

The Oligarchy's Plans for Our Future Keep Getting Dumber

Caitlin Johnstone discards the high-flown dogma around space colonization and challenges readers to accept themselves and life on planet Earth.



By [Caitlin Johnstone](#)

CaitlinJohnstone.com



It's rare to get a billionaire to share their grand plans for the future, which is weird because billionaires pretty much rule the world. Whenever they do, though, it's always something incredibly sociopathic, like replacing all jobs with billionaire-owned automation/AI and [giving people a Universal Basic Income](#) set by the [billionaire-owned government](#). Or loading all the humans onto rocket ships and sending them to live on [Amazon Space Dildos](#).

Billionaire Elon Musk, who hates unions and wants to implant AI into human brains, has been continuing this trend of idiotic plutocratic futurology with a new campaign to detonate nuclear weapons on the planet Mars. This is not because Musk hates Mars, but because he wants to colonize it; the idea is to vaporize the red planet's polar ice caps and throw carbon dioxide into the air to ultimately make the planet more habitable.

Scientists are voicing skepticism that such a plan could even work, before even opening up the "Just because you can doesn't mean that you should" debate. Sending nuclear weapons into space for any reason whatsoever should receive an outright rejection from all of humanity, since getting nukes into earth's orbit has been the wet dream of war machine engineers for decades and pretending they went to Mars would serve as an ideal cover story to circumvent international space treaties until it's too late to prevent it.

Musk claims he wants to colonize Mars because a new dark age ensuing from a third world war appears "likely," and he wants to ensure that there will be humans living off of the planet to re-populate it after we wipe ourselves out here. Rather than pouring wealth, brainpower and resources into pushing for a change in the status quo which has set the world's nuclear-armed powers on a collision course for a world military confrontation that will destroy our biosphere, this billionaire has decided it's better to nuke Mars so that a back bench of reserve humans can live on a desert space rock.

This is the class of people who are calling the shots in our world. These are the minds who are choosing our fate for us. I wouldn't trust them to run a gas station.

And Elon Musk is one of the saner billionaires.

Nuke Mars!

– Elon Musk (@elonmusk) [August 16, 2019](#)

I'm going to take a lot of flak for saying this, but I honestly believe that the impulse to colonize space is one of the more pernicious cultural mind viruses in our society. I mean, think about it: we've got a planet right here for which we are perfectly adapted, and we're burning it to the ground while looking up at a red dot in the sky going "You know I bet if I nuked that bitch I could build a hermetically sealed house on it someday." How much more insane could you possibly get?

I'm pushing against a cultural dogma that's been mainstream doctrine for generations, but I really find all this blather about adventure and the indomitable human spirit of exploration quite tedious and idiotic when it comes to space colonization. We've got creatures swimming in our own oceans with brains many times larger than our own, and we're killing them all off before we've even developed any kind of real theory about what they're doing with all that extra gray matter. There are parts of the moon that are better explored than vast expanses of our own seas. We don't even know what consciousness is, and science is largely uninterested in answering this question. I don't believe the spirit of exploration and adventure is what's driving our

longing to break for the stars. I think it's nothing but garden variety escapism.

We've all got that one friend or family member who's completely miserable and is always quitting jobs and relationships and moving house and changing their diet in a desperate attempt to find happiness. They rearrange their lifestyle for the umpteenth time and they're barely settled in before their gaze lands on some other aspect of their life and they think, "That's the source of my unhappiness right there. If I can only escape from that, I'll be happy."

Such people are exasperating to be around, because you can see what they're doing and you just want to sit them down and go "The problem is in you, babe. Moving won't help; your inner demons will follow you every time. You've got to stay put and deal with your issues."

Looking for Escape Routes

Our species reminds me of that type of personality right now. So many of us are looking forward to some escape route coming from outside of us to rescue us from ourselves; some are looking forward to the second coming of Jesus, some are looking forward to the aliens coming in to save the day, some are looking forward to the Democrats or the Republicans finally capturing the whole entire government and setting things right with the world, and some are looking forward to billionaires setting up a space colonization program so we can get off this accursed blue orb before we destroy it. But there is no deus ex machina here. No one's going to save us from ourselves. Even if we do succeed in running away from home, we'll inevitably bring the same inner demons with us

that got us into this mess in the first place.

We've got to turn inward and evolve beyond our self-destructive impulses. The only way out is through. The mind virus of celestial escapism stops us from doing this, because it offers us yet another false promise of deus ex machina. It lets us run away from doing the hard but necessary real inner work, just like doing drugs or binging on Netflix or any other kind of escapism.

