaining resources; others are intended for domestic purposes and have nothing to do with the West.

Putin has articulated a vision of how he wants the world to be and what role he wishes Russia to play in it. He seeks a world without NATO, where the U.S. is confined to the Western Hemisphere, where Russia is dominant over the former Soviet countries and can do what it likes to its own people without condemnation or oversight, and where the Kremlin enjoys a veto through the UN Security Council over actions that any other state wishes to take beyond its borders.35 He is working to bring that vision to reality through a set of coherent, mutually supporting, and indeed, overlapping lines of effort. He likely allows his subordinates a great deal of latitude in choosing the specific means and times to advance those lines of effort—a fact that makes it seem as if Russian policy is simply opportunistic and reactive. But we must not allow ourselves to be deluded by this impression any more than by other Russian efforts to shape our understanding of reality.

Putin’s Domestic Objectives

Maintaining relative contentment within his power circle is a key part of regime preservation. Putin has a close, trusted circle of senior subordinates, including several military and intelligence officials who have been with him for the past 20 years.36 His power circle has several outer layers, which include—but are not limited to—major Russian businessmen, often referred to as “oligarSLC.” The use of the term “oligarch” to describe those who run major portions of the economy is inaccurate, however. Those individuals have power because Putin gives it to them, not because they have any inherent ability to seize or hold it independently. He shuffles them around—and sometimes retires them completely—at his will, rather than in response to their demands.37 They do not check or control Putin either individually or collectively, and they rarely, if ever, attempt to act collectively in any event. Putin controls Russia and its policies as completely as he chooses. This situation is different from the way in which the Soviet Union was ruled after Joseph Stalin’s death in 1953. The post-Stalin USSR really was an oligarchy. Politburo members had their own power bases and fiefdoms. They made decisions—including selecting new members, choosing new leaders, and even firing one leader (Stalin’s successor, Nikita Khrushchev)—by majority vote. There is no equivalent of the Politburo in today’s Russia, no one to balance Putin, and certainly no one to remove him. Putin seeks to keep the closest circle of subordinates and the broader Russian national security establishment content, as they form one of the core pillars of his power. He thus seeks to maintain a relative degree of contentment within various layers of his power structures, including among the “oligarSLC.” For example, the Kremlin offered to help mitigate sanctions-related consequences for Russian businessmen.38 Kremlin-linked actors, in another example, reportedly embezzled billions of dollars in the preparations for the 2014 Winter Olympics in Sochi, Russia—the $50 billion price tag of which was the highest for any Olympic games.39 Putin can still retire any of the “oligarSLC” at will without fear of meaningful consequences—yet his regime is much more stable if they collectively remain reasonably satisfied. This reality will drive Putin to continue to seek access to resources, legal and illegal, with which to maintain that satisfaction. Maintaining popular support is a core objective of Putin’s policies. Putin is an autocrat with democratic rhetoric and trappings. Putin’s Russia has no free elections, no free media, and no alternative political platforms. He insists, however, on maintaining the “democratic” façade. He holds elections at the times designated by law (even if he periodically causes the law to be amended) and is genuinely (if decreasingly) popular. Nor is his feint at democratism necessarily a pose. The transformation of the Soviet Union into a democracy was the signal achievement of the 1990s.40 Putin played a role in that achievement, supporting St. Petersburg mayor Anatoliy Sobchak, then Boris Yeltsin, in their battles against attempts by communists to regain control and destroy the democracy, and then by an extreme right-wing nationalist party to gain power.41 Putin has called out many weaknesses of the Yeltsin era—but never the creation of a democratic Russia. Putin has not yet shown any sign of formally turning away from democracy as the ostensible basis of his power, although he has constrained the political space within Russia to the point that the elections are a sham. However, were he to abandon the democratic principles to which he still superficially subscribes, he would need fundamentally to redesign the justification of his rule and the nature of his regime. Nevertheless, he can only maintain even the fiction of democratic legitimacy if he remains popular enough to win elections that are not outrageously stolen. He has not been able to fix the Russian economy, despite early efforts to do so. The fall of global oil prices from their highs in the 2000s, as well as the Western sanctions imposed for his actions in Ukraine, among other things, are causing increasing hardship for the Russian people.42 Putin has adopted an information operations approach to this problem by pushing a number of core narratives, evolving over time, to justify his continued rule and explain away the failures of his policies. He has also grown the police state within Russia for situations in which the information operations do not work to his satisfaction. Putin’s justification of his rule has evolved over time. He first positioned himself as the man who will bring order. The 1990s was a decade of economic catastrophe for Russia. Inflation ran wild, unemployment skyrocketed, crime became not only pervasive but also highly organized and predatory, and civil order eroded. Putin succeeded Yeltsin with a promise to change all that. His “open letter to voters” in 2000 contained a phrase fascinating to students of Russian history: “Our land is rich, but there is no order.” That phrase is similar to one supposedly sent by the predecessors of the Russians at the dawn of Russian history to a Viking prince who would come to conquer them: “Our land is rich, but there is no order. Come to rule and reign over us.” By using the first part of that line, Putin, like Riurik, the founder of Russia’s first dynasty, cast himself as the founder of a new Russia in which order would replace chaos.43 Putin’s initial value proposition to his population was thus order and stability. He did, indeed, attempt to bring order to Russia’s domestic scene. Putin strengthened government institutions and curbed certain kinds of crime. He restored control over the region of Chechnya through a brutal military campaign. He tried to work with economic technocrats to bring the economy into some kind of order. The task was immense, however—Soviet leaders had built the entire Russian industrial and agricultural system and economic base in a centralized fashion. Undoing that centralization and creating an economy in which the market really could work was beyond Putin’s skill and patience. He largely abandoned the effort within a few years, both because it was too hard and because it seemed unnecessary.44 The rising price of oil in the early 2000s fueled the Russian economy and filled the government’s coffers on the one hand.45 The genuine structural reforms and innovation that were needed, on the other, also became antithetical to Putin’s ability to maintain control, as government corruption is a powerful tool of influence in Russia. Putin began to erode civil liberties in that period offering the unspoken but clear exchange: Give me your liberties and I will give you prosperity and stability. The 2008 global financial crisis collapsed oil prices, and the post-2014 sanctions regime removed the patches and workarounds Putin had used to offset his failure to transform Russia’s economy. Continuing low oil prices (and sanctions) have prevented it from recovering with much of the rest of the global economy, even as Putin has continued to eschew any real effort to address the systemic failings holding Russia’s economy back. Putin has therefore refocused on a different value proposition: Give me your liberties and I will give you greatness. He is increasingly linking the legitimacy of his own autocracy with Russia’s position on the world stage and with Russia’s ability to stand up to American “global hegemony.”46

Putin has simultaneously erected a narrative to deflect criticism for Russia’s problems onto the West. The West, supposedly fearful of Russia rising and determined to keep Russia down, has thwarted its rightful efforts to regain its proper place in the world at every turn. Putin claims the Russian economy is in shambles because of unjust and illegal sanctions that have nothing to do with Russia’s actions and are simply meant to keep “the Russian bear in chains.”47

Putin has also consistently fostered a complex narrative that combines diverse and—from the Western perspective—often conflicting elements, including Soviet nostalgia, Eastern Orthodoxy, Russian nationalism, and the simultaneous emphasis on Russia’s multiethnic and multireligious character. The importance Putin gives this narrative is visible in things large and small. He has named Russia’s ballistic missile submarines after Romanov tsars and Muscovite princes.48 He issued a decree in 2009 mandating the introduction of religious education in Russian schools, which began in 2012.49 He continues to place a major emphasis on Soviet-era achievements. Putin and his information machine take these various elements, refine and tailor them, and produce a mix of ideas to cater to various parts of the Russian population.

We can expect Putin’s narratives to continue to shift to accommodate changing realities, but the current rhetorical linkage between Russia’s position on the world stage and the legitimacy of Putin’s domestic power is concerning. It suggests that Putin may be more stubborn about making and retaining gains in the international arena than he was in the first 15 years of his rule, as he seeks ways to bolster his popularity, which is flagging, and on which his mythos relies.

#### Poseidon enables Putin to terrorize NATO—a strike collapses the organization leads to forced US draw in, and global Armageddon.

[Alex Lockie (2-11-2019), Senior Front Page Editor at Business Insider, “The real purpose of Russia's 100-megaton underwater nuclear doomsday device,” Business Insider, [https://www.businessinsider.com/the-real-purpose-of-russias-poseidon-nuclear-doomsday-device-2019-2]//SLC](https://www.businessinsider.com/the-real-purpose-of-russias-poseidon-nuclear-doomsday-device-2019-2%5d//CHS) PK

Davis called the Poseidon a "third-strike vengeance weapon" — meaning Russia would attack a NATO member, the US would respond, and a devastated Russia would flip the switch on a hidden nuke that would lay waste to an entire US seaboard.

According to Davis, the Poseidon would give Russia a "coercive power" to discourage a NATO response to a Russian first strike.

Russia here would seek to not only reoccupy Eastern Europe "but coerce NATO to not act upon an Article 5 declaration and thus lose credibility," he said, referring to the alliance's key clause that guarantees a collective response to an attack on a member state.

Russian President Vladimir Putin "has made it clear he seeks the collapse of NATO," Davis continued. "If NATO doesn't come to the aid of a member state, it's pretty much finished as a defense alliance."

Essentially, Russia could use the Poseidon as an insurance policy while it picks apart NATO. The US, for fear that its coastlines could become irradiated for decades by a stealthy underwater torpedo it has no defenses against, might seriously question how badly it needs to save Estonia from Moscow's clutches.

"Putin may calculate that NATO will blink first rather than risk escalation to a nuclear exchange," Davis said. "Poseidon accentuates the risks to NATO in responding to any Russian threat greatly, dramatically increasing Russia's coercive power."

Davis also suggested the Poseidon would make a capable but heavy-handed naval weapon, which he said could most likely take out an entire carrier strike group in one shot.

Russia has recently signaled its willingness to use nuclear weapons to coerce the West [with its violation of the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty](https://www.businessinsider.com/russia-threatens-us-with-nuclear-doomsday-device-after-inf-failure-2019-2), Davis said. These missiles are purpose-built for taking out European capitals from the Russian mainland.

But Russia has frequently engaged in nuclear saber-rattling when it feels encircled by NATO forces, and so far it has steered clear of confronting NATO with kinetic forces.

"Whether that will involve actual use or just the threat of use is the uncertainty," Davis said.

While it's hard to imagine a good reason for laying the kind of destruction the Poseidon promises, Davis warned that we shouldn't assume the Russians think about nuclear warfare the same way the US does.

#### And if the war doesn’t cause extinction, the following cyber-attacks, terrorism, and collapse of global liberal order will.

Dr. Jamie Shea 19, member of the NATO International Staff for 38 years, currently the Professor of Strategy and Security at the University of Exeter and a Senior Fellow at Friends of Europe, “NATO at 70: an opportunity to recalibrate”, https://www.nato.int/docu/review/2019/Also-in-2019/nato-at-70-an-opportunity-to-recalibrate/EN/index.htm

The daily picture of a NATO that is deploying new forces in its eastern member states, holding major exercises, combating cyber threats and terrorism, conducting training and capacity-building missions in places like Afghanistan and Iraq, and welcoming new members into its ranks will stand in baffling contrast to a political and academic rhetoric that presents NATO as obsolete and Allies as a drain on resources for little return. In short, the optimists will not see the need for the Alliance’s reform, while the pessimists will not deem it poyssible. As so often in the past, it will come down to a choice between actions and words, and what most determines NATO’s credibility in the long run. If the glass is equally half full and half empty, then both sides are right and we are no further forward.

Yet to repeat this somewhat sterile discussion on the occasion of NATO’s 70th anniversary would be a lost opportunity – perhaps even a historic mistake. Because to claim that all is well or not well with NATO is to distort reality and to miss the point.

Yes indeed, the Alliance is not faring so badly when we consider the criticisms and doubts affecting so many of the other institutional pillars of the post-war international order. Finding good news stories about NATO is not difficult, and the frustrations of the last two NATO summits belie an impressive record of concrete achievements. Taken together they show just how committed to NATO its 29 members still are – in cash, capabilities and troops as well as speeches.

But without lapsing into facile crisis constructs, we also need to face up to the fact that the Alliance is today operating in the most complicated security environment in its history. It is facing a more diverse spectrum of threats than ever before. Certainly, these may not be as existential as the threat of nuclear holocaust during the Cold War but they are nonetheless severe and, if not mastered, could end the liberal democratic societies and individual freedoms that the citizens of NATO countries today take for granted.

The 21st century is the century of turbulence with great power competition; rising military spending and readiness to threaten or use force; rapid and far-reaching technological innovation, which is putting greater disruptive and destructive capability into the hands of more bad actors; and hybrid campaigns to divide and destabilise western societies, and gain leverage over their political and economic systems. More than before, the Allies are being challenged from within and without their borders and from multiple directions at the same time. Death by a thousand cuts may not sound as bad as sudden death but the result is still the same.

Challenges on all fronts

For most of the past decades, NATO had the relative luxury of dealing with one challenge in one place at any given time. It marked its 40th anniversary focused entirely on the changes affecting the Soviet Union; its 50th anniversary was in the midst of the Kosovo air campaign; and its 60th anniversary was dominated by discussions over troop surges in Afghanistan. But this time it is different. NATO is reaching 70 when it has to tackle not one but three strategic fronts, not only diverse geographically but also in terms of the type of threats they pose and the responses they require.

In the East, a resurgent and aggressive Russia has made NATO’s eastern Allies nervous and requires the Alliance, after a nearly 30-year gap, to be able to deter, defend against and defeat a peer adversary with modernised forces, abundant war-fighting experience and high-tech weaponry.

In the South, fragile states are vulnerable to extremism, militias and criminal gangs, which pose a range of security headaches ranging from terrorist attacks to humanitarian crises and uncontrolled migration. These require local knowledge, development and long-term capacity-building partnerships with multiple actors.

On the home front, we see the polarisation of many western societies as they struggle to control the dependencies created by globalisation. Moreover, all-embracing technologies have given malicious actors a new hybrid toolkit to either wreak havoc or to assert influence.

These challenges affect Allies in different combinations and come from different sources. But all Allies expect NATO to be equally attentive to their individual concerns and to provide answers. What is unique, therefore, about the situation NATO finds itself in today is that it risks becoming unmanageable. One danger is strategic overload. Another is that poorly managed crises on the home front or a failure to establish deterrence against provocations such as cyber or chemical attacks, which fall below the threshold for Article 5 (NATO’s collective defence clause), could embolden adversaries to make territorial demands as well. Equally, allowing those adversaries to quash human rights and to sow corruption and poor governance in the South – all in the name of re-establishing “order” – could encourage them to try the same tactics in the Alliance’s eastern neighbourhood.

So, for the first time in its seven decades, NATO has to deter and defend against the enemy within as well as without. As we saw after the 9/11 terrorist attacks against the United States, from now on, Article 5 could well apply more to threats against transport, power infrastructure, space communications, pipelines, IT networks and civilians sitting on park benches than to tanks crossing borders. Solidarity will no longer be a rare requirement waiting for a military attack that is potentially catastrophic but extremely unlikely. Rather, it will be an almost daily necessity in response to provocations that are not existential but which civilised societies cannot allow to go unchallenged.

This is fundamentally new and the most pressing issue that Allied leaders need to debate, if they wish NATO to have a future at least as long as its past. Instead of preparing for one kind of attack, how does the Alliance make its member states (and some key partner countries too) fully resilient and able to respond effectively to the 21st century’s pattern of hyper-interference and ubiquitous competition?

This is not to imply that the topics which dominate NATO’s current political agenda are not important. Burden-sharing is at the centre of US President Donald Trump’s view of the utility of the Alliance to the United States and any future US Administration, whether Republican or Democrat, is likely to insist on it too. The speech given by Secretary of Defence Robert M. Gates in Brussels in 2011 came from a Democrat Administration and – in its sharpness and sense of urgency about European capability gaps –prefigured the Republican Trump half a decade before the latter entered the White House.

The United States’ share of the burden of collective defence or, more recently, non-Article 5 operations beyond NATO’s territory has always been disproportionate and unfair. Prolonged European dependence on the United States was one major reason why some US Senators wanted to limit the lifespan of the NATO Treaty to just ten years, when it came up for ratification in 1949. The Europeans have constantly promised to rectify the discrepancy through a host of burden-sharing and offset initiatives, and failed to do so. As Europe became richer and aspired to be treated as an equal actor on the global scene, its inability or unwillingness to provide for its own defence became ever more incomprehensible.

So, rather than resent the current return of the burden-sharing debate, Europeans should perhaps congratulate themselves on their good fortune that Canada and the United States have been willing to underwrite Europe’s defence in peacetime for longer than any of NATO’s founding fathers would have thought possible – or desirable. Simply put, Europeans need to increase their defence budgets to two per cent of GDP; not because the United States demands this as a precondition for sustaining NATO but because Europeans are living in an increasingly rough neighbourhood with multiple threats. In these circumstances, two per cent will give Europeans the capabilities required so that they do not need to make hard choices between deterring Russia or fighting extremists in the Sahel; or fielding high readiness divisions over developing more robust cyber defences and researching the emerging technology areas of artificial intelligence, robotics and hypersonic rockets.

Now that the Defence Investment Pledge, agreed at the 2014 NATO Summit in Wales, has halted the decline in defence spending and led to real increases, the Allies clearly have to maintain this effort. But they also need to develop a narrative that explains the link between money, capability and security. Headline figures can seem somewhat arbitrary. An extra 100 billion dollars by 2020 is a lot of money but NATO also needs to show the public what this means in terms of actual improvements in equipment, readiness and training, and focus more on the national success stories.

Capabilities that address threats such as cyber, military interference with vital space assets, terrorism, border security, data manipulation, the protection of critical infrastructure and crucial supply chains, and humanitarian crises engendered by extreme weather events may resonate more with the public than traditional hard military items such as tanks and artillery. This argues for NATO’s defence planners to take a broad view of capability requirements. The two per cent should be a target for the European Union as well as for NATO. Because if the United States were one day to turn its back on NATO or limit its engagement only to territorial collective defence vis-à-vis Russia, two per cent would be the minimum for European Strategic Autonomy to have any meaning. Consequently the Defence Investment Pledge needs to move progressively from an effort largely driven by the United States to one that Europeans demand of each other.

This said, the function of NATO is not primarily to be about fairness. Equal benefits for equal contributions. Outputs – the benefits gained from being an Ally – will always be more significant than inputs. What counts is that individual inputs maximise collective impact. The diversity of Allies (big and small, with different assets and networks of influence) means that they will always contribute in different ways.

The role of NATO must be to incentivise activity and find ways to combine different contributions for maximum strategic effect. This is more effective than formulating standardised contributions, which could make NATO too strong in certain domains and too weak in others. As NATO tackles 21st century challenges, a broad and diverse spectrum of different assets, skills, knowledge and capabilities will arguably be the Alliance’s comparative advantage over its adversaries. Russia with its largely military power and strategy based on intimidation is a case in point. But it will not be enough to acquire diverse assets –NATO’s challenge is to learn how to use them.

It is in this connection that I see four areas where the Alliance needs to raise its game.

#### Modern terrorism causes extinction.

Krstić '17 [Marko; January 2017; assistant professor of microelectronics and physics at the University of Belgrade, PhD in Electrical Engineering and Computer Science from the University of Belgrade; "Tendency of using chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear weapons for terrorist purposes," Military Technical Courier, Vol. 65, No. 2, p. 481-498]

**CBRN = Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear threats**

The studies of a few cases of earlier CBRN actions have led experts to identify the key characteristics of terrorist groups that could potentially have an interest to use these weapons. It is thought that conservatism is inherent in terrorist organizations, but it must not be forgotten that some terrorists are inclined to innovations in weapons and tactics, as well as to taking risks in actions or in the choice of weapons. Many experts agree that most terrorist organizations want to use proven methods to achieve desired effects. Innovations, especially in the field of CBRN weapons, often indicate terrorists are likely to be led by other factors rather than by pure curiosity and desire to experiment. For some individuals, repression and democratic and strong rule of law are positive determinants of the emergence of CBRN actions which points to a new and more complex global security environment with an increasing risk of terrorists trying to perform a CBRN attack. It is a frightening fact that a single terrorist or isolated terrorist group could improvise a biological weapon or use other ways to spread anthrax, smallpox or other biological agents and thereby cause mass casualties and destroy the health care system of a state. CBRN weapons are secretly shipped to terrorists or hostile governments and represent a significant and growing threat to many countries. Although the threat of CBRN attacks is widely recognized as the central issue of national security, most analysts assume that the primary danger is a threat of the military use of these weapons in conventional wars with traditional military means while the threat of covert attacks, which include terrorism, is rashly and unfairly neglected. Covert attacks are difficult to deter or prevent and CBRN weapons suitable for this type of attack are available to a growing number of enemy states and groups. At the same time, restrictions on their use appear to be diminishing, and so-called new terrorists do not always escalate and become apparent only by using unconventional weapons. These weapons are easily spread or transmitted from person to person, have a high mortality rate and a potential impact on public health, causing mass casualties that can crush health systems and cause public panic and social disruption, thus requiring special efforts to suppress them. When assessing the threat of CBRN weapons, we should take into account the change in capacity to carry out terrorist attacks that are on the rise among countries and non-government elements. Analysts believe that the fear of chemical and biological terrorist attacks is excessive, they point out that, in the past, very few attacks involved these weapons, and even those few attempts that have occurred were mostly thwarted by the authorities. A relative ease with which biological weapons can be obtained, along with other current changes and turbulences in the world, sets the stage for another type of warfare in the 21st century. The potential for CBRN terrorism has widely grown since 11 September, when some of these materials were used. The danger of terrorist use of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction represents a very serious threat for many countries; if a terrorist group could gain access to this weapon, it is highly likely it would use it, or threaten to use it. Although there is very little information on terrorists and their ability to come into possession of nuclear weapons or on their intentions to get them, the risk of CBRN weapons has certainly increased since the terrorists started to become more familiar with these agents and their harmful consequences. Discovering the nature of the threat of biological weapons, as well as the appropriate response to them requires an emphasis on the biological characteristics of these instruments of war and terror. Preparing for a terrorist attack may seem daunting and there are a small number of people with practical experience and a good knowledge of CBRN weapons, because until recently there was no need to own them. In the past, most of the planning regarding emergency response to terrorism concentrated on the concerns of open attacks (bombing). However, the threats of CBRN weapons are taken seriously, especially in the USA, where media, fascinated by new weapons of mass destruction, encourage a growing fear for public safety. Terrorists who have significant human and material resources are much more likely to realize their intentions than lone perpetrators or small terrorist groups. A CBRN terrorism threat is certainly a matter of concern; however, terrorists will face many obstacles in the implementation of an attack of this kind. This includes the acquisition of materials and preparation for spreading them as well as a selection and a survey of a chosen objective and a correct dose required to achieve a desired effect. The growing threat of CBRN terrorism Terrorism can be defined as a deliberate act of violence intended to cause damage, but also to create an appropriate political and ideological situation, so that the use of these non-traditional weapons of terror outside the context is obvious, and the goals will not be military, but civilian ones (Bioterrorism, chemical weapons, and radiation terrorism, nd). Toxic substances, regardless of whether they are of animal, vegetable or mineral origin, were used throughout the history for political assassinations and sabotage; despite the risk of severe penalties, the prospects for success favoured the use of toxic substances. Such use has always been reduced, however, since only a small number of people had access to substances and possessed the ability of learn how to use them (Pascal, 1999). CBRN weapons are rightly viewed with a special sense of horror, their effects can be devastating and indiscriminating, and they take the most stringent toll among the most vulnerable population, non-combatants (e.g. a biological attack cannot be detected sufficiently fast after the disease spreads through the population). Moreover, chemical and biological weapons are a particularly attractive alternative for groups that do not have the ability to produce nuclear weapons, and this risk raises complex but important ethical issues (London, 2003). The common name for CBRN terrorism which causes the death of a large number of people, large scale damage and a strong echo worldwide is post-industrial or hyper-terrorism. This means that non-state elements possess and dispose of assets that were previously held only by states, but unlike them, which often fear reprisals after WMD attacks, terrorists, having no geographical location, are ready to use WMD with much less scrupulousness and fear (Kurmnik, Ribnikar, 2003). Some authors have described the factors that make chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear terrorist attacks in many ways unique and demanding, such as an element of surprise, invisible agents, ordnance, the risk of repetition and new types of risks (Ruggiero, Voss, 2015). In the past 30 years, the use of CBRN weapons has become a major concern for many nations around the world. The public has become insensitive to traditional terrorist attacks that seem to be a less efficient way for terrorist organizations to achieve their goals. What causes shock and fear is actually presenting the properties of weapons which can be used by terrorist organizations to enhance their efforts and the effectiveness of attacks. CBRN terrorism is often a synonym for weapons of mass destruction, although this form of terrorism and related incidents do not require attacks and inflicting harm to large numbers of people they do not even require deadly attacks at all. The number of studies on this type of terrorism is limited due to the lack of available data on this terrorism type. There is a very small number of databases of CBRN incidents, and even the existing ones have relatively little to do with them and they are compared to conventional terrorism (Jesse, 2012). Some experts emphasize the factors that promote such attacks and these factors include the availability of information and expertise, increased frustration of terrorists, demonization of the target population, as well as a millennial, apocalyptic or messianic vision. Experts also differ in opinion when it comes to possible perpetrators of CBRN incidents, and include religious fundamentalists and cults1 as possible perpetrators of such attacks, especially when these groups address to ethereal audience, emphasizing the hatred of unbelievers (Ivanova, Sandler, 2007). Concerns about super terrorism which involves the use of CBRN weapons are mainly focused on what terrorists can do in the context of our social reality, with an emphasis on terrorist motivations, initiatives and limitations. When considering which terrorist groups may be inclined to commit CBRN terrorism, it is important to recognize the spectrum of these acts, as well as to analyze the following categorization: (a) massive casualty events produced by conventional weapons; (b) CBRN scams; (c) conventional attack on a nuclear facility; (d) limited-scale chemical or biological attack or a radiological dispersion; (e) large scale chemical or biological attack or a radiological dispersion; and (f) CBRN strikes (super terrorism) that can lead to thousands of victims. In addition to the motivation and willingness to inflict mass casualties in any way, terrorists must have technical and financial capabilities to come into possession of material and acquire skills for these types of weapons and materials and carry out a successful attack. Chemical and biological weapons can pose a risk to terrorists thus deterring them from using such weapons (Post, 2005, pp.148-151). The possibility that terrorists use chemical or biological substances may increase over the next decade, according to US intelligence agencies. According to CIA2, an interest among non-state actors, including terrorists, for biological and chemical materials is real and growing, and the number of potential perpetrators is increasing. The agency also noted that many of these groups had developed an international network and did not need to rely on state sponsors for financial and technical support. However, it is believed that it is less likely that terrorists would choose chemical and biological weapons over conventional explosives, because these weapons are difficult to control and their results are unpredictable (Condesman, Burke, 2001). The risk of CBRN weapons is growing since terrorists are better acquainted with these agents and their potential for causing harm3. These agents possess desirable characteristics as weapons of terror; they are biologically invisible to the naked eye, odorless and potentially lethal in the form of particles; natural organisms are so readily available, and can be "camouflaged" in natural disasters and used to spread fear and various diseases. Chemical agents quickly attack the critical physiological centers of the body, disabling or killing the victim. Biological and chemical weapons require the application of huge amounts of resources and result in different effects, causing fear and panic in the contaminated areas. Often referred to as "weapons of mass destruction", but, in medical terms, they are weapons of potential mass casualties because they can lead to massive death toll in the absence of preventive measures and timely response (Meyer, Spinella, 2014, pp.645-656). "Bioterrorism is the intentional use of microorganisms or toxins derived from living organisms used for hostile purposes intended to cause disease or death in man, animals and plants, on which they depend". The threat of bioterrorist attacks is real, and each individual is a potential terrorist, when terrorists are "invisible" prior to an attack which also can be "invisible" in the form of causing infectious diseases or epidemics. Citizens who are not aware they are infected are potential safety hazard and so-called dangerous bodies (Mijalković, 2011). In the last ten years, the issue of CBRN weapons has attracted the attention of experts, but a list of priorities by the heads of states has never been established. Biological weapons almost became forgotten after they had been banned by the 1972 Convention on Biological Weapons. A significant attention was paid to them during the 90s of the last century. The important thing is that biological weapons attract much less attention than other similar weapons, but probably represent the greatest danger, and in addition to their use in war, they are available as instruments of terror in peace. Some countries showed willingness to use such weapons against defenseless populations to achieve strategic objectives, and in this regard, some analysts believe that those who attacked the World Trade Center in 1993 applied cyanide on their bombs (this was not confirmed, but a large amount of cyanide was found in possession of the perpetrators). Such a group will prove to be less inefficient, because if terrorists decide to shock and surprise the government by inflicting enormous damage, CBRN weapons will become more attractive and more accessible (Bettis, 1998). Motives and forms of behavior of individuals and groups who acquired or used CBRN weapons have existed since long ago and there is no doubt that modern society is vulnerable to such attacks (Tucker, 2000). Fear of biological terrorism is certainly greater than the fear of the conventional forms of terrorism; some of these fears are justified and some are often exaggerated. Some agents are really very contagious and deadly, and if used properly, have a potential to result in casualties similar to those in a nuclear attack. Perhaps the scariest aspect of biological weapons is that the body is attacked without warning, people are afraid of the threat as it is invisible, and cannot be heard or felt. The history of warfare, terrorism and crime involving biological agents in the last century is considerably less dangerous and more deadly than the history of conventional warfare (Parachini, 2001). Today, some states and some terrorist groups can more easily overcome technological barriers due to the increased flow of information and access to previously unavailable technologies. Along with nuclear and chemical weapons, biological weapons are part of an unholy trinity of weapons of mass destruction (Davis, Johnson-Winegar, 2000, pp.15-28). The society is now faced with the threat of an apocalyptic and asymmetric war scenario in which kamikaze attackers are able to arm themselves with WMD4 without even having to have a "physical" weapon to create fear; they probably still prefer simple, proven methods: a stampede in an enclosed place, or just an explosive device, which will kill many people5 (Palmer, 2004, pp.3-9). Early detection and response to biological or chemical terrorism are crucial to solving this problem (U.S. Congress House, 2003, p.117).

#### And it decimates the opposition to Polish nationalism

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The progressives’ view of regional security is similarly flawed. These retrenchers reject the idea that regional security competition will intensify if the United States leaves. In fact, they argue, U.S. alliances often promote competition, as in the Middle East, where U.S. support for Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates has emboldened those countries in their cold war with Iran. But this logic does not apply to Europe or Asia, where U.S. allies have behaved responsibly. A U.S. pullback from those places is more likely to embolden the regional powers. Since 2008, Russia has invaded two of its neighbors that are not members of NATO, and if the Baltic states were no longer protected by a U.S. security guarantee, it is conceivable that Russia would test the boundaries with gray-zone warfare. In East Asia, a U.S. withdrawal would force Japan to increase its defense capabilities and change its constitution to enable it to compete with China on its own, straining relations with South Korea.

The second problem with retrenchment involves nuclear proliferation. If the United States pulled out of NATO or ended its alliance with Japan, as many realist advocates of retrenchment recommend, some of its allies, no longer protected by the U.S. nuclear umbrella, would be tempted to acquire nuclear weapons of their own. Unlike the progressives for retrenchment, the realists are comfortable with that result, since they see deterrence as a stabilizing force. Most Americans are not so sanguine, and rightly so. There are good reasons to worry about nuclear proliferation: nuclear materials could end up in the hands of terrorists, states with less experience might be more prone to nuclear accidents, and nuclear powers in close proximity have shorter response times and thus conflicts among them have a greater chance of spiraling into escalation.

Third, retrenchment would heighten nationalism and xenophobia. In Europe, a U.S. withdrawal would send the message that every country must fend for itself. It would therefore empower the far-right groups already making this claim—such as the Alternative for Germany, the League in Italy, and the National Front in France—while undermining the centrist democratic leaders there who told their populations that they could rely on the United States and NATO. As a result, Washington would lose leverage over the domestic politics of individual allies, particularly younger and more fragile democracies such as Poland. And since these nationalist populist groups are almost always protectionist, retrenchment would damage U.S. economic interests, as well. Even more alarming, many of the right-wing nationalists that retrenchment would empower have called for greater accommodation of China and Russia.

#### Unchecked Polish nationalism derails the European Green Deal, a key model for global decarbonization

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INTRODUCTION

As 2020 approached, few doubted that it would be a watershed moment for climate policy in the European Union (EU): Ursula von der Leyen, president of the European Commission since December 1, 2019, proposed during her second week in office a European Green Deal (EGD) that is meant to be the defining initiative of her Commission tenure. The EGD proposal called for bold and comprehensive action to make climate protection central in all EU policy. In the process, however, the EGD brought to the fore chronic tensions between EU leaders who are “climate ambitious,” often in Northern, Western, and Southern Europe, and those who are climate cautious, mostly in Central and Eastern Europe.

In an unprecedented move, one lone member of the European Council did not join consensus with his peers to commit to climate neutrality in all member states by 2050—Poland’s prime minister Mateusz Morawiecki. The diverging orientations of Brussels and Warsaw on climate policy were laid bare. Worse yet, broader political tensions between Poland and the EU on political and other matters meant that dialogue was already severely strained. Many felt that the Brussels-Warsaw tensions would translate into a complete impasse on climate policy.

Then 2020 grew even more complex. The novel coronavirus caused massive economic effects across Europe, and some climate-cautious EU members called for a shelving of climate objectives.[i] Polish leaders continued to draw attention to the political and economic difficulty of the country’s move away from hard coal and lignite,[ii] the traditional bulwarks of the Polish economy, energy security, and society. Were Poland to support the EGD, said Warsaw, it would need special accommodation of its situation.

Strong leadership may make such an accommodation possible. The Green Deal has regained momentum and seems poised to be implemented. Germany assumed the six-month EU presidency on July 1, 2020. With Angela Merkel preparing to step down in 2021, the chancellor appears intent on cementing her legacy by delivering a comprehensive climate package that shores up the cohesion of the EU. Together with French president Emmanuel Macron, Merkel has advocated for unprecedented EU common borrowing and significant grant funds, which are the key enablers of a “green recovery” package. On July 21, 2020, the European Council agreed on a package providing a post-pandemic recovery plan, measures to implement the European Green Deal, and the EU’s next seven-year budget, for the years 2021–2027. Two key steps remain as of this writing: securing support from European and national parliaments, which will vote on the deal in the coming weeks.

Consequently, 2020 could yield even more than was hoped at the start of the year. The EU’s hybrid package would respond to the needs of member states hard hit by Covid-19 and also advance the goal of climate neutrality by 2050. The EGD’s Just Transition Mechanism provides funding—and thus political cover—for Poland and other climate-cautious countries. For the EU, 2020 could represent a victory that allows it to extend its long-claimed leadership in global climate policy. For Poland, success in securing this package will mean that it commits itself unambiguously to the decarbonization of its coal-dependent energy sector.

This piece surveys the challenges facing EU climate policy in 2020, as the bloc seeks both to chart a course to midcentury decarbonization and to respond to a pandemic that has paralyzed economies and upended lives across Europe. The Warsaw-Brussels lens is valuable because of Poland’s long reluctance to commit to decarbonization and especially a transition away from coal, which the country relies upon more than any other EU member state. This lens is also useful because the dialogue about future climate policies occurs against a complicated political dynamic. If the EU is to achieve its decarbonization goals, it must do so by securing participation from the climate cautious, even if other political or economic considerations create distractions.

The specifics that this piece examines are inherently European. They reflect the history, aspirations, governance structures, politics, wealth, and economic health of the EU. Nonetheless, the difficult interactions between Brussels and Warsaw over the EGD proposal provide an important example of the broad types of headwinds facing climate policy making all around the globe, not just in Europe. Effective and enduring climate solutions require visionary ambition and wise policies that respond to the urgency of climate science. Climate solutions also require political pragmatism, principled dealmaking, and effective implementation.

The stakes of this European story are significant for people all around the globe: Any true solution for climate change can be credible only with meaningful and timely action by the major emitters of greenhouse gases (GHG)—Europe, along with the United States, China, India, and others. Europe also provides useful examples in climate diplomacy; technological, financial, and business innovation; and policy.

Europe’s tensions between the climate ambitious and the climate cautious are echoed in different specific forms around the globe. Decision-makers in the United States need to ensure that coal, oil, and gas workers—as well as their families and local communities—are not left by the side of the road as the United States accelerates and deepens its response to climate change. So, too, leaders in Beijing, New Delhi, Canberra, Jakarta, Tokyo, Seoul, and elsewhere need to determine what kind of a future lies ahead for workers in high-emitting industries. Europe’s efforts to forge a Green Deal in 2020 and sustain momentum in the face of Covid-19, then, may hold broad lessons that others can learn from.

This piece reflects research conducted in English- and Polish-language sources as well as over two dozen interviews with analysts, experts, businesspeople, academics, and senior officials in Brussels and a number of EU member states, especially in Poland. Many of the interviewees spoke on the condition of anonymity; others are quoted with permission.

The first section surveys the history of climate and energy policy making in the EU culminating in the proposed EGD. Second, this piece turns to Poland as a member of the EU—its current politics, the overall relationship between Warsaw and Brussels, and the country’s energy resource mix as part of EU energy markets. Third, the focus is in particular on Poland’s outlook on climate solutions. Fourth, the piece assesses prospects in the second half of 2020 for Warsaw-Brussels climate debates and the proposed green recovery package: Can a grand bargain between Brussels and Warsaw be completed—a deal that could enable sustained momentum on climate even in the face of the pandemic’s shocks to European economies? Last, the piece looks outside the Warsaw-Brussels dynamic, and outside Europe in general, to consider possible implications for other countries and regions.

THE ROAD TO AN EGD

Since the emergence in the late 1980s of widespread concern about human-caused global warming, the EU has sought to distinguish itself—and indeed strengthen itself—through leadership in this arena.

The EU and Environmental Policy Making

Today’s EU grew out of a post–World War II, six-country treaty that sought to create common ground among historical foes by creating a common market in steel and coal (in this narrow sense: energy) and through this mechanism facilitate trade and peace in Europe. By the time that climate change emerged onto the global stage in the late 1980s as the highest-profile international environmental challenge, 12 countries had signed the Single European Act, which created the European Community and called for the establishment of a single market. The Maastricht Treaty of 1992 formed the EU; expanded its remit from economics to justice, home affairs, and common foreign and security policy; and strengthened the role of the European Commission’s institutions.

Through this same period, international environmental governance experienced significant development. Discovery of the hole in the stratospheric ozone layer precipitated the Vienna Convention in 1985 and then in 1987 the Montreal Protocol on ozone layer protection. These agreements suggested that the global community could identify and enact solutions to major environmental threats. In 1990, responding to emerging science about the link between human-caused emissions of GHGs and climate change, ministers gathered for the Second World Climate Conference in Geneva and called for the development of a climate convention by the time of the United Nations (UN) Conference on Environment and Development (or the Rio Earth Summit) in June 1992.

In the lead-up to Rio, the European Commission played an increasingly vocal and active role—especially in negotiations for the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). In fact, the Earth Summit was the first major international event at which the European Community sought, and after long diplomatic wrangling secured, agreement that its head of delegation be accorded treatment equivalent to that of a head of state.

The fall of the Berlin Wall and the end of the Cold War in the early 1990s opened a period of optimism and opportunity. An increasingly integrated Europe was emerging and asserting a new governance model—one built around cooperation, integration, and the promulgation of shared norms and laws within the EU. Environmental protection took on a central role—serving as a theme that mobilized popular support in old and new EU member states alike. In 1997, the Treaty of Amsterdam declared sustainable development as a fundamental objective of the EU. The European Parliament, citizen groups, and many EU-based companies called for efforts to translate EU environmental provisions into international agreements and governance. Protecting the environment—and especially the global climate—provided a means to extend the growing EU’s soft power and a tool to press for economic opportunity.[iii]

European leadership on climate proceeded steadily from the 1990s to the eve of 2020. Not always did EU climate policies succeed,[iv] but climate nonetheless served as a rallying cry for the expanding EU’s identity, and it occupied a high priority for policy makers. In the run-up to the UNFCCC’s 21st Conference of the Parties (COP-21) in late 2015, all the relevant institutions of the EU worked in concert with the French diplomatic system to ensure a successful outcome—the Paris climate agreement.

Emergence of the EGD

From late 2015 to late 2019, the public clamor for more aggressive climate policies grew more insistent across Europe. In autumn 2018, the UN’s Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change issued a special report assessing the difference in effects arising from a global average temperature change capped at two degrees versus one-and-a-half degrees Celsius and the scale of actions required to realize the lower temperature limit. Swedish climate activist Greta Thunberg started what grew into a global series of student strikes—“Fridays for Future.” That civic mobilization and increased interest to act on climate may have also supported a “green wave” that emerged from the 2019 EU parliamentary elections—which saw Green Party members win seats across the EU.[v] Also, a growing number of pension funds and other equity investors introduced shareholder propositions requiring investment transparency and even divestment in response to the changing climate. This increasingly pro-climate sensibility was not without contradictory sentiments, such as the yellow vest (gilets jaunes) protests against higher French fuel prices. Nonetheless, public expectations of climate action grew more and more urgent.

One consideration that complicates Brussels’s ability to drive climate solutions is the matter of “competence” (legal authority) for policy making in energy and climate. Under the terms of the 2007 Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU), energy was for the first time introduced into the EU legal framework. It was defined as a topic of shared competence between member states and the EU. The European Commission could therefore propose measures to promote security of supply; ensure the functioning of the energy market; promote energy efficiency, conservation, and new and renewable forms of energy; and promote energy network interconnections.[vi] Matters like determination of the energy resource mix were to be determined at the national level. In regard to environmental protection, by contrast, the EU takes precedence over the member states in regard to competence.[vii] Clearly, then, on policy relating to climate and energy, overlapping competence creates a natural setting for divergent views about the proper role of EU decision-making and thus the potential for tensions between Brussels and the member states.

With this backdrop, in December 2019, the newly installed Commission president, Ursula von der Leyen, introduced her EGD proposal using soaring rhetoric. “The Green Deal is Europe’s ‘man on the moon’ moment,” she declared.[viii] “It is ambitious; it is designed to be just; it is made in Europe for Europe to lead the way to climate neutrality in 2050. Europe has always given its best when … we are bold and aim high. With the Green Deal, we are aiming high.”[ix]

Unlike the US Green New Deal, which was proposed by a number of US Congress members but to date not translated into specific legislative proposals, the EGD was designed around legislative and executive action that has already started to be debated, refined, and prepared for implementation. The EGD calls for the implementation of 50 initiatives across industry, buildings, mobility, agriculture and food processing, land use and forestry, finance, research and development (R&D), pollution control, budgeting, trade, international development, diplomacy, and more. Among its more prominent elements are the following:

* A legally binding target of climate neutrality (defined as no net emissions of GHGs) for the EU by 2050, to be enshrined in a new climate law
* More ambitious emissions targets for 2030—either 50 percent or 55 percent below 1990 levels, rather than the present target of 40 percent
* A major public consultation exercise labeled as the EU climate pact
* Trade measures to protect energy-intensive, trade-exposed industries through a border carbon adjustment that would apply to imports from jurisdictions not controlling carbon emissions from those industries
* Extensive finance provisions, including the creation of a Just Transition Mechanism intended to ease the transition to a decarbonized energy system through bank lending and private investment, as well as grants from a Just Transition Fund[x]

POLAND IN THE EU: EVOLVING ECONOMIC, POLITICAL, AND ENERGY RELATIONS

Benefits and Costs of EU Membership

Poland’s entry into the EU in 2004 represented a major milestone for both the EU and Poland. Poland had chosen to bind its security to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in 1999. But if NATO accession defined Poland’s fundamental defense posture, membership in the EU affected daily life more concretely and routinely. It represented the economic, and many say cultural, road forward. EU membership drew Poland toward a rules-based Europe that emphasized common values as the accompaniment to economic opportunity under a single market. Poland had to update its laws and practices as enshrined in the body of existing EU law referred to as the acquis communautaire.

This meant that Poland’s EU membership brought many benefits but also some perceived costs. Poland received significant direct aid from Brussels that supported infrastructure and development goals and provided economic and personal opportunities such as the ability of Poles to travel, work, and study freely across the continent. Poland was also a country that had only just returned to true independence after leaving the Soviet bloc, so EU membership meant ceding some national decision-making on those matters where the EU has competence.

This reality fed friction. The shine of the EU and its institutions for a number of Polish groups and officials began to wear off. In the past few years alone, the domination of the conservative and, some would say, populist Law and Justice Party (PiS) over politics, business, media, and cultural life has only exacerbated the friction between Brussels and Warsaw on issues ranging from Syrian refugees to Poland’s courts and rule of law.

The most pronounced case of such friction, rule-of-law issues, has pushed Warsaw-Brussels dynamics into uncharted political territory. In 2015, the PiS-dominated Sejm (parliament) rewrote the legal basis for the Constitutional Tribunal, only to have the revisions be found unconstitutional by that very court. Polish president Andrzej Duda replaced members of the Constitutional Tribunal with PiS party loyalists.[xi] Later, PiS introduced new disciplinary rules that appeared to undermine the independence of the court system. The action elicited numerous criticisms from fellow EU member states, and the European Commission threatened to take the matter to the European Court of Justice.[xii] This still-unfolding confrontation raised a daunting question: Are Warsaw and Brussels still committed to a future with Poland inside the EU?

Pursuing Polish Interests in the EU

Polish officials, who energetically sought to secure concrete benefits from EU membership for Polish citizens, developed a reputation in some Western EU capitals of always bargaining for more—more cohesion funding, more concessional finance, more technical assistance. Among experienced European diplomats, academics, and businesspeople, these Polish bargaining tactics elicited a variety of reactions.

Some said that Polish officials were transactional and at times unproductively hardheaded.[xiii] Others insisted Polish officials behaved perfectly appropriately: they were dogged and sometimes successful in their pursuit of benefits for Poland. Speaking about negotiations, one senior official from a neighboring government noted, “Everyone plays the same game. They say that the energy transition is going to be very, very, very costly, and someone has to pay.”[xiv] Some said that friction between and among EU member states was simply the price of doing business, something not to be exaggerated. A European diplomat argued that even in the face of the truly extraordinary challenges posed by the global pandemic, “there is a strong sense of solidarity. Who else do we have to rely upon? Just as in a family, there are some arguments. But we are a family. The typical mode of getting things done in the EU is to gather for meetings, where everyone shouts at each other about their respective positions. Then afterward, you go for a quiet coffee to agree on everything out of view of the cameras.”[xv]

Poles often note that they were the only EU country not to enter an economic recession during the financial crisis of 2008–2009 and have maintained consistent gross domestic product (GDP) growth ever since. Now, with another global recession unfolding due to the coronavirus, Poland again hopes to be well positioned to weather the potential storm. Its unemployment rate was 2.9 percent at the end of 2019. Poland’s technocratic prime minister, Mateusz Morawiecki, stated in early June 2020 that Poland would experience one of the smallest effects on GDP of all EU member states.[xvi] As a former economist, the prime minister has worked to be seen as a pragmatist in Brussels even as his party expresses populist overtones and social conservatism. Despite public declarations by President Duda or by the true PiS leader, Jaroslaw Kaczynski, about defending coal at all costs, the Morawiecki government is creating opportunities for clean energy growth and the eventual transition from a coal-dependent power sector.

#### Warming causes extinction.

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It’s been a grave winter for the health of our planet.

In Madrid, urgent climate talks dissolved into a disappointing stalemate. The public is informed and engaged in a new and promising way but is also more divided. We are close to a tipping point: a point at which the rate of change increases dramatically, and possibly irreversibly, towards a climate catastrophe.

When we talk about the concept of tipping points, we recognize that change isn’t linear – it’s exponential. We see examples of this all too frequently. As the planet warms, Arctic permafrost thaws, releasing methane and carbon dioxide that further accelerates the pace of change. And as the Earth loses more and more of its white, reflective surfaces, the planet more readily absorbs heat.

We’re close to some of nature’s tipping points. Reaching these would have disastrous implications for our planet and our way of life.

Man on the moon moment

But in Europe, a change is coming that could be crucial to containing our carbon emissions and limiting the effects of climate change.

On December 11, 2019, the European Commission announced the European Green Deal, a set of policy initiatives aimed at making this continent carbon neutral by 2050. The European Commission’s president, Ursula von der Leyen, called it Europe’s “man on the moon moment.”

The world’s track record with climate regulation has been patchy at best. So, what’s different about the European Green Deal?

For me, it marks a fundamental change in the way environmental and sustainability regulation is developed. Historically, change that is focused upon carbon emissions reduction or environmental protection has been weighed in terms of expense: what must we sacrifice to achieve these targets? This tends to shut down public and political discussion, and in my view, has critically undersold the opportunities that sustainable practices bring to the table.

Growth strategy

The Green Deal is not about penalizing businesses and people for doing things in a less sustainable way. It’s a growth strategy, integrated into every public policy plan, that hardwires a preference for sustainable initiatives into every aspect of Europe’s socioeconomic development.

This is an important distinction. When you look more deeply at sustainable solutions, you discover that they aren’t at odds with economic progress. They are, in fact, better in every way. Take LED lighting. It’s more resource-efficient. Less burdensome on the environment. It costs less over a lifetime. And it’s better for people, helping to improve quality of life. It can reduce road traffic accidents, deter crime, make you more productive, contribute to you breathing cleaner air. Who would say no to that?

We’ve said before that as we move into this all-determining decade of climate action, the time for talk is over. The European Green Deal presents a clear and non-negotiable ambition: to be climate neutral by 2050 at the latest.

To get there, we need intermediate milestones too, and that means a cut in emissions of more than half by 2030. This is in line with the recommendation of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, which advised a reduction of at least 55% by 2030.

To have our “man on the moon moment”, we need to walk the talk. At Signify, we have our own carbon commitment, to be carbon neutral by the end of this year.

We also call upon others to adopt programs like the Climate Group’s RE100 commitment to renewable energy, to participate in renovation programs that transform existing buildings into net zero carbon buildings, and to adopt a 100% electric vehicle goal for the corporate or the municipal car fleet, because doing these things brings with it progress. It demystifies climate action, it turns ambition into concrete steps, and it demonstrates the economic potential of a new and better way for our society to function.

Progress is not linear

Programs that start with only a few participants have the power to make a difference. We know that the detrimental effects of climate change on our planet are not linear, but the same can be said of our progress. History has shown that many transitions accelerate after reaching a certain momentum. We see this in the lighting sector.

At the end of 2006, incandescent light bulbs were still two thirds of our sales volume. In our last quarter, more than 80% of our revenue came from sustainable products, systems and services. The world has more people, bigger urban populations, and more light points than ever before, yet the proportion of global electricity consumption from lighting falls each year, from 19% in 2006, to 13% in 2018, and we expect it to fall further to 8% by 2030.

What happened? LED reached a tipping point. This successful decoupling of electricity consumption from use of light shows that choosing for sustainability does not need to come at a cost. This is just one example of such a decoupling – there can be many more. If we can achieve energy savings on such a scale across buildings, transportation, industry, our targets will be easily met.

To my mind, the European Green Deal can be our tipping point for good. With its broad scope, it reaches into the areas where we can have the most significant impact, and within these, create further tipping points for good.

It can change the way we approach regulation. It can prove to the world that sustainability and economic growth need not be at odds. And it can be a time we look back on as the moment when we joined together to divert our path to a better and more sustainable trajectory.

### 1AC—Plan

#### Thus, the Plan: The Russian Federation should ban lethal autonomous nuclear drone submarines.

Schneider ‘20 (Mark B. Schneider; Senior Analyst with the National Institute for Public Policy. Before retirement from DoD Senior Executive Service, Dr. Schneider served in a number of senior positions within the Office of Secretary of Defense for Policy including Principal Director for Forces Policy, Principal Director for Strategic Defense, Space and Verification Policy, Director for Strategic Arms Control Policy and Representative of the Secretary of Defense to the Nuclear Arms Control Implementation Commissions. He also served in the senior Foreign Service as a Member of the State Department Policy Planning Staff; “The Barbarians in the Bay: Russia’s Nuclear Armed Drone Submarine”; <https://www.realcleardefense.com/articles/2020/07/25/the_barbarians_in_the_bay_russias_nuclear_armed_drone_submarine_115493.html>, RealClear Defense, 7-25-2020)//SLC PK

Noted Russian journalist Pavel Felgenhauer warned that Status-6 "may further embolden the Kremlin to push for a new world order of its liking by intimidating the United States and its allies.” The Washington Post editorialized that Russia’s underwater nuclear drone “should raise alarm bells.” The Post is certainly correct about the implications of this weapon, but it is not, as the Post characterized it, a “tactical nuclear weapon.” Nor is it a torpedo but rather a drone submarine. The best description of it is an arms control concept included in the START and New START Treaties – a “new kind of strategic offensive arm.” It is probably the most destructive weapon in human history. Its use would cause massive loss of life and cause grave global environmental effects. As Chief arms control negotiator Ambassador Marshall Billingslea said, the Poseidon is a “terrible” weapon and should be [banned](https://dialog.proquest.com/professional/professionalnewsstand/docview/2419576540/fulltext/172C8BEE5801BBBDD92/2?accountid=155509&site=professionalnewsstand&t:ac=172C8BEE5801BBBDD92/1&t:cp=maintain/resultcitationblocksbrief&t:zoneid=transactionalZone_17363421876).

#### Broad bans are ineffective—partial bans are crucial to stop dangerous weapons while setting the stage for a broader treaty.

Kallenborn 20 - Zachary Kallenborn (expert on drone swarms, weapons of mass destruction, and WMD terrorism. His work has been published in the Nonproliferation Review, Studies in Conflict and Terrorism, Slate, Defense One, and War on the Rocks), "A Partial Ban on Autonomous Weapons Would Make Everyone Safer," Foreign Policy, 10-14-2020, https://foreignpolicy.com/2020/10/14/ai-drones-swarms-killer-robots-partial-ban-on-autonomous-weapons-would-make-everyone-safer/ WJ

Instead of a broad ban on all autonomous weapons, the international community should identify and focus restrictions on the highest-risk weapons: drone swarms and autonomous chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear weapons, known as CBRN weapons. A narrower focus would increase the likelihood of global agreement, while providing a normative foundation for broader restrictions.

In 2018, the tech company Intel flew 2,018 drones at once in a Guinness World Record-breaking light show in Folsom, California. Earlier this year, Russia and China flew light shows of more than 2,000 drones too. The drones carried flashy lights and were meant as modern fireworks, but similar drones could be designed for war with thousands of guns, bombs, and missiles.

A thousand-drone swarm has a thousand points of potential error. And because drones in a true swarm communicate with one another, errors may propagate throughout the swarm. For example, one drone may misidentify a cruise ship as an aircraft carrier, then unleash the full might of the swarm on a few thousand civilians.

The same may occur if the drone correctly identifies the cruise ship as not a target, but the word not is lost, due to simple accident or adversary jamming. Swarm communication also leads to emergent behavior—collective behaviors of the swarm that do not depend on the individual parts—that further reduces both the predictability and understandability of the weapon.

As P.W. Singer, a strategist and senior fellow at New America, wrote in his book Wired for War, “a swarm takes the action on its own, which may not always be exactly where and when the commander wants it. Nothing happens in a swarm directly, but rather through the complex relationships among the parts.”

Drone swarms pose a greater threat to powerful militaries, because cheap drones can be flung one after another against expensive platforms until they fall. In 2018, a group calling itself the Free Alawites Movement claimed responsibility for launching 13 drones made largely of plywood, duct tape, and lawnmower engines that attacked Russia’s Khmeimim Air Base in Syria.

The movement claimed the successful destruction of a $300 million S-400 surface-to-air missile system. (The exact identity of the “Free Alawites Movement” is unclear. The only attacks it has claimed are the Khmeimim attacks and another drone attack on a Russian naval base in Syria on the same day. Sources have also attributed the attacks to the Islamic State, Hayat Tahrir al-Sham, and Ahrar al-Sham.)

Russian officials acknowledged the drones flew autonomously and were preprogrammed to drop bombs on the base but claim no damage was done. (The Russian officials did not comment on whether the drones communicated with one another to make a true drone swarm.) However, in Libya, Turkish Bayraktar TB2 drones disabled at least nine Russian air defense systems. The Bayraktar drones are considerably more advanced than those used in Syria, but they illustrate the same principle: Drones pose major threats to air defenses and other expensive systems.

An adversary could fling tons of drones against a $1.8 billion USS Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer in an attempt to disable or destroy it and still have a cost advantage. Facing such a threat, great powers should choose to lead—rather than resist—the arms control charge for certain weapons. Yes, great powers would give up the potential to unleash their own massive swarms, but swarms are likely to favor weaker powers. If swarms are most effective when used en masse against big, expensive platforms, then major powers that possess such expensive equipment stand to lose the most. Swarms might also be easier to control.

A key arms control challenge for autonomous weapons is knowing if a weapon is actually autonomous. At root, autonomy is just a matter of programming the weapon to fire under given conditions, however simple or complex. A simple landmine explodes when enough weight is put upon it; an autonomous turret fires based on analyzed information collected from sensors and any design constraints. With autonomous weapons, an outside observer cannot tell whether the weapon operates under predesigned rules or is being controlled remotely. However, no human can reasonably control a swarm of thousands of drones.

The complexity is simply too much. They must monitor hundreds of video, infrared, or other feeds, while planning the swarm’s actions and deciding who to kill. Such a massive swarm must be autonomous, may be a weapon of mass destruction in its own right, and could carry traditional weapons of mass destruction.

Discussion of autonomous weapons takes place under the auspices of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons, assuming the weapon fires bullets, bombs, or missiles. But an autonomous weapon could just as readily be armed with CBRN agents.

Autonomous vehicles are a great way to deliver chemical, radiological, and biological weapons. An autonomous vehicle cannot get sick with anthrax, nor choke on chlorine. Drones can more directly target enemies, while adjusting trajectories based on local wind and humidity conditions. Plus, small drones can take to the air, fly indoors, and work together to carry out attacks. Operatives from the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria were reportedly quite interested in using drones to carry out radiological and potentially chemical attacks. North Korea also has an arsenal of chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons and a thousand-drone fleet.

When robots make decisions on nuclear weapons, the fate of humanity is at stake. In 1983, at the height of the Cold War, a Soviet early warning system concluded the United States had launched five nuclear missiles at the Soviet Union. The computer expressed the highest degree of confidence in the conclusion. The likely response: immediate nuclear retaliation to level U.S. cities and kill millions of American civilians. Fortunately, Stanislav Petrov, the Soviet officer in charge of the warning system, concluded the computer was wrong. Petrov was correct. Without him, millions of people would be dead.

New restrictions on autonomous CBRN weapons should be a relatively easy avenue for new restrictions. A wide range of treaties already restrict production, export, and use of CBRN weapons from the Geneva Convention to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and the Chemical Weapons Convention. At minimum, governments could collectively agree to incorporate autonomous weapons in all applicable CBRN weapons treaties.

This would signal a greater willingness to adopt restrictions on autonomous weapons without a requirement to resolve the question of autonomous weapons with conventional payloads. Of course, a ban may require giving up capabilities like a nuclear “dead hand”—in the words of proponents, “an automated strategic response system based on artificial intelligence”—but nuclear weapons experts are overwhelmingly against the idea. The risks to great powers of increased CBRN weapons proliferation and accidental nuclear war are far greater than any deterrent advantage already gained with a robust conventional and nuclear force.

Placing autonomous weapons on the global agenda in the first place is a definite success—a global treaty can never be made if no one cares enough to even talk about it—but the question is what happens next. Do government experts simply keep talking or do these meetings lead to actionable treaties?

What combination of inducements, export controls, transparency measures, sanctions, and, in extreme events, the use of force are best suited to preventing the threat? Historically, comprehensive bans took decades—the global community took about 70 years to go from the Geneva Protocols against chemical weapons usage to states giving up the weapons—but autonomous weapons are growing and proliferating rapidly.

Countries might not be willing to ban the weapons outright, but banning the highest-risk autonomous weapons—drone swarms and autonomous weapons armed with CBRN agents—could provide a foundation for reducing autonomous weapons risks. Great powers would give up little, while improving their own security.

## 1AC Kritik

### 1AC—Advantage

#### The doomsday drone is here. Russia is serious about getting Poseidon in the ocean ASAP—most recent evidence from a few weeks ago means the aff is try or die.

[David Axe (1-21-2021), Forbes Aerospace and Defense Staff, “Russia Is Building Four Special Submarines To Haul Its Weird Doomsday Drone,” Forbes, [https://www.forbes.com/sites/davidaxe/2021/01/21/russia-is-building-four-special-submarines-to-haul-its-grotesque-doomsday-drone/?sh=298680943703]//SLC](https://www.forbes.com/sites/davidaxe/2021/01/21/russia-is-building-four-special-submarines-to-haul-its-grotesque-doomsday-drone/?sh=298680943703%5d//CHS) PK

Six years after Russia’s Poseidon doomsday torpedo first appeared in a television camera’s fleeting shot of a briefing book for Russian President Vladimir Putin, it’s still not totally clear why the Kremlin thinks the bizarre radiological weapon is a good investment.

But it is clear Moscow is serious about deploying Poseidon, a 79-foot-long, nuclear-powered underwater drone armed with a huge dirty-bomb warhead that could irradiate U.S. coastal cities and naval bases in the late stages of a civilization-ending nuclear war.

Not only is the Kremlin building a new base for storing as many as 30 Poseidons, it’s also outfitting at least four nuclear-powered submarines specifically for carrying the huge doomsday torpedoes.

Because Poseidon consumes so much of a launching vessel’s internal space, these four subs won’t necessarily be terribly useful in other roles. Poseidon is “grotesque,” to quote Kingston Reif, a nuclear expert with the Arms Control Association in Washington, D.C. But it’s also a big deal to the Russian submarine fleet.

Outside observers got their first glimpse of Poseidon in November 2015, during a television broadcast of a meeting between Putin and top military officials in the Black Sea city of Sochi.

A camera from government-owned Channel One captured a fleeting glance at a briefing book, in which were visible schematics for Poseidon and two different classes of carrier submarines—the Project 09852 Belgorod and the Project 09851 Khabarovsk.

Belgorod is the older of the pair. A modified, stretched variant of the Oscar-II-class cruise-missile submarine, the 604-foot-long Belgorod is one of the biggest submarines ever. She spent a staggering 28 years under construction and in trials before finally commissioning in 2020.

The Russian fleet reportedly has configured Belgorod for two main missions. She has fitting on her ventral hull for latching onto the Project 210 Losharik, an approximately 200-foot-long, deep-diving, nuclear-powered spy submarine.

Losharik is most famous for suffering a fatal fire in 2019. The Kremlin reportedly planned to repair the vessel and return her to service.

Belgorod’s other mission is to carry as many as six Poseidons in bow tubes. The idea would be for Belgorod to fire the Poseidons from the relative safety of Russian coastal waters after an exchange of nuclear missiles has devastated both Russia and the United States. The Poseidons would cruise across the ocean and, days later, explode along the American coast.

The three Khabarovsks—two under construction and one planned—reportedly also carry six Poseidons. It’s unclear whether the approximately 390-foot boats, which are shorter variants of the Borei-class ballistic-missile submarine—also possess the ventral bay for hooking onto a mini-sub such as Losharik.

