

The Agony of 'Regime Change' Refugees

Exclusive: There are positive signs of Syrians returning to Aleppo after the ouster of Al Qaeda's militants. But the legacy of Western "regime change" wars continues to plague Europe and inflict human suffering, writes Andrew Spannaus.

By Andrew Spannaus

European nations have been thrown into a political crisis by the hundreds of thousands of migrants coming north from the Middle East and Africa. The number has grown in recent years, due to a mix of wars and poverty, resulting in a visible increase of the influx of foreigners across Europe, and a popular backlash that has political institutions scrambling to find a way to stem the flow and lessen the sense of emergency.

The problem is that the causes of the mass migration have deep roots that cannot be solved in the short-term; and even a medium- to long-term solution will require serious changes in foreign and economic policy for the entire Western world.

In September 2015, as the number of refugees from Syria increased due to the ongoing military conflict there, German Chancellor Angela Merkel made a surprising announcement. Going against the grain of public opinion, in which anti-immigrant sentiment seemed to be rising rapidly, Merkel announced that her country would open its doors and accept hundreds of thousands of asylum-seekers. Germany already has a large number of recent immigrants among its population, and the view was that a wealthy country with a population of over 80 million could certainly do its part to deal with the humanitarian crisis enveloping the Middle East.

The open attitude didn't last long. In March 2016, Germany played a key role in reaching a deal with President Erdogan of Turkey, who in exchange for billions of euros, essentially closed the land route towards Europe through the Balkans. As a result, only the sea routes remained, with departures principally from Turkey, Egypt and Libya, making Greece and Italy the primary entry points to Europe. The routes have been further reduced over the past year, with the vast majority of departures currently originating in Libya.

Italy at Forefront

This has meant that in 2017 over 85 percent of total migrants headed towards Europe have arrived in Italy, a country that has led efforts to rescue people risking death in the Mediterranean in recent years. There have been ongoing

negotiations with other European nations to relocate the migrants that are taken to Italian ports and lessen the burden on the country of entry, but the number of migrants relocated has been only a small portion of those that arrive.

As a result Italy, which is not particularly efficient in managing the new arrivals despite making significant strides in recent years, feels left alone to deal with a crisis that is straining its resources. One of the side effects is a palpable shift in public attitudes in this Catholic country, from openness to help those in need, to a feeling that the situation is out of control and that the identity of Europe is under threat from the constant influx of migrants from different cultures.

The Italian government is attempting to find a technical solution to reduce the flow across the sea, which includes negotiations with the various factions in Libya, a new code of conduct for NGOs working in the area, and tightening the rules for bringing migrants to Italian ports.

All of these measures address only the last link in the chain of migration from the Middle East and Africa though, and even if they were to succeed, would only block the flow from Libya – where migrants suffer horrendous conditions, including torture – while human traffickers would seek new routes to get around the obstacles put up by European governments.

The Larger Issue

The deeper problem to address is the causes of the migrant crisis. This requires taking a step backwards, to understand how the current situation was created. The first issue is that of Libya itself, a country without any effective centralized control, ruled over by rival factions that are unable or unwilling to stop the numerous human trafficking networks from taking money from desperate migrants and putting them on rafts pointed towards Italy, where they will either be rescued by naval forces or NGOs, or die along the way.

The prime responsibility for the Libyan chaos lies in Paris, London and Washington. The goal of overthrowing Muammar Gaddafi had been present for decades in Western capitals, but it was not until 2011 – under the cover of the “Arab Spring” – that the French government in particular began to organize the effort to overthrow him, and gain economic and strategic advantages for itself in Northern Africa as a result.

The French had already prepared the attack as they encouraged U.S. President Barack Obama to join the “humanitarian” war that was intended to save the opposition from being massacred by Gaddafi. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton headed up the pro-intervention faction in the Obama Administration to the point

that the Libyan campaign became known to many as "Hillary's War."

Upon learning of Gaddafi's brutal murder, Clinton paraphrased Julius Caesar declaring: "We came, we saw, he died." The result though, rather than being a triumph of democracy, has been a descent into chaos, that among other things has allowed the country to become a key gathering point for terrorist groups such as ISIS.

