

US and NATO Nuclear Lunacy Still Raving

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While Civil Society and a global movement work steadfastly across dozens of fields for the abolition of nuclear weapons, planning, preparations, and rehearsals for attacks using deployed H-bombs and nuclear missiles are routine in the US military and NATO. Two years ago, the US Joint Chief of Staff published online, then quickly deleted, its thermonuclear mass destruction titled “Nuclear Operations, Joint Publication 3-72.”

Before the Joint Chiefs took it down, Steven Aftergood of the Federation of American Scientists managed to [preserve a copy](#). The manual relies on abstractions and euphemism to depict the unthinkable. It says, “The employment of nuclear weapons could have a significant influence on ground operations.” Of course “employment” means detonation, and “significant influence” means searing fireballs, vaporized victims, blast and shock-wave devastation, demolished hospitals and schools, vast firestorms, and permanent radioactive contamination of water, soil, and the food chain.

The manual explains that nuclear attacks create “conditions” without describing them. It says, “Using nuclear weapons could create conditions for decisive results and the restoration of strategic stability.” Then, as if US presidents had never said, “Nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought,” the report pretends it can and should. “[T]he use of a nuclear weapon will...create conditions that affect how commanders will prevail in conflict.”

US nuclear war practice takes place routinely with allied European militaries. “Steadfast Noon” is NATO’s code name for its annual nuclear attack practice, and Hans Kristensen reports for the Federation of American Scientists that, “This is the exercise that practices NATO’s nuclear strike mission with the B61 ... nuclear bombs the US deploys in Europe.” Jan Merička wrote in European Security Journal News Oct. 19, 2017, that Steadfast Noon is designed “to simulate nuclear strikes...and was conducted from the Kleine Brogel Air Base in Belgium and Büchel Air Base in Germany, where US B61 thermonuclear bombs with the force of up to 340 kilotons of TNT are stored.” (FYI: Hiroshima was incinerated with a 15 kiloton US bomb.)

To illustrate the Pentagon's ho-hum acceptance of mass destruction, it recently opened in Omaha its new, \$1.3 billion Strategic Command headquarters for supervising and targeting the nuclear arsenal, and it named the building after General Curtis LeMay, who, the *Omaha World Herald* reported, designed and conducted the incendiary bombing of 60 Japanese cities at the end of WWII, bombing that "incinerated entire cities" killing as many as 900,000 civilians. General LeMay's motto and that of Strategic Command used to be "Death from Above," but after the war it was changed to "Peace is Our Profession."

In Germany, readiness for attacks with nuclear weapons is maintained by the USAF 702nd Munitions Support Squadron, which tends to Germany's 33rd Fighter-Bomber Wing at Büchel Air Force Base. Headlines from last October's bombing "theater" included, and "NATO Holds Secret Nuclear War Exercises in Germany," "German Air Force training for nuclear war as part of NATO;" from 2017, "NATO nuclear weapons exercise unusually open"; and in 2015, "NATO nuclear weapons exercise Steadfast Noon in Büchel."

While the uninitiated might be aghast, the US military plans and prepares all year round for nuclear attacks at its far-flung "Defense Nuclear Weapons School" of the Air Force Nuclear College. According to the school's website, one branch (of "Armageddon Academy") is at the Ramstein Air Force Base in Germany, the largest US military base outside the country. Other branches are in New Mexico, Florida, Texas, Georgia, Oklahoma, and Ohio. Outlines for this school's ghoulish courses can be read online. (The site may have been altered since I first reported on it in last June.) For example, the school says boastfully that it "is responsible for delivering, sustaining and supporting air-delivered nuclear weapon systems for our warfighters ... every day."

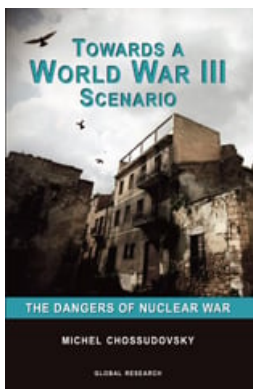
Course outlines on the website include, "Theater Nuclear Operations, a 4.5-day course that provides training for planners, support staff, targeteers, and staff nuclear planners for joint operations and targeting. The course provides an overview of nuclear weapon design, capabilities, and effects.... Objectives: ...Understand the US nuclear planning and execution process; Understand the targeting effects of nuclear weapon employment." Another class is, "Integrated Munitions Effects Assessment ... a five-day course that provides students ... proficiency in creating target models, developing attack plans using ... nuclear weapons...." Students "will be able to import, edit, and modify target sites", "Calculate probabilistic attacks against predefined targets; [and] develop attack plans using ... nuclear weapons...."

I am of the mind that setting the stage for nuclear attacks is both criminal and insane. Luckily, millions of people are involved in the newly invigorated movement to rid the world of such madness, via the 2017 Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. Read it sometime.

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John LaForge is Co-director of Nukewatch, a peace and environmental justice group in Wisconsin, and is co-editor with Arianne Peterson of Nuclear Heartland, Revised: A Guide to the 450 Land-Based Missiles of the United States.



[“Towards a World War III Scenario: The Dangers of Nuclear War”](#)

by Michel Chossudovsky

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[Michel Chossudovsky](#) is Professor of Economics at the University of Ottawa and Director of the Centre for Research on Globalization (CRG), which hosts the critically acclaimed website www.globalresearch.ca. He is a contributor to the Encyclopedia Britannica. His writings have been translated into more than 20 languages.

Reviews

“This book is a ‘must’ resource – a richly documented and systematic diagnosis of the supremely pathological geo-strategic planning of US wars since ‘9-11’ against non-nuclear countries to seize their oil fields and resources under cover of ‘freedom and democracy’.”

–John McMurtry, Professor of Philosophy, Guelph University

“In a world where engineered, pre-emptive, or more fashionably “humanitarian” wars of aggression have become the norm, this challenging book may be our final wake-up call.”

–Denis Halliday, Former Assistant Secretary General of the United Nations

Michel Chossudovsky exposes the insanity of our privatized war machine. Iran is being targeted with nuclear weapons as part of a war agenda built on distortions and lies for the purpose of private profit. The real aims are oil, financial hegemony and global control. The price could be nuclear holocaust. When weapons become the hottest export of the world’s only superpower, and diplomats work as salesmen for the defense industry, the whole world is recklessly endangered. If we must have a military, it belongs entirely in the public sector. No one should profit from mass death and destruction.

–Ellen Brown, author of ‘Web of Debt’ and president of the Public Banking Institute

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