The Russian submarine fleet slowly has been shrinking as fewer new vessels replace more numerous Cold War-vintage boats. In coming decades Moscow’s undersea fleet might stabilize at a sustainable structure of around a dozen each vessels of three major types—diesel-electric attack boats, nuclear-powered attack boats and nuclear-powered ballistic-missile boats.

That Moscow is willing to spend billions of dollars building four Poseidon-carriers—together representing more than a tenth of the overall future undersea fleet—is testimony to the importance Putin’s regime places on the doomsday torpedo.

Reif tried to make sense of it. He said he thinks Poseidon is a response to America’s own heavy investment in missile-defense systems that, in theory, could intercept nuclear-tipped ballistic missiles.

Missile-defenses don’t work very well in practice, but Moscow apparently isn’t taking any chances. Putin’s regime could view Poseidon and its launching subs as an underwater insurance policy against America getting lucky and shooting down ballistic nukes. “Their investment in these systems suggests a real concern about said defenses,” Reif said.

#### Poseidon enables Putin to terrorize NATO—a strike collapses the organization leads to forced US draw in, and global Armageddon.

[Alex Lockie (2-11-2019), Senior Front Page Editor at Business Insider, “The real purpose of Russia's 100-megaton underwater nuclear doomsday device,” Business Insider, [https://www.businessinsider.com/the-real-purpose-of-russias-poseidon-nuclear-doomsday-device-2019-2]//SLC](https://www.businessinsider.com/the-real-purpose-of-russias-poseidon-nuclear-doomsday-device-2019-2%5d//CHS) PK

Davis called the Poseidon a "third-strike vengeance weapon" — meaning Russia would attack a NATO member, the US would respond, and a devastated Russia would flip the switch on a hidden nuke that would lay waste to an entire US seaboard.

According to Davis, the Poseidon would give Russia a "coercive power" to discourage a NATO response to a Russian first strike.

Russia here would seek to not only reoccupy Eastern Europe "but coerce NATO to not act upon an Article 5 declaration and thus lose credibility," he said, referring to the alliance's key clause that guarantees a collective response to an attack on a member state.

Russian President Vladimir Putin "has made it clear he seeks the collapse of NATO," Davis continued. "If NATO doesn't come to the aid of a member state, it's pretty much finished as a defense alliance."

Essentially, Russia could use the Poseidon as an insurance policy while it picks apart NATO. The US, for fear that its coastlines could become irradiated for decades by a stealthy underwater torpedo it has no defenses against, might seriously question how badly it needs to save Estonia from Moscow's clutches.

"Putin may calculate that NATO will blink first rather than risk escalation to a nuclear exchange," Davis said. "Poseidon accentuates the risks to NATO in responding to any Russian threat greatly, dramatically increasing Russia's coercive power."

Davis also suggested the Poseidon would make a capable but heavy-handed naval weapon, which he said could most likely take out an entire carrier strike group in one shot.

Russia has recently signaled its willingness to use nuclear weapons to coerce the West [with its violation of the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty](https://www.businessinsider.com/russia-threatens-us-with-nuclear-doomsday-device-after-inf-failure-2019-2), Davis said. These missiles are purpose-built for taking out European capitals from the Russian mainland.

But Russia has frequently engaged in nuclear saber-rattling when it feels encircled by NATO forces, and so far it has steered clear of confronting NATO with kinetic forces.

"Whether that will involve actual use or just the threat of use is the uncertainty," Davis said.

While it's hard to imagine a good reason for laying the kind of destruction the Poseidon promises, Davis warned that we shouldn't assume the Russians think about nuclear warfare the same way the US does.

#### Putin seeks the collapse of the American led international order—he’s identified NATO as the key target to do that.

Kagan, 19 - American resident scholar at the American Enterprise Institute, and a former professor of military history at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, less famous brother of our favorite neighborhood neocon Robert Kagan

Frederick W. Kagan, “CONFRONTING THE RUSSIAN CHALLENGE: A NEW APPROACH FOR THE U.S.,” Institute for the Study of War. June 2019. <https://www.politico.com/f/?id=0000016b-6eef-dc80-a3ff-ffff778c0000>

The Russian threat’s effectiveness results mainly from the West’s weaknesses. NATO’s European members are not meeting their full commitments to the alliance to maintain the fighting power needed to deter and defeat the emerging challenge from Moscow. Increasing political polarization and the erosion of trust by Western peoples in their governments creates vulnerabilities that the Kremlin has adroitly exploited.

Moscow’s success in manipulating Western perceptions of and reactions to its activities has fueled the development of an approach to warfare that the West finds difficult to understand, let alone counter. Shaping the information space is the primary effort to which Russian military operations, even conventional military operations, are frequently subordinated in this way of war. Russia obfuscates its activities and confuses the discussion so that many people throw up their hands and say simply, “Who knows if the Russians really did that? Who knows if it was legal?”—thus paralyzing the West’s responses.

Putin’s Program

Putin is not simply an opportunistic predator. Putin and the major institutions of the Russian Federation have a program as coherent as that of any Western leader. Putin enunciates his objectives in major speeches, and his ministers generate detailed formal expositions of Russia’s military and diplomatic aims and its efforts and the methods and resources it uses to pursue them. These statements cohere with the actions of Russian officials and military units on the ground. The common perception that he is opportunistic arises from the way that the Kremlin sets conditions to achieve these objectives in advance. Putin closely monitors the domestic and international situation and decides to execute plans when and if conditions require and favor the Kremlin. The aims of Russian policy can be distilled into the following:

Domestic Objectives Putin is an autocrat who seeks to retain control of his state and the succession. He seeks to keep his power circle content, maintain his own popularity, suppress domestic political opposition in the name of blocking a “color revolution” he falsely accuses the West of preparing, and expand the Russian economy.

Putin has not fixed the economy, which remains corrupt, inefficient, and dependent on petrochemical and mineral exports. He has focused instead on ending the international sanctions regime to obtain the cash, expertise, and technology he needs. Information operations and hybrid warfare undertakings in Europe are heavily aimed at this objective.

External Objectives

Putin’s foreign policy aims are clear: end American dominance and the “unipolar” world order, restore “multipolarity,” and reestablish Russia as a global power and broker. He identifies NATO as an adversary and a threat and seeks to negate it. He aims to break Western unity, establish Russian suzerainty over the former Soviet States, and regain a global footprint.

Putin works to break Western unity by invalidating the collective defense provision of the North Atlantic Treaty (Article 5), weakening the European Union, and destroying the faith of Western societies in their governments.

He is reestablishing a global military footprint similar in extent the Soviet Union’s, but with different aims. He is neither advancing an ideology, nor establishing bases from which to project conventional military power on a large scale. He aims rather to constrain and shape America’s actions using small numbers of troops and agents along with advanced anti-air and anti-shipping systems.

Recommendations A sound U.S. grand strategic approach to Russia: • Aims to achieve core American national security objectives positively rather than to react defensively to Russian actions; • Holistically addresses all U.S. interests globally as they relate to Russia rather than considering them theater-by-theater; • Does not trade core American national security interests in one theater for those in another, or sacrifice one vital interest for another; • Achieves American objectives by means short of war if at all possible; • Deters nuclear war, the use of any nuclear weapons, and other Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD); • Accepts the risk of conventional conflict with Russia while seeking to avoid it and to control escalation, while also ensuring that American forces will prevail at any escalation level; • Contests Russian information operations and hybrid warfare undertakings; and • Extends American protection and deterrence to U.S. allies in NATO and outside of NATO. Such an approach involves four principal lines of effort. Constrain Putin’s Resources. Russia uses hybrid warfare approaches because of its relative poverty and inability to field large and modern military systems that could challenge the U.S. and NATO symmetrically. Lifting or reducing the current sanctions regime or otherwise facilitating Russia’s access to wealth and technology could give Putin the resources he needs to mount a much more significant conventional threat—an aim he had been pursuing in the early 2000s when high oil prices and no sanctions made it seem possible. Disrupt Hybrid Operations. Identifying, exposing, and disrupting hybrid operations is a feasible, if difficult, undertaking. New structures in the U.S. military, State Department, and possibly National Security Council Staff are likely needed to: 1. Coordinate efforts to identify and understand hybrid operations in preparation and underway; 2. Develop recommendations for action against hybrid operations that the U.S. government has identified but are not yet publicly known; 3. Respond to the unexpected third-party exposure of hybrid operations whether the U.S. government knew about the operations or not; 4. Identify in advance the specific campaign and strategic objectives that should be pursued when the U.S. government deliberately exposes a particular hybrid operation or when third parties expose hybrid operations of a certain type in a certain area; 5. Shape the U.S. government response, particularly in the information space, to drive the blowback effects of the exposure of a particular hybrid operation toward achieving those identified objectives; and 6. Learn lessons from past and current counter-hybrid operations undertakings, improve techniques, and prepare for future evolutions of Russian approaches in coordination with allies and partners. The U.S. should also develop a counter-information operations approach that uses only truth against Russian narratives aimed at sowing discord within the West and at undermining the legitimacy of Western governments.

Delegitimize Putin as a Mediator and Convener.

Recognition as one of the poles of a multipolar world order is vital to Putin. It is part of the greatness he promises the Russian people in return for taking their liberty. Getting a “seat at the table” of Western-led endeavors is insufficient for him because he seeks to transform the international system fundamentally. He finds the very language of being offered a seat at the West’s table patronizing.

He has gained much more legitimacy as an international partner in Syria and Ukraine than his behavior warrants. He benefits from the continuous desire of Western leaders to believe that Moscow will help them out of their own problems if only it is approached in the right way.

The U.S. and its allies must instead recognize that Putin is a self-declared adversary who seeks to weaken, divide, and harm them—never to strengthen or help them. He has made clear in word and deed that his interests are antithetical to the West’s. The West should therefore stop treating him as a potential partner, but instead require him to demonstrate that he can and will act to advance rather than damage the West’s interests before engaging with him at high levels.

The West must not trade interests in one region for Putin’s help in another, even if there is reason to believe that he would actually be helpful. Those working on American policy in Syria and the Levant must recognize that the U.S. cannot afford to subordinate its global Russia policy to pursue limited interests, however important, within the Middle East. Recognizing Putin as a mediator or convener in Syria—to constrain Iran’s activities in the south of that country, for example—is too high a price tag to pay for undermining a coherent global approach to the Russian threat. Granting him credibility in that role there enhances his credibility in his self-proclaimed role as a mediator rather than belligerent in Ukraine. The tradeoff of interests is unacceptable.

Nor should the U.S. engage with Putin about Ukraine until he has committed publicly in word and deed to what should be the minimum non-negotiable Western demand—the recognition of the full sovereignty of all the former Soviet states, specifically including Ukraine, in their borders as of the dates of their admission as independent countries to the United Nations, and the formal renunciation (including the repealing of relevant Russian legislation) of any right to interfere in the internal affairs of those states

Defend NATO. The increased Russian threat requires increased efforts to defend NATO against both conventional and hybrid threats. All NATO members must meet their commitments to defense spending targets—and should be prepared to go beyond those commitments to field the forces necessary to defend themselves and other alliance members. The Russian base in Syria poses a threat to Western operations in the Middle East that are essential to protecting our own citizens and security against terrorist threats and Iran. Neither the U.S. nor NATO is postured to protect the Mediterranean or fight for access to the Middle East through the eastern Mediterranean. NATO must now prepare to field and deploy additional forces to ensure that it can win that fight. The West should also remove as much ambiguity as possible from the NATO commitment to defend member states threatened by hybrid warfare. The 2018 Brussels Declaration affirming the alliance’s intention to defend member states attacked by hybrid warfare was a good start. The U.S. and other NATO states with stronger militaries should go further by declaring that they will come to the aid of a member state attacked by conventional or hybrid means regardless of whether Article 5 is formally activated, creating a pre-emptive coalition of the willing to deter Russian aggression. Bilateral Negotiations. Recognizing that Russia is a self-defined adversary and threat does not preclude direct negotiations. The U.S. negotiated several arms control treaties with the Soviet Union and has negotiated with other self-defined enemies as well. It should retain open channels of communication and a willingness to work together with Russia on bilateral areas in which real and verifiable agreement is possible, even while refusing to grant legitimacy to Russian intervention in conflicts beyond its borders. Such areas could include strategic nuclear weapons, cyber operations, interference in elections, the Intermediate Nuclear Forces treaty, and other matters related to direct Russo-American tensions and concerns. There is little likelihood of any negotiation yielding fruit at this point, but there is no need to refuse to talk with Russia on these and similar issues in hopes of laying the groundwork for more successful discussions in the future. INTRODUCTION The Russian challenge is a paradox. Russia’s nuclear arsenal poses the only truly existential threat to the United States and its allies, but Russia’s conventional military forces have never recovered anything like the power of the Soviet military. Those forces pose a limited and uneven threat to America’s European allies and to U.S. armed forces, partially because many U.S. allies are not meeting their NATO defense spending commitments. Russia is willing and able to act more rapidly and accept greater risk than Western countries because of its autocratic nature. Its cyber capabilities are among the best in the world, and it is developing an information-based way of war that the West has not collectively properly understood, let alone begun developing a response to. That information-based warfare has included attempts to affect and disrupt elections in the U.S. and allied states. The complexity and paradoxical nature of the Russian threat is perhaps its greatest strength. It is one of the key reasons for the failure of successive American administrations and U.S. partners around the world to develop a coherent strategy for securing themselves and their people and advancing their interests in the face of Russian efforts against them. The West’s lack of continuous focus on the Russian challenge has created major gaps in our collective understanding of the problem—another key reason for our failure to develop a sound counter-strategy. American concerns about Russia are bifurcated, moreover. Many Americans see the Russian threat primarily as a domestic problem: Moscow’s interference in the 2016 presidential election, attempts to interfere in the 2018 midterm election, and efforts to shape the 2020 elections. The U.S. national security establishment acknowledges the domestic problem but is generally more concerned with the military challenges a seemingly reviving Russia poses to U.S. NATO allies and other partners in the Euro-Atlantic region; with Russia’s activities in places like Syria and Venezuela; and with Russia’s outreach to rogue states such as North Korea and Iran. Even that overseas security concern, however, is pervaded by complexity and some confusion. The recommendations of the current U.S. National Security Strategy (NSS) and National Defense Strategy (NDS) are dominated by responses to much-trumpeted Russian investments in the modernization of conventional and nuclear forces. At the same time, those documents acknowledge the importance of Russian capabilities at the lower end of the military spectrum and in the non-military realms of information, cyber, space, information, and economic efforts. Americans thus generally agree that Russia is a threat to which the U.S. must respond in some way, but the varying definitions of that threat hinder discussion of the appropriate response. Russia has entangled itself sufficiently in American partisan politics that conversation about the national security threat it poses is increasingly polarized. We must find a way to transcend this polarization to develop a strategy to secure the U.S. and its allies and advance U.S. interests, despite Russian efforts to undermine America’s domestic politics. AMERICAN INTERESTS—WHAT IS AT STAKE The Ideals of the American Republic The stakes in the Russo-American conflict are high. Russian leader Vladimir Putin seeks to undermine confidence in democratically elected institutions and the institution of democracy itself in the United States and the West.1 He is trying to interfere with the ability of American and European peoples to choose their leaders freely2 and is undermining the rules-based international order on which American prosperity and security rest. His actions in Ukraine and Syria have driven the world toward greater violence and disorder. The normalization of Putin’s illegal actions over time will likely prompt other states to emulate his behavior and cause further deterioration of the international system. Moscow’s war on the very idea of truth has been perhaps the most damaging Russian undertaking in recent years. The most basic element of the Russian information strategy, which we will consider in more detail presently, is the creation of a sense of uncertainty around any important issue. Russia’s strategy does not require persuading Western audiences that its actions in Ukraine’s Crimean Peninsula or the Kerch Strait, which connects the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov, for example, were legal or justified.3 It is enough to create an environment in which many people say simply, “who knows?” The “who knows?” principle feeds powerfully into the phenomena of viral “fake news,” as well as other falsehoods and accusations of falsehoods which, if left unchecked, will ultimately make civil discourse impossible. The Kremlin’s propaganda does not necessarily need its target audiences to believe in lies; its primary goal is to make sure they do not believe in the truth. This aspect of Putin’s approach is one of the greatest obstacles to forming an accurate assessment and making recommendations. It is also one of the most insidious threats the current Russian strategy poses to the survival of the American republic. The good news is that the war on the idea of truth does not involve military operations or violence, though it can lead to both. The bad news is that it is extraordinarily difficult to identify, let alone to counter. Yet we must counter it if we are to survive as a functioning polity. American Prosperity The debate about the trade deficit and tariffs only underscores the scale and importance of the role Europe plays in the American economy. Europe is the largest single market for American exports and the second-largest source of American imports, with trade totaling nearly $1.1 trillion.4 American exports to Europe are estimated to support 2.6 million jobs in the U.S.5 Significant damage to the European economy, let alone the collapse of major European states or Europe itself, would devastate the U.S. economy as well. American prosperity is tightly interwoven with Europe’s. American prosperity also depends on Europe remaining largely democratic, with market-based economies, and subscribing to the idea of a rulesbased international order. The re-emergence of authoritarian regimes in major European states, which would most likely be fueled by a resurgence of extremist nationalism, would lead to the collapse of the entire European system, including its economic foundations. European economic cooperation rests on European peace, which in turn rests on the continued submergence of extremist nationalism and adherence to a common set of values. Russian actions against Western democracies and support for extremist groups, often with nationalist agendas, reinforce negative trends emerging within Europe itself. These actions therefore constitute a threat to American prosperity and security over the long term. The American economy also depends on the free flow of goods across the world’s oceans and through critical maritime chokepoints. Russia posed no threat to those chokepoints after the Soviet Union fell, but that situation is changing. The establishment of what appears to be a permanent Russian air, land, and naval base on the Syrian coast gives Russia a foothold in the Mediterranean for the first time since 1991. Russian efforts to negotiate bases in Egypt and Libya and around the Horn of Africa would allow Moscow to threaten maritime and air traffic through the Suez Canal and the Red Sea.6 Since roughly 3.9 million barrels of oil per day transited the Suez in 2016, to say nothing of the food and other cargo moving through the canal, Russian interference would have significant impacts on the global economy—and therefore on America’s economy.7 Russia’s efforts to establish control over the maritime routes opening in the Arctic also threaten the free movement of goods through an emerging set of maritime chokepoints.8 Those efforts are even more relevant to the U.S. because the Arctic routes ultimately pass through the Bering Strait, the one (maritime) border America shares with Russia. Russian actions can hinder or prevent the U.S. and its allies from benefiting from the opening of the Arctic. Russia is already bringing China into the Arctic region through energy investment projects and negotiations about the use of the Northern Sea Route, despite the fact that China is a state with no Arctic territory or claims.9 NATO The collective defense provision of the NATO treaty (known as Article 5) has been invoked only once in the 70-year history of the alliance: on September 12, 2001, on behalf of the United States. NATO military forces provided limited but important assistance to the U.S. in the immediate wake of the 9/11 attacks, including air surveillance patrols over the United States, and have continued supporting the U.S. in the long wars that followed. NATO established military missions in both Iraq and Afghanistan in the next two decades, deploying tens of thousands of soldiers to fight and to train America’s Iraqi and Afghan partners. American allies, primarily NATO members, have suffered more than 1,100 deaths in the Afghan war, slightly under half the number of U.S. deaths.10 The non-U.S. NATO member states collectively spent roughly $313 billion on defense in 2018—about half the American defense budget.11 The failure of most NATO members to meet their commitment to spend 2 percent of their GDP on defense is lamentable and must be addressed. But the fact remains that the alliance and its members have spent large amounts of blood and treasure fighting alongside American forces against the enemies that attacked the U.S. homeland two decades ago, and that they provide strength and depth to the defense of Europe, which remains of vital strategic importance to the United States. The U.S. could not come close to replacing them without significantly increasing its own defense spending and the size of the U.S. military—to say nothing of American casualties. NATO is also the most effective alliance in world history by the standard that counts most: it has achieved its founding objective for 70 years. The alliance was formed in 1949 to defend Western Europe from the threat of Soviet aggression, ideally by deterring Soviet attack, and has never needed to fight to defend itself. The United States always provided the preponderance of military force for the alliance, but the European military contribution has always been critical as well. American conventional forces throughout the Cold War depended on the facilities and the combat power of European militaries, and the independent nuclear deterrents of France and Great Britain were likely as important to deterring overt Soviet aggression as America’s nuclear arsenal. The Soviets might have come to doubt that the U.S. would risk nuclear annihilation to defend Europe, but they never doubted that France and Britain would resort to nuclear arms in the face of a Soviet invasion. Has NATO become irrelevant with the passing of the Cold War and the drawdown of U.S. forces from Iraq and Afghanistan? Only if the threat of war has passed and Europe itself has become irrelevant to the United States. Neither is the case. Europe’s survival, prosperity, and democratic values remain central to America’s well-being, as noted above, and today’s global environment makes war more likely than it has been since the collapse of the Soviet Union. It is not a given that Europe will remain democratic and a part of the international rules-based order if NATO crumbles. The U.S. can and should continue to work with its European partners to increase their defense expenditures and, more to the point, military capabilities (for which the percent of GDP spent on defense is not a sufficient proxy). The U.S. must also recognize the centrality of the alliance to America’s own security, as both the National Security Strategy and the National Defense Strategy do.12 The maintenance and defense of NATO itself is a core national security interest of the United States. Cyber Russia is one of the world’s leading cyber powers, competing with the U.S. and China for the top spot, at least in offensive cyber capabilities. Russian hacking has become legendary in the U.S. thanks to Russia’s efforts to influence the 2016 presidential campaign, but Russia has turned its cyber capabilities against its neighbors in other damaging ways. Russia attacked Estonia in 2007 with a massive distributed denial-of-service attack. It attacked Ukrainian computers with the NotPetya malware in 2017, which eventually caused billions of dollars in damage, including in the Americas.13 It also employed cyberattacks in coordination with its ground invasions of Georgia in 2008 and Ukraine in 2014. Fears of Russian cyber capabilities are warranted. This report does not consider the Russian cyber challenge in detail because others with far more technical expertise and support are actively engaged in combating it, defending against it, and deterring it. Our sole contribution in this area will be to consider it in the specific context of information operations support for hybrid operations in the recommendations section below. This approach stems from the recognition that the Kremlin’s cyber operations largely serve as enablers for its larger campaigns, rather than as a main effort. One must note, however, that while deterrence with conventional and nuclear forces prevents attacks, the United States is subject to cyberattack every day and has not established an effective means of retaliation, and thus deterrence. Weapons of Mass Destruction Russia’s nuclear arsenal is large enough to destroy the United States completely. The U.S. currently has no fielded ability to defend against a full-scale Russian nuclear attack—nor can Russia defend against a U.S. nuclear attack. American missile defense systems, by design, do not have the characteristics or scale necessary to shoot down any important fraction of the number of warheads the Russians have aimed at the U.S. from land- and sea-based launch platforms. America’s security against Russian nuclear attack today rests on the same principle as it has since the Russians first acquired nuclear weapons: deterrence. Russia also lacks the ability to shoot down American land- or sea-launched missiles and may not even be able reliably to shoot down U.S. nuclear-armed fifth-generation bombers. Deterrence is extremely likely to continue to work against Putin, who is a rational actor without the kinds of apocalyptic visions that might lead another leader to opt for annihilation in pursuit of some delusional greater good.14 The U.S. must pursue necessary modernization of its nuclear arsenal to sustain the credibility of its nuclear deterrent forces, but there is no reason to fear that deterrence will fail against Putin if it does so.15 It is less clear that Russia will continue to abide by its commitments to abjure chemical weapons, however. Russian agents have already conducted several chemical attacks, bizarrely using distinctive, military-grade chemical agents in attempted assassinations in the United Kingdom.16 Putin has also given top cover to Syrian President Bashar al-Assad’s use of chemical weapons against his own people, despite Russia’s formal role in guaranteeing Assad’s adherence to his 2013 promise to destroy his chemical weapons stockpile and refrain from any such use.17 Periodic Russian-inspired “rumors” that Western military personnel and Ukraine—which has no chemical weapons program—were planning to use chemical weapons on Ukrainian territory raise the concern that Russian agents provocateurs might conduct false flag operations of their own.18 Russia has the capability to produce chemical weapons at will—as does any industrialized state—but it is now showing that it may be willing to do so and to use them. The Soviet Union also maintained a vibrant biological weapons program. Russia has not thus far shown any signs of having restarted it or of having any intent to do so. The completely false claims that the U.S. has built biological weapons facilities in Russia’s neighboring states raise some concern on this front, since they could theoretically provide cover for the use of Russia’s own biological weapons, but they are more likely intended to influence the information space and justify other Russian actions.19 Terrorism Russia poses several challenges to any sound American approach to counter-terrorism. In addition to Iran, the world’s most prolific state sponsor of terrorism, Moscow’s preferred partners in the Middle East are those whose actions most directly fuel the spread of Salafi-jihadi groups. Russia encouraged and supported systematic efforts to eliminate moderate, secular opposition groups in Syria to the benefit of the Salafi-jihadi groups. Putin aims to expel or constrain the U.S. in the Middle East and establish his own forces in key locations that would allow him to disrupt American efforts to re-engage.20 Russia is the co-leader of a political and military coalition that includes Iran, Lebanese Hezbollah, the Assad regime, and Iranian-controlled Iraqi Shi’a militias.21 Russia provides most of the air support to that coalition in Syria, as well as special forces troops (SPETSNAZ), intelligence capabilities, air defense, and long-range missile strikes.22 That coalition’s campaign of sectarian cleansing has driven millions of people from their homes, fueling the refugee crisis that has damaged Europe.23 The coalition seeks to reimpose a minoritarian ‘Alawite dictatorship in Syria and a militantly anti-American and anti–Sunni Arab government in Iraq.24 The atrocities Russian forces themselves have committed, including deliberate and precise airstrikes against hospitals, have increased the sense of desperation within the Sunni Arab community in Syria, which Salafi-jihadi groups such as ISIS and al Qaeda have exploited.25 Russia supported Assad’s campaign to destroy the non-Salafi-jihadi opposition groups opposing him—particularly those backed by the U.S.—to aid the narrative that the only choices in Syria were Assad’s government or the Salafi-jihadis.26 That narrative was false in 2015 when Russian forces entered the fight but has become much truer following their efforts.27 Russia backed this undertaking with military force, but even more powerfully with information operations that continually hammered on the theme that the U.S. itself was backing terrorists in Syria and Russia was fighting ISIS.28 The insidiousness of the Russian demands that the U.S. remove its forces from Syria is masked by the current U.S. administration’s desire to do exactly that.29 One can argue the merits of keeping American troops in Syria or pulling them out— and this is not the place for that discussion—but the choice should be America’s. At the moment it still is. The consolidation of Russian anti-access/ area-denial (A2/AD) systems in Syria, however, together with the prospect of the withdrawal (or expulsion) of American forces from Iraq (or the closure of Iraqi airspace to support U.S. operations in Syria), could severely complicate American efforts to strike against terrorist threats that will likely re-emerge in Syria over time.30 The more the U.S. relies on an over-the-horizon strategy of precision strikes against terrorists actively planning attacks on the American homeland, the more vulnerable it becomes to the potential disruption of those strikes by Russian air defense systems, whether operated openly by Russians or nominally by their local partners. RUSSIA’S OBJECTIVES Mention of Putin’s objectives or of any systematic effort to achieve them almost always elicits as a response the assertion that Putin has no plan: Putin has no strategy; there is no Russian grand strategy, and so on. The other extreme of the debate considers Putin a calculated strategist with a grand master plan. The question of whether Putin has a plan, however that word is meant by those who assert that he does not, has important consequences for any American strategy to advance U.S. interests with regard to Russia. The trouble is that it is not clear what it would mean for Putin to have a plan or to lack one. We must first consider that more abstract question before addressing whether he has one. To have a plan usually means to have articulated goals, specific methods by which one will seek to achieve those goals, and identified means required for those methods to succeed. Goals, methods, and means can range from very specific to extremely vague and can be more flexible or more rigid. Specificity and flexibility can vary among the elements of this triad, moreover—goals may be very specific and rigid, methods general and flexible, means specific and flexible, or any other logical combination. When considering the question of Putin’s plan, therefore, we must break the discussion down into these four components: Does he have goals? Has he determined methods of achieving his goals? Has he specified resources required for those methods? How specific and how flexible are his goals, his methods, and the resources he allocates? Putting this discussion in context is helpful. Does a U.S. president have “a plan”? Not in any technical or literal sense. Every U.S. administration produces not a plan, but a National Security Strategy that is generally long on objectives—often reasonably specific—and very short on details of implementation (methods). Different national security advisers oversee processes within the White House to build out implementation details to greater or lesser degrees, but the actual implementation plans (methods) are developed by the relevant Cabinet departments. Those departments are also generally responsible for determining the resources that will be needed to implement their plans. The White House must then approve both the plans themselves and the allocation of the requested resources—and then must persuade Congress actually to appropriate the resources in the way the White House wishes to allocate them. This entire process takes more than a year from the start of a new administration and is never complete—the world changes, personnel turn over, and annual budget cycles and mid-term elections cause significant flutter. The one thing that does not happen is that a president receives and signs a “plan” with clear goals, detailed and specified methods, and the specific resources required, which is then executed.31 Putin does not have more of a plan than the U.S. does. It is virtually certain that he also lacks any such clear single document laying out the goals, methods, and means that he and his ministers are executing. But does he have as much of a plan as Presidents George W. Bush, Barack Obama, and Donald Trump have had? By all external signs, he does.

Putin has clearly articulated a series of overarching objectives and goals for Russia’s foreign policy and national security. Putin has been continuously communicating them through various media, including Russia’s doctrinal documents, regular speeches, his senior subordinates, and the Kremlin’s vast propaganda machine for the past two decades.

Russia has a foreign policy concept similar in scope and framing to the U.S. National Security Strategy, a military doctrine similar to the U.S. National Defense Strategy, and a series of other strategies (such as maritime, information security, and energy security) relating to the other components of national power and interest.32 These documents remain very much living concepts and have gone through multiple revisions in the decades since the fall of the Soviet Union.

Through regular speeches, Putin consistently communicates his goals and the key narratives that underpin Russian foreign policy. He makes an annual speech to the Russian Federal Assembly that is similar in some respects to the U.S. president’s State of the Union address. Putin’s addresses tend to be even more specific (and much more boring) in presenting the previous year’s accomplishments and an outline of goals and intentions for the next year.33 Russia’s doctrines and concepts match Putin’s speeches closely enough to suggest that there is some connection between them. Putin also makes other regular speeches, including at the UN General Assembly, the Valdai Discussion Club, the Munich Security Conference at times, and during lengthy press conferences with the Russian media. These remarks are usually rather specific in their presentation of his objectives and sometimes, some of the means by which he intends to pursue them. Such speeches are neither less frequent nor less specific than the major policy speeches of American presidents.

The widespread belief that Putin is simply or even primarily an opportunist who reacts to American or European mistakes is thus erroneous. Nor is Putin’s most common rhetorical trope—that he is the innocent victim forced to defend Russia against unjustified Western aggression—tethered to reality.34 Putin’s statements, key Russian national security documents, and the actions of Putin’s senior subordinates over the two decades of his reign cannot be distilled into a “plan,” but rather represent a set of grand strategic aims and strategic and operational campaigns underway to achieve them.

Putin has remained open and consistent about his core objectives since his rise to power in 1999: the preservation of his regime, the end of American “global hegemony,” and the restoration of Russia as a mighty force to be reckoned with on the international stage. Some of his foreign policy pursuits are purely pragmatic and aimed at gaining resources; others are intended for domestic purposes and have nothing to do with the West.

Putin has articulated a vision of how he wants the world to be and what role he wishes Russia to play in it. He seeks a world without NATO, where the U.S. is confined to the Western Hemisphere, where Russia is dominant over the former Soviet countries and can do what it likes to its own people without condemnation or oversight, and where the Kremlin enjoys a veto through the UN Security Council over actions that any other state wishes to take beyond its borders.35 He is working to bring that vision to reality through a set of coherent, mutually supporting, and indeed, overlapping lines of effort. He likely allows his subordinates a great deal of latitude in choosing the specific means and times to advance those lines of effort—a fact that makes it seem as if Russian policy is simply opportunistic and reactive. But we must not allow ourselves to be deluded by this impression any more than by other Russian efforts to shape our understanding of reality.

Putin’s Domestic Objectives

Maintaining relative contentment within his power circle is a key part of regime preservation. Putin has a close, trusted circle of senior subordinates, including several military and intelligence officials who have been with him for the past 20 years.36 His power circle has several outer layers, which include—but are not limited to—major Russian businessmen, often referred to as “oligarSLC.” The use of the term “oligarch” to describe those who run major portions of the economy is inaccurate, however. Those individuals have power because Putin gives it to them, not because they have any inherent ability to seize or hold it independently. He shuffles them around—and sometimes retires them completely—at his will, rather than in response to their demands.37 They do not check or control Putin either individually or collectively, and they rarely, if ever, attempt to act collectively in any event. Putin controls Russia and its policies as completely as he chooses. This situation is different from the way in which the Soviet Union was ruled after Joseph Stalin’s death in 1953. The post-Stalin USSR really was an oligarchy. Politburo members had their own power bases and fiefdoms. They made decisions—including selecting new members, choosing new leaders, and even firing one leader (Stalin’s successor, Nikita Khrushchev)—by majority vote. There is no equivalent of the Politburo in today’s Russia, no one to balance Putin, and certainly no one to remove him. Putin seeks to keep the closest circle of subordinates and the broader Russian national security establishment content, as they form one of the core pillars of his power. He thus seeks to maintain a relative degree of contentment within various layers of his power structures, including among the “oligarSLC.” For example, the Kremlin offered to help mitigate sanctions-related consequences for Russian businessmen.38 Kremlin-linked actors, in another example, reportedly embezzled billions of dollars in the preparations for the 2014 Winter Olympics in Sochi, Russia—the $50 billion price tag of which was the highest for any Olympic games.39 Putin can still retire any of the “oligarSLC” at will without fear of meaningful consequences—yet his regime is much more stable if they collectively remain reasonably satisfied. This reality will drive Putin to continue to seek access to resources, legal and illegal, with which to maintain that satisfaction. Maintaining popular support is a core objective of Putin’s policies. Putin is an autocrat with democratic rhetoric and trappings. Putin’s Russia has no free elections, no free media, and no alternative political platforms. He insists, however, on maintaining the “democratic” façade. He holds elections at the times designated by law (even if he periodically causes the law to be amended) and is genuinely (if decreasingly) popular. Nor is his feint at democratism necessarily a pose. The transformation of the Soviet Union into a democracy was the signal achievement of the 1990s.40 Putin played a role in that achievement, supporting St. Petersburg mayor Anatoliy Sobchak, then Boris Yeltsin, in their battles against attempts by communists to regain control and destroy the democracy, and then by an extreme right-wing nationalist party to gain power.41 Putin has called out many weaknesses of the Yeltsin era—but never the creation of a democratic Russia. Putin has not yet shown any sign of formally turning away from democracy as the ostensible basis of his power, although he has constrained the political space within Russia to the point that the elections are a sham. However, were he to abandon the democratic principles to which he still superficially subscribes, he would need fundamentally to redesign the justification of his rule and the nature of his regime. Nevertheless, he can only maintain even the fiction of democratic legitimacy if he remains popular enough to win elections that are not outrageously stolen. He has not been able to fix the Russian economy, despite early efforts to do so. The fall of global oil prices from their highs in the 2000s, as well as the Western sanctions imposed for his actions in Ukraine, among other things, are causing increasing hardship for the Russian people.42 Putin has adopted an information operations approach to this problem by pushing a number of core narratives, evolving over time, to justify his continued rule and explain away the failures of his policies. He has also grown the police state within Russia for situations in which the information operations do not work to his satisfaction. Putin’s justification of his rule has evolved over time. He first positioned himself as the man who will bring order. The 1990s was a decade of economic catastrophe for Russia. Inflation ran wild, unemployment skyrocketed, crime became not only pervasive but also highly organized and predatory, and civil order eroded. Putin succeeded Yeltsin with a promise to change all that. His “open letter to voters” in 2000 contained a phrase fascinating to students of Russian history: “Our land is rich, but there is no order.” That phrase is similar to one supposedly sent by the predecessors of the Russians at the dawn of Russian history to a Viking prince who would come to conquer them: “Our land is rich, but there is no order. Come to rule and reign over us.” By using the first part of that line, Putin, like Riurik, the founder of Russia’s first dynasty, cast himself as the founder of a new Russia in which order would replace chaos.43 Putin’s initial value proposition to his population was thus order and stability. He did, indeed, attempt to bring order to Russia’s domestic scene. Putin strengthened government institutions and curbed certain kinds of crime. He restored control over the region of Chechnya through a brutal military campaign. He tried to work with economic technocrats to bring the economy into some kind of order. The task was immense, however—Soviet leaders had built the entire Russian industrial and agricultural system and economic base in a centralized fashion. Undoing that centralization and creating an economy in which the market really could work was beyond Putin’s skill and patience. He largely abandoned the effort within a few years, both because it was too hard and because it seemed unnecessary.44 The rising price of oil in the early 2000s fueled the Russian economy and filled the government’s coffers on the one hand.45 The genuine structural reforms and innovation that were needed, on the other, also became antithetical to Putin’s ability to maintain control, as government corruption is a powerful tool of influence in Russia. Putin began to erode civil liberties in that period offering the unspoken but clear exchange: Give me your liberties and I will give you prosperity and stability. The 2008 global financial crisis collapsed oil prices, and the post-2014 sanctions regime removed the patches and workarounds Putin had used to offset his failure to transform Russia’s economy. Continuing low oil prices (and sanctions) have prevented it from recovering with much of the rest of the global economy, even as Putin has continued to eschew any real effort to address the systemic failings holding Russia’s economy back. Putin has therefore refocused on a different value proposition: Give me your liberties and I will give you greatness. He is increasingly linking the legitimacy of his own autocracy with Russia’s position on the world stage and with Russia’s ability to stand up to American “global hegemony.”46

Putin has simultaneously erected a narrative to deflect criticism for Russia’s problems onto the West. The West, supposedly fearful of Russia rising and determined to keep Russia down, has thwarted its rightful efforts to regain its proper place in the world at every turn. Putin claims the Russian economy is in shambles because of unjust and illegal sanctions that have nothing to do with Russia’s actions and are simply meant to keep “the Russian bear in chains.”47

Putin has also consistently fostered a complex narrative that combines diverse and—from the Western perspective—often conflicting elements, including Soviet nostalgia, Eastern Orthodoxy, Russian nationalism, and the simultaneous emphasis on Russia’s multiethnic and multireligious character. The importance Putin gives this narrative is visible in things large and small. He has named Russia’s ballistic missile submarines after Romanov tsars and Muscovite princes.48 He issued a decree in 2009 mandating the introduction of religious education in Russian schools, which began in 2012.49 He continues to place a major emphasis on Soviet-era achievements. Putin and his information machine take these various elements, refine and tailor them, and produce a mix of ideas to cater to various parts of the Russian population.

We can expect Putin’s narratives to continue to shift to accommodate changing realities, but the current rhetorical linkage between Russia’s position on the world stage and the legitimacy of Putin’s domestic power is concerning. It suggests that Putin may be more stubborn about making and retaining gains in the international arena than he was in the first 15 years of his rule, as he seeks ways to bolster his popularity, which is flagging, and on which his mythos relies.

#### LIO collapse causes extinction if the bomb doesn’t.

Yuval Noah Harari 18, Professor of History at Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 9/26/18, “We need a post-liberal order now,” The Economist, <https://www.economist.com/open-future/2018/09/26/we-need-a-post-liberal-order-now>

For several generations, the world has been governed by what today we call “the global liberal order”. Behind these lofty words is the idea that all humans share some core experiences, values and interests, and that no human group is inherently superior to all others. Cooperation is therefore more sensible than conflict. All humans should work together to protect their common values and advance their common interests. And the best way to foster such cooperation is to ease the movement of ideas, goods, money and people across the globe.

Though the global liberal order has many faults and problems, it has proved superior to all alternatives. The liberal world of the early 21st century is more prosperous, healthy and peaceful than ever before. For the first time in human history, starvation kills fewer people than obesity; plagues kill fewer people than old age; and violence kills fewer people than accidents. When I was six months old I didn’t die in an epidemic, thanks to medicines discovered by foreign scientists in distant lands. When I was three I didn’t starve to death, thanks to wheat grown by foreign farmers thousands of kilometers away. And when I was eleven I wasn’t obliterated in a nuclear war, thanks to agreements signed by foreign leaders on the other side of the planet. If you think we should go back to some pre-liberal golden age, please name the year in which humankind was in better shape than in the early 21st century. Was it 1918? 1718? 1218?

Nevertheless, people all over the world are now losing faith in the liberal order. Nationalist and religious views that privilege one human group over all others are back in vogue. Governments are increasingly restricting the flow of ideas, goods, money and people. Walls are popping up everywhere, both on the ground and in cyberspace. Immigration is out, tariffs are in.

If the liberal order is collapsing, what new kind of global order might replace it? So far, those who challenge the liberal order do so mainly on a national level. They have many ideas about how to advance the interests of their particular country, but they don’t have a viable vision for how the world as a whole should function. For example, Russian nationalism can be a reasonable guide for running the affairs of Russia, but Russian nationalism has no plan for the rest of humanity. Unless, of course, nationalism morphs into imperialism, and calls for one nation to conquer and rule the entire world. A century ago, several nationalist movements indeed harboured such imperialist fantasies. Today’s nationalists, whether in Russia, Turkey, Italy or China, so far refrain from advocating global conquest.

In place of violently establishing a global empire, some nationalists such as Steve Bannon, Viktor Orban, the Northern League in Italy and the British Brexiteers dream about a peaceful “Nationalist International”. They argue that all nations today face the same enemies. The bogeymen of globalism, multiculturalism and immigration are threatening to destroy the traditions and identities of all nations. Therefore nationalists across the world should make common cause in opposing these global forces. Hungarians, Italians, Turks and Israelis should build walls, erect fences and slow down the movement of people, goods, money and ideas.

The world will then be divided into distinct nation-states, each with its own sacred identity and traditions. Based on mutual respect for these differing identities, all nation-states could cooperate and trade peacefully with one another. Hungary will be Hungarian, Turkey will be Turkish, Israel will be Israeli, and everyone will know who they are and what is their proper place in the world. It will be a world without immigration, without universal values, without multiculturalism, and without a global elite—but with peaceful international relations and some trade. In a word, the “Nationalist International” envisions the world as a network of walled-but-friendly fortresses.

Many people would think this is quite a reasonable vision. Why isn’t it a viable alternative to the liberal order? Two things should be noted about it. First, it is still a comparatively liberal vision. It assumes that no human group is superior to all others, that no nation should dominate its peers, and that international cooperation is better than conflict. In fact, liberalism and nationalism were originally closely aligned with one another. The 19th century liberal nationalists, such as Giuseppe Garibaldi and Giuseppe Mazzini in Italy, and Adam Mickiewicz in Poland, dreamt about precisely such an international liberal order of peacefully-coexisting nations.

The second thing to note about this vision of friendly fortresses is that it has been tried—and it failed spectacularly. All attempts to divide the world into clear-cut nations have so far resulted in war and genocide. When the heirs of Garibaldi, Mazzini and Mickiewicz managed to overthrow the multi-ethnic Habsburg Empire, it proved impossible to find a clear line dividing Italians from Slovenes or Poles from Ukrainians.

This had set the stage for the second world war. The key problem with the network of fortresses is that each national fortress wants a bit more land, security and prosperity for itself at the expense of the neighbors, and without the help of universal values and global organisations, rival fortresses cannot agree on any common rules. Walled fortresses are seldom friendly.

But if you happen to live inside a particularly strong fortress, such as America or Russia, why should you care? Some nationalists indeed adopt a more extreme isolationist position. They don’t believe in either a global empire or in a global network of fortresses. Instead, they deny the necessity of any global order whatsoever. “Our fortress should just raise the drawbridges,” they say, “and the rest of the world can go to hell. We should refuse entry to foreign people, foreign ideas and foreign goods, and as long as our walls are stout and the guards are loyal, who cares what happens to the foreigners?”

Such extreme isolationism, however, is completely divorced from economic realities. Without a global trade network, all existing national economies will collapse—including that of North Korea. Many countries will not be able even to feed themselves without imports, and prices of almost all products will skyrocket. The made-in-China shirt I am wearing cost me about $5. If it had been produced by Israeli workers from Israeli-grown cotton using Israeli-made machines powered by non-existing Israeli oil, it may well have cost ten times as much. Nationalist leaders from Donald Trump to Vladimir Putin may therefore heap abuse on the global trade network, but none thinks seriously of taking their country completely out of that network. And we cannot have a global trade network without some global order that sets the rules of the game.

Even more importantly, whether people like it or not, humankind today faces three common problems that make a mockery of all national borders, and that can only be solved through global cooperation. These are nuclear war, climate change and technological disruption. You cannot build a wall against nuclear winter or against global warming, and no nation can regulate artificial intelligence (AI) or bioengineering single-handedly. It won’t be enough if only the European Union forbids producing killer robots or only America bans genetically-engineering human babies. Due to the immense potential of such disruptive technologies, if even one country decides to pursue these high-risk high-gain paths, other countries will be forced to follow its dangerous lead for fear of being left behind.

An AI arms race or a biotechnological arms race almost guarantees the worst outcome. Whoever wins the arms race, the loser will likely be humanity itself. For in an arms race, all regulations will collapse. Consider, for example, conducting genetic-engineering experiments on human babies. Every country will say: “We don’t want to conduct such experiments—we are the good guys. But how do we know our rivals are not doing it? We cannot afford to remain behind. So we must do it before them.”

Similarly, consider developing autonomous-weapon systems, that can decide for themselves whether to shoot and kill people. Again, every country will say: “This is a very dangerous technology, and it should be regulated carefully. But we don’t trust our rivals to regulate it, so we must develop it first”.

The only thing that can prevent such destructive arms races is greater trust between countries. This is not an impossible mission. If today the Germans promise the French: “Trust us, we aren’t developing killer robots in a secret laboratory under the Bavarian Alps,” the French are likely to believe the Germans, despite the terrible history of these two countries. We need to build such trust globally. We need to reach a point when Americans and Chinese can trust one another like the French and Germans.

Similarly, we need to create a global safety-net to protect humans against the economic shocks that AI is likely to cause. Automation will create immense new wealth in high-tech hubs such as Silicon Valley, while the worst effects will be felt in developing countries whose economies depend on cheap manual labor. There will be more jobs to software engineers in California, but fewer jobs to Mexican factory workers and truck drivers. We now have a global economy, but politics is still very national. Unless we find solutions on a global level to the disruptions caused by AI, entire countries might collapse, and the resulting chaos, violence and waves of immigration will destabilise the entire world.

This is the proper perspective to look at recent developments such as Brexit. In itself, Brexit isn’t necessarily a bad idea. But is this what Britain and the EU should be dealing with right now? How does Brexit help prevent nuclear war? How does Brexit help prevent climate change? How does Brexit help regulate artificial intelligence and bioengineering? Instead of helping, Brexit makes it harder to solve all of these problems. Every minute that Britain and the EU spend on Brexit is one less minute they spend on preventing climate change and on regulating AI.

In order to survive and flourish in the 21st century, humankind needs effective global cooperation, and so far the only viable blueprint for such cooperation is offered by liberalism. Nevertheless, governments all over the world are undermining the foundations of the liberal order, and the world is turning into a network of fortresses. The first to feel the impact are the weakest members of humanity, who find themselves without any fortress willing to protect them: refugees, illegal migrants, persecuted minorities. But if the walls keep rising, eventually the whole of humankind will feel the squeeze.

#### The LIO is key to prevent genocidal violence – their reactionary “anti-Imperial” ethics sanction authoritarian intervention and condemn millions to death. Prefer a nuanced and pragmatic understanding of interventionism – categorical rejection forecloses shit tons of times it has worked BUT the perm solves their links/impact turns by avoiding catastrophic forever wars

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Shadi Hamid, “Is a Better World Possible Without U.S. Military Force?,” The Atlantic, October 18, 2016, <https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2016/10/american-intervention-syria/504512/>.

The eight years of the Obama presidency have offered us a natural experiment of sorts. Not all U.S. presidents are similar on foreign policy, and not all (or any) U.S. presidents are quite like Barack Obama. After two terms of George W. Bush’s aggressive militarism, we have had the opportunity to watch whether attitudes toward the U.S.—and U.S. military force—would change, if circumstances changed. President Obama shared at least some of the assumptions of both the hard Left and foreign-policy realists, that the use of direct U.S. military force abroad, even with the best of intentions, often does more harm then good. Better, then, to “do no harm.”

This has been Barack Obama’s position on the Syrian Civil War, the key foreign-policy debate of our time. The president’s discomfort with military action against the Syrian regime seems deep and instinctual and oblivious to changing facts on the ground. When the debate over intervention began, around 5,000 Syrians had been killed. Now it’s close to 500,000. Yet, Obama’s basic orientation toward the Syrian dictator Bashar al-Assad has remained unchanged. This suggests that Obama, like many others who oppose U.S. intervention against Assad, is doing so on “principled” or, to put it differently, ideological grounds.

Despite President Obama’s very conscious desire to limit America’s role in the Middle East and to minimize the extent to which U.S. military assets are deployed in the region, there is little evidence that the views of the hard Left and other critics of American power have changed as a result. (Yes, the U.S. military is arguably involved in more countries now than when the Obama administration took office, but—compared to Iraq and Afghanistan before him—Obama’s footprint has been decidedly limited, with a reliance on drone strikes and special-operations forces.) As for those who actually live in the Middle East, a less militaristic America has done little to temper anti-Americanism. In the three countries—Egypt, Jordan, and Lebanon—for which Pew has survey data for both Bush’s last year and either 2014 or 2015, favorability toward the U.S. is significantly worse under Obama today than it was in 2008. Why exactly is up for debate, but we can at the very least say that a drastic drawdown of U.S. military personnel—precisely the policy pushed for by Democrats in the wake of Iraq’s failure—does not seem to have bought America much goodwill.

Despite the fact that Assad and Russia are responsible for indiscriminate attacks on civilians and civilian infrastructure, including hospitals, many leftists have viewed even the mere mention of the U.S. doing anything in response as “warmongering.” We have had the unfortunate situation of someone as (formerly) well-respected as Jeffrey SaSLC arguing that the U.S. should provide “air cover and logistical support” to Bashar al-Assad. We have had Wikileaks’ attacks on the White Helmets, who have risked—and, for at least 140, lost—their lives in the worst conditions to save Syrian lives from the rubble of Syrian and Russian bombardment. Of course, it is not an absurd position to be skeptical of any proposed American escalation against Assad, and many reasonable people across the political spectrum have made that case. But it is something else entirely to apply such skepticism selectively to the U.S. and not to others, especially when the others in question deliberately target civilians as a matter of policy. It can be a slippery slope. While no one would accuse Obama of liking Putin, coordinating with and enabling Russia in Syria is effectively U.S. policy. As the New York Times columnist Roger Cohen noted in February, well before the current disaster in Aleppo: “The troubling thing is that the Putin policy on Syria has become hard to distinguish from the Obama policy.”

The Left has always had a utopian bent, believing that life, not just for Americans, but for millions abroad, can be made better through human agency (rather than, say, simply hoping that the market will self-correct). The problem, though, is that the better, more just world that so many hope for is simply impossible without the use of American military force. At first blush, such a claim might seem self-evidently absurd. Haven’t we all seen what happened in Iraq? The 2003 Iraq invasion was one of the worst strategic blunders in the history of U.S. foreign policy. Yet, it’s not clear what exactly this has to do with the Syrian conflict, which is almost the inverse of the Iraq war. In Iraq, civil war happened after the U.S. invasion. In Syria, civil war broke out in the absence of U.S. intervention.

What all of this suggests is that attitudes toward the U.S. military, and by extension the United States, are often “inelastic,” meaning that what the U.S. actually does or doesn’t do abroad has limited bearing on perceptions of American power. As a general proposition, many leftists, for example, seem to believe that there is something intrinsically wrong with the use of military force by the United States. In other words, when America does it, it is a bad thing, irrespective of the outcomes it produces, and therefore should be opposed outright. There is rarely any real effort to explain why it’s bad—after all, if it were purely a moral stand against the killing of innocents, the use of Russian or Syrian military force would have to be considered much worse.

But, for the use of American power abroad to be intrinsically wrong or immoral, all uses of military force would have to be either immoral or ineffective, or both. However, as a factual matter, this is simply not the case. There was no way to stop mass slaughter and genocide in Bosnia or Kosovo without U.S. military force, buttressed, as it should be, by broad regional or international consensus. In those two cases, a U.S.-led coalition acted. In those cases where the international community did not act, genocide did, in fact, occur, as we witnessed in Rwanda. What became clear then—and what has become clear once again in Syria—is that a world where others than the U.S. take the initiative to stop such slaughter does not exist, and is unlikely to exist at any point in the foreseeable future. While they may be less common, there are also cases where dictators will not only kill their own people but try to forcefully invade and conquer their neighbors. As in the first Gulf War, the gobbling up of Kuwait could not have been prevented without a U.S.-led coalition, again with broad international support.

The list goes on. From a moral standpoint, no one should have to suffer under the indignities of ISIS rule. From a strategic standpoint, having an extremist state the size of Indiana in the middle of the Middle East, needless to say, does not suggest the coming of a better, more secure world. While Obama was late to act against the organization and while the anti-ISIS campaign has been deeply flawed, the amount of territory that ISIS controls has been reduced significantly, due in large part to U.S. airstrikes, intelligence, and special-operations forces. No one, not Turkey, Saudi Arabia, or anyone else, was going to seriously confront ISIS without U.S. coordination and leadership, and it’s U.S. coordination and leadership that is facilitating the current battle for the Islamic State’s Iraqi stronghold in Mosul. This is the faulty—and ultimately quite dangerous—premise behind one of the founding assumptions of Obama’s foreign policy: that if the U.S. steps back, others will step in. Even when “others” do step in, the results are often destructive, since America’s allies and adversaries alike do not generally share its values, interests, or objectives.

Of course, U.S. military force may be necessary, but it can never be sufficient on its own. This is where the judgment, morality, and strategic vision of politicians and policymakers can make the crucial difference. The United States has not been the “force for good” that many Americans would like to think it’s been. There is a tragic history of intervention abroad that more Americans should be aware of, whether it’s overthrowing democratically elected leaders in Latin America or backing brutal dictators in the Middle East. There is no reason to think the U.S. is necessarily doomed to repeat those mistakes indefinitely. But even if it was, there would still be instances where only U.S. military force could be counted on to stop genocide.

The alternative to a proactive and internationalist U.S. policy is to “do no harm,” and this might seem a safe fallback position: Foreign countries and cultures are too complicated to understand, so instead of trying to understand them, let’s at least not make the situation worse. The idea that the U.S. can “do no harm,” however, depends on the fiction that the most powerful nation in the world can ever be truly “neutral” in foreign conflicts, not just when it acts, but also when it doesn’t. Neutrality, or silence, is often complicity, something that was once the moral, urgent claim of the Left. The fiction of neutrality is growing more dangerous, as we enter a period of resurgent authoritarianism, anti-refugee incitement, and routine mass killing.

This is the built-in contradiction of what might be called the “anti-imperialist Left.” They are against empire, and there is only one country powerful enough to reasonably be considered “imperial.” (Russia, of course, engages in bloody imperial ventures, but it gets a pass since it is acting against the United States.) But to insist that the fundamental problem in today’s world is American imperialism is to have only the most outdated “principles”—principles that, in the case of Syria, Rwanda, Bosnia, Kosovo, and even Libya, have left, or would have left, the most vulnerable and suffering without any recourse to safety and protection.

If the United States announced tomorrow morning that it would no longer use its military for anything but to defend the borders of the homeland, many would instinctively cheer, perhaps not quite realizing what this would mean in practice. But that is the conundrum the Left is now facing. A world without mass slaughter, of the sort of we are seeing every day in Syria, cannot ever come to be without American power. But perhaps this will prove one of the positive legacies of the Obama era: showing that the alternative of American disinterest and disengagement is not necessarily better. For those, though, that care about ideology—holding on to the idea that U.S. military force is somehow inherently bad—more than they care about actual human outcomes, the untenability of their position will persist. That, too, will be a tragedy, since at a time when many on the Right are turning jingoistic or isolationist, there is a need for voices that not just believe in U.S. power, but believe that that power—still, for now, preeminent—can be used for better, more moral ends.

#### Stats all go aff – unipolarity has ushered in massive progress since 1991

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Michael Beckley, Unrivaled: Why America Will Remain the World’s Sole Superpower, Ithaca, New York: Cornell Studies in Security Affairs, 2018, p. 135-137

No Hegemonic Rivalry

The story of world politics is often told as a game of thrones in which a rotating cast of great powers battles for top-dog status. According to researchers led by Graham Allison at Harvard, there have been sixteen cases in the past fi ve hundred years when a rising power challenged a ruling power. 3 Twelve of these cases ended in carnage. One can quibble with Allison’s case selection, but the basic pattern is clear: hegemonic rivalry has sparked a catastrophic war every forty years on average for the past half millennium.

The emergence of unipolarity in 1991 has put this cycle of hegemonic competition on hold. Obviously wars and security competition still occur in today’s unipolar world—in fact, as I explain later, unipolarity has made certain types of asymmetric confl ict more likely—but none of these confl icts have the global scope or generational length of a hegemonic rivalry.

To appreciate this point, just consider the Cold War—one of the four “peaceful” cases of hegemonic rivalry identifi ed by Allison’s study. Although the two superpowers never went to war, they divided the world into rival camps, waged proxy wars that killed millions of people, and pushed each other to the brink of nuclear Armageddon. For forty-fi ve years, World War III and human extinction were nontrivial possibilities.

Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, by contrast, the United States has not faced a hegemonic rival, and the world, though far from perfect, has been more peaceful and prosperous than ever before.

Just look at the numbers. From 1400 to 1991, the rate of war deaths worldwide hovered between 5 and 10 deaths per 100,000 people and spiked to 200 deaths per 100,000 during major wars. 4 After 1991, however, war death rates dropped to 0.5 deaths per 100,000 people and have stayed there ever since. Interstate wars have disappeared almost entirely, and the number of civil wars has declined by more than 30 percent. 5 Meanwhile, the global economy has quadrupled in size, creating more wealth between 1991 and 2018 than in all prior human history combined. 6

What explains this unprecedented outbreak of peace and prosperity? Some scholars attribute it to advances in communications technology, from the printing press to the telegraph to the Internet, which supposedly spread empathy around the globe and caused entire nations to place a higher value on human life.

Such explanations are appealing, because they play on our natural desire to believe in human progress, but are they convincing? Did humans suddenly become 10 to 20 times less violent and cruel in 1991? Are we orders of magnitude more noble and kind than our grandparents? Has social media made us more empathetic? Of course not, which is why the dramatic decline in warfare after 1991 is better explained by geopolitics than sociology. 8

The collapse of the Soviet Union not only ended the Cold War and related proxy fi ghting, it also opened up large swathes of the world to democracy, international commerce, and peacekeeping forces—all of which surged after 1991 and further dampened confl ict. 9 Faced with overwhelming U.S. economic and military might, most countries have decided to work within the American-led liberal order rather than fi ght to overturn it. 10 As of 2018, nearly seventy countries have joined the U.S. alliance network—a Kantian community in which war is unthinkable—and even the two main challengers to this community, China and Russia, begrudgingly participate in the institutions of the liberal order (e.g., the UN, the WTO, the IMF, World Bank, and the G-20), engage in commerce with the United States and its allies, and contribute to international peacekeeping missions. 11 History may not have ended in 1991, but it clearly changed in profound ways—and mostly for the better.

#### Retreat from global alliances doesn’t spur increased burden-sharing and emboldens other great power competitions

Schake 19

Kori Schake, Deputy Director General of the International Institute for Strategic Studies and the author Of Safe Passage: The Transition From British to American Hegemony. She served on the National Security Council and in the U.S. State Department in the George W. Bush administration, “Back to Basics: How to Make Right What Trump Gets Wrong,” Foreign Affairs, May/June 2019, accessed through Georgetown libraries

Asking whether U.S. allies do enough is the wrong question: they don’t. The right question is what policies would cause them to do more. The Trump administration believes that if it steps back, they will step forward. In fact, when the United States steps back, its allies step back even further—and its adversaries step forward. If the United States withdraws its forces from Afghanistan, its allies will not ramp up their presence there; they will follow suit and leave. When Trump announced that U.S. forces would be removed from Syria, other members of the coalition against the Islamic State (or isis) scrambled for the exit, too.

This dynamic plays into the hands of U.S. adversaries, chief among them Russia and China. Russia is on the decline demographically and economically, but it is far from a failing state. It has excelled at sustaining authoritarians, such as Syrian President Bashar al-Assad; destabilizing eastern Europe; and weaponizing the openness of free societies through covert meddling, as in the 2016 U.S. presidential election. Some hope this subversive activity will subside when its chief architect, Russian President Vladimir Putin, leaves office. But there is no telling what will happen as long as he remains in power.

The Chinese Communist Party, for its part, seeks access to markets and technology to power the economic development on which its claim to legitimacy rests, yet Beijing has rejected Washington’s invitation to become a “responsible stakeholder” in the existing order. Instead, it has breached the un Convention on the Law of the Sea, or unclos, by building military bases on disputed territory in the South China Sea. It has violated the terms of the World Trade Organization through its forced technology transfers from foreign to domestic companies. And its brand of authoritarian capitalism has become a model to emulate among regimes that desire Western prosperity without the constraints imposed by the rule of law and the economic volatility that comes with genuinely free markets.

Put simply, the United States invites challenges by calling into question its alliance relationships; its allies do the same through their military weakness. In addition, Washington has enfeebled international institutions by flouting the rules it demands that others follow, such as those of unclos, which it has not ratified. U.S. allies, by contrast, have empowered international institutions to a degree not supported by their publics, as the current backlash against an ever-closer union in Europe illustrates. In the meantime, adversaries have been capitalizing on the gap between those two tendencies.

#### Russia war escalates to extinction – regional nuclear wars don’t

Cotton-Barratt 17 [Owen Cotton-Barratt, et al, PhD in Pure Mathematics, Oxford, Lecturer in Mathematics at Oxford, Research Associate at the Future of Humanity Institute, 2/3/2017, Existential Risk: Diplomacy and Governance, https://www.fhi.ox.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/Existential-Risks-2017-01-23.pdf]

The bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki demonstrated the unprecedented destructive power of nuclear weapons. However, even in an all-out nuclear war between the United States and Russia, despite horrific casualties, neither country’s population is likely to be completely destroyed by the direct effects of the blast, fire, and radiation.8 The aftermath could be much worse: the burning of flammable materials could send massive amounts of smoke into the atmosphere, which would absorb sunlight and cause sustained global cooling, severe ozone loss, and agricultural disruption – a nuclear winter.

