

Appendix to

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A Difficult but Necessary Decision

The use of nuclear weapons could save humanity from global catastrophe

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Let me share a few thoughts which I have entertained for a long time and which took their final shape after the recent Assembly of the Council on Foreign and Defense Policy that proved to be one of the most remarkable gatherings in its 31-year history.

Growing Threat

Russia and its leadership seem to be facing a difficult choice. It becomes increasingly clear that a clash with the West cannot end even if we win a partial or even a crushing victory in Ukraine.

It will be a really partial victory if we liberate four regions. It will be a slightly bigger victory if we liberate the entire East and South of present-day Ukraine in the next year or two. But there will still remain a part of it with an even more embittered ultranationalist population pumped up with weapons—a bleeding wound threatening inevitable complications and a new war.

Perhaps the worst situation may occur if, at the cost of enormous losses, we liberate the whole of Ukraine and remain in ruins with a population that mostly hates us. Its “redemption” will take more than a decade. Any option, especially the latter one, will distract our country from making an urgently needed step to shift its spiritual, economic, and military-political focus to the east of Eurasia. We will get stuck in the west, with no prospects in the foreseeable future, while present-day Ukraine, primarily its central and western regions, will sap managerial, human, and financial resources out of the country. These regions were heavily subsidized even in Soviet times. The feud with the West will continue as it will support a low-grade guerrilla civil war.

A more attractive option would be liberating and reincorporating the East and the South of Ukraine, and forcing the rest to surrender, followed by complete demilitarization and the creation of a friendly buffer state. But this would be possible only if and when we are able to break the West’s will to incite and support the Kiev junta, and to force it to retreat strategically.

And this brings us to the most important but almost undiscussed issue. The underlying, and even fundamental cause of the conflict in Ukraine and many other tensions in the world, as well as of the overall growth of the threat of war is the accelerating failure of the modern ruling Western elites—mainly comprador ones in Europe (Portuguese colonialists used the word ‘comprador’ to refer to local traders who catered to their needs)—who were generated by the globalization course of recent decades. This failure is accompanied by rapid changes, unprecedented in history, in the global balance of power in favor of the Global Majority, with China and partly India acting as its economic drivers, and Russia chosen by history to be its military-strategic pillar. This weakening infuriates not only the imperial-cosmopolitan elites (Biden and Co.), but also the imperial-national ones (Trump). Their countries are losing their five-century-long ability to syphon wealth around the world, imposing, primarily by brute force, political and economic orders, and cultural dominance. So there will be no quick end to the unfolding Western defensive but aggressive confrontation. This collapse of moral, political, and economic positions has been brewing since the mid-1960s; it was interrupted by the Soviet Union’s breakup but resumed with renewed vigor in the 2000s. (The defeat in Iraq and Afghanistan, and the beginning of the Western economic model crisis in 2008 were major milestones.)

To stop this snowballing downward slide, the West has temporarily consolidated itself. The United States has turned Ukraine into a striking fist intended to create a crisis and thus tie the hands of Russia—the military-political core of the non-Western world, which is freeing itself from the shackles of neo-colonialism—but better still blow it up, thus radically weakening the rising alternative superpower—China. For our part, we delayed our preemptive strike either because we misunderstood the inevitability of a clash, or because we were gathering strength. Moreover, following modern, mainly Western, military-political thought, we thoughtlessly set too high a threshold for the use of nuclear weapons, inaccurately assessed the situation in Ukraine, and did not start the military operation there successfully enough.

Failing internally, Western elites began to actively nourish the weeds that had come through after seventy years of well-being, satiety, and peace—all these anti-human ideologies that reject the family, homeland, history, love between a man and a woman, faith, commitment to higher ideals, everything that constitutes the essence of man. They are weeding out

those who resist. The goal is to destroy their societies and turn people into mankurts (slaves deprived of reason and sense of history as described by the great Kirgiz and Russian writer Chengiz Aitmatov) in order to reduce their ability to resist modern “globalist” capitalism, increasingly unfair and counterproductive for humans and humanity as a whole.

Along the way, the weakened United States unleashed a conflict to finish off Europe and other dependent countries, intending to throw them into the flames of confrontation after Ukraine. Local elites in most of these countries have lost their bearings and, panic-stricken by their failing internal and external positions, are obediently leading their countries to the slaughter. Moreover, the feeling of a greater failure, powerlessness, centuries-old Russophobia, intellectual degradation, and the loss of strategic culture make their hatred even deeper than that of the United States.

The vector of development in most Western countries clearly indicates their movement towards a new fascism and (so far) “liberal” totalitarianism.

