The End Stage of American Empire

By William Astore
All around us things are falling apart. Collectively, Americans are experiencing national and imperial decline. Can America save itself? Is this country, as presently constituted, even worth saving?

For me, that last question is radical indeed. From my early years, I believed deeply in the idea of America. I knew this country wasn’t perfect, of course, not even close. Long before the 1619 Project, I was aware of the “original sin” of slavery and how central it was to our history. I also knew about the genocide of Native Americans. (As a teenager, my favorite movie — and so it remains — was Little Big Man, which pulled no punches when it came to the white man and his insatiably murderous greed.)

Nevertheless, America still promised much, or so I believed in the 1970s and 1980s. Life here was simply better, hands down, than in places like the Soviet Union and Mao Zedong’s China. That’s why we had to “contain” communism — to keep them over there, so they could never invade our country and extinguish our lamp of liberty. And that’s why I joined America’s Cold War military, serving in the Air Force from the presidency of Ronald Reagan to that of George W. Bush and Dick Cheney. And believe me, it proved quite a ride. It taught this retired lieutenant colonel that the sky’s anything but the limit.

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And yet after that war ended in 1918, peace proved elusive indeed, despite the Treaty of Versailles, among other abortive agreements. There was too much unfinished business, too much belief in the power of militarism, especially in an emergent Third Reich in Germany and in Japan, which had embraced ruthless European military methods to create its own Asiatic sphere of dominance. Scores needed to be settled, so the Germans and Japanese believed, and military offensives were the way to do it.

As a result, civil war in Europe continued with World War II, even as Japan showed that Asiatic powers could similarly embrace and deploy the unwisdom of unchecked militarism. (See Space Force p. 7)

When I taught World War I to cadets at the Air Force Academy, I would explain how the horrific costs of that war contributed to the collapse of four empires: Czarist Russia, the German Second Reich, the Ottoman Empire, and the Austro-Hungarian Empire of the Habsburgs. Yet even the “winners,” like the French and British empires, were weakened by the enormity of what was, above all, a brutal European civil war, even if it spilled over into Africa, Asia, and, indeed, the Americas.

Lessons from History on Imperial Decline

I’m a historian, so please allow me to share a few basic lessons I’ve learned.
We are in big trouble

By Bruce K. Gagnon

On June 12 the leaders of Poland, France and Germany met in Paris for a summit on the NATO war against Russia using Ukraine as the hammer. The meeting called for a NATO escalation. They demanded that Russia be permanently demilitarized and rendered incapable of waging military operations any longer.

In addition the Wall Street Journal announced on June 13 that the “Biden administration is expected to provide Ukraine with Depleted-Uranium rounds following weeks of internal debate about how to equip the Abrams tanks the US is giving to Kiev.” The collective west is not interested in negotiations or ceasefire. Their goal since the US orchestrated coup in Kiev in 2014 has been full-blown war with Russia.

In recent months we heard from the former leaders of Germany, France and Ukraine (Merkel, Hollande, Poroshenko) that they never intended to honor the Minsk 1 & 2 agreements (2014-2015). Instead they used them to stall and build up the Ukrainian military for war with Russia. These agreements called for ceasefire in the civil war, pull-back of all troops and the creation of a federated Ukraine which would have given the Russian-ethnic population of eastern Ukraine (Donbass) local autonomy. No war would have happened as Russia was totally on-board with Minsk.

Since the war began in February 2022 EU members have given at least $80 billion worth of military, humanitarian and financial aid to Kiev. US taxpayers have sent more than $140 billion to Ukraine.

At the same time US-UK-EU sanctions on Russia have back-fired and the European economy has hit the skids while Russia’s economy has prospered as Moscow turned to Asia, Africa and Latin America to pick up the slack. Germany in particular (the economic engine of Europe) is now facing major meltdown as the cheap natural gas that ran their economic engine of Europe is now facing major difficulty in filling the gap. Germany in particular (the industrial base has been lost due to their sanctions on Russia. The US attack on the Nordstream pipelines only complicates Germany’s problems.

All the while the ‘peace movement’ in the US, and across much of the west, remains seriously divided. The most many groups are willing to say these days to our own governments is ‘ceasefire and negotiations’. Sadly not enough peace people will say, “Stop funding this war which will surely lead to WW3 and possibly go nuclear”.

Let’s be frank. As long as the US-UK-NATO continue their current escalation how can Moscow be expected to trust the western leaders? Polls in Russia reveal that more than 80% of the public supports their government. In fact, many Russians are critical that their military has not been aggressive enough against the Nazi-led army that the western governments are arming, training, funding and directing.

At the same time US-UK-NATO are moving to turn their ‘alliance’ into a global one. It was recently announced that NATO was setting up operations in Japan as it moves to encircle China. Here we go again. Sanctions are being threatened against China and Taiwan is being armed to the max by Washington. US troops are being sent to Taiwan and US bases in the region are scaling up in preparation for another war.

The newly created Space Force is asking for more money as well. All US-NATO warfare is directed via space technology these days. Thus Washington is pushing the allies to help cover these growing costs and promises ‘interoperability’ to them. This means they will be hooked into the space war-fighting system but the Pentagon will control the ‘tip of the spear’.

Space orbits are increasingly crowded and the space junk problem is worsening. So much so that a NASA scientist has coined the phrase ‘the Kessler Syndrome’ which means that if things continue as they presently are we will witness cascading collisions and exponential growth of space debris. Any war in space (which the Space Force is now threatening) would mean massive scenarios of the Kessler Syndrome.

At that point the Earth goes dark as most of what we do today is aided by orbiting satellites. Cell phones, GPS, Internet banking, Air traffic control, weather prediction, and cable TV all would be shut down. The pathway from Earth to space would become highly problematic as it would be near impossible to get any rockets thru the orbiting debris field.

For the past year here in Maine I’ve been twice weekly standing on a street corner in my town with signs that read ‘No war with Russia’ and ‘No more $$$$ for Ukraine’. During the past several months a growing number of people have been attending these kinds of protests vigils to key traffic intersections around the state. Each month we get 40-50 people of all ages and backgrounds at these events. Lately we’ve seen the chorus of honks, waves and peace signs growing as it becomes clear that the public is beginning to react to the costs of the war.

Our only way out from behind this eight-ball is to get out on the streets where the people can see our signs and banners. Corporate media (essentially owned by the MIC and Wall Street) isn’t giving us the real story. Even social media is under attack as people like us are cancelled, blocked, and made invisible by the neo-con led forces that want endless war so they might stay in control of empire.

But those days are gone. BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa) is creating a challenge to the western colonial exploitative capitalist system epitomized by the IMF and World Bank. Now more than 25 nations including Venezuela, Mexico, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Indonesia are in line to join BRICS. The US-UK-NATO cannot abide by this challenge to their global control.

The question for this moment: will US-UK-NATO destroy the world in order to block the multi-polar movement now underway?

It is thus our time to speak out and protest while we still can.

**Why the Silence?**

By Joan Roelofs

Despite the US illegal immoral wars, preparation for them, and their threats to life, health, the environment and the destruction of human existence, there has been very little protest. Even those we might expect to dissent are strangely silent: progressives, religious leaders, academics, civil rights activists, and environmentalists.

There is brave and persistent activism by anti-war organizations, but still mostly quiet acceptance.

Why have the US public, press, and politicians been generally unperturbed about US aggression, creeping militarization of our economy and culture, and the UN inability to enforce the illegality of war? I have been trying to answer this in articles and a book, *The Trillion Dollar Silencer*. Among the reasons are propaganda, fear, distractions, and interests. Here are some examples of what I discovered.

**Propaganda:** People in this country, citizens and residents, have been taught from an early age that the US is a beacon to the world and that its foreign policy is always intended for good. Very many want to believe this and do. Children are exposed to a culture of violence, especially in their video games and the increasing militarization of their schools, many of which enroll students in JROTC. On the other hand, voices of protest and important documents are increasingly shut out of mainstream media, or ridiculed. For example, two major antiwar demonstrations in Washington DC were not mentioned in “newspapers of record,” and Sy Hersh’s investigation of the Nord Stream pipeline was ignored or dismissed.

**Fear:** Opposing war or organizing anti-war protests can incur penalties. These may range from social ostracism to loss of employment. If even tenured professors can be booted for opposition to US foreign policy, those with much less job protection have much to fear. Organizations worry about losing members or donors. Those with family members who are veterans or now in the military don’t want to offend their relatives.

**Distractions:** Many people must concentrate on working, keeping a job, feeding the children, preventing the house from falling down, caring for ill relatives, and the needs of daily existence. Other distractions: alcohol, drugs, sports, TV, celebrities, video games, pornography, violent crime, pandemics, earthquakes, etc., often displace attention to foreign wars.

Even noble distractions can blot out ugly realities. Meditation and hobbies are good for clearing the mind—but do they clear too much? Concerns for their relatives.

**Interests:** My major investigations have been of the interests, so that we may see the full scope of what we are up against. One obvious silence comes from the many people with current or past military status: active, reserve, retired, veterans, civilian employees, contractors, and base workers. The Department of Defense has the largest civilian employment in the federal government, and works closely with other departments and agencies.