According to one model 9 , an all-out exchange of 4,000 weapons10 could lead to a drop in global temperatures of around 8°C, making it impossible to grow food for 4 to 5 years. This could leave some survivors in parts of Australia and New Zealand, but they would be in a very precarious situation and the threat of extinction from other sources would be great. An exchange on this scale is only possible between the US and Russia who have more than 90% of the world’s nuclear weapons, with stockpiles of around 4,500 warheads each, although many are not operationally deployed.11 Some models suggest that even a small regional nuclear war involving 100 nuclear weapons would produce a nuclear winter serious enough to put two billion people at risk of starvation,12 though this estimate might be pessimistic.13 Wars on this scale are unlikely to lead to outright human extinction, but this does suggest that conflicts which are around an order of magnitude larger may be likely to threaten civilisation. It should be emphasised that there is very large uncertainty about the effects of a large nuclear war on global climate. This remains an area where increased academic research work, including more detailed climate modelling and a better understanding of how survivors might be able to cope and adapt, would have high returns.

It is very difficult to precisely estimate the probability of existential risk from nuclear war over the next century, and existing attempts leave very large confidence intervals. According to many experts, the most likely nuclear war at present is between India and Pakistan.14 However, given the relatively modest size of their arsenals, the risk of human extinction is plausibly greater from a conflict between the United States and Russia. Tensions between these countries have increased in recent years and it seems unreasonable to rule out the possibility of them rising further in the future.

#### Independently, Poseidon creates aggressive posturing that sidesteps current treaties leading to escalation.

[Joshua M.M. Portzer (July 2020), Lieutenant Commander in the US Navy, “Kanyon’s Reach: Rethinking the Nuclear Triad in the Autonomous Age,” United States Naval Institute, Vol. 146/7/1409, [https://www.usni.org/magazines/proceedings/2020/july/kanyons-reach-rethinking-nuclear-triad-autonomous-age]//SLC](https://www.usni.org/magazines/proceedings/2020/july/kanyons-reach-rethinking-nuclear-triad-autonomous-age%5d//CHS) PK \*\*brackets for ableist language\*\*

Throughout history, weapon system advances have created paradigm shifts for militaries. Occasionally these shifts are tectonic, unlocking new domains for warfare. The aircraft carrier took air warfare across oceans. The satellite brought electronic warfare to space. The next harbinger of strategic warfare’s future: autonomous unmanned undersea vehicles (UUVs).

Russia has developed a submarine-deployed autonomous UUV (AUUV) that can travel thousands of miles and detonate a nuclear payload of several megatons in a foreign harbor—a capability that will be operational by the late 2020s.1 A strategic nuclear weapon that is deployed and detonated undersea is a true paradigm shift: Never before has a country’s nuclear kill chain remained exclusively undersea. Kanyon

The “Kanyon” weapon system—also referred to as Status-6 or Poseidon—first emerged in footage on Russian television in 2015. It is a nuclear-powered (N)-AUUV that can travel thousands of nautical miles (nm) at approximately 100 knots and can operate at a depth of 1,000 meters. While it may carry a conventional weapons payload, its nuclear warhead is approximately two megatons.2 Russia designed it as a strategic weapon to take out ports and coastal cities. It may deploy on up to four submarines (modified Oscar II class) in both the Northern and Pacific Fleets, with each submarine carrying up to eight Kanyon weapons.3

Unlike any other nuclear weapon, Kanyon detonates underwater and is nuclear powered.4 Washington references it in its Nuclear Posture Review 2018 (NPR) as a “new intercontinental, nuclear-armed, nuclear-powered, undersea autonomous torpedo.”5 Russian President Vladimir Putin included Kanyon in his 2018 national address, along with three other advanced nuclear weapon vehicles.6 Russia began undersea trials for Kanyon in December 2018.

The ramifications of Kanyon cannot be overstated. Consider the realm of nuclear treaties and deterrence. Kanyon could deploy by 2027. This is past New START’s expiration, even if it were extended to 2026. As Kanyon is an N-AUUV, it does not fit New START’s current weapons definitions, much like another new weapon, Kinzhal (an air-to-surface nuclear missile). Thus, it would not be subject to the treaty’s restrictions in current form.7 Furthermore, Kanyon is impervious to ballistic-missile defense because it travels by and detonates in the ocean. There is no option to detect a Russian launch of this weapon and then execute a counterlaunch. The United States would not know of the threat until it had detonated.

The U.S. Navy should find this weapon horrifying. Naval Station Norfolk is the world’s largest naval base and houses approximately 75 ships and 130 aircraft. A single Kanyon detonation at Norfolk could wipe out half of the United States’ aircraft carriers and roughly a third of the surface Navy without warning. A coordinated attack against both Norfolk and San Diego ports would catastrophically destroy [cripple] the Navy.

#### A single use causes extinction.

Lockie 19 [Alex, Senior Front Page Editor at Business Insider. “The real purpose of Russia’s 100-megaton underwater nuclear doomsday device.” Business Insider. February 11, 2019. https://www.businessinsider.my/the-real-purpose-of-russias-poseidon-nuclear-doomsday-device-2019-2/?fbclid=IwAR2\_pCU5-NG5lbhBdriP9OhMAj4zYPWEB8OPJ6rHHhHRi9HMjXl2ZBFdBkw]

Russia is said to have built a new 100-megaton underwater nuclear doomsday device, and it has threatened the US with it. The device goes beyond traditional ideas of nuclear warfighting and poses a direct threat to the future of humanity or life on Earth. Nobody has ever built a weapon like this before, because there’s almost no military utility in so badly destroying the world. But an expert on nuclear strategy told Business Insider the weapon might have a larger role in helping Russian President Vladimir Putin break down NATO with the threat of nuclear destruction. Since 2015, when images of a Russian nuclear torpedo first leaked on state television, the world has asked itself why Moscow would build a weapon that could end all life on Earth. While all nuclear weapons can kill thousands in the blink of an eye and leave radiation poisoning the environment for years to come, Russia’s new doomsday device, called “Poseidon,” takes steps to maximize this effect. If the US fired one of its Minutemen III nuclear weapons at a target, it would detonate in the air above the target and rely on the blast’s incredible downward pressure to crush it. The fireball from the nuke may not even touch the ground, and the only radiation would come from the bomb itself and any dust particles swept up in the explosion, Stephen Schwartz, the author of “Atomic Audit,” previously told Business Insider. But Russia’s Poseidon is said to use a warhead many times as strong, perhaps even as strong as the largest bomb ever detonated. Additionally, it’s designed to come into direct contact with water, marine animals, and the ocean floor, kicking up a radioactive tsunami that could spread deadly radiation over hundreds of thousands of miles of land and sea and render it uninhabitable for decades. In short, while most nuclear weapons can end a city, Russia’s Poseidon could end a continent. Read more: Why Putin’s new ‘doomsday’ device is so much more deadly and horrific than a regular nuke Even in the mania at the height of the Cold War, nobody took seriously the idea of building such a world-ender, Malcolm Davis, a senior analyst at the Australian Strategic Policy Institute, told Business Insider. So why build one now?

### 1AC—Plan

#### Thus, the Plan: The Russian Federation should ban lethal autonomous nuclear drone submarines.

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Noted Russian journalist Pavel Felgenhauer warned that Status-6 "may further embolden the Kremlin to push for a new world order of its liking by intimidating the United States and its allies.” The Washington Post editorialized that Russia’s underwater nuclear drone “should raise alarm bells.” The Post is certainly correct about the implications of this weapon, but it is not, as the Post characterized it, a “tactical nuclear weapon.” Nor is it a torpedo but rather a drone submarine. The best description of it is an arms control concept included in the START and New START Treaties – a “new kind of strategic offensive arm.” It is probably the most destructive weapon in human history. Its use would cause massive loss of life and cause grave global environmental effects. As Chief arms control negotiator Ambassador Marshall Billingslea said, the Poseidon is a “terrible” weapon and should be [banned](https://dialog.proquest.com/professional/professionalnewsstand/docview/2419576540/fulltext/172C8BEE5801BBBDD92/2?accountid=155509&site=professionalnewsstand&t:ac=172C8BEE5801BBBDD92/1&t:cp=maintain/resultcitationblocksbrief&t:zoneid=transactionalZone_17363421876).

### 1AC—Framing

#### Biological death is the worst evil

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Contrary to those accounts, I would argue that it is death per se that is really the objective evil for us, not because it deprives us of a prospective future of overall good judged better than the alter- native of non-being. It cannot be about harm to a former person who has ceased to exist, for no person actually suffers from the sub-sequent non-participation. Rather, death in itself is an evil to us because it ontologically destroys the current existent subject — it is the ultimate in metaphysical lightening strikes.80 The evil of death is truly an ontological evil borne by the person who already exists, independently of calculations about better or worse possible lives. Such an evil need not be consciously experienced in order to be an evil for the kind of being a human person is. Death is an evil because of the change in kind it brings about, a change that is destructive of the type of entity that we essentially are. Anything, whether caused naturally or caused by human intervention (intentional or unintentional) that drastically interferes in the process of maintaining the person in existence is an objective evil for the person. What is crucially at stake here, and is dialectically supportive of the self-evidency of the basic good of human life, is that death is a radical interference with the current life process of the kind of being that we are. In consequence, death itself can be credibly thought of as a ‘primitive evil’ for all persons, regardless of the extent to which they are currently or prospectively capable of participating in a full array of the goods of life.81 In conclusion, concerning willed human actions, it is justifiable to state that any intentional rejection of human life itself cannot therefore be warranted since it is an expression of an ultimate disvalue for the subject, namely, the destruction of the present person; a radical ontological good that we cannot begin to weigh objectively against the travails of life in a rational manner. To deal with the sources of disvalue (pain, suffering, etc.) we should not seek to irrationally destroy the person, the very source and condition of all human possibility.82

#### The American foreign policy establishment solves great power war and self corrects – any alternative strategy is substantially worse – the alternative’s retreat from foreign policy expertise and lack of a coherent foreign policy vision turns all their offense

**Brands** et. al **20** [HAL BRANDS, the Henry A. Kissinger Distinguished Professor of Global Affairs at the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies and a scholar at the American Enterprise Institute, served as Special Assistant to the Secretary of Defense in 2015-2016. PETER FEAVER, Professor of Political Science and Public Policy at Duke University, served as special adviser for strategic planning and institutional reform at the National Security Council staff in 2005-2007 and as director for defense policy and arms control in 1993-1994. WILLIAM INBODEN, William Powers, Jr., Executive Director of the Clements Center for National Security and an Associate Professor at the LBJ School of Public Affairs at the University of Texas at Austin, served at the State Department in 2002-2005 and as senior director for strategic planning on the National Security Council staff in 2005-2007, “In Defense of the Blob”, April 29th, <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/united-states/2020-04-29/defense-blob>]

* Any offense they win is solved by doubling down and committing to status quo foreign policy – rejecting foreign policy expertise makes everything worse so any offense they win against primacy is offense against the alt because expertise solves and rejection makes it worse
* Turns interventions – they’re politically toxic which discourages them, but lack of expertise makes them more common
* Answers general foreign policy Ks --- american foreign policy is not monolithic or closed off to alternative perspectives --- your perspective is just wrong
* Assume the K is wrong because a century of foreign policy expertise has concluded the LIO is best

Blob theorists view the establishment as a club of like-minded elite insiders who control everything, take care of one another, and brush off challenges to conventional wisdom. In reality, the United States actually has a healthy marketplace of foreign policy ideas. Discussion over American foreign policy is loud, contentious, diverse, and generally pragmatic—and as a result, the nation gets the opportunity to learn from its mistakes, build on its successes, and improve its performance over time.

In both absolute and relative terms, the expert community dealing with foreign policy and national security in the United States is remarkably large and heterogeneous. Inside government, cadres of professionals make vast amounts of technocratic knowledge and institutional memory available to policymakers. Every department and agency with an international role has distinctive regional or functional expertise it can bring to bear. This in-house knowledge is complemented by an even larger and more diverse network of experts in the many hundreds of think tanks and contract research institutions that surround the government and offer views ranging from right to left, hawk to dove, free trader to protectionist, technocratic to ideological. Pick any policy issue and you can put together a lively debate with ease. Should the United States engage with China or contain it? Negotiate with Iran or squeeze it? Withdraw from the Middle East or redouble its efforts? Reasoned arguments on all sides are widely available, in any form you want—all supplied from within the supposedly monolithic establishment.

Moreover, unlike such communities in other leading powers, the American foreign policy establishment is connected to society rather than cut off from it, because the top several layers of U.S. national security bureaucracies are staffed by political appointees rather than civil servants. The Blob comprises government officials, outside experts, and many people who go back and forth between the two. Insiders know how government works and what is practical. Outsiders think independently. And in-and-outers bridge the gaps. Other countries simply do not have comparably large, diverse, permeable, expert communities that encourage vigorous debate over national policy—which is why, say, the caliber of U.S. debate about nuclear policy is more nuanced and better informed than in other nuclear powers, and which is why other countries would love to have such a Blob of their own.

The American foreign policy establishment, finally, is generally more pragmatic than ideological. It values prudence and security over novelty and creativity. It knows that thinking outside the box may be useful in testing policy assumptions, but the box is usually there for a reason, and so reflexively embracing the far-out option is dangerous. Its members have made many mistakes, individually and collectively, but several features of the system enforce accountability over time. Foreign policy failures, for example, are politically toxic and often spur positive change. The monumental intelligence failures that allowed the September 11 attacks to happen were followed by policy and institutional reforms that have helped prevent other mass-casualty terrorist attacks on U.S. targets for almost two decades. Early misjudgments in the Iraq war led to the adoption of a new counterinsurgency strategy that restored stability, at least for a while. The international economic imbalances and financial procedures that led to the 2008 global financial crisis were addressed by policies that contributed to a decade-long recovery.

Taken together, these virtues reinforce one another and help the United States tackle the countless national and global challenges that confront a superpower. Blob critics claim there are no meaningful arguments over U.S. foreign policy. But this is just not true. Intense disputes over the Korean War, the Vietnam War, détente and arms control, the opening to China, and policies in Central America and the Middle East were followed by battles over the Gulf War, NATO expansion, military interventions in Haiti, Somalia, and the Balkans, and the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq—not to mention heated arguments over positions toward China, Iran, North Korea, Russia, and other issues today. It is true that beneath all this controversy lies a relatively stable consensus on the value of power, alliances, and constructive global engagement. Most members of the establishment believe that global problems usually improve when the United States engages responsibly and worsen when the United States retreats. Yet that reflects not some nefarious groupthink but the wisdom of professional crowds, arrived at through painful trial and error over more than a century.

WHAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN

If the Blob is not a cabal, neither is its record one of dismal failure. Critics argue that the United States entered the 1990s in a position of great power and prestige and squandered that legacy through misguided wars and interventions, geopolitical hubris, and the aggressive pursuit of a global liberal order at the expense of the nation’s economic and security interests. But the story they tell doesn’t match what actually happened. American grand strategy did not change radically after the Cold War, because it was developed not just as a response to the Soviet challenge but to the foreign policy disasters of the 1930s and 1940s. After World War II, U.S. officials decided to maintain the nation’s primacy, thwart dangerous aggressors, and build a secure, prosperous international order in which the United States could thrive. After the Cold War, they decided to keep this strategy going, even in the absence of an immediate peer competitor.

From George H. W. Bush to Barack Obama, post–Cold War presidents worked hard to further the efforts their predecessors started, shaping an environment conducive to American interests and ideas. They promoted free trade and globalization, maintained and even expanded the country’s global network of alliances and military bases, policed the global commons, and tried to stabilize regional conflicts and promote human rights. Unchecked by great-power rivals, Washington did become more willing to use military force in the periphery on behalf of national ideals. But even then, it hardly ran amok in search of monsters to destroy, abstaining from interventions in Rwanda, the African Great Lakes, Sudan, the Caucasus, Ukraine, Myanmar, and other potential cases. The basic outlines of recent American strategy would be recognizable to officials stretching back generations, because its goal has remained constant: fostering a world guided by American leadership, rooted in American values, and protected by American power.

Have there been disappointments and even disasters along the way? Absolutely. Globalization and democratization were supposed to mellow China and Russia and help them fit easily into the U.S.-led order. That hasn’t worked out as well as hoped. North Korea went nuclear despite a series of U.S. presidents swearing they would never let it happen. Before 9/11, Washington didn’t take terrorism seriously enough; afterward, it became obsessed with stopping it at all costs. And far too many military interventions—from Somalia to Afghanistan, Iraq to Libya—have been misconceived and mishandled.

As serious as these failures were, however, they were no worse than those occurring during other periods in U.S. history. The quarter century after World War II saw the loss of China, the end of a nuclear monopoly, the erection of the Iron Curtain and the Berlin Wall, a bloody stalemate in Korea, a communist takeover in Cuba, and a catastrophic war in Vietnam. The following two decades witnessed the collapse of the Bretton Woods system, an energy crisis and OPEC oil embargo, anti-American revolutions in Iran and Nicaragua, a bungled intervention in Lebanon, dirty wars in Central America, the Iran-contra scandal, and the Tiananmen Square massacre. Some degree of failure, even tragedy, is inescapable in foreign policy. What matters most is not the presence of individual triumphs or disasters but the collective balance between them. From this perspective, the post–Cold War era looks significantly better, for set against the failures is a giant success—the emergence of a far more peaceful, prosperous, and liberal international system, with a prosperous and secure United States at its center.

Critics count the problems that have occurred but ignore the problems that have been avoided. There were plenty of ways the world could have gone haywire after 1989. Leading scholars, for example, foresaw a descent into vicious instability. Germany and Japan would turn hungry and revisionist again, security vacuums would emerge in Central Europe and East Asia, and nationalism, aggression, and nuclear proliferation would run rampant. “We will soon miss the Cold War,” John Mearsheimer predicted in 1990. “The prospect of major crises, even wars . . . is likely to increase dramatically.”

Not quite. The long peace continued, as great-power relations remained relatively calm. German and Japanese revisionism never materialized—because those countries remained tightly embraced within a strong U.S. alliance system and a broader liberal international order. An outbreak of nationalism and ethnic aggression was contained in the Balkans. The countries of the former Warsaw Pact did not descend into chaos but embarked on political and economic reform, relaxing into a newly secure environment inside NATO. Asia did not collapse into vicious rivalries; under U.S. guidance, it continued its remarkable post-1979 stretch of peace as billions of people benefited from decades of sustained economic growth. The number of democracies in the world rose dramatically. Even nuclear proliferation has remained relatively limited, as Washington continued to provide security guarantees to allies so they would not pursue independent nuclear arsenals, orchestrated a campaign to secure loose nuclear materials, and punished rogue states that tried to buck the nonproliferation regime. In short, after 1989, the deep global engagement favored by the Blob kept the world moving forward on a generally positive track, rather than regressing to the historical mean of tyranny, depression, and war.

Yes, instability is returning in both Asia and Europe, globalization and democracy are currently in retreat, intense competitions with China and Russia loom, and the new coronavirus pandemic has reminded the world of the downsides of connectivity. But the return of great-power rivalry in recent years has been fueled less by U.S. overreach than by questions about its stamina. Had Washington followed the recommendations of the Blob’s critics and retrenched from its global commitments after 1989, rather than leaning into them, things would look even worse now. If the United States had pursued a strategy of offshore balancing, say, by winding down its overseas obligations, would it be sitting pretty now? It is hard to see how withdrawing from Europe in the 1990s or not expanding NATO would have encouraged less bullying from Moscow. More likely, it would simply have given a resurgent Russia greater freedom to reassert its influence. Pulling back from the Asia-Pacific region, similarly, would likely have undermined the United States’ ability to hedge against the negative consequences of China’s rise. And less engagement by Washington on a global liberal agenda in trade, politics, and human rights would not have improved the world or prepared it institutionally to handle global challenges, such as pandemics and climate change.

In retrospect, it is easy to identify specific policies and decisions one would want to change. It is harder to identify an alternative strategy that would have delivered clearly superior results—and that is the true standard by which real-world foreign policies deserve to be judged.

THE RETURN OF THE BLOB

How about the critics’ third argument, that escaping the influence of the Blob would make American policy more effective and the country more secure? As it happens, a real-time test of that proposition has been running for over three years. The Trump administration has sidelined national security professionals, and professionalism, to a degree unprecedented in the modern era. The president has routinely disregarded the advice of apolitical career officials, accused them of disloyalty and even treason, and purged the top ranks of the administration of anybody unwilling to toe the official line of the day (whatever that may be). The results of this experiment are not encouraging. So far it has produced poor policy, poor execution, and poor outcomes.

Unforced errors are one of the hallmarks of the Trump administration’s foreign policy.

The administration launched an overdue effort to confront China on its trade practices, only to hobble the approach by withdrawing from the Trans-Pacific Partnership and starting simultaneous trade wars with American allies. It punished Russia for its territorial aggression and electoral sabotage, only to be undercut by the president’s embrace of Russian President Vladimir Putin and by his personal vendettas relating to Ukraine. The president twice announced, and twice partially reversed, a decision to withdraw troops from Syria, thereby battering U.S. credibility without actually leaving the conflict. Thanks to diplomatic bungling and presidential credulity, North Korea is no more contained than it was three years ago, and Japan, South Korea, and the United States are all at odds. Because of arbitrary White House interference with military justice and other issues, civil-military relations have cratered. What links these cases is not ideology but competence—all involved basic mistakes that were pointed out by experts inside and outside government, only to be contemptuously ignored by the White House.

Even when the administration’s policy choices have been defensible in conception, they have often been botched in execution, due to a disregard for expert advice and a disdain for the details of implementation. The administration could have tried to remedy the defects of the Iran nuclear deal, for example, in a way that included European powers rather than alienating them. It could have increased pressure on Tehran with a plan for converting that pressure into lasting results. It could have gotten something in return for diplomatic concessions given to Israel and Saudi Arabia. And it could have reformed NAFTA without gratuitously harming relations with Canada and Mexico.

As for results, the current pandemic shows just what happens when national policy is driven by amateur improvisation rather than professional planning. Pandemics have been a known danger for decades, and the Blob has a suggested playbook for handling them—constant vigilance, early detection and monitoring, a unified national response in coordination with global partners, and much more. Coming into office, the Trump administration was fully briefed on the challenge—and chose to look the other way, downgrading the relevant technocrats and pushing for deep cuts in global health and disease programs. At the crucial early stages of the crisis, when a robust multilateral effort might have had maximum effect, the administration’s disorganization and denial left Washington on the sidelines. As the disease raced around the world and took hold in the United States, officials desperate to sound the alarm and begin preventive measures were silenced by a president unwilling to hear bad news. And once the direness of the medical situation was finally recognized, the administration tried to shift blame, going so far as to cut funding for the World Health Organization in the midst of the pandemic, simply in order to create a politically useful scapegoat.

The establishment makes mistakes, often big ones. But in its collective capacity, it learns from them and changes course—which is why the liberal international order has not only lasted for generations but deepened and broadened over time. Purging experience and disinterested expertise from U.S. foreign policy has already caused problems. The longer it continues, the worse things will get. And the more many will hope for the return of the Blob.

#### Liberalism is both inevitable and good – its self-correcting mechanisms maintain global stability, facilitate international cooperation to resolve intractable problems, and raise global standards of living while constantly correcting for failure. Any other system risks global catastrophe and can’t be effectuated anyway given liberalism’s entrenched nature.

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In many respects, today's liberal democratic malaise is a byproduct of the liberal world order's success. After the Cold War, that order became a global system, expanding beyond its birthplace in the West. But as free markets spread, problems began to crop up: economic inequality grew, old political bargains between capital and labor broke down, and social supports eroded. The benefits of globalization and economic expansion were distributed disproportionately to elites. Oligarchic power bloomed. A modulated form of capitalism morphed into winnertake- all casino capitalism. Many new democracies turned out to lack the traditions and habits necessary to sustain democratic institutions. And large flows of immigrants triggered a xenophobic backlash. Together, these developments have called into question the legitimacy of liberal democratic life and created openings for opportunistic demagogues.

Just as the causes of this malaise are clear, so is its solution: a return to the fundamentals of liberal democracy. Rather than deeply challenging the first principles of liberal democracy, the current problems call for reforms to better realize them. To reduce inequality, political leaders will need to return to the social democratic policies embodied in the New Deal, pass more progressive taxation, and invest in education and infrastructure. To foster a sense of liberal democratic identity, they will need to emphasize education as a catalyst for assimilation and promote national and public service. In other words, the remedy for the problems of liberal democracy is more liberal democracy; liberalism contains the seeds of its own salvation.

Indeed, liberal democracies have repeatedly recovered from crises resulting from their own excesses. In the 1930s, overproduction and the integration of financial markets brought about an economic depression, which triggered the rise of fascism. But it also triggered the New Deal and social democracy, leading to a more stable form of capitalism. In the 1950s, the success of the Manhattan Project, combined with the emerging U.S.-Soviet rivalry, created the novel threat of a worldwide nuclear holocaust. That threat gave rise to arms control pacts and agreements concerning the governance of global spaces, deals forged by the United States in collaboration with the Soviet Union. In the 1970s, rising middle-class consumption led to oil shortages, economic stagnation, and environmental decay. In response, the advanced industrial democracies established oil coordination agreements, invested in clean energy, and struck numerous international environmental accords aimed at reducing pollutants. The problems that liberal democracies face today, while great, are certainly not more challenging than those that they have faced and overcome in these historically recent decades. Of course, there is no guarantee that liberal democracies will successfully rise to the occasion, but to count them out would fly in the face of repeated historical experiences.

Today's dire predictions ignore these past successes. They suffer from a blinding presentism. Taking what is new and threatening as the master pattern is an understandable reflex in the face of change, but it is almost never a very good guide to the future. Large-scale human arrangements such as liberal democracy rarely change as rapidly or as radically as they seem to in the moment. If history is any guide, today's illiberal populists and authoritarians will evoke resistance and countermovements.

THE RESILIENT ORDER

After World War II, liberal democracies joined together to create an international order that reflected their shared interests. And as is the case with liberal democracy itself, the order that emerged to accompany it cannot be easily undone. For one thing, it is deeply embedded. Hundreds of millions, if not billions, of people have geared their activities and expectations to the order's institutions and incentives, from farmers to microchip makers. However unappealing aspects of it may be, replacing the liberal order with something significantly different would be extremely difficult. Despite the high expectations they generate, revolutionary moments often fail to make enduring changes. It is unrealistic today to think that a few years of nationalist demagoguery will dramatically undo liberalism.

Growing interdependence makes the order especially difficult to overturn. Ever since its inception in the eighteenth century, liberalism has been deeply committed to the progressive improvement of the human condition through scientific discovery and technological advancements. This Enlightenment project began to bear practical fruits on a large scale in the nineteenth century, transforming virtually every aspect of human life. New techniques for production, communication, transportation, and destruction poured forth. The liberal system has been at the forefront not just of stoking those fires of innovation but also of addressing the negative consequences. Adam Smith's case for free trade, for example, was strengthened when it became easier to establish supply chains across global distances. And the age-old case for peace was vastly strengthened when weapons evolved from being simple and limited in their destruction to the city-busting missiles of the nuclear era. Liberal democratic capitalist societies have thrived and expanded because they have been particularly adept at stimulating and exploiting innovation and at coping with their spillover effects and negative externalities. In short, liberal modernity excels at both harvesting the fruits of modern advance and guarding against its dangers.

This dynamic of constant change and ever-increasing interdependence is only accelerating. Human progress has caused grave harm to the planet and its atmosphere, yet climate change will also require unprecedented levels of international cooperation. With the rise of bioweapons and cyberwarfare, the capabilities to wreak mass destruction are getting cheaper and ever more accessible, making the international regulation of these technologies a vital national security imperative for all countries. At the same time, global capitalism has drawn more people and countries into cross-border webs of exchange, thus making virtually everyone dependent on the competent management of international finance and trade. In the age of global interdependence, even a realist must be an internationalist.

The international order is also likely to persist because its survival does not depend on all of its members being liberal democracies. The return of isolationism, the rise of illiberal regimes such as China and Russia, and the general recession of liberal democracy in many parts of the world appear to bode ill for the liberal international order. But contrary to the conventional wisdom, many of its institutions are not uniquely liberal in character. Rather, they are Westphalian, in that they are designed merely to solve problems of sovereign states, whether they be democratic or authoritarian. And many of the key participants in these institutions are anything but liberal or democratic.

Consider the Soviet Union's cooperative efforts during the Cold War. Back then, the liberal world order was primarily an arrangement among liberal democracies in Europe, North America, and East Asia. Even so, the Soviet Union often worked with the democracies to help build international institutions. Moscow's committed antiliberal stance did not stop it from partnering with Washington to create a raft of arms control agreements. Nor did it stop it from cooperating with Washington through the World Health Organization to spearhead a global campaign to eradicate smallpox, which succeeded in completely eliminating the disease by 1979.

More recently, countries of all stripes have crafted global rules to guard against environmental destruction. The signatories to the Paris climate agreement, for example, include such autocracies as China, Iran, and Russia. Westphalian approaches have also thrived when it comes to governing the commons, such as the ocean, the atmosphere, outer space, and Antarctica. To name just one example, the 1987 Montreal Protocol, which has thwarted the destruction of the ozone layer, has been actively supported by democracies and dictatorships alike. Such agreements are not challenges to the sovereignty of the states that create them but collective measures to solve problems they cannot address on their own.

Most institutions in the liberal order do not demand that their backers be liberal democracies; they only require that they be status quo powers and capable of fulfilling their commitments. They do not challenge the Westphalian system; they codify it. The UN, for example, enshrines the principle of state sovereignty and, through the permanent members of the Security Council, the notion of great-power decision-making. All of this makes the order more durable. Because much of international cooperation has nothing at all to do with liberalism or democracy, when politicians who are hostile to all things liberal are in power, they can still retain their international agendas and keep the order alive. The persistence of Westphalian institutions provides a lasting foundation on which distinctively liberal and democratic institutions can be erected in the future.

Another reason to believe that the liberal order will endure involves the return of ideological rivalry. The last two and a half decades have been profoundly anomalous in that liberalism has had no credible competitor. During the rest of its existence, it faced competition that made it stronger. Throughout the nineteenth century, liberal democracies sought to outperform monarchical, hereditary, and aristocratic regimes. During the first half of the twentieth century, autocratic and fascist competitors created strong incentives for the liberal democracies to get their own houses in order and band together. And after World War II, they built the liberal order in part to contain the threat of the Soviet Union and international communism.

The Chinese Communist Party appears increasingly likely to seek to offer an alternative to the components of the existing order that have to do with economic liberalism and human rights. If it ends up competing with the liberal democracies, they will again face pressure to champion their values. As during the Cold War, they will have incentives to undertake domestic reforms and strengthen their international alliances. The collapse of the Soviet Union, although a great milestone in the annals of the advance of liberal democracy, had the ironic effect of eliminating one of its main drivers of solidarity. The bad news of renewed ideological rivalry could be good news for the liberal international order.

#### Liberalism isn’t perfect or historically innocent, but it’s the most practical way of organizing power for radical societal change—any alt throws fifty years of positive change out the window and leaves no check on Trumpism

--debate is a product of liberalism—so any value they see in deliberating proves liberalism can counter its own excesses

Isaac 18—James H. Rudy Professor of Political Science at Indiana University, Bloomington (Jeffrey, “Putting Liberal Democracy First,” Dissent, Volume 65, Number 2, Spring 2018, pp. 151-159)

Those of us who consider ourselves “left liberals” have expressed particular alarm about the symbolic and practical dangers posed by leaders such as Donald Trump and his supporters. To name but a few: mass rallies denouncing “the liberal media”; inciting and sometimes enacting violence against critics or protestors; calling for the imprisonment of political adversaries; racist and xenophobic rhetoric invoked to support Muslim bans, border walls, and mass deportations; conspiracy-mongering attacks on career civil servants as agents of “the deep state,” and on journalists as “enem[ies] of the American people”; and orchestrated campaigns of lying and disinformation under the banner of speaking “truth” directly to the people and opposing “fake news.” In many ways, these tactics and actions are all too reminiscent of the “origins of totalitarianism” discussed by Hannah Arendt in her 1951 classic of that title. To note this is not to deny the profound differences between the global crises of 1914–1945 and today. But it is to register profound fear for the future of liberal democracy.

Colleagues further to my left have been critical, sometimes harshly, of this liberal response. They insist that Trump is not quite so dangerous, and that the dangers he does pose are largely expressions of deeper tendencies of neoliberalism that require more fundamental challenge. It thus makes little sense, they argue, for the left to reflexively defend liberal democracy— liberal democracy itself is the problem, and the solution is its transformation. While tactically these arguments track the 2016 debates between supporters of Hillary Clinton and Bernie Sanders, they also run deeper. Some on the left—whether enthusiastic Bernie supporters, or unenthusiastic supporters who nonetheless saw his candidacy as an opening—reviled Clinton for her neoliberalism, and could not bring themselves to vote for her even once she won the Democratic nomination. They argued that the threat posed by Trump was overstated since both parties are oligarchical and capitalist (they are), and thus essentially similar (they are not). This contingent believed that the real danger is not Trumpism but the corruption, hypocrisy, inequality, and violence plaguing liberal democracy itself.

To be clear, the majority of Sanders supporters did vote for Clinton in the general election. Moreover, I have no interest in “blaming” people with such convictions for Clinton’s defeat, however they voted (and in a liberal democracy each individual has the fundamental right to vote as he or she chooses). Further, many Sanders activists have been involved in important long-term organizing efforts that are in no way reducible to the terms of a single election. At the same time, in the debates about the election and since Trump’s inauguration, there have been serious differences of opinion between those who are greatly alarmed by Trumpism and who regard the defense of liberal democracy as an urgent imperative, and those who regard it as nothing more than a symptom of a deeper and more fundamental crisis. “Socialism or barbarism” is a slogan rarely heard. But something like it seems to represent the logic of an anti-liberal position with real traction on the left.

It is important to acknowledge that what we call “liberal democracy” is a complex, novel, imperfect, and ultimately fragile form of politics, created after the Second World War through an accommodation between liberalism and democracy that was neither inevitable nor innocent. It required the buyin of social democratic and Christian democratic movements and parties; it relied on the unique conditions of postwar growth, class compromise, and Cold War “vital center” anticommunism; and it incorporated from the start some profoundly illiberal policy commitments (the national security state, post-colonial counter-insurgency, an uncritical embrace of “modernization,” and compromises with racial and gender inequality, to name a few). This regime was flawed from the start: it was already in crisis by 1965, and much of the politics of the past sixty years can be seen as an intensification of this crisis. Such an arrangement hardly represents a “riddle of history solved.”

Yet liberal democracy—in spite of its corruptions, failings, and complicity with injustice—represents the most practical and normatively legitimate way of organizing political power at the level of the nation-state. And every effort to install an alternative has resulted in disaster.

Liberal democracy is both limited and precarious. And simple appeals to liberal values are insufficient, either to defend liberal democracy under siege, or to further advance the causes of social justice and deepen democracy. For this reason, I disagree with self-identified liberal democrats who regard populism in any form as a danger to liberal democracy. I would instead agree with those such as Chantal Mouffe and Étienne Balibar, who argue that new forms of left populism and new left movements and parties (exemplified by Syriza in Greece, Podemos in Spain, and Demos in Romania) are important to advance the cause of social justice, to counter the rise of right-wing populism, and thus to defend liberal democracy itself.

At the same time, I believe that calls to unambiguously embrace a new left populism, or to declare one’s goal to be socialism (or for some, even communism) are seriously misguided, at least for those who take liberal values seriously. There are two reasons why.

The first is broadly political: because a new socialist or left populist hegemony faces profound and probably insuperable obstacles, and these are not gainsaid by the obvious failings of capitalism. Marx was simply wrong when he declared that “Mankind thus inevitably sets itself only such tasks as it is able to solve.” And the fact that capitalism is the source of profound harm to social justice and environmental sustainability does not mean that there is any obvious way to “solve,” rather than simply to remedy, these harms.

In their recent Jacobin piece “Social Democracy Is Good. But Not Good Enough.” Joseph Schwartz and Bhaskar Sunkara take issue with recent advocacy of liberal versions of socialism. They argue that “history shows us that achieving a stable welfare state while leaving capital’s power over the economy largely intact is itself far from viable. Even if we wanted to stop at socialism within capitalism, it’s not clear that we could.” But it is much less clear that it is possible to institute a wholesale socialist transformation. And, as Schwartz and Sunkara themselves concede: “To chart a different course, we would need a militant labor movement and a mass socialist presence strengthened by accumulated victories, looking to not merely tame but overcome capitalism.” But such a socialist mass politics is rather unlikely given the current forms of social and economic life, which differ dramatically from the forms of industrialism that gave birth to the modern socialist movement in the mid-nineteenth century.

“Post-Fordist” forms of flexible accumulation, automation, neoliberal forms of consumerism, new digital means of communication, new forms of “liquid modernity”—such developments have promoted new forms of inequality, but they have also eroded the social, cultural, and economic bases of working-class formation that grounded socialist politics in the past. In countries such as the United States, there is no mass proletariat to mobilize or organize. And while there is a working class, not many of the individuals inhabiting this class regard wage-labor as the defining feature of their experience or identity under capitalism.

In fact, a range of struggles for recognition now flourish in real tension with class politics—including civil rights, women’s rights, and gay rights. Right-wing populism represents a powerful backlash against these struggles that has successfully garnered substantial white working-class support. The identities of many members of the white working class are deeply and profoundly constituted by sexism and resentment toward immigrants and people of color in ways that make them poor targets for socialist advocacy.

It does not follow from this that socialist political organizing ought to be disparaged. But it does follow that left liberals have every reason to approach the aspiration to transcend capitalism, and liberal democracy, with skepticism. And so, when socialist colleagues challenge us from the left, insisting that we “reify” liberal democracy and fail to understand the “real” sources of our difficulties, we have every reason to question who exactly is doing the reifying.

The second reason to keep a liberal distance from invocations of socialist transformation relates to questions of ethical and political judgment. Even if one were to believe that the only way to defend liberal democracy and to defeat the forces of the right is to join the struggle for a more radical challenge to capitalism itself, this would not mitigate some very difficult and consequential political choices that present themselves in the here and now.

Thus after Hillary Clinton was nominated, many Sanders supporters who sincerely believed that something more radical than Clintonism was necessary were faced with a stark choice: on the one hand, voting for and supporting Clinton, and, on the other hand, refusing to support Clinton, by abstaining or supporting Jill Stein, and thus making it more likely that Donald Trump would be elected. To support Clinton in this context was not to repudiate Sanders or the importance of the political “revolution” he led. It was simply to acknowledge that the danger to liberal democracy represented by Trump was too great—and that neoliberalism with a human face is always to be preferred to right-wing authoritarianism. A similar dilemma presented itself to many French leftists in the May 2017 presidential elections. During the first round, a number of center and left candidates decided to run, including left socialist Jean-Luc Mélenchon, along with Marine Le Pen of the right-wing National Front. But in the runoff, the choice was stark: support Emmanuel Macron against Le Pen, on the grounds that the danger from the right must be averted, or refuse to do so, on the grounds that Macron is a neoliberal. Yanis Varoufakis, self-described “erratic Marxist” and former Greek Finance Minister, explained the stakes in Project Syndicate: Progressives have good reason to be angry with a liberal establishment that feels comfortable with Macron. . . . Moreover, it is not hard to identify with the French left’s feeling that the liberal establishment is getting its comeuppance with Le Pen’s rise. . . . But the decision of many leftists to maintain an equal distance between Macron and Le Pen is inexcusable. There are two reasons for this. First, the imperative to oppose racism trumps opposition to neoliberal policies. . . . Just like in the 1940s, we have a duty to ensure that the state’s monopoly over the legitimate use of violence is not controlled by those who harbor violent sentiments toward the foreigner, the cultural or sexual minority member, the “other.” . . . But there is a second reason for backing Macron. . . . My disagreements with Macron are legion. . . . [yet] I support Macron . . . [for I] refuse to be part of a generation of leftists responsible for allowing a fascist and racist to win the French presidency. Naturally, if Macron wins and becomes merely another functionary of Europe’s deep establishment, my comrades and I will oppose him no less energetically than we are—or should be—opposing Le Pen now.

Yet there are those on the left who view the neoliberal as no less of a threat than the neo-fascist. The philosopher Slavoj Žižek, for example, refused to support Macron against Le Pen, echoing a stance he had taken in the Clinton-Trump contest. Similar sentiments have been expressed by the scholar Nancy Fraser, a harsh critic of Clinton. Like Žižek, Fraser insists that “far from being the antidote to fascism, (neo)liberalism is its partner in crime. . . . the left should refuse the choice between progressive neoliberalism and reactionary populism.”

But there are times when such a choice is necessary, and making the right choice is not a form of capitulation but political responsibility. The making of such a choice does not preclude other choices as well, and it makes perfect sense to say “I support this candidate or policy now, when the alternative is much worse, at the same time that I will continue to work for a future in which better choices are available.”

And so on May 15, 2017, shortly after Macron’s victory, Varoufakis, as promised, published a follow-up: “Congratulations, President Macron—Now We Oppose You.” There may be a vantage point from which it makes sense to denounce Varoufakis for refusing to refuse the choice between “progressive neoliberalism and reactionary populism.” But it is a vantage point from which the fate of liberal democracy, with its civil liberties, ethnic and religious tolerance, and political pluralism—and the fate of those constituencies who need these very things to survive—would seem to matter all too little. As Varoufakis stated in another op-ed for Le Monde, “Of course we all wish, at least those of us on the left, that the French electoral system were not binary. But it is. And given that it is, I refuse to be part of a generation of European progressives who could have stopped Marine Le Pen from winning France’s Presidency but didn’t.” Varoufakis describes the refusal of this choice as “scandalous.” To choose against right-wing authoritarianism is to put liberal democracy first, and to treat it not as the end, but as an essential means of any ends worth pursuing.

The questions of means and ends raised by such electoral choices are even more pressing when it comes to another set of tactics supported by some on the left—tactics of sometimes violent direct action represented by antifa. Natasha Lennard explained in the Nation last August that “the antifascist project is not one of asking for better statutes or a reconfiguration of rights. . . . antifa is a promise to neo-Nazis and their bedfellows that we will confront them in the streets; we will expose them online and inform their place of employ.” She makes clear that such a politics has little regard for the discourse of human rights or the rule of law. Last summer, Lennard also pursued this anti-liberal theme in Dissent: Time and again in recent months I have seen political writers apoplectic over alleged rips in the social contract, as wrought by Trump, anti-immigrant policy, or austerity, or any number of political plagues. The liberal response has been outrage and disbelief that the state can fall so far from its alleged foundation as a contract forged by the will of equal pledgers. . . . Calling upon some mythic social contract to deliver us from evil is not just futile, it’s downright religious, as Nietzsche would see it. Liberal outrage peddles Christian morality in a world where God is dead, and we have killed him. . . . Power determines which narratives about reality get to count as truth. Recognizing this is a political necessity for those who would challenge the Trumpian Weltanschauung.” Antifa historian and organizer Mark Bray similarly writes that “anti-fascism is an illiberal politics of social revolutionism applied to fighting the Far Right, not only literal fascists [emphasis added].” The roots of antifa lie in the most radical forms of anarchism. As the journalist Chris Hedges (and also Noam Chomsky) have argued, “The focus on street violence diverts activists from the far less glamorous building of relationships and alternative institutions and community organizing that alone will make effective resistance possible.” Moreover, antifa rhetoric, like the “alt right” and neo-Nazi rhetoric it despises, is Manichean. Instead of efforts to forge broad coalitions capable of defeating right-wing authoritarians at the ballot box, antifa tactics promote cycles of recrimination, giving public credibility to right-wing authoritarians, such as Trump, who valorize police brutality and claim to represent “law and order.” There is a long history of Manichean “friend/enemy” thinking on the left, represented by polemics such as Lenin’s 1918 “The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky” and Trotsky’s 1938 Their Morals and Ours. It was, in part, to counter such thinking that Dissent magazine was founded. That generation of democratic socialists, shaken by the experiences of Stalinism, totalitarianism, genocide, and world war, and hemmed in by McCarthyism and what Irving Howe called a deadening “age of conformity,” created a journal committed to a critical and liberal version of socialism centering on the importance of vigorous disagreement. In its sixty-four years, Dissent has experienced generational changes and featured many important debates. But at no time since the journal’s founding has the very existence of liberal democracy seemed more in danger.

The illiberal forces on the rise threaten to reverse every important achievement, however limited, of the past five decades of liberal democracy. These achievements include reproductive freedom and domestic violence legislation; environmental and workplace health and safety regulation; civil rights and voting rights enforcement; moderate forms of consumer protection; and press freedom and protection against censorship. All deserve to be defended, not because of their role in advancing us toward a future beyond capitalism, but because they represent real improvements in our lives. The fear-mongering, repression, and evisceration of public criticism promoted by right-wing populism diminish democratic citizenship for everyone. They are harmful to left organizing and to anyone who believes in defending political freedom. Resisting these assaults on liberal democracy through the political means made available by liberal democracy is an urgent task. This does not prevent one from also seeking to build a movement beyond “resistance.” But resistance is important work in its own right and, for many of us, it is the work that is currently most important.

Sarah Leonard, a Dissent editor-at-large and former editor at the Nation, recently remarked about the uncertainties of liberals: The problem with many prominent representatives of liberalism today . . . is that they don’t seem to know which side they’re on. Say Bernie, vote Hillary; say universal health care, but condemn its advocacy; say electable, lose everywhere; say you’ll don sneakers to walk the picket line, don’t show up. The name of my desire is socialism; do liberals know the name of theirs? This reluctance to pick “a side” that disturbs Leonard—which I prefer to describe as ambivalence—is real, and while it can be bridged, I doubt it can be eliminated. For to be a left liberal is to be troubled by the hesitations and inconsistencies of which Leonard writes but also to believe that a pluralistic politics of freedom in our complex world requires such tribulations. I supported Sanders and voted for him in the Indiana primary. But I doubted he could win the Democratic nomination, much less the general election, and I worried about the harshness with which some of his supporters attacked Clinton, a harshness that has persisted over the past year. I support universal healthcare, and welcome the shift by many important Democratic leaders to support the Sanders plan. Still, I wonder whether the plan itself is viable, and whether it is the most compelling issue on which to mobilize the Democratic Party to electoral victories in 2018 and 2020. Because I so profoundly fear Trumpism, I regard Democratic victories as critical—even if they involve compromises on healthcare and even as they will likely bring disappointments. Am I confused? Am I lacking in conviction? Or am I simply unable to believe there are easy, clear-cut answers to many current political questions?

And so “liberal” works for me as a political identity in a way that “socialist” does not. It places a priority on the civil and political freedoms that make it possible for us to argue about how to challenge injustice and work for greater justice. It furnishes peaceful channels of political participation and contestation that allow for provisional agreements to be reached about how to move forward.

Again, Lennard writes, disparagingly, that: “The liberal response has been outrage and disbelief that the state can fall so far from its alleged foundation as a contract forged by the will of equal pledgers.” But liberals such as myself do not believe that the liberal democratic state was ever founded through an idyllic process of egalitarian consent. We believe only that liberal democracy is a flawed outcome of struggle worth defending, and that the idea of free and equal democratic will formation has furnished, and continues to furnish, a powerful normative ideal. There is no “mythic social contract” that can “deliver us from evil.” There is no such contract, and there is no such deliverance. There is only ongoing debate and contestation.

It is perhaps that fundamental commitment to ongoing political contestation that marks the difference between left liberals and those to our left who embrace a more “radical” and often emphatically socialist politics. To note this is not to disparage those to my left. It is to identify points of honest difference as well as commonalities, on which agreements and alliances are possible.

In December 2001, Robert Kuttner published a short piece in the liberal journal he co-edits, the American Prospect, with the self-explanatory title “Why Liberals Need Radicals.” In June 2013, Bhaskar Sunkara, editor of Jacobin, published a piece in the Nation, entitled “Letter to ‘The Nation’ From a Young Radical.” Sunkara explains why he and his colleagues have embraced a new radicalism with strong Marxist roots. He too makes the case that liberals and radicals need each other. At the same time, from the radical and not the liberal side, Sunkara’s view of this association is rather harsh: “American radicalism has had a complex and at times contradictory association with liberalism. At the peak of the socialist movement, leftists fed off liberal victories. Radicals, in turn, have added coherence and punch to every key liberal struggle and advance of the past century. Such a mutually beneficial alliance could be in the works again. The first step is to smash the existing liberal coalition and rebuild it on a radically different basis.”

I share Sunkara’s belief that now is the time for mutually beneficial connections and alliances between democratic socialists and liberals. But I am rather wary—perhaps for reasons of generational experience—of calls to “smash the existing liberal coalition.” I am skeptical of that “radically different basis.” Most importantly, I believe that the danger posed by the radical right, to the political conditions and elemental life chances of many millions of individuals, makes it important to defend, to build, and to extend the liberal coalition rather than disrupt or destroy it. Because in the struggle between socialism and barbarism, it is barbarism that has the advantage. And because the civil and political freedoms and forms of responsive public policy made possible by liberal democracy are a necessary condition of any social or economic justice worth having.

## 1AC—Framing

### 1AC—Base

#### The standard is maximizing expected well being.

**pleasure and pain are intrinsically valuable. People consistently regard pleasure and pain as good reasons for action, despite the fact that pleasure doesn’t seem to be instrumentally valuable for anything.**

**Moen 16** [Ole Martin Moen, Research Fellow in Philosophy at University of Oslo “An Argument for Hedonism” Journal of Value Inquiry (Springer), 50 (2) 2016: 267–281] SJDI

Let us start by observing, empirically, that **a widely shared judgment about intrinsic value and disvalue is that pleasure is intrinsically valuable and pain is intrinsically disvaluable.** **On virtually any proposed list of intrinsic values and disvalues (we will look at some of them below), pleasure is included among the intrinsic values and pain among the intrinsic disvalues.** This inclusion makes intuitive sense, moreover, for **there is something undeniably good about the way pleasure feels and something undeniably bad about the way pain feels, and neither the goodness of pleasure nor the badness of pain seems to be exhausted by the further effects that these experiences might have.** “Pleasure” and “pain” are here understood inclusively, as encompassing anything hedonically positive and anything hedonically negative.2 **The special value statuses of pleasure and pain are manifested in how we treat these experiences in our everyday reasoning about values.** If you tell me that you are heading for the convenience store, **I might ask: “What for?” This is a reasonable question, for when you go to the convenience store you usually do so**, not merely for the sake of going to the convenience store, but **for the sake of achieving something further that you deem to be valuable.** You might answer, for example: “To buy soda.” This answer makes sense, for soda is a nice thing and you can get it at the convenience store. I might further inquire, however: “What is buying the soda good for?” This further question can also be a reasonable one, for it need not be obvious why you want the soda. You might answer: “Well, I want it for the pleasure of drinking it.” **If I then proceed by asking “But what is the pleasure of drinking the soda good for?” the discussion is likely to reach an awkward end. The reason is that the pleasure is not good for anything further; it is simply that for which going to the convenience store and buying the soda is good.**3 As Aristotle observes**: “We never ask [a man] what his end is in being pleased, because we assume that pleasure is choice worthy in itself.**”4 Presumably, a similar story can be told in the case of pains, for if someone says “This is painful!” we never respond by asking: “And why is that a problem?” We take for granted that if something is painful, we have a sufficient explanation of why it is bad. If we are onto something in our everyday reasoning about values, it seems that **pleasure and pain are both places where we reach the end of the line in matters of value.**

**Moral uncertainty means preventing extinction should be our highest priority.  
Bostrom 12** [Nick Bostrom. Faculty of Philosophy & Oxford Martin School University of Oxford. “Existential Risk Prevention as Global Priority.” Global Policy (2012)]  
These reflections on **moral uncertainty suggest** an alternative, complementary way of looking at existential risk; they also suggest a new way of thinking about the ideal of sustainability. Let me elaborate.¶ **Our present understanding of axiology might** well **be confused. We may not** nowknow — at least not in concrete detail — what outcomes would count as a big win for humanity; we might not even yet **be able to imagine the best ends** of our journey. **If we are** indeedprofoundly **uncertain** about our ultimate aims,then we should recognize that **there is a great** option **value in preserving** — and ideally improving — **our ability to recognize value and** to **steer the future accordingly. Ensuring** that **there will be a future** version of **humanity** with great powers and a propensity to use them wisely **is** plausibly **the best way** available to us **to increase the probability that the future will contain** a lot of **value.** To do this, we must prevent any existential catastrophe.

**Reducing the risk of extinction is always priority number one.   
Bostrom 12** [Faculty of Philosophy and Oxford Martin School, University of Oxford.], Existential Risk Prevention as Global Priority.  Forthcoming book (Global Policy). MP. [http://www.existenti...org/concept.pdf](http://www.existential-risk.org/concept.pdf)Even if we use the most conservative of these estimates, which entirely ignores the   possibility of space colonization and software minds, **we find that the expected loss of an existential   catastrophe is greater than the value of 10^16 human lives**.  **This implies that the expected value of   reducing existential risk by a mere one millionth of one percentage point is at least a hundred times the   value of a million human lives.**  The more technologically comprehensive estimate of 10  54 humanbrain-emulation subjective life-years (or 10  52  lives of ordinary length) makes the same point even   more starkly.  Even if we give this allegedly lower bound on the cumulative output potential of a   technologically mature civilization a mere 1% chance of being correct, we find that the expected   value of reducing existential risk by a mere one billionth of one billionth of one percentage point is worth   a hundred billion times as much as a billion human lives. **One might consequently argue that even the tiniest reduction of existential risk has an   expected value greater than that of the definite provision of any ordinary good, such as the direct   benefit of saving 1 billion lives.**  And, further, that the absolute value of the indirect effect of saving 1  billion lives on the total cumulative amount of existential riskâ€”positive or negativeâ€”is almost   certainly larger than the positive value of the direct benefit of such an action.

# F/L—Case

## 1AR—Extensions

### XT—Everything

#### Poseidon shreds traditional conflict dynamics and empowers Putin to destroy NATO leads to extinction from nuclear war, terrorism, and cyber attacks.

### XT—Crisis Stability

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## 1AR—Case

### 1AR—AT: Circumvention

#### 1. Durable Fiat means no rollback and they actually do it—that’s best because we get to debate the consequences of a ban—every resolution is unpopular which means their interp of fiat causes the aff to lose every round to “they just won’t follow lol”

#### 2. Your evidence assumes a multilateral treaty but the plan just has Russia stop its own Poseidon production and usage of their own accord—no link.

#### 3. Conceded Kallenborn which says smaller bans on specific weapons are feasible—link turns because your ev assumes a broad ban.

#### 4. Verification is easy.

Gubrud and Altmann 13 – Gubrud, Mark, and Jurgen Altmann. Mark Gubrud is a physicist and adjunct professor in the Peace, War and Defense curriculum at the University of North Carolina. He did his doctoral work in low-temperature and nanoscale experimental physics at the University of Maryland. Jürgen Altmann is a physicist and peace researcher at TU Dortmund University, Germany. He is a co-founder and the chair of the German Research Association for Science, Disarmament and International Security. “Compliance Measures for an Autonomous Weapons Convention.” ICRAC, 2013, [www.icrac.net/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Gubrud-Altmann\_Compliance-Measures-AWC\_ICRAC-WP2.pdf](http://www.icrac.net/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Gubrud-Altmann_Compliance-Measures-AWC_ICRAC-WP2.pdf). | MU

General Considerations Agreements to limit or prohibit certain types of arms – either in the context of arms control or of international humanitarian law4 – always raise the concern that a party that violates the terms may gain an advantage, in armed conflict, over one that does not. Therefore many such agreements include measures for promoting, implementing and verifying compliance. The types and extent of compliance measures may depend on many factors, including the military significance of the controlled weapons or actions, the difficulty of distinguishing systems and activities that are prohibited from those that are allowed, preexisting norms and levels of transparency, and the costs and acceptability of various measures. In the history of international arms limitations, the compliance measures agreed upon have ranged from leaving each state to monitor its own and others’ compliance independently, to establishing international organizations with sophisticated technical inspection and monitoring systems. **Several arms control and international humanitarian law agreements and obligations lack any compliance measures, yet are regularly respected by states**. Examples include the bans on “dumdum” bullets,5 x-ray invisible fragments,6 and blinding lasers,7 as well as many other rules and principles of international humanitarian law, embodied in the Geneva Conventions, their Additional Protocols, and other documents, which govern both permissible weapons and conduct in war. Some of these have gained the status of customary international law,8 and hence are incumbent even upon states that have not formally acceded to them; rules have been established in customary IHL for promoting compliance and prosecuting war crimes.9 **Other agreements**, such as those banning anti-personnel landmines and cluster munitions, **set forth their own provisions for inquiry and investigation of suspected or alleged noncompliance**. In addition, these agreements require state parties to enact their own national implementing measures which set penalties for banned activities, to report the numbers, type and status of banned weapons they are in the process of eliminating, and to participate in consultations and review conferences. These and similar measures set standards of implementation, promote transparency and build confidence, and make noncompliance more difficult to conceal. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) can also help; in particular, the Landmine and Cluster Munitions Monitor (LCMM) plays as strong role as the de facto independent and respected verification mechanism of the treaty. A higher level of verification is provided by official monitoring of declared facilities and weapon systems to ensure that their characteristics and uses fall within prescribed limits. Such measures, for a multilateral treaty, are typically implemented by a treaty implementing organization (TIO).10 Technical measures include tamper-proof monitoring and tagging 2 devices as well as on-site inspections and forensic analysis by expert personnel. **Evidence for the existence of** **undeclared activities and** **systems may also be collected and evaluated by the TIO** **when so mandated**. Considerations for Autonomous Weapons The past decade has witnessed the advent and rapid growth in the development and use, especially by the United States, of weaponized “drones” and, more generally, air, land and water vehicles, large and small, that carry arms and have no on-board crew. A complete prohibition of all such uninhabited armed vehicles would be straightforward to verify through on-site inspections of military sites and other forms of monitoring. Most such vehicles would lack any accommodation for human crew and so would be easily distinguished from piloted and crewed vehicles. A treaty that prohibits autonomous fire decision but allows remotely controlled and “semiautonomous” weapons presents a more complex set of challenges. If a “semi-autonomous weapon system” may have capabilities to autonomously acquire, track, identify, group and prioritize targets, and to control their engagement once a “go” signal is given,11 conversion to full lethal autonomy could be as simple as throwing a (software) switch. Given continued trends in technology, the addition of such capabilities to remotely controlled armed vehicles already equipped with sophisticated sensors and general purpose computers might also reduce to a matter of installing new software. Given the potentially high military importance of some kinds of fully autonomous weapons, especially those designed to attack major weapon systems (perhaps in swarms), there would be a significant risk of fully autonomous options being secretly prepared for systems officially declared to be under human control. However, militarily potent **fully autonomous weapons systems will likely require extensive development and testing** while being operated under full autonomous control (though perhaps under human supervision). **It would be difficult to conceal the large-scale activities that would be involved in such programs**, especially if they are made clear violations of accepted norms and of a binding treaty. By starting with a declaratory undertaking to forgo the development, testing, production and use of fully autonomous weapons, the international community would establish a normative goal and buy time to avoid a runaway arms race. As our understanding of the forms and capabilities of possible autonomous weapons deepens, more detailed limits may be established and clarified, with particular attention to blocking the development and deployment of those systems which pose the greatest threats. Provisions for such further clarifications, and a process for making them, should be incorporated in the treaty. Since verification of the non-existence of an autonomous option in software is virtually impossible, and would be deemed far too intrusive, **a** tamper-proof **system will be needed that can verify**, after the fact, that an attack in question was under direct control of a human being (“in the loop,” not “on the loop”). **This could be achieved by keeping the records of each engagement and making the records of specific engagements available to a Treaty Implementing Organization**, on request, when sufficient evidence exists to support suspicions of illegal autonomous operation. 3 Certain strictly defensive systems, where human safety is at stake and where human reactions are too slow for an effective response, may be exempted from the prohibition, provided they are operated under human supervision. Cases which meet these criteria may include missile and artillery interception systems which defend human-inhabited vehicles or locations. A strict criterion of necessity should be applied; in cases where human reaction is possible, the system should delay engagement to allow a human decision until imperative safety reasons compel an automatic response. In no case should autonomous engagement of human targets be permitted. Such allowances will complicate the terms of an agreement, but if they are narrowly restricted and clearly defined they do not pose particularly difficult challenges for verification.

### 1AR—AT: Too Late to Ban

#### Doesn’t apply to the aff because it’s a specific weapon, not a broad ban.

### 1AR—AT: Abramowicz 20 (Economy)

#### Prefer the more recent Axe evidence that indicates that obviously Russia has been able to build a ton of Poseidon weapons so far – their evidence is old and doesn’t account for recent equipment

#### 2] They’ve read evidence that Russia UQ is in the gutter lmao

### 1AR—AT: Farley 20 (No Threat)

#### Surprise doesn’t matter because you conceded 2021 evidence from the US Navy that they can’t defend the Status 6 no matter what.

### 1AR—AT: Felgenhauer 20 (Hypersonics Thumper)

#### The evidence concedes Zircon is not a threat due to it’s inaccuracy and lack of autonomy in targeting which is why they developed Poseidon.

### 1AR—AT: Hambling 19 (No Tsunami)

#### The potential is still destabilizing AND the test doesn’t apply because the detonation would be on a continental seaboard, not out at sea.

### 1AR—AT: Hambling 19 (Propaganda)

#### Your evidence concedes it’s real—highlighting in green.

David Hambling 19 [(David Hambling, freelance journalist and author based in South London, specialising mainly in science, technology and strange phenomena) Russia’s Apocalypse Torpedo, Popular Mechanics 1-18-2019] AT

Other questions linger. Why is Poseidon always called a drone rather than a torpedo? Are its real targets cities, naval bases, or carrier groups as shown in the video? Given so much contradictory information, it would be easy to doubt whether Poseidon even exists. Certainly, many people have questioned that fact. Its first appearance was in a Russian news report in 2015, when a military commander talking to Putin could be seen holding what appeared to be plans for the top-secret weapon, then called Status-6. This was such a clumsy "leak" that is looked like a case of obvious disinformation.However, a 2016 Pentagon report appeared to confirm that the weapon was real. In 2018, the Russian Ministry of Defense held a public vote and Status-6 was renamed Poseidon, making it one of the most high-profile secret weapons ever. Then there are all those leaked stories to TASS from "military sources." Now, TASS isn't an independent news organization, but a state media outlet wholly owned by the Russian government. What they print is what Putin’s people want—and what they want the West to read. “There’s no reason to believe these Poseidon reports wouldn’t be information ops by Russian intelligence,” says Bronk. Russian military theory places great emphasis on what they call maskirovka, deceiving the enemy. As we have seen before, many hyped Russian weapons were never actually built. “Such a weapon system is needed only for nuclear deterrence,” notes the Russian defense website MilitaryRussia.Ru. “But here is a seditious thought—it is not obligatory for the system to exist, just for there to be some chance that it does exist.”

### 1AR—AT: Hollings 20 (No Capability Increase)

#### Yes increase—it’s the largest bomb ever built and the Navy said they have no way to defend it unlike traditional missiles.

### 1AR—AT: Horowitz 19 (Insecurity)

#### No impact to Russia insecurity, case outweighs on magnitude, and your ev concedes Russia still is insecure with it.

### 1AR—AT: Horowtiz 19 (No Impact)

#### Our ev is more recent and shows that Russia is offensively posturing it and has incentives to use but the US will escalate even if they don’t which triggers the impact.

### 1AR—AT: Kroenig 20 (No Impact)

#### Doesn’t have to be accurate because it’s for destruction and we don’t have the capability to defend—our ev from the Navy.

