

Imagining Reality: Two Minutes to Midnight on the Clock of the Atomic Scientists

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Theme: [Environment](#), [Intelligence](#)
In-depth Report: [Climate Change](#), [Nuclear War](#)

On January 24, 2019, the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists has stated:

"Humanity now faces two simultaneous existential threats, either of which would be cause for extreme concern and immediate attention. These major threats—nuclear weapons and climate change—were exacerbated this past year (2018) by the increased use of information warfare to undermine democracy around the world, amplifying risk from these and other threats and putting the future of civilization in extraordinary danger."

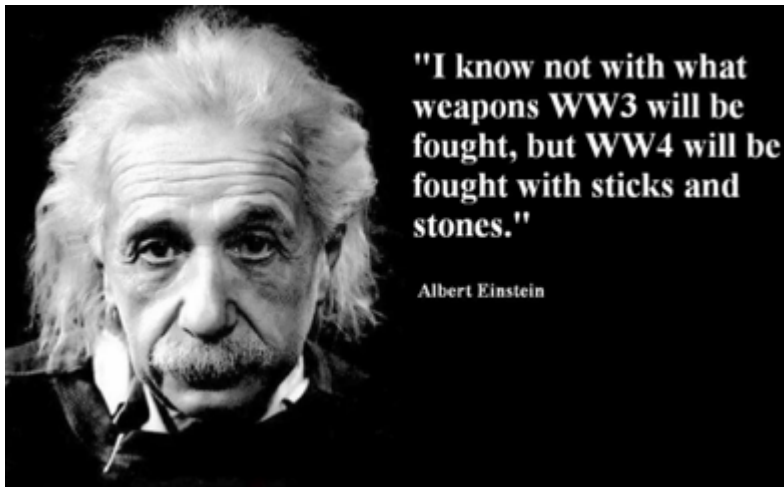
History is replete with instances where an "end" has been falsely predicted. Where do present climate science-based projections and the probabilities of nuclear war lie?

1. Clouded with a veneer of untruths propagated by mercenary pseudo-ideological forces, the brutal fact is that, to date, the emission of more than 600 billion tons of greenhouse gases, raising atmospheric CO₂ concentration by more than 40 percent, has shifted the state of the terrestrial atmosphere to that of the Miocene 16 million years ago, at a rate faster than any recorded since 55 million years ago. Whereas species can adapt to gradual changes runaway global warming within less than a century is triggering a mass extinction. As stated by David Attenborough *"The garden of Eden is no more"* (See [this](#)).
1. Reinforcing the existential risk of climate disruption is the probability of a nuclear exchange, with a nuclear arsenal of 14,575 missiles and bombs (see [this](#)), with time the probability of a deliberate or accidental nuclear war becomes a probability and, with time, a certainty. Lateral and vertical nuclear proliferation is only growing. Sydney Drell, a physicist and nuclear weapons expert, commented on the proximity of a nuclear exchange in the following terms: *"Given all the close calls and mistakes in the 71 years since then (Hiroshima), he considered it a miracle that no other cities have been destroyed by a nuclear weapon—"it is so far beyond my normal optimism"* (See [this](#))

What are the origins of the imminent demise of much of nature, likely including a large part of the human race? Where does responsibility lie? Is it the unrelenting conflict between life-giving and life-destroying forces in nature, the megalomaniac nature of leaders, infinite greed, messianic zeal, murderous atrocities of colosseum games, obscene film and TV shows that create model mirrors in the mind of growing generations?

At the roots of human pre-history are the tribe and the tribal leader, typically the stronger

and brave hunger and warrior, capable of providing the tribe with food and protect it from enemies. The leader, however, may not be the wise and is prone to dragging the tribe to disaster, as have kings and emperors through the ages. Leaders, however, do not arise in a void but within circumstances which enhance their rise to power.



Translated to modern societies, it is often the more ruthless, canning and corrupt types who get to the top, but then, once the species has mastered the technologies of combustion, manipulation of the electromagnetic spectrum, splitting of the atom and production of a variety of poisons, the species needs to be absolutely wise and in control if it is to avoid self-destruction by its own inventions.

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