What is most important is that the situation will only get worse there. Truce is possible, but peace is not. Anger and despair will keep growing in shifts and turns. This vector of the West’s movement unambiguously indicates a slide towards World War III. It is already beginning and may erupt into a full-blown firestorm by chance or due to the growing incompetence and irresponsibility of modern ruling circles in the West.

The advance of artificial intelligence and the robotization of war increase the threat of even unintended escalation. In fact, machines can get out of the control of confused elites.

The situation is aggravated by “strategic parasitism”— over the 75 years of relative peace, people have forgotten the horrors of war and even stopped fearing nuclear weapons. The instinct of self-preservation has weakened everywhere, but particularly in the West.

For many years I have studied the history of nuclear strategy and come to an unambiguous, albeit seemingly not quite scientific, conclusion. The creation of nuclear weapons was the result of divine intervention. Horrified to see that people, Europeans and the Japanese who had joined them, had unleashed two world wars within the life-span of one generation, sacrificing tens of millions of lives, God handed a weapon of Armageddon to humanity to remind those who had lost the fear of hell that it existed. It was this fear that ensured relative peace for the last three quarters of a century. That fear is gone now. What is happening now is unthinkable in accordance with previous ideas about nuclear deterrence: in a fit of desperate rage, the ruling circles of a group of countries have unleashed a full-scale war in the underbelly of a nuclear superpower.

That fear needs to be revived. Otherwise, humanity is doomed.

What is being decided on the battlefields in Ukraine is not only, and not so much, what Russia and the future world order will look like, but mainly whether there will be any world at all or the planet will turn into radioactive ruins poisoning the remains of humanity.

By breaking the West’s will to continue the aggression, we will not only save ourselves and finally free the world from the five-century-long Western yoke, but we will also save humanity. By pushing the West towards a catharsis and thus its elites towards abandoning their striving for hegemony, we will force them to back down before a global catastrophe occurs, thus avoiding it. Humanity will get a new chance for development.

Proposed Solution

There is no doubt that a hard fight is ahead. We will have to solve the remaining internal problems: to finally get rid of Western centrism in our minds and of Westerners in the managerial class, of compradors and their characteristic thinking. (The West is actually helping us with that). It is time to finish our three-hundred-year voyage to Europe, which gave us a lot of useful experience and helped create our great culture. We will carefully preserve our European heritage, of course. But it is time to go home and to our true self, start using the accumulated experience, and chart our own course. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has recently made a breakthrough for all of us by calling Russia in the Foreign Policy Concept a state-civilization. I would add—a civilization of civilizations, open to the North and the South, the West and the East. The main direction of development today is the South and the North, but primarily the East.

The confrontation with the West in Ukraine, no matter how it ends, should not distract us from the strategic internal movement—spiritual, cultural, economic, political, and military-political—to the Urals, Siberia, and the Great Ocean. We need a new Ural-Siberian strategy, implying several spirit-lifting projects, including, of course, the creation of a third capital in Siberia. This movement should become part of the efforts, so urgently needed today, to articulate our Russian Dream—the image of Russia and the world we want to see.

I, and many others, have written many times that without a big idea great states lose their greatness or simply disappear. History is strewn with the shadows and graves of the powers that lost it. It must be generated from above, without expecting it to come from below, as stupid or lazy people do. It must match the fundamental values and aspirations of the

people and, most importantly, lead us all forward. But it is the responsibility of the elite and the country's leadership to articulate it. The delay in doing so has been unacceptably long.

But for the future to come, it is necessary to overcome the evil resistance of the forces of the past—the West—which, if not crushed, will almost certainly and inexorably lead the world to a full-scale and, probably, the last world war for humanity.

And this brings me to the most difficult part of this article. We can keep fighting for another year, or two, or three, sacrificing thousands and thousands of our best men and grinding down tens and hundreds of thousands of people who live in the territories that is now called Ukraine and who have fallen into the tragic historical trap. But this military operation cannot end with a decisive victory without forcing the West to retreat strategically, or even surrender, and compelling it to give up attempts to reverse history and preserve global dominance, and to focus on itself and its current multilevel crisis. Roughly speaking, it must “buzz off” so that Russia and the world could move forward unhindered.

Therefore, it is necessary to arouse the instinct of self-preservation that the West has lost and convince it that its attempts to wear Russia out by arming Ukrainians are counterproductive for the West itself. We will have to make nuclear deterrence a convincing argument again by lowering the threshold for the use of nuclear weapons set unacceptably high, and by rapidly but prudently moving up the deterrence-escalation ladder. The first steps have already been made by the relevant statements of Russian President and other leaders: the announced deployment of nuclear weapons and their carriers in Belarus, and the increased combat readiness of strategic deterrence forces. But there are many steps on this ladder. I have counted about two dozen. Things may also get to the point when we will have to urge our compatriots and all people of goodwill to leave their places of residence near facilities that may become targets for strikes in countries that provide direct support to the puppet regime in Kiev. The enemy must know that we are ready to deliver a preemptive strike in retaliation for all of its current and past acts of aggression in order to prevent a slide into global thermonuclear war.