### 1AR—AT: Lockie 20 (Second Strike)

#### It won’t be launched alone—Russia will simultaneously use ICBMs for the other weapons.

### 1AR—AT: Majumdar 18 (Doesn’t Work)

#### Russia’s tested and proven it works. No probability given for the mechanical failure and your ev concedes we can’t defend even if we detect.

### 1AR—AT: Osborn 20 (Poseidon Solves)

#### It’s referencing ballistic subs which is not Poseidon—it’s an AUV that travels deeper.

### 1AR—AT: Pifer 18 (Not Key)

#### Advancements in tech solve speed and noise AND your evidence concedes that it would just not be good for a surprise attack, not that it wouldn’t be destructive AND concedes that it can’t be stopped—insert rehighlighting in green.

Pifer ’18 [Steven Pifer (nonresident senior fellow in the Arms Control and Non-Proliferation Initiative, Center for 21st Century Security and Intelligence, and the Center on the United States and Europe at the Brookings Institution, and a William J. Perry fellow at the Center for International Security and Cooperation at Stanford University. He focuses on nuclear arms control, Ukraine, and Russia. He has offered commentary on these issues on National Public Radio, PBS NewsHour, CNN, Fox News, BBC, and VOA, and his articles have run in The New York Times, The Washington Post, Financial Times, National Interest, Moscow Times, and Kyiv Post, among others. He is the author of “The Eagle and the Trident: U.S.-Ukraine Relations in Turbulent Times” (Brookings Institution Press, 2017), and co-author with Michael O’Hanlon of “The Opportunity: Next Steps in Reducing Nuclear Arms” (Brookings Institution Press, 2012). A retired Foreign Service officer, his more than 25 years with the State Department focused on U.S. relations with the former Soviet Union and Europe, as well as arms control and security issues. He served as deputy assistant secretary of state in the Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs with responsibilities for Russia and Ukraine (2001-2004), ambassador to Ukraine (1998-2000), and special assistant to the president and senior director for Russia, Ukraine and Eurasia on the National Security Council (1996-1997). In addition to Ukraine, Ambassador Pifer served at the U.S. embassies in Warsaw, Moscow, and London as well as with the U.S. delegation to the negotiation on intermediate-range nuclear forces in Geneva. From 2000 to 2001, he was a visiting scholar at Stanford’s Institute for International Studies. His publications include “Nuclear Arms Control Choices for the Next Administration,” (Brookings Arms Control and Non-Proliferation Series, October 2016); “Obama’s Faltering Nuclear Legacy: the 3 R’s,” The Washington Quarterly (Summer 2015); “Bilateral and Multilateral Nuclear Arms Reductions” in the Routledge Handbook on Nuclear Proliferation and Policy (2015); “A Realist’s Rationale for a World without Nuclear Weapons” in “The War That Must Never Be Fought” (2015); and “Ukraine’s Perilous Balancing Act,” Current Events (March 2012). He has authored numerous op-eds and other articles. Ambassador Pifer is a 1976 graduate of Stanford University with a bachelor’s in economics.) Wednesday, November 18, 2015, “Russia’s perhaps-not-real super torpedo,” Brookings, brookings.edu/blog/order-from-chaos/2015/11/18/russias-perhaps-not-real-super-torpedo/] Kakashi D

For all the oddities of the Status-6 torpedo, there would appear to be one bit of good news. Military strategists since the dawn of the nuclear ballistic missile age have obsessed over the possibility of surprise attack. Given its long travel time to target, possibly noisily announcing its course along the way, the Status-6 would not appear to make a good first-strike weapon. PARANOID ANDROID At about the time that it showed the Status-6 diagram, the broadcast aired Putin expressing concern about U.S. missile defenses and saying: “We’ll work on our missile defense systems, but primarily, as we’ve said repeatedly, I repeat, we’ll work on development of strike weapons capable of overcoming any anti-missile defense systems.” The Status-6, operating underwater, presumably would not be troubled by an American missile interceptor. But does the Russian military really believe it needs such a system to overcome U.S. missile defenses? It would hardly seem so. By 2018, the United States will have 44 missile interceptors with a velocity capable of engaging a strategic ballistic missile warhead. At that time, Russia will have some 1,500 deployed warheads on its intercontinental ballistic missiles and submarine-launched ballistic missiles.

### 1AR—AT: Peck 20 (Strategically Useless)

#### Doesn’t matter—Russia wants the biggest bomb and will use it and it does make strategic sense as the sole threat to SSBNs. s

### 1AR—AT: Piotrowski 18 (No Impact)

#### Assumes that Russia is rational but they conceded the Portzer evidence which shows they’re not proven by the development of the weapon.

### 1AR—AT: Piotrowski 18 (Doesn’t Exist)

#### Lol your own evidence says this is a conspiracy theory and we’ve read 2021 evidence that says Russia has literally displayed the weapon this year.

### 1AR—AT: Seidel 19 (No Impact)

#### Assumes 2 Megatons—you conceded it would be 200 megatons

### 1AR—AT: Trenin 15 (War inevitable)

#### Obviously empirically denied -Trenin argues that it should have happened almost immediately in 2015 but it’s 6 yrs later and no war yet – means war isn’t inevitable

### 1AR—AT: Trenin 18 (NATO Stable/No War)

#### The situation is different in 2021 because Poseidon is ready to go and lack of defense means Putin will attack to bring down NATO, and he can crumble it even without attacking through threats.

### 1AR—AT: Vaddi 19 (Timeframe)

#### Axe is more recent and references Putins SOU to show it’s coming this year.

## 1AR—NATO Bad

### 1AR—Overview

#### 1. This isn’t responsive, the aff doesn’t strengthen or preserve NATO, just prevent a first strike. The impact turn assumes that not doing the plan allows dissolution which no evidence has been read for.

#### 2. Conceded that the way collapse happens is through war which means either a] first strike causes extinction which is Lockie or b] US-Russia war does.

#### 3. Case solves their impact because Russia won’t attack with traditional nukes since they’ll get intercepted and crushed, Poseidon is their only chance—1AC Lockie.

### 1AR—AT: Russia Not Revisionist

### --Top

#### Putin seeks the collapse of the American led international order—he’s identified NATO as the key target to attack.

Kagan, 19 - American resident scholar at the American Enterprise Institute, and a former professor of military history at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, less famous brother of our favorite neighborhood neocon Robert Kagan

Frederick W. Kagan, “CONFRONTING THE RUSSIAN CHALLENGE: A NEW APPROACH FOR THE U.S.,” Institute for the Study of War. June 2019. <https://www.politico.com/f/?id=0000016b-6eef-dc80-a3ff-ffff778c0000>

The Russian threat’s effectiveness results mainly from the West’s weaknesses. NATO’s European members are not meeting their full commitments to the alliance to maintain the fighting power needed to deter and defeat the emerging challenge from Moscow. Increasing political polarization and the erosion of trust by Western peoples in their governments creates vulnerabilities that the Kremlin has adroitly exploited.

Moscow’s success in manipulating Western perceptions of and reactions to its activities has fueled the development of an approach to warfare that the West finds difficult to understand, let alone counter. Shaping the information space is the primary effort to which Russian military operations, even conventional military operations, are frequently subordinated in this way of war. Russia obfuscates its activities and confuses the discussion so that many people throw up their hands and say simply, “Who knows if the Russians really did that? Who knows if it was legal?”—thus paralyzing the West’s responses.

Putin’s Program

Putin is not simply an opportunistic predator. Putin and the major institutions of the Russian Federation have a program as coherent as that of any Western leader. Putin enunciates his objectives in major speeches, and his ministers generate detailed formal expositions of Russia’s military and diplomatic aims and its efforts and the methods and resources it uses to pursue them. These statements cohere with the actions of Russian officials and military units on the ground. The common perception that he is opportunistic arises from the way that the Kremlin sets conditions to achieve these objectives in advance. Putin closely monitors the domestic and international situation and decides to execute plans when and if conditions require and favor the Kremlin. The aims of Russian policy can be distilled into the following:

Domestic Objectives Putin is an autocrat who seeks to retain control of his state and the succession. He seeks to keep his power circle content, maintain his own popularity, suppress domestic political opposition in the name of blocking a “color revolution” he falsely accuses the West of preparing, and expand the Russian economy.

Putin has not fixed the economy, which remains corrupt, inefficient, and dependent on petrochemical and mineral exports. He has focused instead on ending the international sanctions regime to obtain the cash, expertise, and technology he needs. Information operations and hybrid warfare undertakings in Europe are heavily aimed at this objective.

External Objectives

Putin’s foreign policy aims are clear: end American dominance and the “unipolar” world order, restore “multipolarity,” and reestablish Russia as a global power and broker. He identifies NATO as an adversary and a threat and seeks to negate it. He aims to break Western unity, establish Russian suzerainty over the former Soviet States, and regain a global footprint.

Putin works to break Western unity by invalidating the collective defense provision of the North Atlantic Treaty (Article 5), weakening the European Union, and destroying the faith of Western societies in their governments.

He is reestablishing a global military footprint similar in extent the Soviet Union’s, but with different aims. He is neither advancing an ideology, nor establishing bases from which to project conventional military power on a large scale. He aims rather to constrain and shape America’s actions using small numbers of troops and agents along with advanced anti-air and anti-shipping systems.

Recommendations A sound U.S. grand strategic approach to Russia: • Aims to achieve core American national security objectives positively rather than to react defensively to Russian actions; • Holistically addresses all U.S. interests globally as they relate to Russia rather than considering them theater-by-theater; • Does not trade core American national security interests in one theater for those in another, or sacrifice one vital interest for another; • Achieves American objectives by means short of war if at all possible; • Deters nuclear war, the use of any nuclear weapons, and other Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD); • Accepts the risk of conventional conflict with Russia while seeking to avoid it and to control escalation, while also ensuring that American forces will prevail at any escalation level; • Contests Russian information operations and hybrid warfare undertakings; and • Extends American protection and deterrence to U.S. allies in NATO and outside of NATO. Such an approach involves four principal lines of effort. Constrain Putin’s Resources. Russia uses hybrid warfare approaches because of its relative poverty and inability to field large and modern military systems that could challenge the U.S. and NATO symmetrically. Lifting or reducing the current sanctions regime or otherwise facilitating Russia’s access to wealth and technology could give Putin the resources he needs to mount a much more significant conventional threat—an aim he had been pursuing in the early 2000s when high oil prices and no sanctions made it seem possible. Disrupt Hybrid Operations. Identifying, exposing, and disrupting hybrid operations is a feasible, if difficult, undertaking. New structures in the U.S. military, State Department, and possibly National Security Council Staff are likely needed to: 1. Coordinate efforts to identify and understand hybrid operations in preparation and underway; 2. Develop recommendations for action against hybrid operations that the U.S. government has identified but are not yet publicly known; 3. Respond to the unexpected third-party exposure of hybrid operations whether the U.S. government knew about the operations or not; 4. Identify in advance the specific campaign and strategic objectives that should be pursued when the U.S. government deliberately exposes a particular hybrid operation or when third parties expose hybrid operations of a certain type in a certain area; 5. Shape the U.S. government response, particularly in the information space, to drive the blowback effects of the exposure of a particular hybrid operation toward achieving those identified objectives; and 6. Learn lessons from past and current counter-hybrid operations undertakings, improve techniques, and prepare for future evolutions of Russian approaches in coordination with allies and partners. The U.S. should also develop a counter-information operations approach that uses only truth against Russian narratives aimed at sowing discord within the West and at undermining the legitimacy of Western governments.

Delegitimize Putin as a Mediator and Convener.

Recognition as one of the poles of a multipolar world order is vital to Putin. It is part of the greatness he promises the Russian people in return for taking their liberty. Getting a “seat at the table” of Western-led endeavors is insufficient for him because he seeks to transform the international system fundamentally. He finds the very language of being offered a seat at the West’s table patronizing.

He has gained much more legitimacy as an international partner in Syria and Ukraine than his behavior warrants. He benefits from the continuous desire of Western leaders to believe that Moscow will help them out of their own problems if only it is approached in the right way.

The U.S. and its allies must instead recognize that Putin is a self-declared adversary who seeks to weaken, divide, and harm them—never to strengthen or help them. He has made clear in word and deed that his interests are antithetical to the West’s. The West should therefore stop treating him as a potential partner, but instead require him to demonstrate that he can and will act to advance rather than damage the West’s interests before engaging with him at high levels.

The West must not trade interests in one region for Putin’s help in another, even if there is reason to believe that he would actually be helpful. Those working on American policy in Syria and the Levant must recognize that the U.S. cannot afford to subordinate its global Russia policy to pursue limited interests, however important, within the Middle East. Recognizing Putin as a mediator or convener in Syria—to constrain Iran’s activities in the south of that country, for example—is too high a price tag to pay for undermining a coherent global approach to the Russian threat. Granting him credibility in that role there enhances his credibility in his self-proclaimed role as a mediator rather than belligerent in Ukraine. The tradeoff of interests is unacceptable.

Nor should the U.S. engage with Putin about Ukraine until he has committed publicly in word and deed to what should be the minimum non-negotiable Western demand—the recognition of the full sovereignty of all the former Soviet states, specifically including Ukraine, in their borders as of the dates of their admission as independent countries to the United Nations, and the formal renunciation (including the repealing of relevant Russian legislation) of any right to interfere in the internal affairs of those states

Defend NATO. The increased Russian threat requires increased efforts to defend NATO against both conventional and hybrid threats. All NATO members must meet their commitments to defense spending targets—and should be prepared to go beyond those commitments to field the forces necessary to defend themselves and other alliance members. The Russian base in Syria poses a threat to Western operations in the Middle East that are essential to protecting our own citizens and security against terrorist threats and Iran. Neither the U.S. nor NATO is postured to protect the Mediterranean or fight for access to the Middle East through the eastern Mediterranean. NATO must now prepare to field and deploy additional forces to ensure that it can win that fight. The West should also remove as much ambiguity as possible from the NATO commitment to defend member states threatened by hybrid warfare. The 2018 Brussels Declaration affirming the alliance’s intention to defend member states attacked by hybrid warfare was a good start. The U.S. and other NATO states with stronger militaries should go further by declaring that they will come to the aid of a member state attacked by conventional or hybrid means regardless of whether Article 5 is formally activated, creating a pre-emptive coalition of the willing to deter Russian aggression. Bilateral Negotiations. Recognizing that Russia is a self-defined adversary and threat does not preclude direct negotiations. The U.S. negotiated several arms control treaties with the Soviet Union and has negotiated with other self-defined enemies as well. It should retain open channels of communication and a willingness to work together with Russia on bilateral areas in which real and verifiable agreement is possible, even while refusing to grant legitimacy to Russian intervention in conflicts beyond its borders. Such areas could include strategic nuclear weapons, cyber operations, interference in elections, the Intermediate Nuclear Forces treaty, and other matters related to direct Russo-American tensions and concerns. There is little likelihood of any negotiation yielding fruit at this point, but there is no need to refuse to talk with Russia on these and similar issues in hopes of laying the groundwork for more successful discussions in the future. INTRODUCTION The Russian challenge is a paradox. Russia’s nuclear arsenal poses the only truly existential threat to the United States and its allies, but Russia’s conventional military forces have never recovered anything like the power of the Soviet military. Those forces pose a limited and uneven threat to America’s European allies and to U.S. armed forces, partially because many U.S. allies are not meeting their NATO defense spending commitments. Russia is willing and able to act more rapidly and accept greater risk than Western countries because of its autocratic nature. Its cyber capabilities are among the best in the world, and it is developing an information-based way of war that the West has not collectively properly understood, let alone begun developing a response to. That information-based warfare has included attempts to affect and disrupt elections in the U.S. and allied states. The complexity and paradoxical nature of the Russian threat is perhaps its greatest strength. It is one of the key reasons for the failure of successive American administrations and U.S. partners around the world to develop a coherent strategy for securing themselves and their people and advancing their interests in the face of Russian efforts against them. The West’s lack of continuous focus on the Russian challenge has created major gaps in our collective understanding of the problem—another key reason for our failure to develop a sound counter-strategy. American concerns about Russia are bifurcated, moreover. Many Americans see the Russian threat primarily as a domestic problem: Moscow’s interference in the 2016 presidential election, attempts to interfere in the 2018 midterm election, and efforts to shape the 2020 elections. The U.S. national security establishment acknowledges the domestic problem but is generally more concerned with the military challenges a seemingly reviving Russia poses to U.S. NATO allies and other partners in the Euro-Atlantic region; with Russia’s activities in places like Syria and Venezuela; and with Russia’s outreach to rogue states such as North Korea and Iran. Even that overseas security concern, however, is pervaded by complexity and some confusion. The recommendations of the current U.S. National Security Strategy (NSS) and National Defense Strategy (NDS) are dominated by responses to much-trumpeted Russian investments in the modernization of conventional and nuclear forces. At the same time, those documents acknowledge the importance of Russian capabilities at the lower end of the military spectrum and in the non-military realms of information, cyber, space, information, and economic efforts. Americans thus generally agree that Russia is a threat to which the U.S. must respond in some way, but the varying definitions of that threat hinder discussion of the appropriate response. Russia has entangled itself sufficiently in American partisan politics that conversation about the national security threat it poses is increasingly polarized. We must find a way to transcend this polarization to develop a strategy to secure the U.S. and its allies and advance U.S. interests, despite Russian efforts to undermine America’s domestic politics. AMERICAN INTERESTS—WHAT IS AT STAKE The Ideals of the American Republic The stakes in the Russo-American conflict are high. Russian leader Vladimir Putin seeks to undermine confidence in democratically elected institutions and the institution of democracy itself in the United States and the West.1 He is trying to interfere with the ability of American and European peoples to choose their leaders freely2 and is undermining the rules-based international order on which American prosperity and security rest. His actions in Ukraine and Syria have driven the world toward greater violence and disorder. The normalization of Putin’s illegal actions over time will likely prompt other states to emulate his behavior and cause further deterioration of the international system. Moscow’s war on the very idea of truth has been perhaps the most damaging Russian undertaking in recent years. The most basic element of the Russian information strategy, which we will consider in more detail presently, is the creation of a sense of uncertainty around any important issue. Russia’s strategy does not require persuading Western audiences that its actions in Ukraine’s Crimean Peninsula or the Kerch Strait, which connects the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov, for example, were legal or justified.3 It is enough to create an environment in which many people say simply, “who knows?” The “who knows?” principle feeds powerfully into the phenomena of viral “fake news,” as well as other falsehoods and accusations of falsehoods which, if left unchecked, will ultimately make civil discourse impossible. The Kremlin’s propaganda does not necessarily need its target audiences to believe in lies; its primary goal is to make sure they do not believe in the truth. This aspect of Putin’s approach is one of the greatest obstacles to forming an accurate assessment and making recommendations. It is also one of the most insidious threats the current Russian strategy poses to the survival of the American republic. The good news is that the war on the idea of truth does not involve military operations or violence, though it can lead to both. The bad news is that it is extraordinarily difficult to identify, let alone to counter. Yet we must counter it if we are to survive as a functioning polity. American Prosperity The debate about the trade deficit and tariffs only underscores the scale and importance of the role Europe plays in the American economy. Europe is the largest single market for American exports and the second-largest source of American imports, with trade totaling nearly $1.1 trillion.4 American exports to Europe are estimated to support 2.6 million jobs in the U.S.5 Significant damage to the European economy, let alone the collapse of major European states or Europe itself, would devastate the U.S. economy as well. American prosperity is tightly interwoven with Europe’s. American prosperity also depends on Europe remaining largely democratic, with market-based economies, and subscribing to the idea of a rulesbased international order. The re-emergence of authoritarian regimes in major European states, which would most likely be fueled by a resurgence of extremist nationalism, would lead to the collapse of the entire European system, including its economic foundations. European economic cooperation rests on European peace, which in turn rests on the continued submergence of extremist nationalism and adherence to a common set of values. Russian actions against Western democracies and support for extremist groups, often with nationalist agendas, reinforce negative trends emerging within Europe itself. These actions therefore constitute a threat to American prosperity and security over the long term. The American economy also depends on the free flow of goods across the world’s oceans and through critical maritime chokepoints. Russia posed no threat to those chokepoints after the Soviet Union fell, but that situation is changing. The establishment of what appears to be a permanent Russian air, land, and naval base on the Syrian coast gives Russia a foothold in the Mediterranean for the first time since 1991. Russian efforts to negotiate bases in Egypt and Libya and around the Horn of Africa would allow Moscow to threaten maritime and air traffic through the Suez Canal and the Red Sea.6 Since roughly 3.9 million barrels of oil per day transited the Suez in 2016, to say nothing of the food and other cargo moving through the canal, Russian interference would have significant impacts on the global economy—and therefore on America’s economy.7 Russia’s efforts to establish control over the maritime routes opening in the Arctic also threaten the free movement of goods through an emerging set of maritime chokepoints.8 Those efforts are even more relevant to the U.S. because the Arctic routes ultimately pass through the Bering Strait, the one (maritime) border America shares with Russia. Russian actions can hinder or prevent the U.S. and its allies from benefiting from the opening of the Arctic. Russia is already bringing China into the Arctic region through energy investment projects and negotiations about the use of the Northern Sea Route, despite the fact that China is a state with no Arctic territory or claims.9 NATO The collective defense provision of the NATO treaty (known as Article 5) has been invoked only once in the 70-year history of the alliance: on September 12, 2001, on behalf of the United States. NATO military forces provided limited but important assistance to the U.S. in the immediate wake of the 9/11 attacks, including air surveillance patrols over the United States, and have continued supporting the U.S. in the long wars that followed. NATO established military missions in both Iraq and Afghanistan in the next two decades, deploying tens of thousands of soldiers to fight and to train America’s Iraqi and Afghan partners. American allies, primarily NATO members, have suffered more than 1,100 deaths in the Afghan war, slightly under half the number of U.S. deaths.10 The non-U.S. NATO member states collectively spent roughly $313 billion on defense in 2018—about half the American defense budget.11 The failure of most NATO members to meet their commitment to spend 2 percent of their GDP on defense is lamentable and must be addressed. But the fact remains that the alliance and its members have spent large amounts of blood and treasure fighting alongside American forces against the enemies that attacked the U.S. homeland two decades ago, and that they provide strength and depth to the defense of Europe, which remains of vital strategic importance to the United States. The U.S. could not come close to replacing them without significantly increasing its own defense spending and the size of the U.S. military—to say nothing of American casualties. NATO is also the most effective alliance in world history by the standard that counts most: it has achieved its founding objective for 70 years. The alliance was formed in 1949 to defend Western Europe from the threat of Soviet aggression, ideally by deterring Soviet attack, and has never needed to fight to defend itself. The United States always provided the preponderance of military force for the alliance, but the European military contribution has always been critical as well. American conventional forces throughout the Cold War depended on the facilities and the combat power of European militaries, and the independent nuclear deterrents of France and Great Britain were likely as important to deterring overt Soviet aggression as America’s nuclear arsenal. The Soviets might have come to doubt that the U.S. would risk nuclear annihilation to defend Europe, but they never doubted that France and Britain would resort to nuclear arms in the face of a Soviet invasion. Has NATO become irrelevant with the passing of the Cold War and the drawdown of U.S. forces from Iraq and Afghanistan? Only if the threat of war has passed and Europe itself has become irrelevant to the United States. Neither is the case. Europe’s survival, prosperity, and democratic values remain central to America’s well-being, as noted above, and today’s global environment makes war more likely than it has been since the collapse of the Soviet Union. It is not a given that Europe will remain democratic and a part of the international rules-based order if NATO crumbles. The U.S. can and should continue to work with its European partners to increase their defense expenditures and, more to the point, military capabilities (for which the percent of GDP spent on defense is not a sufficient proxy). The U.S. must also recognize the centrality of the alliance to America’s own security, as both the National Security Strategy and the National Defense Strategy do.12 The maintenance and defense of NATO itself is a core national security interest of the United States. Cyber Russia is one of the world’s leading cyber powers, competing with the U.S. and China for the top spot, at least in offensive cyber capabilities. Russian hacking has become legendary in the U.S. thanks to Russia’s efforts to influence the 2016 presidential campaign, but Russia has turned its cyber capabilities against its neighbors in other damaging ways. Russia attacked Estonia in 2007 with a massive distributed denial-of-service attack. It attacked Ukrainian computers with the NotPetya malware in 2017, which eventually caused billions of dollars in damage, including in the Americas.13 It also employed cyberattacks in coordination with its ground invasions of Georgia in 2008 and Ukraine in 2014. Fears of Russian cyber capabilities are warranted. This report does not consider the Russian cyber challenge in detail because others with far more technical expertise and support are actively engaged in combating it, defending against it, and deterring it. Our sole contribution in this area will be to consider it in the specific context of information operations support for hybrid operations in the recommendations section below. This approach stems from the recognition that the Kremlin’s cyber operations largely serve as enablers for its larger campaigns, rather than as a main effort. One must note, however, that while deterrence with conventional and nuclear forces prevents attacks, the United States is subject to cyberattack every day and has not established an effective means of retaliation, and thus deterrence. Weapons of Mass Destruction Russia’s nuclear arsenal is large enough to destroy the United States completely. The U.S. currently has no fielded ability to defend against a full-scale Russian nuclear attack—nor can Russia defend against a U.S. nuclear attack. American missile defense systems, by design, do not have the characteristics or scale necessary to shoot down any important fraction of the number of warheads the Russians have aimed at the U.S. from land- and sea-based launch platforms. America’s security against Russian nuclear attack today rests on the same principle as it has since the Russians first acquired nuclear weapons: deterrence. Russia also lacks the ability to shoot down American land- or sea-launched missiles and may not even be able reliably to shoot down U.S. nuclear-armed fifth-generation bombers. Deterrence is extremely likely to continue to work against Putin, who is a rational actor without the kinds of apocalyptic visions that might lead another leader to opt for annihilation in pursuit of some delusional greater good.14 The U.S. must pursue necessary modernization of its nuclear arsenal to sustain the credibility of its nuclear deterrent forces, but there is no reason to fear that deterrence will fail against Putin if it does so.15 It is less clear that Russia will continue to abide by its commitments to abjure chemical weapons, however. Russian agents have already conducted several chemical attacks, bizarrely using distinctive, military-grade chemical agents in attempted assassinations in the United Kingdom.16 Putin has also given top cover to Syrian President Bashar al-Assad’s use of chemical weapons against his own people, despite Russia’s formal role in guaranteeing Assad’s adherence to his 2013 promise to destroy his chemical weapons stockpile and refrain from any such use.17 Periodic Russian-inspired “rumors” that Western military personnel and Ukraine—which has no chemical weapons program—were planning to use chemical weapons on Ukrainian territory raise the concern that Russian agents provocateurs might conduct false flag operations of their own.18 Russia has the capability to produce chemical weapons at will—as does any industrialized state—but it is now showing that it may be willing to do so and to use them. The Soviet Union also maintained a vibrant biological weapons program. Russia has not thus far shown any signs of having restarted it or of having any intent to do so. The completely false claims that the U.S. has built biological weapons facilities in Russia’s neighboring states raise some concern on this front, since they could theoretically provide cover for the use of Russia’s own biological weapons, but they are more likely intended to influence the information space and justify other Russian actions.19 Terrorism Russia poses several challenges to any sound American approach to counter-terrorism. In addition to Iran, the world’s most prolific state sponsor of terrorism, Moscow’s preferred partners in the Middle East are those whose actions most directly fuel the spread of Salafi-jihadi groups. Russia encouraged and supported systematic efforts to eliminate moderate, secular opposition groups in Syria to the benefit of the Salafi-jihadi groups. Putin aims to expel or constrain the U.S. in the Middle East and establish his own forces in key locations that would allow him to disrupt American efforts to re-engage.20 Russia is the co-leader of a political and military coalition that includes Iran, Lebanese Hezbollah, the Assad regime, and Iranian-controlled Iraqi Shi’a militias.21 Russia provides most of the air support to that coalition in Syria, as well as special forces troops (SPETSNAZ), intelligence capabilities, air defense, and long-range missile strikes.22 That coalition’s campaign of sectarian cleansing has driven millions of people from their homes, fueling the refugee crisis that has damaged Europe.23 The coalition seeks to reimpose a minoritarian ‘Alawite dictatorship in Syria and a militantly anti-American and anti–Sunni Arab government in Iraq.24 The atrocities Russian forces themselves have committed, including deliberate and precise airstrikes against hospitals, have increased the sense of desperation within the Sunni Arab community in Syria, which Salafi-jihadi groups such as ISIS and al Qaeda have exploited.25 Russia supported Assad’s campaign to destroy the non-Salafi-jihadi opposition groups opposing him—particularly those backed by the U.S.—to aid the narrative that the only choices in Syria were Assad’s government or the Salafi-jihadis.26 That narrative was false in 2015 when Russian forces entered the fight but has become much truer following their efforts.27 Russia backed this undertaking with military force, but even more powerfully with information operations that continually hammered on the theme that the U.S. itself was backing terrorists in Syria and Russia was fighting ISIS.28 The insidiousness of the Russian demands that the U.S. remove its forces from Syria is masked by the current U.S. administration’s desire to do exactly that.29 One can argue the merits of keeping American troops in Syria or pulling them out— and this is not the place for that discussion—but the choice should be America’s. At the moment it still is. The consolidation of Russian anti-access/ area-denial (A2/AD) systems in Syria, however, together with the prospect of the withdrawal (or expulsion) of American forces from Iraq (or the closure of Iraqi airspace to support U.S. operations in Syria), could severely complicate American efforts to strike against terrorist threats that will likely re-emerge in Syria over time.30 The more the U.S. relies on an over-the-horizon strategy of precision strikes against terrorists actively planning attacks on the American homeland, the more vulnerable it becomes to the potential disruption of those strikes by Russian air defense systems, whether operated openly by Russians or nominally by their local partners. RUSSIA’S OBJECTIVES Mention of Putin’s objectives or of any systematic effort to achieve them almost always elicits as a response the assertion that Putin has no plan: Putin has no strategy; there is no Russian grand strategy, and so on. The other extreme of the debate considers Putin a calculated strategist with a grand master plan. The question of whether Putin has a plan, however that word is meant by those who assert that he does not, has important consequences for any American strategy to advance U.S. interests with regard to Russia. The trouble is that it is not clear what it would mean for Putin to have a plan or to lack one. We must first consider that more abstract question before addressing whether he has one. To have a plan usually means to have articulated goals, specific methods by which one will seek to achieve those goals, and identified means required for those methods to succeed. Goals, methods, and means can range from very specific to extremely vague and can be more flexible or more rigid. Specificity and flexibility can vary among the elements of this triad, moreover—goals may be very specific and rigid, methods general and flexible, means specific and flexible, or any other logical combination. When considering the question of Putin’s plan, therefore, we must break the discussion down into these four components: Does he have goals? Has he determined methods of achieving his goals? Has he specified resources required for those methods? How specific and how flexible are his goals, his methods, and the resources he allocates? Putting this discussion in context is helpful. Does a U.S. president have “a plan”? Not in any technical or literal sense. Every U.S. administration produces not a plan, but a National Security Strategy that is generally long on objectives—often reasonably specific—and very short on details of implementation (methods). Different national security advisers oversee processes within the White House to build out implementation details to greater or lesser degrees, but the actual implementation plans (methods) are developed by the relevant Cabinet departments. Those departments are also generally responsible for determining the resources that will be needed to implement their plans. The White House must then approve both the plans themselves and the allocation of the requested resources—and then must persuade Congress actually to appropriate the resources in the way the White House wishes to allocate them. This entire process takes more than a year from the start of a new administration and is never complete—the world changes, personnel turn over, and annual budget cycles and mid-term elections cause significant flutter. The one thing that does not happen is that a president receives and signs a “plan” with clear goals, detailed and specified methods, and the specific resources required, which is then executed.31 Putin does not have more of a plan than the U.S. does. It is virtually certain that he also lacks any such clear single document laying out the goals, methods, and means that he and his ministers are executing. But does he have as much of a plan as Presidents George W. Bush, Barack Obama, and Donald Trump have had? By all external signs, he does.

Putin has clearly articulated a series of overarching objectives and goals for Russia’s foreign policy and national security. Putin has been continuously communicating them through various media, including Russia’s doctrinal documents, regular speeches, his senior subordinates, and the Kremlin’s vast propaganda machine for the past two decades.

Russia has a foreign policy concept similar in scope and framing to the U.S. National Security Strategy, a military doctrine similar to the U.S. National Defense Strategy, and a series of other strategies (such as maritime, information security, and energy security) relating to the other components of national power and interest.32 These documents remain very much living concepts and have gone through multiple revisions in the decades since the fall of the Soviet Union.

Through regular speeches, Putin consistently communicates his goals and the key narratives that underpin Russian foreign policy. He makes an annual speech to the Russian Federal Assembly that is similar in some respects to the U.S. president’s State of the Union address. Putin’s addresses tend to be even more specific (and much more boring) in presenting the previous year’s accomplishments and an outline of goals and intentions for the next year.33 Russia’s doctrines and concepts match Putin’s speeches closely enough to suggest that there is some connection between them. Putin also makes other regular speeches, including at the UN General Assembly, the Valdai Discussion Club, the Munich Security Conference at times, and during lengthy press conferences with the Russian media. These remarks are usually rather specific in their presentation of his objectives and sometimes, some of the means by which he intends to pursue them. Such speeches are neither less frequent nor less specific than the major policy speeches of American presidents.

The widespread belief that Putin is simply or even primarily an opportunist who reacts to American or European mistakes is thus erroneous. Nor is Putin’s most common rhetorical trope—that he is the innocent victim forced to defend Russia against unjustified Western aggression—tethered to reality.34 Putin’s statements, key Russian national security documents, and the actions of Putin’s senior subordinates over the two decades of his reign cannot be distilled into a “plan,” but rather represent a set of grand strategic aims and strategic and operational campaigns underway to achieve them.

Putin has remained open and consistent about his core objectives since his rise to power in 1999: the preservation of his regime, the end of American “global hegemony,” and the restoration of Russia as a mighty force to be reckoned with on the international stage. Some of his foreign policy pursuits are purely pragmatic and aimed at gaining resources; others are intended for domestic purposes and have nothing to do with the West.

Putin has articulated a vision of how he wants the world to be and what role he wishes Russia to play in it. He seeks a world without NATO, where the U.S. is confined to the Western Hemisphere, where Russia is dominant over the former Soviet countries and can do what it likes to its own people without condemnation or oversight, and where the Kremlin enjoys a veto through the UN Security Council over actions that any other state wishes to take beyond its borders.35 He is working to bring that vision to reality through a set of coherent, mutually supporting, and indeed, overlapping lines of effort. He likely allows his subordinates a great deal of latitude in choosing the specific means and times to advance those lines of effort—a fact that makes it seem as if Russian policy is simply opportunistic and reactive. But we must not allow ourselves to be deluded by this impression any more than by other Russian efforts to shape our understanding of reality.

Putin’s Domestic Objectives

Maintaining relative contentment within his power circle is a key part of regime preservation. Putin has a close, trusted circle of senior subordinates, including several military and intelligence officials who have been with him for the past 20 years.36 His power circle has several outer layers, which include—but are not limited to—major Russian businessmen, often referred to as “oligarSLC.” The use of the term “oligarch” to describe those who run major portions of the economy is inaccurate, however. Those individuals have power because Putin gives it to them, not because they have any inherent ability to seize or hold it independently. He shuffles them around—and sometimes retires them completely—at his will, rather than in response to their demands.37 They do not check or control Putin either individually or collectively, and they rarely, if ever, attempt to act collectively in any event. Putin controls Russia and its policies as completely as he chooses. This situation is different from the way in which the Soviet Union was ruled after Joseph Stalin’s death in 1953. The post-Stalin USSR really was an oligarchy. Politburo members had their own power bases and fiefdoms. They made decisions—including selecting new members, choosing new leaders, and even firing one leader (Stalin’s successor, Nikita Khrushchev)—by majority vote. There is no equivalent of the Politburo in today’s Russia, no one to balance Putin, and certainly no one to remove him. Putin seeks to keep the closest circle of subordinates and the broader Russian national security establishment content, as they form one of the core pillars of his power. He thus seeks to maintain a relative degree of contentment within various layers of his power structures, including among the “oligarSLC.” For example, the Kremlin offered to help mitigate sanctions-related consequences for Russian businessmen.38 Kremlin-linked actors, in another example, reportedly embezzled billions of dollars in the preparations for the 2014 Winter Olympics in Sochi, Russia—the $50 billion price tag of which was the highest for any Olympic games.39 Putin can still retire any of the “oligarSLC” at will without fear of meaningful consequences—yet his regime is much more stable if they collectively remain reasonably satisfied. This reality will drive Putin to continue to seek access to resources, legal and illegal, with which to maintain that satisfaction. Maintaining popular support is a core objective of Putin’s policies. Putin is an autocrat with democratic rhetoric and trappings. Putin’s Russia has no free elections, no free media, and no alternative political platforms. He insists, however, on maintaining the “democratic” façade. He holds elections at the times designated by law (even if he periodically causes the law to be amended) and is genuinely (if decreasingly) popular. Nor is his feint at democratism necessarily a pose. The transformation of the Soviet Union into a democracy was the signal achievement of the 1990s.40 Putin played a role in that achievement, supporting St. Petersburg mayor Anatoliy Sobchak, then Boris Yeltsin, in their battles against attempts by communists to regain control and destroy the democracy, and then by an extreme right-wing nationalist party to gain power.41 Putin has called out many weaknesses of the Yeltsin era—but never the creation of a democratic Russia. Putin has not yet shown any sign of formally turning away from democracy as the ostensible basis of his power, although he has constrained the political space within Russia to the point that the elections are a sham. However, were he to abandon the democratic principles to which he still superficially subscribes, he would need fundamentally to redesign the justification of his rule and the nature of his regime. Nevertheless, he can only maintain even the fiction of democratic legitimacy if he remains popular enough to win elections that are not outrageously stolen. He has not been able to fix the Russian economy, despite early efforts to do so. The fall of global oil prices from their highs in the 2000s, as well as the Western sanctions imposed for his actions in Ukraine, among other things, are causing increasing hardship for the Russian people.42 Putin has adopted an information operations approach to this problem by pushing a number of core narratives, evolving over time, to justify his continued rule and explain away the failures of his policies. He has also grown the police state within Russia for situations in which the information operations do not work to his satisfaction. Putin’s justification of his rule has evolved over time. He first positioned himself as the man who will bring order. The 1990s was a decade of economic catastrophe for Russia. Inflation ran wild, unemployment skyrocketed, crime became not only pervasive but also highly organized and predatory, and civil order eroded. Putin succeeded Yeltsin with a promise to change all that. His “open letter to voters” in 2000 contained a phrase fascinating to students of Russian history: “Our land is rich, but there is no order.” That phrase is similar to one supposedly sent by the predecessors of the Russians at the dawn of Russian history to a Viking prince who would come to conquer them: “Our land is rich, but there is no order. Come to rule and reign over us.” By using the first part of that line, Putin, like Riurik, the founder of Russia’s first dynasty, cast himself as the founder of a new Russia in which order would replace chaos.43 Putin’s initial value proposition to his population was thus order and stability. He did, indeed, attempt to bring order to Russia’s domestic scene. Putin strengthened government institutions and curbed certain kinds of crime. He restored control over the region of Chechnya through a brutal military campaign. He tried to work with economic technocrats to bring the economy into some kind of order. The task was immense, however—Soviet leaders had built the entire Russian industrial and agricultural system and economic base in a centralized fashion. Undoing that centralization and creating an economy in which the market really could work was beyond Putin’s skill and patience. He largely abandoned the effort within a few years, both because it was too hard and because it seemed unnecessary.44 The rising price of oil in the early 2000s fueled the Russian economy and filled the government’s coffers on the one hand.45 The genuine structural reforms and innovation that were needed, on the other, also became antithetical to Putin’s ability to maintain control, as government corruption is a powerful tool of influence in Russia. Putin began to erode civil liberties in that period offering the unspoken but clear exchange: Give me your liberties and I will give you prosperity and stability. The 2008 global financial crisis collapsed oil prices, and the post-2014 sanctions regime removed the patches and workarounds Putin had used to offset his failure to transform Russia’s economy. Continuing low oil prices (and sanctions) have prevented it from recovering with much of the rest of the global economy, even as Putin has continued to eschew any real effort to address the systemic failings holding Russia’s economy back. Putin has therefore refocused on a different value proposition: Give me your liberties and I will give you greatness. He is increasingly linking the legitimacy of his own autocracy with Russia’s position on the world stage and with Russia’s ability to stand up to American “global hegemony.”46

Putin has simultaneously erected a narrative to deflect criticism for Russia’s problems onto the West. The West, supposedly fearful of Russia rising and determined to keep Russia down, has thwarted its rightful efforts to regain its proper place in the world at every turn. Putin claims the Russian economy is in shambles because of unjust and illegal sanctions that have nothing to do with Russia’s actions and are simply meant to keep “the Russian bear in chains.”47

Putin has also consistently fostered a complex narrative that combines diverse and—from the Western perspective—often conflicting elements, including Soviet nostalgia, Eastern Orthodoxy, Russian nationalism, and the simultaneous emphasis on Russia’s multiethnic and multireligious character. The importance Putin gives this narrative is visible in things large and small. He has named Russia’s ballistic missile submarines after Romanov tsars and Muscovite princes.48 He issued a decree in 2009 mandating the introduction of religious education in Russian schools, which began in 2012.49 He continues to place a major emphasis on Soviet-era achievements. Putin and his information machine take these various elements, refine and tailor them, and produce a mix of ideas to cater to various parts of the Russian population.

We can expect Putin’s narratives to continue to shift to accommodate changing realities, but the current rhetorical linkage between Russia’s position on the world stage and the legitimacy of Putin’s domestic power is concerning. It suggests that Putin may be more stubborn about making and retaining gains in the international arena than he was in the first 15 years of his rule, as he seeks ways to bolster his popularity, which is flagging, and on which his mythos relies.

### --AT: Actis 16

#### Recent posturing with Poseidon and NATO relations disprove.

### --AT: Gotz 16

#### This card is outdated—Russia’s expansions in Ukraine, Crimea, and the Baltics disprove.

### --AT: Pieper 19

#### Yes but the way they do that is through undermining alliances and aggressively posturing which triggers our impacts.

### --AT: Sakwa 17

#### The way they’re doing that is through aggressive posturing—that triggers the impacts.

### --AT: Wilson 19

#### This is a joke—Russia’s given a middle finger to the INF, Ukraine, Crimea, New START, and much more, this card has no warrants.

### 1AR—AT: NATO Provokes

### --Top

#### This doesn’t answer the aff. We agree NATO isn’t good, but allowing Russia the Poseidon causes extinction regardless of who’s fault it is.

### --Defense Still Triggers

#### Defensive realism can still accommodate Russian territorial incursions in the Baltics---it triggers miscalc even if not offensive

--Even if defensive, they’ll still take the Baltics if they get the chance which connects to our impact

Thalis, 18 – Graduated from the University of Sydney with First Class Honours in Government and International Relations, and has completed a Masters of International Relations Theory at the London School of Economics. Alexander Thalis, “Threat or Threatened? Russia in the Era of NATO Expansion,” Australian Institute of International Affairs. June 3, 2018. <http://www.internationalaffairs.org.au/australianoutlook/threat-or-threatened-russian-foreign-policy-in-the-era-of-nato-expansion/>

At a summit in Bucharest in April 2008, NATO released [a statement](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_8443.htm) affirming that Georgia and the Ukraine would be offered membership. US pressure was the chief driver of this decision, as several Western European alliance members expressed opposition to the plan.

This was NATO’s most threatening and provocative move towards Russia yet. Ukraine, as the biggest country is Europe, constitutes an important strategic buffer between Russia and NATO. Napoleonic France, Wilhelmine Germany, and Nazi Germany all invaded Russia through south-eastern Europe and consequently, the Kremlin is extremely reticent to allow the armies of those countries to once again be stationed there. Georgia borders Russia’s volatile Caucasus region, already rife with minority nationalism and secessionist sentiment. Furthermore, both Georgia and the Ukraine are proximate to Russia’s Volga region, its agricultural heartland and its access point for Caspian Sea oil. The Kremlin cannot and will not risk its control over these assets being compromised.

Russia and NATO: Where to Next?

Winston Churchill [once famously remarked](http://www.nytimes.com/2008/08/01/world/europe/01iht-letter.1.14939466.html) that Russia is, “a riddle wrapped in a mystery inside an enigma.” However, since the end of the Cold War at least, the Russian mindset has been remarkably easy to understand.

Russia regards NATO, the world’s most powerful military alliance, as a dire threat the its security. Russia’s goal of trying to halt NATO’s eastward march is rooted in a defensive realist view of international politics. The Kremlin is attempting to safeguard its security; it is not looking to reclaim lost status or recapture an empire. Analysts such as [Derk Eppink have contended that](http://www.djeppink.eu/en/blog/energy-nato-could-rein-putin), “Putin’s mind-set is largely rooted in the 19th century. Politics [for him] is about power.” Those who dismiss this worldview as outdated would do well to remember that Russia was almost destroyed twice in twentieth century by invasions through Eastern Europe. At least twenty-seven million Russians were killed during WWII, roughly one third of the war’s overall death toll. It should hardly be surprising that a sense of vulnerability still pervades Russian strategic thinking today.

It is also worth noting that the US’ worldview is not significantly different to that of Russia. The US has pursued the Monroe Doctrine for almost two centuries, often employing violence and subverting democracy to prevent foreign powers from establishing a presence in the Americas. As [John Mearsheimer explains](https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/russia-fsu/2014-08-18/why-ukraine-crisis-west-s-fault), “this is Geopolitics 101: great powers are always sensitive to potential threats near their home territory… Imagine the American outrage if China built an impressive military alliance and tried to include Canada and Mexico.”

As the Ukraine continues to suffer through a protracted civil war, what can be done to ameliorate the tension between Russia and NATO and restore stability in Eastern Europe? [Stephen Walt proposes](http://foreignpolicy.com/2014/09/04/nato-owes-putin-a-big-thank-you) that NATO should strike a deal with Ukraine and Russia that enshrines the status of the Ukraine as a non-aligned buffer state. Striking a similar deal regarding Georgia would also be prudent. Furthermore, NATO should support the incumbent government in Ukraine, whilst at the same time discouraging it from adopting a provocative stance towards Russia.

Crimea will never be returned to the Ukraine, but NATO may be able to help the Ukraine regain sovereignty over its war torn eastern provinces by encouraging Kiev to cooperate with Moscow. Additionally, the US should discontinue its plans to expand its missile defence shield in Europe. This is a misguided policy that incentivises Russia to increase its reliance on tactical nuclear weapons and risks sparking another nuclear arms race. Paradoxically, Europe is safer without the shield.

Finally, NATO should propose a replacement to the CFE treaty and guarantee that its nuclear arsenal will move no closer to Russia’s borders. In return for these assurances, Russia may be willing to downsize its nuclear armoury in Kaliningrad or even make concessions on the status of Abkhazia and South Ossetia.

With neither side having shown much interest in diplomacy so far, it is hard to know how much can be achieved through negotiation. But the dangers entailed by the current standoff are alarming. Russia and NATO control the overwhelming majority of the world’s nuclear weapons and whilst the likelihood of an all-out war is low, this risk cannot be ignored. Russia and NATO are never going to see eye to eye on some issues, but tensions cannot be allowed to escalate any further. Western leaders are loath to make any concessions to Russia, but peace can only be re-established in Eastern Europe through compromise.

### --Russia is Offensive

#### A] Putin doesn’t act solely defensively---Crimea is a rural strip of land that means nothing---he took it solely to be an asshole and expand power

#### **B]** They’re offensive realists---they don’t try to preserve the status quo

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Joaquín Ferro Rodríguez, “Realism vs Realism. The Change of Approach in The Eastern Border,” June 30, 2015. <http://www.seguridadinternacional.es/?q=es/content/realism-vs-realism-change-approach-eastern-border>

To begin with, I will explain why Russia can be considered as an offensive realist actor. It is not the aim of this paper to focus excessively on theoretical classifications or philosophical debates. However, due to its explicative power and its usefulness to better comprehend the Russian behaviour, it is worth mentioning three points belonging to the offensive realist theory: 1) great powers are rational actors whose main goal is to survive[1]; 2) all great powers are revisionist until the moment they become hegemonic[2]; and 3) for a great power, the only way to guarantee its security is to accumulate a bigger power quota than the rest[3]. Bearing in mind these characteristics, Russian position finds a coherent explanation. As Pierre Hassner puts it, “Russia’s foreign policy cannot be fully understood without taking into account the postimperial humiliation and resentment of the Russian people and the neoimperial ambition of its leaders”[4]. When the Cold War came to an end, Russian leaders regarded the presence of the United States (U.S.) and NATO in Europe positively as a way to keep a reunified Germany pacified. Nevertheless, they did not expect the subsequent NATO and EU enlargement, which included the ex-soviet Baltic countries in 2004[5]. This fact, added to the ‘colour revolutions’ taking place at the same time in Ukraine and Georgia, triggered a feeling of dissatisfaction within Russia and the desire of recovering its position as a great power[6]. The result is that, since 2004, Russia switched its - until that date - collaborative approach towards the West for a tougher one. Behaving as the offensive realist great power it wanted to become, Russia considers NATO/EU enlargements and their further relations with countries belonging to its ‘backyard’, especially Ukraine and Georgia, as a threat[7] to its survival. In order to face this threat, Moscow needs to accumulate more power and influence, above all in its direct neighbourhood, which explains why “Putin’s highest priority is to oppose ‘colour revolutions’”[8] as well as to avoid the promotion of the EU’s normative power in those countries. Consequently, he did not hesitate to show the Russian revisionist nature when he felt that national interests were at stake in Georgia and Ukraine. In the summer of 2008, after President Mikheil Saakashvili’s attempt to bring the separatist regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia back under Georgia’s control, Putin decided to send the army to maintain the Russian influence in those regions[9]. However, his goal was not uniquely to preserve the status quo, but rather to revise it. In that conflict, Putin showed for the first time his true intentions to seize any opportunity at his disposal to broaden his influence and to keep his neighbour countries weak and out of the West’s reach. In order to do so, Putin chose direct means, namely military intervention and war, to tackle the problem. On the other hand, indirect means have been used in the Ukraine crisis for the same purpose. After Viktor Yanukovych fled to Russia and a new pro-European government reached the power in Kiev in February 2014, Russia has promoted uprisings, funded separatist groups and militias in the eastern part of the country, annexed Crimea and sent arms and unidentified military staff to support the pro-Russian groups. These two different responses - direct and indirect - are the Russian tools to achieve its revisionist goals and not merely to defend the status quo, as demonstrated with the annexation of Crimea. These revisionist movements have not only benefited Putin abroad, but also within Russia, as his popularity has soared. This is a consequence of the powerful propaganda machinery of the Kremlin, which has been able to convince citizens of why Russia should be considered as a great power and, thus, to justify its international behaviour. The following points summarise Putin’s foreign policy and account for the theoretical base of the interventions in Georgia and Ukraine: Russia is a great power which shall preserve the sovereignty of the nation by all means. This has been translated into an increase of the military budget by 100% in the last 10 years, as well as in the presence of Russia in the most important international forums to enable them to participate in the decisions regarding other zones of the world[10]. “Russia and the Russian world constitute a ‘singular civilization’, neither Occidental nor Asian, which rests on the Christian values and a ‘historical mission’: to defend the traditional values against a materialist and decadent Occident”[11] (author’s translation). The Russian Diaspora, meaning that “the Russian people have become the largest people disperse worldwide”[12] (author’s translation). This situation implies an obligation for Russia to protect and defend Russian minorities wherever they are[13].

## 1AR – Extinction

### 1AR- AT: No Extinction

#### 1] Yes extinction – our ev o/w cuz it’s specific to a US-Russia war and accounts for recent tech – the blasts would result in a nuke winter which means war, famine, drought, Ice Age, and more

#### 2] Scenarios don’t start at 100% - each one of theirs is one line of speculative crackpot nonsense that’s super far off which means the likelihood of nuclear war being big and bad o/w on timeframe and probability

#### 3] Current suffering o/w – precluding future humans isn’t bad cuz you can’t deny something that wasn’t experienced, but preventing pain is good since it affects people who feel things now

#### 4] Our impact turns their scenarios – more people mean more ideas and advanced research to solve it

#### Extinction – nuclear winter, crude oil amplifies, smoke covers the world

Snyder and Ruyle 17 (Brian F.Snyder and Leslie E. Ruyle, 12-15-2017, [Brian F. Snyder. Department of Environmental Science, Louisiana State University, United States. Leslie E. Ruyle. Center on Conflict and Development, Texas A&M University, United States]"The abolition of war as a goal of environmental policy," No Publication, [https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0048969717316431?via%3Dihub)//SLC](https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0048969717316431?via%3Dihub)//CHS) PK

While the precise impacts of a hypothetical nuclear war are difficult to predict, the detonation of the world's nuclear weapons would plausibly kill all or nearly all humans on Earth and initiate a mass extinction event. There are a total of about 9400 nuclear warheads in active service around the world, with approximately 8300 of these weapons in U.S. and Russian arsenals (Kristensen and Norris, 2017a). Because of government secrecy, it is difficult to reliably estimate the total explosive power contained in these warheads, but in most cases, each warhead ranges between 100 and 1200 kt of TNT equivalent (for comparison, the bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki had yields of approximately 15–20 kt). The combined arsenals of the U.S. and Russia likely have a yield of at least 2–3 billion tons of TNT equivalent (Kristensen and Norris, 2017b,c). 2.1. Nuclear winter In the 1980s climate scientists used simple and early climate models to estimate the effects of large-scale nuclear wars on climate. The estimates they derived were catastrophic. For example, Turco et al. (1983) reported temperature reductions of 43 °C for 4 months in the Northern Hemisphere following nuclear war using the explosive power of 10 billion tons of TNT.1 As the cold war ended, interest in modelling the climate effects of nuclear war declined and some policy-makers considered the threat of nuclear winter to be either disproved or exaggerated (Martin, 1988). Toon et al. (2007) and Robock et al. (2007) reignited interest in the climate effects of nuclear war. Toon et al. (2008) modeled the effects of a medium scale nuclear war with a total explosive yield of 440 million tons of explosive yield (far less than current U.S. and Russian arsenals) and estimated global soot2 emissions of 180 Tg. Using a more conservative estimate of 150 Tg of soot, Toon et al. estimated that this emission would be sufficient to reduce global temperatures by about 8 °C and energy flux by 150 W/m2 ; for comparison, the cumulative greenhouse gas emissions to the atmosphere since the industrial revolution have increased energy flux by 3 W/m2 (Butler and Montzka, 2017). Robock et al. (2007) modeled a similar 150 Tg smoke emission and found similar results including temperature reduction of about 8 °C lasting for several years. Low temperatures reduced evapotranspiration and weakened the global hydrological cycle and Hadley cells. As a result, precipitation decreased globally by 45% with especially dramatic decreases in the agricultural areas of the United States. In the Northern Hemisphere, growing seasons would be shortened by about 100 days for about 3 years. This would preclude most food production over most of the world for several years. Mills et al. (2014) conducted a detailed analysis of the effects of a small (1.5 million ton) regional exchange lofting just 5 Tg of soot into the atmosphere. This war would be equivalent to an exchange of 100 Hiroshima-sized bombs between, for example, India, Pakistan, or China. Mills et al. found global temperature decreases of 1.6 °C. To our knowledge, no one has studied the effects of a multi-billion ton nuclear exchange using modern atmospheric models. If, as Toon et al. and Robock et al. suggest, a 440 million ton war results in temperature reductions of 8 °C for a decade and a 100 day reduction in the growing season, it is reasonable to assume that a one to five billion ton war would not be survivable for the majority of people on earth. However, as populations and population centers grow, the effects of nuclear wars on the biosphere will also grow. The consequences of nuclear winter increase as the amount of fuel (buildings, cars, biomass, liquid and solid fuels) added to a targeted area increase. As population centers grow and densify over time, the amount of soot added to the stratosphere as the result of any given nuclear exchange may increase (depending in part on building materials). As a result, the nuclear winter resulting from a 400 million ton yield global war in 2020 may be far more severe than if the same war occurred in 2000. Further, there are reasons to believe that the soot emissions from a hypothetical nuclear exchange are conservative because they focus on urban areas and often do not incorporate non-urban energy infrastructure. For example, if ignited and burned completely, the U.S. Strategic Petroleum Reserve (SPR) alone contains about 14.5 Tg of soot emissions.3 Including all crude held in U.S. commercial facilities, the potential soot emissions increase to 24 Tg. Thus, incorporating crude oil storage in the U.S. alone would increase soot generation estimates by about 16%. Similarly, nuclear war planners would be likely to target coal, oil and gas fields in the U.S., Russia, and their allies. This unaccounted for fuel could increase the total soot contribution to the atmosphere, potentially deepening the resulting nuclear winter. 2.2. Acute effects of particulate matter Studies of nuclear winter typically focus on the effects of smoke lofted into the stratosphere during nuclear firestorms. However, a larger proportion of smoke following nuclear war will be trapped in the troposphere where it would have significantly acute impacts on human and non-human species. Crutzen et al. (1984) calculated that following a major nuclear war (about 5 billion tons of explosives, roughly the combined U.S. and Russian deployed nuclear arms as of 2017) smoke would cover about 30–40% of the earth's surface with airborne smoke concentrations on the order of 5 mg/m3 . While initially this smoke would be composed of very small particles (b0.1 μm), the particles would rapidly coalesce into the 0.1 to 3 μm range, roughly consistent with the wellstudied PM2.5. For comparison, the EPA's National Ambient Air Quality standard for PM2.5 is 0.012 mg/m3 and as of 2017, the highest PM2.5 concentrations in Asia are typically around 0.3 to 1 mg/m3 .

### ---AT: Rainout

#### Nuclear black carbon absorbs radiation from the sun, creating a stratospheric lofting effect that circumvents rainout

Mills et al. 14 (Michael Mills - Taine G. McDougal Professor of Engineering, the Chair of the Department of Materials Science and Engineering. Owen Toon - Professor of atmospheric and oceanic sciences and fellow at the Laboratory for Atmospheric and Space Physics at the University of Colorado Boulder. Julia Lee-Taylor – CIRES Research Associate at the University of Colorado, Boulder, Researcher and project scientist for The National Center for Atmospheric Research. Alan Robock – Climatologist and Distinguished Professor in the Department of Environmental Sciences at Rutgers University, New Jersey. <MKIM> “Multidecadal global cooling and unprecedented ozone loss following a regional nuclear conflict” 1/4/14. DOA: 7/21/19. https://agupubs.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1002/2013EF000205)

As in previous studies of this scenario [Robock et al., 2007b; Mills et al., 2008], the **BC aerosol absorbs SW radiation, heating the ambient air, inducing a self-lofting that carries most of the BC well above the tropopause**. CESM1(WACCM) has 66 vertical layers and a model top of ∼145 km, compared to 23 layers up to ∼80 km for the GISS ModelE used by Robock et al. [2007b] and 39 layers up to ∼80 km for SOCOL3 used by Stenke et al. [2013]. As Figure 1 shows, we calculate significantly higher lofting than Robock et al. [2007b, compare to their Figure 1b], penetrating significantly into the mesosphere, with peak mass mixing ratios reaching the stratopause (50–60 km) within 1 month and persisting throughout the first year. This higher lofting, in conjunction with effects on the circulation we discuss later, produces significantly longer residence times for the BC than those in previous studies. At the end of 10 years, our calculated visible-band optical depths from the BC persist at 0.02–0.03, as shown in Figure 2. In contrast, Robock et al. [2007b] calculate optical depths near 0.01 only at high latitudes after 10 years, a level that our calculations do not reach for 15 years. 3.2. BC Burden, Rainout, and Lifetime During the first 4 months, 1.2–1.6 of the 5 Tg of BC is lost in our 50 nm experiment ensemble, and 1.6 Tg in our 100 nm experiment, mostly due to rainout in the first few weeks **as the plume initially rises through the troposphere** (Figure 3a). This is larger than the 1.0 Tg initially lost in the study of Mills et al. [2008], which used a previous version of WACCM. This is likely due to the difference in our initial distribution of BC compared to that previous study, which injected 5 Tg into a single column at a resolution four times as coarse as ours. The more concentrated BC in the previous study likely produced faster **heating and rise** into the stratosphere, **mitigating** **rainout**. Our calculated rainout contrasts with the lack of significant rainout calculated by the GISS ModelE [Robock et al., 2007b], which assumes that BC is initially hydrophobic and becomes hydrophilic with a 24 h e-folding time scale. The mass burden reaching the stratosphere and impacts on global climate and chemistry in our calculations would doubtless be greater had we made a similar assumption to the GISS ModelE. Stenke et al. [2013] calculate an initial rainout of ∼2 Tg in their interactive 5 Tg simulations, which assumed BC radii of 50 and 100 nm in two separate runs. After initial rainout, the mass e-folding time for our remaining BC is 8.7 years for the average of our 50 nm experiment ensemble and 8.4 years for our 100 nm experiment, compared to the 6 years reported by Robock et al. [2007b], ∼6.5 years by Mills et al. [2008], 4–4.6 years reported by Stenke et al. [2013], and 1 year for stratospheric sulfate aerosol from typical volcanic eruptions [Oman et al., 2006]. Due to this longer lifetime, after about 4.8 years the global mass burden of BC we calculate in our ensemble is larger than that calculated by the GISS ModelE, **despite the initial 28% rainout loss**. After 10 years, we calculate that 1.1 Tg of BC remains in the atmosphere in our 50 nm experiment ensemble and 0.82 Tg in our 100 nm experiment, compared to 0.54 Tg calculated by the GISS ModelE and 0.07–0.14 Tg calculated by SOCOL3. The long lifetime that we calculate results from both the very **high initial lofting** of BC to altitudes, **where removal from the stratosphere is slow**, and the subsequent slowing down of the stratospheric residual circulation. The Brewer-Dobson circulation is driven waves whose propagation is filtered by zonal winds, which are modulated by temperature gradients [Garcia and Randel, 2008]. As explained by Mills et al. [2008], the BC both heats the stratosphere and cools the surface, reducing the strength of the stratospheric overturning circulation. Figure 4 shows the vertical winds in the lower stratosphere, which bring new air up from the troposphere and drive the poleward circulation, for the control and BC runs. The middle-atmosphere heating and surface cooling reduce the average velocity of tropical updrafts by more than 50%. This effect persists more than twice as long as in Mills et al. [2008], which did not include any ocean cooling effects.

#### This still severely underestimates our impact

Mills et al. 14 (Michael Mills - Taine G. McDougal Professor of Engineering, the Chair of the Department of Materials Science and Engineering. Owen Toon - Professor of atmospheric and oceanic sciences and fellow at the Laboratory for Atmospheric and Space Physics at the University of Colorado Boulder. Julia Lee-Taylor – CIRES Research Associate at the University of Colorado, Boulder, Researcher and project scientist for The National Center for Atmospheric Research. Alan Robock – Climatologist and Distinguished Professor in the Department of Environmental Sciences at Rutgers University, New Jersey. <MKIM> “Multidecadal global cooling and unprecedented ozone loss following a regional nuclear conflict” 1/4/14. DOA: 7/21/19. https://agupubs.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1002/2013EF000205)

We present the first study of the global impacts of a regional nuclear war with an Earth system model including atmospheric chemistry, ocean dynamics, and interactive sea ice and land components. **A limited, regional nuclear war between India and Pakistan in which each side detonates 50 15 kt weapons** could produce about 5 Tg of black carbon (BC).