'Regime Change' Chaos

The Libyan chaos, the most immediate hindrance to stopping the flow of migrants to Europe at this moment, leads to the larger issue of Western policy regarding terrorism and the Middle East in general. The series of "regime change" wars in recent years have reflected the goal of using terrorist networks for the West's strategic advantage, while ignoring the long-term effects of this tactic. The support for the Mujahidin in Afghanistan in the 1980s, in an attempt to weaken the Soviet Union, led directly to the rise of Osama bin-Laden and Al Qaeda in the 1990s.

The financial backing given to Sunni extremism, provided in particular by allies such as Saudi Arabia, spawned the terrorist groups that today target the West. From the war in Iraq to support for the most extreme anti-Assad groups in Syria, the United States and other Western powers have had a major hand in creating the very problem they are scrambling to deal with today.

The Obama Administration began a timid shift away from "regime change," with the decision not to bomb Syria in 2013, and rather to seek cooperation with Russia. The attempt to rebalance U.S. interests in the Middle East was also reflected in the nuclear deal reached with Iran. The effort ultimately proved to be too little, too late though, as large sections of the institutions resisted the shift and Obama himself essentially ran out of time; by the end of his term he had succumbed to the pressure to maintain a hostile position towards Russia, and failed to define a new strategic orientation towards the Middle East.

President Donald Trump has repeatedly criticized the policies of regime change and is moving forward on cooperation with Russia in Syria, despite the bombing of a Syrian air base in April in response to dubious claims of a chemical weapons attack by the Syrian government. Yet he has also toed the traditional pro-Saudi, anti-Iran line in the Middle East in general, making it seem doubtful that he is willing, or even able, to actually change U.S. policy in the region. As of now, the conflicts are far from being over, and from this perspective, it becomes clear that no short-term solutions are on the horizon.

An even broader issue is that of development, as economic conditions are once

again overtaking political unrest as the main driver of migration. There has been talk recently of a European Plan for Africa, to spur economic development and remove the root causes that drive people to leave their homes and families despite the potential dangers. The reality though, is that the discussion still revolves around the type of limited initiatives that are all too similar to the programs of the International Monetary Fund, focused on improving the climate for private investment and other “structural reforms.”

Some of the goals may be laudable, but the approach is a far cry from that of the Marshall Plan for Europe after World War II – which is often thrown around as a precedent when new plans are announced – that involved large amounts of public investment in rebuilding industrial capacity.

On this front as well, Western nations seem unable to recognize their own mistakes and contribution to the poverty in Africa that is driving a decades-long humanitarian crisis, that has now become an urgent political crisis for much of Europe as well.

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Cataclysmic Risks of North Korean Crisis

The schoolyard taunts between President Trump and North Korean leaders have quieted for now. But the underlying risks of a nuclear showdown remain, as Korea expert Tim Shorrock explained to Dennis J Bernstein.

By Dennis J Bernstein

Many Asia experts are concerned that the war of words between President Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un could turn Trump’s warning of “fire and fury, the likes of which the world has never seen” into a catastrophic reality.

I spoke on August 10 with long-time Korea expert Tim Shorrock, a Washington-based journalist who spent a good deal of his youth in South Korea and has been writing about the Koreas for nearly 40 years. Shorrock has recently returned from a two-month stay in South Korea where he had an opportunity to interview the new president, Moon Jae-in.

Dennis Bernstein: Why don't you begin by giving us a sense of what is going on in the South now. Are people afraid of a World War III?

Tim Shorrock: For most South Koreans, this is a confrontation between the U.S. and North Korea. The concern is that Donald Trump will follow up on the threat he made the other day and do something crazy. Of course, there is the fear that it could spill over into South Korea, but there is not any panic going on there.

DB: The new government in South Korea is more inclined to have negotiations with the North. But the United States has not even appointed an ambassador to the South. The situation seems very confusing and dangerous.

TS: The danger is miscalculation. You have Trump basically driving nuclear war with North Korea and you have North Korea saying that they will soon decide whether to send missiles toward Guam. It is a situation where someone could mistake an insignificant launch for something very significant. Or they could misinterpret something happening on the border and things could escalate out of control.

A lot of people in Congress were very concerned about Trump's remarks. That was true around the world, as well. Moon Jae-in won the election based on his policy of wanting to engage again with North Korea. The last two presidents had rejected engagement and the situation had become very tense because of their hard-line policies.

Moon has not gotten much of a response yet from the North. He has proposed military-to-military talks but the North has not yet responded. Now with the latest missile test by the North, Moon has reversed himself on deployment of THAAD and has actually called for its expansion. However, he said today that the door is still open to dialogue.