Bezos Reveals His Ugly Vision For The World He's Trying To Rule

"Bezos then went on to discuss his plan to ship humans off of the best planet in the solar system and send them to live in floating cylinders in space." <https://t.co/Ps7iMvwfwA>

– Caitlin Johnstone ? (@caitoz) [May 12, 2019](#)

Can you try a little thought experiment for me? Imagine, just for a moment, if we took space colonization off the table. Completely. Forever. We just decided that it's never going to happen and we all moved to accept that. Really imagine it. Really put yourself there for a minute.

What does that change in you? What does that change about your attitude toward our future? If we're honest with ourselves, I think it would change quite a bit. For me, when I take space conquest off the table, it takes me in a direction that just so happens to look extremely healthy. It makes me say, "Oh, okay, so we'll obviously have to get rid of the status quo of endless war and ecocide, since those will ruin this place, and that will mean radically changing our relationship with each other and with our ecosystem. It will mean getting women around the world full reproductive

sovereignty and education since that's proven to reverse population growth. It will mean ceasing to think like a cancer, believing that endless growth is a virtue. It will mean ceasing to believe that the existence of trillions of humans is the best our species can hope for, when we have yet to even scratch the surface of our own potential on a large scale. And I suppose it will mean getting together and figuring out how to detect and neutralize the threat of apocalyptic meteor strikes, too."

Imagine

Imagine that. Imagine if instead of trying to figure out how to fill the sky with trillions of mediocre humans we turned inward, healed our inner demons, and realized our full potential. Such a world would be a paradise. I know from my own experience that humans are capable of so very, very much more than what we have attained so far; we really haven't scratched the surface at all. If we're going to explore, the direction of that exploration ought to be inward.

I really think the mainstream idea that we can always make a mad dash for the black emptiness in the sky if things go to shit here keeps us from truly confronting our urgent need to preserve the ecosystemic context in which we evolved, and which there's no evidence that we can live without.

I mean, we don't even know that space colonization is possible. As of yet we have no evidence at all that humans are sufficiently separate and separable from Earth's biosphere for survival apart from our ecosystem to be a real thing. Humans aren't really separate "things;" they're a symbiotic collaboration of organisms with ecosystems of

their own, all of which as far as we know are entirely dependent on the greater ecosystem from which we blossomed. So far all our attempts at creating independent biospheres have failed miserably, and the closest we've come to living in space has consisted of nothing but glorified scuba excursions: visits to space stations fully dependent on a lifeline of terrestrial supplies. That's the difference between flying and jumping. It might be as delusional as our brains thinking they can hop out of our skulls and live independently of our bodies, or some river eddies saying they're moving to dry land.

Elon Musk's Neuralink is developing a brain implant to connect people's minds directly to a computer. These mind-reading systems could affect our privacy, security, identity, equality, and personal safety. <https://t.co/LdHuTTmjlb>

– Rappler (@rapplerdotcom) [August 17, 2019](#)

And even if it is possible, why would you want it? Do people not know what space is? Are they aware that it's nothing but boring desert wasteland that's really, really, hard to get to and survive on? Have you ever been trapped for a long time surrounded by nothing but man-made things, like on an airplane or a cruise ship? Picture that, but way worse and for much longer. It would be a sterile, artificial existence; even if you managed to bring in plants and animals it would be ordered in a man-made way that is no more natural than the saplings grown on traffic islands. At best it would be like being in a mall your entire life. You'd be cut off from the primordial thrum of your home world. There'd be no real life there. No real soul.

Imagine never feeling the starry spatter of a shower of rain

on your face. Imagine never ever again hearing the roar of wind on a wintry night or experiencing the thunder of the ocean on a big surf day. Imagine never again being blown away by the brightness of a rainbow or the thrilling crack of lightning or the astonishing beauty of a sunset or the first rays of springtime sunshine fondly warming the back of your neck. Imagine never again coming across a friendly squirrel or a shy possum or a little feast of wild blackberries. Imagine never again lying in the dappled light filtered through a magnificent tree. I don't know about you but I would just miss the breeze playing in my hair too terribly to ever leave. I love it here and it loves me like a mother loves her child. This is not just my home, I grew from the earth as surely as a mushroom or a seahorse. I am a part of the earth and the earth is a part of me. We belong together.