### ---AT: Reisner

#### Reisner doesn’t apply to our scenario

Toon et al 19 [Owen B. Toon, PhD, Physics at Cornell; Charles G. Bardeen, Atmospheric Chemistry Observations and Modeling Laboratory, National Center for Atmospheric Research; Alan Robock, Department of Environmental Sciences, Rutgers University, New Brunswick; Lili Xia, Federation of American Scientists; Hans Kristensen, Natural Resources Defense Council; Matthew McKinzie, Department of Physics, University of Colorado, Boulder; R. J. Peterson, School of Earth, Environmental, and Marine Sciences, University of Texas Rio Grande Valley; Cheryl S. Harrison, Institute of Arctic and Alpine Research, University of Colorado, Boulder; Nicole S. Lovenduski , Department of Atmospheric and Oceanic Sciences, Institute of Arctic and Alpine Research; and Richard P. Turco, Department of Atmospheric and Oceanic Sciences, University of California, Los Angeles] "Rapidly expanding nuclear arsenals in Pakistan and India portend regional and global catastrophe," Science Advances, https://advances.sciencemag.org/content/5/10/eaay5478 Science Advances 02 Oct 2019: Vol. 5, no. 10 RE

The fuel load in Reisner et al. is too small to generate a fire storm. Mills et al. (2014) used smoke estimates from Toon et al. (2007), who calculate fuel loads ranging from 12.6 to 94.5 g/cm2 for the top 50 urban targets in India and Pakistan. These values are all significantly above the 4 g/cm2 threshold value needed to support a firestorm. In their paper, Reisner et al. do not provide either the target location or the fuel loads used in their fire model. Rather they state that they visually examined Google images of Indian and Pakistani cities and chose a similar area of Atlanta. In personal communications, Jon Reisner did connect us with the provider of their fuel loads, Joseph Crepeau of Applied Research Associates, Inc., so that we could assess these critical data. Their ground zero is near the East Lake Golf Club in suburban Atlanta (33.750°N, 84.305°W), more than 5 km east of downtown Atlanta. A Google Earth map of this region (Figure 1) shows that this suburban region with a golf course looks nothing like a city in India or Pakistan (e.g., Figure 2). From their fuel load maps, we were able to calculate the average burnable fuel load in the 13 km2 target area to be 0.14 g/cm2 and in the 10‐km × 10‐km domain of their model to be 0.91 g/cm2. Both of these values are well below the fuel load threshold for a firestorm, and the target area has 6 times less fuel density than the domain average. The fuel load for the target area is also well below the value calculated using maps of population density following Toon et al. (2007) of 0.87 g/cm2. Fundamentally Reisner et al. simply chose a target with very little fuel. The 0.14 g/cm2 value for the Reisner et al. target area is 15 to 110 times smaller than the top 50 targets in India and Pakistan which were considered in the Mills et al. (2014) study.

Reisner et al. assume a wind profile with 6–8 m/s winds in the boundary layer, which they call “very calm,” but which are significantly above the threshold of 3.6 m/s for a firestorm. Toon et al. (2007) did not consider the effects of surface winds in assuming firestorm conditions. For the top targets in India and Pakistan, during May our own numerical simulations with the version of the WACCM model used by Mills et al. (2014) suggest that surface winds for likely targets would be expected to be above the firestorm threshold about 50% of the time, so assuming sufficient fuel loads, about half of the targets should develop into firestorms and half into conflagrations.

Because of the choice of target location and wind speed, Reisner et al. simulated a weak conflagration rather than a firestorm. Furthermore, for their climate simulation they assume that all 100 targets have the same smoke emissions as this case. In Toon et al. (2007), targets were identified and smoke production scaled by population density and thus each location injected a different amount of smoke proportional to the population. Figure 5 of Reisner et al. shows that their fire is blowing downwind. Conflagrations were observed in World War II mass fires, and indeed were desired in order to burn the largest possible area. They are also commonly observed in modern forest fires. Reisner et al. state “As indicated below, the simulations include various worst case assumptions with regard to the specification of the fuel, weather conditions, and height of burst of the device. Therefore, they serve as upper bounds with regard to the expected outcome of an urban mass fire caused by a nuclear detonation.” We argue that the Reisner et al. simulation is clearly not a worst case. As we have already discussed Reisner et al. do not have a high fuel load, but one that is more than an order of magnitude smaller than even the lowest fuel loads in the urban areas of Pakistan and India considered in the Mills et al. (2014) study. Firestorms were also observed in World War II and lofted material to high altitudes (see Penner et al., 1986). Moreover, numerous conflagrations in forest fires with fuel densities similar to those assumed by Reisner et al. have produced smoke plumes that reached into the stratosphere (e.g., Peterson et al., 2018). In 2017 a fire in British Columbia produced a stratospheric smoke pall that was observed by satellites for 8 months (Yu et al., 2019). Aircraft studies have shown that debris from recent fires is common in the lower stratosphere (Ditas et al., 2018).

Reisner et al. neither compared their simulation with previous studies of mass fires, nor listed the basic parameters that would allow comparisons with past or future studies. They claim they have validated their model against observed mass fires, referring to their Figure 1 and three references (Linn, Canfield, et al., 2012; Linn, Anderson, et al., 2012; Pimont et al., 2009). However, two of these references (Linn, Canfield, et al., 2012; Pimont et al., 2009) and their Figure 1 focus on line fires emitting smoke into the boundary layer, which is not relevant to urban mass fires. The third reference (Linn, Anderson, et al., 2012) focuses on 150 m × 150 m or smaller burn plots, also not representative of a mass fire.

Unfortunately, Reisner et al. did not report where the fire they simulated was located, fuel loading, fraction of fuels burned, fire energy release, or energy release rate when simulations were terminated so their results could not be duplicated. They have subsequently provided us with the target location and fuel loads, which is an important first step to assessing their results and recreating their fire simulation in other models.

# F/L—Topicality

## 1AR—T Plans Bad

#### 1] CI: Affs may defend subset of countries/weapons.

#### 2] Generic statements most predictably proven true by subsets.

Cimpian et al, PhDs, 10

(Andrei, Amanda C. Brandone, Susan A. Gelman, Generic statements require little evidence for acceptance but have powerful implications, Cogn Sci. 2010 Nov 1; 34(8): 1452–1482)

Generic statements (e.g., “Birds lay eggs”) express generalizations about categories. In this paper, we hypothesized that there is a paradoxical asymmetry at the core of generic meaning, such that these sentences have extremely strong implications but require little evidence to be judged true. Four experiments confirmed the hypothesized asymmetry: Participants interpreted novel generics such as “Lorches have purple feathers” as referring to nearly all lorches, but they judged the same novel generics to be true given a wide range of prevalence levels (e.g., even when only 10% or 30% of lorches had purple feathers). A second hypothesis, also confirmed by the results, was that novel generic sentences about dangerous or distinctive properties would be more acceptable than generic sentences that were similar but did not have these connotations. In addition to clarifying important aspects of generics’ meaning, these findings are applicable to a range of real-world processes such as stereotyping and political discourse. Keywords: generic language, concepts, truth conditions, prevalence implications, quantifiers, semantics Go to: 1. Introduction A statement is generic if it expresses a generalization about the members of a kind, as in “Mosquitoes carry the West Nile virus” or “Birds lay eggs” (e.g., Carlson, 1977; Carlson & Pelletier, 1995; Leslie, 2008). Such generalizations are commonplace in everyday conversation and child-directed speech (Gelman, Coley, Rosengren, Hartman, & Pappas, 1998; Gelman, Taylor, & Nguyen, 2004; Gelman, Goetz, Sarnecka, & Flukes, 2008), and are likely to foster the growth of children’s conceptual knowledge (Cimpian & Markman, 2009; Gelman, 2004, 2009). Here, however, we explore the semantics of generic sentences—and, in particular, the relationship between generic meaning and the statistical prevalence of the relevant properties (e.g., what proportion of birds lay eggs). Consider, first, generics’ truth conditions: Generic sentences are often judged true despite weak statistical evidence. Few people would dispute the truth of “Mosquitoes carry the West Nile virus”, yet only about 1% of mosquitoes are actually carriers (Cox, 2004). Similarly, only a minority of birds lays eggs (the healthy, mature females), but “Birds lay eggs” is uncontroversial. This loose, almost negligible relationship between the prevalence of a property within a category and the acceptance of the corresponding generic sentence has long puzzled linguists and philosophers, and has led to many attempts to describe the truth conditions of generic statements (for reviews, see Carlson, 1995; Leslie, 2008). Though generics’ truth conditions may be unrelated to property prevalence (cf. Prasada & Dillingham, 2006), the same cannot be said about the implications of generic statements. When provided with a novel generic sentence, one often has the impression that the property talked about is widespread. For example, if we were unfamiliar with the West Nile virus and were told (generically) that mosquitoes carry it, it would not be unreasonable to assume that all, or at least a majority of, mosquitoes are carriers (Gelman, Star, & Flukes, 2002). It is this paradoxical combination of flexible, almost prevalence-independent truth conditions, on the one hand, and widespread prevalence implications, on the other, that is the main focus of this article. We will attempt to demonstrate empirically that the prevalence level that is sufficient to judge a generic sentence as true is indeed significantly lower than the prevalence level implied by that very same sentence. If told that, say, “Lorches have purple feathers,” people might expect almost all lorches to have these feathers (illustrating generics’ high implied prevalence), but they may still agree that the sentence is true even if the actual prevalence of purple feathers among lorches turned out to be much lower (illustrating generics’ flexible truth conditions). Additionally, we propose that this asymmetry is peculiar to generic statements and does not extend to sentences with quantified noun phrases as subjects. That is, the prevalence implied by a sentence such as “Most lorches have purple feathers” may be more closely aligned with the prevalence that would be needed to judge it as true. Before describing our studies, we provide a brief overview of previous research on the truth conditions and the prevalence implications of generic statements. 1.1. Generics’ truth conditions Some of the first experimental evidence for the idea that the truth of a generic statement does not depend on the underlying statistics was provided by Gilson and Abelson (1965; Abelson & Kanouse, 1966) in their studies of “the psychology of audience reaction” to “persuasive communication” in the form of generic assertions (Abelson & Kanouse, 1966, p. 171). Participants were presented with novel items such as the following: Altogether there are three kinds of tribes—Southern, Northern, Central. Southern tribes have sports magazines. Northern tribes do not have sports magazines. Central tribes do not have sports magazines. Do tribes have sports magazines? All items had the same critical feature: only one third of the target category possessed the relevant property. Despite the low prevalence, participants answered “yes” approximately 70% of the time to “Do tribes have sports magazines?” and other generic questions similar to it. Thus, people’s acceptance of the generics did not seem contingent on strong statistical evidence, leaving the door open for persuasion, and perhaps manipulation, by ill-intentioned communicators. A similar conclusion about the relationship between statistical prevalence and generics’ truth conditions emerged from the linguistics literature on this topic (e.g., Carlson, 1977; Carlson & Pelletier, 1995; Dahl, 1975; Declerck, 1986, 1991; Lawler, 1973). For example, Carlson (1977) writes that “there are many cases where […] less than half of the individuals under consideration have some certain property, yet we still can truly predicate that property of the appropriate bare plural” (p. 67), as is the case with “Birds lay eggs” and “Mosquitoes carry the West Nile virus” but also with “Lions have manes” (only males do), “Cardinals are red” (only males are), and others. He points out, moreover, that there are many properties that, although present in a majority of a kind, nevertheless cannot be predicated truthfully of that kind (e.g., more than 50% of books are paperbacks but “Books are paperbacks” is false). Thus, acceptance of a generic sentence is doubly dissociated from the prevalence of the property it refers to—not only can true generics refer to low-prevalence properties, but high-prevalence properties are also not guaranteed to be true in generic form.

#### 3] Debate solves arbitrary linguistic intuitions—we can determine the most predictable interp based on clash, limits, topic lit, and community norms. Semantics are a floor not ceiling—if we are sufficiently predictable, division of ground is more important.

#### 4] Aff ground—PICs cause same debates in reverse which is worse 1] creates 13-7 time skew by restarting the debate in the 1AR 2] negs have generics—Soft Law, Torts, Kant, Realism Ks, deterrence DA while affs don’t have any vs PICs

#### 5] Functional limits check—only countries that a] are developing LAWs b] disrupting international norms are viable

#### 6] Clash— overlimiting discourages in depth research because the unifying aff ground is only surface level and one aff for 2 months produces stale debates

#### 7] Topic education—different weapons and states have different geopolitical considerations—lit determines the breadth of topic limits and provides nuance.

#### 7] Aff RVIs A] Topic ed—deters frivolous violations and forces neg to think twice before skewing 1AR B] Reciprocity—T is a unique avenue to ballot that aff can’t access—makes it structurally unfair without RVI

## 1AR—T Ban=Prohibit

#### Counter-interp: affs can specify an LAW to ban

#### Partial bans are T – only we have ev about the topic

Kallenborn 20 [Zachary, expert on drone swarms, weapons of mass destruction, and WMD terrorism. His work has been published in the Nonproliferation Review, Studies in Conflict and Terrorism, Slate, Defense One, and War on the Rocks. Middlebury Institute of International Studies at Monterey Master of Arts in Nonproliferation and Terrorism Studies ] "A Partial Ban on Autonomous Weapons Would Make Everyone Safer," Foreign Policy, https://foreignpolicy.com/2020/10/14/ai-drones-swarms-killer-robots-partial-ban-on-autonomous-weapons-would-make-everyone-safer/ 10-14-2020 RE

Countries might not be willing to ban the weapons outright, but banning the highest-risk autonomous weapons—drone swarms and autonomous weapons armed with CBRN agents— could provide a foundation for reducing autonomous weapons risks. Great powers would give up little, while improving their own security.

#### Prefer defintiions that directly define the word as opposed to define ban as prohibit and then define prohibit as something – they’re more predictable.

#### Reject evidence from PEDIAA – it’s a user-submitted blogging website like Yahoo Answers or reddit, their author is a nameless admin with no quals citing nobody, it is as credible as a card written by a debater.

#### Prohibit means limit or restrict – prefer a real author

Schiedler-Brown 12 – Attorney, Jean Schiedler-Brown & Associates (Jean, “Appellant Brief of Randall Kinchloe v. States Dept of Health, Washington,” *The Court of Appeals of the State of Washington, Division 1*, <http://www.courts.wa.gov/content/Briefs/A01/686429%20Appellant%20Randall%20Kincheloe%27s.pdf>)

3. The ordinary definition of the term "restrictions" also does not include the reporting and monitoring or supervising terms and conditions that are included in the 2001 Stipulation. Black's Law Dictionary, 'fifth edition,(1979) defines "restriction" as; A limitation often imposed in a deed or lease respecting the use to which the property may be put. The term "restrict' is also cross referenced with the term "restrain." Restrain is defined as; To limit, confine, abridge, narrow down, restrict, obstruct, impede, hinder, stay, destroy. To prohibit from action; to put compulsion on; to restrict; to hold or press back. To keep in check; to hold back from acting, proceeding, or advancing, either by physical or moral force, or by interposing obstacle, to repress or suppress, to curb. In contrast, the terms "supervise" and "supervisor" are defined as; To have general oversight over, to superintend or to inspect. See Supervisor. A surveyor or overseer. . . In a broad sense, one having authority over others, to superintend and direct. The term "supervisor" means an individual having authority, in the interest of the employer, to hire, transfer, suspend, layoff, recall, promote, discharge, assign, reward, or discipline other employees, or responsibility to direct them, or to adjust their grievances, or effectively to recommend such action, if in connection with the foregoing the exercise of such authority is not of a merely routine or clerical nature, but required the use of independent judgment. Comparing the above definitions, it is clear that the definition of "restriction" is very different from the definition of "supervision"-very few of the same words are used to explain or define the different terms. In his 2001 stipulation, Mr. Kincheloe essentially agreed to some supervision conditions, but he did not agree to restrict his license.

#### 3] Debate solves arbitrary linguistic intuitions—we can determine the most predictable interp based on clash, limits, topic lit, and community norms. Semantics are a floor not ceiling—if we are sufficiently predictable, division of ground is more important.

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## 1AR—T Plural

#### 1] CI: I can specify one country

#### 2] Bare plurals can be affirmed by singular instances

Zweig 09 Zweig, Eytan. (2009). Number-neutral bare plurals and the multiplicity implicature. Linguistics and Philosophy, 32(4), 353–407. doi:10.1007/s10988-009-9064-3 SM

A third environment in which similar behavior holds is questions. Take the following dialogue: (29) Did you see bears during your hike? (30) a. #No, I saw one. b. Yes, I saw one. If I had gone on a hike yesterday, during which I saw a single bear, it would be quite bizarre for me to respond to (29) with (30a). A natural answer is instead (30b). But since seeing one bear is sufficient for an affirmative answer, it follows that the question was not about seeing more than one bear. Compare this to the following: (31) Did you see several bears during your hike? (32) a. No, I saw one. b. #Yes, I saw one. In the same scenario, if I were asked (31), I would most probably answer with (32a). It is thus not a property of all plural-containing questions that they can be answered affirmatively with a singular; rather, this is a special property of bare plurals. Finally, the same phenomenon occurs in certain modal environments. For example: (33) Sherlock Holmes should question local residents to find the thief. Given (33), it does not follow that Holmes needs to question the residents in groups of two or more; nor does it follow that if the first resident that he questions happens to be the thief, he must nonetheless question a second one. Based on this set of observations, the authors mentioned above conclude that bare plurals do not contain a multiplicity condition in their denotation. Krifka (2004), whose main focus is the relationship between the existential reading of bare plurals and kind readings, does not attempt to account for where the multiplicity meaning in positive sentences such as (23) comes from. Both Sauerland et al. (2005) and Spector (2007), on the other hand, offer detailed theories of the multiplicity, both arguing that it is in fact a conversational implicature. In this they share much with my own conclusion in the matter, as argued for below in Sect. 4.2. However, neither paper considers data from dependent plurals; Sauerland et al. focus entirely on sentences with only one plural NP, and make no mention of the phenomenon. Spector makes a brief mention of dependent plurals in a footnote, in which he suggests that the behavior of bare plurals in dependent readings and in downwards entailing environments are independent phenomena. The methods used to calculate the multiplicity implicature in Sauerland et al. (2005) and Spector (2007) differ both from each other and from my own proposal. Detailed discussion of their proposals appear in Sects. 5.1 and 5.2 below.

#### 3] Pragmatics outweigh—Framers intended ground not definitional excellence. When debaters do prep, they consider circuit norms/topic lit, not grammar—their impact is predictability which collapses to pragmatics.

#### 4] Topic lit—incentivize random combis like China + Estonia distorting topic lit and means their interp doesn’t solve because there’s no offense to the second country.

#### 5] Aff ground—PICs cause same debates in reverse which is worse 1] creates 13-7 time skew 2] negs have generics—Soft Law, Torts, Kant, Realism Ks, deterrence DA while affs don’t have any vs PICs

#### 6] Functional limits check—only countries that a] are developing LAWs b] disrupting international norms are viable

#### 7] Clash—allows us to go in-depth into one particular country’s weapons development rather than nebulous connections between different countries

#### 8] Reasonability—good is good enough and key to avoid substance crowdout—Pen, Harker, DD all read China + its core of topic—should be predictable.

## 1AR—T Autonomous

### 1AR—General

#### 1] We meet—Poseidon is an autonomous UUV—Portzer outweighs, it’s straight from the military.

[Joshua M.M. Portzer (July 2020), Lieutenant Commander in the US Navy, “Kanyon’s Reach: Rethinking the Nuclear Triad in the Autonomous Age,” United States Naval Institute, Vol. 146/7/1409, [https://www.usni.org/magazines/proceedings/2020/july/kanyons-reach-rethinking-nuclear-triad-autonomous-age]//SLC](https://www.usni.org/magazines/proceedings/2020/july/kanyons-reach-rethinking-nuclear-triad-autonomous-age%5d//CHS) PK \*\*brackets for ableist language\*\*

Throughout history, weapon system advances have created paradigm shifts for militaries. Occasionally these shifts are tectonic, unlocking new domains for warfare. The aircraft carrier took air warfare across oceans. The satellite brought electronic warfare to space. The next harbinger of strategic warfare’s future: autonomous unmanned undersea vehicles (UUVs).

Russia has developed a submarine-deployed autonomous UUV (AUUV) that can travel thousands of miles and detonate a nuclear payload of several megatons in a foreign harbor—a capability that will be operational by the late 2020s.1 A strategic nuclear weapon that is deployed and detonated undersea is a true paradigm shift: Never before has a country’s nuclear kill chain remained exclusively undersea. Kanyon

The “Kanyon” weapon system—also referred to as Status-6 or Poseidon—first emerged in footage on Russian television in 2015. It is a nuclear-powered (N)-AUUV that can travel thousands of nautical miles (nm) at approximately 100 knots and can operate at a depth of 1,000 meters. While it may carry a conventional weapons payload, its nuclear warhead is approximately two megatons.2 Russia designed it as a strategic weapon to take out ports and coastal cities. It may deploy on up to four submarines (modified Oscar II class) in both the Northern and Pacific Fleets, with each submarine carrying up to eight Kanyon weapons.3

Unlike any other nuclear weapon, Kanyon detonates underwater and is nuclear powered.4 Washington references it in its Nuclear Posture Review 2018 (NPR) as a “new intercontinental, nuclear-armed, nuclear-powered, undersea autonomous torpedo.”5 Russian President Vladimir Putin included Kanyon in his 2018 national address, along with three other advanced nuclear weapon vehicles.6 Russia began undersea trials for Kanyon in December 2018.

#### 2] That’s a type of LAW.

Tuneer Mukherjee (Maritime Security Analyst and researcher of Asian security at the Stimson Center. His current focus is on naval modernization in South Asia. Previously, he was a Junior Fellow with the Observer Research Foundation’s Maritime Policy Initiative in New Delhi, India, where he worked on Indo-Pacific maritime strategy and the impact of artificial intelligence on naval operations. He has also been a researcher with the Asia Maritime Transparency Initiative at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, Washington D.C, where he tracked maritime disputes in the South China Sea), July 16 2018, Securing the maritime commons: The role of artificial intelligence in naval operations, https://www.orfonline.org/research/42497-a-i-in-naval-operations-exploring-possibilities-debating-ethics/ WJ

The same concepts of deep learning algorithms that apply to naval combat systems are also applicable to autonomous naval vehicles. These unmanned vessels, without human supervision, are constantly learning from their environment and improving their capability to execute missions with increased perspicacity. Targeting autonomy in such unmanned vessels may serve the necessities of future warfare and let an ASV like the Sea Hunter conduct full-range anti-submarine warfare operations with the mission autonomy to engage targets. Similarly, AUVs may well be the future replacements of attack submarines if lethal autonomy is granted. Autonomy to carry out lethal missions would allow such unmanned vessels to provide active protection to harbours, large ships, commercial convoys, sea lines of communication and even nuclear submarines. Plausibly, the future of the maritime battle-space could be balanced in favour of autonomous systems. The question then arises as to when Lethal Autonomous Weapon Systems (LAWS) will be deployed.

Lethal Autonomous Weapon Systems (LAWS)

Ocean environments are considered the most suitable area for the initial deployment of LAWS as identification of assets is easier, and there is relatively smaller presence of civilians.[53] An armed AUV would increase the bandwidth at which any naval task force operates, as vessels will have the ability to function and engage enemy targets without human intervention or any input from the command team. The future in this automation revolution may well take us to a system that will be at the helm of command and control of navies, with authorisation to deploy lethal unmanned assets when it deems it necessary, completely replacing human command teams. The use of LAWS brings an undeniable advantage in protecting marine zones, where there is high exposure to submarine threats. Deploying LAWS will make additional sense for sub-surface missions, as targeting through ROVs is problematic, with existing communications in submarines being restricted to VLF (Very Low Frequency) and ELF (Extremely Low Frequency) radio waves because of the properties of radio waves in salt water.[54]

#### 3] Level of autonomy doesn’t determine LAWs—it’s just an AI weapon with lethal force.

[Matthew Achilles Kokkinos (4-16-2020), The Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy—Tufts University, “Global Governance of Autonomous Weapon Systems: The Russia Case Study,” Tufts University, [https://sites.tufts.edu/fletcherrussia/files/2020/05/The-Global-Governance-of-AWS-Russia-Case-Study.pdf]//SLC](https://sites.tufts.edu/fletcherrussia/files/2020/05/The-Global-Governance-of-AWS-Russia-Case-Study.pdf%5d//CHS) PK

LAWS is the overarching umbrella terminology and category that includes many drone, SAWS, and AWS technologies, but there is one further distinction regarding the actions which it conducts. Specifically, weapons within the LAWS category use kinetic, lethal force, regardless of the level of autonomy, spanning “in-the-loop,” “on-the-loop,” and “out-of-the-loop,” technologies. Not all UCAV, SAWS, and AWS, however, deliver kinetic or lethal force, creating a headache for terminology relating to definitions and governance. For example, the US currently employs use of the Miniature Air Launched Decoy (MALD) and Miniature Air Launched Decoy – Jammer (MALD-J), decoy air-launched vehiclesthat deceive radar and use non-kinetic and non-lethal force to jam radar, respectively.17 LAWS, therefore, do not include these types of autonomous weapon systems which are non-lethal and non-kinetic in use.

#### 4] CI—AWS = LAWs, every international treaty that regulates them explicitly uses AWS as a synonym

Evans 18 [Hayley Evans is a Harvard Frank Knox and ASIL Fellow working at Rights and Security International. She graduated from Harvard Law School, where she was co-president of the Harvard National Security and Law Association and Executive Editor for Online of the Harvard International Law Journal. "Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems at the First and Second U.N. GGE Meetings." [https://www.lawfareblog.com/lethal-autonomous-weapons-systems-first-and-second-un-gge-meetings]//recut](https://www.lawfareblog.com/lethal-autonomous-weapons-systems-first-and-second-un-gge-meetings%5d//recut) SLC PK

As a result, many experts, states and interest groups—including the international coalition, Campaign to Stop Killer Robots—have advocated for a limit to the development of lethal autonomous weapons systems (LAWS). As of Nov. 16, 2017, twenty-two countries have called for a ban on LAWS; neither the U.S. nor the U.K. have joined this call. Last summer, tech companies followed suit, with CEOs including Elon Musk signing an Open Letter to the United Nations Convention on Certain Chemical Weapons. This letter warned that LAWS “[t]hreaten to become the third revolution in warfare.” Noting that “[w]e do not have long to act,” artificial intelligence and robotics tech companies cautioned that “once developed, [LAWS] will permit armed conflict to be fought at a scale greater than ever, and at timescales faster than humans can comprehend.”

In Dec. 2016, the Fifth Review Conference of the High Contracting Parties to the CCW decided to establish a Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) on LAWS. From Nov. 13 to 17, 2017, the United Nations held its first meeting of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) GGE on Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems; the second meeting will take place from April 9 to 13. The GGE’s mandate is to examine emerging technologies in the area of LAWS, in the context of the objectives and purposes of the CCW, and with a view toward identification of the rules and principles applicable to such weapon systems.

This post covers the current status of LAWS, summarizing technical and legal developments, as well as the first GGE on LAWS, which focused on four dimensions of LAWS: technical; military; legal and ethical; and cross-cutting. The post concludes with what to look forward to in the second GGE on LAWS, beginning on April 9.

What are lethal autonomous weapons systems?

Though states have not agreed on a definition of LAWS, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has defined “autonomous weapon systems” as “[a]ny weapon system with autonomy in its critical functions—that is, a weapon system that can select (i.e. search for or detect, identify, track, select) and attack (i.e. use force against, neutralize, damage or destroy) targets without human intervention.” When the U.S. Department of Defense’s Office of Technical Intelligence inquired into the current research and development opportunities surrounding an increase in technological autonomy, DoD similarly identified three multidisciplinary technical fields on which autonomy relies: perception, cognition and action.

#### 5] Infinite Regress—their interp allows no affs

Roff 15 [Heather, Senior Research Fellow, University of Oxford Department of Politics and International Relations; Research Scientist, Arizona State University, Global Security Initiative] "Autonomous or 'Semi' Autonomous Weapons? A Distinction Without Difference," HuffPost, https://www.huffpost.com/entry/autonomous-or-semi-autono\_b\_6487268 1-16-2015 RE //recut SLC PK

These pressing questions notwithstanding, would we still consider a system such as this “semi-autonomous?” In other words, the systems we have now are permitted to engage targets — that is target and trigger — autonomously based on some preselected criteria. Would these systems that utilize a “training data set” to learn from likewise be considered “semi-autonomous” because a human preselected the training data? Common sense would say “no,” but so far militaries may say “yes.” The US Department of Defense, for example, states that a “semi-autonomous” weapon system is one that “once activated, is intended only to engage individual targets or specific target groups that have been selected by a human operator” (DoD, 2012). Yet, at what point would we say that “targets” are not selected by a human operator? Who is the operator? The software programmer with the training data set can be an “operator,” and the lowly Airman likewise can be an “operator” if she is the one ordered to push a button, so too can the Commander who orders her to push it (though, the current DoD Directive makes a distinction between “commander” and “operator” which problematizes the notion of command responsibility even further). The only policy we have on autonomy does not define, much to my dismay, “operator.” This leaves us in the uncomfortable position that distinction between autonomous and semi-autonomous weapons is one without difference, and taken to the extreme would mean that militaries would now only need to claim their weapons system is “semi-autonomous,” much to the chagrin of common sense.

#### 6] Debatability over precision—no one cares if we’re precise legal scholars but factors like clash and ground can set the best division of the topic for DEBATE.

### --AT Harker Violation

#### We meet—they have zero violation because their violation card is a hypothetical about a potential US submarine, NOT the Poseidon—rehighlighting in yellow.

Portzer 20 [Lieutenant Commander Joshua M. M. Portzer, U.S. Navy] "Kanyon’s Reach: Rethinking the Nuclear Triad in the Autonomous Age," U.S. Naval Institute, https://www.usni.org/magazines/proceedings/2020/july/kanyons-reach-rethinking-nuclear-triad-autonomous-age July 2020 RE

It is good to address the elephant in the room. It goes something like this: You are arguing for autonomous nuclear weapons. Are you crazy? As suggested earlier, autonomous weapons “once activated, can select and engage targets without further intervention by a human operator,” but that does not mean that humans cannot intervene.27 Imagine a U.S.-operated N-AUUV. An operator on a submarine inputs prioritized target coordinates into the N-AUUV’s program. She also inputs the desired attack time. The N-AUUV launches only when it is deemed necessary to strike. Once launched, the N-AUUV uses its navigation sensor suite to negotiate around terrain, mammals, and other obstructions to reach its target at the specified time, regulating its speed as necessary. If it finds an obstruction, it circumnavigates. If there is a weapon malfunction, it can scuttle itself deep in the ocean’s abyss. Autonomy allows for intercontinental travel without a man-in-the-loop the entire time. But the N-AUUV does not have a mind of its own. Humans still must launch it. The kill decision still resides with those who are capable of sovereign, ethical decision-making

#### LAWs CAN independently analyze and make active decisions to fire without supervision but also can have in the loop—their card in yellow.

Wyatt 20 [Austin, PhD, Australian Catholic University is a research associate in the Values in Defence and Security Technology group at The University of New South Wales at the Australian Defence Force Academy. His research concerns autonomous weapons with a particular emphasis on their disruptive effects in Southeast Asia.] "So Just What Is a Killer Robot?: Detailing the Ongoing Debate around Defining Lethal Auton," Washington Headquarters Services, https://www.whs.mil/News/News-Display/Article/2210967/so-just-what-is-a-killer-robot-detailing-the-ongoing-debate-around-defining-let/ 6-8-2020 RE

So, What is an Autonomous Weapon System?

Attempting to present an authoritative single definition of LAWSs in the midst of the ongoing international debate would be a hubristic goal for this article. As with terrorism, the broad strokes of a definition have been admirably outlined by others and are generally agreed, the continued international debate centers on the specifics and is sustained by discursive differences that are primarily political in nature. However, by drawing on the positions explained above, and a selection of definitions developed by prominent scholars, it is possible to synthesize a working definition that would be sufficient to facilitate discussion separate from the politicized CCW process.

At its most simplistic an AWS could be thought of as a computer that is analyzing data inputted from multiple conventional sensors to inform its actions without direct human involvement. While insufficiently detailed, this kind of definition is useful for scholars whose analysis is focused on the ethical, moral, strategic, or legal issues raised by LAWSs. For example, Maya Brehm adopted a basic definition of AWSs as “a weapon system with sensors, algorithms and effectors,” with the explicit acknowledgement that this approach sidestepped the ongoing debate while providing a sufficient descriptive picture for the reader. However, for regulation to be effective, it would require a more operationalizable and detailed approach.

At the core of this approach should be a consideration of the level of independent control that a system exercises over its critical functions.42 Setting aside those weapon systems that are either inert (requiring human operation) or automated (such as landmines),43 this approach would help identify whether a system is operationally semiautonomous, supervised by a human operator, or exercises operationally full autonomy over its critical functions. Interestingly, existing definitions have placed emphasis on different critical functions in their approach to autonomous weapon systems. For example, Crootof emphasized the weapon’s ability to process information to make targeting decisions,44 while Horowitz emphasized the ability to select a target that was not preselected by an operator.45

Furthermore, given the goal is to create a definition suitable for the development of technical standards among states that are currently pursuing AWSs, as well as potential future importers, it is better to focus the definition on autonomy at the platform level, rather than disposable munitions or systems where autonomous agents completely replace humans in the planning of military action.46

Based on these features, consider the following as an early example of such a working definition for LAWSs:

“A fully autonomous Lethal Autonomous Weapon System (LAWS) is a weapon delivery platform that is able to independently analyze its environment and make an active decision whether to fire without human supervision or guidance.”47

#### Their evidence confirms—in yellow.

Portzer 20 [Lieutenant Commander Joshua M. M. Portzer, U.S. Navy] "Kanyon’s Reach: Rethinking the Nuclear Triad in the Autonomous Age," U.S. Naval Institute, https://www.usni.org/magazines/proceedings/2020/july/kanyons-reach-rethinking-nuclear-triad-autonomous-age July 2020 RE

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### --AT Greenhill Violation

#### We definitively meet Sayler.

Mishra 19 Sylvia Mishra [Sylvia Mishra was a 2019 India-U.S. Fellow at New America. Mishra researched civilian drones and India and the United States' potential role in shaping new drone applications, a project with applications in wider public interest issues.], 5-8-2019, "Could unmanned underwater vehicles undermine nuclear deterrence?," Strategist, <https://www.aspistrategist.org.au/could-unmanned-underwater-vehicles-undermine-nuclear-deterrence/> AG

UUVs can function without the direction of a human operator and have wide dual-use (that is, civilian and military) applications. Some are used for commercial purposes, hydrography and oceanographic research. Lockheed Martin’s yellow Marlin drone submarine inspects offshore rigs and underwater pipelines, a task that’s worth around a billion dollars a year in the Gulf of Mexico.

#### Horowitz is a hypothetical about what would happen if it could receive instructions, not that it does. This card just doesn’t draw a conclusion so it can’t be a violation. Our cards disprove it.

#### We meet both interps—Poseidon is autonomous—your author.

**Sutton, 19,** 11/17/2019, Forbes, “Video Suggests Russia’s Poseidon Nuclear-Powered Drone Has A Seabed-Launched Version”, H I Sutton, a defnsive analyst, writes extensively on maritime defense topics, particularly underwater warfare. For current events he uses OSINT (Open Source Intelligence) in addition to the usual tools and research. URL: <https://www.forbes.com/sites/hisutton/2019/11/17/video-suggests-russias-poseidon-nuclear-powered-drone-has-a-seabed-launched-version/?sh=3d6032d15b6c>, KR

Poseidon is one of the most disruptive weapons currently being developed. It is also one of the least well understood. Each new report and image provides intelligence that improves our understanding. It is designed to hit coastal cities with a 2 megaton warhead, around 133 times more powerful than the bomb dropped on Hiroshima.

It is often described as a drone or autonomous underwater vehicle (AUV), and as an Intercontinental Nuclear-Powered Nuclear-Armed Autonomous Torpedo in some U.S. government documents. I prefer the torpedo likeness since it is a weapon, intended for a one-way journey. It is massive though, around 20-30 times the size of regular torpedoes. We know that with a nuclear power plant it will presumably have virtually unlimited range, be able to dive deeper than most current weapons and run so fast that current torpedoes wouldn’t catch it. So it would be very hard to counter. But the launch submarines are possible weakness because they might be trailed and neutralized before the torpedo can be fired. This raises the question of a seabed-launched version.

#### And it has capabilities to conduct its own missions – prefer our ev on quals from the military

MAKICHUK, 20, 5/26/20, “Russia to test ‘Doomsday Drone’ in high Arctic”, Asia Times, Dave Makichuk is a reporter and analyst from Asia Times, URL: <https://asiatimes.com/2020/05/russia-set-to-test-doomsday-drone-in-high-arctic/>, KR

“A drone has several advantages. A submarine with a crew on board is, of course, a powerful weapon, but there are certain restrictions on the human factor. The Poseidon can practically be on alert and perform assigned tasks at any time,” former GRU colonel Alexander Zhilin told the Kremlin-controlled Sputnik Radio outlet on Tuesday.

#### It’s not a UUV or torpedo, it’s an AUV because post launch it conducts it’s own missions, it just can’t be launched from port because of the way it’s built (certain spacecraft have to be launched from planes but that doesn’t make them missiles)—if we win it’s functionally a LAW then the plan should use the language of the Russian military to ensure passage.

### --Extra

# F/L—Disadvantages

## 1AR - BMD DA

### 1AR – Uniqueness

#### [If reading NATO adv] - ] the 1AC turns the uniqueness – Russia’s possession of Poseidon forces NATO destruction, not the US leaving the Open Skies Treaty

#### ] Their uniqueness evidence is too old and assumes deteriorating relations from Trump that push US and Russia to the point of war – doesn’t account for new Biden stances.

#### ] Empirically denied – the US has been out of OST for >6 months but the impacts haven’t been triggered yet

#### Their evidence doesn’t assume Biden’s pro NATO stance which checks Russian US war, but only in regards to arms control treaties – that’s alt solvency to the DA

Hill 20 Ian Hill [Ian Hill is a retired senior career diplomat in the New Zealand foreign ministry. In the course of his 42 years in the diplomatic service, Mr Hill served three times in Moscow, twice as Ambassador (2009–12 and 2016–20). He also served as Deputy Head of Mission for five years in Washington DC, and held other senior foreign service roles in London and the Pacific.] 11-25-2020, "A Biden presidency and US-Russia relations," Lowy Institute, https://www.lowyinstitute.org/the-interpreter/biden-presidency-and-us-russia-relations AG

US policy towards Russia will not only get tougher, but also more coherent, with less of the mixed messaging of the Trump administration. Importantly too, Russia policy may prove a rare area of bipartisan consensus in Congress, where Moscow will find few friends among either Republicans or Democrats.

How might life get more difficult for Moscow on Biden’s watch?

First up, the President-elect supports a strong NATO alliance, and will take early steps to reassure and repair relations with its European allies, especially Germany and France. This offers the prospect of a reinvigorated and more cohesive NATO alliance – politically and militarily. Biden favours strengthening NATO’s capabilities to meet both traditional military and new hybrid security threats.

This doesn’t mean that there won’t still be friction between Washington and its European partners on Russia – not least because there remains considerable “America first” sentiment on Capitol Hill. Under Biden, the US will continue to press its European NATO allies to pay more for their own defence. Biden is also opposed to the Nordstream 2 gas pipeline, which may prove problematic for relations with Angela Merkel’s Germany. And a more hard-line Russia policy from Washington may discomfort those European partners inclined to conciliate Russia, not least for economic reasons. Yet, while transatlantic differences will inevitably persist, Biden will approach alliance management issues in a more reasoned and respectful manner.

Secondly, Biden is committed to renewed US multilateral leadership, and cooperating with partners to uphold shared democratic values and human rights. He has pledged to impose “real costs” on Russia’s violation of international norms, in particular foreshadowing more unequivocal American support for Ukraine. Moves in Congress to toughen sanctions on Russia will likely receive strong White House support. The new administration will take a strong line on Belarus, challenging the Moscow-backed Lukashenko regime’s violent suppression of political dissent and human rights, in the wake of discredited presidential elections. Biden has also voiced support for beleaguered Russian civil society, protesting against what he described as Putin’s “kleptocratic authoritarian system”. Globally, Biden will want America to be more visible and engaged diplomatically, narrowing the room for manoeuvre Russia has enjoyed during the Trump era, whether in Africa, the Middle East or Latin America.

### 1AR – Link

T/L – their evidence is rlly rlly bad and just cherry picks the one example of Poseidon to try and finesse a link, but there really isn’t a link that we should be scared of – there’s a bunch of other weapons that solve back for the DA.

#### 1] No link – their evidence concedes Russia deterrence logic is just speculative and won’t translate into policymaking – that link turns the DA and means the only way to preserve deterrence is by preventing accidental launch through implementing the plan

**1NC Roberts 20 Saratoga reads blue**, Cynthia. [Cynthia Roberts is a professor of political science at Hunter College, City University of New York, and a senior research scholar at the Saltzman Institute of War and Peace Studies, Columbia University.] “Revelations about Russia’s Nuclear Deterrence Policy - War on the Rocks.” *War on the Rocks*, 19 June 2020, <https://warontherocks.com/2020/06/revelations-about-russias-nuclear-deterrence-policy/>. [GHS-AA] // recut AG

On June 2, the Kremlin published an unprecedented six-page document entitled Principles of State Policy of the Russian Federation in the Sphere of Nuclear Deterrence. Although this statement of Russia’s official position on nuclear deterrence policy does not overturn current military doctrine, it is notable for identifying the range of threats that Russia seeks to deter with its nuclear forces, clarifying Russia’s approach to nuclear deterrence, and articulating the conditions under which Moscow might escalate to the use of nuclear weapons. Given Russia’s nuclear stockpile of approximately 4,310 warheads and the deteriorating relations between Moscow and the West, such issues are vital to global peace and security. The set of public statements, or declaratory policy, on nuclear deterrence matters — especially for American analysts — because it gives insight into how the role of Russian nuclear weapons has evolved over time in response to technological innovation, international challenges to the security of Russia’s nuclear deterrent policy, and internal debates in Moscow over the details of military policy and how best to ensure a credible nuclear deterrent posture. Despite sharing some similarities with the deterrence policies of the United States — such as maintaining a nuclear triad to address threats to the survivability of land-based forces and considering limited nuclear options to deter further escalation or de-escalate a conflict — important elements of Russia’s approach to nuclear deterrence are unique. Analysts should read Principles of State Policy extremely carefully and with a Russian lens. Importantly, Russia experts should appreciate that Moscow is animated by a persistent fear that Washington seeks to neutralize Russia’s strategic deterrent. As a result, the military is fixated on preemption to prevent a disabling first strike, even as the political leadership has traditionally resisted pre-delegating nuclear authority. The document also shows that Russian nuclear doctrine has focused more on ensuring deterrence and less on nuclear coercion for aggressive aims.

#### 2] Alt solvency – their evidence concedes Moscow just cares about a nuclear triad in context to land based forces, not Poseidon specifically

**1NC Roberts 20 – we read blue**, Cynthia. [Cynthia Roberts is a professor of political science at Hunter College, City University of New York, and a senior research scholar at the Saltzman Institute of War and Peace Studies, Columbia University.] “Revelations about Russia’s Nuclear Deterrence Policy - War on the Rocks.” *War on the Rocks*, 19 June 2020, <https://warontherocks.com/2020/06/revelations-about-russias-nuclear-deterrence-policy/>. [GHS-AA] // recut AG

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#### 3] Their link ev flows aff and turns the DA – it concedes that Moscow will preempt conflict with a first strike specifically with exotics like Poseidon – the only way to solve is through the plan

**1NC Roberts 20 – we read blue**, Cynthia. [Cynthia Roberts is a professor of political science at Hunter College, City University of New York, and a senior research scholar at the Saltzman Institute of War and Peace Studies, Columbia University.] “Revelations about Russia’s Nuclear Deterrence Policy - War on the Rocks.” *War on the Rocks*, 19 June 2020, <https://warontherocks.com/2020/06/revelations-about-russias-nuclear-deterrence-policy/>. [GHS-AA] // recut AG

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#### 4] Alt solvency – their evidence says Poseidon is one of three types of weapons Russia uses for deterrence

**1NC Cimbala**, Stephen, **and** Adam **Lowther 20 – we read blue**. [Stephen J. Cimbala is a distinguished professor of political science, Penn State Brandywine, an American studies faculty member, and the author of numerous books and articles in the fields of international security studies, defense policy, nuclear weapons and arms control, intelligence, and other fields. He is a graduate of Penn State, having received his BA in journalism in 1965. He received an MA in 1967, and his PhD in 1969, both in political science, from the University of Wisconsin, Madison. He serves on the editorial boards of various professional journals, has consulted for a number of US government agencies and defense contractors, and is frequently quoted in the media on national security topics. Dr. Adam Lowther is a professor of political science at the US Army School of Advanced Military Studies, the former director of the US Air Force’s School for Advanced Nuclear Deterrence Studies, and the former director of the Air Force Research Institute’s Center for Academic and Professional Journals. He holds a PhD in international relations from the University of Alabama. Dr. Lowther is the author of numerous journal articles and books focused on international relations and military affairs.] “Putin and Missile Defense Malaise: Broadening US Options.” *Air University*, 9 June 2020, <https://www.airuniversity.af.edu/JEMEAA/Display/Article/2213507/putin-and-missile-defense-malaise-broadening-us-options/>. [GHS-AA]

On 1 March 2018, President Vladimir Putin promised a new generation of Russian nuclear weapons specifically intended to circumvent US strategic missile defenses.1 The weapons mentioned in Putin’s presentation to the Federal Assembly included an intercontinental cruise missile, a hypersonic glide weapon, and a long-range nuclear torpedo, in addition to other nuclear-capable delivery systems in development and/or deployment. One of the reasons for Russo–American and NATO–Russian divergence on missile defenses is the Russian concern that NATO regional and US global missile defenses could overturn the stability of nuclear deterrence based on assured retaliation.2 Although Moscow’s concerns are understandable, given Russia’s dependence on nuclear weapons to deter or stop a feared invasion from the West, US planning assumes that advanced ballistic missile defenses in Europe exist to protect NATO allies from small-scale attacks from Iran—not Russia.3 On the other hand, missile defenses can be tasked to protect retaliatory forces as their priority, or singular, mission. For example, terminal antimissile defenses for intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBM), deployed in missile silos, could be designed to protect those retaliatory forces from first strikes instead of populations from retaliatory attacks. The possibility of defending silo-based ICBMs with terminal ballistic missile defenses (BMD) to reduce their first-strike vulnerability was studied during the Cold War and subsequently by the US government and various defense contractors.4 The Nixon administration approved deployment of the Sentinel-Safeguard system, with a primary mission of defending retaliatory forces, in 1969, but the United States subsequently mothballed the system after agreeing to the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty in 1972.5 In the sections that follow, we first consider some of the military-strategic and arms control issues that have complicated US– and NATO–Russian dialogue on missile defenses. In the second section, we analyze the hypothetical impacts that ICBM silo defenses deployed by the United States and Russia might have on deterrence and arms control stability, including consideration of possible alternatives.6 The development and eventual deployment by Russia and the United States of advanced hypersonic weapons make this topic especially timely. Hypersonics could pose time-urgent threats to both fixed and mobile strategic launchers, but especially to silo-based ICBMs.7 Post–Cold War and Missile Defenses The United States and Russia now field 80 percent fewer operationally deployed strategic nuclear weapons than during the Cold War. As table 1 illustrates, the United States and Russia each field a force with a slightly different mix of warheads and delivery vehicles—all of which meet the requirements of the New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START). At the same time the number of operationally deployed strategic nuclear weapons was in dramatic decline, the United States refused efforts on the development of antiballistic missile defenses.8 Antiballistic missile defense technologies are of interest not only to the United States and Russia but also to other states who feel threatened by the spread of ballistic missiles outside of Europe. The spread of ballistic missiles and the decline of nuclear arsenals occurred independently but ultimately converged in their significant impact on strategic stability. One example is prescient. Japan, a nonnuclear state, would prefer neither to join the ranks of nuclear weapons states nor to enter into a regional nuclear arms race. It is, however, very interested in antimissile defenses as a defense against a limited nuclear strike—possibly from North Korea. Japan is already cooperating with the United States in developing and deploying theater missile defenses for its state territory and contiguous waters.9 This stance is not unreasonable from Japan’s perspective, considering its proximity to North Korea, China, and other Asian nuclear powers. Missile defenses might provide for a country like Japan or South Korea an alternative “deterrent by denial” instead of a nuclear deterrent by threat of unacceptable second-strike retaliation.10 Antiballistic missile defenses could also serve as an insurance policy against accidental launches or unauthorized rogue attacks. Table 2 summarizes active and planned phases of the US–NATO European Phased Adaptive Approach (EPAA) missile defense plan, which could be replicated in Japan, Korea, or elsewhere. The Obama administration’s attempt to “reset” relations with Russia led to the conclusion of the New START agreement and to a temporary thaw in US–Russia and Russia–NATO relations on the issue of missile defenses.11 However, the thaw was temporary, as animosity over missile defenses returned in 2011–2012 when the Obama administration missile defense plan for Europe became clearer and its implications for Russia became a presidential election issue.12 To appease the Russians, then–US Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel announced in 2013 that the Pentagon would cancel plans for the fourth phase of EPAA, regarded as the phase most objectionable to Russia, which viewed the system as a way to undermine Russian nuclear deterrence. Neither President Putin nor his military leadership was mollified by this US decision.13 Moscow continued to demand either a change in the US plan or a Russian level of involvement and participation in designing the European BMD system that would satisfy Russia’s nervous military leaders and politicians as to American and NATO intentions and capabilities.14

#### 5] Alt solvency – Poseidon is one of 6 weapons that accomplish the same purpose.

**1NC Nilsen 20 – we read Blue**, Thomas. [Thomas Nilsen is editor of the Independent Barents Observer with its news desk located in Kirkenes, northern Norway. He has a long experience in media cooperation across the borders in the high north of Europe, both as radio- and newspaper reporter all the way back to the days before the breakup of the Soviet Union. Nilsen has been editor of Barents Observer since 2009, including in the period when its staff were employees of the Norwegian Barents Secretariat. In 2015, the secretariat decided that the newpaper no longer should have the editorial freedom that comes with the Rights and Duties of the Editor. Journalistic freedom and independece are core values for the staff reporters and all left and relaunched the newspaper in October 2015 as a journalist-owned, independent company. Before 2009, Nilsen was Deputy head of the Norwegian Barents Secretariat. Before 2003, he worked 12 years for the Bellona Foundation’s Russian study group, focusing on nuclear safety issues and general environmental challenges in northern areas and the Arctic. Thomas has been travelling extensively in the Barents Region and northern Russia since the late 80’s working for different media and organizations. He is also a guide at sea and in remote locations in the Russian north for various groups and regularly lectures on security issues, environmental and socio-economic development in the Barents Region. Thomas Nilsen studied at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology.] “Russia’s ‘doomsday Drone’ Prepares for Testing.” *The Barents Observer*, 26 Mar. 2020, <https://thebarentsobserver.com/en/security/2020/05/russia-prepares-testing-doomsday-drone>. [GHS-AA]

The test-launch will take place from the “Belgorod” submarine, a source in the military-industrial complex told RIA Novosti. The drone, formed as a giant torpedo, is built to carry a several megatons nuclear warhead and is described by weapons analysts as a “doomsday nuke”. Powered by a small nuclear reactor, the Poseidon has a believed range of 10,000 km across the world’s oceans. Launched from the Barents Sea or other waters in the Arctic, the drone can autonomously cross the North Atlantic. If detonated outside the east coast of the United States, the nuclear warhead could create a several tens of meters high tsunami wave additional to damage caused by the nuclear blast itself. The Barents Observer first reported about the existence of the weapon in 2016. In March 2018, President Vladimir Putin confirmed the existence of the upcoming giant underwater drone. Poseidon was one of six new strategic nuclear weapons presented by the President. In July 2018, Russia’s Ministry of Defense released a video showing the workshop where the drone was assembled and an animated film demonstrating how the drone potentially could be used in a real warfare situation. One of Kremlin’s controlled media, Radio Sputnik, on Tuesday aired an interview with former GRU colonel Aleksandr Zhilin who elaborates on the drone’s advantages. “A drone has several advantages. A submarine with a crew on board is, of course, a powerful weapon, but there are certain restrictions on the human factor. The Poseidon can practically be on alert and perform assigned tasks at any time,” he says. Today, Zhilin is head of the Centre for Study of Public Applied Problems of National Security with the Lobachevsky University in Nizhny Novgorod. Safe against hackers He calms those worrying about the potential of seeing the drones being hacked by computer terrorists. “The appearance of this class of drones, of course, requires a lot of responsibility, because it is managed via software. It is clear that there are certain risks when in operation hackers can try to take control. But, talking with our engineers, designers, I came to the conclusion that there is massive protection against external interference,” Aleksandr Zhilin said to the radio channel. With the deep-diving Poseidon drone, Russia will counter any U.S. missile defense systems and by that ensure deterrence, a second-strike capability. The plan is to deploy 16 Poseidon drones on combat duty with the Northern Fleet. Two special-purpose submarines are to carry the weapons, the “Belgorod” and the “Khabarovsk”, both built at the Sevmash yard in Severodvinsk. “Belgorod” is a prototype submarine based on a prolonged hull of an Oscar-II class nuclear-powered submarine. It was launched in April 2019, and is expected to start sea trials within a few months.

#### 6] the 1NC article concludes aff – it says no threat to second strike

**1NC Cimbala**, Stephen, **and** Adam **Lowther 20**. [Stephen J. Cimbala is a distinguished professor of political science, Penn State Brandywine, an American studies faculty member, and the author of numerous books and articles in the fields of international security studies, defense policy, nuclear weapons and arms control, intelligence, and other fields. He is a graduate of Penn State, having received his BA in journalism in 1965. He received an MA in 1967, and his PhD in 1969, both in political science, from the University of Wisconsin, Madison. He serves on the editorial boards of various professional journals, has consulted for a number of US government agencies and defense contractors, and is frequently quoted in the media on national security topics. Dr. Adam Lowther is a professor of political science at the US Army School of Advanced Military Studies, the former director of the US Air Force’s School for Advanced Nuclear Deterrence Studies, and the former director of the Air Force Research Institute’s Center for Academic and Professional Journals. He holds a PhD in international relations from the University of Alabama. Dr. Lowther is the author of numerous journal articles and books focused on international relations and military affairs.] “Putin and Missile Defense Malaise: Broadening US Options.” *Air University*, 9 June 2020, <https://www.airuniversity.af.edu/JEMEAA/Display/Article/2213507/putin-and-missile-defense-malaise-broadening-us-options/>. [GHS-AA-re-cut KR // recut AG]

Regardless of these considerations, from a military and deterrence standpoint, there are two potential benefits the deployment of antiballistic missile defenses provide the ICBM force and deterrence—compared to the undefended condition. First, an attacker cannot know the exact performance of antiballistic missile defenses under crisis or wartime conditions; even the defender will be estimating success based on tests and simulations. These unknown parameters of missile defense performance “under fire” will complicate an attacker’s first-strike confidence. Second, the availability of silo defenses can allow leaders to feel less pressure to “use them or lose them” and increase confidence against a decision to strike preemptively. Opponents of antiballistic missile defense systems argue that current ABM technology does not perform particularly well, is too costly, and will always be overwhelmed by greater offensive weapons.25 In many respects, these critiques are true but irrelevant. Antiballistic missile defenses, even mediocre ones, change the calculus for attacking ICBM fields and ensure that a portion of ICBMs are available for countervalue strikes. ABM systems need not be perfect. Mediocre is good enough.

Apart from these pros and cons for deterrence and nuclear crisis stability, there is also the issue of arms race stability. US antiballistic missile defenses for ICBMs might provoke Russian or Chinese countermeasures in the form of their own missile defenses or offsetting modernization of offenses. Russian or Chinese ICBM defenses might have a similar effect on the United States. But in all cases, ICBM silo defenses would not be a threat to the second-strike capability of another state. Thus, the potential for creating stability is a net positive.

#### 7] Nilsen quotes a GRU colonel, he’s an arms agent part of the government, obviously he’s biased – we’ve inserted the bio right before the quote – we read blue

**1NC Nilsen 20**, Thomas. [Thomas Nilsen is editor of the Independent Barents Observer with its news desk located in Kirkenes, northern Norway. He has a long experience in media cooperation across the borders in the high north of Europe, both as radio- and newspaper reporter all the way back to the days before the breakup of the Soviet Union. Nilsen has been editor of Barents Observer since 2009, including in the period when its staff were employees of the Norwegian Barents Secretariat. In 2015, the secretariat decided that the newpaper no longer should have the editorial freedom that comes with the Rights and Duties of the Editor. Journalistic freedom and independece are core values for the staff reporters and all left and relaunched the newspaper in October 2015 as a journalist-owned, independent company. Before 2009, Nilsen was Deputy head of the Norwegian Barents Secretariat. Before 2003, he worked 12 years for the Bellona Foundation’s Russian study group, focusing on nuclear safety issues and general environmental challenges in northern areas and the Arctic. Thomas has been travelling extensively in the Barents Region and northern Russia since the late 80’s working for different media and organizations. He is also a guide at sea and in remote locations in the Russian north for various groups and regularly lectures on security issues, environmental and socio-economic development in the Barents Region. Thomas Nilsen studied at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology.] “Russia’s ‘doomsday Drone’ Prepares for Testing.” *The Barents Observer*, 26 Mar. 2020, <https://thebarentsobserver.com/en/security/2020/05/russia-prepares-testing-doomsday-drone>. [GHS-AA-recut KR]

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### 1AR – Impact

Push very hard on the fact that there’s no scnario for Russia usage of weapons– that should set up a good 2ar on things like timeframe and probability weighing

Also maybe just go for the no impact card = no impact

## 1AR—Deterrence DA

### 1AR—Link Turn

#### 1] Poseidon crushes deterrence strategy – it gives Russian leaders a false confidence which kills their recourse ability

#### 2] Hacking means it can be turned against them – read the 1NC ev - the tech is super rouge and rudimentary

#### 3] Subs shred deterrence due to risk of escalation – that’s 1AC Portxer and Insinna

#### 4] It’s meant to destroy economic installations in coastal areas and leads to mass radiation which destroys the climate – you have to be insane to think this is a deterrent

Pifer 15 – Steven Pifer is a nonresident senior fellow in the Arms Control and Non-Proliferation Initiative, Center for 21st Century Security and Intelligence, and the Center on the United States and Europe at the Brookings Institution, and a William J. Perry fellow at the Center for International Security and Cooperation at Stanford University. He focuses on nuclear arms control, Ukraine, and Russia. He has offered commentary on these issues on National Public Radio, PBS NewsHour, CNN, Fox News, BBC, and VOA, and his articles have run in The New York Times, The Washington Post, Financial Times, National Interest, Moscow Times, and Kyiv Post, among others; “Russia’s perhaps-not-real super torpedo”; November 18, 2015; <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/order-from-chaos/2015/11/18/russias-perhaps-not-real-super-torpedo/> As+

On November 10, a Russian television broadcast of a meeting between President Vladimir Putin and some of his senior military officers revealed a “secret” plan for a long-range, nuclear-armed torpedo called Status-6. The broadcast on state-run Channel One showed a diagram of the torpedo, filmed over the shoulder of a Russian officer.

According to BBC, the diagram described the purpose of the Status-6 as to “destroy important economic installations of the enemy in coastal areas and cause guaranteed devastating damage to the country’s territory by creating wide areas of radioactive contamination, rendering them unusable for military, economic or other activity for a long time.”

The Status-6 revelation raises some interesting questions.

NOT AN ACCIDENTAL LEAK

To begin with, this was no accidental leak. Televised events involving the Russian president are carefully scripted by the Kremlin. Even were a Russian cameraman daring enough to film the diagram surreptitiously, his producer would have made a phone call to check with higher authority before broadcasting a secret weapon to the world.

The picture was aired because the Kremlin wanted it aired and wanted the world to believe that Russia has plans for a large nuclear torpedo. That fits with Moscow’s pattern of nuclear saber-rattling over the past two years. Along with a generally more belligerent stance toward the West, flights by Bear bombers near NATO air space, and submarine incursions in Swedish and Finnish waters, Putin and other Russian officials take every possible occasion to remind the world of something the world already knows well: Russia has an awful lot of nuclear weapons.

IS IT REAL?

Is the Status-6 intended to be real? As Jeffrey Lewis has pointed out, it would appear to be a particularly nasty weapon that would generate massive amounts of radioactivity if detonated in shallow waters. It also would appear to have some drawbacks.

First of all, the diagram indicated that the torpedo, which would be launched from a submarine mothership, will have a range of 10,000 kilometers (more than 6,000 miles). The long range would allow the torpedo to be fired from waters close to Russia, reducing the exposure of the Russian mothership to U.S. and NATO anti-submarine capabilities. At its alleged speed of 100 knots (about 115 miles per hour), if launched from north of Russia’s Kola Peninsula, the torpedo would take some 40 hours to reach targets on the U.S. East Coast. That’s a long time; do Russian military planners really want a system that takes nearly two days to strike its objectives?

Second, at a speed of 100 knots, the Status-6 would be much faster than conventional torpedoes. When it comes to underwater travel, more speed usually means more noise, increasing the risk of detection. This would not appear to be a particularly stealthy system. NATO navies might not have an ability to stop it, but they might well know where it was and where it was headed.

Third, the Russians as a rule exercise caution about how they manage and control nuclear arms. Would Russian navy commanders be comfortable with an unmanned nuclear weapon roaming the ocean on its own for up to two days traveling to its target—or perhaps even longer if it traveled to near the target and simply lurked?

This is not to say that the Status-6 is not a real weapon design. The Russians, and the Soviets before them, have built some bizarre and nasty devices. But it’s not obvious that the Status-6 would be the weapon of choice for many operations—that is, unless the Russian leadership was prepared to have its cities nuked in response.

For all the oddities of the Status-6 torpedo, there would appear to be one bit of good news. Military strategists since the dawn of the nuclear ballistic missile age have obsessed over the possibility of surprise attack. Given its long travel time to target, possibly noisily announcing its course along the way, the Status-6 would not appear to make a good first-strike weapon.

PARANOID ANDROID

At about the time that it showed the Status-6 diagram, the broadcast aired Putin expressing concern about U.S. missile defenses and saying: “We’ll work on our missile defense systems, but primarily, as we’ve said repeatedly, I repeat, we’ll work on development of strike weapons capable of overcoming any anti-missile defense systems.”

The Status-6, operating underwater, presumably would not be troubled by an American missile interceptor. But does the Russian military really believe it needs such a system to overcome U.S. missile defenses? It would hardly seem so. By 2018, the United States will have 44 missile interceptors with a velocity capable of engaging a strategic ballistic missile warhead. At that time, Russia will have some 1,500 deployed warheads on its intercontinental ballistic missiles and submarine-launched ballistic missiles.

The Russian military understands this. The Russian public may not. The Status-6 revelation thus may have been aimed at domestic viewers, to assure them that, despite all of the anxiety that Moscow voices about U.S. missile defenses, the Russian military will still be able to strike back.