DB: What is the history of negotiations between the North and the South?

TS: Moon Jae-in ran on what he called the "Sunshine Policy." This policy was started by Kim Dae-jung, who was the president from the late 1990's to the early 2000's. He ran on a campaign to break down the barriers between the North and the South through cultural and economic outreach and political engagement. He had a summit in the 1990's with Kim Jong-il and there was another summit with Kim Dae-jung's successor, Noh Moo-hyun, in 2007. They made declarations about moving toward peace, demilitarizing the situation and reducing or eliminating nuclear weapons on the peninsula. During the Sunshine years, many South Koreans traveled to North Korea, and vice versa.

So there was actually a lot of contact until about 2007, the first time it had happened for 45 years or so. And many South Koreans began to see the North less

as an enemy. The enmity has been broken down between the South and the North.

Now, this hasn't improved relations between North Korea and America. Because of the death of this one American visitor who was imprisoned in North Korea and came back in a coma and died a few days later [Otto Warmbier], the US Congress moved to bar any travel from the US to North Korea. This is the first ban on Americans traveling to other countries in decades.

DB: You had a chance recently to interview the new president, Moon Jae-in. What did you learn from that experience?

TS: I met him two days before his election. He came up through the democratic movement. He was a labor rights and human rights lawyer for many years. He was very active in the opposition to the military dictator Park Chung-hee in the 1970's. He was jailed twice for his anti-government activities. He was chief of staff under progressive president Noh Moo-hyun and was present when Noh met with Kim Jung-il in 2007.

I asked him about the Sunshine Policy and whether he thought there might be opposition from the US. He was already getting criticism from analysts in Washington and some politicians that his policies were soft on North Korea. His response was that if he could do something to reduce the tensions, especially between North Korea and the United States, that should be welcomed by the US.

I asked him about the 1980 massive uprising in Gwangju against martial law and the massacre that followed. The uprising was put down brutally by the South Korean military with help from the Americans. This is still a source of friction between South Koreans and the United States. While he said that the Americans could have done a lot more than they did at the time, he didn't think it was necessary that the United States apologize now, when the country has moved on and is now a democracy.

Right now, Moon is treading a very fine line: He is trying to reach out to North Korea but he is under a lot of pressure from the United States to adopt a more military-first stance. Many South Koreans have been criticizing him for agreeing to extend the deployment of the missile system that the US installed last year.

DB: If the United States tried to pull off a first strike, what might that look like?

TS: It would be a catastrophe. North Korea is fully capable of launching a counterattack. With its conventional weapons it could wipe out Seoul. It could reach Japan. There would be untold numbers of casualties. South Korea does not want the US to launch a unilateral war without taking into consideration the huge casualties that would result in South Korea and without consulting the

South Koreans. It would rupture the alliance between the United States and South Korea. I think a lot of what Trump has been saying is pure bluster. It is very dangerous bluster and can only escalate the situation.

DB: Many people feel that this THAAD missile system is not in place to protect South Korea but is part of an offensive program known as the Pacific Pivot to control China and the region.

TS: The Chinese claim that the radar component of the system is very strong and can penetrate China very easily. Many in South Korea believe that the missiles are there to protect US bases. But even proponents of THAAD concede that, while it is capable of shooting a few missiles down, in the case of a large-scale war, it wouldn't make much of a difference.

It is actually more of a psychological weapon than something that can prevent an attack or a war. As you said, it is part of a broader system that is in place. Over the past few years there has been a huge military build-up in the region and particularly in Korea. This is a major confrontation and for most South Koreans the only way out is to have engagement.

DB: The American people have no knowledge of the violent history of US involvement in Korea which makes the North Koreans incredibly nervous and reluctant to give up what they see as a bargaining chip with nuclear weapons.

TS: During the Korean War, the United States completely obliterated the North. Eventually there were literally no targets left. Three million people, most of them civilians, were killed by US planes. It was a complete scorched earth policy. Trump's rhetoric reminds people of what happened in the Korean War.

The North Koreans have a very real fear of the United States launching its military on them again. The American people have so little knowledge of this history. All they hear in the news are numbers: How far can the North Korean missiles go, how many people would be killed in a war? Nobody is talking about how we got into this situation and how we can get out.