Defense department contracting, where most of the budget goes, is a highly effective silencer. It provides large profits for corporations, and jobs for executives, engineers, scientists, mechanics, laborers, architects, and others. It also helps keep the sagging economy and fragile enterprises afloat. Vast contracts go to weapons producers, construction companies, and cybersecurity and intelligence firms. Humana (a private health insurance company) was one of the top 10 contractors in 2020.

Less publicity has been given to the subcontractors making weapons parts, firms providing every type of goods and services, universities, think tanks, and nonprofit organizations. For example, a company producing wooden children’s furniture in my city received a contract for cribs that met new standards, for military child care centers. The government requires that products must be new and domestically sourced, unless they are unavailable. Contracts also give preferences to small businesses, and those owned by women, minorities, disabled people, and veterans.

Among the large DoD contractors are Goodwill Industries and other nonprofits employing disabled people. These provide clothing, furniture, landscaping, and janitorial services to the military. The DoD Readiness and Environmental Protection Integration program creates buffer zones to reduce civilian encroachment near live fire exercise, bombung ranges, and war games areas. The Nature Conservancy is a major contractor in this program.

Also involved are Evergreen State College, Ducks Unlimited, Oregon Zoo, Maine Audubon Society, and Trout Unlimited The Student Conservation Association helps protect endangered species on bases. Universities are heavily involved with the military, through ROTC, weapons development, and research contracts of every kind. A controversial new grant to Howard University is to develop Air Force autonomous warfare.

Military bases in the US, hundreds like small cities, are economic hubs of their region, supporting real estate firms, entertainment, shopping malls, motels, museums and others. They employ local people as well as major construction firms, electronic intelligence installers, and superfund remediation workers. Military installations such as the Hanford Nuclear Reservation absorb billions for cleanup, with no end in sight.

The huge profits military contractors amass enables propaganda, greenwashing, political contributions, and philanthropy that includes not only donations, but partnerships, scholarships, and programs. Universities and think tanks are heavily supported. Weapons firms are especially generous to minority organizations such as the NAACP, Congressional Black Caucus, and American Indian College Fund; all the arts; environmental groups; and youth organizations. Contractors support STEM education and sponsor the popular robotics competitions in public schools.

State governments have military departments, National Guard units, military schools for at-risk youth, and economic development commissions that embrace DoD contracts.

These are the mountains that must be moved. We need more investigations, more information to the public, and above all, people working together to figure out how changes can happen. We may want green infrastructure, environmental restoration, resources for human needs, and a culture of peace. Politically, how can we get it?

~ Joan Roelofs is Professor Emerita of Political Science, Keene State College in New Hampshire. Her recent book is entitled ‘THE TRILLION DOLLAR SILENCER: Why There Is So Little Anti-War Protest in the United States’. Joan has been an antwar activist ever since she protested the Korean War.
Full Spectrum Dominance: What Does It Really Mean?

By Lisa Savage

When Full Spectrum Dominance became U.S. Pentagon policy in 1997, we may have disagreed with their goals but we thought we knew what they meant: military power projection over 100% of the land, oceans, and air of the planet we all share, and outer space as well.

Thirty years on from the Outer Space Treaty (OST) signed in 1967, the “agreement non-capable” U.S. government felt comfortable enough to flaunt the equitable international access goals of the OST. If might makes right in traditional warfighting domains, it must also be so in domains like space.

Before long the quest for Full Spectrum Dominance would be expanded to include cyberspace i.e. the Internet and other digital tech spaces. Full disclosure: as an educator, now retired, I always wondered how U.S. generals thought they were going to prevail in computer science and information technology when students in this country were years behind their age mates in Europe and Asia in mathematics learning.

With the advent of the 21st century, Pentagon ambitions have been revealed as even more perva-sive and chilling. It’s now clear that Full Spectrum Dominance extends to communications as a quest for Electromagnetic Spectrum Superiority, to the information sphere and, not coincidentally, to controlling the public’s health. Since President Barak Obama signed a law permitting the use of public funds to produce domestic propaganda as one of his final acts in office, we’ve seen an explosion of information management schemes.

Some, as revealed by reporters mining the Twitter Files, consist of operating social media platforms like sock puppets for the U.S. government (and, currently, the prevailing political party). Others involve building an academic and mainstream press juggernaut to enforce acceptable narratives and suppress others. Topics range from pandemic management to the U.S. /NATO proxy war against Russia in Ukraine. In some ways the lockdown on controlling information was accelerated by twin crises twenty years apart: the terrorist attacks of 9/11 on U.S. soil, and SARS-CoV-2 bioweapon deployment originating from U.S.-funded research in Wuhan, China.

The historical context is important here. Since WW2 the U.S. has pursued unipolar control of the world economy via both military and covert power projection to dominate world trade. Since its illegal coup violating national sovereignty in Ukraine in 2014, its power has been slipping away. Despite 800+ military bases outside its own borders, its own gutting of its industrial base and prosperity for citizens has weakened its ability to project power and has undercut domestic faith in government and mainstream media. Now backed into a corner as the world moves rapidly toward multipolar governance, it threatens and bullies nations large and small with dwindling effect. Hollywood soft propaganda aside, Full Spectrum Dominance was never more than a pipe dream, and has never been further from realization than it is today.

A few examples:

• Moving to weaken Russia both militarily and economically through war on its borders and extensive sanctions has backfired. Ukraine has burned through troops and NATO weapon systems rapidly while Russia’s economy has improved as it continues to supply energy to much of the world. The Russian Federation’s military appears competent and well-resourced, and its deepening alliance with the People’s Republic of China is a gamechanger. Most analysts internationally understand that the real target of U.S. desperation to remain in power is China, with its Belt and Road infrastructure integrating Asia and the Global South, and its BRICS economic leadership attracting new nations rapidly. China’s recent role in brokering a rapprochement between rivals Iran and Saudi Arabia is similarly a diplomatic triumph that the warmongering U.S. is incapable of accomplishing.

• Bombing the Nord Stream gas pipelines from Russia to Germany was moderately successful in that 75% of their capacity was destroyed, but a public relations nightmare. Only in the West is the public kept from discussing this act of war against another NATO nation, and the U.S.’s cynical control of the United Nations has ensured that no independent investigation has occurred. Meanwhile, major environmental organizations in the U.S. have been utterly silent on the climate crime of the largest release on record of methane into Earth’s atmosphere.

• International space cooperation has unraveled as Russia prepares to exit from its role supporting the International Space Station, and the Chinese government launches a modern space station of its own. Among the many treaties the hegemonic U.S. refuses to ratify is the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space (PAROS), which supports the fundamental principles of the OST and goes on to ban the weaponization of space. With U.S. oligarch Elon Musk’s Space X satellite communication system supporting the communications aspect of the war on Russia in Ukraine, one can see both the deep involvement of corporate contractors in U.S. war making and the ongoing use of space assets for projecting military force.

• Demonizing China, and to a lesser extent Russia, for operating defensively and offensively in cyberspace, the Pentagon loses credibility due to its hypocrisy. An Air Force general was just nominated to head both the NSA electronic spying agency and the U.S. military command that conducts offensive cyber operations, and the Pentagon requested $11.2 billion for cyberspace operations next year.

• The recent G7 conference was cynically located in Hiroshima, first city to be destroyed by a nuclear weapon. Japan is under huge pressure from the U.S. to abandon its pacifist constitution and ramp up to fight China. Those assembled at the G7 from fading Western powers failed to make any progress toward the expressed goal of nuclear disarmament, but since the U.S. continues refusing to sign the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, this came as no great surprise.

Writing in Counterpunch in 2015, journalist Diana Johnstone supplied some of the historical underpinning of U.S. insurrection on this issue:

President Harry S. Truman was meeting with Churchill and Stalin in the Berlin suburb of Potsdam when secret news came that the New Mexico test of the atomic bomb was a success. Observers recall that Truman was “a changed man”, euphoric with the possession of such power. While more profound men shuddered at the implications of this destructive force, to Truman and his “conniving” Secretary of State, James Byrnes, the message was: “Now we can get away with everything.”

Roger McKenzie, international editor of the U.K. Morning Star newspaper, notes that what is called for today is full spectrum resistance and organizing. Global Network members are proud to contribute our efforts through education, advocacy, protest, and other forms of resistance to impending world war intended to stave off the end of empire. Join us!

~ Lisa Savage serves as GN’s Social Media coordinator and is a member of the GN board of directors. She lives in Solon, Maine.
Asian & NATO nations in the ‘Battle for the Arctic’

By Vladimir Danilov (New Eastern Outlook)

During the Cold War, Washington and Moscow fought hard for dominance in the Arctic. But then these tensions subsided in the 1990s, a period of “rapprochement between the West and Russia”. The Arctic Council was even created, bringing the states of the region together and allowing them to coordinate their policies. After that, for a while, the Arctic was of secondary importance to the US after the Middle East and the Indo-Pacific.

However, melting ice, which opened up new transport routes and access to the region’s richest natural resources, in particular unexplored reserves of oil, gas, rare metals, and large quantities of fish, have turned the Arctic region into an active zone of competition and rivalry. And, in addition to the Nordic states, the US and NATO, even Asian countries, in particular China, Japan, India, and South Korea, have joined the “battle for the Arctic”, seeing significant advantages in using a shorter and cheaper transport route to Europe in addition to resource potential. Other Asian BRICS and Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) countries have also shown interest in cooperating with Russia in the Arctic, demonstrating the strategic nature of these intentions.