### 1AR—AT: Dougherty Link

#### Their link evidence is ass – here are a laundry list of problems with it:

#### 1] It confirms the perception internal link

#### 2] Context of Trump not Biden – they have radically different fopo stances and will take different courses of action

#### 3] It’s based on a leaked photo from years ago, the real thing is much different – we read Green

1NC Brumfiel & Kristensen ’18 [Hans M. Kristensen (Director of the Nuclear Information Project at the Federation of American Scientists where he provides the public with analysis and background information about the status of nuclear forces and the role of nuclear weapons. He specializes in using the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) in his research and is a frequent consultant to and is widely referenced in the news media on the role and status of nuclear weapons. His collaboration with researchers at NRDC in 2010 resulted in an estimate of the size of the U.S. nuclear weapons stockpile that was only 13 weapons off the actual number declassified by the U.S. government. Kristensen is co-author of the Nuclear Notebook column in the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists and the World Nuclear Forces overview in the SIPRI Yearbook. The Nuclear Notebook is, according to the publisher, “widely regarded as the most accurate source of information on nuclear weapons and weapons facilities available to the public.” Past Nuclear Notebook columns can be found here. A full listing of Kristensen’s publications can be found here. Between 2002 and 2005, Kristensen was a consultant to the nuclear program at the Natural Resources Defense Council in Washington, D.C, where he researched nuclear weapons issues and wrote the report “U.S. Nuclear Weapons In Europe” (February 2005) and co-authored numerous articles including “What’s Behind Bush’s Nuclear Cuts” (Arms Control Today, October 2004) and “The Protection Paradox” (Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, March/April 2004). Between 1998 and 2002, Kristensen directed the Nuclear Strategy Project at the Nautilus Institute in Berkeley, CA, and he was a Special Advisor to the Danish Ministry of Defense in 1997-1998 as a member of the Danish Defense Commission. He was a Senior Researcher with the Nuclear Information Unit of Greenpeace International in Washington D.C from 1991 to 1996, prior to which he coordinated the Greenpeace Nuclear Free Seas Campaign in Denmark, Norway, Finland and Sweden.), NPR’s Geoff Brumfiel (Geoff Brumfiel works as a senior editor and correspondent on NPR's science desk. His editing duties include science and space, while his reporting focuses on the intersection of science and national security. From April of 2016 to September of 2018, Brumfiel served as an editor overseeing basic research and climate science. Prior to that, he worked for three years as a reporter covering physics and space for the network. Brumfiel has carried his microphone into ghost villages created by the Fukushima nuclear accident in Japan. He's tracked the journey of highly enriched uranium as it was shipped out of Poland. For a story on how animals drink, he crouched for over an hour and tried to convince his neighbor's cat to lap a bowl of milk. Before NPR, Brumfiel was based in London as a senior reporter for Nature Magazine from 2007-2013. There, he covered energy, space, climate, and the physical sciences. From 2002 – 2007, Brumfiel was Nature Magazine's Washington Correspondent. Brumfiel is the 2013 winner of the Association of British Science Writers award for news reporting on the Fukushima nuclear accident.) All Things Considered, 2-2-2018, “Buried In Trump's Nuclear Report: A Russian Doomsday Weapon,” <https://www.npr.org/sections/parallels/2018/02/02/582087310/buried-in-trumps-nuclear-report-a-russian-doomsday-weapon>] Kakashi D

Then again, the whole thing might be a fake."The drawing of this drone looks more like an enlarged drawing of a smaller torpedo," says Podvig. In other words, it looks as if the Russians may have just taken some torpedo clip art, blown it up to terrifying size and then broadcast it on state television. Why? "It's a way to get our attention," says Geist. Geist says that the "leak" of Status-6 was deliberate. Russia worries that U.S. missile defenses might be able to shoot down its missiles in a nuclear war. By showing a plan for Status-6, Russia is warning the U.S. that if it continues to build such defensive systems, then Russia will find another way to strike, with a missile that can't be intercepted. "My read of the whole Status-6 slide leak is that the Russians were trying to send us a message," Geist says. Podvig agrees that the leak of Status-6 is probably just a warning shot. But the fact that it appeared in the Pentagon's newest report on nuclear weapons shows that some war planners are taking the idea seriously. There may be some politics involved in that decision as well, says Hans Kristensen of the Federation of American Scientists. The Trump administration is pushing hard for upgrades to America's nuclear arsenal. In his State of the Union address, the president called for making the arsenal "so strong and so powerful that it will deter any acts of aggression by any other nation or anyone else." Citing Status-6 helps to build the case that upgrades to American nukes are needed, Kristensen says.

## 1AR—Innovation DA

### 1AR—Uniqueness

#### They don’t have uniqueness about AI innovation in Russia. Russia is structurally incapable of meaningful AI innovation AND if they can then it’s bad because it goes to their military which the aff impact turns.

[Aaron Bateman (6-12-2019), Aaron Bateman is pursuing a PhD in the history of science and technology at Johns Hopkins University. He also served as a U.S. Air Force intelligence officer with assignments at the National Security Agency and the Pentagon, “Russia’s Quest to Lead the World in AI Is Doomed,” Defense One, [https://www.defenseone.com/ideas/2019/06/russias-quest-lead-world-ai-doomed/157663/]//SLC](https://www.defenseone.com/ideas/2019/06/russias-quest-lead-world-ai-doomed/157663/%5d//CHS) PK

In 2017, Russian President Vladimir Putin famously stated that whoever becomes the leader in artificial intelligence “will become [the ruler of the world](https://www.cnn.com/2017/09/01/world/putin-artificial-intelligence-will-rule-world/index.html).” Most experts on technology and security would agree with Putin about the importance of AI, which will ultimately reshape healthcare, transportation, industry, national security, and more. Nevertheless, Moscow’s recognition of AI’s importance will not produce enough breakthroughs to obtain the technological edge that it so deeply desires. Russia will ultimately fail in its quest to become a leader in AI because of its inability to foster a culture of innovation.

Russia’s anxieties about competing in the information age are far from new. In 1983, then-Soviet Minister of Defense Nikolai Ogarkov [lamented](https://www.nytimes.com/1992/08/20/opinion/foreign-affairs-who-won-the-cold-war.html) to the New York Times that in the United States, “small children — even before they begin school — play with computers….here we don’t even have computers in every office of the Ministry of Defense.” The Soviets were concerned about Ronald Reagan’s Strategic Defense Initiative, a land and space-based missile defense system, in part due to its artificial intelligence-enabled battle management system. In short, the Soviets feared that they would be unable to compete as the information revolution accelerated.

Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev has shared many of Ogarkov’s concerns about modern technology for the entirety of his political career. In 2010, Medvedev established [Skolkovo Technopark](http://kremlin.ru/events/president/news/9056), Russia’s own version of Silicon Valley, outside Moscow to foster innovation and develop breakthroughs in emerging technologies. Within five years, Skolkovo had more than 30,000 people working on a modern campus that closely resembled Google headquarters. Residents of Skolkovo received investments from Microsoft, IBM, and Intel. Nevertheless, due to corruption and state interference, many of the top innovators in Skolkovo have [fled Russia](https://foreignpolicy.com/2015/05/06/the-short-life-and-speedy-death-of-russias-silicon-valley-medvedev-go-russia-skolkovo/) and are now working in the U.S. and Europe.

Endemic corruption, no protections for private property, and a pervasive state security apparatus make Russia a very difficult environment for innovation to flourish. Scientists want to collaborate with researchers around the world who are making headway in their respective fields. In Russia, the state has traditionally impeded the free flow of knowledge across its borders because Moscow views uncontrolled information as a political and national security threat.

Yet Russian leaders seem not to have learned from the difficulties with Skolkovo. In February, Putin announced that the Russian government will [publish an AI strategy](https://www.defenseone.com/ideas/2019/05/putin-drops-hints-about-upcoming-national-ai-strategy/157365/) by the middle of June 2019. Unsurprisingly, much of Moscow’s focus is on using AI to improve Russia’s military capabilities. Last year, the Russian Ministry of Defense organized a [competition](https://iz.ru/691073/2018-01-02/minoborony-zaimetsia-razrabotkami-v-sfere-iskusstvennogo-intellekta) to foster breakthroughs in the field. Additionally, there is an Artificial Intelligence Association that is considering the broad impacts of AI on society. This month, it is a key sponsor of a [conference](http://www.raai.org/) aimed at developing technologies to expand the prowess of the Russian armed forces. Regardless the Russian government’s AI innovation efforts will ultimately not succeed for the same reasons that Skolkovo has failed.

The Russian government will devote the preponderance of its AI resources to defense and national security. Thus, researchers are going to be heavily censored by the Russian security services. It will become increasingly difficult for Russian academics to have unfettered access to their Western colleagues due to security concerns. Additionally, any developments in the AI arena will be appropriated by the state, creating a disincentive for commercial investment. Thus, it is highly probable that much of Russia’s leading talent in fields relevant to AI research will leave, just like many of their Skolkovo colleagues, to work in countries that will enable them to achieve their goals.

Russia’s political system and culture of corruption will prevent it from becoming a center of AI innovation. Ultimately, it will continue to fall farther behind the United States, China, and Western Europe in AI research and other advanced technologies. Just like in the 1980s, Russia is not equipped to effectively compete in a world that is so heavily shaped by the information revolution.

### 1AR—Link

#### New/Castro and Mclaughlin is about US AI development in the context of DARPA—the plan doesn’t lessen DARPA’s AI spending which means there isn’t a link and alt causes solve the impact.

### 1AR—Impact Turn

#### Russian AI development is bad—disinformation, political warfare, and cyberattacks.

The Kremlin is undoubtedly aware of the country’s unfavorable position in the global AI competition, even if such an admission is unlikely to ever be made publicly. Strategically, such a wide gap between ambition and capacity means that Russia will need to invest its limited resources carefully. Currently, Moscow is pursuing investments in at least two directions: select conventional military and defense technologies where the Kremlin believes it can still hold comparative advantage over the West and high-impact, low-cost asymmetric warfare to correct the imbalance between Russia and the West in the conventional domain. The former—Russia’s development and use of AI-driven military technologies and weapons—has received significant attention.[11]

## 1AR – Modernization DA

### 1AR—Thumper

#### Poseidon isn’t key – Avangard HGV, RS-28, Burevestnik, Kinzhal, Tsirkon Cruise Missiles, Barguzin, and RS-26 force US modernization –Poseidon is one of many, we’ll insert the list

Woolf 20 -- Amy F Woolf (Specialist in Nuclear Weapons Policy at Congressional Research Service), July 20, 2020, Russia’s Nuclear Weapons: Doctrine, Forces, and Modernization, https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/R/R45861 WJ \*The line “Russia’s exotic new systems” in Roberts links to this study\*

Table

Description automatically generated

#### Avangard also causes modernization

Roberts 20, Cynthia. [Cynthia Roberts is a professor of political science at Hunter College, City University of New York, and a senior research scholar at the Saltzman Institute of War and Peace Studies, Columbia University.] “Revelations about Russia’s Nuclear Deterrence Policy - War on the Rocks.” *War on the Rocks*, 19 June 2020, <https://warontherocks.com/2020/06/revelations-about-russias-nuclear-deterrence-policy/>. [GHS-AA] Recut WJ

Putin has presided over Russia’s most extensive and costly nuclear modernization program since the Cold War, which has led to the development of six new nuclear systems designed to ensure a robust deterrent and capabilities for multiple contingencies. Russia’s exotic new systems — especially the Avangard nuclear-armed hypersonic glide vehicle that will sit atop an intercontinental ballistic missile and the multi-megaton Poseidon, a nuclear-powered and nuclear-armed torpedo with transoceanic range — while not necessarily designed to achieve greater destruction than the current arsenal, are not counted under New START Treaty limits but vividly challenge assertions of U.S. nuclear primacy. They give credence not only to deterrence but also to Putin’s demands to “listen to us now” and take Russian interests seriously. For reassurance, which reflects the other side of the coin that nuclear war is best avoided, Putin embraces the reality of mutual assured destruction, and disavows that Russia would attempt all-out preventive nuclear strikes — but hasn’t ruled out more limited preemptive strikes.

What about a potential Russian fait accompli operation against a U.S. ally or partner that Moscow could terminate with the limited use of low-yield nuclear weapons in accordance with the so-called “escalate to de-escalate” concept? Current and former Western officials infer aggressive intentions from increased Russian deployments of tactical and intermediate-range ballistic missiles, including the SSC-8, from Russia’s aggression towards Ukraine, and from their own confirmation bias in reading Russian military statements about nuclear use for de-escalation. Indeed, the 2018 U.S. Nuclear Posture Review asserts that “Russia has demonstrated its willingness to use force to alter the map of Europe and impose its will on its neighbors, backed by implicit and explicit nuclear first-use threats.” American conflict scenarios start with Russian aggression and shift to the Russian first use of nuclear weapons in either demonstration or small strikes to coerce NATO to abandon allies.

Given Russia’s large and growing stockpile of non-strategic nuclear weapons, providing credible response options to deter limited nuclear attacks is a prudent measure. One such response option involves modifying some W76 Trident II warheads to include survivable low-yield W76-2 warheads on U.S. nuclear ballistic missile submarines. These modifications, which do not increase the total U.S. nuclear stockpile, strengthen the package of available limited nuclear options to demonstrate U.S. credibility and will to respond to even limited Russian nuclear first use, helping ensure that attempted Russian aggression will fail.

### 1AR – Impact Turn

#### US modernization forces an arms race

Paltrow 17 Scot Paltrow [Scot J. Paltrow is an American journalist. A financial journalist, Paltrow currently works for Reuters. Paltrow is from New York. He received his bachelor's degree from the Cornell University College of Arts and Sciences and a master's degree from the London School of Economics.], 11-21-2017, "Special Report: In modernizing nuclear arsenal, U.S. stokes new arms race," U.S., <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-nuclear-modernize-specialreport/special-report-in-modernizing-nuclear-arsenal-u-s-stokes-new-arms-race-idUSKBN1DL1AH> AG

Some former senior U.S. government officials, legislators and arms-control specialists – many of whom once backed a strong nuclear arsenal -- are now warning that the modernization push poses grave dangers.

“REALLY DANGEROUS THINKING”

They argue that the upgrades contradict the rationales for New START - to ratchet down the level of mistrust and reduce risk of intentional or accidental nuclear war. The latest improvements, they say, make the U.S. and Russian arsenals both more destructive and more tempting to deploy. The United States, for instance, has a “dial down” bomb that can be adjusted to act like a tactical weapon, and others are planned.

“The idea that we could somehow fine tune a nuclear conflict is really dangerous thinking,” says Kingston Reif, director of disarmament and threat reduction policy at the Arms Control Association, a Washington-based think tank.

One leader of this group, William Perry, who served as defense secretary under President Bill Clinton, said recently in a Q&A on YouTube that “the danger of a nuclear catastrophe today is greater than it was during the Cold War.”

Perry told Reuters that both the United States and Russia have upgraded their arsenals in ways that make the use of nuclear weapons likelier. The U.S. upgrade, he said, has occurred almost exclusively behind closed doors. “It is happening without any basic public discussion,” he said. “We’re just doing it.”

The cause of arms control got a publicity boost in October when the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons, a Geneva organization, won the Nobel Peace Prize for its role in getting the United Nations General Assembly in July to adopt a nuclear prohibition treaty. The United States, Russia and other nuclear powers boycotted the treaty negotiations.

The U.S. modernization program has many supporters in addition to Trump, however. There is little or no pressure in Congress to scale it back. Backers argue that for the most part the United States is merely tweaking old weapons, not developing new ones.

Some say that beefed up weapons are a more effective deterrent, reducing the chance of war. Cherry Murray served until January as a top official at the Energy Department, which runs the U.S. warhead inventory. She said the reduction in nuclear weapon stockpiles under New START makes it imperative that Washington improve its arsenal.

During the Cold War, Murray said in an interview, the United States had so many missiles that if one didn’t work, the military could simply discard it. With the new limit of 1,550 warheads, every one counts, she said.

“When you get down to that number we better make sure they work,” she said. “And we better make sure our adversaries believe they work.”

An Obama spokesman said the former president would not comment for this story. The Russian embassy in Washington did not respond to multiple requests for comment.

While the number of warheads and launch vehicles is limited by the treaty, nothing in it forbids upgrading the weaponry or replacing older arms with completely new and deadlier ones. Details of the modernized weapons show that both are happening.

The upshot, according to former Obama advisers and outside arms-control specialists, is that the modernization destabilized the U.S.-Russia status quo, setting off a new arms race. Jon Wolfsthal, a former top advisor to Obama on arms control, said it is possible to have potentially devastating arms race even with a relatively small number of weapons.

The New START treaty limits the number of warheads and launch vehicles. But it says nothing about the design of the “delivery” methods – land- and submarine-based ballistic missiles, hydrogen bombs and cruise missiles. Thus both sides are increasing exponentially the killing power of these weapons, upgrading the delivery vehicles so that they are bigger, more accurate and equipped with dangerous new features – without increasing the number of warheads or vehicles.

#### US modernization is far too expensive – decks the economy

Paltrow 17 Scot Paltrow, 11-21-2017, "Special Report: In modernizing nuclear arsenal, U.S. stokes new arms race," U.S., <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-nuclear-modernize-specialreport/special-report-in-modernizing-nuclear-arsenal-u-s-stokes-new-arms-race-idUSKBN1DL1AH> AG

The U.S. modernization effort is not coming cheap. This year the Congressional Budget Office estimated the program will cost at least $1.25 trillion over 30 years. The amount could grow significantly, as the Pentagon has a history of major cost overruns on large acquisition projects.

As defense secretary under Obama, Leon Panetta backed modernization. Now he questions the price tag.

“We are in a new chapter of the Cold War with Putin,” he told Reuters in an interview, blaming the struggle’s resumption on the Russian president. Panetta says he doubts the United States will be able to fund the modernization program. “We have defense, entitlements and taxes to deal with at the same time there are record deficits,” he said.

New START is leading to significant reductions in the two rival arsenals, a process that began with the disintegration of the USSR. But reduced numbers do not necessarily mean reduced danger.

In 1990, the year before the Soviet Union collapsed, the United States had more than 12,000 warheads and the Soviets just over 11,000, an August 2017 Congressional Research Service report says. Soon the two countries made precipitous cuts. The 1991 START treaty limited each to somewhat more than 6,000 warheads. By 2009 the number was down to about 2,200 deployed warheads.

Tom Collina, policy director of the Ploughshares Fund, an arms control group, says that both Moscow and Washington are on track to meet the 1,550 limit by the treaty’s 2018 deadline. The treaty, however, allows for fudging.

At Russia’s insistence, each bomber is counted as a single warhead, no matter how many nuclear bombs it carries or has ready for use. As a result, the real limit for each side is about 2,000. Collina says the United States currently has 1,740 deployed warheads, and Russia is believed to have a similar number. Each side also has thousands of warheads in storage and retired bombs and missiles awaiting dismantlement.

The declining inventories mask the technological improvements the two sides are making. There is a new arms race, based this time not on number of weapons but on increasing lethality, says William Potter, director of nonproliferation studies at the Middlebury Institute of International Studies in Monterey, California.

“We are in a situation in which technological advances are outstripping arms control,” Potter says.

One example of an old weapon transformed into a more dangerous new one is America’s main hydrogen bomb. The Air Force has deployed the B61 bomb on heavy bombers since the mid-1960s. Until recently, the B61 was an old-fashioned gravity bomb, dropped by a plane and free-falling to its target.

## 1AR—Second Strike DA

#### 1. Conceding Pry and Hollings sinks this disad—this relies on Russia’s intentions being simply defense but that can’t explain why they aren’t building a low yield nuke instead of making it 200 fucking megatons or why they’re threatening other countries with it. This is an offensive weapon built for a first strike.

#### 2. The link is about strategic nuclear modernization assuring second strike which means banning Poseidon doesn’t tank it—we don’t ban Russia’s strategic submarines, just their 200 MT nuclear weapon.

#### 3. Fiat solves the link—Russia unilaterally ditches Poseidon so they do it intentionally, it’s not an international treaty forcing Russia to do it so they don’t feel threatened.

#### 4. Link is nonuq—our evidence indicates Poseidon creates global second strike insecurity which causes a first strike because the US is nervous BUT you conceded Russia won’t strike first anyway without Poseidon because they know they’d immediately get curb stomped so there’s no impact to insecurity without Poseidon.

#### 5. This impact is pre-Biden, we’ve eased military action and taken diplomatic action with sanctions like 3 days ago which means this isn’t applicable.

## 1AR—Prestige DA

### 1AR—Uniqueness

#### NonUQ—Russia’s prestige is not high.

[Lucy Handley (2-25-2020), Writer for CNBC, “The US is the world’s top ‘soft’ power — but Trump has damaged its reputation, survey says,” CNBC, [https://www.cnbc.com/2020/02/25/the-us-is-the-worlds-top-soft-power-but-trump-has-damaged-its-reputation.html]//SLC](https://www.cnbc.com/2020/02/25/the-us-is-the-worlds-top-soft-power-but-trump-has-damaged-its-reputation.html%5d//CHS) PK

Like the U.S., China and Russia rank higher for influence than for reputation. China is ranked as the world’s second-most influential country but comes in at 24th for reputation. Russia ranks 7th for influence and 26th for reputation.

#### Pew Research confirms.

[Bruce Stokes (8-5-2015), FORMER DIRECTOR, GLOBAL ECONOMIC ATTITUDE, “Russia, Putin Held in Low Regard around the World,” Pew Research Center, [https://www.pewresearch.org/global/2015/08/05/russia-putin-held-in-low-regard-around-the-world/]//SLC](https://www.pewresearch.org/global/2015/08/05/russia-putin-held-in-low-regard-around-the-world/%5d//CHS) PK

Outside its own borders, neither Russia nor its president, Vladimir Putin, receives much respect or support, according to a new Pew Research Center survey. [A median of only 30% see Russia favorably in the nations outside of Russia.](https://twitter.com/intent/tweet?url=http://pewrsr.ch/RusImage2015&text=A%20median%20of%20only%2030%25%20see%20Russia%20favorably%20in%20the%20nations%20outside%20of%20Russia.) Its image trails that of the United States in nearly every region of the world. At the same time, a [median of only 24% in the countries surveyed have confidence in Putin to do the right thing in world affairs,](https://twitter.com/intent/tweet?url=http://pewrsr.ch/RusImage2015&text=a%20median%20of%20only%2024%25%20in%20the%20countries%20surveyed%20have%20confidence%20in%20Putin%20to%20do%20the%20right%20thing%20in%20world%20affairs%2C) and there is far less faith in the Russian leader than there is in U.S. President Barack Obama.

Opinions [of Russia are more unfavorable than favorable in 26 nations.](https://twitter.com/intent/tweet?url=http://pewrsr.ch/RusImage2015&text=of%20Russia%20are%20more%20unfavorable%20than%20favorable%20in%2026%20nations.) The strongest negative sentiment is in Poland and Jordan (both 80%). The former is a legacy of a long history of bilateral tensions. Public opinion in Jordan may be influenced by Moscow’s current support for the regime of President Bashar al-Assad in Syria, Jordan’s neighbor and the source of hundreds of thousands of refugees in Jordan. Anti-Russian sentiment is also particularly strong in Israel (74%), Japan (73%), Germany (70%) and France (70%).

These are among the main findings of a Pew Research Center survey, conducted in 40 nations among 45,435 respondents from March 25 to May 27, 2015.

### 1AR—Link

#### Every case card about Poseidon not having an impact or changing calculus turns the link because it proves it doesn’t increase prestige.

#### Russia’s other 4 weapons thump AND other countries don’t care anyway.

[Matthew Kroenig et al, Mark Massa, Christian Trotti (March 2020), Matthew Kroenig is the deputy director of the Scowcroft Center for Strategy and Security at the Atlantic Council and an associate professor in the Department of Government and School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University, Mark Massa is a project assistant in the Scowcroft Center for Strategy and Security at the Atlantic Council. He is a master’s student in the Security Studies Program at the Georgetown University School of Foreign Service, Christian Trotti is a program assistant in the Scowcroft Center for Strategy and Security at the Atlantic Council, “Russia’s Exotic Nuclear Weapons and Implications for the United States and NATO,” Atlantic Council, [https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Russias-Exotic-Nuclear-Weapons.pdf]//SLC](https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Russias-Exotic-Nuclear-Weapons.pdf%5d//CHS) PK

On March 1, 2018, Russian President Vladimir Putin delivered his State of the Nation address, in which he announced five new nuclear-capable, strategic weapons systems. These systems include: a new heavy intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM); a nuclear-armed hypersonic glide vehicle (HGV); a nuclear-armed, air-launched hypersonic missile; a nuclear-powered, nuclear-armed cruise missile; and a nuclear-powered, nuclear-armed submarine drone.1 Many Western experts were perplexed by the Russian announcement and dismissed the idea that these weapons would have much effect on US and allied national security. After all, they argued, the United States and its allies are already vulnerable to Russian nuclear forces, so these new systems would not meaningfully change the strategic equation.

### 1AR—Impact Turn—Authoritarianism

#### Russian legitimacy boosts the export of its authoritarian model

Rosenberger 19 – senior fellow and director of the Alliance for Securing Democracy

Laura, 9/29. “China and Russia are working to destroy democracy, and our victory is not assured.” https://www.dallasnews.com/opinion/commentary/2019/09/29/china-and-russia-are-working-to-destroy-democracy-and-our-victory-is-not-assured/

And as Karen Dawisha writes in her book Putin's Kleptocracy: Who Owns Russia? President Vladimir Putin and his cronies used the privatization period in Russia to enrich themselves at the expense of the Russian people. Now they rely on the Western financial system to protect these ill-gotten gains, employing a patronage system that bolsters Putin's power and enriches his inner circle.

Increasingly, these regimes are turning their tools of coercion outward to spread authoritarianism to advance their own interests. The erosion of institutions inside democratic countries along with a retreat in U.S. global leadership has provided these regimes with soft targets.

In the case of Putin's Russia, this manifests in a strategy of undermining democracies to gain power and diminish their appeal at home. Seeing vulnerabilities in democracies as opportunities to boost his position, Putin has turned his information weaponry outward, using his intelligence apparatus and proxies to exploit divisions and weaknesses to create chaos and damage democratic governments and institutions across the trans-Atlantic space.

The former president of Freedom House, David Kramer, rightly observed that "corruption is Putin's biggest export." And according to the Alliance for Securing Democracy, Russia uses state-owned companies, particularly in the oil and gas sectors, to create and exploit dependencies, cultivate influencers, and coerce governments to adopt policies favorable to Moscow.

For its part, China aims to remake global rules to be more favorable to it, while legitimizing its system of government. While the Chinese Communist Party's end goal may not be weakening democracies, that is the effect. These include: undermining the rules-based order, using coercive tactics including political interference in democracies, and using state-backed capital to make governments more dependent on Beijing while distorting markets.

China under President Xi Jinping has also recognized the importance of shaping standards and norms for technology and information architecture. The party is increasingly turning the tools of control it developed at home outward — censoring discussion beyond its borders on indigenous platforms such as WeChat, Bloomberg reported. And it uses a cyberattack tool that some have dubbed the "Great Cannon" to conduct denial-of-service assaults to silence its critics overseas, according to a report by the Citizen Lab at the University of Toronto.

Furthermore, the systems of surveillance and control the Chinese Communist Party deployed internally are being exported to other countries, sometimes, according to The New York Times, in the form of so-called smart cities or other seemingly commercial high-tech deals. These deals are not simply about shipping technology. They often include training government officials on how to use the capabilities as the party does, shaping the behavior of officials in other countries and providing them Beijing's means of control.

Of course, these technological exports are not just about commercial gain. They create dependencies on technology and provide data to Beijing. They also shape norms on the use of such technologies, supporting the development of systems that look more like China's, thus legitimizing the party's system of government. As New York Times reporter Paul Mozur has observed, by exporting its systems of surveillance and control, the Chinese Communist party-state "become[s] the axle, and all of these different places become the spokes in this wheel, the new version of global governance, a new alternative to the messy democracies of the past."

The combined effect of these tactics is the weakening of democracies from within and without, and a global creep of illiberalism and authoritarianism. Russia's exploitation of internal vulnerabilities to sow division and accelerate dysfunction within Western democracies creates space for an authoritarian model. And China's increasingly assertive foreign policy, growing political and economic heft, and focus on technological development is shaping markets and governance outside its borders.

When authoritarians define the systems, rules and standards that constitute and govern that architecture, the information domain will be more authoritarian and less democratic by design. Council on Foreign Relations scholar Adam Segal has observed that China is remaking cyberspace in its own image. "If this happens, the internet will be less global and less open. A major part of it will run Chinese applications over Chinese-made hardware. And Beijing will reap the economic, diplomatic, national security, and intelligence benefits that once flowed to Washington."

#### Extinction

Yuval Noah Harari 18, Professor of History at Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 9/26/18, “We need a post-liberal order now,” The Economist, <https://www.economist.com/open-future/2018/09/26/we-need-a-post-liberal-order-now>

For several generations, the world has been governed by what today we call “the global liberal order”. Behind these lofty words is the idea that all humans share some core experiences, values and interests, and that no human group is inherently superior to all others. Cooperation is therefore more sensible than conflict. All humans should work together to protect their common values and advance their common interests. And the best way to foster such cooperation is to ease the movement of ideas, goods, money and people across the globe.

Though the global liberal order has many faults and problems, it has proved superior to all alternatives. The liberal world of the early 21st century is more prosperous, healthy and peaceful than ever before. For the first time in human history, starvation kills fewer people than obesity; plagues kill fewer people than old age; and violence kills fewer people than accidents. When I was six months old I didn’t die in an epidemic, thanks to medicines discovered by foreign scientists in distant lands. When I was three I didn’t starve to death, thanks to wheat grown by foreign farmers thousands of kilometers away. And when I was eleven I wasn’t obliterated in a nuclear war, thanks to agreements signed by foreign leaders on the other side of the planet. If you think we should go back to some pre-liberal golden age, please name the year in which humankind was in better shape than in the early 21st century. Was it 1918? 1718? 1218?

Nevertheless, people all over the world are now losing faith in the liberal order. Nationalist and religious views that privilege one human group over all others are back in vogue. Governments are increasingly restricting the flow of ideas, goods, money and people. Walls are popping up everywhere, both on the ground and in cyberspace. Immigration is out, tariffs are in.

If the liberal order is collapsing, what new kind of global order might replace it? So far, those who challenge the liberal order do so mainly on a national level. They have many ideas about how to advance the interests of their particular country, but they don’t have a viable vision for how the world as a whole should function. For example, Russian nationalism can be a reasonable guide for running the affairs of Russia, but Russian nationalism has no plan for the rest of humanity. Unless, of course, nationalism morphs into imperialism, and calls for one nation to conquer and rule the entire world. A century ago, several nationalist movements indeed harboured such imperialist fantasies. Today’s nationalists, whether in Russia, Turkey, Italy or China, so far refrain from advocating global conquest.

In place of violently establishing a global empire, some nationalists such as Steve Bannon, Viktor Orban, the Northern League in Italy and the British Brexiteers dream about a peaceful “Nationalist International”. They argue that all nations today face the same enemies. The bogeymen of globalism, multiculturalism and immigration are threatening to destroy the traditions and identities of all nations. Therefore nationalists across the world should make common cause in opposing these global forces. Hungarians, Italians, Turks and Israelis should build walls, erect fences and slow down the movement of people, goods, money and ideas.

The world will then be divided into distinct nation-states, each with its own sacred identity and traditions. Based on mutual respect for these differing identities, all nation-states could cooperate and trade peacefully with one another. Hungary will be Hungarian, Turkey will be Turkish, Israel will be Israeli, and everyone will know who they are and what is their proper place in the world. It will be a world without immigration, without universal values, without multiculturalism, and without a global elite—but with peaceful international relations and some trade. In a word, the “Nationalist International” envisions the world as a network of walled-but-friendly fortresses.

Many people would think this is quite a reasonable vision. Why isn’t it a viable alternative to the liberal order? Two things should be noted about it. First, it is still a comparatively liberal vision. It assumes that no human group is superior to all others, that no nation should dominate its peers, and that international cooperation is better than conflict. In fact, liberalism and nationalism were originally closely aligned with one another. The 19th century liberal nationalists, such as Giuseppe Garibaldi and Giuseppe Mazzini in Italy, and Adam Mickiewicz in Poland, dreamt about precisely such an international liberal order of peacefully-coexisting nations.

The second thing to note about this vision of friendly fortresses is that it has been tried—and it failed spectacularly. All attempts to divide the world into clear-cut nations have so far resulted in war and genocide. When the heirs of Garibaldi, Mazzini and Mickiewicz managed to overthrow the multi-ethnic Habsburg Empire, it proved impossible to find a clear line dividing Italians from Slovenes or Poles from Ukrainians.

This had set the stage for the second world war. The key problem with the network of fortresses is that each national fortress wants a bit more land, security and prosperity for itself at the expense of the neighbors, and without the help of universal values and global organisations, rival fortresses cannot agree on any common rules. Walled fortresses are seldom friendly.

But if you happen to live inside a particularly strong fortress, such as America or Russia, why should you care? Some nationalists indeed adopt a more extreme isolationist position. They don’t believe in either a global empire or in a global network of fortresses. Instead, they deny the necessity of any global order whatsoever. “Our fortress should just raise the drawbridges,” they say, “and the rest of the world can go to hell. We should refuse entry to foreign people, foreign ideas and foreign goods, and as long as our walls are stout and the guards are loyal, who cares what happens to the foreigners?”

Such extreme isolationism, however, is completely divorced from economic realities. Without a global trade network, all existing national economies will collapse—including that of North Korea. Many countries will not be able even to feed themselves without imports, and prices of almost all products will skyrocket. The made-in-China shirt I am wearing cost me about $5. If it had been produced by Israeli workers from Israeli-grown cotton using Israeli-made machines powered by non-existing Israeli oil, it may well have cost ten times as much. Nationalist leaders from Donald Trump to Vladimir Putin may therefore heap abuse on the global trade network, but none thinks seriously of taking their country completely out of that network. And we cannot have a global trade network without some global order that sets the rules of the game.

Even more importantly, whether people like it or not, humankind today faces three common problems that make a mockery of all national borders, and that can only be solved through global cooperation. These are nuclear war, climate change and technological disruption. You cannot build a wall against nuclear winter or against global warming, and no nation can regulate artificial intelligence (AI) or bioengineering single-handedly. It won’t be enough if only the European Union forbids producing killer robots or only America bans genetically-engineering human babies. Due to the immense potential of such disruptive technologies, if even one country decides to pursue these high-risk high-gain paths, other countries will be forced to follow its dangerous lead for fear of being left behind.

An AI arms race or a biotechnological arms race almost guarantees the worst outcome. Whoever wins the arms race, the loser will likely be humanity itself. For in an arms race, all regulations will collapse. Consider, for example, conducting genetic-engineering experiments on human babies. Every country will say: “We don’t want to conduct such experiments—we are the good guys. But how do we know our rivals are not doing it? We cannot afford to remain behind. So we must do it before them.”

Similarly, consider developing autonomous-weapon systems, that can decide for themselves whether to shoot and kill people. Again, every country will say: “This is a very dangerous technology, and it should be regulated carefully. But we don’t trust our rivals to regulate it, so we must develop it first”.

The only thing that can prevent such destructive arms races is greater trust between countries. This is not an impossible mission. If today the Germans promise the French: “Trust us, we aren’t developing killer robots in a secret laboratory under the Bavarian Alps,” the French are likely to believe the Germans, despite the terrible history of these two countries. We need to build such trust globally. We need to reach a point when Americans and Chinese can trust one another like the French and Germans.

Similarly, we need to create a global safety-net to protect humans against the economic shocks that AI is likely to cause. Automation will create immense new wealth in high-tech hubs such as Silicon Valley, while the worst effects will be felt in developing countries whose economies depend on cheap manual labor. There will be more jobs to software engineers in California, but fewer jobs to Mexican factory workers and truck drivers. We now have a global economy, but politics is still very national. Unless we find solutions on a global level to the disruptions caused by AI, entire countries might collapse, and the resulting chaos, violence and waves of immigration will destabilise the entire world.

This is the proper perspective to look at recent developments such as Brexit. In itself, Brexit isn’t necessarily a bad idea. But is this what Britain and the EU should be dealing with right now? How does Brexit help prevent nuclear war? How does Brexit help prevent climate change? How does Brexit help regulate artificial intelligence and bioengineering? Instead of helping, Brexit makes it harder to solve all of these problems. Every minute that Britain and the EU spend on Brexit is one less minute they spend on preventing climate change and on regulating AI.

In order to survive and flourish in the 21st century, humankind needs effective global cooperation, and so far the only viable blueprint for such cooperation is offered by liberalism. Nevertheless, governments all over the world are undermining the foundations of the liberal order, and the world is turning into a network of fortresses. The first to feel the impact are the weakest members of humanity, who find themselves without any fortress willing to protect them: refugees, illegal migrants, persecuted minorities. But if the walls keep rising, eventually the whole of humankind will feel the squeeze.

### 1AR—Impact Turn—Baltics

#### Causes Baltics adventurism that goes nuclear.

Impact:

--Russia needs to use nuclear threats in adventurism bc of conventional inferioty

--Wld detonate tac nukes to dare us to go to strategic nukes – either we give up and lose NATO or retaliate

--Causes countervalue strikes that kill everyone

IL:

--Russia adventurism relies on hybrid/info warfare – need to be able to sell a narrative to succeed

--Legitimacy is key – putin’s opportunistic and strikes if he thinks people will buy his narratives

--He’ll view the plan as an opportunity – views multipolarity as legitimating and will see it as recognition of his right to seize soviet states

--Nostalgia link – his sopo strat is based on reminiscence about the old USSR days – space achieves that

UQ:

1] now key – Putin in frozen conflicts and not condoned or condemned – plan is viewed sa ex post facto condoning Ukraine which justifies future incursions – it says putin is fine to seize territory bc we’re willing to work with him anyway!

2] His foreign policy strat is failing now – states are’t aligned with him

3] SoPo low bc he’s been called out – he paid a high price for incursions and the US has shunned him – that means his actions are delegitimized and called out so he won’t try it, but the plan flips it

Kagan, 19 - American resident scholar at the American Enterprise Institute, and a former professor of military history at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, less famous brother of our favorite neighborhood neocon Robert Kagan

Frederick W. Kagan, “CONFRONTING THE RUSSIAN CHALLENGE: A NEW APPROACH FOR THE U.S.,” Institute for the Study of War. June 2019. <https://www.politico.com/f/?id=0000016b-6eef-dc80-a3ff-ffff778c0000>

\*\*\*Apologies for it being super condensed - it’s a 90 pg article

The Russian threat’s effectiveness results mainly from the West’s weaknesses. NATO’s European members are not meeting their full commitments to the alliance to maintain the fighting power needed to deter and defeat the emerging challenge from Moscow. Increasing political polarization and the erosion of trust by Western peoples in their governments creates vulnerabilities that the Kremlin has adroitly exploited.

Moscow’s success in manipulating Western perceptions of and reactions to its activities has fueled the development of an approach to warfare that the West finds difficult to understand, let alone counter. Shaping the information space is the primary effort to which Russian military operations, even conventional military operations, are frequently subordinated in this way of war. Russia obfuscates its activities and confuses the discussion so that many people throw up their hands and say simply, “Who knows if the Russians really did that? Who knows if it was legal?”—thus paralyzing the West’s responses.

Putin’s Program

Putin is not simply an opportunistic predator. Putin and the major institutions of the Russian Federation have a program as coherent as that of any Western leader. Putin enunciates his objectives in major speeches, and his ministers generate detailed formal expositions of Russia’s military and diplomatic aims and its efforts and the methods and resources it uses to pursue them. These statements cohere with the actions of Russian officials and military units on the ground. The common perception that he is opportunistic arises from the way that the Kremlin sets conditions to achieve these objectives in advance. Putin closely monitors the domestic and international situation and decides to execute plans when and if conditions require and favor the Kremlin. The aims of Russian policy can be distilled into the following:

Domestic Objectives Putin is an autocrat who seeks to retain control of his state and the succession. He seeks to keep his power circle content, maintain his own popularity, suppress domestic political opposition in the name of blocking a “color revolution” he falsely accuses the West of preparing, and expand the Russian economy.

Putin has not fixed the economy, which remains corrupt, inefficient, and dependent on petrochemical and mineral exports. He has focused instead on ending the international sanctions regime to obtain the cash, expertise, and technology he needs. Information operations and hybrid warfare undertakings in Europe are heavily aimed at this objective.

External Objectives

Putin’s foreign policy aims are clear: end American dominance and the “unipolar” world order, restore “multipolarity,” and reestablish Russia as a global power and broker. He identifies NATO as an adversary and a threat and seeks to negate it. He aims to break Western unity, establish Russian suzerainty over the former Soviet States, and regain a global footprint.

Putin works to break Western unity by invalidating the collective defense provision of the North Atlantic Treaty (Article 5), weakening the European Union, and destroying the faith of Western societies in their governments.

He is reestablishing a global military footprint similar in extent the Soviet Union’s, but with different aims. He is neither advancing an ideology, nor establishing bases from which to project conventional military power on a large scale. He aims rather to constrain and shape America’s actions using small numbers of troops and agents along with advanced anti-air and anti-shipping systems.

Recommendations A sound U.S. grand strategic approach to Russia: • Aims to achieve core American national security objectives positively rather than to react defensively to Russian actions; • Holistically addresses all U.S. interests globally as they relate to Russia rather than considering them theater-by-theater; • Does not trade core American national security interests in one theater for those in another, or sacrifice one vital interest for another; • Achieves American objectives by means short of war if at all possible; • Deters nuclear war, the use of any nuclear weapons, and other Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD); • Accepts the risk of conventional conflict with Russia while seeking to avoid it and to control escalation, while also ensuring that American forces will prevail at any escalation level; • Contests Russian information operations and hybrid warfare undertakings; and • Extends American protection and deterrence to U.S. allies in NATO and outside of NATO. Such an approach involves four principal lines of effort. Constrain Putin’s Resources. Russia uses hybrid warfare approaches because of its relative poverty and inability to field large and modern military systems that could challenge the U.S. and NATO symmetrically. Lifting or reducing the current sanctions regime or otherwise facilitating Russia’s access to wealth and technology could give Putin the resources he needs to mount a much more significant conventional threat—an aim he had been pursuing in the early 2000s when high oil prices and no sanctions made it seem possible. Disrupt Hybrid Operations. Identifying, exposing, and disrupting hybrid operations is a feasible, if difficult, undertaking. New structures in the U.S. military, State Department, and possibly National Security Council Staff are likely needed to: 1. Coordinate efforts to identify and understand hybrid operations in preparation and underway; 2. Develop recommendations for action against hybrid operations that the U.S. government has identified but are not yet publicly known; 3. Respond to the unexpected third-party exposure of hybrid operations whether the U.S. government knew about the operations or not; 4. Identify in advance the specific campaign and strategic objectives that should be pursued when the U.S. government deliberately exposes a particular hybrid operation or when third parties expose hybrid operations of a certain type in a certain area; 5. Shape the U.S. government response, particularly in the information space, to drive the blowback effects of the exposure of a particular hybrid operation toward achieving those identified objectives; and 6. Learn lessons from past and current counter-hybrid operations undertakings, improve techniques, and prepare for future evolutions of Russian approaches in coordination with allies and partners. The U.S. should also develop a counter-information operations approach that uses only truth against Russian narratives aimed at sowing discord within the West and at undermining the legitimacy of Western governments.

Delegitimize Putin as a Mediator and Convener.

Recognition as one of the poles of a multipolar world order is vital to Putin. It is part of the greatness he promises the Russian people in return for taking their liberty. Getting a “seat at the table” of Western-led endeavors is insufficient for him because he seeks to transform the international system fundamentally. He finds the very language of being offered a seat at the West’s table patronizing.

He has gained much more legitimacy as an international partner in Syria and Ukraine than his behavior warrants. He benefits from the continuous desire of Western leaders to believe that Moscow will help them out of their own problems if only it is approached in the right way.

The U.S. and its allies must instead recognize that Putin is a self-declared adversary who seeks to weaken, divide, and harm them—never to strengthen or help them. He has made clear in word and deed that his interests are antithetical to the West’s. The West should therefore stop treating him as a potential partner, but instead require him to demonstrate that he can and will act to advance rather than damage the West’s interests before engaging with him at high levels.

The West must not trade interests in one region for Putin’s help in another, even if there is reason to believe that he would actually be helpful. Those working on American policy in Syria and the Levant must recognize that the U.S. cannot afford to subordinate its global Russia policy to pursue limited interests, however important, within the Middle East. Recognizing Putin as a mediator or convener in Syria—to constrain Iran’s activities in the south of that country, for example—is too high a price tag to pay for undermining a coherent global approach to the Russian threat. Granting him credibility in that role there enhances his credibility in his self-proclaimed role as a mediator rather than belligerent in Ukraine. The tradeoff of interests is unacceptable.

Nor should the U.S. engage with Putin about Ukraine until he has committed publicly in word and deed to what should be the minimum non-negotiable Western demand—the recognition of the full sovereignty of all the former Soviet states, specifically including Ukraine, in their borders as of the dates of their admission as independent countries to the United Nations, and the formal renunciation (including the repealing of relevant Russian legislation) of any right to interfere in the internal affairs of those states

Defend NATO. The increased Russian threat requires increased efforts to defend NATO against both conventional and hybrid threats. All NATO members must meet their commitments to defense spending targets—and should be prepared to go beyond those commitments to field the forces necessary to defend themselves and other alliance members. The Russian base in Syria poses a threat to Western operations in the Middle East that are essential to protecting our own citizens and security against terrorist threats and Iran. Neither the U.S. nor NATO is postured to protect the Mediterranean or fight for access to the Middle East through the eastern Mediterranean. NATO must now prepare to field and deploy additional forces to ensure that it can win that fight. The West should also remove as much ambiguity as possible from the NATO commitment to defend member states threatened by hybrid warfare. The 2018 Brussels Declaration affirming the alliance’s intention to defend member states attacked by hybrid warfare was a good start. The U.S. and other NATO states with stronger militaries should go further by declaring that they will come to the aid of a member state attacked by conventional or hybrid means regardless of whether Article 5 is formally activated, creating a pre-emptive coalition of the willing to deter Russian aggression. Bilateral Negotiations. Recognizing that Russia is a self-defined adversary and threat does not preclude direct negotiations. The U.S. negotiated several arms control treaties with the Soviet Union and has negotiated with other self-defined enemies as well. It should retain open channels of communication and a willingness to work together with Russia on bilateral areas in which real and verifiable agreement is possible, even while refusing to grant legitimacy to Russian intervention in conflicts beyond its borders. Such areas could include strategic nuclear weapons, cyber operations, interference in elections, the Intermediate Nuclear Forces treaty, and other matters related to direct Russo-American tensions and concerns. There is little likelihood of any negotiation yielding fruit at this point, but there is no need to refuse to talk with Russia on these and similar issues in hopes of laying the groundwork for more successful discussions in the future. INTRODUCTION The Russian challenge is a paradox. Russia’s nuclear arsenal poses the only truly existential threat to the United States and its allies, but Russia’s conventional military forces have never recovered anything like the power of the Soviet military. Those forces pose a limited and uneven threat to America’s European allies and to U.S. armed forces, partially because many U.S. allies are not meeting their NATO defense spending commitments. Russia is willing and able to act more rapidly and accept greater risk than Western countries because of its autocratic nature. Its cyber capabilities are among the best in the world, and it is developing an information-based way of war that the West has not collectively properly understood, let alone begun developing a response to. That information-based warfare has included attempts to affect and disrupt elections in the U.S. and allied states. The complexity and paradoxical nature of the Russian threat is perhaps its greatest strength. It is one of the key reasons for the failure of successive American administrations and U.S. partners around the world to develop a coherent strategy for securing themselves and their people and advancing their interests in the face of Russian efforts against them. The West’s lack of continuous focus on the Russian challenge has created major gaps in our collective understanding of the problem—another key reason for our failure to develop a sound counter-strategy. American concerns about Russia are bifurcated, moreover. Many Americans see the Russian threat primarily as a domestic problem: Moscow’s interference in the 2016 presidential election, attempts to interfere in the 2018 midterm election, and efforts to shape the 2020 elections. The U.S. national security establishment acknowledges the domestic problem but is generally more concerned with the military challenges a seemingly reviving Russia poses to U.S. NATO allies and other partners in the Euro-Atlantic region; with Russia’s activities in places like Syria and Venezuela; and with Russia’s outreach to rogue states such as North Korea and Iran. Even that overseas security concern, however, is pervaded by complexity and some confusion. The recommendations of the current U.S. National Security Strategy (NSS) and National Defense Strategy (NDS) are dominated by responses to much-trumpeted Russian investments in the modernization of conventional and nuclear forces. At the same time, those documents acknowledge the importance of Russian capabilities at the lower end of the military spectrum and in the non-military realms of information, cyber, space, information, and economic efforts. Americans thus generally agree that Russia is a threat to which the U.S. must respond in some way, but the varying definitions of that threat hinder discussion of the appropriate response. Russia has entangled itself sufficiently in American partisan politics that conversation about the national security threat it poses is increasingly polarized. We must find a way to transcend this polarization to develop a strategy to secure the U.S. and its allies and advance U.S. interests, despite Russian efforts to undermine America’s domestic politics. AMERICAN INTERESTS—WHAT IS AT STAKE The Ideals of the American Republic The stakes in the Russo-American conflict are high. Russian leader Vladimir Putin seeks to undermine confidence in democratically elected institutions and the institution of democracy itself in the United States and the West.1 He is trying to interfere with the ability of American and European peoples to choose their leaders freely2 and is undermining the rules-based international order on which American prosperity and security rest. His actions in Ukraine and Syria have driven the world toward greater violence and disorder. The normalization of Putin’s illegal actions over time will likely prompt other states to emulate his behavior and cause further deterioration of the international system. Moscow’s war on the very idea of truth has been perhaps the most damaging Russian undertaking in recent years. The most basic element of the Russian information strategy, which we will consider in more detail presently, is the creation of a sense of uncertainty around any important issue. Russia’s strategy does not require persuading Western audiences that its actions in Ukraine’s Crimean Peninsula or the Kerch Strait, which connects the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov, for example, were legal or justified.3 It is enough to create an environment in which many people say simply, “who knows?” The “who knows?” principle feeds powerfully into the phenomena of viral “fake news,” as well as other falsehoods and accusations of falsehoods which, if left unchecked, will ultimately make civil discourse impossible. The Kremlin’s propaganda does not necessarily need its target audiences to believe in lies; its primary goal is to make sure they do not believe in the truth. This aspect of Putin’s approach is one of the greatest obstacles to forming an accurate assessment and making recommendations. It is also one of the most insidious threats the current Russian strategy poses to the survival of the American republic. The good news is that the war on the idea of truth does not involve military operations or violence, though it can lead to both. The bad news is that it is extraordinarily difficult to identify, let alone to counter. Yet we must counter it if we are to survive as a functioning polity. American Prosperity The debate about the trade deficit and tariffs only underscores the scale and importance of the role Europe plays in the American economy. Europe is the largest single market for American exports and the second-largest source of American imports, with trade totaling nearly $1.1 trillion.4 American exports to Europe are estimated to support 2.6 million jobs in the U.S.5 Significant damage to the European economy, let alone the collapse of major European states or Europe itself, would devastate the U.S. economy as well. American prosperity is tightly interwoven with Europe’s. American prosperity also depends on Europe remaining largely democratic, with market-based economies, and subscribing to the idea of a rulesbased international order. The re-emergence of authoritarian regimes in major European states, which would most likely be fueled by a resurgence of extremist nationalism, would lead to the collapse of the entire European system, including its economic foundations. European economic cooperation rests on European peace, which in turn rests on the continued submergence of extremist nationalism and adherence to a common set of values. Russian actions against Western democracies and support for extremist groups, often with nationalist agendas, reinforce negative trends emerging within Europe itself. These actions therefore constitute a threat to American prosperity and security over the long term. The American economy also depends on the free flow of goods across the world’s oceans and through critical maritime chokepoints. Russia posed no threat to those chokepoints after the Soviet Union fell, but that situation is changing. The establishment of what appears to be a permanent Russian air, land, and naval base on the Syrian coast gives Russia a foothold in the Mediterranean for the first time since 1991. Russian efforts to negotiate bases in Egypt and Libya and around the Horn of Africa would allow Moscow to threaten maritime and air traffic through the Suez Canal and the Red Sea.6 Since roughly 3.9 million barrels of oil per day transited the Suez in 2016, to say nothing of the food and other cargo moving through the canal, Russian interference would have significant impacts on the global economy—and therefore on America’s economy.7 Russia’s efforts to establish control over the maritime routes opening in the Arctic also threaten the free movement of goods through an emerging set of maritime chokepoints.8 Those efforts are even more relevant to the U.S. because the Arctic routes ultimately pass through the Bering Strait, the one (maritime) border America shares with Russia. Russian actions can hinder or prevent the U.S. and its allies from benefiting from the opening of the Arctic. Russia is already bringing China into the Arctic region through energy investment projects and negotiations about the use of the Northern Sea Route, despite the fact that China is a state with no Arctic territory or claims.9 NATO The collective defense provision of the NATO treaty (known as Article 5) has been invoked only once in the 70-year history of the alliance: on September 12, 2001, on behalf of the United States. NATO military forces provided limited but important assistance to the U.S. in the immediate wake of the 9/11 attacks, including air surveillance patrols over the United States, and have continued supporting the U.S. in the long wars that followed. NATO established military missions in both Iraq and Afghanistan in the next two decades, deploying tens of thousands of soldiers to fight and to train America’s Iraqi and Afghan partners. American allies, primarily NATO members, have suffered more than 1,100 deaths in the Afghan war, slightly under half the number of U.S. deaths.10 The non-U.S. NATO member states collectively spent roughly $313 billion on defense in 2018—about half the American defense budget.11 The failure of most NATO members to meet their commitment to spend 2 percent of their GDP on defense is lamentable and must be addressed. But the fact remains that the alliance and its members have spent large amounts of blood and treasure fighting alongside American forces against the enemies that attacked the U.S. homeland two decades ago, and that they provide strength and depth to the defense of Europe, which remains of vital strategic importance to the United States. The U.S. could not come close to replacing them without significantly increasing its own defense spending and the size of the U.S. military—to say nothing of American casualties. NATO is also the most effective alliance in world history by the standard that counts most: it has achieved its founding objective for 70 years. The alliance was formed in 1949 to defend Western Europe from the threat of Soviet aggression, ideally by deterring Soviet attack, and has never needed to fight to defend itself. The United States always provided the preponderance of military force for the alliance, but the European military contribution has always been critical as well. American conventional forces throughout the Cold War depended on the facilities and the combat power of European militaries, and the independent nuclear deterrents of France and Great Britain were likely as important to deterring overt Soviet aggression as America’s nuclear arsenal. The Soviets might have come to doubt that the U.S. would risk nuclear annihilation to defend Europe, but they never doubted that France and Britain would resort to nuclear arms in the face of a Soviet invasion. Has NATO become irrelevant with the passing of the Cold War and the drawdown of U.S. forces from Iraq and Afghanistan? Only if the threat of war has passed and Europe itself has become irrelevant to the United States. Neither is the case. Europe’s survival, prosperity, and democratic values remain central to America’s well-being, as noted above, and today’s global environment makes war more likely than it has been since the collapse of the Soviet Union. It is not a given that Europe will remain democratic and a part of the international rules-based order if NATO crumbles. The U.S. can and should continue to work with its European partners to increase their defense expenditures and, more to the point, military capabilities (for which the percent of GDP spent on defense is not a sufficient proxy). The U.S. must also recognize the centrality of the alliance to America’s own security, as both the National Security Strategy and the National Defense Strategy do.12 The maintenance and defense of NATO itself is a core national security interest of the United States. Cyber Russia is one of the world’s leading cyber powers, competing with the U.S. and China for the top spot, at least in offensive cyber capabilities. Russian hacking has become legendary in the U.S. thanks to Russia’s efforts to influence the 2016 presidential campaign, but Russia has turned its cyber capabilities against its neighbors in other damaging ways. Russia attacked Estonia in 2007 with a massive distributed denial-of-service attack. It attacked Ukrainian computers with the NotPetya malware in 2017, which eventually caused billions of dollars in damage, including in the Americas.13 It also employed cyberattacks in coordination with its ground invasions of Georgia in 2008 and Ukraine in 2014. Fears of Russian cyber capabilities are warranted. This report does not consider the Russian cyber challenge in detail because others with far more technical expertise and support are actively engaged in combating it, defending against it, and deterring it. Our sole contribution in this area will be to consider it in the specific context of information operations support for hybrid operations in the recommendations section below. This approach stems from the recognition that the Kremlin’s cyber operations largely serve as enablers for its larger campaigns, rather than as a main effort. One must note, however, that while deterrence with conventional and nuclear forces prevents attacks, the United States is subject to cyberattack every day and has not established an effective means of retaliation, and thus deterrence. Weapons of Mass Destruction Russia’s nuclear arsenal is large enough to destroy the United States completely. The U.S. currently has no fielded ability to defend against a full-scale Russian nuclear attack—nor can Russia defend against a U.S. nuclear attack. American missile defense systems, by design, do not have the characteristics or scale necessary to shoot down any important fraction of the number of warheads the Russians have aimed at the U.S. from land- and sea-based launch platforms. America’s security against Russian nuclear attack today rests on the same principle as it has since the Russians first acquired nuclear weapons: deterrence. Russia also lacks the ability to shoot down American land- or sea-launched missiles and may not even be able reliably to shoot down U.S. nuclear-armed fifth-generation bombers. Deterrence is extremely likely to continue to work against Putin, who is a rational actor without the kinds of apocalyptic visions that might lead another leader to opt for annihilation in pursuit of some delusional greater good.14 The U.S. must pursue necessary modernization of its nuclear arsenal to sustain the credibility of its nuclear deterrent forces, but there is no reason to fear that deterrence will fail against Putin if it does so.15 It is less clear that Russia will continue to abide by its commitments to abjure chemical weapons, however. Russian agents have already conducted several chemical attacks, bizarrely using distinctive, military-grade chemical agents in attempted assassinations in the United Kingdom.16 Putin has also given top cover to Syrian President Bashar al-Assad’s use of chemical weapons against his own people, despite Russia’s formal role in guaranteeing Assad’s adherence to his 2013 promise to destroy his chemical weapons stockpile and refrain from any such use.17 Periodic Russian-inspired “rumors” that Western military personnel and Ukraine—which has no chemical weapons program—were planning to use chemical weapons on Ukrainian territory raise the concern that Russian agents provocateurs might conduct false flag operations of their own.18 Russia has the capability to produce chemical weapons at will—as does any industrialized state—but it is now showing that it may be willing to do so and to use them. The Soviet Union also maintained a vibrant biological weapons program. Russia has not thus far shown any signs of having restarted it or of having any intent to do so. The completely false claims that the U.S. has built biological weapons facilities in Russia’s neighboring states raise some concern on this front, since they could theoretically provide cover for the use of Russia’s own biological weapons, but they are more likely intended to influence the information space and justify other Russian actions.19 Terrorism Russia poses several challenges to any sound American approach to counter-terrorism. In addition to Iran, the world’s most prolific state sponsor of terrorism, Moscow’s preferred partners in the Middle East are those whose actions most directly fuel the spread of Salafi-jihadi groups. Russia encouraged and supported systematic efforts to eliminate moderate, secular opposition groups in Syria to the benefit of the Salafi-jihadi groups. Putin aims to expel or constrain the U.S. in the Middle East and establish his own forces in key locations that would allow him to disrupt American efforts to re-engage.20 Russia is the co-leader of a political and military coalition that includes Iran, Lebanese Hezbollah, the Assad regime, and Iranian-controlled Iraqi Shi’a militias.21 Russia provides most of the air support to that coalition in Syria, as well as special forces troops (SPETSNAZ), intelligence capabilities, air defense, and long-range missile strikes.22 That coalition’s campaign of sectarian cleansing has driven millions of people from their homes, fueling the refugee crisis that has damaged Europe.23 The coalition seeks to reimpose a minoritarian ‘Alawite dictatorship in Syria and a militantly anti-American and anti–Sunni Arab government in Iraq.24 The atrocities Russian forces themselves have committed, including deliberate and precise airstrikes against hospitals, have increased the sense of desperation within the Sunni Arab community in Syria, which Salafi-jihadi groups such as ISIS and al Qaeda have exploited.25 Russia supported Assad’s campaign to destroy the non-Salafi-jihadi opposition groups opposing him—particularly those backed by the U.S.—to aid the narrative that the only choices in Syria were Assad’s government or the Salafi-jihadis.26 That narrative was false in 2015 when Russian forces entered the fight but has become much truer following their efforts.27 Russia backed this undertaking with military force, but even more powerfully with information operations that continually hammered on the theme that the U.S. itself was backing terrorists in Syria and Russia was fighting ISIS.28 The insidiousness of the Russian demands that the U.S. remove its forces from Syria is masked by the current U.S. administration’s desire to do exactly that.29 One can argue the merits of keeping American troops in Syria or pulling them out— and this is not the place for that discussion—but the choice should be America’s. At the moment it still is. The consolidation of Russian anti-access/ area-denial (A2/AD) systems in Syria, however, together with the prospect of the withdrawal (or expulsion) of American forces from Iraq (or the closure of Iraqi airspace to support U.S. operations in Syria), could severely complicate American efforts to strike against terrorist threats that will likely re-emerge in Syria over time.30 The more the U.S. relies on an over-the-horizon strategy of precision strikes against terrorists actively planning attacks on the American homeland, the more vulnerable it becomes to the potential disruption of those strikes by Russian air defense systems, whether operated openly by Russians or nominally by their local partners. RUSSIA’S OBJECTIVES Mention of Putin’s objectives or of any systematic effort to achieve them almost always elicits as a response the assertion that Putin has no plan: Putin has no strategy; there is no Russian grand strategy, and so on. The other extreme of the debate considers Putin a calculated strategist with a grand master plan. The question of whether Putin has a plan, however that word is meant by those who assert that he does not, has important consequences for any American strategy to advance U.S. interests with regard to Russia. The trouble is that it is not clear what it would mean for Putin to have a plan or to lack one. We must first consider that more abstract question before addressing whether he has one. To have a plan usually means to have articulated goals, specific methods by which one will seek to achieve those goals, and identified means required for those methods to succeed. Goals, methods, and means can range from very specific to extremely vague and can be more flexible or more rigid. Specificity and flexibility can vary among the elements of this triad, moreover—goals may be very specific and rigid, methods general and flexible, means specific and flexible, or any other logical combination. When considering the question of Putin’s plan, therefore, we must break the discussion down into these four components: Does he have goals? Has he determined methods of achieving his goals? Has he specified resources required for those methods? How specific and how flexible are his goals, his methods, and the resources he allocates? Putting this discussion in context is helpful. Does a U.S. president have “a plan”? Not in any technical or literal sense. Every U.S. administration produces not a plan, but a National Security Strategy that is generally long on objectives—often reasonably specific—and very short on details of implementation (methods). Different national security advisers oversee processes within the White House to build out implementation details to greater or lesser degrees, but the actual implementation plans (methods) are developed by the relevant Cabinet departments. Those departments are also generally responsible for determining the resources that will be needed to implement their plans. The White House must then approve both the plans themselves and the allocation of the requested resources—and then must persuade Congress actually to appropriate the resources in the way the White House wishes to allocate them. This entire process takes more than a year from the start of a new administration and is never complete—the world changes, personnel turn over, and annual budget cycles and mid-term elections cause significant flutter. The one thing that does not happen is that a president receives and signs a “plan” with clear goals, detailed and specified methods, and the specific resources required, which is then executed.31 Putin does not have more of a plan than the U.S. does. It is virtually certain that he also lacks any such clear single document laying out the goals, methods, and means that he and his ministers are executing. But does he have as much of a plan as Presidents George W. Bush, Barack Obama, and Donald Trump have had? By all external signs, he does.

