

This Is Actually Terrifying

By [James G. Rickards](#)

Global Research, June 30, 2023

[The Daily Reckoning](#) 27 June 2023

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

Theme: [Intelligence](#)

In-depth Report: [Nuclear War](#), [UKRAINE REPORT](#)

All Global Research articles can be read in 51 languages by activating the Translate Website button below the author's name.

To receive Global Research's Daily Newsletter (selected articles), [click here](#).

Click the share button above to email/forward this article to your friends and colleagues. Follow us on [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#) and subscribe to our [Telegram Channel](#). Feel free to repost and share widely Global Research articles.

The "coup" in Russia is over but there's a very worrying development going on in Ukraine right now that should frighten everyone.

That's the growing risk of a nuclear war. I'm not being hyperbolic.

Let's break it all down...

President Biden is accusing Russian President Vladimir Putin of preparing to use tactical nuclear weapons in Ukraine.

The theory is that if Russia is in danger of military collapse in Ukraine, Putin will resort to the use of tactical nuclear weapons out of desperation.

But you can basically rule that out because Russia isn't losing the war in Ukraine. In fact, it's winning the war and continues to gain momentum.

Russia is crushing the much-anticipated Ukrainian offensive and is either advancing or holding the line in other sectors.

Meanwhile, Russian arms factories are churning out massive amounts of weapons and ammunition while the West is scraping the bottom of the barrel to find enough weapons and ammo to send to Ukraine.

It's a war of attrition and there's no practical way that Ukraine can win that war.

So why would Putin need to use nuclear weapons?

The answer, of course, is that he wouldn't. He's winning the war.

Nuclear Swordsmanship

But such warnings about Putin using nuclear weapons are not new. Biden has been accusing Russia of threatening to use nuclear weapons since the start of the war last February.

Some perspective is needed to assess this claim. For the record, the United States is the first and only country to conduct a nuclear war, which it did between Aug. 6 and Aug. 9, 1945, killing about a quarter-million civilians.

Putin has made it clear that Russia will not use nuclear weapons unless the U.S. or NATO allies do so first.

The U.S. has not made a similar pledge.

Biden based his threat assessment on the fact that Putin recently moved tactical nuclear weapons to its ally, Belarus, which is closer to Kyiv.

That's true, but it conveniently ignores the facts that the U.S. has placed nuclear weapons in Germany, that the U.K. and France are nuclear powers in their own rights and that U.S. Navy submarines and destroyers with nuclear missiles are deployed around Russia.

Belarus also had nuclear weapons when it was part of the Soviet Union prior to 1991. In short, there was nothing particularly provocative about Putin's move relative to prior positioning and the U.S. deployment of nukes.

MADness!

What is provocative is a recent article by Michael Rubin, a former Pentagon official and now a resident scholar at the American Enterprise Institute, a Washington, D.C.-based think tank.

Rubin recommended that the U.S. should provide tactical nuclear weapons to the Ukrainians themselves.

The rationale is a version of the doctrine of mutually assured destruction, MAD, that maintained stability between the U.S. and the former Soviet Union (really Russia) during the Cold War.

The idea is if each side has enough nuclear weapons to survive a first strike by the other and launch a second strike of its own, then neither side will start a nuclear war because it would be destroyed in turn.

There's merit to the MAD doctrine subject to a long list of conditions including large arsenals, secure command-and-control procedures, good communication between the protagonists (such as the "hot line") and rational leadership on both sides.

None of those conditions applies to Ukraine. It would have a modest arsenal (not enough to survive a first strike), has weak command-and-control, has almost no communication with Russia and has desperate and insecure leadership.

It's almost as if Rubin's proposal is designed to force Putin to attack any Ukrainian nuclear capacity as a way to justify escalation by the U.S. and get U.S. and NATO boots on the

ground in Ukraine.

That's a short path to World War III. Any talk of giving Ukraine nuclear weapons is reckless.

Rubin's idea could be behind Putin's plan to move nuclear weapons to Belarus as a way to dissuade the U.S. from going further.

Of course, Putin's actions in Belarus are an example of escalation, which may be exactly what Rubin and the other warmongers in the U.S. wanted.

Simply put, Rubin's idea is reckless and moves the world closer to nuclear war.

When you hear Biden talk about Putin's threat to use nuclear weapons, it's critical to bear in mind that the U.S. is the real threat and is acting with a view to escalating the war and dragging NATO into a direct war with Russia.