Tokyo’s desire to step up its battle for the Arctic has long been reported in the Japanese media. Japan is now actively developing research on meteorological observations and forecasts, environmental protection and the “improvement” of international law in the Arctic. It is clearly hoping, among the countries not territorially part of the region, to gain unrestricted access to the exploitation and utilization of the “Arctic’s benefits”. Especially the promising route linking Europe and Asia along Russia’s northern coast, which is already used by container ships and tankers to transport liquefied natural gas (LNG) from the gas fields on the Yamal peninsula to both Europe and Asia.

Beijing has also declared itself a “near-Arctic country” and has formulated its own Arctic policy, justifying its interest in the region in part by the fact that the melting Arctic ice could flood many Chinese shores and displace some 20 million people. According to China’s vision of the future, a “Polar Silk Road” is to run through the still ice-bound expanses, with an infrastructure and a legal regime being put in place for the many ships to operate.

Following China, South Korea has become a permanent observer to the Arctic Council, having also begun building its own icebreaker fleet and even adopted an action program to implement the National Arctic Policy.

As for India, it emphasizes participation in Arctic energy projects. In particular, in Sakhalin, AFK Sistema and India’s largest oil and gas corporation ONGC signed framework cooperation agreements in 2010, and in 2011 the Indian businessmen became key partners in the development of oil fields in the Nenets Autonomous Okrug (District).

US–NATO bases in Arctic

And NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg explicitly stated that the Alliance should increase its presence in the Arctic, which is of “great strategic importance” to the bloc. At the same time, the Alliance intends to establish year-round naval bases in the Arctic regions of Canada and northern Norway. To this end, the US and Norway have already signed an agreement in April 2021 on the construction of military bases: three air bases and two naval ones. In addition, the United States already operates eight bases in the Arctic region, plus those of its allies: Denmark (five bases), Norway (five bases) and Iceland (one base). The total is 19. If Washington negotiates with Sweden and Finland, which are about to join the bloc, it will have access to nine more. In order to strengthen its position in the Arctic, in 2019 the Trump administration explored the possibility of buying Greenland from Denmark, and in 2020 the US decided to reopen a consulate in Greenland.

With this in mind, various experts now note that international military activity in the high latitudes has recently increased markedly, and that military activities in the Arctic are being internationalized. It is certainly a very worrying trend for the Arctic region to become a possible international theater of war. NATO’s policy of “northern enlargement” of the Alliance, involving neutral countries Finland and Sweden, could further complicate the situation in the Arctic and intensify confrontation in the region.
Traffic jam in Lower Earth Orbit & few rules

Sputnik

Elon Musk has laid out plans to launch tens of thousands of small satellites into orbit to facilitate the Starlink global high-speed internet service, but the proposal has raised eyebrows of many space-faring countries, including the US military.

A study recently published in the Chinese peer-reviewed journal Radio Engineering has determined SpaceX routinely disregarded some of the basic rules of orbital safety with its Starlink satellites.

“We must establish a new ‘space traffic rule’ based on new technologies, otherwise the development of Chinese constellations will be seriously restricted,” said Yu Shunjing, a satellite design engineer with DFH Satellite Co., China’s largest satellite maker and one of the co-authors of the study.

Aside from some basic structures, such as a ban on placing offensive weapons in Earth orbit, there are stunningly few globally-agreed-upon rules governing spacecraft. However, some common conventions have governed space flight for decades, such as regarding 10 kilometers as the minimum distance two satellites can approach each other without substantial risk of a collision, which would produce dangerous space trash.

The distance is necessary because objects in orbit travel very fast, at least 11,300 kilometers per hour, and both computerized collision avoidance systems and human controllers on the ground require time to detect a potential collision and avoid it.

“The existing safety limit is based on scientific calculation,” Yu said. “Crossing the line could lead to some dangerous consequences, because one collision can lead to another.”

However, according to the Chinese study, several Starlink satellites have begun operating at just 4.9 kilometers apart in an effort to maximize data-sharing via lasers - a new method being tested by Musk’s company in lieu of putting more relay stations on Earth’s surface.

SpaceX already has permits to place 12,000 satellites into orbit, which observers say is already a worrisomely large number, but the company has proposed as many as 30,000 satellites. Rival firms, such as Amazon, have launched competing networks of thousands of satellites.

Starlink satellites have posed a danger to both other orbiting spacecraft as well as people on the ground. In July and again in October of last year, two satellites passed perilously close to China’s Tiangong space station, one of which caused the space station to alter course in order to avoid a collision. Beijing blasted the US for the company’s negligence, but Musk dismissed Chinese fears, saying the satellite network poses no danger to other spacecraft.

There have been other close calls in space, too, such as between lunar orbiters owned by NASA and the Indian Space Research Organization in November 2021, and between several US Geosynchronous Space Situational Awareness Program (GSSAP) “neighborhood watch” satellites and Russian geosynchronous communications satellites between 2016 and 2018.

How weapons firms influence the Ukraine debate

by Ben Freeman

“Experts” from defense industry funded think tanks are flooding the media, pushing for more arms without disclosing their benefactors.

“To be brutal about it, we need to see masses of Russians fleeing, deserting, shooting their officers, taken captive, or dead. The Russian defeat must be an unmistakably big, bloody shambles. …To that end, with the utmost urgency, the West should give everything that Ukraine could possibly use,” argues Eliot Cohen in The Atlantic.

What neither Cohen, who also famously pushed for the U.S. invasion of Iraq, nor The Atlantic acknowledge in the article is that most of the weapons Cohen mentions in the article — including long-range missiles, F-16s, and even F-35s — are made by funders of Cohen’s employer, the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS).

While this might seem like a glaring conflict of interest that, at the very least, should be disclosed in the article, a new Quincy Institute brief that I authored, “Defense Contractor Funded Think Tanks Dominate Ukraine Debate,” shows that this article isn’t an exception; it’s the norm. America’s top foreign policy think tanks are awash in funding from the defense industry. They’ve dominated the media market related to the Ukraine war, and they seldom, if ever, disclose that many of the weapons they’re recommending the U.S. give to Ukraine are made by their funders.

In short, when you hear a think tank scholar comment on the Ukraine war, chances are you’re hearing from someone whose employer is funded by those who profit from war, but you’ll probably never know it. That’s because 78 percent of the top ranked foreign policy think tanks in the U.S. receive funding from the Pentagon or its contractors, as documented in the new brief.

At the very top, defense industry influence is even greater: every single one of the top 10 ranked foreign policy think tanks receives funding from the defense sector. And, for many think tanks, the amount of defense funding is enormous. For example, CSIS, the Center for a New American Security (CNAS), and The Atlantic Council all reported receiving more than a million dollars a year from the defense sector.

These and other think tanks that receive considerable defense sector funding have publicly advocated for more militarized U.S. responses to the Ukraine war and, compared to their counterparts at think tanks that accept little or no defense sector funding, have dominated the media landscape related to the Ukraine war.

Media outlets were, similarly, not transparent about the conflicts of interest of the experts they were citing. In fact, none of the media mentions analyzed in the brief were accompanied by disclosures of defense industry funding of think tanks that were, at times, recommending policies that could financially benefit their funders.

— Ben Freeman is a Research Fellow at Quincy Institute for Responsible Statecraft. His work focuses on how foreign governments seek to influence American government and policy.
The End Stage of American Empire (cont. from p. 1)

and war. The result: 75 million dead and more empires shattered, including Mussolini’s “New Rome,” a “thousand-year” German Reich that barely lasted 12 of them before being utterly destroyed, and an Imperial Japan that was starved, burnt out, and finally nuked. China, devastated by war with Japan, also found itself ripped apart by internal struggles between nationalists and communists.

As with its prequel, even most of the “winners” of World War II emerged in a weakened state. In defeating Nazi Germany, the Soviet Union had lost 25-30 million people. Its response was to erect, in Winston Churchill’s phrase, an “Iron Curtain” behind which it could exploit the peoples of Eastern Europe in a militarized empire that ultimately collapsed due to its wars and its own internal divisions. Yet the USSR lasted longer than the post-war French and British empires. France, humiliated by its rapid capitulation to the Germans in 1940, fought to reclaim wealth and glory in “French” Indochina, only to be severely humbled at Dien Bien Phu. Great Britain, exhausted from its victory, quickly lost India, that “Jewel” in its imperial crown, and then Egypt in the Suez debacle.

There was, in fact, only one country, one empire, that truly “won” World War II: the United States, which had been the least touched (Pearl Harbor aside) by war and all its horrors. That seemingly never-ending European civil war from 1914 to 1945, along with Japan’s immobilization and China’s implosion, left the U.S. virtually unchallenged globally. America emerged from those wars as a superpower precisely because its government had astutely backed the winning side twice, tipping the scales in the process, while paying a relatively low price in blood and treasure compared to allies like the Soviet Union, France, and Britain.

History’s lesson for America’s leaders should have been all too clear: when you wage war long, especially when you devote significant parts of your resources — financial, material, and especially personal — to it, you wage it wrong. Not for nothing is war depicted in the Bible as one of the four horsemen of the apocalypse. France had lost its empire in World War II; it just took later military catastrophes in Algeria and Indochina to make it obvious. That was similarly true of Britain’s humiliations in India, Egypt, and elsewhere, while the Soviet Union, which had lost much of its imperial vigor in that war, would take decades of slow rot and overturn in places like Afghanistan to implode.