It's easy to feel helpless. The wise ones do not have any money and therefore any power. We are being run by a handful of coddled man-children and it seems like they might have the last word. But I have been thinking about [Rupert Sheldrake's ideas on morphic resonance](#) a lot lately and I'm increasingly convinced that even just one of us bringing consciousness to an aspect of our collective darkness is enough to wordlessly and instantly inform the herd. So, do me a favor if you are willing. Go and run one more experiment for me. Go outside now and place your hand on the ground and say to the Earth these words – "I'm sorry, please forgive me, thank you, I love you." Say it as many times as you feel like. Say it, and mean it.

And then let's see what happens next.

Caitlin Johnstone is a rogue journalist, poet, and utopia prepper who publishes regularly [at Medium](#). Follow her work on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), or her [website](#). She has a [podcast](#) and a new book [“Woke: A Field Guide for Utopia Preppers.”](#)

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The Euro-Atlantic Populist Wave

Andrew Spannaus analyzes the anti-establishment revolt across the West in this excerpt from his new book, “Original Sins. Globalization, Populism, and the Six Contradictions Facing the European Union.”

By [Andrew Spannaus](#)

[AspeniaOnline](#)



In 2016, the world began to change, with the Brexit referendum in the U.K. and the election of Donald Trump as U.S. president. In both cases, an insurrection of “regular people” against the structures of political and media power upset the political balance of two of the leading countries of the Western world.

And the revolt didn’t stop there. It continued in 2017 and

2018 with a series of elections across continental Europe that saw the growth of protest movements and candidates willing to challenge the system of globalization that until recently seemed inevitable.

The anti-establishment revolt that has spread across the Western world is closely linked to the gradual transformation of the economic structure of the nations on both sides of the Atlantic over a period of decades, from one focused principally on production, to a system based increasingly on finance.

Finance has always had a role, of course, and speculative bubbles have often led to crashes and depressions in various periods of history. The characteristic of the shift over the past half-century is that of a structural change that despite provoking a series of crises, has not been effectively addressed. The result has been a widespread increase in inequality, interlinked with stagnation or even a decrease of purchasing power and living standards for a considerable portion of the population. This doesn't mean that people don't have more *stuff* nowadays, due to new digital technologies for example, they do. But most have to work more now, with more uncertainty, to make a decent living.

Speculative Financial Attacks

The mechanisms of the globalized financial economy have brought profound change in the international political sphere as well. Speculative movements have become a form of pressure under which countries can be brought to their knees, as national governments are no longer able to think

of their own citizens' interests in the face of a financial attack. Some might say that in the long run the markets are generally right, i.e. capital movements tend to reward or punish countries based on the quality of their economic policies. This ideological, tautological position is easily unmasked with reference to any number of speculative bubbles, from that of the "Asian Tigers" in the 1990s to the debt bubbles of Argentina and Russia in the 2000s; the pursuit of immediate profits in the name of shareholder value often means ignoring economic fundamentals, and exploiting misperceptions despite their lack of justification being fairly obvious to a reasonable observer.

The problem is not the existence of financial markets per se, but rather the role they have been given in determining economic policy, de facto shifting the aims of policymakers from the pursuit of the general welfare to the appeasement of investors in a model whose goals are generally not aligned with the long-term needs of the population.

The discontent produced by this process has now boiled over; and predictably, the targets of the protest are not only the executives who exploit the revolving door between finance and government (of which there have been many). A broader opposition has developed, a cultural revolt that mixes multiple factors associated with the same process. In the case of globalization there is no denying that many changes have been due not to some inevitable process of upheaval ultimately leading to progress. Rather, numerous Western industries have been uprooted in order to exploit weak labor and environmental regulations in countries that were desperate for investment. Political decisions were made to

further this process, essentially disregarding the long-term effects they would have on the workforce in developed nations.

The defenders of globalization say that people have to be ready to adapt to this process, yet when adaptation means seeing a worsening of one's standard of living, accompanied by a loss of social cohesion, it's not surprising that frustration and discontent grow over time.

Immigration

Another major issue that has emerged in this context is, of course, immigration. A strong reaction has developed among conservatives in particular, but has expanded to have a general effect beyond those who would normally be considered xenophobic or racist. In many countries, right-wing populists have used immigration as one of their major issues in criticizing globalization. The notion that the disappearance of borders means that people should be able to go wherever they wish, has fed into fears of a rapid change in the identity of Western European countries in particular, in both economic and social terms.

