

The Three Global Super-Powers. China, Russia and the U.S.

By [Eric Zuesse](#)

Global Research, February 20, 2018

Region: [Asia](#), [Russia and FSU](#), [USA](#)

There are currently three global super-powers, three nations that lead the world: China, Russia, and U.S.

After World War II, until recently, the U.S. clearly dominated the world, not only **culturally**, with more influence over the world's other cultures than any other single nation possessed, but also **economically**, with product-dominance throughout the world, and also **militarily** tied with the Soviet Union during the Cold War, and, then, after the Cold War, still possessing such military dominance, so that in 2006, America's billionaires — [as represented by the most-prestigious two agencies that represent their collective interests against the public, the Council on Foreign Relations and Harvard University](#) — were actively promoting, broadly amongst foreign-policy academics, [the idea that the U.S. should seek to occupy a position of such extreme military superiority over Russia](#), so that since 2006 the concept of "Nuclear Primacy" is reflected, by America's power-centers, as being the correct goal for America, going forward, replacing the prior nuclear-strategic paradigm (since the 1950s) of "Mutually Assured Destruction," or "M.A.D.," in which nuclear weapons were (and, by Russia, still are) seen as purely defensive strategic military assets between the two nuclear superpowers, weapons whose only actual purpose, for either country, is to ward off a WW III — no usefulness at all in an actual aggressive military context. Thus, M.A.D. became replaced in America by Nuclear Primacy, nuclear weapons that are put in place to serve not only to ward off a nuclear attack, but also, ultimately, to win a nuclear war against the other nuclear super-power, Russia — nukes as aggressive weapons, by which the U.S. will (it has been expected, ever since 2006) soon be able to demand, and to receive, Russia's capitulation, surrender, or else Russia will be destroyed by a U.S. nuclear first-strike, while U.S. casualties, from any presumably few Russian weapons that might make it through this ABM-BMD shield, will be kept to an "acceptably low" level, by virtue of that then-functioning ABM-BMD system, combined with increases in U.S. nuclear striking-power. This nuclear-primacy paradigm aims for America (its billionaires) to take over the entire world, including ultimately the world's largest land-mass: Russia.

But, now, twelve years later, America's presumed early lead in such 'defensive' strategic weaponry [has become, instead, ever more clearly, just a figment of America's military-industrial complex's \(MIC's\) fervid marketing-campaign for the development and sale of such weapons](#), ever since U.S. President Ronald Reagan's promised "Star Wars" program during the 1980s got the effort, toward a winnable nuclear war, started, as an alleged 'defensive' measure — not yet overtly the end of M.A.D.

Soon after Reagan, the Soviet Union, and its communism, and its Warsaw Pact counter to America's NATO military alliance, all simultaneously ended, in 1991, as a consequence of which, the U.S. military-industrial complex (MIC), and especially the large U.S.

manufacturers of nuclear-weapons systems, the companies that dominate the MIC, were becoming stranded, because the market for their costliest wares was now in limbo.

Though elimination of the Cold War wouldn't have been an existential threat to these manufacturers, an end to the Cold War on the U.S. side would have threatened the market-values of those U.S. companies, which are controlled by U.S. billionaires, who have lots of clout in Congress. Thus, though the Cold War ended in 1991 on the Russian side, [it secretly continued on the U.S. side](#) (that is, amongst [America's super-wealthy, the people who control the U.S. Government](#) — the main market for the MIC); and America's strategic switch, away from M.A.D. to Nuclear Primacy (so as to unshackle their market from the prior politically imposed demand to maintain a nuclear *balance* between the two sides), has been a significant part of this secret continuation, by America, of the Cold War, while Russia's Government continued instead to think in terms of the M.A.D. paradigm. (Russia's weapons-manufacturers are still owned by the Government — socialized — so, there's no need to grow their 'market value'.)

In a strictly capitalist country, weapons-manufacturing is a major area of investment for billionaires, whose fortunes there rise to the extent that governments are buying their planes and bombs and missiles, especially those of the most sophisticated types, which are strategic weaponry, such as nuclear systems, which are the most profitable ones of all. Growth-at-all-costs has meant (and means) that the MIC is a cancer upon the entire world. ([Eisenhower's Farewell Address, on 17 January 1961](#), understated the problem.) Either the entire military will be a public entity, or else there will be (because of its privatized weapons-manufacturing) a tendency for the military to destroy everything else in order to continue to grow, like investors expect and demand — grow like cancer.

