

The Global Crisis. War, Ecology and the Global Economy: Reflections on 2018, Forecasting 2019

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Theme: [Global Economy](#), [US NATO War Agenda](#)

In many ways it is painful to reflect on the year 2018; a year of vital opportunities lost when so much is at stake.

Whether politically, militarily, socially, economically, financially or ecologically, humanity took some giant strides backwards while passing up endless opportunities to make a positive difference in our world.

Let me, very briefly, identify some of the more crucial backward steps, starting with the recognition by the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists in January that the year had already started badly when they moved the Doomsday Clock to two minutes to midnight, the closest it has ever been to 'doomsday' (and equal to 1953 when the Soviet Union first exploded a thermonuclear weapon matching the US capacity). See ['It is now two minutes to midnight'](#).

This change reflected the perilous state of our world, particularly given the renewed threat of nuclear war and the ongoing climate catastrophe. It didn't even mention the massive and unrelenting assault on the biosphere (apart from the climate) nor, of course, the ongoing monumental atrocities against fellow human beings.

Some Lowlights of 2018

1. The global elite, using key elite fora such as the Group of 30, the Trilateral Commission, the Bilderberg Group and the World Economic Forum, continued to plan, generate and exacerbate the many ongoing wars, deepening exploitation within the global economy, climate and environmental destruction, and the refugee crisis, among many other violent impacts, in pursuit of greater elite power, profit and privilege.
2. International organizations (such as the United Nations, the World Bank and International Monetary Fund) and national governments used military forces, legal systems, police forces and prison systems around the world to serve the global elite by defending its interests against the bulk of the human population, including those individuals and organizations audacious enough to challenge elite power, profit and privilege.
3. \$US1.7 trillion was *officially* spent worldwide on military weapons to kill fellow human beings and other lifeforms, and to destroy the biosphere. See ['Global military spending remains high at \\$1.7 trillion'](#).

However, so out-of-control is this spending that the United States has now spent

\$US21trillion on its military in the past 20 years for which it cannot even account! That's right, \$US1trillion each year, including 2018, above the official US national budget for killing is 'lost'. See [Army General Fund Adjustments Not Adequately Documented or Supported](#), ['Has Our Government Spent \\$21 Trillion Of Our Money Without Telling Us?'](#) and ['The Pentagon Can't Account for \\$21 Trillion \(That's Not a Typo\)'](#).

4. War and other military violence continued to rage across the planet wreaking devastation on many countries and regions, particularly in the Middle East and Africa. If you missed this, read what is happening to Yemen, described as 'the world's worst [humanitarian] crisis in decades' with 'three quarters of the entire Yemeni population – 22 million women, children and men – dependent on some form of humanitarian assistance to survive.' See ['Yemen: UN chief hails "signs of hope" in world's worst man-made humanitarian disaster'](#).
5. Not content with the nature and extent of the military violence they are inflicting already, during 2018 elites continued to plan how to do it more effectively in future with research and development of artificial intelligence just one manifestation of this: 'an "arms race in AI" is now underway, with the U.S., China, Russia, and other nations (including Britain, Israel, and South Korea) seeking to gain a critical advantage in the weaponization of artificial intelligence and robotics' so that 'artificial intelligence will be applied to every aspect of warfare, from logistics and surveillance to target identification and battle management'. See ["'Alexa, Launch Our Nukes!" Artificial Intelligence and the Future of War'](#).
6. The United States government unilaterally withdrew from the Intermediate Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty (which limits the deployment of intermediate range nuclear weapons).
7. Another significant proportion of global private financial wealth – conservatively estimated by the Tax Justice Network in 2010 to already total between \$US21 and \$US32 trillion – has been invested virtually tax-free through the world's still-expanding black hole of more than 80 'offshore' tax havens (such as the City of London Corporation, Jersey, Guernsey, the Isle of Man, Bermuda, the Cayman Islands, Hong Kong, Nauru, St. Kitts, Antigua, Tortola, Switzerland, the Channel Islands, Monaco, Cyprus, Gibraltar and Liechtenstein). This is just financial wealth. 'A big share of the real estate, yachts, racehorses, gold bricks – and many other things that count as non-financial wealth – are also owned via offshore structures where it is impossible to identify the owners.' See [Tax Justice Network](#).