There is no denying the centrality of the issue of immigration, yet it is political malpractice not to recognize how it is linked to the overall reaction to globalization, starting in the economic sphere. The insecurity people feel due to more difficult living conditions feeds a fear of immigrants, who are seen as a threat to economic well-being. If immigrants are willing to accept lower pay and less comfortable living conditions, it is not hard to see how that can put downward pressure on the

living standards of others.

Disastrous Wars

A third key issue is foreign policy. While the notion of free markets has been used to promote neoliberal economic policies, the defense of human rights has been proclaimed as the justification for a series of disastrous wars. President Barack Obama made great use of Hillary Clinton's hawkishness to win the Democratic primaries in 2008, only to later be pushed into another regime-change war a few years later, in Libya. Donald Trump went further, decrying the "\$6 trillion wasted in the Middle East" that could have been used to "rebuild our country." This attack on the so-called shared values of the international liberal order struck a strong chord in U.S. citizens tired of endless conflict, making a connection between a failed foreign policy and economic decline. The effects were felt in Europe as well, in particular as regards a potential shift in the Western stance towards Russia.

Little Progress

In the United States, while pundits concentrate on the tone of the political/public debate as it is affected by Trump's style, there is little progress on addressing the long-term process that has brought us to this point. Yes, there has been economic growth, and even an uptick in manufacturing jobs, yet the middle and lower classes in the United States still struggle to make ends meet, while younger workers in particular suffer from uncertainty regarding their future. Ignoring this reality, claiming that whoever still feels an aversion to the mainstream narrative regarding the economic

and political conditions of the country, merely strengthens the disconnect between different segments of the population. Fortunately for the Democratic Party, in the 2018 mid-terms most candidates decided to concentrate on pocketbook issues, starting with healthcare, rather than trumpeting the cause of the resistance against the “deplorables,” the term used by Hillary Clinton in 2016.

The similarity with the political situation in Europe is obvious. For years the political and media establishment branded any anti-European Union positions as being inherently racist and reactionary, simply feeding the perception that the institutions were out of touch with the demands of a significant portion of the population. From the Netherlands to France, from Germany to Italy, populist parties have all drawn on opposition to globalization and austerity to grow their support, often – but not always – mixed in with criticism of increased immigration. Despite the different political systems, the issues are so similar to those in the United States that it is hard to deny a connection, or to reduce the popular reaction to one based only on racism or fear of others.

Given the parallels between the situations in Europe and the United States, the only practicable remedy is also quite evident: either political institutions begin to deal seriously with the fundamental economic changes that have taken place over a period of decades, or nobody should expect the revolt of the voters to subside, with all of the negative side effects seen to this point. And there is no doubt things could get even worse, in Europe in particular, where the last cases of dictatorship and destruction of

democratic institutions are not so far in the past.

Andrew Spannaus is a journalist and political analyst based in Milan, and the elected chairman of the Milan Foreign Press Association. His latest book is "Original Sins. Globalization, Populism, and the Six Contradictions Facing the European Union," published in May 2019.

Dismantling the Domsday Machines

Dan Ellsberg has given us a book that shows the urgency of re-engaging on nuclear disarmament, writes John V. Walsh.

With Two Minutes to Midnight, Time Is Running Out

By **John V. Walsh**

Antiwar.com

"From a technical point of view, he [director Stanley Kubrick] anticipated many things. ... Since that time, little has changed, honestly. The only difference is that modern weapons systems have become more sophisticated, more complex. But this idea of a retaliatory strike and the inability to manage these systems, yes, all of these things are relevant today. It [controlling the weapons] will become even more difficult and more dangerous."

*— Russian President Vladimir Putin commenting on the film, "Dr. Strangelove: or How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb," in an **interview with Oliver Stone, May 11, 2016**. Putin had not seen*

the movie and did not know of it before Stone showed it to him.

The "Doomsday Machine," the title of Daniel Ellsberg's superb book, is not an imaginary contraption from a movie masterpiece. A Doomsday Machine uncannily like the one described in "Dr. Strangelove" exists right now. In fact, there are two such machines, one in U.S. hands and one in Russia's. The U.S. seeks to hide its version, but Ellsberg has revealed that it has existed since the 1950s. Russia has quietly admitted that it has one, named it formally, "Perimetr," and also tagged it with a frighteningly apt nickname "Dead Hand." Because the U.S. and Russia are the only nations with Doomsday Machines to date we shall restrict this discussion to them.