Will Ukraine Conduct a "False Flag" Attack on a Nuclear Power Plant?

But that's not all. There's the possibility that an increasingly desperate Ukraine could try to stage a "false flag" attack on the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant (ZNPP) in the Kherson region and blame it on Russia.

Both Ukrainian President Zelenskyy and the head of Ukrainian intelligence services have warned recently about a possible Russian attack on the plant.

In other words, they could be putting the conditions in place for a false flag attack.

"See, we warned you this would happen!"

Such an attack could potentially spread nuclear radiation throughout the region and possibly beyond.

It wouldn't be on the level of Chernobyl because the plant is operating at a much smaller capacity than Chernobyl.

But still, it would be seen as an unacceptable war crime by Russia, which would spark international outrage and set the stage for direct NATO intervention.

Incidentally, ZNPP is currently under Russian control, but much of the surrounding territory is still held by the Ukrainians.

How might an attack on the plant go down? Here's some more detail:

Ukraine (under direction of the U.S. and with U.S. help) could send a commando team to the facility, plant heavy explosives and then detonate them in a way intended to cause a partial meltdown and release of radiation.

Prevailing winds would carry the radiation in the direction of Romania, Poland and Slovakia, all of whom are members of NATO.

Once the radiation reaches those countries it will be regarded as an "attack" on NATO members.

This will trigger Article 5 of the NATO treaty, which says that an attack on one is an attack on all.

Sens. Lindsey Graham and Richard Blumenthal, in fact, just proposed legislation stating that Russian nuclear weapons use in Ukraine would be considered a direct attack on NATO.

Bombing a nuclear power plant isn't the same as employing tactical nuclear weapons, but do you really think they'd draw that distinction?

The Article 5 trigger would provide legal cover to the U.S., the U.K., France, Germany and the rest of the coalition to send troops to Ukraine to prop up the failing offensive.

The next step would be direct combat between U.S. and Russian troops. And that's a direct gateway to World War III.

Is This Really Just Conspiratorial Nonsense?

You might dismiss all this talk as conspiratorial nonsense. After all, why would Ukraine want to create a serious nuclear incident on its own soil?

I'd just remind you that there's credible evidence (according to German intelligence) that Ukrainian security agencies were responsible for the destruction of the Nord Stream 2 pipeline, the largest act of eco-terrorism ever conducted.

In fairness, there's also credible evidence that the U.S. carried out the attack, so it might not have been Ukraine. But it remains a legitimate possibility.

It's also probable that Ukraine destroyed the Nova Kakhovka Hydroelectric Dam earlier this month in an effort to undermine Russia's position in the area.

The result was an environmental disaster.

As with Nord Stream 2, there's no definitive proof that Ukraine was responsible. Of course, as with the pipeline, Ukraine blamed Russia.

While it's possible Russia did it, Russia stood to lose much more than Ukraine from the dam's destruction and the subsequent flooding.

If you were a detective, Ukraine would be your prime suspect.

Assuming Ukraine was responsible for both the pipeline and dam incidents, would it be out of the question for it to stage a nuclear incident if that meant bringing NATO directly into the war?

I don't think it would be.

Again, I have no proof that Ukraine was actually responsible for the destruction of the pipeline or the dam. But it is a reasonable possibility.

That's why you shouldn't rule out the possibility of a false flag attack on the nuclear power plant.

Again, Ukraine is getting desperate and desperate times call for desperate measures.

So if there is an attack on the Zaporizhzhia nuclear plant in the days to come, you'll know who was responsible.

You'll also know that the world is one step closer to nuclear war.

*

Note to readers: Please click the share button above. Follow us on Instagram and Twitter and subscribe to our Telegram Channel. Feel free to repost and share widely Global Research articles.

James G. Rickards is the editor of [Strategic Intelligence](#), [Project Prophecy](#), [Crash Speculator](#), and [Gold Speculator](#). He is an American lawyer, economist, and investment banker with 40 years of experience working in capital markets on Wall Street. He was the principal negotiator of the rescue of Long-Term Capital Management L.P. (LTCM) by the U.S Federal Reserve in 1998. His clients include institutional investors and government directorates.

Featured image is from TDR

The original source of this article is [The Daily Reckoning](#)
Copyright © [James G. Rickards](#), [The Daily Reckoning](#), 2023

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

[Become a Member of Global Research](#)

Articles by: [James G. Rickards](#)

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

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

For media inquiries: publications@globalresearch.ca