A major source of America's decline was U.S. President George W. Bush, who came into office in 2001 when the Cold War could no longer excite the American public as being a threat (since the Soviet Union and its communism and its military alliance were now long gone), and a new demon thus needed to be brought before the American people, as warranting increased 'defense' expenditures. [9/11 came along just in time to fill this interim lack of a *cause de guerre*, to attack now Al Qaeda and other \(as today's U.S. President famously tags it\) "radical Islamic terrorists."](#) However, America's spending on strategic weaponry requires instead focus against the other nuclear super-power as being the 'enemy', and this is what the end of M.A.D. and the start of Nuclear Primacy (which is manna from heaven for the 'Defense' contractors) have been all about: re-defining 'the enemy', from being a country with which peace must be maintained (M.A.D.), to becoming instead a country that should be outright conquered. And, amongst the lies which are necessary in order to sustain this switch (from M.A.D. to Nuclear Primacy), is the lie that ABMs have no aggressive function, but are 'purely for defense'. This lie will enable the public to accept the spending of trillions of dollars of federal money on weapons whose sole real use will be conquering Russia — or, at least, the *attempt* to do so.

Nobody makes public the identities of the individuals, in the U.S. and in its allied countries, who comprise [the suddenly booming market for luxurious nuclear-proof deep-underground bunkers](#). But whomever these owners are, three things about them are obvious: they've got lots of money; they think that the prospect of a nuclear war is very real — worth their pre-paying for suitably luxurious long-term temporary accommodations deep underground; and they aren't themselves one of the high government officials for whom the government's taxpayers have already built such bunkers. (Or, perhaps, some of them do belong to the last of those three categories, but they've got so much extra money that they can easily afford

to pay for more luxurious quarters than the taxpayers have already supplied them with.)

Quite similar to Donald Trump, but far more overtly faith-based than the hyper-secular [former Miss Universe Pageant owner Trump](#), George W. Bush had a confidence [like the Taliban and Al Qaeda do, that “God is on our side”](#), and so Bush acted as if he had no reason to test-out America’s ABM weapons before ordering and buying them (at the public taxpayer’s expense, and private billionaires’ profits, of course). Or, perhaps alternatively, Bush didn’t even care whether these weapons would work, but only whether the owners of the companies that would be manufacturing them would be satisfied with their profits, from the decisions that he was making, which so powerfully affected their profits. In any case, Bush’s focus on rushing forward with a U.S. ABM system demonstrated his strong commitment to the replacement of M.A.D., by Nuclear Primacy. [The whole idea of Nuclear Primacy rests upon there being an effective U.S. ABM system installed so as to make the enemy’s retaliatory weapons ineffective.](#) Bush pushed the ABM into production even before there was any indication that it would work. He did this even before the very concept of “Nuclear Primacy” was publicly introduced by the two chief agents for America’s aristocracy in 2006. What Harvard and the CFR promoted, was already the Government’s policy. While there were criticisms of Bush’s execution of the plan, there was no significant scholarly opposition against the Nuclear Primacy concept itself.

All subject-areas of expertise (and this refers to scientists, not to scholars) despised the religious faith-based President George W. Bush, much like they despise the secular faith-based President Donald Trump. For example, everyone knows that Trump has great difficulty finding experts who are willing to serve in his Administration. Similarly, in the October 2004 [“Poll of Academic Economists”](#) by the *Economist*, 59% of them answered “no” when asked “If you had a chance to work in a policy job in Washington, would you take it?” And when queried “For whom would you rather work?” Bush or his then electoral opponent Senator John Kerry, 81% chose Kerry — notwithstanding that, as a predominantly conservative lot, the economists did like *onething* about George W. Bush: “Outsourcing of jobs overseas,” which 86% of them rated to be either good or very good. (Of course, Trump claims to oppose that; so, in this regard, he’s even less acceptable to economists than Bush was.)

