

The Nuclear Crisis Nobody Knows

The Nuclear Crisis With Russia

President Biden's first State of the Union address neglected to mention the little fact that his Ukraine policy has brought the world to the brink of a thermonuclear holocaust.

On Sunday (February 27, 2022), Russian dictator Vladimir Putin ordered his nuclear forces on "high alert" or "special alert" or "highest alert" as variously reported by Russian and Western sources.

Putin has assumed personal control of the world's largest nuclear arsenal in one of his underground bunkers, of which there are hundreds in Russia. Some of these are deep underground, shielded beneath hundreds of meters of granite, so large they can accommodate thousands of Russian elites, and impervious to nuclear attack.

The Biden Administration and their media allies are desperately trying to cover-up the greatly elevated nuclear threat from Russia, dismissing Putin's threats as "bluster" and "saber rattling." Biden's Defense Department falsely claims there are no signs of "muscle movement" indicating that Russian forces are mobilizing for nuclear war.

After the Afghanistan debacle, the Biden Administration does not want to admit to America that they have blundered into a possible nuclear war over Ukraine—where the U.S. has no vital national interests at stake.

Blundering Toward Nuclear War

In fact, thanks to Biden's Ukraine policies, the U.S. and NATO now face the gravest nuclear threat since the Cuban missile crisis.

Biden "drew a line in the sand" over Ukraine, threatening grave consequences, mobilizing NATO to arm Ukraine and project forces to Eastern Europe, staking U.S. superpower credibility on deterring Russia.

After Russia's invasion, Biden enacted economic sanctions that he promised the White House Press Corps would be as damaging to Russia as attacks by tanks and missiles, and authorized B-52 nuclear bombers to fly, for the first time ever, to Poland.

Consequently:

--Before invading Ukraine, Russia performed a major nuclear forces "exercise" called Grom (Thunder). Unusually, Grom simulated nuclear strikes in the Arctic Ocean near Finland, Sweden, and Norway, too close for comfort. Consistent with Russian military doctrine, these exercises were to warn the West and almost certainly mobilized Russian nuclear forces for war.

--Russia reportedly has flushed to the field at least its Yars mobile ICBMs that can strike both the U.S. and Europe.

--Russia reportedly has deployed at least some of its missile submarines and attack submarines to sea.

--Dictator Putin's self-deployment to a nuclear bunker is itself compelling evidence of a real nuclear crisis, since most Russian nuclear weapons can be launched in a few minutes as they are on Constant Combat Readiness.

Russian Nuclear Forces Mobilization

Russia's mobilization for nuclear war is officially defined by four ascending readiness levels:

CONSTANT COMBAT READINESS: Normal everyday readiness when there is no threat of war.

INCREASED COMBAT READINESS: Increased readiness of command-control-communications-intelligence (C3I) and partial mobilization of nuclear forces when there is elevated risk of nuclear war.

THREAT OF WAR READINESS: All nuclear forces mostly or fully mobilized because there is imminent threat of nuclear war.

FULL COMBAT READINESS: All nuclear forces are fully ready and/or engaged in combat operations waging nuclear war.

Today, Russian nuclear forces are at least at Increased Combat Readiness and possibly Threat of War Readiness. Most Russian strategic warheads are on ICBMs and SLBMs (even Russian SLBMs are intercontinental missiles that can strike the U.S. launching from port) with secure C3—so Russia can mobilize most of its strategic nuclear forces secretly.

Russia's strategic nuclear posture is optimized for surprise attack by relying most heavily on ICBMs that even normally have very high (over 95%) Constant Combat Readiness, secure C3 for secret mobilization, and only four mobilization levels so they can beat the U.S. to the "nuclear draw."

Most Russian strategic nuclear warheads are on ICBMs that, even at their lowest readiness condition (Constant Combat Readiness) can be launched in minutes—whereas most U.S. strategic nuclear warheads are on non-alert submarines in port and non-alert bombers that need to be generated. Thus, Russia has a very significant advantage over the U.S. in numbers of strategic warheads that can be launched on short-notice.

U.S. Nuclear Forces Not Mobilizing

In contrast, the U.S. strategic nuclear posture is more transparent, eschews surprise attack for "strategic stability" by relying least heavily on ICBMs, most heavily on missile submarines that normally are mostly in port and are all armed with SLBMs of intermediate-range (so they have to go to sea in order to reach Russia), and non-alert strategic bombers that can fully mobilize in three days.

Where Russian nuclear forces have four mobilization levels, U.S. nuclear forces have five mobilization levels, called "Defense Readiness Condition" or DEFCON levels:

DEFCON 5: Normal everyday readiness when there is no threat of war.

DEFCON 4: Increased intelligence surveillance of adversaries and increased base security.

