



Brandon's "Usable Nukes" Are the Fast-Track to Jopocalypse

Description

USA: "The Biden administration's Nuclear Posture Review is, at heart, a terrifying document. It not only keeps the world on a path of increasing nuclear risk, in many ways it increases that risk. Citing rising threats from Russia and China, it argues that the only viable U.S. response is to rebuild the entire U.S. nuclear arsenal, maintain an array of dangerous Cold War-era nuclear policies, and threaten the first use of nuclear weapons in a variety of scenarios." Stephen Young, Union of Concerned Scientists

Maybe you're one of the millions of people who think the US would never use its nuclear weapons unless the threat of a nuclear attack was imminent.

Well, you'd be wrong, because according to the recently-released Nuclear Posture Review, the bar for using nukes has been significantly lowered. The new standard reads like this: **(nukes can be used) "in extreme circumstances to defend the vital interests of the United States or its allies and partners."**

"Defend the vital interests of the United States or its allies"??

That's a pretty broad net, isn't it? That could include anything from a serious threat to national security to an ordinary economic competitor. And that loopy-goopy definition appears to be just what the authors were looking for. The hardliners wanted to fundamentally change US nuclear doctrine so the conditions under which nukes could be used was greatly expanded. The obvious objective of this dramatic policy-shift is to eliminate any obstacle to the free and unfettered use of nuclear weapons. Which is precisely what the neocons have always wanted; a green light to Armageddon. Now they got what they wanted. Here are a few of the changes in policy that suggest that a full-blown nuclear war is no longer a remote possibility, but an increasingly likely prospect.

1– First-Strike Use: Biden refuses to rule out first-strike use of US nuclear weapons ...in reversal of his campaign promise. This is from The Daily Mail:

“... on the campaign trail, Biden had vowed to switch to a ‘sole purpose’ doctrine, which maintains that the US would only use nuclear weapons to respond to another nation’s nuclear attack....

President **Joe Biden is abandoning a campaign vow** to alter longstanding US nuclear doctrine, **and will instead embrace existing policy that reserves America’s right to use nukes in a first-strike scenario**, according to multiple reports.” (Daily Mail)

2– Nuclear Escalation: The Biden team has accelerated the deployment of modernized U.S. B61 tactical nuclear weapons to NATO bases in Europe. (The B61-12 carries a lower yield nuclear warhead than earlier versions but is more accurate and can penetrate below ground.) This is from Reuters:

Russia said on Saturday that the accelerated deployment of modernised U.S. B61 tactical nuclear weapons at NATO bases in Europe would lower the “nuclear threshold” and that Russia would take the move into account in its military planning.

Amid the Ukraine crisis, Politico reported on Oct. 26 that the United States told a closed NATO meeting this month that it would accelerate the deployment of a modernised version of the B61, the B61-12, with the new weapons arriving at European bases in December, several months earlier than planned.

“We cannot ignore the plans to modernize nuclear weapons, those free-fall bombs that are in Europe,” Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Alexander Grushko told state RIA news agency. (Reuters)

3– ‘Tactical’ means ‘Usable’: Biden’s new regime of low-yield nukes (which can still blow up a city the size of New York) **are called “tactical” weapons because they are designed for use on the battlefield, which is to say, Biden no longer limits the use of nukes for national defense but also supports their use in conventional wars.** (Like Ukraine?) This is from Aljazeera:

“Tactical nuclear warheads were created to give military commanders more flexibility on the battlefield. In the mid-1950s, as more powerful thermonuclear bombs were being built and tested, military planners thought smaller weapons with a shorter range would be more useful in ‘tactical’ situations,” according to Al Jazeera’s defence analyst Alex Gatopoulos. (Aljazeera)

4– Fasttrack to Nuclear War: Biden’s New Euro-Nukes have lowered the threshold for nuclear war. This is from MSN:

Russia said on Saturday that the accelerated deployment of modernized US B61 tactical nuclear weapons at NATO bases in Europe would lower the “nuclear threshold” and that Russia would take the move into account in its military planning...

“The United States is modernizing them, increasing their accuracy and reducing the power of the nuclear charge, that is, they turn these weapons into ‘battlefield weapons’, thereby reducing the nuclear threshold,” Grushko said....