I have said and written many times that if we correctly build a strategy of intimidation and deterrence and even use of nuclear weapons, the risk of a “retaliatory” nuclear or any other strike on our territory can be reduced to an absolute minimum. Only a madman, who, above all, hates America, will have the guts to strike back in “defense” of Europeans, thus putting his own country at risk and sacrificing conditional Boston for conditional Poznan. Both the U.S. and Europe know this very well, but they just prefer not to think about it. We have encouraged this thoughtlessness ourselves with our own peace-loving rhetoric. From studying the history of the American nuclear strategy I know that after the USSR had gained the convincing ability to respond to a nuclear strike, Washington did not seriously consider, although bluffed in public, the possibility of using nuclear weapons against Soviet territory. If they ever considered such a possibility, they did so only against the “advancing” Soviet troops in Western Europe itself. I know that Chancellors Kohl and Schmidt fled their bunkers as soon as the question of such use came up during military exercises.

We must go up the deterrence-escalation ladder quickly enough. Given the vector of Western development — the persistent degradation of most of its elites—each of their next calls will be even more incompetent and more ideologically charged than the previous ones. We can hardly expect more responsible and reasonable leaders to come to power there in the near future. This can happen only after a catharsis, after they have given up their ambitions.

We must not repeat the “Ukrainian scenario.” For a quarter of a century, we did not listen to those who warned that NATO expansion would lead to war, and tried to delay and “negotiate.” As a result, we have got a severe armed conflict. The price of indecision now will be higher by an order of magnitude.

But what if they do not back down? What if they have lost the instinct of self-preservation completely? In this case we will have to hit a bunch of targets in a number of countries in order to bring those who have lost their mind to reason.

Morally, this is a terrible choice as we will use God's weapon, thus dooming ourselves to grave spiritual losses. But if we do not do this, not only Russia can die, but most likely the entire human civilization will cease to exist.

We will have to make this choice ourselves. Even friends and sympathizers will not support us at first. If I were Chinese, I would not want the current conflict to end too soon and abruptly, because it draws off U.S. forces and gives China an opportunity to gather strength for a decisive battle, direct or, in accordance with the best behests of Lao Tzu, by forcing the enemy to retreat without a fight. I would also oppose the use of nuclear weapons because raising the confrontation to the nuclear level would mean a shift into an area where my country (China) is still weak. In addition, decisive action is not in line with the Chinese foreign policy philosophy, which emphasizes economic factors (when building up military power) and avoids direct confrontation. I would support the ally, securing his backyard, but I would hide behind him without interfering in the fight. (But perhaps I do not understand this philosophy well enough and attribute incorrect motives to our Chinese friends). If Russia delivered a nuclear strike, the Chinese would condemn it, but they would also rejoice at heart that a powerful blow has been dealt to the reputation and position of the United States.

And what would our reaction be if (God forbid) Pakistan struck India or vice versa? We would be horrified and saddened that the nuclear taboo has been broken. And then we would start helping those affected and making necessary changes in our nuclear doctrine.

For India and other countries of the Global Majority, including nuclear ones (Pakistan, Israel), the use of nuclear weapons is also unacceptable for both moral and geostrategic reasons. If they are used and used “successfully,” this will break the nuclear taboo—the idea that they cannot be used under any circumstances and that their use will inevitably lead to a global nuclear Armageddon. We can hardly count on quick support, even if many countries in the Global South would feel satisfaction from the defeat of their former oppressors, who robbed, perpetrated genocides, and imposed an alien culture.

But in the end, the winners are not judged. And the saviors are thanked. European political culture does not remember good things. But the rest of the world remembers with gratitude how we helped the Chinese free themselves from the brutal Japanese occupation, and how we helped colonies free themselves from the colonial yoke. If we are not understood at once, there will be even more incentives to engage in self-improvement. But still, it is quite likely that we will be able to win, bring our enemy to reason and force it to back off without resorting to extreme measures, and a few years later take a position behind China, as it now stands behind us, supporting it in its fight with the United States. In this case it will be possible to avoid a big war. Together we will win for the benefit of everyone, including the people living in Western countries.

And then Russia and humanity will persevere through all the hardships and go into the future, which seems to me bright, multipolar, multicultural, multicolored, and giving countries and peoples a chance to build their own and common future.