Meanwhile, the United States hummed along, denying it was an empire at all, even as it adopted so many of the trappings of one. In fact, in the wake of the implosion of the Soviet Union in 1991, Washington’s leaders would declare America the exceptional “superpower,” a new and far more enlightened Rome and “the indispensable nation” on planet Earth. In the wake of the 9/11 attacks, its leaders would declare America the exceptional “superpower,” a new and far more enlightened Rome and “the indispensable nation” on planet Earth. The result: 75 million dead and more empires shattered, including Mussolini’s “New Rome,” a “thousand-year” German Reich that barely lasted 12 of them before being utterly destroyed, and an Imperial Japan that was starved, burnt out, and finally nuked. China, devastated by war with Japan, also found itself ripped apart by internal struggles between nationalists and communists.

For whether you call it fascism, as with Nazi Germany, communism, as with Stalin’s Soviet Union, or democracy, as with the United States, empires built on dominance achieved through a powerful, expansionist military necessarily become ever more authoritarian, corrupt, and dysfunctional. Ultimately, they are fated to fail. No surprise there, since whatever else such empires may serve, they don’t serve their own people. Their operatives protect themselves at any cost, while attacking efforts at retrenchment or demilitarization as dangerously misguided, if not seditiously disloyal.

That’s why those like Chelsea Manning, Edward Snowden, and Daniel Hale, who shined a light on the empire’s militarized crimes and corruption, found themselves imprisoned, forced into exile, or otherwise silenced. Even foreign journalists like Julian Assange can be caught up in the empire’s dragnet and imprisoned if they dare expose its war crimes. The empire knows how to strike back and will readily betray its own justice system (most notably in the case of Assange), including the hallowed principles of free speech and the press, to do so.

Perhaps he will eventually be freed, likely as not when the empire judges he’s approaching death’s door. His jailing and torture have already served their purpose. Journalists know that to expose America’s war crimes will get them thrown in jail and here I don’t even mean the nearly 400 million AR-15 semi-automatic rifles. By “guns,” I mean all the militarized trappings of empire, including America’s vast stockpile of military bases and its staggering commitments to weaponry of all sorts, including world-ending nuclear ones. As for clenching bitterly to religion — and by “religion” I mean the belief in America’s own righteousness, regardless of the millions of people it’s killed globally from the Vietnam era to the present moment — that, too, would have to stop.

History’s lessons can be brutal. Empires rarely die well. After it became an empire, Rome never returned to being a republic and eventually fell to barbarian invasions. The collapse of Germany’s Second Reich bred a third one of greater virulence, even if it was of shorter duration. Only its utter defeat in 1945 finally convinced Germans that God didn’t march with their soldiers into battle.

What will it take to convince Americans to turn their backs on empire and war before it’s too late? When will we conclude that Christ wasn’t joking when He blessed the peacemakers rather than the warmongers?

As an iron curtain descends on a failing American imperial state, one thing we won’t be able to say is that we weren’t warned.

~ William Astore is a retired lieutenant colonel (USAF) and professor of history. His personal blog is Bracing Views.
Neo-cons appear willing to risk it all to stay in control

By Global Times

Editor’s Note: The recent developments in East Asia, such as the détente between South Korea and Japan, South Korea’s increasing hostility toward China, and the talk of a liaison office of NATO in Tokyo, have raised alert of observers, as the US escalates confrontation with China. What are the obstacles for East Asia to maintain peace? Global Times (GT) reporter Wang Wenwen discussed these issues with K.J. Noh (Noh), a US-based journalist, political analyst, writer and educator specializing in the geopolitics and political economy of the Asia-Pacific region. He is a member of Veterans for Peace and Pivot to Peace and lives on the west coast.

GT: It is hyped by some Western media outlets that an East Asian NATO that comprises the US, Japan, South Korea and even China’s Taiwan region should be established. What do you think?

Noh: I think it’s an act of madness. NATO is the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, neither Japan or South Korea is in the North Atlantic. They are all in the Pacific. NATO is a Cold War relic that should have been disbanded after the fall of the Soviet Union. But since then, it served and it still serves as the military arm of US imperialism and US force projection around the world. It comes into the Pacific to threaten China, and talks of preserving peace or upholding human rights, which is hypocrisy beyond belief.

GT: Japan is in talks to open a NATO office. How will it affect regional stability, as the US pursues confrontation with China?

Noh: It will destroy regional stability. Anytime you hear the word “stability” from the US media, they are really talking about destabilization. Anytime you hear the word “deterrance,” they are really talking about provocation. It will escalate the threat. It’s not just a liaison office, it is an office to prepare for interoperability between the US and Japan.

So it is very threatening. The idea behind this is to expand the theater of war and the number of forces that are pinching China. But it’s an extraordinarily dangerous confrontation and provocative act, and everybody in the West would be opposing it.

GT: What are the obstacles for East Asia to maintain peace? What lessons should East Asia draw from the ongoing Ukraine crisis?

Noh: The key obstacle for peace in East Asia is the US. Asia wants peace. China certainly wants peace, but the US wants war. It’s good at waging war. I’m talking not just hybrid warfare, grey-zone warfare, technological warfare, trade warfare, academic warfare, legal warfare, cultural warfare, information warfare. It’s doing all of that.

But it is also preparing for shooting war, for kinetic war. It will go to war to maintain its hegemony. The US would rather see the end of the world, rather than the end of their supremacy.

As for the lessons of the Ukraine war, it’s important for all the countries in East Asia not to engage in a proxy war and not to be provoked into responding. The US will do everything to cross every red-line to provoke a war. It wants to create a kind of bandwagon strategy against China and get the entire world to sanction China as it has [tried to do] with Ukraine.

What China is doing is very important, because it has proposed peace and it’s acting as the wise mediator. I believe that over the long term peace defeats war, just as the soft defeats the hard, civilization defeats barbarism, ethics defeats wrong. Taking the higher road and engaging with diplomacy and working for peace, China is setting an example for the world that the rest of the world will eventually follow. At this extraordinary, dangerous and difficult moment, it really is the fact that the US wants to trigger war. The US certainly doesn’t want peace that China has mediated or ushered in, because that would be just as bad as losing the war, and it would lose its global legitimacy.

We are in a very dangerous moment, but the lessons that we should learn is to look at Ukraine and let the US bring war to your shores. We have to work for peace and not be fooled by the lies of a failing patron that is so intent on either having its way or wreaking havoc around the world.

GT: The G7 Summit was held in Hiroshima on May 19-21. In recent years, the G7’s original nature of economic cooperation has weakened, but its military and ideological nature has continued to increase. What do you think of G7’s role as an accomplice of war and economic coercion?

Noh: These countries are going along, not because they see China as a threat, but because the US is actually the threat to them. If they don’t bandwagon with the US, there will be mistreatment sanctions. In a certain sense, they are an unwilling coalition.

The US wants to create as many gang members as it can to do its bidding to gang up against China, so that they can criticize China and say China is a threat to the rules-based order. It’s the US usual propaganda. We can also note that there is a dissonance within the G7 itself. France has made some noises about being more independent.

On a foundation level, economic cooperation with China is essential for all the Western states. China is the only major economy that’s growing, and the only economy that has the capacity to bring these Western Atlantic states out of the economic morass. If they were thinking rationally and if they had their own interests at heart, they would be seeking to build and strengthen relations with China, and they would do away with this absurd demonization of China.

But to a large extent, the US is the ventriloquist behind the scenes, and the G7 largely are going to be capitulating and repeating the US lies. They will use every symbolic and rhetorical strategy to reinforce their hostility to China. That is a great mistake and a great tragedy.

GT: It seems that South Korea is tilting more toward the US. There has also been a growing negative trend in China-South Korea relations, as South Korea’s president touched upon China’s core issue, the Taiwan question. Do you think Seoul is jeopardizing its diplomatic balance and losing strategic independence?

Noh: It’s true that South Korea is leaning more towards the US. The Yoon administration has put all of its chips onto aligning with the US. The key thing to understand is that inside South Korea’s DNA, in its history, South Korea has always been a US client state. The state of South Korea was created artificially by the US, by dividing the peninsula into two.

What we’re seeing now is a reversion to the historical template. Yoon is giving the US everything it wants. Not long after he was elected, he came up with the South Korean Indo-Pacific strategy. This is essentially the US Indo-Pacific strategy. The US’ pivot to Asia strategy is rebranded. It is a plan to prevent China from developing and even to encircle and attack it.

The US is provoking South Korea as a proxy or a pretext to escalate against China. Essentially, the key point is that South Korea does not have strategic independence.
Space Domain Awareness - a move to the DARC side

By Dave Webb

There are several indications that the US is preparing for war with China but one that may not have caught the attention of many is what is happening in space. The US explicitly stated its desire to dominate and control space in Space Command’s 1997 ‘Vision for 2020’ and the US is saying that its dominance in space is threatened by ‘provocative’ actions by China and Russia. The war in Ukraine is showing how important space resources are to the military for surveillance, targeting and communications, but domination of a region requires knowledge of everything that goes on there and an ability to monitor the actions of others. The latest move by the US is to add a Deep Space Advanced Radar Capability (DARC) to contribute to the Space Domain Awareness (SDA) programme.

