

# The Fear Driving US Nuclear Strategy

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Region: [USA](#)

Theme: [Media Disinformation](#), [Military](#), [Military and WMD](#), [US NATO War Agenda](#)

In-depth Report: [Nuclear War](#)

*The United States Department of Defense released its latest 'Nuclear Posture Review 2018' (NPR) on 2 February, updating the last one issued in 2010 during the previous administration. See ['Nuclear Posture Review 2018'](#).*

The Executive Summary of the NPR is also available, if you prefer. See ['Nuclear Posture Review 2018 Executive Summary'](#).

Several authors have already thoughtfully exposed a phenomenal variety of obvious lies, invented threats, strategic misconceptions and flaws – such as the fallacious thinking behind 'deterrence' and significantly increased risk of nuclear war given the delusional 'thinking' in the document – as well as the political fear-mongering in the NPR. For example, eminent scholar Professor Paul Rogers has pointed out:

'The risk now is that we are on a slippery slope towards "small nuclear wars in far-off places", which themselves could either escalate or at the very least break the 70+ year taboo on treating nuclear weapons as usable.' See ['Nuclear Posture Review: Sliding Towards Nuclear War?'](#)

Stephen Lendman has reminded us that US 'defense spending far exceeds what Russia, China, Iran and other independent countries spend combined' and that the US 'nuclear arsenal and delivery systems can destroy planet earth multiple times over' with the document suggesting 'preparation for nuclear war'. Moreover, the NPR 'falsely claims the nation must address "an unprecedented range and mix of threats" posed by Russia, China, North Korea, Iran and other countries' and this despite the incontrovertible fact that no nation has threatened US security since World War II and none threatens it now.

He further points out that the NPR's claim that there is 'an unprecedented range and mix of threats, including major conventional, chemical, biological, nuclear, space, and cyber threats, and violent nonstate actors' is 'utter rubbish' and that 'America's rage for endless wars of aggression, along with its rogue allies, poses the only serious threat to world peace and stability.' See ['Trump's Nuclear Posture Review'](#).

Even Andrew C. Weber, an assistant defense secretary during the Obama administration, has warned that

'Almost everything about this radical new policy will blur the line between nuclear and conventional' and 'will make nuclear war a lot more likely.' See ['Pentagon Suggests Countering Devastating Cyberattacks With Nuclear Arms'](#).

Despite the obvious belligerence in the document, we are supposed to believe, according to words in the NPR, that 'The United States remains committed to its efforts in support of the ultimate global elimination of nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons' despite the US denunciation of the ['UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons'](#) negotiated by 122 countries just a few months ago in mid-2017. See ['U.S., UK and France Denounce Nuclear Ban Treaty'](#).



UN Convention on Nuclear Ban (Source: [ICAN](#))

Presumably, we are supposed to have shorter memories than members of the US administration or to be even more terrified and unintelligent than are they. This would be difficult.

Rather than further critique the document, which several authors have done admirably, I would like to explain my observation immediately above.

Let me start by explaining why those who formulated the current US nuclear strategy, wrote the Nuclear Posture Review, now promote it and are responsible for implementing it, are utterly terrified and quite delusional, and constitute a threat to human civilization.

The NPR is full of language such as this: 'There now exists an unprecedented range and mix of threats, including major conventional, chemical, biological, nuclear, space, and cyber threats, and violent nonstate actors. These developments have produced increased uncertainty and risk.'

Are these individuals, notably including Donald Trump, Secretary of Defense General Jim 'Mad Dog' Mattis, Chief of Staff Marine General John Kelly and National Security Adviser General H. R. McMaster, really frightened of countries such as Iran (with its non-existent nuclear arsenal) or North Korea (with its handful of 'primitive' nuclear weapons and inadequate delivery systems)? Or are they really frightened of countries such as Russia and China, whose nuclear arsenals pale in comparison to that of the United States and whose strategic posture in any case is decidedly non-aggressive (particularly towards the United States) despite its ongoing provocations of them?

Are US government leaders really so terrified of possible conventional, chemical, biological, space and cyber attacks that they need to threaten nuclear annihilation should it occur?

Well, the answer to each of these questions is that *Trump, Mattis, Kelly, McMaster and other US political and military leaders are, indeed, terrified.*

However, they are projecting their obvious terror away from its original source and onto a 'safe' and 'approved' target so that they can behave in accordance with their terror. They do this because the original cause of their terror – their parents and/or other significant adults in their childhood – never allowed them to feel their terror and to direct and express it safely and appropriately. For a full explanation of why this happens, see ['Why Violence?'](#) and ['Fearless Psychology and Fearful Psychology: Principles and Practice'](#).

Unfortunately, and in this case potentially catastrophically, this dysfunctional behavioural

response to deeply suppressed terror cannot 'work' either personally or politically for the individuals concerned. Let me explain why.