DEFCON 3: Mobilization of nuclear forces for combat operations.

DEFCON 2: Nuclear forces ready for war in less than 6 hours.

DEFCON 1: All nuclear forces are fully ready and/or engaged in combat operations waging nuclear war.

Today, Russian nuclear forces are probably at the U.S. equivalent of DEFCON 3 or DEFCON 2, which is very rare in history, occurring only during such major events as the 1956 Suez Crisis, 1958 Berlin Crisis, 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis, 1968 invasion of Czechoslovakia, 1973 Yom Kippur War, 1983 Able Archer NATO nuclear exercise, and 1991 Soviet coup attempt against Premier Gorbachev, for example.

Today, U.S. nuclear forces are not mobilized, are at their normal everyday state of readiness: DEFCON 5.

Nuclear Crisis Coverup

President Biden and the Pentagon are telling the press that the U.S. has not increased its DEFCON level because there is no nuclear crisis with Russia. Yet the Pentagon has just canceled a Minuteman III ICBM test launch to “de-escalate” the crisis that supposedly does not exist.

DEFCON 5 may be prudent, to avoid escalating Ukraine into a nuclear war with Russia—but it also makes the U.S. more vulnerable to surprise attack.

Historically, when Moscow mobilizes nuclear forces, the U.S. also mobilizes to deter them.

During the Cuban missile crisis, President Kennedy mobilized U.S. nuclear forces to DEFCON 2, making Moscow retreat from Cuba—and told the truth to America and the world about the imminent nuclear threat.

Maybe Putin and Biden are both crazy. But Putin is better postured to win a nuclear war.

Recommendations

Although punishing Russia for invading Ukraine seems like a moral imperative justifying Western military intervention, the U.S. and NATO have no vital interests at stake in Ukraine that would justify risking a major conventional or nuclear war with Russia. U.S. and NATO supreme national and international interests dictate non-intervention to avoid a nuclear war over Ukraine.

Retaliatory measures to punish Russian aggression, that would be far more painful and productive than the feather of economic sanctions and a policy of fighting until the last brave Ukrainian, include the following:

--Crash program to harden the U.S. electric grid and other critical infrastructures from EMP and Cyber Warfare. Much could be accomplished in one year to protect the American people from these existential threats that are the key to quick victory over the U.S. in the military doctrines of Russia, China, North Korea, and Iran.

--Crash program to deploy space-based missile defenses, like Brilliant Pebbles (deployable in 5 years for \$20 billion) that could render obsolete the nuclear missiles of Russia, China, North Korea, and Iran, and greatly diminish their capability to engage in nuclear blackmail.

--Crash program to accelerate the modernization of the U.S. nuclear Triad, now mostly planned for the 2030s, to catch-up with Russia, that has already modernized its Triad.

--Crash program to catch-up with Russia in development of advanced technology nuclear weapons (where the U.S. is 30 years behind), even if abandonment of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) and resumption of nuclear testing is necessary, since Russia and China have already violated the CTBT with low-yield nuclear testing.

--Crash program to re-arm U.S. ICBMs with multiple warheads (they originally carried multiple warheads, but were reduced to single warheads for reasons of arms control and “strategic stability”) to close the gap with Russia in numbers of nuclear warheads that can be launched on short-notice.

--Crash program to greatly increase U.S. tactical nuclear weapons from the present 180 gravity bombs to 2,000 or more warheads for U.S. air, sea, and land forces to match at least the lowest estimated number of Russia’s tactical nuclear weapons (2,000-8,000).

--The new U.S. Nuclear Posture Review should not weaken the credibility of the U.S. nuclear deterrent: by advocating a nuclear “No First Use” policy or differently worded variants thereof; should not ban U.S. ICBMs or oppose replacement of the aged Minuteman III with a new ICBM; should not ban nuclear-armed strategic bombers; should not ban new nuclear-armed SLCMs, ALCMs, and other strategic or tactical nuclear missiles; should support development of U.S. nuclear hypersonic warheads for strategic missiles (current U.S. hypersonic weapons under development are non-nuclear for theater or tactical use) like hypersonic warheads for ICBMs now deployed by Russia; and should not pretend that conventional weapons are a credible substitute for nuclear weapons. Unfortunately, the Biden Administration is seriously considering going in the wrong direction on all of the above in their Nuclear Posture Review, which may be another reason they do not want to admit blundering into a nuclear crisis with Russia.

Ukraine is an object lesson in what happens when the strategic balance tilts against the West.

Avenge Ukraine by remembering the strategy of “Peace Through Strength” that won the Cold War against the USSR peacefully, and can again deliver victory in the New Cold War against Russia and China—peacefully.

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