Ellsberg's terrifying message in the book has failed to provoke action in the year since its publication. Instead, on Jan. 24 the *Bulletin of Atomic Scientists* kept its Doomsday Clock at two minutes to midnight, poised perilously close to Armageddon for a second year, marking a "new abnormal."

The first component of a Doomsday Machine is a mechanism of launching nuclear weapons with a command structure not always in the hands of a president in either country, something carefully hidden from the U.S. public.

The second component is a weapon of such destructive force that it can kill billions at once and then more gradually the entire human race and perhaps all animal life on earth.

Here is a brief consideration of Ellsberg's views as a reminder of the nuclear peril we face along with a plan of

action that he and others suggest.

Launch and Command

Russia and the U.S. each have the ability to strike the other with great force, destroy the other's cities and industrial and military bases.

The essence of this first-strike capacity is the ability to wipe out the deterrent of the other side or weaken it so that the remaining force could be intercepted for the most part.

How can a targeted nation respond to such a capability? It must convince the adversary that such a strike is futile because it will not destroy the deterrent of the targeted nation. The attacker must understand that the nuclear force of the targeted nation, its nuclear deterrent, will survive, and the attacker will be annihilated.

The first approach to ensure this survivability is to build ever more nuclear weapons. Thus, when the U.S. pioneered its first-strike capability in the Cold War, the Soviet Union responded with a buildup. Quite quickly both had a first-strike capacity with the competitive buildup reaching the insane levels shown [here](#). Each side also took the following additional measures.

The first measure to prevent the loss of deterrence is to put the nuclear force on Launch on Warning, which is also described as [Hair Trigger Alert](#).

Most of us have heard about this, but we ought to quake in our boots every time it comes to mind. Since the time to respond to a first strike is only tens of minutes for an

ICBM (Intercontinental Ballistic Missile) attack, which takes about 30 minutes to travel between the U.S. and Russia, and even less time for a short or intermediate range missile, a targeted country must have its nuclear force loaded onto delivery vehicles and capable of being launched on warning of a nuclear attack.

Nuclear warheads that are loaded onto delivery vehicles are said to be “deployed.” They are ready to be launched in minutes. On each side –both in Russia and in the U.S. – roughly 1,600 such warheads were loaded onto long-range delivery vehicles in 2018. (There are several thousand more warheads in reserve on each side but not “deployed.”) It is easy to see the danger inherent in this situation.

The second measure to prevent loss of deterrence is “delegation.” This is not widely known or understood.

One aspect of a first strike would be an attempt to knock out known command centers so that a retaliatory strike could not be ordered. This is known as “decapitation.” The antidote to decapitation is “delegation,” that is, others besides the presidents and their immediate successors are authorized to press “the button.” It works this way. These “others” are located in secret command centers far from Washington or the Strategic Air Command Base in Colorado, both of which will be targeted in a decapitation strike. If these secret centers find themselves cut off from communication with Washington or Moscow, then the assumption is made that a decapitating nuclear strike has occurred. In that event these “others” removed from the centers of power are authorized to press the nuclear button. These others are not elected officials and in fact we do not know who

they are. What Ellsberg discovered is that some of these “others” are military people who are concerned that they too could be hit in a decapitating strike. So they also have the authority to delegate.

In fact, no one, perhaps not even the president, nor his circle of advisors, knows who can launch the nuclear weapons. Is it possible that one might be like the fictional [General Jack D. Ripper](#), the psychotic, delusional fellow who gives the launch order in Dr. Strangelove, or someone lusting after the [Rapture?](#)

In summary, first-strike capability is the source of the problem. It leads to a nuclear arms buildup, launch on warning and delegation. The idea of having such a capability is deeply imbedded in U.S. “strategic” thinking and will be hard to dislodge.

Weapons of Human Extinction

The second component of a Doomsday Machine is the weaponry. What is the destructive power of the nuclear weapons used in a first strike? In 1961, when Ellsberg was among those working on nuclear-war fighting strategy for the Kennedy administration, he requested an estimate from the Pentagon of the deaths due to a first strike as the war planners had mapped it out then. To his surprise the estimate came back at once – the Pentagon had made it and kept it hidden. At a time when the global population was about 3 billion, a first strike by the U.S. would result in the deaths of 1.2 billion from explosions, radiation and fire. That number was deaths only, not injuries. And it was only the result of U.S. weapons; it did not include deaths from a Soviet response if

they managed one. The deaths would be concentrated in targeted countries, then and now the U.S. and Russia.