Evolution devised an extraordinarily powerful response to threats: it gave many organisms, including human beings, the emotion of fear to detect threats as well as other tools that can be used in conjunction with fear to respond powerfully to threats. Hence, in response to a threat, humans are meant to feel their fear and, while doing so, engage other feelings, conscience and intelligence so that the source of the threat can be accurately identified and the most powerful and effective behavioural response to that threat can be devised and implemented. In simple language: We need our fear to tell us we are under threat and to play a part in defending ourselves. In evolutionary terms, this was highly functional.

If, however, during childhood, the fear is suppressed because the individual is too frightened to feel it (usually because their parents deny them a safe opportunity to do so), then they will be unconsciously compelled to project their fear onto those who pose no threat (precisely because these people do not immobilize them with terror) and to endlessly seek to control these people (during childhood this usually means their younger siblings and/or friends, and during adulthood it usually means people of another sex, race, class, religion or nation) so that they can gain relief from experiencing their suppressed (childhood)fear.

The relief, of course, is delusionary. But once someone is terrified, it is not possible for them to behave functionally or powerfully. They will live in a world of delusion and projection, endlessly blaming those who they (unconsciously) project to be a threat precisely because these people are not frightening and not a threat and seem more likely to be able to be 'controlled'.

This projection and behaviour happen all of the time, both in personal interactions and geopolitically, but it doesn't usually threaten imminent annihilation, even if, to choose another example, it endlessly and perhaps disastrously impedes efforts to tackle the environmental and other assaults on our biosphere.

It is because parents are frightened to feel and experience their own fear that they also fear their child's fear and they act (consciously or unconsciously, depending on the context) to prevent the child from feeling this fear, perhaps by doing something as simple as reassuring them.

However, parents also use a variety of methods to distract their child from feeling their feelings. They might offer the child a toy or food to distract them. But another important way in which fear is suppressed is by teaching children to use play as a distraction from having their feelings. This fear might then re-manifest in the form of the child wanting others to play with them but particularly by doing so in a game of their choosing and over which they have control (so that they can ensure that their fear is not raised).

Once the child has learned to use gaining control over play to distract themselves from their terror, it might well become a lifetime addiction, subsequently manifesting as a dysfunctional desire for control within a family or perhaps even economically, politically or militarily.

Unfortunately, as some of these children grow up and the nature of their 'game' changes, the outcome can have deadly consequences. This is simply because there is never any guarantee that others will submit willingly to control by others. And, if they do not, this can

trigger the original person's (unconscious) terror 'necessitating' action – a higher-risk strategy in an attempt to secure this higher degree of control over others – to resuppress their terror.

However, for example, even if the terrified person ends up owning a major corporation and exercising a great degree of control over employees, markets and possibly countries, the terror driving their delusional need for control can never be satisfied. See ['Love Denied: The Psychology of Materialism, Violence and War'](#). But the same principle applies in other domains as well, including the political and military.

And in the most dangerous collective manifestation of this major psychological disorder, the current US political/military leadership, which has been effectively merged by Trump's appointment of military generals to his political staff, we now have the situation where a collection of individuals who are terrified and also project their dysfunctional desire for control onto other nations, are willing to threaten (and use) nuclear weapons in a delusory attempt to feel (personally) 'in control'.

It is little wonder that the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists has moved the Doomsday Clock to two minutes to midnight! See ['It is now two minutes to midnight: 2018 Doomsday Clock Statement.'](#)

So what can we do?

Well, I would tackle the problem at several levels and I invite you to consider participating in one or more of these.

To help prevent this problem from emerging at its source, you are welcome to consider making ['My Promise to Children'](#). This will play a vital role in ensuring that children do not grow up suppressing their fear.

Given the extraordinary emotional and other damage inflicted by school, you might consider educational opportunities for your child(ren) outside that framework. See ['Do We Want School or Education?'](#)

If you suspect that you are not as powerful as you would like, you might consider ['Putting Feelings First'](#) so that you can learn to behave with awareness – a synthesis of all of the feedback that your various mental functions give you and the judgments that arise, in an integrated way, from this feedback. This will enable you to love yourself truly and always courageously act out your own self-will, whatever the consequences.

If you wish to work against the many threats, including military threats, to our environment simultaneously, you are welcome to join those participating in ['The Flame Tree Project to Save Life on Earth'](#).

And if you wish to be part of efforts to end violence and war, including the threat of nuclear annihilation, you are welcome to consider signing the online pledge of ['The People's Charter to Create a Nonviolent World'](#) and/or using sound nonviolent strategy for your campaign or liberation struggle. See [Nonviolent Campaign Strategy](#) or [Nonviolent Defense/Liberation Strategy](#).

Our world is poised perilously on the brink of catastrophic nuclear war. This has happened because we have given responsibility for holding the nuclear trigger to a handful of men

who, emotionally speaking, are terrified little boys cowering from the imaginary threat of the bogeyman under their bed.

There is no easy way back from this brink. But you can help, both now and in the future, by doing one or more of the suggestions above.

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