Under Bush, experts were even trying, with no success, to inform this conservative faith-based President about areas in the federal budget where substantial funds were being simply wasted, but his blind faith caused him to ignore such scientific warnings, and enormous federal waste resulted. For example, the science reporter William Broad headlined in *The New York Times* on 24 September 2003, [“Report Sees Risks in Push for Missile Defense”](#), and opened, “The Bush administration’s push to deploy a \$22 billion missile defense system by this time next year could lead to unforeseen cost increases and technical failures that will have to be fixed before it can hope to stop enemy warheads, Congressional investigators said yesterday. The General Accounting Office, in a 40-page report, said the Pentagon was combining 10 crucial technologies into a missile defense system without knowing if they can handle the task [and subsequently the same thing happened in order to produce the scandalously overpriced and insanely multi-functional F-35 jets], often described as trying to hit a bullet with a bullet.” The article quoted a former Pentagon weapons testing chief, who said that to deploy such an anti-ballistic missile (ABM) system just a year hence as planned, would be to deploy “no more than a scarecrow, not a real defense” — in other words, a system that would almost certainly fail in any actual use — because so many parts of the system wouldn’t have been tested sufficiently to be

designed functionally that soon. The prior (Bill Clinton) Administration, more attentive to such concerns, had established a schedule for testing the various parts of this complex system prior to any possible deployment. However, one of G.W. Bush's first actions coming into office was to deploy an ABM system, *even if it might not work*, and to do the testing afterward. Bush, it seems, possessed the faith that if science were to fail to supply the system's functionality, then God would certainly do so, for the benefit of "God's People."

Jackson Diehl of the *Washington Post* thus headlined on 26 April 2004, ["Dubious Threat, Expensive Defense"](#) and closed: "Bush would spend twice as much on missile defense as on customs and border protection," yet gain only "a rudimentary and uncertain defense against an unlikely long-range missile attack." Diehl opined that, despite the transformed defense needs after 9/11, "The president who never admits error will stay the course."

Bush did stay the course: by the time of 14 February 2005, as the *New York Times* reported the next day, ["The nation's fledgling missile defense system suffered its third straight test failure."](#) Commented one scientist there, "It's as if Henry Ford started up his automobile production line and began selling cars without ever taking one for a test drive." But not quite: Bush had now taken his third 'test drive' — and all three failed.

On 4 April 2005, the AP reported, ["Congress is weighing how much to invest in the fledgling ballistic missile defense system"](#), which has suffered setbacks and whose cost could easily top the \$150 billion partial price tag the Bush administration has estimated." Some congressional proponents of the ABM system were even quoted as saying that it had to be deployed in order to prevent future terrorist attacks, such as had occurred on 9/11. Of course, that allegation is absurd — 9/11 couldn't have been stopped by an anti-missile defense system. But members of Congress aren't so stupid as not to know this. That allegation was probably just a marketing-ploy sponsored in back-rooms by corporations such as Lockheed Martin, who might reflect their satisfaction with the statement, by donating to the 'appropriate' PACS.

Meanwhile, the Bush Administration and the Republican Congress were financially shortchanging many of the nation's authentic anti-terrorist needs. This \$150 billion+ could have gone a long way toward achieving *real* protection (and/or toward serving non-defense needs), if it had been scientifically allocated.

Were Al Qaeda to have been voting directly in the U.S. Congress, the ABM system would have had an easier time passing unchanged, exactly as Bush wanted. Al Qaeda would have been fervent Republicans — they were just as religious, and just as faith-obsessed, though in a different 'inerrant Scripture'. If Donald Trump has faith in any 'inerrant Scripture', nobody knows what it is. But, he seems to have lots of faith in himself, even if experts in the respective subject-fields don't.

By the present time, [the failure of America's entire ABM-BMD gamble — which was started under Reagan, begun being operationalized under G.W. Bush, and finally being installed by Barack Obama and now under Trump — is painfully clear](#). But success was never its actual goal: restoring the government's growth in 'defense' spending (even while cutting now the government's non-'defense' spending) is its real purpose. Those billionaires and centi-millionaires must be served, or else Congress-members will lose their seats to well-funded competitors in their own Party's next primary. The system succeeds marvelously at doing what it's intended to do: to serve the people who buy the Government — to serve the *actual patrons* of this '[democracy](#)'. Instead of being a democracy, it's a government that's bought

and sold.

While America thus spends itself into becoming increasingly a third-world country, China and Russia pursue different objectives. Specifically in the case of Russia, its military spending is one-tenth of America's, but, because Russia cannot afford to allow billionaires' demands for private profit to constitute the incentive-system that drives the Russian Government's military decisions, Russia has gone militarily from strength to strength, while post-WW-II America (spending ten times as much) has gone from Vietnam to Afghanistan to Iraq to Libya to Syria, and yet America's 'news' media have cheered all of these evil billionaires' invasions of those countries we wrecked, as if companies such as General Dynamics owned companies such as the *Washington Post*, and thus (with all that propaganda) [the American public continue to respect America's military higher than any other U.S. institution](#) — despite such a long string of military failures by this country, despite spending ten times what Russia does on its military, and despite America's military being [the most corrupt part of the U.S. federal Government](#).