Controlled by the global elite, Wall Street and other major banks manage this monstrous diversion of wealth under Government protection. 'Their business is fraud and grand theft.' Tax haven locations offer more than tax avoidance. 'Almost anything goes on.' It includes 'bribery, illegal gambling, money laundering, human and sex trafficking, arms dealing, toxic waste dumping, conflict diamonds and endangered species trafficking, bootlegged software, and endless other lawless practices.' See ['Trillions Stashed in Offshore Tax Havens'](#).

8. The world's major corporations continued to inflict enormous ongoing violence (in a myriad of ways) in their pursuit of endless profit at the expense of living

beings (human and otherwise) and Earth's biosphere by producing and marketing a wide range of life-destroying products ranging from nuclear weapons and nuclear power to junk food, pharmaceutical drugs, synthetic poisons and genetically mutilated organisms (GMOs). These corporations include those involved in the following industries: weapons manufacturers, major banks and their 'industry groups' like the International Monetary Conference, asset management firms, investment companies, financial services companies, fossil fuel (coal, oil and gas) corporations, technology corporations, media corporations, major marketing and public relations corporations, agrochemical (pesticides, seeds, fertilizers) giants, pharmaceutical corporations, biotechnology (genetic mutilation) corporations, mining corporations, nuclear power corporations, food multinationals and water corporations. You can see a list of the major corporations in this article: ['The Global Elite is Insane Revisited'](#).

9. More than a billion people continued to live under occupation, dictatorship or threat of genocidal assault. See, for example, ['500 Years is Long Enough! Human Depravity in the Congo'](#).
10. 36,500,000 human beings (mainly in Africa, Asia and Central/South America) were starved to death.
11. 18,250,000 children were killed by adults in wars, by starving them to death, and in a large variety of other ways.
12. 8,000,000 children were trafficked into sexual slavery; executed in sacrificial killings after being kidnapped; bred to be sold as a 'cash crop' for sexual violation, to produce child pornography ('kiddie porn') and 'snuff' movies (in which children are killed during the filming); ritually tortured and murdered as well as raped by dogs trained for the purpose. See ['Humanity's "Dirty Little Secret": Starving, Enslaving, Raping, Torturing and Killing our Children'](#).
13. Hundreds of thousands of individuals were kidnapped or tricked into slavery, which now denies 46,000,000 human beings the right to live the life of their choice, condemning many individuals - especially women and children - to lives of sexual slavery, forced labor or as child soldiers. See ['The Global Slavery Index'](#) and ['46 million people living as slaves, latest global index reveals'](#).
14. Well over 100,000 people (particularly Falun Gong practitioners) in China, where an extensive state-controlled program is conducted, were subjected to forced organ removal for the trade in human organs. See [Bloody Harvest and The Slaughter](#).
15. 15,750,000 people were displaced by war, persecution or famine. There are now 68,500,000 people, more than half of whom are children and 10,000,000 of whom are stateless, who have been forcibly displaced worldwide and remain precariously unsettled, usually in adverse circumstances. One person in the world is forcibly displaced every two seconds. See ['Figures at a Glance'](#).