Putin has clearly articulated a series of overarching objectives and goals for Russia’s foreign policy and national security. Putin has been continuously communicating them through various media, including Russia’s doctrinal documents, regular speeches, his senior subordinates, and the Kremlin’s vast propaganda machine for the past two decades.

Russia has a foreign policy concept similar in scope and framing to the U.S. National Security Strategy, a military doctrine similar to the U.S. National Defense Strategy, and a series of other strategies (such as maritime, information security, and energy security) relating to the other components of national power and interest.32 These documents remain very much living concepts and have gone through multiple revisions in the decades since the fall of the Soviet Union.

Through regular speeches, Putin consistently communicates his goals and the key narratives that underpin Russian foreign policy. He makes an annual speech to the Russian Federal Assembly that is similar in some respects to the U.S. president’s State of the Union address. Putin’s addresses tend to be even more specific (and much more boring) in presenting the previous year’s accomplishments and an outline of goals and intentions for the next year.33 Russia’s doctrines and concepts match Putin’s speeches closely enough to suggest that there is some connection between them. Putin also makes other regular speeches, including at the UN General Assembly, the Valdai Discussion Club, the Munich Security Conference at times, and during lengthy press conferences with the Russian media. These remarks are usually rather specific in their presentation of his objectives and sometimes, some of the means by which he intends to pursue them. Such speeches are neither less frequent nor less specific than the major policy speeches of American presidents.

The widespread belief that Putin is simply or even primarily an opportunist who reacts to American or European mistakes is thus erroneous. Nor is Putin’s most common rhetorical trope—that he is the innocent victim forced to defend Russia against unjustified Western aggression—tethered to reality.34 Putin’s statements, key Russian national security documents, and the actions of Putin’s senior subordinates over the two decades of his reign cannot be distilled into a “plan,” but rather represent a set of grand strategic aims and strategic and operational campaigns underway to achieve them.

Putin has remained open and consistent about his core objectives since his rise to power in 1999: the preservation of his regime, the end of American “global hegemony,” and the restoration of Russia as a mighty force to be reckoned with on the international stage. Some of his foreign policy pursuits are purely pragmatic and aimed at gaining resources; others are intended for domestic purposes and have nothing to do with the West.

Putin has articulated a vision of how he wants the world to be and what role he wishes Russia to play in it. He seeks a world without NATO, where the U.S. is confined to the Western Hemisphere, where Russia is dominant over the former Soviet countries and can do what it likes to its own people without condemnation or oversight, and where the Kremlin enjoys a veto through the UN Security Council over actions that any other state wishes to take beyond its borders.35 He is working to bring that vision to reality through a set of coherent, mutually supporting, and indeed, overlapping lines of effort. He likely allows his subordinates a great deal of latitude in choosing the specific means and times to advance those lines of effort—a fact that makes it seem as if Russian policy is simply opportunistic and reactive. But we must not allow ourselves to be deluded by this impression any more than by other Russian efforts to shape our understanding of reality.

Putin’s Domestic Objectives

Maintaining relative contentment within his power circle is a key part of regime preservation. Putin has a close, trusted circle of senior subordinates, including several military and intelligence officials who have been with him for the past 20 years.36 His power circle has several outer layers, which include—but are not limited to—major Russian businessmen, often referred to as “oligarSLC.” The use of the term “oligarch” to describe those who run major portions of the economy is inaccurate, however. Those individuals have power because Putin gives it to them, not because they have any inherent ability to seize or hold it independently. He shuffles them around—and sometimes retires them completely—at his will, rather than in response to their demands.37 They do not check or control Putin either individually or collectively, and they rarely, if ever, attempt to act collectively in any event. Putin controls Russia and its policies as completely as he chooses. This situation is different from the way in which the Soviet Union was ruled after Joseph Stalin’s death in 1953. The post-Stalin USSR really was an oligarchy. Politburo members had their own power bases and fiefdoms. They made decisions—including selecting new members, choosing new leaders, and even firing one leader (Stalin’s successor, Nikita Khrushchev)—by majority vote. There is no equivalent of the Politburo in today’s Russia, no one to balance Putin, and certainly no one to remove him. Putin seeks to keep the closest circle of subordinates and the broader Russian national security establishment content, as they form one of the core pillars of his power. He thus seeks to maintain a relative degree of contentment within various layers of his power structures, including among the “oligarSLC.” For example, the Kremlin offered to help mitigate sanctions-related consequences for Russian businessmen.38 Kremlin-linked actors, in another example, reportedly embezzled billions of dollars in the preparations for the 2014 Winter Olympics in Sochi, Russia—the $50 billion price tag of which was the highest for any Olympic games.39 Putin can still retire any of the “oligarSLC” at will without fear of meaningful consequences—yet his regime is much more stable if they collectively remain reasonably satisfied. This reality will drive Putin to continue to seek access to resources, legal and illegal, with which to maintain that satisfaction. Maintaining popular support is a core objective of Putin’s policies. Putin is an autocrat with democratic rhetoric and trappings. Putin’s Russia has no free elections, no free media, and no alternative political platforms. He insists, however, on maintaining the “democratic” façade. He holds elections at the times designated by law (even if he periodically causes the law to be amended) and is genuinely (if decreasingly) popular. Nor is his feint at democratism necessarily a pose. The transformation of the Soviet Union into a democracy was the signal achievement of the 1990s.40 Putin played a role in that achievement, supporting St. Petersburg mayor Anatoliy Sobchak, then Boris Yeltsin, in their battles against attempts by communists to regain control and destroy the democracy, and then by an extreme right-wing nationalist party to gain power.41 Putin has called out many weaknesses of the Yeltsin era—but never the creation of a democratic Russia. Putin has not yet shown any sign of formally turning away from democracy as the ostensible basis of his power, although he has constrained the political space within Russia to the point that the elections are a sham. However, were he to abandon the democratic principles to which he still superficially subscribes, he would need fundamentally to redesign the justification of his rule and the nature of his regime. Nevertheless, he can only maintain even the fiction of democratic legitimacy if he remains popular enough to win elections that are not outrageously stolen. He has not been able to fix the Russian economy, despite early efforts to do so. The fall of global oil prices from their highs in the 2000s, as well as the Western sanctions imposed for his actions in Ukraine, among other things, are causing increasing hardship for the Russian people.42 Putin has adopted an information operations approach to this problem by pushing a number of core narratives, evolving over time, to justify his continued rule and explain away the failures of his policies. He has also grown the police state within Russia for situations in which the information operations do not work to his satisfaction. Putin’s justification of his rule has evolved over time. He first positioned himself as the man who will bring order. The 1990s was a decade of economic catastrophe for Russia. Inflation ran wild, unemployment skyrocketed, crime became not only pervasive but also highly organized and predatory, and civil order eroded. Putin succeeded Yeltsin with a promise to change all that. His “open letter to voters” in 2000 contained a phrase fascinating to students of Russian history: “Our land is rich, but there is no order.” That phrase is similar to one supposedly sent by the predecessors of the Russians at the dawn of Russian history to a Viking prince who would come to conquer them: “Our land is rich, but there is no order. Come to rule and reign over us.” By using the first part of that line, Putin, like Riurik, the founder of Russia’s first dynasty, cast himself as the founder of a new Russia in which order would replace chaos.43 Putin’s initial value proposition to his population was thus order and stability. He did, indeed, attempt to bring order to Russia’s domestic scene. Putin strengthened government institutions and curbed certain kinds of crime. He restored control over the region of Chechnya through a brutal military campaign. He tried to work with economic technocrats to bring the economy into some kind of order. The task was immense, however—Soviet leaders had built the entire Russian industrial and agricultural system and economic base in a centralized fashion. Undoing that centralization and creating an economy in which the market really could work was beyond Putin’s skill and patience. He largely abandoned the effort within a few years, both because it was too hard and because it seemed unnecessary.44 The rising price of oil in the early 2000s fueled the Russian economy and filled the government’s coffers on the one hand.45 The genuine structural reforms and innovation that were needed, on the other, also became antithetical to Putin’s ability to maintain control, as government corruption is a powerful tool of influence in Russia. Putin began to erode civil liberties in that period offering the unspoken but clear exchange: Give me your liberties and I will give you prosperity and stability. The 2008 global financial crisis collapsed oil prices, and the post-2014 sanctions regime removed the patches and workarounds Putin had used to offset his failure to transform Russia’s economy. Continuing low oil prices (and sanctions) have prevented it from recovering with much of the rest of the global economy, even as Putin has continued to eschew any real effort to address the systemic failings holding Russia’s economy back. Putin has therefore refocused on a different value proposition: Give me your liberties and I will give you greatness. He is increasingly linking the legitimacy of his own autocracy with Russia’s position on the world stage and with Russia’s ability to stand up to American “global hegemony.”46

Putin has simultaneously erected a narrative to deflect criticism for Russia’s problems onto the West. The West, supposedly fearful of Russia rising and determined to keep Russia down, has thwarted its rightful efforts to regain its proper place in the world at every turn. Putin claims the Russian economy is in shambles because of unjust and illegal sanctions that have nothing to do with Russia’s actions and are simply meant to keep “the Russian bear in chains.”47

Putin has also consistently fostered a complex narrative that combines diverse and—from the Western perspective—often conflicting elements, including Soviet nostalgia, Eastern Orthodoxy, Russian nationalism, and the simultaneous emphasis on Russia’s multiethnic and multireligious character. The importance Putin gives this narrative is visible in things large and small. He has named Russia’s ballistic missile submarines after Romanov tsars and Muscovite princes.48 He issued a decree in 2009 mandating the introduction of religious education in Russian schools, which began in 2012.49 He continues to place a major emphasis on Soviet-era achievements. Putin and his information machine take these various elements, refine and tailor them, and produce a mix of ideas to cater to various parts of the Russian population.

We can expect Putin’s narratives to continue to shift to accommodate changing realities, but the current rhetorical linkage between Russia’s position on the world stage and the legitimacy of Putin’s domestic power is concerning. It suggests that Putin may be more stubborn about making and retaining gains in the international arena than he was in the first 15 years of his rule, as he seeks ways to bolster his popularity, which is flagging, and on which his mythos relies.

Blocking a “color revolution” in Russia is the overarching justification Putin gives for the erosion of political freedom and the expansion of Russia’s police state. Revolutions overturned post-Soviet governments in Georgia (the Rose Revolution in 2003), Ukraine (the Orange Revolution in 2004), and Kyrgyzstan (the Tulip Revolution in 2005). Putin blamed all of them on efforts by the West, primarily the U.S., to undermine pro-Russian governments, even though all three emerged indigenously and spontaneously without external assistance. He regarded the Ukrainian EuroMaidan Revolution of 2014 as an extension of this phenomenon.50 The rhetoric Putin and other Russian officials and writers use about “color revolutions” is extreme. It paints them as part of a coherent Western effort aimed ultimately at overthrowing the Russian government itself. It is quite possible that Putin believes that there is such an effort underway and that the events that rocked the post-Soviet states were a part of it. Even if he did not believe this when he started to talk about it, he may well have convinced himself of it after 15 years of vituperation on the subject. The notion of a “color revolution” conspiracy against Russia is also a convenient way for Putin to discredit any opposition, an easy way to tar political opponents as foreign agents and traitors, to control and expel foreign non-governmental organizations, and generally to justify the erosion of civil liberties, human rights, and free expression in Russia. It externalizes resistance to Putin’s increasing autocracy while simultaneously providing scapegoats to blame for Russia’s problems. It also creates the narrative basis for casting any Western efforts to constrain Russian actions anywhere as part of a larger effort to set preconditions for a “color revolution” in Moscow. It fuels a narrative to which Russians are historically amenable: that Russia is surrounded and under siege by hostile powers trying to contain or destroy it. Putin can cast almost any action foreign states take of which he does not approve as part of this effort.51 The net effects of this narrative are threefold. First, it tends to consolidate support behind Putin as he presents himself as the defender of Russia against a hostile world—and his near-total control of the information most of his people receive makes it difficult for many to hear and believe any other side. Second, it constantly confronts the West with the suspicion that someone really is trying to orchestrate a conspiracy to cause “regime change” in Russia. Although no state or alliance has had any such objective since the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991, the negative connotations of even the idea of attempting regime change create opposition to policies labeled in this way. Third, it also creates opposition to a potential peaceful change in the nature of the Russian regime from within, as Putin has associated the idea of political change with the “color revolution” prism of chaos, destruction, and an inevitably worsening economy. Putin presents his people a simple (but false) choice between the prospect of going back to something like the chaos and poverty of the 1990s ... or Vladimir Putin. Using the bogey of the “color revolution” conspiracy theory and other narratives, Putin is expanding the already-significant state control over his people’s communications and moving to a more rigid authoritarian model. He has prevented the emergence of any significant political opposition party or leader. Key opposition figures have been murdered, imprisoned, poisoned, and otherwise attacked.52 Putin’s regime suppresses—sometimes brutally— political dissent in the form of peaceful street protests or demonstrations, despite their small sizes.53 The political environment in Russia today is not markedly different from that of the Soviet Union in its last decade. Putin has brought the overwhelming majority of significant Russian media outlets into line with his own desired narratives, presenting the Russian people with a coherent stream of propaganda virtually without deviation. He appears to have decided that even this level of information control is insufficient, however, and has recently begun to assert even greater technical and policy control over Russians’ access to the internet.54 He has not yet matched these activities with recreation of an internal security apparatus on the scale needed to control the population through coercion, intimidation, and force, but he has been steadily expanding the internal security services during his two decades of rule. He has centralized some elements of the internal security apparatus under the control of a loyal lieutenant, but he would need to expand it considerably to be able to rely on it to maintain order by force beyond Moscow and St. Petersburg.55 In assessing whether Putin aims to shift the basis of his rule to more overt dictatorship, one of the key indicators to watch for is further expansion of that apparatus. It is also an indicator of the degree to which he sincerely believes that any sort of “color revolution” is in the offing. Expansion of the Russian economy remains an important component of Putin’s ability to sustain and grow his assertive foreign policy, popular support, and the resources subsidizing his close circle. Putin seems largely to have given up the idea of reforming the economy and has thus set about at least two major undertakings to improve it without reform. Undermining the Western sanctions regime. The imposition of major sanctions on Russia following the invasion of Ukraine and the annexation of Crimea in 2014 has inflicted great damage on the Russian economy. Putin has launched a number of efforts to erode and break those sanctions, both in Europe and in the U.S. Despite repeated declarations about the ineffectiveness of sanctions, Putin clearly believes that nothing would improve the economy more dramatically and rapidly than their elimination. The Mueller Report amply documents Putin’s fear of new sanctions after the 2016 elections and his efforts to deflect them or have them nullified.56 He even went so far as to promise not to retaliate against the sanctions the Obama administration imposed, in hopes of persuading the incoming Trump administration to reverse or block them. His efforts failed, however, as Congress insisted on new sanctions and President Trump did not stop them. Russian activities in Europe have aimed in part to suborn one or more members of the European Union (EU) to refuse to renew the sanctions imposed following Russia’s 2014 invasion of Ukraine. Openly pro-Russian governments in Budapest and now Rome, along with other states that have indicated greater reluctance to continue the sanctions regime, have not yet cast the vote to stop the renewal of sanctions. Putin has not given up, however, and continues to work to shape the political, informational, and economic environment in Europe to make it safe for one country to vote against sanctions renewal—and one vote is all he needs in the consensus-based EU model. The collapse of the sanctions regime and a flood of foreign direct investment into Russia could dramatically increase the resources available to support Putin’s foreign and defense efforts, even without fundamentally addressing the problems of the Russian economy. Putin would likely use those resources to return to the aggressive conventional military buildup he was pursuing before the imposition of sanctions in 2014 and to supercharge his economic efforts to establish Russian influence around the world. Developing new revenue streams is another obvious approach to bringing cash into the Russian economy and government. Russia is at a disadvantage in this regard because of the structural weaknesses of its economy. Its principal exports are almost entirely in the form of mineral wealth—oil, coal, and natural gas, as well as other raw materials. Weapons and military training services are the major industrial export. The use of private military companies (PMCs) such as the Wagner Group is a foreign policy tool for the Kremlin, but also one of the main exportable “services.” Civilian nuclear technology is a niche expertise that Putin is willing to sell as well. Putin has worked hard to expand Russia’s economic portfolios in all these areas. He has pushed both the Nord Stream II and the Turk Stream natural gas pipelines to make Europe ever more heavily dependent on Russian natural gas and to eliminate Russia’s dependency on the Ukrainian gas transit system. His lieutenants are actively negotiating deals throughout the Middle East and Africa to sell civilian nuclear technology. This generates continuous revenue because the states that commit to using Russian nuclear reactor technology will likely become dependent on Russian equipment and expertise to keep it running.57 Russia’s military activities in Syria can be described as a massive outdoor weapons exposition.58 The Russian armed forces have ostentatiously used several advanced weapons systems that were not required for the specific tactical tasks at hand.59 The Russian military staged these displays with the informational and geopolitical aim of demonstrating Russia’s renewed and advanced conventional capabilities. They also showed the effectiveness of weapons and platforms whose export versions are for sale. Russian military hardware salesmen are active throughout the Middle East and are having success. Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan seems committed to purchasing the S-400 air defense system, despite vigorous American and NATO opposition and the threat that the U.S. will refuse to complete planned sales of the F-35 stealth aircraft to Turkey.60 The U.S. should certainly not deliver the F-35 to Turkey if Erdogan proceeds with purchase of the S-400. A Turkish trade of the F-35 for the S-400 would nevertheless be a significant victory for Putin in both economic and political terms. Putin’s efforts to steal arms business from the U.S. would also be assisted by legislation or executive decisions blocking the export of weapons systems to Saudi Arabia over the conduct of the war in Yemen. Income from such sales is a trivial percentage of American net exports, to say nothing of U.S. GDP, but would be much larger in the Russian ledgers, where totals are more than an order of magnitude smaller. The proliferation of Russian PMCs is another potential source of revenue—in addition to being a Kremlin foreign policy tool—although it is hard to assess its significance because of the secrecy surrounding the entire PMC enterprise. The reported numbers of mercenaries deployed by various Russian PMCs are generally in the low hundreds here and there—not large enough, in principle, to suggest that the income from them would be very great. There is no knowing the terms of their contracts, however, or what other activities they might engage in while stationed in poorly governed states rife with corruption and organized crime. None of these activities is likely to generate floods of money into Russia’s coffers in the near term, which is likely why Putin remains so heavily focused on sanctions relief. Putin has no other viable options for obtaining resources on a large scale. A significant increase in the price of hydrocarbons—either oil or natural gas—would once again flood Russia with cash. But Putin has no obvious way of directly causing such an increase in the price of oil, since Russia’s share of the oil market is not large enough to allow him to force price increases on OPEC. His ability to manipulate the price he charges Europeans for natural gas is also constrained. If he raises it too high, he could drive the Europeans to search harder for alternative sources of fuel or, given the Trump Administration’s willingness to export American liquefied natural gas (LNG), to rely on the U.S. instead of Russia. Such a European turn away from Russian gas would be a disaster for Russia. Without the ability to export LNG on a large scale, Russia can only sell gas where the pipelines go—and right now, they go to Europe. Russia could expand cooperation with China to create another major source of cash. Putin is very likely aware of the long-term risks of growing Chinese influence over Russia and its neighbors, yet he still may pursue greater economic ties with Xi Jinping’s China, given the likely calculation that he can control this relationship in the near term. Even so, Chinese cash usually comes with a heavy non-cash price, and Putin is savvy enough to be wary of becoming too dependent on Beijing’s largesse. Russia’s economy is therefore likely critical but stable. None of the economic efforts Putin has put into effect will fix the Russian economy’s fundamental structural flaws. All are palliatives with half-lives. Putin lacks a meaningful plan in this sense—nothing he is saying or doing will create a stable economic basis for Russia’s future. Neither, on the other hand, is Russia heading for a crash. The current level of economic stagnation is likely stable and sustainable—a constraint on Putin’s ability to expand his conventional capabilities and use economic instruments of power abroad, but not a threat to his rule. Russia has been a relatively poor country for much of its history. Yet it has proved capable of asserting itself on the European or global stage for most of that time. Russians are used to being a “poor power”; this is a normal state. These realities do not undercut the value of Western economic pressure on Russia; they should, rather, help set the proper objectives and expectations in applying such pressure. Retaining power constitutionally and managing a succession are the last major domestic campaigns in which Putin is engaged. Putin faces a significant watershed when his current presidential term ends in 2024, as he is constitutionally prohibited from running for re-election again in that cycle. He faced this dilemma in 2008 and chose then to allow Dmitrii Medvedev to become president while he retained effective control of Russian policy from the post of prime minister. He could pursue a similar model in 2024, but it is unlikely that he will do so. Among other things, Medvedev appears to have made at least one decision of which Putin violently disapproved—the failure to veto the UN resolution authorizing intervention in Libya against Moammar Ghaddafi—but he chose not to stop or reverse it. His ability to continue to control Russian policy and, even more, manage his succession from a position nominally subordinate to even a puppetlike president could also become more problematic as he ages. Putin could always cause the Duma to adjust the constitution again to let him run for another term, but he has not been laying the groundwork for such an approach (although it is admittedly early days yet for such an action). He might be pursuing an effort that offers a more interesting potential resolution to the dilemma in the form of further implementation of the Union Treaty with Belarus. He has been actively “negotiating” with Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko to create a full integration of the Russian and Belarusian armed forces and security services, bringing Belarus nearly completely back under de facto Russian control.61 Belarus would nevertheless remain a nominally independent sovereign state. The integrated forces would function under the rubric of a union of the two states, which would naturally have a president. Putin might shift to that role, retaining full control over the security apparatuses of both states, as well as the dominance he holds by virtue of his control of Russia’s economy and kleptocracy. He could then allow a puppet to take over as Russia’s president but now in a role subordinated to him rather than nominally superior to him.

External Objectives

Putin has been as explicit as it is possible to be in his overarching foreign policy aims: he seeks to end American dominance and the “unipolar” world order, restore “multipolarity,” and reestablish Russia as a global force to be reckoned with. He identifies NATO as an adversary and a threat and clearly seeks to weaken it and break the bonds between the U.S. and NATO’s European members.

Breaking Western unity is thus one of Putin’s core foreign policy objectives. Three major lines of effort support this undertaking: invalidating the collective defense provision of the North Atlantic Treaty (Article 5), weakening or breaking the European Union, and destroying the faith of Western societies in their governments and institutions.

Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty states that an attack on one member of the alliance is an attack on all, with the requisite defense commitments. The provision’s activation is far from automatic, however. A member state under attack must request support from the alliance whose political body, the North Atlantic Council (NAC), must then vote unanimously to provide it. The alliance has activated Article 5 only once, as noted above, and on behalf of the United States. Putin is working to ensure that it is never activated again. Putin can achieve this by creating a situation in which one or more member states votes against a request to activate Article 5, or in which a member state under attack does not request such a vote for fear that it will fail. If a state under Russian attack does not seek or fails to secure the alliance’s support, then the collective defense provision that is the bedrock of the alliance will have been weakened badly if it has not collapsed entirely. Putin’s efforts to secure Hungarian and also Italian support to end the renewals of EU sanctions help him in this undertaking as well, since both Hungary and Italy are NATO members. Hungary’s Viktor Orban in particular is so overtly pro-Russian that he could well seize on any doubt about the reality of a Russian hybrid intervention to refuse to vote for an Article 5 activation. Putin has acquired a potentially more interesting route to Article 5 nullification, moreover, in his entente with Turkey, also a NATO member, over Syria. His noteworthy failure to respond to the downing by the Turkish Air Force of a Russian fighter that crossed the Turkish border in 2015 has paid dividends. His efforts to sell the Turks the S-400 system are also advancing the aim of driving a deep wedge between Ankara and Washington. Erdogan’s suspicions that the U.S. backed the failed 2016 coup against him make very real the possibility that he would come before even Orban in refusing to vote for an Article 5 action in the case of a hybrid campaign in Latvia, for instance. The question of how much Putin seeks to destroy the collective defense provisions of the NATO treaty rather than simply to regain formerly Soviet territories should loom large in considerations of possible military scenarios. The direct deployment of regular, uniformed Russian armed forces personnel in one of the Baltic states would make it very difficult for any NATO member state to refuse to honor a request to invoke Article 5. Erdogan, Orban, or some other leader might still find a way, but the pressure to show alliance solidarity in such a situation would be intense. A Crimea-type scenario, then, in which the hybrid war starts with “little green men” (Russian soldiers out of uniform) but then escalates quickly to the use of conventional Russian military personnel, with their equipment and insignia, is much less likely if Article 5 is the target. A better Russian approach in that case would be the model Putin used in eastern Ukraine: Russian soldiers out of uniform work with local proxies, some already existing, others created as they go along, and try hard never to show themselves overtly.62 Russian information operations work around the clock to obfuscate emerging evidence of any Russian military presence, while the Kremlin praises the brave warriors of the Russianspeaking patriots within the target state, who are surprisingly well armed and well led. In such a case, Putin is more likely to attempt to leverage an insurgency (which he probably created) to break the government and create chaos of some sort than to move to overt deployment of conventional forces—at least until he is as sure as he can be that even such a deployment would not rouse the alliance to invoke Article 5 at the last moment. He might well accept or even prefer an ostensible “failure” to gain control of the target country (at that time) in return for making obvious to all that NATO is dead. After all, once the collective defense provisions of the alliance and the Western will to defend the Baltics are destroyed, Putin can pick them off at his leisure. Weaken or break the European Union. Putin has been energetically supporting Euroskeptic parties for many years—his financial aid to Marine Le Pen in France is the most ostentatious example, but there are numerous others.63 He stands to benefit from weakening or breaking the European Union in several ways. First, the EU is an exclusive economic club that Russia will be unable to join in Putin’s lifetime. The corruption and opacity of the Russian economy are too deeply established for Putin to imagine a time when Russia might meet the standards for EU membership—and Putin relies on this corruption and opacity, as we have noted, for continued control over the major economic actors in Russia. Nor is he likely to desire such membership. Sitting around a table on an equal basis with Luxembourg and Belgium is not appealing to a man who aspires to be one of the poles in a multipolar world. But the EU collectively wields great economic power through its ability to control trade with the bloc and impose sanctions. Putin would do much better in a Europe where he could negotiate and pressure individual states on a bilateral basis—and a Europe that was unable to impose multilateral sanctions on him and require all member states to abide by them—and he appears to understand that. Second, the Euroskeptic parties are generally extremely nationalistic. The reemergence of nationalism within Europe poses an enormous challenge to the stability of intra-European relations and could even undermine the long peace that has held in Western Europe since 1945.64 It would likely translate into conflict at the North Atlantic Council and could well drive increased tensions between individual European countries and the United States. Putin appears to be untroubled by the prospect of a reemergence of German nationalism, even though that ideology historically has targeted Russia. He may believe that the benefit of shattering the Western bloc outweighs risks that he likely expects to be able to handle in other ways. Weakening Western will and trust in democratic institutions is another line of effort Putin is pursuing to break the Western bloc. His interference in the Western political systems and information space is intended to destroy Westerners’ trust in their governments and in the idea of democracy, as much as to bring about the election or defeat of particular candidates—if not more so.65 He is explicit in his attacks on the Western political system: “Even in the so-called developed democracies, the majority of citizens have no real influence on the political process and no direct and real influence on power,” he said in 2016, adding that “it is not about populists … ordinary people, ordinary citizens are losing trust in the ruling class.”66 This effort benefits from trends in Western societies that were already undermining popular faith in institutions. Americans’ confidence in institutions generally has dropped by about 10 percent from its post–Cold War high in 2004.67 The Iraq War, the 2008 financial crisis, and revelations of classified U.S. surveillance programs, among other things, have eroded Americans’ trust in institutions almost across the board. The military is a remarkable exception to this trend. The massive, unauthorized release of classified materials by Edward Snowden was particularly important in this regard, as it has cemented the erroneous impression that the U.S. government was listening to the phone calls and reading the e-mails of all its citizens and those of many other countries. That impression has widened the wedge between some major technology companies and the government, hindering the development of a national cyber-defense capability and even the government’s ability to contract for advanced software.68 It is not surprising that Snowden ended up in Moscow or that Putin has granted him asylum. Snowden advanced a major Russian line of effort, apparently without any orders from Putin. These negative trends in the West have created openings that Putin is working to exploit by compromising elections, supporting extremist candidates, and pursuing aggressive information operations that stoke divisions and mistrust within Western societies. Establishing Russian suzerainty over the states of the former Soviet Union is a second major foreign policy objective. Suzerainty is “a dominant state controlling the foreign relations of a vassal state but allowing it sovereign authority in its internal affairs.”69 It is the most precise way of capturing Putin’s aims vis-à-vis the former Soviet states and the limitations of those aims. He is not attempting to reconquer the lost territory nor to govern it directly from Moscow. He has asserted, rather, that the world must recognize that post-Soviet states have only a truncated sovereignty over their own affairs. They may not freely join alliances such as NATO or economic blocs such as the EU without Moscow’s permission, for example. Putin further claims that Russia has the right to protect Russian speakers in those states against oppression or discrimination (as defined and determined by Putin), and that it may use military force to do so. Assertion of the right to defend Russian speakers abroad is not Putin’s innovation. Boris Yeltsin’s government articulated it in the early 1990s, but Yeltsin never acted on it.70 Opposition to NATO’s expansion also originated in the Yeltsin era, and the 1997 National Security Concept identified such expansion as a “national security threat.”71 But whereas Yeltsin nevertheless continued to try to work with NATO and establish a relationship with it, Putin has been frankly antagonistic toward the alliance. The actual expansion of NATO to include the three Baltic states as well as Romania, Bulgaria, Slovakia, and Slovenia in 2004 was likely a tipping point in Putin’s attitudes. The critical nuance to consider is that Putin has always been more concerned about the loss of control over Russia’s perceived sphere of influence than an actual NATO threat to Russia.72 NATO expansion coincided with the first of the “color revolutions” in Ukraine, which clearly fueled Putin’s fears that the former Soviet states were at risk of slipping entirely out of Moscow’s orbit. Putin initiated active efforts to regain control over the former Soviet states shortly after he took office in 1999-2000, but it took several years before he adopted a more combative tone and aggressive policies. Putin’s speech before the Munich Security Conference in 2007 and then his invasion of Georgia in 2008 underscored this overt turn.73 He has clearly made it a priority to ensure that no more former Soviet states join NATO or the EU, while working to undermine the bonds linking the Baltic states to the alliance. Putin’s claims to suzerainty over the former Soviet states have been met with ambivalence in the West. Russia experts and others often defend the assertion of a unique Russian sphere of influence over those states on historical or geopolitical bases.74 Even the seizure and annexation of Crimea has been presented as somehow ambiguous. Putin’s argument—that Soviet Communist Party secretary general Nikita Khrushchev’s transfer of the region from Russia to Ukraine was an internal matter that should not have led to the peninsula’s inclusion in an independent Ukraine—has gotten a surprising amount of traction in the expert community.75 Examined closely, however, Putin’s claims over the former Soviet states are completely indefensible. All 15 of the Soviet Socialist Republics, including Russia, were recognized as sovereign states after the USSR collapsed, and they were admitted to the UN on an equal basis with all other UN member states. The Russian Federation recognized them all and their UN accessions without reservations. The subsequent complaints by Yeltsin’s foreign minister, Yevgenii Primakov, and then Putin, about the folly of Yeltsin’s decisions to do so does not change or invalidate those decisions.76 The 15 former Soviet states thus have all the same rights as every other member of the UN—including the right to make such alliances and join such blocs as they choose without needing the permission of another power, and the right to govern their own people, including minorities, as they wish. It is ironic, to say the least, that Putin vigorously defends Assad’s right to conduct horrifying atrocities against his own people on the grounds of sovereignty, while claiming that alleged discrimination against the use of Russian language in post-Soviet states justifies his own military intervention in those states. Russia can certainly decide that the shift of post-Soviet states into the NATO or EU orbit poses such a significant threat to its security and interests that it must use force to stop or reverse it, just as any sovereign state can see threats in the actions of its neighbors and decide that it must respond with force. But the resort to force in such circumstances is aggression, not a defensive move, and must be regarded and treated as such by the international community. Accepting the Russian argument that Moscow has an inherent right to intervene, including militarily, in its neighbors based on their treatment of their Russian minorities or their intentions to join alliances is a truncation of their sovereignty that undermines the entire basis of international law and the UN Charter. Putin is actively working to establish precisely that principle as a matter of international norm and is making a distressing amount of progress. Both Yeltsin and Putin have retained Russian suzerainty over some post-Soviet states in legal and legitimate ways as well. Russian ground and air forces have remained in Armenia, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan almost continuously since the fall of the Soviet Union at the invitation of the governments of those states. A small Russian military contingent also remains in Moldova in more ambivalent circumstances. The government in Chisinau does not welcome its presence and the parliament has called on it to depart, but the Moldovan government has not formally ordered the Russians to leave.77 These deployments give Russia significant influence in the Caucasus, eastern Central Asia, and Moldova. The deployment in Tajikistan also creates a platform for Russian engagement and interference in Afghanistan. The situation in Belarus is the most worrisome of the legal reconsolidation efforts because of the strategic impacts it could have on NATO’s ability to defend the Baltic states (see Appendix I for a more detailed consideration of this problem). Negotiations currently underway could lead to the merging of the Russian and Belarusian armed forces and the technical subordination of the governments of Russia and Belarus to some new Union State. It is tempting, as we have noted, to imagine Putin taking control of this new combined polity after the end of his current presidential term, thereby finding an elegant solution to the constitutional problems of extending his reign. Returning Russia to the status of a global power shaping the international system is the last major external objective Putin is pursuing. Several lines of effort support this objective: Regain a global military footprint. Putin has been working to regain parts of the Soviet global military position lost in the late 1980s. A principal aim of this undertaking is to impose increasing costs on America’s efforts to continue operating around the world as it chooses and to offset part of the huge financial deficit holding Putin back from pursuing his larger aims. It is not meant to create platforms for global or even major regional wars, still less to advance an ideology (one of the Soviet objectives in creating the footprint in the first place). Putin’s establishment of a long-term air and naval base in Syria was the first significant step in this effort.78 He has also been cultivating the leaders of other states that were formerly Soviet clients and partners, including Egypt, Libya, Iraq, Sudan, and Cuba.79 In addition, he has recently added to the list by deploying Russian mercenaries (at least) in Venezuela and solidifying an entente with Iran that the Soviet Union never had.80 The Russian armed forces and/or mercenaries are now openly operating out of bases in Syria, Ukraine, and Venezuela. Russian PMCs have also reportedly been operating in Sudan, Central African Republic, and Libya.81 Russian forces have episodically used bases in Iran as well.82 This footprint is far smaller than the Soviets’, but is a dramatic change from Russian policies and capabilities between 1991 and 2013. Indications are that Putin intends to expand further using the sale of advanced weapons systems as the entry wedge. One major reason the U.S. is unwilling to give Turkey the F-35 if Ankara proceeds with the Russian S-400 air defense system purchase is that Russian technical specialists would be stationed in Turkey with its deployment. For the U.S., the military implications of these efforts are complex. The Russian military does not now have the capability to deploy large enough numbers of advanced offensive conventional weapons systems to bases beyond its borders to challenge a major American military effort to destroy them. The defensive systems, especially advanced A2/AD systems like the S-300, S-400, and Bastion anti-ship cruise missile system pose much greater challenges.83 But the U.S. military could defeat the limited numbers of such systems the Russians have emplaced in Syria and might emplace elsewhere if it chose to allocate the necessary resources. The most immediate consequence of the expanded Russian global conventional footprint, then, is the requirement that the U.S. and its allies ensure the availability of the forces that might be needed to handle the Russian systems. That resource requirement is significant. Neither the U.S. nor NATO has anticipated having to fight in the Mediterranean since the end of the Cold War, and the alliance does not have the necessary assets permanently allocated to respond to such a threat. It has instead generally used the resources that would be needed to counter Russian positions to conduct counter-terrorism operations throughout the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. The Russian deployments thus force on the alliance, in the event of an escalation with Moscow, the choice of reducing counter-terrorism operations, reallocating forces from the Indo-Pacific theater (not really an option in the current geostrategic environment), or creating and deploying new forces to deal with the emerging threat. In this context, the loss of Turkey as a reliable U.S. partner is very damaging. The Turkish air force is significant in its own right, although it is still recovering from Erdogan’s post–coup attempt purge, and the ability to use Turkish bases for operations against Russian positions in Syria would be strategically very significant.84 But the burgeoning Russo-Turkish entente means that the U.S. and NATO cannot count on Ankara in a showdown, further raising the requirement to develop and deploy new resources. The Russian deployments in Syria, Venezuela, and elsewhere are, in fact, part of a hybrid operation aimed not at preparing to fight a conventional war, but rather, at persuading the U.S. and its allies to withdraw from the threatened regions or limit their operations. Putin likely aims to increase both the risk and the cost of continuing to conduct military operations in the MENA area to a level at which the U.S. yields to its ever-growing impulse to pull back from the region entirely. This operation is surely also aimed at securing economic resources. Recent Russian deployments to Venezuela have gone to key oil-producing areas, and Putin’s financial interactions with Nicolas Maduro are well reported.85 Russian forces in Syria are also supporting Putin’s efforts to gain at least partial control over the reconstruction resources expected to flow into that country if ever he can persuade the international community to send them.86 Putin’s Syria campaign has already helped leach resources for his inner circle. For example, a Russian company run by Yevgeniy Prigozhin, a close Putin associate central to Russia’s attack on the U.S. political system, secured a stake in Syrian oil and gas fields via the Assad regime.87 It is vital in assessing Russia’s apparent reconstruction of the Soviet global military posture to recognize the essential differences in aims driving Putin from those motivating the Soviets. Putin intends to raise the cost to the U.S. of being a global power to levels higher than he thinks Americans will wish to pay. The U.S. must recognize the limitations of his ambitions in this regard as it develops intelligent responses at reasonable cost, even while being clear-eyed about the real threats Russia’s expanding global footprint present.

Normalize Russia’s violations of international law. The Russian cyberattack against Estonia in 2007; invasion of Georgia in 2008, with the subsequent annexation of the Georgian territories of Abkhazia and South Ossetia; invasion of Ukraine in 2014; deliberate attacks against civilians in Syria; defense of Assad’s use of chemical weapons and other crimes against humanity; chemical-weapons attacks on Russian expatriates in the UK; and seizure of Ukrainian naval vessels and personnel attempting to transit the Kerch Strait are all violations of international law.

Russia has paid virtually no price for any of them except the invasion of Ukraine. On the contrary, Putin has positioned himself as a mediator in Syria (although not a successful one) by convening a pseudo–peace process in Astana that competes with the internationally recognized Geneva Process (which has also been unsuccessful, to be sure). Putin continues to portray Russia as a mediator even in the Ukraine conflict where he is a belligerent. He successfully obfuscated the illegality of his actions in and beyond the Kerch Strait, and has deflected some of the opprobrium his activities in Syria deserve by accusing the U.S. of supporting terrorists and the Syrian opposition of conducting the chemical weapons attacks.88 The expulsion of Russian officials—including intelligence officers— by the U.S., UK, and other states in response to the chemical weapons attacks in Britain was hardly a crippling response.89

The net result of these repeated violations of international law that do not result in meaningful consequences is their normalization. Each one establishes a precedent that Putin can and will then use to defend similar or even more aggressive activities. If the West accepted the clearly illegal seizure of Ukrainian ships in international waters near the Kerch Strait, how will it react if Russian forces seize some other ship on a trumped-up pretext while it attempts to transit the opening Arctic shipping route? Having taken no action against Russia for its defense of Assad’s use of chemical weapons, how would the West respond to a covert Russian operation to use chemical warfare in Ukraine while attributing the incident to the Ukrainian or a Western government?

The principled answer is that, of course, failure to act in one case does not preclude action in subsequent cases. If the West has not responded adequately to most of these Russian transgressions, neither has it explicitly condoned them—yet. That is a line that we must be very wary of inadvertently crossing.

Imagine an unlikely but not an impossible situation in which Ukraine’s President Volodymir Zelensky, elected in April 2019, asks the U.S. and the EU to waive Russian sanctions for Ukraine—or lift them altogether—as part of a deal he is negotiating to “end the conflict” in his country. It would be difficult to resist such a request since ending wars is desirable, especially if it can be done with the apparent acceptance of both sides. The net effect of endorsing such a deal, however, which would surely leave Crimea in Russia’s hands and eastern Ukraine in a changed political relationship to Kyiv, would be to endorse retroactively the violations of international law Putin committed in 2014. Doing so would indeed establish a precedent that Putin can impose his will on other states as long as he subsequently succeeds well enough to convince or coerce those states into recognizing his actions.

There is, of course, no new principle at work here. It has always been true in the modern states system that a successful aggressor can have his aggression legitimized by a subsequent peace agreement, even one forcefully imposed on the defeated state. The novelty in this situation is twofold. First, Russia has not been universally identified as the aggressor— Putin’s efforts in Ukraine are not generally accepted as the offensive land-grab they actually were—and Putin’s role in any deal would be as mediator rather than belligerent. It is one thing to accept that Putin launched, waged, and won a war of aggression, the outcome of which the defeated state chose to accept; it is another to say that he facilitated and mediated a peace agreement in a conflict to which he was not actually party, when, in fact, he initiated it and directly benefited from it.

Second, the principle at issue goes beyond the straightforward one of legitimizing a forcible conquest—it also touches on the nature of the post-Soviet states’ sovereignty. Putin has asserted, as we have argued, that Russia has the right to intervene by force in any of the post-Soviet states and the international community has no right to interfere (including even by offering an opinion). Recognizing his activities in Ukraine ex post facto recognizes this principle as well. It establishes as a firm precedent, reinforcing the precedent already established by the invasion of Georgia, that there are degrees of sovereignty in the international community and that some states are more sovereign than others. Putin is clearly attempting to establish precisely that principle. The West must resist the temptations he may offer to allow him to do so.

Create a constellation of alliances and friendly states that gravitate toward Russia. Putin has been working hard to create multiple blocs and groupings of which Russia is either the sole center or one of a small number of core states, as an alternative to the U.S.-dominated international order he so opposes.90 Few of these individual efforts have been particularly effective, nor is it clear that the sum of them will result in a truly Russia-centric constellation of states. But the tenacity with which he has pursued this objective and the sheer number of attempts to reach it demonstrate, if nothing else, the importance he seems to attach to it.

Some of these groupings offer Russia little inherent influence. BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa) began simply as an acronym to describe major emerging markets, for example. It has no formal decision-making process, nor are its members aligned with one another on political or economic policies. It has no military component at all.

Some, such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) require Russia to compete with China for predominant influence.91 That competition is not going well for Moscow, at least in the case of the SCO, leading Putin to de-emphasize this forum for the moment. Some, like the Eurasian Economic Union, remain largely aspirational. They have not yet established themselves as meaningful associations through which Russia could hope to exert influence now, nor is it clear that they will gain more significance over time—although Putin continues to work at it.92 Others are operational and meaningful. The Astana Process tripartite has not brought peace to Syria, but it has helped establish Putin at the heart of a triad with Iran and Turkey that is shaping Ankara’s drift away from NATO and toward Moscow. The Quartet Intelligence Center has not yet integrated the Iraqi military or government into the Russian orbit as fully as Putin might like, but it gives form to the very real military coalition of Russia, Iran, and Syria that is fighting in Syria.93 Still others, such as the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) are largely moribund at the moment, but the Union Treaty with Belarus had also been dormant almost since its creation in the 1990s, and Putin is attempting to reify it.94 We cannot discount the possibility that he may do so with one of the other agreements that are legacies of the 1990s. The purpose of laying out these various efforts is not to suggest that they are likely to succeed, or that their success would have dire consequences for American national security—it might or might not, depending on the circumstances. The purpose is, rather, to demonstrate again the coherence between Putin’s stated grand strategic vision and the undertakings the Russian state is pursuing to achieve it. Putin’s goals are antithetical to the security and national interests of the United States and its allies. We must prevent him from achieving them, without resorting to major war if at all possible. We turn next, therefore, to the means by which Putin and his subordinates pursue his aims—an examination that will show the tremendous challenges his methods pose, on the one hand, and the opportunities to respond with means well short of war, on the other.

THE RUSSIAN WAY OF WAR

The Russian way of war today is based on recognition of Russia’s fundamental weaknesses and the fact that Russia is not a near-peer of the U.S. and will not become one any time soon. It is designed to achieve Moscow’s objectives without fighting a major war against the West that Russia would likely lose if it did not escalate to using nuclear weapons.95 Its technological emphases have therefore been on less-expensive and asymmetric capabilities such as information operations, cyber operations, A2/ AD systems, and nuclear systems. Its intellectual development has focused on the category of political-informational-military activities encapsulated in the terms “hybrid war” or “gray zone” conflict.96 Russia is optimizing itself to fight a poor man’s war because it is poor and will remain so. Putin is sufficiently in contact with reality to know that he will fail if he attempts to regain anything approaching conventional military parity with the West.

Assessing the novelty of this Russian approach is difficult. None of the concepts or technologies on which it relies is new or unique to it. Most of the key intellectual framework goes back to the early days of Soviet military thinking. Some can be traced back centuries to Sun Tsu. Nor has Russia abandoned traditional military approaches and conventional capabilities. It would be both wrong and dangerous to ascribe to Russia the invention of an entirely new way of war that is the only way in which it will fight now, or in the future.

There are nevertheless important differences between the current Russian approach and the approach that characterized Russian military and national security strategy and doctrine in the 2000s and the 1990s, to say nothing of the Soviet period. The differences lie partly in emphasis and partly in the degree of intellectual development of certain concepts at the expense of others. It would be equally wrong and dangerous, therefore, to see the current Russian approach to war as the same as, or even congruent with, all of the post-Soviet period. The Russian military in the 1990s and 2000s focused largely on acquiring the capabilities it most envied in the stunning conventional American military victories against Iraq in 1991 and 2003. It sought to acquire long-range precision-strike capabilities that the Soviet military never had, stealth technology, and tanks and aircraft roughly equivalent with the mainstay technologies of NATO countries.97 It also sought to transform itself from a mass cadre-andreserve conscript force into a volunteer professional military, recognizing the tremendous value the U.S. transition to the all-volunteer force had brought on the battlefield.98 It has managed to achieve only partial success in most of these measures after nearly three decades. It has re-equipped many, but by no means all, of its combat units with weapons systems roughly equivalent to American fourth-generation aircraft (such as the F-15E Strike Eagle), M1 tanks, etc. It has struggled to field a force of fifth-generation aircraft and is unlikely to build a large enough arsenal of such aircraft to pose a serious challenge to American capabilities in any short period of time.99 It has acquired and demonstrated the ability to employ precision weapons, including long-range precision missile systems. Its mix of those systems and “dumb bombs” in Syria, however, was more similar to the mix the U.S. used in 1991 than to the mix American forces use today—the large majority of Russian munitions dropped in Syria were not precision-guided munitions because the Russian stockpiles are not large enough to support their widespread employment.100 The Russian military has notably failed to transition fully to an all-volunteer force, moreover, and has given up the effort. It has become, therefore, a segmented force with a volunteer element (so-called contract soldiers) and a large body of conscripts serving one-year terms (half the two-year service requirement for conscripts in the Red Army). This partial professionalization will continue to exercise a drag on its ability to complete its modernization programs; one-year conscripts simply cannot learn both how to be soldiers and how to use very advanced modern weapons systems. Russia’s modernization efforts lurched dramatically in 2008 with the appointment of Anatolii Serdyukov as defense minister.101 Serdyukov’s mandate was to reduce the cost of the Russian military significantly in response to the collapse in global oil prices resulting from the global financial crisis. He sought to make major personnel cuts, to restructure weapons system acquisition, and to reorganize the military, especially the ground forces, in a way that would have severely degraded its ability to conduct large-scale conventional warfare without optimizing it for any other sort of warfare. Serdyukov’s successor, Sergei Shoigu, along with Chief of the General Staff Valeriy Gerasimov, have reversed many, but not all, of those reforms. It is important to note, therefore, that some of the changes being made to the Russian military that enhance its ability to fight maneuver war are reversals of changes made in 2008 for cost-cutting purposes, rather than new improvements on an already-sound structure. The emphasis in Russian military development has changed significantly since the start of Russian involvement in Ukraine in 2014 and Syria in 2015. Gerasimov published a noteworthy article in 2013, discussion of which in the Western press gave rise to the phrase “Gerasimov doctrine.”102 The author of that phrase subsequently not only retracted it, but also aggressively attacked the idea of its existence.103 As with “hybrid war” and “gray zone,” this paper will not attempt to defend or attack the validity of the term, but will explore the collection of concepts and actions to which it could meaningfully be said to apply and that do actually comprise the current Russian approach to war.104 The heart of this approach is the conclusion that wars are won and lost in the information space rather than on the battlefield. Russian military thinkers have gone so far as to argue that every strategic, operational, and even tactical undertaking should be aimed first at achieving an effect in the information space, and that it is the information campaign that is decisive.105 Formal Russian doctrine has not gone this far, nor has Russian military activity on the ground, but the extreme statement is a measure of how important the concept is.106 The importance of information operations is old hat for any Sovietologist. The Soviets were renowned for the “active measures” of the KGB, for “disinformation” and various efforts to suborn groups in the West, sometimes unwittingly, to advance their ideological and concrete agendas. The Soviet military evolved an elaborate theory of deception, bringing the term “maskirovka” into common parlance among those who studied it. The Soviets also built out a concept called “reflexive control” that is the most noteworthy element of Putin’s ability to play a poor hand well.107 Reflexive control is a fancy way of saying “gaslighting.” It is the effort to shape the information space in which an adversary makes decisions so that he voluntarily chooses to act contrary to his own interests and his own benefit—all the while believing that he is actually advancing his own cause. Reflexive control is a form of intellectual jiu-jitsu, which may be one reason it appeals to Putin, who is a long-time and high-level practitioner of the Russian form of judo known as sambo.108 It uses the enemy’s strength against him in the best case, but at least causes him to avoid bringing his strength to bear against you. None of this, again, is new. Even the additions of cyber operations and cyber-enabled information operations such as bots and troll farms are not new or unique to the Russian approach to war. The novelty comes in part from the relative emphasis in Russian operations on efforts to shape the information space and the frequent subordination of conventional military operations and the threat of such operations to those efforts. Another novel aspect is the vulnerability of Western societies to these kinds of efforts, resulting in part from the effects of changes in the technological shape of the information space and the way in which it interacts with the psychology and sociology of Western individuals and societies. The current information environment favors the attacker over the defender for several reasons. The extremely widespread penetration of the internet in Western societies gives an attacker almost universal access to the population, unfiltered by government agency or corporate leadership. The anonymity made possible by the internet makes it difficult or impossible for individuals to know who is speaking to them. The decentralization of sources of information magnifies the effect of that anonymity by allowing it to seem that multiple independent sources verify and validate each other even when a single individual or group controls all of them. And the psychological asymmetry of outrage and retraction means that corrections and fact-checking almost never fully undo the damage done by a false accusation and often have little effect. These characteristics of the modern information space have created the ideal environment in which ideas first developed and attempted by the Soviets can flourish in ways the Soviets could never have imagined.

We must be careful to avoid attributing too much brilliance to Putin and Gerasimov. It is not necessarily the case, or even likely, that they perceived the opportunities these phenomena would present and skillfully designed a “doctrine” to take advantage of them. On the contrary, they and their Russian and Soviet predecessors have been trying to make these approaches work all along. The increased intellectual, doctrinal, and organizational emphasis on them, starting overtly in 2015, likely results instead from the realization that they were suddenly working very well. As with all important military innovations, therefore, the emergence of the current Russian approach to war was almost certainly the result of theory, action, experience, and reflections on interactions with the adversary rather than a sudden explosion of insight.

Whatever its origins and novelty or lack thereof, this Russian approach has allowed Putin to make gains he could never have hoped to make with conventional military forces alone.109 Syria is a case in point. Russia could never have established a lodgment on the Syrian coast and then expanded it to encompass a naval facility, a permanent and expanded military airbase, and a ground forces garrison—all protected by advanced air defense systems—through conventional military operations, against the wishes of the U.S. and its allies. Russian aircraft flying to Syria must transit either NATO airspace (through Turkey or Romania or Bulgaria and then Greece) or Iraqi airspace (via Iran) that the U.S. dominates. Had the U.S. been determined to prevent Russian planes from getting to Syria, the Russian Air Force could not have penetrated the defenses the U.S. and its allies could have put up. But the U.S. and its allies made no such decision. They have, on the contrary, worked hard to avoid any risk of military confrontation with Russian aircraft—a project made challenging, not unironically, by the periodic aggressiveness of Russian pilots. The prospect of a Russian naval expedition forcing its way into the Tartus naval facility in the face of efforts by the U.S. Sixth Fleet to stop it is even more fanciful.

The key to Putin’s success in this gambit lay in his ability to persuade American and NATO leaders that Russia’s military presence in Syria was not a threat and might even be helpful—while simultaneously stoking the belief that any U.S. effort to oppose or control the Russian deployment would lead to major, possibly nuclear, war.

The key to that success, in turn, lay in the fact that neither the Obama nor the Trump administration wanted to be in Syria or wished to fight any kind of conflict with Russia. President Obama, on the contrary, invited Putin into Syria in 2013 to help him out of the trap he had created by announcing that any further use of chemical weapons by Assad was a “red line”—without actually being willing to enforce that red line when Assad crossed it.

Obama’s decision to reach out to Moscow likely resulted in part from the long bipartisan trend of seeking to “reset” relations with Russia, bring Russia back into the fold of responsible international stakeholders, and generally return to what Americans saw as the golden age of U.S.-Russian cooperation in the 1990s. This trend began in the first years of the George W. Bush administration, shortly after Putin’s accession to power. It continued with Hillary Clinton’s vaunted push of the “reset” button and Donald Trump’s praise for Putin and continued attempts to find ways to cooperate with him toward supposedly common objectives.110 The conviction that a Russian reset and a return to the golden years of the 1990s is just one phone call or summit away has become one of the few truly bipartisan foreign policy assumptions in this increasingly polarized era. Putin has used it skillfully to advance his own projects while offering few or no concessions in return.

Conventional military forces play a critical role in the Russian approach to war nevertheless. Russian airpower and long-range precision-strike capability were critical to preserving, stabilizing, and then expanding the Assad regime and the territory it controlled in Syria. Iran, Lebanese Hezbollah, and the other components of the pro-regime coalition all lack similar capabilities. The hardening of opposition defenses in various parts of Syria before the Russian intervention raised the requirement for continued regime offensive operations beyond what the pro-regime coalition could provide.111 The Russian intervention was therefore essential to the survival of the regime and remains essential to its precarious stability and to any hope it has of regaining control of the rest of Syria. The very limited deployment of a few dozen aircraft and salvoes of long-range missiles made Russia indispensable to the pro-regime coalition and gave Putin enormous leverage in Syria at relatively low risk and low cost. The deployment of Russian S-300 and S-400 anti-aircraft systems to Syria dramatically increased that leverage, again at very low risk and cost. The American military could destroy those systems and operate freely over Syrian airspace even against Moscow’s wishes, but the cost in U.S. aircraft and missiles devoted to the operation, in time, and possibly in casualties and aircraft losses would be significant. The range of the S-300 and the reported locations at which launchers were deployed, moreover, means that most Israeli Air Force and some Turkish Air Force aircraft are within range of those systems the moment they take off from airbases in Israel and Turkey. That fact has not been lost on Israeli or Turkish leaders. Putin has also used conventional military forces on a limited scale in Ukraine. He relied on the naval infantry forces already deployed in Crimea, reinforced by small numbers of special forces and other units, to seize control of that peninsula in 2014. Small numbers of conventional forces battalion tactical groups and similar-sized formations helped local proxies seize and hold ground in eastern Ukraine, while highly skilled special forces elements supported them in the battle area and in the rear of the Ukrainian forces.112 Russia has provided air defense capabilities and significant electronic warfare support to its Ukrainian proxies and also to its fighters and allies in Syria. The highly targeted assistance of Russia’s conventional military is probably even more essential to Putin’s proxies in Ukraine than in Syria. The Ukrainian Armed Forces are likely to regain control over the Russian-occupied territories in Ukraine if the Russian military stops supporting its proxies on the battlefield. The current Russian way of war, therefore, truly is hybrid. It requires the use of limited numbers of highly capable conventional forces able to conduct expeditionary operations beyond Russia’s borders. However, it also relies on the creation and maintenance of a political and information environment that facilitates the presence and activities of those forces without serious opposition from any state or actor that could meaningfully challenge them. The conventional forces themselves are enablers to a larger political-informational campaign rather than being the main effort. Evidence for that assessment lies in Putin’s response to the several occasions on which his conventional forces suffered losses— specifically, the Turkish downing of a Russian aircraft in 2015; the accidental downing of another Russian plane by Syrian forces during an Israeli airstrike in 2018; and the killing of several hundred members of the Wagner PMC during an attack by that group on an outpost in eastern Syria held by the opposition, where American advisers were also present.113 Washington and the world held their breath in each case, worrying about Putin’s possible response. The U.S. Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Joseph Dunford, reached out immediately to Gerasimov to send messages of both deterrence and de-escalation each time.114 Putin did not retaliate militarily on any of these occasions. He responded to the Turkish shoot-down by deploying Russian S-300 systems operated by Russian troops, and to the Syrian shoot-down by completing a contract with the Assad regime for S-300 systems of its own, which had long been held up. He made no meaningful response to the Wagner incident and did not even use his air defense systems to disrupt the massive U.S. air operations against the attacking Wagner forces as they were destroyed. Putin has similarly refrained from using his own S-300 and S-400 systems to shoot at Israeli aircraft during any of Israel’s repeated airstrikes against regime targets within Syria and has, reportedly, prevented the Syrians from using their S-300 system.115 Nor has Putin retaliated against Israel for those strikes or against the U.S. for the 2017 missile strikes Washington launched against the Shayrat airbase in response to Assad’s renewed use of chemical weapons. The aircraft and missile systems Putin has deployed to Syria, therefore, are clearly not meant to give him control over Syria’s skies. They are also obviously not meant to challenge the ability of the U.S., Turkey, or Israel to conduct anti-regime operations, at least within the current limits of such operations. Lastly, they are not meant to enable Putin to retaliate in any symmetrical tit-for-tat manner for Russian losses suffered directly or indirectly at the hands of the U.S., Turkey, or Israel. The relative inaction of Russia’s aircraft against those states could be at least partially explained by Moscow’s focus on fighting the opposition. But the air defense systems can only be intended to defend against the U.S., Turkey, and Israel, since the opposition has never had aircraft against which those systems are effective.116 The Kremlin has, in other words, deployed systems to defend against attacks that have, in fact, come—and yet not used those systems to defend against those attacks. This conundrum can only be resolved by recognizing that the purpose of those systems is to shape the behavior of the U.S., Turkey, and Israel rather than to fight openly against them. The deployments of advanced air defense weapons, and also of some of the air-to-air-optimized aircraft Russia has periodically sent to Syria, support a political-informational campaign rather than a conventional military operation (even if we regard counter-insurgency and counter-terrorism as being in that category). Circumstances might, of course, arise in which Putin would authorize his troops to use some or all of their capabilities conventionally against the U.S. and its partners and allies. That fact drives the fear of escalation that leads the U.S. Joint Chiefs chairman to jump on the phone to Moscow every time a major incident occurs. It also shapes American, Turkish, and Israeli calculations about military options they might choose. This is exactly the point from Moscow’s perspective. Putin’s S-300 and S-400 systems in Syria work best if they are never used. Problems of Escalation—for Russia The U.S. military and those who study it are preoccupied, understandably, by its shortcomings and inadequacies. The shortcomings are real, and the military is, indeed, inadequate for the global requirements it must meet. The preoccupation with our own failings has tended to obscure an objective assessment of the relative risks to the U.S. and Russia of a conventional military confrontation in Syria, however. The U.S. has therefore tended to overestimate the likelihood that a crisis with Russia in Syria will escalate to the point of such a major confrontation and, as a result, has allowed Putin’s very limited deployment of combat power and good use of the information space to drive a high degree of American self-deterrence. Russia has rarely had more than a couple of dozen combat aircraft at its airfields in Syria at any given time.117 Most of them are usually ground-attack planes (principally Su-25 Frogfoots, which are roughly similar to the U.S. Air Force A-10), and they have limited ability to conduct air-to-air combat against U.S. fighter bombers. The rest are generally variants of the Su-30 fighter bomber, sometimes with a few more-advanced airframes optimized for air-to-air combat, including, occasionally, the Su-57 stealth fighter bomber. A single U.S. carrier strike group has around 48 strike fighters, all with air-to-air and air-to-ground capabilities. The U.S. Navy alone has more than 775 strike aircraft (including all variants of the F/A-18 and the F-35).118 The U.S. Air Force has more than 1,240 fighters and fighter bombers, as well as around 140 strategic bombers.119 The single carrier strike group—almost invariably in the Mediterranean or in or near the Persian Gulf—thus outguns the Russian aircraft in Syria by a significant margin, and the U.S. Air Force and Navy could rapidly begin to flow crushing numbers of reinforcements to the theater. The Russian Air Force, by contrast, has a total of roughly 745 fighter bombers in its entire inventory, according to the most recently published Defense Intelligence Agency estimates.120 It has an additional 215 attack aircraft (mostly Su-25s) and another 141 strategic bombers. It is thus somewhat larger than the U.S. Navy, considerably smaller than the U.S. Air Force, and about one-third the size of both together. These numbers exclude the roughly 240 F-16s in the Turkish Air Force—which have demonstrated their ability to shoot down Russian fighters in limited engagements, and so should not be dismissed—as well as those of America’s other NATO allies, not to mention the Israeli Air Force, one of the best in the world. The U.S. thus has absolute escalation dominance in an air-to-air fight over the skies of Syria, unless one imagines that Russian aircraft and pilots are an order-of-magnitude more lethal than their American counterparts—a notion there is no evidence for, and considerable evidence against.121 Critics of this argument need not challenge this assertion, but could argue instead that it is beside the point. The U.S. military cannot focus solely on fighting the Russians in Syria. It must support American ground forces deployed in Iraq and Afghanistan; conduct counter-terrorism operations throughout Africa; and deter and be ready to respond to aggressions by China, North Korea, and Iran, at least. The concentration of aircraft, ships, and pilots needed to fight a significant air war against Russia in Syria would severely degrade the U.S. military’s ability to meet these other requirements. This fact more than any fear of confronting the Russian military in the Middle East explains the self-paralysis of the U.S. military. Putin, by contrast, has projected a willingness to mix it up in Syria. His pilots ostentatiously fly close to American aircraft, engage in risky maneuvers near them, lock targeting radars on them, and in other ways portray almost an eagerness to engage in a fight.122 The Turkish downing of a Russian aircraft in 2015 resulted from repeated violations of Turkish airspace by Russian pilots in another set of deliberate provocations.123 Putin’s message through these actions has consistently been: You will not fight me here, but I am willing to fight you. Yet on each occasion when blows have been traded, Putin has backed down. One reason is that his escalation calculus is far worse than America’s. The Russian Air Force also has essential tasks outside Syria that would prevent it from concentrating all, or even most of its available assets there. It must cover Russia’s enormous periphery, the largest land border of any country in the world, including a long border with China. Putin would be foolish to strip aircraft from St. Petersburg, a short flight from NATO airfields, while fighting the U.S. in Syria. Nor could he denude his forces in Crimea, linked to the Russian mainland by a single bridge, or his forces in and near eastern Ukraine. He could not even prudently strip his far east of all advanced aircraft. He might— or might not—decide that China would not take advantage of any weakening of his defenses, but the U.S. can threaten him from carriers in the Pacific even if Japan opts to deny the use of its bases in a conflict with Russia to which it is not party. Would the U.S. bomb St. Petersburg or Vladivostok while fighting Russia in Syria? Of course not. But strategic calculus does not work that way. It is a fact that the U.S. could conduct such attacks, and any professional military staff forced to confront the prospect of an escalation to major conventional war in one theater would have to consider the possibility that such a war might spread to other theaters. Best professional military advice in such a situation would be to maintain sufficient combat power in any other vulnerable theater to deter and, if necessary, defeat enemy attempts to transfer the conflict there. It is equally true, after all, that a rapid U.S.-Russia dustup in Syria would be very unlikely to trigger a Chinese military adventure or a North Korean invasion of South Korea. Yet the U.S. military allows the fears of just such scenarios to undermine its willingness to contemplate fighting Russia in Syria— and the Russian military will behave no differently. Even that calculation is not Russia’s most serious problem with the idea of escalation to conventional conflict in the skies over Syria. The biggest problem is actually financial. Russia could not afford to replace the losses it would inevitably take in such a fight, whereas the U.S. could. Bad as the differential in aircraft looks for the Russians, we must recall that the differential in overall economic power and in defense budgets looks much worse. The Russian economy and defense budgets are less than one-tenth the size of America’s. Its military is struggling to “modernize” to a level of technology similar to what the U.S. has had for decades. The cost of having to replace many lost modern aircraft would disrupt Russian defense programs for years. The U.S. could make good such losses in short order if it chose.