But, actually, America's military spending is probably much higher than just ten times Russia's, because America's official figures — what SIPRI and others use, which is just the 'Defense' Department — excludes much of America's military expenses, as a consequence of which, [America's official \\$617.1 billion FY 2019 expenditure for the Department of 'Defense' masks an actual annual military expense of \\$1,135.7 billion](#). That's \$1.36 trillion per year, to do things such as destroy Afghanistan, destroy Iraq, destroy Syria, destroy Libya, perpetrate [coups such as in Ukraine](#), assist coups such as in Honduras, etc. But even that's not the total 'defense' expenditure which taxpayers have bought for the billionaires, because, throughout its existence, the U.S. CIA has been getting unrecorded off-the-books billions from the international narcotics trade, starting in 1948, when it perpetrated a coup in Thailand and installed there a brutal regime that helped establish the CIA's off-the-books funding-system, as I had mentioned [in a prior article](#), where I discussed U.S. relations with Syria, in broader historical context,

starting in 1949, when the U.S. CIA, under President Harry S. Truman, did [its second coup d'état](#), overthrowing a democratically elected progressive Government (the first having been [Thailand 1948, where the CIA had installed an extremely barbaric dictator](#) replacing [the democratically elected government](#) that had been headed by a [staunch anti-fascist](#), and simultaneously set up the CIA's off-the-books supplementary funding mechanism from the international narcotics-trade — a CIA practice which has continued till [perhaps the present](#); and, furthermore, the infamous [Nugan-Hand affair](#), which [involved Thailand](#), definitely involved the CIA's [Michael Hand and William Colby](#); so, clearly, the CIA is funded off-the-books from the narcotics business, and America's anti-narcotics laws thus are actually keeping narcotics-drug prices and resultant burglaries and CIA profits artificially high, funneling that illicit money into CIA coffers; and any method to defund the CIA down to its core intelligence-gathering function and to eliminate its coup-function, which is the function that took control in Thailand and Syria and then Iran and many more, would need to regulate — instead of to continue outlawing — drugs, which might be the main reason why it hasn't yet been done: [illegal drugs provide wealth to the CIA and other gang-lords](#), including [some U.S. Government officials](#)).

Another significant milestone in the development of the American elite's plan to conquer Russia has been the overwhelming — more than 90% of the votes in both the U.S. Senate and House — support for the imposition in 2012 of economic sanctions against Russia, to

punish the Russian Government for the alleged 2009 murder of one alleged anti-corruption whistleblower in a Russian prison, Sergei Magnitsky — the Magnitsky Act was passed, and was the first set of economic sanctions against Russia. ([The evidence that Magnitsky had been a 'whistleblower'](#), and [the evidence that he was 'tortured' in prison, and the evidence that he wasn't instead the American Bill Browder's tax-accountant who had helped Browder in a complex tax-evasion scheme that had defrauded the Russian Government of \\$232 million, are all themselves fraudulent](#), and even are easily verified as being fraudulent, but both the U.S. Government, and the EU, ignored and continue to ignore all of it.) In order to have a 'justification' to attack Russia, an excuse is needed; and, since the ideological one — communism — ended in 1991, Russia needs to be at least a 'dictatorship'; so, something such as the Magnitsky Act was necessary in order to get the military-industrial complex's (MIC's) PR ball rolling toward even-higher annual U.S. 'defense' spending. However, that excuse, being a 'dictatorship' (with elections that are at least as honest as America's are), isn't enough. Russia also needs to be officially declared to be an 'aggressor' — an *aggressive* dictatorship — such as to have grabbed portions of its adjoining country, Ukraine. So, America's Obama regime [secretly started in 2011 planning, and then in February 2014 it carried out, a coup against and overthrowing the democratically elected and Russia-friendly Government of Ukraine](#), and installed there [a fascist regime](#) to replace the one that had received 75% of the vote in the Crimean region of Ukraine, and 90% of the vote in the Donbass region of Ukraine, so that both regions refused to be ruled by the Obama-installed rabidly anti-Russian Ukrainian regime, and Russia helped both of those two separatist regions on its borders, and even protected and accepted Crimea's referendum-vote of over 90% to rejoin Russia, of which Crimea had historically been a part until the Soviet dictator in 1954 arbitrarily transferred it to Ukraine. So, now, the U.S. MIC has the excuses it wants, in order to place — and thus did place — its weapons and troops onto and near Russia's borders, just a ten-minute missile flight-time to Moscow.