16. Millions of people were made homeless in their own country as a result of war, persecution, 'natural' disasters, internal conflict, poverty or as a result of elite-driven national economic policy. The last time a global survey was attempted – by the United Nations back in 2005 – an estimated 100 million people were homeless worldwide. As many as 1.6 billion people lack adequate housing (living in slums, for example). See ['Global Homelessness Statistics'](#).
17. 73,000 species of life (plants, birds, animals, fish, amphibians, insects and reptiles) on Earth were driven to extinction with the worldwide loss of insects, including vital pollinators such as bees, now between 75% and 90%, depending on the species. See ['Insect Decimation Upstages Global Warming'](#). Have you seen a butterfly recently?
18. Separately from global species extinctions, Earth continued to experience 'a huge episode of population declines and extirpations, which will have negative cascading consequences on ecosystem functioning and services vital to sustaining civilization. We describe this as a "biological annihilation" to highlight the current magnitude of Earth's ongoing sixth major extinction event.' Moreover, local population extinctions 'are orders of magnitude more frequent than species extinctions. Population extinctions, however, are a prelude to species extinctions, so Earth's sixth mass extinction episode has proceeded further than most assume.' See ['Biological annihilation via the ongoing sixth mass extinction signaled by vertebrate population losses and declines'](#) and ['Biological Annihilation on Earth Accelerating'](#).
19. Wildlife trafficking, worth up to \$20 billion in 2018, is pushing many endangered species to the brink of extinction. Illegal wildlife products include jewelry, traditional medicine, clothing, furniture, and souvenirs, as well as some exotic pets, most of which are sold to unaware/unconcerned consumers in the West. See, for example, [Stop Wildlife Trafficking](#).
20. 16,000,000 acres of pristine rainforest were destroyed (with more than 40,000 tropical tree species now threatened with extinction). See ['Measuring the Daily Destruction of the World's Rainforests'](#), ['Estimating the global conservation status of more than 15,000 Amazonian tree species'](#) and ['Half of Amazon Tree Species Face Extinction'](#).
21. Vast quantities of soil were washed away as we destroyed the rainforests, and enormous quantities of both inorganic constituents (such as heavy metals like cadmium, chromium, lead, mercury, nickel and zinc) and organic pollutants (particularly synthetic chemicals in the form of fertilizers, pesticides and herbicides) were dumped into the soil as well, thus reducing its nutrients and killing the microbes within it. We also contaminated enormous quantities of soil with radioactive waste. See [Soil-net](#), ['Glyphosate effects on soil rhizosphere-associated bacterial communities'](#) and ['Disposing of Nuclear Waste is a Challenge for Humanity'](#).
22. The TEPCO nuclear power plant in Fukushima, Japan discharged 109,000 tons of radioactive waste into the Pacific Ocean killing an incalculable number of fish

and other marine organisms and indefinitely contaminating expanding areas of that ocean. See [‘Fukushima: A Nuclear War without a War: The Unspoken Crisis of Worldwide Nuclear Radiation’](#).

23. Human use of fossil fuels to power aircraft, shipping and vehicles (among other purposes) released 10 billion metric tons (gigatons) of carbon dioxide into Earth’s atmosphere, a 2.7% increase over 2017. See [‘Global Carbon Budget 2018’](#) and [‘Carbon dioxide emissions will hit a record high globally in 2018’](#). As a measure of their concern *elite-controlled governments and corporations around the world are currently planning or have under construction 1,380 new coal plants?* That’s right. 1,380 new coal plants. In 59 countries. See [‘NGOs Release List of World’s Top Coal Plant Developers’](#) and [‘2018 Coal Plant Developers List’](#).
24. 90 billion land animals and 60 billion marine animals were killed for human consumption, more than 100 million animals were killed for laboratory purposes in the United States alone and there were other animal deaths in shelters, zoos and in blood sports. See [‘How Many Animals Are Killed Each Year?’](#)

In addition, 40 million animals were killed for their fur. Approximately 30 million of these animals were raised on fur farms and killed, about 10 million wild animals were trapped and killed, and hundreds of thousands of seals were killed for their fur. See [‘How Many Animals are Killed Each Year?’](#)