SDA involves the detection, tracking, and identification of objects in orbit, including active and inactive satellites and space debris and it is important for both civil and military space programmes. The US declares that SDA is needed to keep track of space debris and warn of possible collisions with satellites, but SDA also enables the military to monitor the activities of others in space and can provide data for the targeting of anti-satellite systems.

SDA data comes from a variety of space sensors and ground-based telescopes and radars and is combined with intelligence sources to produce a picture of the space environment. The US Space Surveillance Network (SSN) is a global collection of ground and space-based sensors (including the radar at Fylingdales in Yorkshire, UK) and is controlled by the 18th Space Defense Squadron which is a component of Space Force’s Space Delta 2 unit. Based at Vandenberg Space Force Base, their mission is to provide “a continuous, comprehensive, and combat-relevant understanding of the space situation”. The Space Force budget request for 2024 includes $584 million for space-tracking programs, $100 million more than the 2023 allocation, to fund ground-based radar, optical telescopes, and surveillance satellites in orbit, as well as obtaining space-tracking data from private companies and data from other countries.

Space Force maintains a Unified Data Library (UDL) to hold all this data and an international program has been established to share orbital data. In April 2009 Romania became the 20th nation and 100th partner to join US Strategic Command’s space data sharing program. Other partners include two intergovernmental organizations, the European Space Agency and the European Organization for the Exploitation of Meteorological Satellites; and 78 commercial satellite owner/operator/launchers.

In space, the Space Force and the National Reconnaissance Office (NRO), the US intelligence agency that builds spy satellites, together maintain the Space-Based Space Surveillance (SBSS) system satellite constellation. Coverage of the geosynchronous orbit (where a lot of military surveillance and communications satellites are stationed) has been enhanced by the Geosynchronous Space Situational Awareness Program (GSSAP) and a jointly funded secretive satellite called ‘Silent Barker’, is scheduled to launch later this year.

On the ground, Space Force continually upgrades the telescopes of the Ground-based Electro-Optical Deep Space Surveillance System (GEOSSSS) stationed in New Mexico, Diego Garcia and Hawaii. A radar addition called ‘Space Fence’, located at Kwajalein Atoll in the Marshall Islands and built by Lockheed Martin, became operational in 2020. It has significantly increased the number of objects that can be seen from Earth and has an option of another site in Western Australia.

The existing data collection network can be affected by bad weather and DARC is being added to provide all-weather, 24/7 coverage of objects in geosynchronous orbit. DARC will consist of three transmit/receive sites, in Texas, Australia and the UK, to identify potential targets up to 36,000km away in geosynchronous orbit. It was designed by Johns Hopkins Applied Physics Laboratory and relies heavily on commercial technology and the total cost of the system is expected to be around $844 million.

The exact location of the sites in Australia and the UK have not been disclosed but some details are emerging from the UK. The Ministry of Defence has said that a number of possible sites are being considered. Full details are not forthcoming, but two possible candidates have come to light. These are Cawdor Barracks in Pembrokeshire Wales and a training base at West Freugh in Scotland. The former is close to a National Park and the latter is about six miles (10km) south-east of Stranraer, covering about 320 hectares. When finally developed the chosen site would include a total of 21 receiving antenna dishes about 60ft (20m) in height and 50ft (15m) in diameter and 6 transmitting dishes of the same size. There would also be an operations building and perimeter and security fencing.

An article on DARC in the Global Times in 2021 said, “[DARC] … is a significant escalation that has the potential to further change the direction of global military competition. The head of the Royal Air Force, Air Chief Marshal Sir Michael Wigston, has bluntly predicted the next war could be won or lost in space. The primary purpose of the US and its allies in developing DARC is obviously to prepare for winning a war and to deter China and Russia.”

The response to DARC is likely to be more countermeasures from China and Russia, accelerating the space arms race. For almost 40 years the US has either abstained or voted against UN resolutions to prevent an arms race in space while Russia and China have voted in favour. In May Brig Gen Jesse Morehouse from US Space Command was reported as saying that the US had “no choice” but to prepare for orbital combat and that the US “is ready to fight tonight in space if we have to.”

These are worrying developments in dangerous times and make our message to ‘Keep Space for Peace’ more important than ever.

Paul Mobbs who we met at the GN Conference in Oxford in 2018, created a video about DARC and the US military’s control of the ‘space domain’ in 2021 – see it here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KhqGdQ5S Nic

– Dave Webb is the GN board convenor and also chairs Yorkshire Region CND. He lives in Leeds, England.
Odds & Ends

Planned Gift to GN
If you are in the process of estate planning, please consider making a gift of a tax-deductible donation in the form of a bequest, donation of stock or other instruments to the Global Network. Your planned gift would be an important contribution to our movement to stop the nuclearization and weaponization of space. Thank you for your consideration.

Check Spam Filter
We have found that many of the emails sent to our members and friends are ending up in their spam filters. Please be sure to regularly check your spam filters for our emails and those of others who are trying to share important news. You can keep up with the work of the GN at our web site www.space4peace.org and Bruce Gagnon’s blog called Organizing Notes.

GN YouTube channel
Each month GN board member Will Griffin (Iraq & Afghanistan war veteran) has been making a video depicting a different aspect of the US effort to ‘control and dominate’ space. He’s putting them on our channel which can be found on YouTube at ‘GNspace4peace’. If you click on the ‘Subscribe’ button you’ll get a notice each time a new video is posted on our channel. You can help by sharing the links to these videos so that more people can watch and learn. Thanks.

Space Week in October
The Global Network’s annual Keep Space for Peace Week will be held Oc- tober 7-14 this year. We urge members and supporters to hold public activi- ties during the week to help increase public concern and political mobiliza- tion around increasingly dangerous space issues. Be sure to help share the links to our web site and our YouTube page during space week as they each contain many excellent resources.

Control of space?
The Associated Press has reported that strategic rivalry with China’s ambitious space program is helping drive NASA’s effort to get back into space in a big way. That’s as both nations push to put people back on the moon and establish the first lunar bases. “In a decade, the US has gone from the unquestioned leader in space to merely one of two peers in a competition,” Sen. Jim Inhofe, an Okla- homa Republican, declared at a Senate Armed Services hearing. “Everything our military does relies on space.” At another hearing last year, NASA ad- ministrator Bill Nelson branded an image transmitted by a Chinese rover that had just plunked down on Mars. “The Chinese government ... they’re going to be landing humans on the moon,” he said. “That should tell us something about our need to get off our butt.” The U.S. has long main- tained that it intends to be the ‘Master of Space’ and wishes to ‘control and dominate space’. Russia and China have for many years introduced a new treaty to ban all weapons in space at the United Nations but Washington and Israel (during Republican and Democrat administrations) have been blocking the treaty.

Using civilian satellites during war
“When I look across what we’re seeing in that Ukrainian theater, I see some important lessons that we should take to heart in terms of building our Space Force design,” Gen. Chance Saltzman told the Senate Armed Ser- vices Committee in late 2022 during a hearing on his nomination for chief of space operations (CSO). The Space Force is engaged in an effort to “pivot” to a more resilient force design by 2027. This new posture will include more satellites in more orbits, and increased reliance on commercial systems, to complicate the ability of adversaries to seriously degrade or destroy criti- cal US space capabilities. “[T]he use of commercial space capabilities to augment military and national decision-making capabilities has proved to be effective for the Ukrainians,” he said. This includes using commercial satel- lite communications systems, such as SpaceX’s Starlink, to ensure the ability of leaders to maintain command and control capabilities.

Ready to ‘fight tonight’
The Guardian reported in May that the US is ready for conflict in outer space, according to a senior military official, after developing anti-satellite technologies to counter the threats posed by “provocative” countries such as Russia and China. “The USA is ready to fight tonight in space if we have to,” Morehouse told reporters at a briefing at the US embassy in London. “If someone was to threaten the USA, or any of our interests, including those of our allies and partners with whom we have treaties of mutual defence support, we are ready to fight tonight.” Faced with a new space race, More- house said the US would continue to develop anti-satellite technologies... because that’s the best way to deter conflict from happening”, adding it would do so “without engaging in ir- responsible tests”.

Robo dogs
Holloman Air Force Base in New Mexico is testing out new four-legged technology. The base has two new robotic dogs that will work alongside their service members. It’s called the “Vision-60” ground robot or more simply, robodog, and it’s designed to improve surveillance capabilities at Holloman. They say their base has a lot of desert and the robodogs’ ability to withstand heat and cover long dis- tances help them patrol terrain that’s harder for humans. The robots were created by the company, Ghost Ro- botics. They weigh 86 pounds and are about the size of a full-sized Golden Retriever. They can travel for about six-miles and they’re controlled using a joystick.