This plan is moving forward, but nobody can yet say whether, or even when, the U.S. regime will invade. However, the U.S. regime and its NATO allies now also have the excuses that Russia has been holding 'aggressive' military exercises near its borders 'threatening' NATO countries on its border that might invade Russia, and Western 'news'media have alarmed their publics against Russia's 'aggressive' moves after its having 'stolen' Crimea and 'attacked' Ukraine in Donbass. And then there is yet more Russian 'aggression' when Syria requested and received Russia's military assistance against [the U.S.-backed jihadists who, since 2012, have poured, by the tens of thousands, from around the world, into Syria, to be led by the U.S.-backed Al Qaeda there, to overthrow the Syrian Government, which is allied with Russia](#). So, that too (the Syrian war) could produce a war between the U.S. and Russia; it could start over Syrian territory, where the U.S. insists on regime-change, but claims *only* to be 'fighting terrorists' there. Of course, regardless of whether the invader of Syria (the U.S.), or else the defender of Syria (Russia), wins, the loser in Syria, especially if it turns out to be the U.S. invader (i.e., if Syria remains one country instead of breaking apart, and if Assad becomes re-elected as President there), could then use that superpower-defeat in Syria, as constituting an excuse to invade the winning superpower there. This would be WW III, starting in Syria, instead of in Ukraine. The U.S. regime has set up those two scenarios.

1984 has come in the real world, but the declining and former leading superpower, America (["Oceania" in George Orwell's uncannily prophetic description of the future that he prematurely set to occur in 1984](#)), is apparently determined to stay 'on top', even if it's the last thing that anybody does. Can it really be that if the world of the future won't be led by

America's billionaires, then it won't exist *at all*? Do they really demand "My way, or the highway" — *really*? Are America's billionaires (despite any 'humanitarian' pretenses they individually so often hypocritically express, both in the fictionalized and in the real version) so stunningly united in their actual psychopathy (likewise in both versions — "Big Brother," *and* today's reality)? Thus far, it seems that they are. None of them — not a one of these people who have the financial resources to bring the world's most pressing issue honestly to the American public — is speaking out against the others on it, and devoting major funds to exposing the others for their pumping lies against Russia, and to exposing the truths about such things as ABMs and the MIC. And collectively they've [got the American public fooled into admiring the MIC \("the Military"\) above all other U.S. institutions](#). But whether America's billionaires will carry their collective evil to the extreme, isn't yet clear. [They are the actual decision-makers regarding U.S. Government policy](#), but they are playing their cards — as usual — privately and secretly, until their game (whatever it may turn out to be) will already be finished.

Meanwhile, Russia and China each proceeds forward on its own priorities, which aren't necessarily similar to those of the [conquest-obsessed American Government](#).

*

This article was originally published by [Strategic Culture Foundation](#).

Investigative historian Eric Zuesse is the author, most recently, of [They're Not Even Close: The Democratic vs. Republican Economic Records, 1910-2010](#), and of [CHRIST'S VENTRILOQUISTS: The Event that Created Christianity](#).

The original source of this article is Global Research
Copyright © [Eric Zuesse](#), Global Research, 2018

[Comment on Global Research Articles on our Facebook page](#)

[Become a Member of Global Research](#)

Articles by: [Eric Zuesse](#)

About the author:

Investigative historian Eric Zuesse is the author, most recently, of [They're Not Even Close: The Democratic vs. Republican Economic Records, 1910-2010](#), and of [CHRIST'S VENTRILOQUISTS: The Event that Created Christianity](#).

Disclaimer: The contents of this article are of sole responsibility of the author(s). The Centre for Research on Globalization will not be responsible for any inaccurate or incorrect statement in this article. The Centre of Research on Globalization grants permission to cross-post Global Research articles on community internet sites as long the source and copyright are acknowledged together with a hyperlink to the original Global Research article. For publication of Global Research articles in print or other forms including commercial internet sites, contact: publications@globalresearch.ca

www.globalresearch.ca contains copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. We are making such material available to our readers under the provisions of "fair use" in an effort to advance a better understanding of political, economic and social issues. The material on this site is distributed without profit to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving it for research and educational purposes. If you wish to use copyrighted material for purposes other than "fair use" you must request permission from the copyright owner.

For media inquiries: publications@globalresearch.ca