25. Farming of animals for human consumption released 7,100,000,000 tonnes of CO₂-equivalent into Earth’s atmosphere. About 44% of livestock emissions were in the form of methane (which was 44% of anthropogenic CH₄ emissions), 29% as Nitrous Oxide (which was 53% of anthropogenic N₂O emissions) and 27% as Carbon Dioxide (which was 5% of anthropogenic CO₂ emissions). See [‘GHG Emissions by Livestock’](#).
26. Human use of fossil fuels and farming of animals released 3.2 million metric tons of (CO₂ equivalent) nitrous oxide (N₂O) into Earth’s atmosphere. See [‘Nitrous oxide emissions’](#).
27. As a result of previous greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and the consequent rise of about one degree celsius in the global temperature, causing the melting of Arctic permafrost and undersea methane ice clathrates, an incalculable quantity of methane was uncontrollably released into the atmosphere during 2018 (with the quantity being released getting ever closer to ‘exploding’). See [‘7,000 underground gas bubbles poised to “explode” in Arctic’](#) and [‘Release of Arctic Methane “May Be Apocalyptic,” Study Warns’](#).
28. Ice in the Antarctic is melting at a record-breaking rate, losing 219 billion tonnes of ice in 2018 at a rate that has accelerated threefold in the last five years. See [‘Antarctic ice melting faster than ever, studies show’](#).
29. An incalculable amount of agricultural poisons, fossil fuels and other wastes was discharged into the ocean, adversely impacting life at all ocean depths – see [‘Staggering level of toxic chemicals found in creatures at the bottom of the sea,’](#)

[scientists say](#)’- and generating ocean ‘dead zones’: regions that have too little oxygen to support marine organisms. See [‘Our Planet Is Exploding With Marine “Dead Zones”](#)’.

30. At least 8 million metric tons of plastic, of which 236,000 tons were microplastics, was discharged into the ocean. See [‘Plastic waste inputs from land into the ocean’](#) and [‘Plastics in the Ocean’](#).
31. Earth’s fresh water and ground water was further depleted and contaminated. These contaminants included bacteria, viruses and household chemicals from faulty septic systems; hazardous wastes from abandoned and uncontrolled hazardous waste sites (of which there are over 20,000 in the USA alone); leaks from landfill items such as car battery acid, paint and household cleaners; the pesticides, herbicides and other poisons used on farms and home gardens; radioactive waste from nuclear tests; and the chemical contamination caused by hydraulic fracturing (fracking) in search of shale gas, for which about 750 chemicals and components, some extremely toxic and carcinogenic like lead and benzene, have been used. See [‘Groundwater contamination’](#), [‘Groundwater drunk by BILLIONS of people may be contaminated by radioactive material spread across the world by nuclear testing in the 1950s’](#) and [‘Fracking chemicals’](#).
32. The longstanding covert military use of geoengineering – spraying tens of millions of tons of highly toxic metals (including aluminium, barium and strontium) and toxic coal fly ash nanoparticulates (containing arsenic, chromium, thallium, chlorine, bromine, fluorine, iodine, mercury and radioactive elements) into the atmosphere from jet aircraft to weaponize the atmosphere and weather – in order to enhance elite control of human populations, continued unchecked. Geoengineering is systematically destroying Earth’s ozone layer – which blocks the deadly portion of solar radiation, UV-C and most UV-B, from reaching Earth’s surface – as well as adversely altering Earth’s weather patterns and polluting its air, water and soil at incredible cost to the health and well-being of living organisms and the biosphere. See [‘Geoengineering Watch’](#).
33. As one outcome of our dysfunctional parenting model and political systems, fascism continued to rise around the world. See [‘The Psychology of Fascism’](#).
34. Despite the belief that we have ‘the right to privacy’, privacy (in any sense of the word) was ongoingly eroded in 2018 and is now effectively non-existent, particularly thanks to Alphabet (owner of Google). Taken together, ‘Uber, Amazon, Facebook, eBay, Tinder, Apple, Lyft, Foursquare, Airbnb, Spotify, Instagram, Twitter, Angry Birds... have turned our computers and phones into bugs that are plugged in to a vast corporate-owned surveillance network. Where we go, what we do, what we talk about, who we talk to, and who we see – everything is recorded and, at some point, leveraged for value.’ Moreover, given Google’s integrated relationship with the US government, the US military, the CIA, and major US weapons manufacturers, there isn’t really anything you can do that isn’t known by those who want to know it. In essence, Google is ‘a powerful global corporation with its own political agenda and a mission to maximise

profits for shareholders' and it partly achieves this by expanding the surveillance programs of the national security state at the direction of the global elite. See ['Google's Earth: How the Tech Giant Is Helping the State Spy on Us'](#) and the documentary ['The Modern Surveillance State'](#).