Space Force: Need more launch pads
DefenseOne reports: The increas- ing commercial use of launch pads and other space infrastructure could eventually hinder the Pentagon’s abil- ity to deploy new satellites when and where they’re needed, the nominee to lead the Space Force told lawmakers. “Currently, our capacity on our ranges meets the governmental needs, but with the proliferation of small satel- lites, that’s going to change rapidly,” Lt. Gen. Chance Saltzman told the Senate Armed Services Committee during his confirmation hearing to be the chief of space operations. “The number of launches is going to go up dramati- cally and we’re going to need to look at other opportunities.” One way to make sure the Pentagon can launch anytime, anywhere is by increasing the number of launch providers and pads available to the Defense Department, Saltzman said.

Space Force has a song
The Space Force has a song, and it doesn’t mention aliens, intergalactic domination, or planetary conquests. The song, “Semper Supra,” was named after the Space Force’s motto, which is Latin for “always above.” The lyr- ics are: ‘We’re the mighty watchful eye, Guardians beyond the blue. The invisible front line, Warfighters brave and true. Boldly reaching into space, There’s no limit to our sky. Standing guard both night and day. We’re the Space Force from on high’.

‘Determine the outcome’ via space
Breaking Defense reports: The De- fense Department needs centralized management of its ambitious Joint All Domain Command and Control (JADCC) effort, and the Space Force should be given that responsibility because of the “indispensable role” space capabilities play in linking sensors to shooters, asserts a new policy paper by the Mitchell Institute. “Warfighting in the space domain will determine the outcome of future conflicts. The reason for this is simple: success in war will go to the side that possesses superior battlespace knowledge, makes better decisions, directs forces more effec- tively, and closes kill chains faster. Technologies on orbit are pivotal in se- curing this advantage, especially when it comes to sensors and connectivity,” the paper states.

Health impacts from high-tech weapons
Israeli Defense Forces personnel who work in close contact with high-intensity, whole-body, radio-frequency radiation (RFR) radar might face significant risk of getting hematolym- phoid and other cancers, according to a new study led by Israeli researchers. The team suggested that IDF soldiers working with Hawk missiles, David’s sling batteries, Iron Dome, Arrow miss- siles and Patriot batteries could all ex- pose them to excessive radiation. The researchers just published their study titled “On radar and radio exposure and cancer in the military setting” in the peer-reviewed journal Environmen- tal Research.

Astronomers upset with Sat launches
Racing to fill up the already crowded Lower Earth Orbits (LEO) with more satellites, global launch companies and militaries are pushing hard to create new launch pads in order to ‘beat the rush’. The venerable astronomy peri- odical Sky & Telescope has also sounded the alarm: Astronomers at the Vera Rubin Observatory and the International Astronomical Union’s Centre for the Protection of Dark and Quiet Skies from Satellite Constellation Interfer- ence (IAU CPS) are concerned because these new spacecraft will interfere
with celestial observations, adding to the problems already caused by other satellite constellations. In addition, the glut of satellites in LEO dramatically increases the chance of cascading collisions called the Kessler Syndrome which at some point could make entry into space from Earth virtually impossible due to the ever growing debris field.

**Australia is pot of gold**

ABC.net.au reports: Visiting senior US military officers believe Australia is a “pot of gold at the end of the rainbow”, as they mark this continent’s “prime” geography for future space operations. One officer warned a conflict in space in the next few years is a very real prospect, saying potential adversaries have already shown they can successfully shoot down satellites. “It may begin with what we call reversible effects of jamming of satellite communications...or of dazzling directed energy [aimed at] intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance platforms,” he said. “[Or] it could be cyber attacks against our space systems and architecture — so not just the satellites but the links, the ground nodes and the user architecture — [and] ultimately it could go to some sort of kinetic activity.” Everything the U.S. says it is worrying about has long ago been weaponized by the Pentagon.

**U.S. Space Force in South Korea**

The American and South Korean militaries are setting up space-monitoring organizations in South Korea, aiming to keep an eye on North Korea’s nuclear and missile activity as its capabilities continue to improve. The U.S. Space Force has launched a regional command in South Korea, whose own air force consolidated space-related units into a Space Operations Squadron in late 2022. They are expected to use satellites to strengthen reconnaissance. The South Korean air force said it expects the Space Operations Squadron to further improve the efficiency of space operations, emphasizing the use of information from space for national defense. It said that it will promote cooperation with the American space force in South Korea and that “we plan to increase the combined space operations capability of the U.S.-South Korea alliance.” These space-war-fighting joint developments are currently targeting China, North Korea and Russia.

**Space Force growing**

The Space Force has taken over all of the Department of Defense’s military satellite communication functions, a major step in building the new service. The Navy and the Army have transferred major satellite communication operations to the Space Force in an effort to consolidate training, operations, acquisition and other activities. The transfer marks the first time all military satellite communication functions have been consolidated under a single military service. As part of growing Space Force capabilities, the Pentagon expects the service to grow its partnerships with other countries. Space Force annual budget has doubled since its inception despite claims at the time that it would be a ‘lean operation’.

**Loading up on Space Force missions**

The US Space Force needs to develop capabilities to degrade the space-based capabilities of potential adversary nations, Vice Chief of Space Operations Gen. David Thompson told a meeting at the Mitchell Institute for Aerospace Studies in early June. “We are certainly going to need to disrupt, degrade and deny (deceive) the space capabilities of adversaries,” Thompson told the podcast meeting. “We are in the next chapter of the Space Force.” Thompson also noted that the US Space Force will need to take over the role of providing ground surveillance imagery to US combat forces around the world from the National Reconnaissance Office (NRO).

**Debt ceiling decision: Cuts social spending, not Pentagon**

The bipartisan deal to end the stalemate over lifting the government borrowing limit included cuts to domestic spending programs but not to the Pentagon budget. Dr. Jack Rasmus, professor of economics and politics at St. Mary’s College in California, argues that both parties are happy to abandon the poor in the name ofarming Ukraine. Democrats and Republicans have used the recent debt ceiling stand-off as a pretext for cutting social spending while inflating the military budget. “Biden wants a free hand to continue to give billions every week to finance the Ukraine proxy war, and he’s got that free hand now,” Rasmus said. “And both sides never even made an effort to do any cuts here on the defense side. So Biden got his blank check for raising Pentagon and war spending and financing Ukraine. And the Republicans got all the rest.” U.S. taxpayers have given more than $140 billion so far to the US proxy war on Russia – using Ukraine as the hammer.

**More weapons and $$$$$$$ Antiiwar.com reported in early June: The Department of Defense announced it will purchase $2.1 billion in weapons for Ukraine. The weapons to be purchased include: Additional munitions for Patriot air defense systems; HAWK air defense systems and missiles; 105mm and 203mm artillery rounds; Puma Unmanned Aerial Systems; Laser-guided rocket system munitions; and Support for training, maintenance, and sustainment activities. The neo-cons and their MIC backers are cashing in on this war against Russia. And China is next. Think of the money to be made! And the Western citizens are told to keep quiet....

**The numbers don’t lie**

National Priorities Project reports: World military spending has reached a new record high of $2.24 trillion in 2022, according to new data published by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI). That’s up 3.7% since the previous year, including the steepest increase among European nations since the end of the Cold War over 30 years ago. The US remains the world’s largest military spender by far, with its $877 billion representing 39% of global military spending. That’s three times as much as the second largest spender, China, which spent $292 billion in 2022. And it’s about ten times as much as the next largest spender, Russia, which spent about $66 billion in the same year. U.S. spending is more than the next ten countries combined, more than last year when it was larger than the next nine. Many of these next ten countries are NATO members aligned with the U.S. — including Ukraine, which had the highest single-year increase in military spending. SIPRI has ever recorded, rising 640% to $44 billion since the war with Russia.

**It’s Déjà vu all over again**

The Libertarian Institute reports: In January, the top US Marine Corps general in Japan explained to the Financial Times that Washington and Tokyo are “setting the theater,” for war with China. Lt. Gen. James Bierman, commander of the Third Marine Expeditionary Force and of Marine Forces Japan, said Washington is working with its allies in the region to prepare for the coming war with China, much like the U.S. did with its NATO allies following the 2014 U.S. backed coup in Kiev. Washington constantly ramps up U.S. military cooperation with Taipei, committing billions of dollars in military aid to Taiwan, expanding U.S. National Guard training programs with the Taiwanese military, sending ever more Congressional delegations to the island, deploying ever higher numbers of U.S. troops to the island, concurrently training hundreds of Taiwanese soldiers on U.S. soil, converting Taiwan into a “giant weapons depot,” and sailing American warships through the sensitive Taiwan Strait almost every month. The U.S. government absurdly promises these provocations are done to “deter” war, but China has made clear that Taiwan is a “red line” and Washington’s actions makes war more likely. Beijing has repeatedly said that they are seeking a “peaceful reunification” with Taiwan.

**Jeju Island launch site**

The Korea Bizwire reports: South Korean space service startup Perigee Aerospace Inc. says it has signed a memorandum of understanding with the Jeju provincial government to construct and operate the country’s first offshore launch platform. Perigee has been working on the development of BW-1, a rocket that uses liquid methane as a fuel. The company is currently constructing a barge offshore launch platform for the test flight of the upper part of the BW-1, which is expected to take place at the end of this year. It is predicted that this launch site will eventually host military payloads into space.