...

Russia's ambassador to Washington, Anatoly Antonov, said on Saturday on Telegram that the new B61 bombs had a "strategic significance" as Russia's tactical nuclear weapons were in storage, yet **these U.S. bombs would be just a short flight from Russia's borders.**

"We cannot ignore the plans to modernize nuclear weapons, those free-fall bombs that are in Europe," Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Alexander Grushko told state RIA news agency. (MSM)

5– Increasing the Reasons for using Nukes: The Nuclear Posture Review abandons **Biden's promise to ensure that US nuclear weapons would be used for the "sole purpose" of deterring or responding to a nuclear attack.** Instead, the NPR states that the US will consider the use of nuclear weapons "in extreme circumstances to defend the vital interests of the United States or its allies and partners."

Sole purpose could significantly reduce the risk of unintended escalation and increase the credibility of more flexible and realistic nonnuclear response options in a range of importance contingencies." (Federation of American Scientists)

6– More Escalation: The US now reserves the right to use its nukes against non-nuclear weapon countries. This is from an article at Bloomberg News:

The Pentagon's new National Defense Strategy rejected limits on using nuclear weapons long championed by arms control advocates and in the past by President Joe Biden.

Citing burgeoning threats from China and Russia, the Defense Department said in the document released Thursday that "by the 2030s the United States will, for the first time in its history face two major nuclear powers as strategic competitors and potential adversaries." In response, the US will "maintain a very high bar for nuclear employment" **without ruling out using the weapons in retaliation to a non-nuclear strategic threat to the homeland, US forces abroad or allies.**" ("Pentagon's Strategy Won't Rule Out Nuclear Use Against Non-Nuclear Threats", Bloomberg)

Here's more from an article at the World Socialist Web Site:

In the Defense Department briefing, this point is elaborated. **The NPR**, a department official stated, **"establishes a strategy that relies on nuclear weapons to deter all forms of strategic attack . This includes nuclear employment of any scale, and it includes high-consequence attacks of a strategic nature that use non-nuclear means."**

The publication of the document was rapidly condemned by arms control experts. **"The Biden administration's unclassified Nuclear Posture Review (NPR) is, at heart, a terrifying document,"** wrote the Union of Concerned Scientists (UCS).

"It not only keeps the world on a path of increasing nuclear risk, in many ways it increases that risk," the UCS argued, by claiming that "the only viable U.S. response is to rebuild the entire U.S. nuclear arsenal, maintain an array of dangerous Cold War-era nuclear policies, and threaten the first use of nuclear weapons in a variety of scenarios."...

This marks a significant development from Trump's 2018 National Defense Strategy, which largely referred to the use of military force to secure economic interests in the negative—asserting that it was China that was doing so. While this was the clear implication of the 2018 document, **the definition of “national interests” advanced by the Pentagon's 2022 document to include “economic prosperity” constitutes an even more open step toward advocating the doctrine that war is an acceptable means to secure economic aims.**

A section of the 2022 National Defense Strategy:

These documents, which were not seriously discussed in the US media, make clear **the fundamental falsehood that the massive US military buildup this year is a response to “Russian aggression.”** In reality, in the thinking of the White House and Pentagon war planners, **the massive increases in military spending and plans for war with China are created by “dramatic changes in geopolitics, technology, economics, and our environment.”**

These documents make clear that the United States sees the economic rise of China as an existential threat, to be responded to with the threat of military force. The United States sees the subjugation of Russia as a critical stepping stone toward the conflict with China.”
(“Pentagon national strategy document targets China”, Andre Damon, World Socialist Web Site)

The White House, the Pentagon and the entire US foreign policy establishment now march in lockstep behind the most fanatically-lethal defense policy in the nation's 246-year history. The National Defense Strategy, the Nuclear Posture Review and the National Security Strategy all embrace the same reckless warmongering policy that will inevitably lead to mass annihilation and civilizational collapse. The doves and critical thinkers have all been removed from the foreign policy apparatus while the madmen and warhawks drag the world inexorably towards catastrophe. God help us.

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