35. The right to free speech was ongoingly eroded in 2018. For just a couple of examples in the United States alone, see ['Marc Lamont Hill On Getting Fired From CNN, His Remarks On Palestine + More'](#) and ['A Texas Elementary School Speech Pathologist Refused to Sign a Pro-Israel Oath, Now Mandatory in Many States – so She Lost Her Job'](#).
36. Believing that we know better than evolution, humans created the first gene-edited baby in 2018. See ['Why we are not ready for genetically designed babies'](#) and ['China's Golem Babies: There is Another Agenda'](#).
37. An incalculable amount of junk was added to the 100 trillion items of junk already in Space. See ['Space Junk: Tracking & Removing Orbital Debris'](#).
38. Incalculable amounts of antibiotic waste, nuclear waste, nanowaste and genetically engineered organisms were released into Earth's biosphere. See ['Junk Planet: Is Earth the Largest Garbage Dump in the Universe?'](#)
39. Ongoing violence against children – see ['Why Violence?'](#) and ['Fearless Psychology and Fearful Psychology: Principles and Practice'](#) – ensured that more people will grow up accepting (and quite powerless to challenge) our dysfunctional and violent world, as described above.
40. The corporate media, education and entertainment industries continued to distract us from reality ensuring that most people remain oblivious to our predicament and their own role in it, let alone what they can do to respond powerfully.

While the above list of the setbacks humanity and the Earth suffered in 2018 is very incomplete, it still provides clear evidence that humanity is rapidly entering a dystopian future far more horrific than the worst novel or film in the genre. The good news is that, at the current rate, this dystopian world will be shortlived as humans drive themselves over the edge of extinction. See ['Human Extinction by 2026? A Last Ditch Strategy to Fight for Human Survival'](#).

But so that the picture is clear and 'balanced': were there any gains made against this onslaught?

Of course, it goes without saying that the global elite, international organizations (such as the United Nations), governments, corporations and other elite agents continued to live in delusion/denial endlessly blocking any initiative requiring serious action that would cut into corporate profits, or arguing over tangential issues of insignificant consequence to humanity's future.

In short, I could find no record of official efforts during the year to plan for the development

and implementation of a comprehensive, just and sustainable peace, but perhaps I missed it.

Separately from this, there have been some minor activist gains: for example, some western banks and insurance companies are no longer financially supporting the expansion of the western weapons industry and the western coal industry, some rainforest groups have managed to save portions of Earth's rainforest heritage, and activist groups continue to work on a variety of issues sometimes making modest gains.

In essence however, as you probably realize, many of the issues above are not even being tackled and, even when they are, activist efforts have been hampered by inadequate analysis of the forces driving conflicts and problems, limited vision (particularly unambitious aims such as those in relation to ending war and the climate catastrophe), unsophisticated strategy (necessary to have profound impact against a deeply entrenched, highly organized and well-resourced opponent, with the endless lobbying of elite institutions, such as governments and corporations, despite this effort simply absorbing and dissipating our dissent, as is intended – as Mark Twain once noted: 'If voting made a difference, they wouldn't let us do it.') and failure to make the difficult decisions to promote necessary solutions that are 'unpopular'.

Fundamentally, these 'difficult decisions' include the vital need to campaign for the human population, particularly in the West, to substantially reduce their consumption – by 80% – involving both energy and resources of every kind as the central feature of any strategy to curtail destruction of the environment and climate, to undermine capitalism and to eliminate the primary driver of war: violent resource acquisition from Middle Eastern and developing nations for the production of consumer goods and services for western consumers.