**NATO going global**

NATO is planning to open a liaison office in Japan (likely hosted at Yokota Air Base), the first of its kind in Asia. The station will allow the military alliance to conduct periodic consultations with Japan and key partners in the region such as South Korea, Australia and New Zealand as China emerges as ‘a new challenge’, alongside its traditional focus on Russia. Danish Ambassador to Japan Peter Taksoe-Jensen told Nikkei Asia in a phone interview that a NATO liaison office would be the first of its kind in the Indo-Pacific and more than just symbolic. “It would be a very visible, real way to strengthen the relations between Japan and NATO,” he said. “There will also be a look at interoperability,” Taksoe-Jensen said, regarding how NATO and Japanese forces work together in different areas.

**Enviro impacts of rocket launches & explosions**

CNN reported in May that environmental groups are suing the
Federal Aviation Administration in federal court over SpaceX’s launch of its massive Starship rocket. The groups argue that the agency failed to adequately investigate the potential harm launches – or a mishap – could do to the surrounding environment. The rocket, which is the most powerful ever built, took off from a launch pad at SpaceX’s privately owned spaceport in South Texas on April 20 before exploding over the Gulf of Mexico about four minutes into flight. Ahead of the launch the FAA issued a finding that the launch would have no significant impact on its surrounding environment. Therefore, the agency didn’t proceed with a more in-depth Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), which would have taken more time. Local enviro groups are demanding a real EIS as is required by law. According to a study by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), global rocket launches (of which there were 180 last year) inject about 1,000 tons of soot into the upper atmosphere per year. That will only get worse, NOAA warns, as the industry continues to expand. “The bottom line is projected increases in rocket launches could expose people in the Northern Hemisphere [where most rocket launches take place] to increased harmful UV radiation,” environmental scientist Christopher Maloney, the study’s lead author, said in a statement.

Critique of Patriot MD system

By Mike Schroer

I recently watched a video on a YouTube channel that has done many videos showing interesting things using high speed cameras. The latest video was to film a bullet hitting a bullet. Since this is how many of the Air Defense Missile (ADM) systems are euphemistically described it seemed that this video would be interesting to watch. As it turns out the crew involved in this video is from the Huntsville, Alabama area and had worked on some of those ADM systems. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5cQwD7RnNI

The video shows some of the complexities of hitting a bullet with a bullet. When watching the video please take note of the efforts made to control the many variables, very short range, precision machined guns and mounts, precision bullets and powder loads, and a very controlled and static environment. With all the design efforts made to control the variables it still took many tries to consistently hit a bullet with a bullet.

With this information now consider applying this to a missile defense system. The range is considerably longer, the time frame to react may be quite short, and the incoming missile(s) can use multiple defensive tactics such as electronic jamming, decoy missiles, and an ability to steer and change its trajectory (if only a slight amount creates a huge problem). Then add to that the possibility of being overcome by sheer numbers of incoming missiles.

It brings into question whether all the money spent on these systems have built a viable product. Let’s take the recent deployment of the PATRIOT missile system in Kiev. They took a system that is designed to operate in a layered defense system with THAAD and ATACMS and other surveillance systems and set them out nearly on their own and expected them to work. Then the Russians spoofed them with decoys and cheap sacrificial drones until they had exhausted all their missiles and then struck them with a hypersonic missile which was probably overkill, but was done for the PR benefit of their superiority over the western technology.

It begs the question of whether we are using our technology prowess on a path to destruction. It seems that diplomacy would provide a better bang for the buck and our scientific talents could be better used to improve everyone’s standard of living.

~ Mike Schroer is a retired software engineer, Navy Vietnam combat veteran, and worked on the PATRIOT missile system and Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI, Star Wars) development in Huntsville, Alabama before having an epiphany and moved to working on development of commercial telecommunications equipment.

India needs ‘space-based’ weapons

India must boost its defensive and offensive capabilities in the space domain, as the “future lies in having space-based platforms,” Air Chief Marshal Vivek Ram Chaudhari told a national security and geopolitics forum last spring. “In the future, instead of having purely land-based offensive systems, we should also have space-based offensive systems,” Chaudhari said. The competition and rivalry between the global powers in space “will have its effects across all other domains of warfare,” he said, predicting that his Air Force will soon turn into an Air Space Force, and “will be called upon to take part in space situational awareness, space denial exercises or space control exercises.” Funds for India’s space weapons tech will come from human needs and enviro programs.

LBJ on space

“Control of space means control of the world. From space, the masters of infinity would have the power to control the earth’s weather, to cause drought and flood, to change tides and raise the levels of the sea, to divert the Gulf Stream and change temperate climates to frigid.” — President Lyndon Baines Johnson (Democrat 1963-1969)

Biden to send DU weapons to Kiev

The Biden administration is going to approve the provision of depleted uranium tank shells to Ukraine, the Wall Street Journal reported in June. After weeks of internal debate on how to equip the Abrams tanks that Biden has provided to Kiev, the White House is expected to agree on the transferring of depleted uranium munitions to Ukraine. Although some officials say that there are no serious obstacles to approving the shipment of depleted uranium munitions, others express concern that due to the transfer of such shells, Washington could be criticized for providing weapons that pose a danger to human health and the environment. In addition, the White House is still discussing the possibility of providing cluster munitions to Ukraine, among other arms, according to the news outlet.
Planned satellite increase will damage Earth

By Einar Flydal and Else Nordhagen

In 2020 the Norwegian national assembly held a debate over a white paper from the cabinet, regarding a national venture into the satellite business. (Meld. St. 10 (2019-2020) ‘Høyt-flyvende satellitter - jordnære formål. En strategi for norsk romvirksomhet’. (High-flying satellites - down-to-earth purposes. A strategy for Norwegian space activities’)

Our written contribution to a consultation on the white paper in the Assembly’s Committee of Commerce was our first version of this paper. We then made a slightly different, improved version for translation, less specific as to the Norwegian circumstances.

During our work on health and environmental consequences of human use of electricity and radio waves, we have become aware of major environmental damages uncovered by a few, small research groups doing interdisciplinary research - the only way to detect and understand these damages.

These scientists’ serious messages are easily drowned in the enthusiasm for new technology and opportunities for economic growth, new jobs and new revenue streams. It seems that in most countries, no entities of the government, nor any research organizations or groups, have responsibility, knowledge, or activities covering such interdisciplinary issues.

However, the message from these small and dispersed research communities is far-reaching: The damaging effects on the electromagnetic field surrounding the Earth from radio transmitters on the ground and in space have been ongoing for a long time, and are today clearly observed and verified in tests. The mechanisms are well documented. We cannot maintain or increase the use of radio communication without increasing these damaging effects on the conditions for Life on Earth.

These interdisciplinary scientists’ studies show that radio waves impact the climate on Earth and the conditions of Life in a variety of ways. Here we present very briefly the most important and best studied mechanisms, and we provide a small selection of references - in part in the form of popularized texts, in part regular scientific studies. The research we refer to, is based on traditional physics and chemistry, and requires no ‘alternative’ or controversial data, nor any such ways of reasoning.

This is knowledge that is rarely known to physicists, who are normally quite unfamiliar with biology. Neither has this knowledge been taken into account by the climate scientists. E.g., it is missing in the climate models used by the IPCC, a fact NASA has criticized. Biologists and medical doctors have educations that usually do not extend far enough into space for such topics to be part of their education. Hence, the specialists have blinders, making them unaware of the full picture.

Therefore, the engineers and business interests do not meet any well-founded opposition from such specialists, nor do politicians get more than presentations from interested parties and experts with tunnel visions.

Hence, those pushing for the increased use of wireless communication - broadcast as well as bidirectional, are lacking knowledge about the resulting changes in the Earth electromagnetism - whether they are created by normal or abnormal, natural or man-made radio signals - and the biological effects thereof. At the same time, many people suffering from rheumatism, as well as many others, experience such effects in the form of a set of symptoms often called “weather sickness”, not knowing that it is caused by the electromagnetic changes in their environment originating in electromagnetic processes found in the huge weather systems enveloping the Earth.

The small, interdisciplinary research groups sounding the alarm about this larger connection between biology and electromagnetism, are seriously concerned, as their warnings are not listened to.

The present international push for communication satellite networks will contribute to the global community running into an ecological dead end by weakening Earth’s sustainability, contributing to reduction of public health in general, as well as the health of the environment, for our own as well as for future generations of all life on Earth.


~ Einar Flydal is cand. polit (political science), MTS (Master of Telecom Strategy), retired from R&D and teaching. Else Nordhagen is dr.scient (informatics), retired from R&D, ICT development and teaching.

How the billionaire space race could be one giant leap for pollution

One rocket launch produces up to 300 tons of carbon dioxide into the upper atmosphere where it can remain for years

Last week Virgin Galactic took Richard Branson past the edge of space, roughly 86 km up - part of a new space race with the Amazon billionaire Jeff Bezos, who aims to make a similar journey on Tuesday.
Book review

By Lisa Savage

CIRCLE IN THE DARKNESS: Memoir of a World Watcher by Diana Johnstone
Clarity Press (USA), 2020

With German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock cheerleading the proxy war in Ukraine and telling reporters that Russian President Vladimir Putin had better make a 360 degree turn or else, many of us wonder what happened to turn Green Party members in Europe toward supporting NATO’s wars. Now that I’ve read this rich memoir by Diana Johnstone, former press secretary for the Green Group in the European Parliament that preceded the EU, I can see how it happened. And probably why.