Again and again, US officials and the US media will say that North Korea refuses to negotiate on their nuclear weapons. What they leave out is that North Korea, in every one of their statements, has said that, until the United States drops its hostile policy, they will not negotiate.

What would it mean to end our hostile policy? That is what happened under Clinton in the late 1990's. The agreement was to end their nuclear program. At that time they didn't have any nuclear weapons. That program was frozen for twelve years until the agreement was ripped up in 2003 by the Bush administration. After that they built a bomb and exploded it in 2006.

Most importantly, the United States has never ended its hostile policy. That is the only way this is going to be resolved. As recently as 2015, the North Koreans offered to put another moratorium on weapons development if the United States would sign a peace agreement. Obama rejected that. Even more recently the North Koreans, together with the Chinese and the Russians, proposed that North Korea freeze their nuclear missile programs in exchange for a drawback of the US/South Korean military exercises. That has also been rejected so far by the United States.

DB: Do you see it as a problem that the Trump administration doesn't seem very interested in diplomacy? They seem to want to solve matters with B1 bombers.

TS: Interestingly, Trump has had some negotiations with the North Korean government. Soon after he took office in January, the US ambassador to North Korea met with the North Korean foreign minister and that is when we reached an agreement to free some of the Americans in prison in North Korea. But those talks were aimed toward opening the door to broader negotiations.

Less than a week ago, Secretary of State Rex Tillerson said at his first press conference that he would welcome direct talks with North Korea if they would put a moratorium on their missile tests. A couple days later, Trump makes this statement about nuclear war. I believe there is a split in the administration about this. There are definitely forces within the administration who are pushing for military action.

DB: The Trump administration has taken to blaming the Chinese, saying they haven't done enough to rein in North Korea. My understanding is that the Chinese are pretty upset about THAAD and in general about the role the US has been playing in its attempt to surround China with this military ring. What role could China be playing here?

TS: The predominant line right now in Washington is to outsource policy to China, to have China put the screws on North Korea. That's just not going to happen. They have a long relationship. After all, one million Chinese soldiers died in the Korean War trying to defend North Korea. China certainly does not want to have a situation in a unified Korea where suddenly they have US forces right on the border of the Yellow River. Neither is China going to put pressure on North Korea until it collapses.

China has been quite accommodating to US demands for sanctions. The Chinese and the Russians both voted at the UN for a vast expansion of sanctions which will affect one-third of North Korea's exports. But after the vote, both the Chinese and the Russian ambassadors made it very clear that they want the United States to negotiate with the North. They see sanctions as only one part of a larger

strategy. They came up with a proposal they are calling “freeze for freeze,” which would freeze North Korea’s development of nuclear weapons if the US freezes its military exercises.

Actually, I think the Chinese are playing an important role right now. Just today [August 10], they put out a statement warning Trump that his language is not helping. North Korea has always taken an independent course. They had a lot of disputes with the Soviet Union and they have had a lot of disputes with China. It has its own policies and doesn’t like to be pushed around by bigger powers.

This is a conflict between North Korea and the United States. The North Korean foreign minister just said that the only country they are going to use nuclear weapons against, if they have to, is the United States. What American officials and media would like us to think is that the United States is just an innocent bystander in Korea: “For some strange reason we cannot understand, the North Koreans just hate us so.”

Without understanding the history and the role of the United States in Korea, a lot of Americans are going along with this. We have had military forces in Korea since 1945. There are no Chinese troops, no Russian troops in North Korea.

DB: We hear a lot about poverty in the North, about hunger. I imagine that their heavy military build-up takes a toll on their own people.

TS: Absolutely. It has a huge military far out of proportion with their size and population. Of course, all this military spending deprives the civilian population of support. That was one of the factors that brought them to negotiate in the first place. In the late 1990’s there was a severe crisis when they experienced famine and floods and they lost their access to low-cost oil from the former Soviet Union. At that time, thousands and thousands of people did die from starvation.

It is still a very poor country but, even under the stiff sanctions, in the last few years North Korea’s economy has grown substantially. People who go there note that there is lots of new construction and economic activity. But I am sure that achieving peace with the outside world would certainly do a lot to improve its economy, to be able to divert resources away from military spending.