Nuclear Escalation

The prospect of the world’s two largest nuclear powers going to war, even in a limited conventional way, is of course terrifying. The U.S. certainly should do everything in its power to achieve its objectives without resorting to major combat operations against Russia—that is the guiding principle of current national security documents and of this report.

The straightforward equation sometimes made between any such local conflict and global nuclear war, however, is entirely unjustified. It simply is not the case that any major conventional war will lead inevitably, or even probably, to nuclear war.

One can trace escalation paths from a conventional war Putin is losing in Syria to his use of a theater nuclear weapon, either to change the odds or to try to force the U.S. to back down. He could use such a weapon to destroy a U.S. airfield in one of the regional states (Turkey, perhaps, or Kuwait) or a U.S. aircraft carrier strike group. The destruction of any single airbase or carrier would not prevent the U.S. from carrying forward an air war to successful conclusion. There are simply too many bases and carriers the U.S. could use for the elimination of a single one to terminate a campaign. Unless Putin were willing to destroy many airbases in many different countries (most of them NATO members) and sink every carrier moving into the theater, he could not prevent the U.S. from destroying his assets in the Middle East.

It is impossible to predict the American response to such a use of nuclear weapons—regardless of the occupant of the White House. The U.S. could respond by using theater nuclear weapons of its own against Russian forces in the Middle East (which this report emphatically does not support or recommend)—and here, a single nuclear device dropped on the airfield near Latakia would pretty much destroy Russian capabilities to continue the air war in the region. Alternatively, Washington could engage in either conventional or nuclear retaliation against Russian forces beyond the region, including in Russia proper (and, again, this report does not support or recommend using nuclear weapons under any circumstances, except possibly in extremis situations far more dire than those under consideration here).

Putin would then be forced to decide whether to escalate further. He could conduct a larger nuclear strike against NATO (since any effort seriously to disrupt U.S. military capabilities in and around Europe would require breaking or badly damaging the alliance). He could also go directly for a strike on the U.S. homeland. If he chose the latter and launched an all-out strike, the U.S. president would likely respond in kind, leading to the destruction of both Russia and the U.S.—and possibly life on Earth. One could endlessly consider lesser variants, but they all lead to dramatically increased risk of Armageddon.

Thus, the real questions are, would Putin risk Armageddon for Syria, or is he likely to miscalculate an American response to a nuclear escalation badly enough to end up there against his will?

Full-scale global thermonuclear war is an insane undertaking. The reason for maintaining large arsenals of strategic nuclear weapons is to deter such a war, not to fight it. A tiny handful of leaders in the past have been willing to accept their own total destruction in pursuit of some larger cause—Hitler being the prime exemplar of this, as of so many evils—but none of them, mercifully, has had nuclear weapons. Putin does not fall anywhere near this category. He is a thoroughly rational actor who has prospered by taking prudent risks and backing down, rather than escalating, on almost every occasion when the breaks did not go his way.124 He holds to no ideology that transcends his own existence sufficiently to cause him to prefer obliteration to defeat. Considerable evidence opposes the idea that he would accept, let alone embrace, full-scale nuclear war if given any choice to avoid it.

The real risk of such a war emerging from a regional crisis, therefore, comes from the risk of miscalculation. It comes, in other words, from the notion that Putin might persuade himself that he could safely use a nuclear weapon of his own without triggering a nuclear retaliation that could escalate to total destruction.

Putin himself has set conditions, for fear of precisely this kind of miscalculation, through his discussions of “de-escalation” with regard to scenarios for warfare in the Baltic states. The Russian military has openly discussed using one or a small number of nuclear weapons to terminate a conventional, even a regional or local, conflict on its own terms.125 It is by no means clear, of course, that all three of the nuclear NATO states (the U.S., Britain, and France) would choose not to retaliate against a nuclear attack on another NATO member state. But neither is it obvious, in the current circumstances, that they would. Putin might have some reason to think he could successfully “escalate to de-escalate,” given the general ambivalence within some NATO capitals about the desirability of even fighting for the Baltics to begin with.

It is harder to imagine him making such a calculation in the context of the Syria scenario being considered here, however. In this scenario, the conflict involves American versus Russian forces directly, and the attack would be on American troops, with thousands or tens of thousands killed in the nuclear strike. The U.S. president would already have demonstrated a willingness to escalate to a high level conventionally, a fact that would weigh heavily against the notion that that president would tamely accept a Russian escalation to a higher level of conflict. Putin would have to be an imbecile, or a gambler of epic proportions, to persuade himself that he could safely escalate to de-escalate in such a conflict. Assuming deterrence continues to work at the strategic level, in other words, it is very likely to continue to work at the operational and tactical levels, even in a major conventional conflict involving American and Russian forces, at least outside of Russian territory.

The purpose of the foregoing discussion was not in any way to suggest that a U.S.-Russian conventional war in Syria or anywhere else is safe, would definitely not spread, and could not lead to nuclear war. Still less was it a brief to advocate for any such conflict. The aim, rather, was to show that the escalation paths from the current situation to higher levels of conflict look much worse for Putin than they do for the U.S., and that even adding the notion of the risk of nuclear war or escalation to de-escalate, Putin has every reason to believe that outright confrontation with the American military will end badly for him.

That is one of the main reasons behind his preference for hybrid warfare. It is the reason he is unlikely to abandon that preference any time soon but seems, rather, to be doubling down on it. This has implications far beyond Syria. It goes into the Baltics, Poland, NATO, and even Ukraine and Belarus with various important modifications. The current Russian way of war reflects the realities of Russia’s situation and the correlation of forces between Russia and the U.S. for the foreseeable future. This is the way of war against which the U.S. and its allies must most urgently prepare, and from which they must not allow themselves to be distracted, even while taking necessary steps to address deficiencies in conventional combat power and other areas. Hybrid war is not a façade or a fad— it is the only realistic way Putin has to achieve his objectives by force.

### 1AR—Impact Turn—Internet

#### Russian legitimacy facilitates the export of its authoritarian internet model—wrecks internet freedom

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Robert, “The Spread of Russia’s Digital Authoritarianism,” in Artificial Intelligence, China, Russia, and the Global Order, ed. Nicholas D. Wright. https://www.airuniversity.af.edu/Portals/10/AUPress/Books/B\_0161\_WRIGHT\_ARTIFICIAL\_INTELLIGENCE\_CHINA\_RUSSIA\_AND\_THE\_GLOBAL\_ORDER.PDF

Russian president Vladimir Putin has long viewed the global Internet as an American Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) project (MacAskill, 2014). For Putin, everything from the technical architecture to the governance that un- derpins the Internet has been constructed carefully in favor of American val- ues and interests. For Putin, it follows logically that it is therefore in Russia’s interest to subvert existing architecture and governance structures. In re- sponse to these paranoias, Russia has constructed a “red web” in its authori- tarian image.

Russian digital authoritarianism displays four notable characteristics:

1. Less technical filtering of content than a comparable Chinese system, but greater reliance on intimidation and social norms around self- censorship, underpinned by robust technical surveillance system on all Internet traffic, known colloquially as SORM;

2. Complex, but ultimately highly restrictive, speech and expression laws;

3. Corporate capture, particularly state capture, of ISPs; and

4. Heavy-handed state manipulation of the market for information domestically.

Because the Russian approach is so reliant on surveillance, its system neces- sarily involves strict laws and technology to enable law enforcement.

Legal structure. As Human Rights Watch (2017) notes, since 2012 the Russian state has gradually updated the legal system to outlaw extreme speech online. In Russia, the state has selectively cast extreme speech to include rela- tively benign criticism of the government (Human Rights Watch, 2017). Rather than filtering or blocking content, the Russian state relies on ISPs and other providers to comply with a series of laws mandating law enforcement access to their data and servers via SORM-compliant technologies, which al- low law enforcement to collect or monitor traffic without the knowledge of the service provider. A set of regulations issued by the Federal Council of Ministers and the Ministry of Communications and Information Technolo- gies codify legal requirements for ISPs to use SORM-compliant technology and install SORM “black boxes” on their networks (Global Legal Monitor, 2016). The SORM network intercepts and stores all Internet traffic in Russia. Due to arcane, Soviet era–legal orders, once law enforcement has court per- mission to access SORM data, the scope of lawful access under the order is largely unrestricted (Soldatov and Borogan, 2015, p. 78). In addition, as Mare- cal (2016, p. 33) notes, “Surveillance can begin before the warrant is granted (or even requested), the warrant need not be shown to anyone (whether the surveillance target or the telecom operator), and it is only required for the retrieval of collected communications content, and not for the metadata that is often just as revealing as content, if not more so.”

Technology. To enforce laws, law enforcement requires communcations content and data. To scoop up this information, the Federal Security Service (FSB) relies on SORM black boxes, which mirror online traffic, sending the original on to its intended destination and a copy of all traffic to FSB-owned and -operated servers. The FSB then employs technical solutions from a myr- iad of Russian and non-Russian companies to conduct deep packet inspec- tion, decrypting communications and gaining critical access as needed. A second major technology leveraged by the Russian security services is the Semantic Archive Platform, provided by Analytical Business Solutions, a Rus- sian software developer. The Semantic Archive Platform provides a means for security services to aggregate open-source online data (media, social net- works, forums, etc.), process this data, and analyze it. The Semantic Archive Platform utilizes algorithms to identify and extract key data, as well as to pro- cess the data for easier use by operators (Analytical Business Solutions, n.d.).

The Russian SORM-3 system allows most information and data to flow through the Internet—the exception being data and content from applica- tions and platforms that refuse to provide data access to security services via SORM devices. Because of this relatively free flow, the Russian state therefore engages in widespread prostate propaganda to flood the market for informa- tion and manipulate online narratives.

Exporting Russian Digital Authoritarianism

As Jacklyn Kerr (2018) notes, authoritarian adoption of digital solutions that shape their local information environment is likely driven by “[t]he in- ternationally available Internet control solutions of which a regime is aware, a regime’s financial and organizational capacity to implement these or to access assistance in their implementation, and the policies selected by other states in the regime’s reference group or endorsed by regional and international orga- nizations with which a state is closely engaged.”

The availability of models and products and the ease with which those products and models fit with existing capacities and legal frameworks largely drives the adoption of digital authoritarian practices. Russian approaches to digital authoritarianism are alluring to countries that have existing legal frameworks with similarities to Russia. The majority of Russian export of au- thoritarian enabling technology occurs in Russia’s own near abroad. As ex- plained below, however, Russia is adept at promoting its model globally via means beyond trade, such as through diplomacy and the strategic use of in- formation. It is important to note that, while some of this activity is clearly a concerted effort on the part of the Russian state, some activities that spread or promote digital authoritarianism likely do so unintentionally.

Diplomacy

As earlier mentioned, President Putin has long viewed the global Internet as a CIA project. For a Russian perspective, Western powers have carefully crafted the global rules governing the Internet. It is therefore a primary objec- tive of the Russian state to not only assert Russia’s sovereignty over the net- work within its borders but to also “make other countries, especially the United States, accept” this right (Soldatov and Borogan, 2015, p. 223). In pur- suit of this goal, the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs is one of the leading proponents of sweeping international cybersecurity treaties. Often, the desire to allow state entities to reassert “sovereignty” over the information space drives support for these treaties, legitimizing authoritarian approaches to In- ternet censorship and surveillance. Using events like the rampant misinfor- mation around liberal democratic elections in Europe and the United States, as well as the Snowden revelations, Russia seeks to blur the line between cy- bersecurity (computer network defense) and information control in interna- tional forums. The linkage of the two issues—and the promotion of this view globally—is a direct threat to the flow of information on the Internet and ease the task of authoritarians who seek to manipulate narratives to fulfill their objectives. By linking information control to cybersecurity in global forums, Russia, China, and their Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) partners have long sought to obscure their true intentions through semantics.

#### Internet freedom key to sustain global interdependence

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(Ryan David, “US Leadership in Cyberspace: Transnational Cyber Security and Global Governance.” Cyberspace and International Relations: Theory, Prospects and Challenges, pp. 169-170.)

The Open Door holds that US policymakers subscribe to a worldview where the security of the United States rests on sustained economic and political expansion abroad (Beard 1934; Williams 1959; also see Bacevich 2002; Layne 2006, 1998). Adas (2006) has shown that US policymakers from the founding of the United States through the present consistently leverage technology in pursuit of that expansion. Beginning in late 1994 and continuing to the present, US policymakers initiated and sustain a policy to repurpose the Internet as a platform for the expansion of American products and political ideals (Kiggins 2011). From the view of US policymakers, the social purpose of the Internet in the post-Cold War era is to serve as a platform for expanding free-market commerce and free speech, for globally expanding information and economic exchange (Kiggins 2011). To ensure the Internet is used in accordance with this social purpose, US policymakers have constructed a discourse around the Internet founded on the principle of openness (Antonova 2008; McCarthy 2011). US policymakers discursively promote and protect the Internet as an open domain in order to create global institutional conditions that are favorable for global expansion of information and economic exchange consistent with the worldview of US policymakers. Castells (1999) has shown how the Internet assists globalization by linking states in a deepening web of economic interdependence that characterizes this era of global capitalism shaped by the United States and other allied advanced industrialized democracies. Evidence of the growing economic import of the Internet supports the claim that the Internet is an increasingly vital global platform for exchange.

By 2015, total international trade over the Internet, more commonly referred to as global electronic commerce, is projected to be SI .4 trillion and is expected to continue to grow at a 13.5 % compounded annual growth rate for the foreseeable future (Enright 2011). Mann and Kierkegaard (2006, 25) estimate that global electronic commerce adds roughly .25 basis points of growth to annual GDP for industrialized nations. In the case of the United States, that translates to over $400 billion added to US GDP per year. While 53 % of all global electronic commerce transactions occur in the United States, Japan, and the United Kingdom, developing countries such as Brazil, China, Russia, and Mexico are projected to experience electronic commerce growth at an annual rate of 26% for the foreseeable future (Enright 2011). A shift is underway where global electronic commerce moves from the developed world to the developing world driven, in part, by successful economic development strategies that are creating consumer classes in those countries and, in part, by the expansion of mobile telecommunications networks throughout the developing world. More consumers, on a global scale, plug into cyber space through their new mobile devices such smart phones and tablet computers reflecting a shift from desktop computing to cloud computing. This shift will deepen interdependence, shrinking the distance between private Internet based computing and public Internet based computing (Castells 1999, 1996). With this shift in computing, global consumption patterns may change, and, with that change in consumption patterns may come change in global trade, economic production, employment, and political institutions (Ibid.). The Arab spring could be construed as reflecting these tectonic shifts in the global political economy that are amplified and accelerated by cyber based and enabled communications technologies. Combined, the Stuxnet virus, the cyber attack on Google and thirty-three other US enterprises, and the growing import of the Internet to global trade and information flows argue against a state-centric framework of cyber security that elides the role that the Internet plays in deepening linkages among state and non-state actors (Keohane and Nye 2001).

#### Interdependence prevents great power transition wars, independently of economic growth

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(Daniel W., May. “Five Known Unknowns about the Next Generation Global Political Economy.” <https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/IOS-Drezner-web-1.pdf>)

Globalization therefore creates powerful pressures on governments not to close off their economies through protectionism or military aggression. Interdependence can also tamp down conflicts that would otherwise be likely to break out during a great power transition. Of the 15 times a rising power has emerged to challenge a ruling power between 1500 and 2000, war broke out 11 times.109 Despite these odds, China’s recent rise to great power status has elevated tensions without leading to anything approaching war. It could be argued that the Sino-American economic relationship is so deep that it has tamped down the great power conflict that would otherwise have been in full bloom over the past two decades. Instead, both China and the United States have taken pains to talk about the need for a new kind of great power relationship. Interdependence can help to reduce the likelihood of an extreme event—such as a great power war—from taking place.

## 1AR—Public Credibility DA

### 1AR—AT: Dougherty Link

#### 1] This card is miscut – their ev says 2018, it’s from 2015. Mischaracterizing the date of a source in this instance has implications – they portray the source as from 2018 when the subs were pretty commonly used which gives them a distinct advantage when it comes to the debate regarding the usefulness of these weapons. If you think this is a reason the drop the team then drop them but otherwise it’s just a reason to drop the card

#### 2] Even if this is the case – perception towards the US is net worse which o/w’s – that’s 1AC Episkopos

#### 3] This disad has no internal link–A] Russia isn’t heavily invested in any proxy wars, B] they have no warrant saying that Poseidon decreasing credibility leads to escalation of proxy wars, C] their uniqueness ev is in the context of global nuclear brinksmanship whereas they’re public credibility argument is in the context of domestic perception which is radically different.

#### 4] We recut their ev – it’s massively power tagged – all it says is the weapon is a threat and the military understands it’s power

Pifer 15 – Steven Pifer is a nonresident senior fellow in the Arms Control and Non-Proliferation Initiative, Center for 21st Century Security and Intelligence, and the Center on the United States and Europe at the Brookings Institution, and a William J. Perry fellow at the Center for International Security and Cooperation at Stanford University. He focuses on nuclear arms control, Ukraine, and Russia. He has offered commentary on these issues on National Public Radio, PBS NewsHour, CNN, Fox News, BBC, and VOA, and his articles have run in The New York Times, The Washington Post, Financial Times, National Interest, Moscow Times, and Kyiv Post, among others; “Russia’s perhaps-not-real super torpedo”; November 18, 2015; <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/order-from-chaos/2015/11/18/russias-perhaps-not-real-super-torpedo/> As+

At about the time that it showed the Status-6 diagram, the broadcast aired Putin expressing concern about U.S. missile defenses and saying: “We’ll work on our missile defense systems, but primarily, as we’ve said repeatedly, I repeat, we’ll work on development of strike weapons capable of overcoming any anti-missile defense systems.” The Status-6, operating underwater, presumably would not be troubled by an American missile interceptor. But does the Russian military really believe it needs such a system to overcome U.S. missile defenses? It would hardly seem so. By 2018, the United States will have 44 missile interceptors with a velocity capable of engaging a strategic ballistic missile warhead. At that time, Russia will have some 1,500 deployed warheads on its intercontinental ballistic missiles and submarine-launched ballistic missiles. The Russian military understands this. The Russian public may not. The Status-6 revelation thus may have been aimed at domestic viewers, to assure them that, despite all of the anxiety that Moscow voices about U.S. missile defenses, the Russian military will still be able to strike back.

### 1AR—Link Turn

#### Poseidon’s perception among the Russian military is shit

Kroenig et. al. 20 –Matthew Kroenig is the deputy director of the Scowcroft Center for Strategy and Security at the Atlantic Council and an associate professor in the Department of Government and School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University. He is the author or editor of seven books, including The Logic of American Nuclear Strategy: Why Strategic Superiority Matters (Oxford University Press, 2018) and The Return of Great Power Rivalry: Democracy versus Autocracy from the Ancient World to the US and China (Oxford University Press, 2020). Mark Massa is a project assistant in the Scowcroft Center for Strategy and Security at the Atlantic Council. He is a master’s student in the Security Studies Program at the Georgetown University School of Foreign Service. He is currently writing his honors thesis on a theory of SSBN strategy. His research focuses on nuclear affairs and the Arctic. Christian Trotti is a program assistant in the Scowcroft Center for Strategy and Security at the Atlantic Council. In this role, he serves as the Scowcroft Center’s action officer for US and allied defense issues. His interests include great-power competition, nuclear deterrence, military strategy and operational concepts, and wargaming; “Russia’s Exotic Nuclear Weapons and Implications for the United States and NATO”; March 2020; <https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Russias-Exotic-Nuclear-Weapons.pdf> As+

The Poseidon, a nuclear-armed underwater drone, is the final exotic Russian strategic system. Eight Poseidon drones would be carried by, and launched from the torpedo tubes of, a nuclear-powered, guided-missile submarine (SSGN). While the Poseidon can be armed with conventional or nuclear payloads, its ability to carry a large-yield nuclear warhead has attracted much attention. Indeed, there is even speculation that the Poseidon would be laden with a multi-megaton warhead seeded with cobalt—which would result in particularly deadly nuclear fallout. Given that the Poseidon operates deeply underwater, it is unlikely that it could be guided by satellite navigation; therefore, its delivery would probably be inaccurate. Accordingly, when targeted at the US eastern seaboard, for example, it could be expected to hit “somewhere between Charleston, SC and Charlestown, MA,” as one participant claimed. Like the Burevestnik, this system may possess a loitering capability. The weapon could also be used at closer ranges in a counterforce capability against large fleet formations. Notably, some Russian commentators, including former Russian military officers, have criticized this weapon for being too noisy and slow, and, thus, vulnerable to interception.

## 1AR—Putin Approval DA

### 1AR—Uniqueness

#### Approval ratings are meaningless in Russia and the Russian government meddles with the Levada Center—no uniqueness for the DA.

[Max De Haldevang (1-17-2018), Reporter on Quartz’s geopolitics team and finalist for the 2020 Livingston Award, “Russia’s only independent pollster has been blocked ahead of this year’s presidential election,” Quartz, [https://qz.com/1181625/russias-only-independent-pollster-the-levada-center-has-been-blocked-ahead-of-the-election/]//SLC](https://qz.com/1181625/russias-only-independent-pollster-the-levada-center-has-been-blocked-ahead-of-the-election/%5d//CHS) PK

The Levada Center has long served as a crucial member of Russian civil society. The pollster has published the country’s only independent surveys, since it split from state-run VTsIOM in 2003, providing unique insights into Russians’ views about politics, economics, culture, and much else besides.

Now, it has become another casualty of the country’s 2012 “foreign agents” law, which the Kremlin uses to crack down on organizations that get funding from outside Russia. Having [been designated](https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/sep/20/ollster-russia-results-levada-centre-kremlin-foreign-agent-list) a “foreign agent” in 2016, Levada announced this week that it [won’t publish](https://www.reuters.com/article/us-russia-election-pollster/russian-pollster-pulls-pre-election-research-over-closure-fears-idUSKBN1F51GA?il=0) political polls in the run-up to the presidential election on March 18 for fear that authorities might shut it down for falling foul of the law. That means that as the country enters an election cycle where president Vladimir Putin’s victory is certain, we won’t have any trustworthy data to give us a sense of how voters feel about the situation.

Why does that matter if the election is a foregone conclusion? Political opinions in Russia are far more nuanced than just looking at Putin’s sky-high approval rating. Ever since the annexation of Crimea in 2014, Putin’s approval rating has soared, as Levada’s polls show.

However, dig a little deeper and you see the Crimea sugar-high is wearing off, with prime minister Dmitry Medvedev and the government both netting negative approval scores by the end of last year. In other words, Russians are much less happy with their government than the support for Putin implies.

As a result, there is little to excite Russian voters about the upcoming election. The campaign cycle has kicked off with news that the economy has [fallen back](https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2018-01-11/putin-s-break-from-recession-fleeting-as-economy-hits-a-pothole) into recession after a fleeting recovery from the longest contraction in recent history. But disgruntled voters won’t find any candidates who attack Putin’s economic record among the Kremlin-vetted candidates allowed on the ballot.

So, the real measure analysts care about is how many people bother to vote. In other words, is the support for Putin active or passive? The question has become even more salient this year, with Alexey Navalny, an anti-corruption blogger and the country’s most prominent opposition figure, banned from running and calling for a [general boycott](https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-russia-election-navalny/putin-critic-navalny-calls-election-boycott-rallies-idUKKBN1EL10D) of the vote.

As it happens, this is where polls about voting intentions by Levada and the main state pollster, VTsIOM, get vastly different results:

With turnout typically inflated by ballot box-stuffing and [other fraudulent measures](https://qz.com/795374/british-journalist-catches-rigged-russian-elections/), the lack of a baseline prediction provided by independent polls will hamper any hope of using Russia’s upcoming election as a reliable measure of public opinion.

### 1AR—No Link

#### No link – their Kofman 18 evidence is about Poseidon being influenced by defense establishments, not that it’s the primary part of his anti-West agenda, the plan doesn’t largely affect his popularity at all, he still has other hypersonic weapons systems like Avangard to flex with.

#### No internal link—they don’t have an internal link about how much Putin’s popularity will tank because of the ban—conceded 1AC Pry that the reason is his ego, not popularity. This is like saying Biden’s approval rating is going to tank if he eliminates the RGM-84 missile—the majority of people don’t give a fuck.

### 1AR—Link Turn

#### Russians don’t support increasing the military—our evidence is more recent, considers long term trends, and is much more qualified.

Gregory wrote his analysis before the Syria intervention. The price there has been enormous. Most Russians do not know the exact numbers, but many do have a sense of the financial and human costs. Recent [polls](https://www.ridl.io/en/foreign%20policy%20fatigue/) favor peaceful resolution of conflicts and reveal less concern for great power status.

Levada Center analyst Denis Volkov [found](https://carnegie.ru/commentary/76874) that Russians attribute Russia’s budgetary difficulties to excessive spending on the football World Cup, the Sochi Olympics, and the war in Syria. In September 2018, Volkov [reported](http://www.ridl.io/en/foreign-policy-fatigue/) that the number dissatisfied with Russia’s “aggressive stance” has been growing: 22 percent approved in March 2016, but just 16 percent in July 2018. He found: “People want the authorities to focus on domestic growth and spend money ‘at home.’ Foreign policy is increasingly being perceived as one of the main obstacles on the path to the desired development of the country.”

Russians are increasingly concerned about conflict with the West. In May 2018, 56 percent [expressed](https://www.ridl.io/en/foreign%20policy%20fatigue/) uneasiness about Russia’s isolation in international affairs. The number stating that Putin is defending the country’s interests is declining. Vokov reports that in focus [groups](https://carnegie.ru/commentary/76874), some participants stated that “he focuses only on foreign policy,” “he helps other countries too much,” and “he spends too much on defence.” Other comments included: “Russian authorities should have revised current budget spending, and taken other steps, before increasing the retirement age.” They should “make do with less,” “start living within their means,” and “cut spending” on arms, on the Donetsk and Luhansk People’s Republics, on military operations in Syria, and even on Crimea. Respondents added that these steps could have made it unnecessary to raise the retirement age.

Levada [data](https://www.levada.ru/2019/05/06/sobytiya-v-sirii/) from mid-April 2019 showed 51 percent approving Russia’s policy in Syria, while 35 percent disapproved. However, when asked if Russia should end its military operations in Syria, 55 percent said yes and just 30 percent said no. Levada Center [surveys](https://www.levada.ru/2019/05/06/sobytiya-v-sirii/) in May 2019 indicate that the economic impact of sanctions is having less influence on public opinion than the broader shift in consciousness/values. Russians want an end to the aggressive foreign policy due to their values more than for economic relief.

These data point to a sharp change in social mood over the past year. The authors of [short articles](http://www.liberal.ru/articles/7335) edited by Rogov state that while pension reform stimulated the shift, it goes much deeper. They write: “Continuing stagnation in the economy and lower incomes have undermined confidence in the regime, and foreign policy mobilization and propaganda no longer compensate for the ‘economic negative.’” Government reliance on repression and administrative measures to stave off organized resistance threatens the regime’s legitimacy, making it more difficult to solve the 2024 succession problem.

The Kremlin is also having more difficulty controlling the information media space. Trust in TV news has declined since the Crimean annexation, and especially since the pension reform. According to government pollster VTsIOM, in 2015 a majority of Russians [stated](https://www.newsweek.com/majority-russians-do-not-trust-national-media-510682) that they did not trust official media. When [asked](https://fom.ru/SMI-i-internet/14170) which information sources people trusted most, in April 2015 some 63 percent said television; in January 2019 only 36 percent trusted television. The number expressing trust in the Internet and social media increased from 19 percent to 31 percent. Among Russians under 30, 57 percent said that they rely on Internet news sites. While 48 percent said they watched TV news, a majority do not trust it. Another indication of the shifting media landscape is that Aleksandr Gorbunov, the wheelchair blogger whose sardonic satire critiques Russian authorities, has 1.1 million [followers](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/05/17/world/europe/stalingulag-putin-russia.html?searchResultPosition=1) on Twitter, about double the number of RT chief Margarita Simonyan.

Russia’s leaders likely receive but downplay data indicating that their energetic foreign policies are becoming less popular. They might again try a “short victorious war” —a [case made](https://www.latimes.com/opinion/op-ed/la-oe-aron-putin-russia-military-20190425-story.html) by Leon Aron, Director of Russian Studies at the American Enterprise Institute. Russia’s first “short victorious wars” took place when Interior Minister Vyacheslav Plehve decided to provoke Japan in 1904. This produced the first modern instance of a European power losing a war to an Asian country. For Putin, embarking on a new foreign military campaign (or escalating a current one) is the most risky option, but nevertheless remains an option. The good news is that Russian elites are talking frankly about the risks. The bad news is that the decision most likely will be made by one individual.

Carnegie Moscow Center Director Dmitri Trenin [captured](https://carnegie.ru/commentary/78990) some of the growing demand for more public discussion about foreign policy, calling for a “rethinking.” His emphasis on China, while meshing with Putin’s current priorities, ignores the data on Russians’ “modern” values, which are far closer to Europe than to Xi’s China.

Witnessing the peaceful transition of power in Ukraine has had an impact in Russia. Still, Volkov finds that most Russians view Russia’s role in Ukraine and Syria as helping to restore order, not as military intervention. However, with declining real incomes and the raised pension age, people are hesitant about foreign campaigns, especially when they appear open-ended. Carnegie Moscow Center analyst Andrei Kolesnikov’s early 2019 data [reinforce](https://carnegie.ru/2019/02/05/ru-pub-78322) this finding: Most Russians regard Russia’s military operations as less important than the nation’s internal needs.

### 1AR—No Impact

#### Their impact evidence is laughable – Oliker is from 18 years ago – at best, it has one warrant: domestic turmoil which should’ve been triggered multiple times like by Aremenia and Azerbaijan, Belarus instability, Kyrgyzstan riots, Moldova’s election, corruption, jailing of Navalny, or the Russian government’s anemic response to COVID—make them answer why each of these instances of turmoil didn’t trigger the impact.

#### Aff solves the impact—we can deter other Russian missles but Poseidon collapses missile defense—that’s 1AC Pry.

### 1AR—Impact Turn

**High support is bad—triggers Russian offensives.**

Polina **Beliakova 19**, Ph.D. Candidate at the Fletcher School and Senior Ph.D. Research Fellow at the Center for Strategic Studies at Tufts University, MA in Government from IDC Herzliya, BA in Sociology from the International Solomon University, “How Does The Kremlin Kick When It’s Down?”, War on the Rocks, 8/23/2019, https://warontherocks.com/2019/08/how-does-the-kremlin-kick-when-its-down/

Russian President Vladimir Putin’s trust ratings are at **historic lows**. So are levels of popular satisfaction with Russian government authorities and economic policy. This discontent recently spilled into the streets with mass demonstrations against the Moscow’s authorities decision not to register the independent candidates for the City Duma elections. The images of riot police beating the protesting Muscovites went viral. Popular Russian celebrities with millions of followers on social media called upon their subscribers to join the protests. Dissatisfaction with the regime is not limited to the capital: In Russia’s European North, the citizens of Arkhangelsk oblast are fighting against the construction of a massive landfill. Earlier this summer, in the Ural city of Yekaterinburg, people protested the local governor’s plan for building yet another church in place of a park. The Kremlin is losing the public’s tolerance to the severe mismanagement of the state. How will this domestic turmoil affect Russia’s **international behavior**? Some commentators of Russian politics suggest that Putin uses international adventures to compensate for his decreasing popularity at home. For example, former Georgian president and long-time Putin opponent Mikheil Saakashvili recently pointed out that when Putin’s public support decreases, he escalates ongoing international conflicts or launches new ones to galvanize support at home. This assumption is consistent with a diversionary war argument: To draw public attention away from problems at home, leaders start a war that boosts popular support for the government. Interestingly, Putin’s **track record** suggests that the **opposite is true**: Russia does **not** go to war when domestic support is at its lowest. Does this suggest that Putin will practice **restraint** in foreign policy as he deals with discontent at home? That conclusion would be premature. Low public approval does not limit the Kremlin’s ability to advance its foreign policy objectives using nonviolent means. Thus, Russia observers can likely expect covert and cyber operations as well as bold diplomatic moves that will divert the public’s attention at cost lower than the use of force. Why is that? First, relatively **high levels of approval** for domestic and economic policy (See Figure 1) preceded previous **major episodes** of Russia’s international offensives — Georgia in August 2008, the annexation of Crimea in March 2014, and the intervention in Syria in September 2015. Moreover, despite an overwhelming increase in public support after the annexation of Crimea, a decrease in domestic approval for the government’s performance followed Putin’s two other audacious moves. Thus, Russia’s aggressive foreign policy does not correlate with public support for the government in a way consistent with the diversionary war argument. Second, given the decreased level of approval for government authorities and economic policy, expensive foreign endeavors may only exacerbate popular dissatisfaction, and there are signs that Putin does pay attention to fluctuations in the public’s mood. For instance, Putin’s four-hour call-in show on June 20 focused mostly on the questions of inadequate salaries and poor infrastructure. He also underscored that the state’s greatness has to be reflected not in arms spending but in the growing economy — the next strategic priority for Russia. Similarly, in a February 2019 speech he did not advertise Russia’s plans for the next great victories in the international arena like in previous years, but emphasized the importance of welfare, education, and economic health. By contrast, in 2018, Putin started a similar address by mentioning the conquering of new lands and space, and stressing the fatalistic importance of today’s choices for the future in which not all countries will be able to remain sovereign. This should come as no surprise. In May 2019, Levada Center polls indicated that Russians’ willingness to bear the financial burden associated with the annexation of Crimea had significantly decreased over the past five years. Given the unprecedented low levels of approval for economic policy, it is unlikely that another daring and expensive international bid will ignite enthusiasm at home and produce the outcomes expected from diversionary use of force. With a diversionary war off the table, should we expect Russia to keep a low international profile due to domestic troubles? Well, yes and no.

# F/L—Counterplans

## 1AR—Regulations CP

### 1AR—Perm

#### Perm do both – any risk that the CP can’t solve the aff means the perm shields the link to the nb and the aff

### 1AR—Regulations Fail

#### Regulations fail – states don’t conduct weapons reviews, won’t monitor rigorously, or have incentives to comply – that turns the CP and means only the aff solves

**Docherty 16**, Bonnie Docherty, senior researcher in the Arms Division of Human Rights Watch and senior clinical instructor at the Harvard Law School International Human Rights Clinic (IHRC), was the lead writer and editor of this report. Joseph Crupi, Anna Khalfaoui, and Lan Mei, students in IHRC, made major contributions to the research, analysis, and writing of the report. Steve Goose, director of the Arms Division, and Mary Wareham, advocacy director of the Arms Division, edited the report. Dinah PoKempner, general counsel, and Tom Porteous, deputy program director, also reviewed the report ; Human Rights Watch, 12-9-2016, "Making the Case," <https://www.hrw.org/report/2016/12/09/making-case/dangers-killer-robots-and-need-preemptive-ban>, KR

While international humanitarian law already sets limits on problematic weapons and their use, responsible governments have in the past found it necessary to supplement existing legal frameworks for weapons that by their nature pose significant humanitarian threats. Treaties dedicated to specific weapons types exist for cluster munitions, antipersonnel mines, blinding lasers, chemical weapons, and biological weapons. Fully autonomous weapons have the potential to raise a comparable or even higher level of humanitarian concern and thus should be the subject of similar supplementary international law.

Contention #10: Reviews of new weapons systems can address the dangers of fully autonomous weapons.

Rebuttal: Weapons reviews are not universal, consistent, or rigorously conducted, and they fail to address the implications of weapons outside of an armed conflict context. A ban would resolve these shortcomings in the case of fully autonomous weapons.

Analysis: Some critics argue that conducting weapons reviews on fully autonomous weapons would sufficiently regulate the weapons. Weapons reviews assess the legality of the future use of a new weapon during its design, development, and acquisition phases. They are sometimes called “Article 36 reviews” because they are required under Article 36 of Additional Protocol I to the Geneva Conventions. The article states:

In the study, development, acquisition or adoption of a new weapon, means or method of warfare, a High Contracting Party is under an obligation to determine whether its employment would, in some or all circumstances, be prohibited by this Protocol or by any other rule of international law applicable to the High Contracting Party.[117]

Critics have argued, including during CCW debates, that there is no need for a ban because any fully autonomous weapon that would violate international law would fail a weapons review and thus not be developed or used.[118] Not all governments, however, conduct weapons reviews, those that do follow varying standards, and reviews are often too narrow in scope sufficiently to address every danger posed by fully autonomous weapons. Proposals to address the shortcomings of weapons reviews should be considered in a separate forum to avoid distracting from discussions about fully autonomous weapons.

Currently, fewer than 30 states are known to have national review processes in place.[119] Not all states are party to Additional Protocol I, and it is debated whether weapons reviews are required under customary international law.[120] The lack of universal practice means that it is possible that some states could develop or acquire fully autonomous weapons without first reviewing the legality of the weapons at all.

Even if weapons reviews were conducted by every state, leaving decisions about whether or not to develop weapons to individual states is bound to lead to inconsistent outcomes. The complexity of fully autonomous weapons, which would require review of both hardware and software components, would exacerbate such inconsistencies.[121] In addition, there is no internationally mandated monitoring to ensure that all states conduct reviews and adhere to the results.[122] There is also limited capability for outside monitoring, including by civil society, because of the general lack of transparency in weapons reviews processes.[123] States are not obliged to release their reviews, and none are known to have disclosed information about a review that rejected a proposed weapon.[124]

Without the external pressure generated by monitoring, states have few incentives to conduct rigorous reviews of weapons. Just as there are no publicized cases of the rejection of a weapon, there are also no known examples of states stopping the development or production of a weapon because it failed a legal review.[125] The expense of conducting the kind of complex reviews necessary for fully autonomous weapons would provide a further disincentive to doing rigorous testing.

Regardless of the effectiveness of the weapons reviews, the basic goal, as evidenced by Article 36’s reference to “warfare,” is to ensure compliance with international law in the context of armed conflict. The ICRC’s guide to weapons reviews reflects this framework, noting that “[a]ssessing the legality of new weapons contributes to ensuring that a State’s armed forces are capable of conducting hostilities in accordance with its international obligations.”[126]

This framework does not address the human rights and ethical implications of the use of weapons. Fully autonomous weapons could independently contravene human rights law because of their potential use outside of armed conflict in domestic law enforcement situations (see Contention #5).[127] Because they would use force without meaningful human control, such weapons raise serious ethical concerns (see Contention #6). Neither of these risks would be taken into account in a military weapons review.[128]

Acknowledging the problems with existing weapons reviews, some states have called for improvements.[129] For example, at the 2016 CCW Meeting of Experts on Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems, the United States proposed that CCW states parties produce “a non-legally binding outcome document that describes a comprehensive weapons review process.”[130] Such a set of best practices, however, would operate on a voluntary basis and would have less authority than a legally binding instrument.

While strengthening weapons reviews and setting international standards are worthy goals, the CCW meetings about fully autonomous weapons are an inappropriate forum for such discussions. The need to improve reviews is relevant neither specifically nor solely to fully autonomous weapons.[131] Rather, discussions about weapons reviews in the context of fully autonomous weapons distract from the substantive issues presented by the development and use of these weapons.

### 1AR—Solvency Deficits

#### View the counterplan through a risk of a solvency deficit. If we’re winning there’s a risk they don’t solve perception gaps that’s enough to trigger nuclear escalation.

#### Ambiguity is a reason to drop the planks – states don’t know how to “mitigate” escalation or “reduce” conflict

### --- Protocols

#### Solvency Deficits:

#### 1] States want conflict – perception gaps trigger use-them-or-lose them situations which means self-restraint doesn’t apply

#### 2] Infinite loopholes – states have full sovereignty which means they control when to escalate and can justify bs scenarios to escalate

#### 3] No incentive for states to do so – fiat means that they develop protocols but they’re not enough to prevent conflict since other states could also violate them

### --- NFU

#### Solvency Deficits:

#### 1] Infinite loopholes – states can justify threats, immediate damage, or minor conflict to neccesitate nuclear escalation

#### 2] Can’t solve perception – states don’t care about NFU if they fear they’re gonna get nuked or annihilated

#### 3] Turn – NFUs lead to ambiguity bc countries claim to have NFUs but have gone back on them multiple times in the past

### --- Discussions

#### Solvency Deficits:

#### 1] They mean nothing – diplomats try to reach peace but the military is hard-wired for engagement – tensions are too far to de-escalate since states are scared

#### 2] Can’t solve perception – discussions provide false hope and criteria that won’t be met since perception escalation is regardless of international statements

#### 3] Russia isn’t bound – Putin has full control over the country which means they won’t be held accountable and if they start war that triggers extinction

### 1AR—Double Bind

#### Either the CP reduces US-Russia tensions by rendering laws useless, which means it still links to the nb and turns the CP since russia can’t use laws or it doesn’t in which case perception gaps still exist which means worst case, the CP doesn’t solve

## 1AR—CCW CP

### 1AR—Timeframe

#### There’s not enough time – recent stalling is ENOUGH to make it impossible to pass

Delcker, Gray, 20, 2/1/2020, Politico, “Top UN official: It’s not too late to curb AI-powered weapons”, Andrew Gray is EU Editor at POLITICO Europe. Based in Brussels, Andrew commissions, edits and occasionally writes stories from around the continent, Janosch is a graduate of the mid-career M.A. program in political journalism at Columbia University’s Journalism School and holds another Master’s degree from New York University and a B.A. degree from Humboldt University of Berlin. He is also a graduate of the journalism fellowship (Volontariat) at DW, Germany’s international broadcaster. Andrew worked at Reuters as a correspondent and bureau chief for 15 years. He was posted to Germany, Geneva, the Balkans, West Africa, London and Washington, where he covered the Pentagon. He was embedded with a U.S. Army tank battalion during the 2003 invasion of Iraq and covered the aftermath from Baghdad. Andrew has also covered major sports events including Olympic Games and soccer World Cups. Andrew has a bachelor’s degree in languages and a master’s degree in investigative journalism.URL: <https://www.politico.eu/article/top-un-official-its-not-too-late-to-curb-ai-powered-weapons/>, KR

“The incremental gains achieved to date are not impressive,” said Mary Wareham, the coordinator of the global Campaign to Stop Killer Robots, an alliance that has gathered the support of 30 countries, over 140 nongovernmental organizations and the European Parliament for a ban on the weapons.

Activists and AI scientists warn that the slow-moving diplomatic efforts are being outpaced by rapid advances in technology that allows manufacturers and governments to build ever more sophisticated weapons.

The two-year time horizon mentioned by Nakamitsu may represent the last chance to achieve a meaningful deal, according to Frank Sauer, a political scientist at the Bundeswehr University in Munich who has followed the negotiations since their onset.

A milestone review conference of the CCW is scheduled to take place in December 2021.

“All players now agree that something tangible needs to be produced within the coming two years — otherwise it could be too late,” Sauer said. "It's crunch time for the CCW."

#### Too late – the next meeting is in december which means the aff oweighs on timeframe – fiating a time sooner makes states unready for decisions and they rebel

## 1AR—Consult NATO

#### 1. C/A their circumvention arguments from case—counterplan doesn’t solve the aff because multilateral arms control fails so the aff’s unilateral policy is key.

#### 2. Perm do the CP-- if they win a say yes argument it’s not functionally competitive because it results in the plan. Functional and textual competition is key to preserve aff ground – prevents debates that center around tiny processes and questions of wording that favor the long 2nr

#### 3. Consultation is normal means—we meet their definitions because we immediately consult.

Webster 9 – Merriam Webster 2009 (http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/resolved)

# Main Entry: 1re·solve # Pronunciation: \ri-ˈzälv, -ˈzȯlv also -ˈzäv or -ˈzȯv\ # Function: verb # Inflected Form(s): re·solved; re·solv·ing 1 : to become separated into component parts; also : to become reduced by dissolving or analysis 2 : to form a resolution : determine 3 : consult, deliberate

#### 4. NATO is bad because it provokes Russia into first striking which was 1AC Lockie so the CP causes extinction.

#### 5. Perm do the aff and the counterplan for all other mulitary technology—logical limited intrinsicness is justified because none of their net benefit evidence is about the topic which means we should be able to test whether the counterplan is actually an opportunity cost.

#### 6. <Consult CPs are a voter>

## 1AR—Future Gens CP

#### 1. <Consult CPs are a voter>

#### 2. Consultation is normal means

Webster 9 – Merriam Webster 2009 (http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/resolved)

# Main Entry: 1re·solve # Pronunciation: \ri-ˈzälv, -ˈzȯlv also -ˈzäv or -ˈzȯv\ # Function: verb # Inflected Form(s): re·solved; re·solv·ing 1 : to become separated into component parts; also : to become reduced by dissolving or analysis 2 : to form a resolution : determine 3 : consult, deliberate

#### 3. Perm do the CP-- if they win a say yes argument it’s not functionally competitive because it results in the plan. Functional and textual competition is key to preserve aff ground – prevents debates that center around tiny processes and questions of wording that favor the long 2nr

#### 4. Doesn’t solve—Russia gets sketched out when they have to do this and think something’s up so it makes circumvention more likely to defend themselves.

#### 5. Permutation do the aff and counterplan for synthetic biology, geoengineering, distributed manufacturing, and ai other than the aff—logical limited intrinsicness is justified because none of their net benefit evidence is about the topic which means we should be able to test whether the counterplan is actually an opportunity cost.

## 1AR—Moratorium/Reform CP

### 1AR—Circumvention

#### States will circumvent --- they will develop behind closed doors and then after the time expires they’ll ramp up development on their secret projects and make them public. This isn’t the same as a ban which is permanent

### 1AR—PDCP then the plan

#### Perm do the CP then the aff --- it solves best: we get five years to design a full ban and convince nations to comply and then a full ban gets instituted

### 1AR—Ban is key to solve

#### The aff is the only solution --- it’s try or die

HRW 19 – Human Rights Watch, 9-26-2019, "‘Killer Robots:’ Ban Treaty Is the Only Credible Solution," https://www.hrw.org/news/2019/09/26/killer-robots-ban-treaty-only-credible-solution

New York) – [France](https://www.hrw.org/europe/asie-centrale/france), [Germany](https://www.hrw.org/europa-und-zentralasien/germany), and other nations that are committed to a rules-based international order should begin negotiations on a new international treaty to ban preemptively lethal autonomous weapons systems, also known as fully autonomous weapons or killer robots. On September 26, 2019, foreign ministers from France, Germany, and dozens of other countries endorsed a declaration at the United Nations addressing lethal autonomous weapons systems. “This declaration is yet another step down the path leading to the inevitable treaty that’s needed to prevent a grim future of killing by machine,” said [Mary Wareham](https://www.hrw.org/about/people/mary-wareham), arms advocacy director at Human Rights Watch and coordinator of the [Campaign to Stop Killer Robots](https://www.stopkillerrobots.org/). “If these political leaders are really serious about tackling the killer robots threat, then they should open negotiations on a treaty to ban them and require meaningful human control over weapons systems and the use of force.” The foreign ministers participating in the “Alliance for Multilateralism” initiative that France and Germany spearheaded share the common goal of promoting a “rules-based international order” and have committed to address killer robots along with climate change and four other “politically relevant” issues. The political declaration endorsed during the annual opening of the UN General Assembly in New York marks the first time such a high-level group has acknowledged the killer robots threat. The killer robots declaration shows that efforts to tackle this urgent challenge are swiftly ascending the multilateral agenda, Human Rights Watch said. Since 2014, more than 90 countries have met eight times at the Convention on Conventional Weapons (CCW) to discuss concerns raised by killer robots. Most of the participating nations wish to negotiate a new treaty with prohibitions and restrictions in order to retain meaningful human control over the use of force. Yet, a small number of military powers – most notably Russia and the United States – have blocked progress toward that objective. As a result, while the talks were formalized in 2016, they still have not produced a credible outcome. At the last CCW meeting in August 2019, Russia and the United States again opposed proposals to negotiate a new treaty on killer robots, calling such a move “premature.” Human Rights Watch and the Campaign to Stop Killer Robots urge states party to the convention to agree in November to begin negotiations next year on a new treaty that requires meaningful human control over the use of force, which would effectively prohibit fully autonomous weapons. Only a new international law can effectively address the multiple ethical, moral, legal, accountability, security, and technological concerns raised by killer robots, Human Rights Watch said. A total of [29 countries](https://www.stopkillerrobots.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/KRC_CountryViews21Aug2019.pdf) have explicitly called for a ban on killer robots: Algeria, Argentina, Austria, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, China (on use only), Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Djibouti, Ecuador, El Salvador, Egypt, Ghana, Guatemala, the Holy See, Iraq, Jordan, Mexico, Morocco, Nicaragua, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, the State of Palestine, Uganda, Venezuela, and Zimbabwe. The new political declaration on killer robots is unambitious as it falls far short of the new international ban treaty sought by so many. It is ambiguous as it endorses a goal discussed at the Convention on Conventional Weapons of “developing a normative framework,” but there is little agreement among countries about what that means in practice. Some countries view such a framework as guidelines that would not amend existing international law, while others regard it as a new international treaty to prohibit or restrict lethal autonomous weapons systems. The Campaign to Stop Killer Robots, which began in 2013, is a coalition of 118 nongovernmental organizations in 59 countries that is working to preemptively ban fully autonomous weapons and require meaningful human control over the use of force. “It’s obvious that a new treaty to prevent killer robots is desperately needed to ensure a successful rules-based international order,” Wareham said. “Pressure to regulate will intensify the longer it takes nations to commit to negotiate the killer robots treaty.”

#### A ban is uniquely key to solving miscalc and creates better global norms.

[Mary Wareham, 11-9-17, (advocacy director of the Human Rights Watch’s Arms Division, o-laureate of the 1997 Nobel Peace Prize), "It’s Time For a Binding, Absolute Ban on Fully Autonomous Weapons," Human Rights Watch, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2017/11/09/its-time-binding-absolute-ban-fully-autonomous-weapons>] // Proof DR

The United States along with China, Israel, South Korea, Russia and the United Kingdom have been investing in developing weapons systems with decreasing levels of human control in the critical functions of selecting and engaging targets. The fear is that as the human role decreases, these so-called ‘killer robots’ will eventually take over these critical functions. Armed drones are an example of this trend toward ever-greater autonomy, but they are still operated by a human who takes the decision to select and fire on targets. A central concern with fully autonomous weapons is that they will cross a moral line that should never be crossed by permitting machines to make the determination to take a human life on the battlefield or in policing, border control and other circumstances. On 13 November 2017, representatives from about 80 countries will meet at the United Nations in Geneva to discuss questions relating to what they call lethal autonomous weapons systems. Since their last meeting on the issue in April 2016, concerns have continued to mount over these future weapons. At the same time, there is a debate about whether states at the Convention on Conventional Weapons (CCW) can address this challenge by negotiating a new CCW protocol that bans or restricts these weapons. Given that countries would not want to fall behind in potentially advantageous military technology, the development of these revolutionary weapons would be likely to lead to an arms race, unless action to put a stop to the whole process is taken now. High-tech militaries might have an edge in the early stages of these weapons’ development, but as costs go down and the technology proliferates, these weapons would likely be mass-produced. Life-and-death decisions Qualities such as compassion and empathy in addition to human experience make humans uniquely qualified to make the moral decision to apply force in particular situations. No technological improvements can solve the fundamental challenge to humanity that will come from delegating a life-and-death decision to a machine. Any killing orchestrated by a fully autonomous weapon is arguably inherently wrong since machines are unable to exercise human judgment and compassion. Humans find it difficult in many circumstances to reliably distinguish between lawful and unlawful targets, but fully autonomous weapons are even more unlikely to reliably make such distinctions, as required by international humanitarian law. While the capabilities of future technology are uncertain, it is highly doubtful that it could ever replicate the full range of inherently human characteristics necessary to comply with the rules of distinction and proportionality. These weapons also have the potential to commit unlawful acts for which no one could be held responsible. Existing mechanisms for legal accountability are ill-suited and inadequate to address the unlawful harm that fully autonomous weapons would be likely to cause. One driver behind fully autonomous weapons is the desire to process data and operate at greater speed than for weapons controlled by humans at the targeting and/or engagement stages. Such weapons could also operate without a line of communication after they are deployed. Yet because fully autonomous weapons would have the power to make complex determinations in less structured environments, their speed could lead armed conflicts to spiral rapidly out of control. And regardless of their speed, their ability to operate without a line of communication after deployment would be problematic because the weapons could make poor, independent choices about the use of force. Since fully autonomous weapons could operate at high speeds and without human control, their actions would also not be tempered by human understanding of political, socio-economic, environmental and humanitarian risks at the moment they engage. Thus, they could trigger a range of unintended consequences, many of which could fundamentally alter relations between states or the nature of ongoing conflicts. While fully autonomous weapons might create an immediate military benefit for some states, they should recognise that such advantages would be short-lived once these weapons begin to proliferate. Ultimately, the financial and human costs of developing such weapons systems would leave each state worse off. For these and other reasons, non-governmental organisations have established the Campaign to Stop Killer Robots to work for a preemptive ban on development, production and use of weapons systems that, once activated, would select and fire on targets without meaningful human control. Since 2013, 19 countries have endorsed this ban objective and dozens more have affirmed the importance of retaining meaningful or appropriate or adequate human control over critical combat functions of weapons systems. Yet multilateral deliberations on this topic have proceeded at a snail’s pace while technology that will enable the development of fully autonomous weapons bounds ahead. While international humanitarian law already sets limits on problematic weapons and their use, responsible governments have in the past found it necessary to supplement existing legal frameworks for weapons that by their nature pose significant humanitarian threats. Some contend that conducting weapons reviews before developing or acquiring fully autonomous weapons would sufficiently regulate the weapons. Weapons reviews are required under Article 36 of Additional Protocol I to the Geneva Conventions to assess the legality of the future use of a new weapon during its design, development and acquisition phases. Yet weapons reviews are not universal, consistent or rigorously conducted, and they fail to address the implications of weapons outside of an armed conflict context. Few governments conduct weapons reviews and those that do follow varying standards. Reviews are often too narrow in scope sufficiently to address every danger posed. States are also not obliged to release their reviews, and none are known to have disclosed information about a review that rejected a proposed weapon. A binding, absolute ban on fully autonomous weapons would reduce the chance of misuse of the weapons, would be easier to enforce, and would enhance the stigma associated with violations. Moreover, a ban would maximise the stigmatisation of fully autonomous weapons, creating a widely recognised norm and influencing even those that do not join the treaty. Precedent shows that a ban would be achievable and effective. After three years of informal talks with no outcome, it’s time for states to negotiate and adopt an international, legally binding instrument that prohibits the development, production and use of fully autonomous weapons. If that is not possible under the auspices of the CCW, states should explore other mechanisms to ban fully autonomous weapons without delay. The future of our humanity depends on it.

## 1AR—NATO Measures CP

#### 1. Doesn’t solve the aff—

#### a] Poseidon is ready to go now and these take time to implement which means the ban is key to stop it now.

#### b] Russia will just accelerate their strike if they know measures are being taken against it because they know the window will close.

#### c] Modernization means Russia can keep modifying to circumvent defenses which leaves the US playing catch up.

#### 2. Perm do both—shields the link to the net benefit <contextualize>.

#### 3. These are just potential ideas this random guy has—zero studies prove it actually work which means there isnt solvency.

#### 4. Sea Wolf plank causes extinction—our ev indicates they would be launched from Russian coastal waters so the US intruding would causes escalation.

#### 5. Reject CPs without a unified solvency advocate – wrecks aff ground with random Frankenstein planks to fiat out of aff solvency deficits

#### 6. C point doesn’t assume Poseidon—it gives them the capability to destroy second strike so they’ll take it as a threat and attack.

#### 7. 1AC Hollings and Crimean escalation answers hotlines—they don’t care about a surrender or a ceasefire, they want war.

#### 8. International fiat bad:

#### a] logical decision-making: Russia makes policy decisions based on how other actors are likely to act, they’re not a universal decisionmaker which means ifiat is a flawed decision making model. Outweighs--it’s the most portable skill we can use throughout our daily lives.

#### b] aff ground: justifies the neg reading “cp: all countries should not go to war” which prevents the aff from reading 99% of advantages and is infinitely regressive

#### c] predictability – there are an infinite number of things international actors can do which unlimits neg args and makes being aff impossible.

## 1AR—Regulations CP

### 1AR—CP Fails

#### 1] turn their advancement plank – increasing the automation capabilities creates a larger threat

#### 2] the IHL plank is non-unique --- our solvency card proves that is good

#### 3] illict prolif is way to vague we don’t know what’s enough prolif or not

#### 4] plan flaw – “conduct research to improve the technology” is super vague and not contextualized to laws meaning they’re bad

#### 5] circumvention gets fiated by the plan and completely destroyed which means it’s wrong – worst case its non-uq because it’s going to happen

#### 6] plan flaw – no idea what is illicit prolif – even if it is low they would circumvent, and we have enough weapons rn for war

#### 7] Bans are less vague, making them preferable to regulations

Docherty 6/1 Bonnie Docherty [Bonnie Docherty, senior researcher in the Arms Division at Human Rights Watch, is an expert on arms and the protection of civilians during armed conflicts. Since 2001, she has played an active role, as both lawyer and field researcher, in the campaign against cluster munitions.], 6-1-2020, "The Need for and Elements of a New Treaty on Fully Autonomous Weapons," Human Rights Watch, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2020/06/01/need-and-elements-new-treaty-fully-autonomous-weapons> AG

The unacceptable risks posed by fully autonomous weapons necessitate creation of a new legally binding instrument. It could take the form of a stand-alone treaty or a protocol to the Convention on Conventional Weapons. Existing international law, including international humanitarian law, is insufficient in this context because its fundamental rules were designed to be implemented by humans not machines. At the time states negotiated the additional protocols to the Geneva Conventions, they could not have envisioned full autonomy in technology. Therefore, while CCW states parties have agreed that international humanitarian law applies to this new technology, there are debates about how it does.[12]

A new treaty would clarify and strengthen existing international humanitarian law. It would establish clear international rules to address the specific problem of weapons systems that operate outside of meaningful human control. In so doing, the instrument would fill the legal gap highlighted by the Martens Clause, help eliminate disputes about interpretation, promote consistency of interpretation and implementation, and facilitate compliance and enforcement.[13]

The treaty could also go beyond the scope of current international humanitarian law. While the relevant provisions of international humanitarian law focus on the use of weapons, a new treaty could address development, production, and use. In addition, it could apply to the use of fully autonomous weapons in both law enforcement operations as well as situations of armed conflict.[14]

A legally binding instrument is preferable to the “normative and operational framework” that the CCW states parties agreed to develop in 2020 and 2021.[15] The phrase “normative and operational framework” is intentionally vague, and thus has created uncertainty about what states should be working toward. While the term could encompass a legally binding CCW protocol, it could also refer to political commitments or voluntary best practices, which would be not be enough to preempt what has been called the “third revolution in warfare.”[16] Whether adopted under the auspices of CCW or in another forum, a legally binding instrument would bind states parties to clear obligations. Past experience shows that the stigma it would create could also influence states not party and non-state armed groups.

### 1AR—Solvency deficits

#### Can’t solve the aff:

#### 1] miscalc will always exist – changes in the past haven’t worked and terrorists also increase their hacking technology

#### 2] arms races get pushed by the security dilemma – states will always work secretly to advance their own interests which means it doesn’t solve

#### 3] first strike capabilities still exist – loopholes and random threats can increase the justification – super hegemons can also get away with a crappy reason

#### 4] terrorists can still steal weapons

## 1AR—Torts CP

#### 1. This counterplan relies on prosecution after the fact but they’ve conceded that one strike causes extinction which was 1AC Lockie so the CP doesn’t solve.

#### 2. Their card says domestic policy is far less effective – and it doesn’t spill up when foreign litigation faces roadblocks – we read green

Crootof 16 [Rebecca Crootof, Ph.D. Candidate in Law, Yale Graduate School of Arts and Sciences; Resident Fellow, Yale Information Society Project (ISP). WAR TORTS: ACCOUNTABILITY FOR AUTONOMOUS WEAPONS. May 2016. https://scholarship.law.upenn.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=9528&context=penn\_law\_review&httpsredir=1&referer=]

However, the international community need not collectively organize to create tort liability for the actions of autonomous weapon systems. One nation-state could do so singlehandedly, simply by passing domestic legislation with universal jurisdiction. In fact, depending on the alleged tort violation, it is possible that the Alien Tort Statute could already be used to prosecute individuals for war torts caused by autonomous weapon systems.284 However, because of the political problems associated with attempting to hold foreign states accountable for international law violations in domestic courts285 and the foreign policy conflicts legislation like the ATS engenders,286 it would be far preferable to have an overarching international war torts regime than a domestic one.

#### 3. Perm do both—their ev assumes one or the other but doing both super charges solvency and shields the link to the NB and circumvention.

#### 4. No fiating enforcement on a counterplan—it’s unfair because it means that we can’t garner and solvency deficits to the counterplan so they auto win on risk of a disad.

#### 5. That means the CP gets circumvented—there’s no separation of powers in Russia so Putin will have control of the torts and he obviously won’t prosecute himself because he’s authoritarian.

#### 6. Links to the NB <contextualize>