Johnstone’s story starts long before the current three party coalition government took power in Germany. When she found herself a divorced single mother in an era when the history department of her state university declared that they didn’t “give teaching positions to women,” she switched disciplines, moved to France, and still found time to join the vibrant expatriate antiwar movement of the Vietnam era. A self-described “timid militant,” Johnstone found herself studying French literature for a Ph.D. and French colonialism in “Indochina” for her own edification.

It wasn’t long before she found her true path: journalism. Reflecting on the conditions she describes for reporters in the mid-20th century compared with today’s harsh, even fatal consequences for authentic reporting shows how profoundly things have changed. Investigative reporter Seymour Hersh once received a Pulitzer Prize and was published in major outlets eager to share his expose of events like the My Lai massacre cover-up. He’s now spurned by his former publishers and must self-publish in order to report on “How America Took Out the Nord Stream Pipeline.” Johnstone’s long career straddled this divide.

She identifies the moment when the Green Group in Europe lost its soul as occurring in 1995 during NATO’s war to break up the former Yugoslavia. “Something grave...happened to the Greens. They...allowed mass media choice of star personalities to determine a major policy issue.” As mainstream media today continues its shift toward infotainment requiring colorful personalities to cover in lieu of challenging government officials, her experiences seem prescient. A legion of photogenic performers like Foreign Minister Baerbock continue to entertain while the real decisions affecting the fate of the world are made in secret, deep behind the façade of elected personalities.

A quote from Albert Einstein serves as Johnston’s epigram and the source of her title: “As our circle of knowledge expands, so does the circumference of darkness surrounding it.” Today, the circumference of darkness is ever widening; in Eurasia with proliferating nuclear weapons, and globally as war moves into outer space, darkness threatens to engulf us.

Corporate “Sentinel” Greed

By Christian Sorensen

The nuclear triad consists of three parts: nuclear weapons launched from submarines, nuclear weapons launched from aircraft, and land-based nuclear weapons known as intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICMB). The U.S. government is giving corporations $1.7 trillion to upgrade all three.

The corporation Northrop Grumman is in charge of making the new ICBM, nicknamed “Sentinel.” Northrop Grumman is developing rockets for the first and second stages that get the missile into the atmosphere. Aerojet Rocketdyne is developing the third-stage rocket. After the missile reaches altitude, it releases the reentry vehicle (developed by Lockheed Martin in King of Prussia, Pennsylvania, and Textron in Haslet, Texas), which contains the warhead.

The Department of Energy’s labs that make and test the warhead (e.g., Los Alamos in New Mexico, Lawrence Livermore in California) are run by corporations and academic institutions. Other corporate work on this weapon of mass destruction includes CAE training programs, Raytheon Technologies’ Collins Aerospace command & control equipment, General Dynamics ground launch equipment, and Honeywell missile electronics.


The only thing the U.S. ruling class fears is an organized working class, united across racial lines. For only an organized united working class can challenge and depose the profit-over-people economic system that plagues us all.

~ Reprinted from RT

Russia won’t shoot down Starlink satellites

Russia has the tools needed to disable hostile satellites, but refrains from doing so to avoid escalation, Dmitry Rogozin, former head of Roscosmos space agency, said in May.

In an interview with Moscow Speaking radio station, Rogozin was asked to comment on Russia’s capability to destroy Western satellites, including Starlink systems operated by Elon Musk’s SpaceX Company.

“If we need to whack down, physically destroy, or simply neutralize the enemy orbital constellation… we will do that very quickly. We have all the necessary means for this,” the ex-Roscosmos head, said.

However, Rogozin cautioned that any attack or other actions seeking to disable satellites would be seen as a casus belli. “This is a pretext for war, which will spill into space.”

Russia would face retaliation, immediately losing all of its own satellites, he said, adding that this would lead to an escalation and war.

He also said that Moscow really needs a satellite system like Starlink, which has thousands of relays enabling users to control drones in real time and evade electronic warfare measures.

Since the start of the Ukraine conflict, SpaceX has provided Kiev with thousands of Starlink terminals to help the local population to stay connected to the internet.

However, as Kiev started to increasingly rely on the satellites to fight Russia, in February, SpaceX limited the Ukrainian military’s ability to control drones, with a senior company official explaining that this technology “was never intended to be weaponized.”

Musk himself has said that he did not intend for his satellites to be the reason for the Ukraine conflict spiraling into WWII.

In early April, the Russian Foreign Ministry also accused Kiev and “a number of foreign states” of attempting to tamper with Russian civilian satellites, warning that this is in violation of international law and could trigger an appropriate response.”

~ Reprinted from RT
New Zealand entrenched in America’s warfighting operations

By Warren Thomson

If anyone still doubts that a large part of Rocket Lab’s (RL) activities involves direct support for military operations, the latest announcement from the company puts it beyond debate. “Rocket Lab USA, Inc., today announced it has created a US-based wholly owned subsidiary to serve the defence and intelligence community. Rocket Lab National Security will deliver reliable launch services and space systems capabilities to the US government and its allies” (Business Wire – Yahoo Website, 1/12/22).

The article goes on to say that since the company’s first launch of the Electron rocket in 2017, Rocket Lab has conducted multiple successful launches for national security customers, including missions for the National Reconnaissance Office (NRO), US Space Force, and Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA). Rocket Lab National Security “… will build on this proven track record to deliver new and existing space capabilities for national security applications”.

RL American Launches

The NZ Herald reported (25/1/23) that Rocket Lab successfully staged its first launch from American soil, at 6pm on 25 January, after a number of delays. The Herald states: “The ‘Virginia is for Launch Lovers’ mission was the first of three launches involving 15 satellites for HawkEye 360, a maker of radio-frequency ‘geo-analytics’ tracking services for military, maritime and border security clients”, further confirming the New Zealand Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Peter Beck has completely sold his soul to the Pentagon.

In an interview with Newstalk ZB’s Right-wing presenter, Heather Du Plessis-Allan, Beck said Rocket Lab now has a majority of its 1,500 staff in the US, but Launch Complex 1 at Mahia will maintain a high volume of Electron launches (ibid). The article – hidden in the Herald’s business pages – also notes Rocket Lab shares were up 3.3% to $US4.98, in January, well off its year-high of $US1.47, for a market cap of $US2.36 billion. The Stuff Website (12/3/23) reports Rocket Lab had $US38 million ($NZ61.96m) in Silicon Valley Bank (SVB), which collapsed early in March 2023

SVB, which was the United States’ 16th-largest bank, failed after depositors rushed to withdraw money amid anxiety over the bank’s health. This is the second-biggest bank failure in US history after the collapse of Washington Mutual in 2008. Silicon Valley Bank has been lending to the tech industry for four decades and is known for lending to start-ups. A spokesperson for Rocket Lab said the money was about 7.9% of the company’s $US484m total cash and cash equivalents and marketable securities as of December 31.

RL Operations in Auckland.

“For your information, I was at Mercer Airport (south of Auckland) last week. Rocket Lab have based two Sikorsky 92 helicopters there, the ones used to attempt expended rocket stage mid-air recovery. There is also a test facility to run rocket engine tests at the southern end of the runway. The $38 million hole [see above] will be quickly filled by the US military funding machine and USD printing press”.

Rocket Lab Operations in Australia

“Rocket Lab, a global leader in launch services and space systems, today announced it has established a new wholly-owned subsidiary, Rocket Lab Australia, to explore opportunities to support the expansion of Australia’s national space capabilities. The Australian government has set a goal to triple the size of the Australian space sector from an estimated $A4 billion in 2016 to $A12 billion and create an additional 20,000 jobs by 2030”.

“The Australian government has also committed $A17 billion above and beyond civil space investment for the development of Defence space capabilities as part of a 2020 strategy to maintain and upgrade existing space capabilities and develop new capabilities to service global partners” (Five Eyes is specifically mentioned).

Rocket Lab quotes founder and CEO Peter Beck: “Rocket Lab has already played a key role in supporting Australia’s rapid growth in space by flying several commercially developed Australian satellites on Electron, as well as national launching security payloads developed in partnership with Australia’s Department of Defence” (further confirmation of how deeply the company is embedded in military operations).

Aotearoa/NZ’s Place in Star Wars?

The New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) and the Ministry of Defence hosted an annual Combined Space Operations (CSpO) Principals’ Board meeting on 7-8 December 2022, in Wellington. The Chief of Air Force, Air Vice-Marshall Andrew Clark and Deputy Secretary of Defence Policy and Planning, Michael Swain, hosted delegates from CSpO member nations Australia, Canada, France, Germany, the United Kingdom and the United States. CSpO is claimed to be a military space initiative which has the purpose of sharing information about space operations and activities and co-ordinating an “… effort to ensure space remains a secure, stable, safe, peaceful and operationally sustainable domain for all”.

New Zealand joined CSpO in July 2015, for the opportunity to increase knowledge of space operations, “… to bolster efforts to promote a rules-based international order in space, and to strengthen international relationships.” Meetings are held on a rotating basis, with New Zealand last hosting in October 2015.

NZDF says its participation in CSpO “… reinforces New Zealand’s approach to space, focused on the promotion and encouragement of the development of responsible behaviours in space.”

Space for Peace Aotearoa

Aotearoa is a Hidden Gem

Campaigning for a peaceful space domain.

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