It is important to remember that, until the late 1970’s, North Korea’s industrial indices were actually higher than those in the South. They were doing well, especially by third-world standards. It is true that today the South Korean economy is miles ahead of the North. But a backward country could not be developing nuclear weapons. I believe that with years of peace and interchange

with other countries, North Korea would be much better off. That should be the goal of everybody.

DB: What do you think will be the impact of these latest sanctions?

TS: Cutting one-third of exports and blocking remittances from workers abroad is surely going to hurt the people there. Any time you have sanctions it is the ordinary people who suffer. We saw this in Iraq. There could be some very tough years ahead for North Korea.

DB: Maybe we can come back to the geopolitical angle. Many critics of US foreign policy in the region feel that this is not about North Korea or South Korea, it is about the United States drawing a ring around China in order to control the resources, the trade routes. This is about the uppity North getting in the way of US interests in controlling the region.

TS: Certainly that conflict is there and the United States has moved very aggressively against China in many ways. But this particular conflict goes way back to the early days of the Cold War. The Korean War was one of the first hot battles of the Cold War. This is part of the legacy of the US intervention after World War II, of the choices the US made as to who would govern South Korea, consciously using those who had collaborated with the Japanese occupation.

I don't see the question of Korea as a side issue from the broader picture. It is very important to find some solution to the Korean standoff. By this point, the US and Vietnam are almost military allies. The United States has been able to get past the war in Vietnam. It is about time we were able to do the same with Korea.

Dennis J Bernstein is a host of "Flashpoints" on the Pacifica radio network and the author of [Special Ed: Voices from a Hidden Classroom](#). You can access the audio archives at www.flashpoints.net.

Taking Nuclear War Seriously

With remarkably little public debate, the U.S. government has raised the risk of a nuclear conflagration with face-offs against Russia and now North Korea, an existential issue that Dennis J Bernstein discusses with journalist John Pilger.

Dennis J Bernstein

Emmy-Award winning filmmaker John Pilger's latest film, *The Coming War on China*,

deals directly with the new projection of U.S. power into Asia, as well as the toll U.S. aggression has already taken on the people of the region.

Pilger started his career as a war correspondent in Vietnam and has been a strong critic of U.S. aggression in Asia ever since as he twice won Britain's Journalist of the Year Award. I spoke to Pilger on August 8 about the dangers from the current face-off between the U.S. and North Korea.

Dennis Bernstein: John Pilger, your new piece is called "On the Beach 2017: The Beckoning of Nuclear War." Could you give a little context to that title?

John Pilger: I read Nevil Shute's novel *On the Beach* for the first time recently. It came out in 1959 and is about the aftermath of nuclear war. Actually, it isn't about war as such. It is about a great silence. At the front of the book, Shute quotes T.S. Eliot, who wrote "When it happens it will be not with a bang but with a whimper." The novel is about the last US warship to survive, a submarine. The rest have all gone. The northern hemisphere is completely radioactive. The submarine heads south to Australia but is being followed by this closing blind of radioactivity. It is about a community in Australia that attempts to come to grips with the fact that the radioactivity is coming and will be there by September and that will be the end.

It is an astonishingly moving book, and I happened to read it just as the US Congress nearly unanimously voted in favor of sanctions against Russia—in effect, for an economic war with Russia. These sanctions are so provocative, so unjustified, so wrongheaded. There is a cynical side to them because they are really directed against Europe, against Germany, which is dependent upon Russian natural gas.

But these sanctions really are a declaration of war on the second biggest nuclear power in the world. In Shute's novel, the characters are unsure of how the war started, they think it was a mistake or accident and that the US, Russia and China were involved. Everyone is very unclear about what ended life on the planet.

The prospect of nuclear war is still a great abstraction. It is beyond most people's imagination. But our imagination had better catch up pretty soon, when we see outrageous provocation such as this from the US Congress. These sanctions include the end of the Intermediate Range Nuclear Weapons Treaty signed by Reagan and Gorbachev, which marked the end of the Cold War. Bush II knocked out most of the treaties with Russia. This was a very important one and there you find it, buried in the sanctions. It is gone.

DB: Trump was clearly not in favor of these sanctions. While many want to

believe that the reason he wouldn't support these sanctions is because of his business ties with Russia, these business connections seem like our last hope for detente.

JP: This requires some thinking on the part of people. I am sorry if this sounds patronizing but people have just got to give up some of their beloved assumptions. The obsession with Trump is understandable.