While we live in the delusion that we can simply substitute renewable energy for fossil fuels and nuclear power (or believe such delusions that a 1.5 degrees celsius increase above the preindustrial temperature is acceptable or that we have an 'end of century' timeframe to solve the climate crisis), we ignore the fundamental reality that Earth's biosphere is under siege on many fronts as a result of our endless extraction of its natural resources – such as fresh water, minerals, timber and, again, fossil fuels – for consumer production and the provision of services that go well beyond energy.

In short, for example, we will not save the world's rainforests because we switch to renewable energy. We must reduce demand for the consumer products that require rainforest inputs. We must stop mining the Earth for minerals that end up in our mobile phones, computers, vehicles, ships and aircraft by not using the products and services these minerals make possible. We must stop eating meat and other animal products. And so the list goes on.

Forecasting 2019

In many ways it is painful to forecast what will happen in 2019 mainly because of the absurd simplicity of doing so: It will be another year when vital opportunities will be lost when so much is at stake.

Given the insanity of the global elite – see [‘The Global Elite is Insane Revisited’](#) – which will continue to drive the dynamics producing the lowlights mentioned above with the active complicity of their agents in governments and corporations coupled with a human

population that is largely terrified, self-hating and powerless to resist – see [‘In Defense of the Human Individual’](#)– it is a straightforward task to forecast what will happen in 2019.

So let me forecast 40 lowlights for 2019:

1. See list above.
2. See list above.
3. See list above.

40. See list above.

So unless you play your part, 2019 and the few years thereafter will simply be increasingly worse versions of 2018 and it will all be over by 2026. See [‘Human Extinction by 2026? A Last Ditch Strategy to Fight for Human Survival’](#) which cites a wide range of scientific and other evidence which you are welcome to consider for yourself if this date seems premature.

Responding Powerfully

If you already feel able to act powerfully in response to this multifaceted crisis, in a way that will have strategic impact, you are invited to consider joining those participating in [‘The Flame Tree Project to Save Life on Earth’](#), which outlines a simple plan for you to systematically reduce your consumption, by at least 80%, involving both energy and resources of every kind – water, household energy, transport fuels, metals, meat, paper and plastic – while dramatically expanding your individual and community self-reliance in 16 areas, so that all environmental and climate concerns are effectively addressed.

If you are also interested in conducting or participating in a campaign to systematically address one of the issues identified above, you are welcome to consider acting strategically in the way that Mohandas K. Gandhi did. Whether you are engaged in a peace, climate, environment or social justice campaign, the 12-point strategic framework and principles are the same. See [Nonviolent Campaign Strategy](#). And, for example, you can see a basic list of the strategic goals necessary to end war and halt the climate catastrophe. See [‘Strategic Aims’](#).

If you want to know how to nonviolently defend against a foreign invading power or a political/military coup, to liberate your country from a dictatorship or a foreign occupation, or to defeat a genocidal assault, you will learn how to do so in [‘Nonviolent Defense/Liberation Strategy’](#).

If you are interested in nurturing children to live by their conscience and to gain the courage necessary to resist elite violence fearlessly, while living sustainably despite the entreaties of capitalism to over-consume, then you are welcome to make [‘My Promise to Children’](#).

To reiterate: capitalism, war and destruction of the environment and climate are outcomes of our dysfunctional parenting of children which distorts their intellectual and emotional capacities, destroys their conscience and courage, and actively teaches them to over-consume as compensation for having vital emotional needs denied. See [‘Love Denied: The Psychology of Materialism, Violence and War’](#).

If your own intellectual and/or emotional functionality is the issue and you have the self-

awareness to perceive that, and wish to access the conscience and courage that would enable you to act powerfully, try [‘Putting Feelings First’](#).

And if you want to be part of the worldwide movement committed to ending all of the violence identified above, consider signing the online pledge of [‘The People’s Charter to Create a Nonviolent World’](#).

In summary: if we do not rapidly, systematically and substantially reduce our consumption in several key areas and radically alter our parenting model, while resisting elite violence strategically on several fronts, homo sapiens will enter Earth’s fossil record within a few years. Given the fear, self-hatred and powerlessness that paralyses most humans, your choices in these regards are even more vital than you realize.

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