Trump is an odious human being, we know that. But there is only one thing he has really been consistent about and that is not wanting a war with Russia. He almost parallels Ronald Reagan in that. In the end, Reagan didn't want to have war with Russia. This legislation absolutely ends the prospects for peace.

DB: We now have Washington pundits telling us that we have to think about a first strike against North Korea before they strike us.

JP: Once you have a first strike, that's it. This THAAD system in South Korea is so dangerous because it invites the Chinese to strike it so that it doesn't happen to them when they try to respond. There is a kind of sleepwalking element to all of this. I am not an alarmist person but I am very alert to something like this.

In my film *The Coming War on China*, we have the testimony of a member of a US Air Force missile crew based on Okinawa during the time of the Cuban missile crisis. He and his crew were given orders to fire their nuclear-tipped missiles. Fortunately, a very acute junior officer refused to follow the order, but that is how close it got in 1962. There have been other incidents since. Now we are pretty well back to something like that. Perhaps not on a day-to-day basis but on a more insidious basis.

DB: You write in your latest piece ("On the Beach 2017: The Beckoning of Nuclear War"): "They have encircled Russia and China with missiles and a nuclear arsenal. They have used neo-Nazis to install an unstable, aggressive regime on Russia's borderland [Ukraine], through which Hitler invaded Russia and caused the death of some 27 million people. Their goal is to dismember the modern Russian Federation." How do you see this moving forward?

JP: This was illustrated quite clearly during the immediate post-Soviet years, when we were subverting and seeking to control Russia. The effect on Russia was dramatic. The fabric of the old Soviet Union was torn up, in a way similar to how the Chicago Boys went into Chile. It makes the whole question of the Russians interfering in the US election so absurd. It was quite clear during that period that the aim was to divide and control Russia. That is always the aim of imperial states.

Vladimir Putin has incurred the wrath of our “betters” in the West basically because he made Russia independent again. That has been his great crime, actually. That is the test for countries that become enemies. The reason we are getting so much media coverage of Venezuela is that they are independent. I make this general point to explain why I think that the goal here is to divide. But we are talking about Russia here, not Venezuela. We are talking about the second most lethal nuclear power on earth. China was cut up into many pieces during what they still refer to as “the century of humiliation.” The Chinese have no intention of allowing this to be repeated.

DB: One of the most chilling parts of your piece is when you quote the admiral commanding the US Pacific fleet who said that, if required, he would nuke China.

JP: Two-thirds of US naval forces are now in the Pacific as part of the so-called Asian Pivot that President Obama initiated. He was speaking in Australia, where US forces had just completed a huge military exercise. One of the features of this exercise was to rehearse blocking the Malacca Strait and the South China Sea, through which most of China’s trade passes. The fact that this senior admiral would say such a thing publically at this very tense moment in time is pretty breathtaking.

The lie that Hiroshima was nuked in order to end the war was demonstrated by the dropping of the second bomb on Nagasaki. The bombings were both experimental and they were a very clear warning to the Soviet Union not to enter Japan at the end of the war. They were the first terrible shots of the Cold War.

DB: They were obviously testing these new weapons. One was plutonium and the other uranium. There is still a battle over the incredible amount of footage that was taken by the US to document the effects of these two bombs. These were clearly testing grounds.

JP: Interestingly, most of the actual footage taken by the US itself was not released until 1968. But a great deal of the archive footage of Hiroshima and especially Nagasaki has never been released.

People in power seem to have a kind of weird fascination with nuclear weapons, partly because of their apocalyptic nature. Sometimes when you hear a higher-up in the military open his mouth the way the admiral did the other day, you realize that these people do exist.

DB: What makes me really nervous is that Obama oversaw the largest weapons build-up ever and they are always looking for a war to test these weapons out.

JP: Yes, and Obama was awarded the Nobel Prize in part because he said that he was committed to getting rid of nuclear weapons. In fact, the Obama

administration has committed the United States to spending about a trillion dollars over the next ten years developing nuclear weapons.

DB: Any final comments, John?

JP: To progressives, I would just say, politics isn't a game. It isn't just about oneself, it is about all of us. Whatever issues you think are important, to yourself or your group in isolation, in the end we have to think beyond that. We have to think in a communal way. These sanctions that Congress has pushed through without any opposition in the streets! All those people were out protesting Trump's inauguration. Where were they when Congress was pushing through this lethal legislation?

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