Ellsberg was stunned to learn that the Pentagon would coolly make plans for such a gargantuan and immediate genocide. And so should we all be.

But the damage does not stop there. This is the surprise that the Pentagon did not understand at the time. The ash from the fires of burning cities would be cast up into the stratosphere so high that it would not be rained out. There it would remain for at least a decade, blocking enough sunlight to prevent crops from growing for 10 years. That is sufficient to cause total starvation and wipe out the entire human race, with only a handful at most able to survive. Nuclear winter was publicized in the 1980s and encountered some initial skepticism.

Now with the interest in global warming, better computer models have been developed. When the results of a nuclear first strike are put into these models, nuclear winter again makes its appearance as Brian Toon, Alan Robock and others have shown. The TED talks of Toon and of Robock describing their findings are well worthwhile; they are brief and well-illustrated. We are confronted with a genocide of all or nearly all humanity, an "Omnicide."

The launch of the 1600 "deployed" warheads of either the U.S. or Russia is sufficient to give us nuclear winter. So we in the U.S. have put in place a weapon system on hair-trigger alert commanded by we know not whom that can kill virtually all Americans – along with most everyone else on the planet.

We have on hair trigger alert a weapon that is in fact suicidal. Even if we neglect the effects of nuclear winter, the nuclear attacks would be concentrated on Russia and the U.S. So most of us would be consumed. Thus MAD (Mutual Assured Destruction) is replaced with SAD (Self-Assured Destruction).

Abandoning First-Strike Policy & Capacity

Dismantling the Doomsday Machine with its hair-trigger alert and system of delegation means abandoning a first-strike policy *and* capacity. And right now, only two countries have such first strike capacity and only one, the U.S., refuses to take the right to use it “off the table” even when not under attack

What does the elimination of first-strike capacity mean in practice? This involves two basic steps for the U.S. First, the land-based ICBMs, the Minuteman III, must be entirely dismantled, not refurbished as is currently being undertaken at enormous cost. These missiles, the land-based part of the Strategic Triad, are highly accurate but fixed in place like “sitting ducks.” They are only good for a first strike, for they will be destroyed in a successful first strike by an adversary. Former Secretary of Defense William Perry and James E. Cartwright, formerly head of the Strategic Air Command and formerly vice chair of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, have both called for dismantling the Minuteman III. The second step is to reduce the Trident Submarine-Launched Ballistic Missile (SLBM) force to the level where it cannot destroy the entire Russian land-based missile force.

Russia would also need to execute similar measures, taking into account the specifics of its arsenal. Here negotiations, treaties and verification are necessary. But these are impossible in the current atmosphere of Russiagate and Russophobia, which is why both are existential threats and must be surmounted. We must talk despite our differences, real or perceived.

An additional measure has also been proposed. All nuclear warheads should be removed from deployed status by Russia and the U.S. (The anodyne term is “de-alerting.”) That is, the warheads should be removed from their delivery vehicles and stored in a way that would take days or even weeks to deploy – that is to remount. This has been proposed by the Global Zero [Commission on Nuclear Risk Reduction](#) whose plan is laid out [here](#).

The Work Ahead

Total abolition should be the ultimate goal because no human hand should be allowed to wield species-destroying power. But it seems that an intermediate goal is not only needed to give us the breathing space to get to zero nuclear weapons. An intermediate and readily achievable goal can call attention to the problem and motivate large numbers of people. The [Nuclear Freeze movement](#) of the 1980s is a very successful example of this sort of effort; it played a big role in making the Reagan-Gorbachev accords possible.

The effort to kill the Doomsday Machines might well be called something like “Step Away from Doomsday” or simply “Step Away.” At two minutes to midnight we must make haste to do this. Abolishing nuclear weapons will require a

breakthrough in the way countries deal with one another, especially nuclear armed countries. Let us give ourselves the breathing space to accomplish that.

An earlier version of this article appeared on Anti-war.com.

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Consortium News on Flashpoints: Max Blumenthal, As'ad AbuKhalil and Diana

Johnstone

The second episode of Consortium News on Flash Points focuses on two different perspectives on John McCain and the real meaning of Russian interference in U.S. politics.

In collaboration with Dennis Bernstein, host of Pacifica Radio's syndicated show Flashpoints, Consortium News presents its second episode of **Consortium News on Flashpoints**. Recorded and produced in the Berkeley, California studios of KPFA radio, Bernstein speaks with Consortium News Editor-in-Chief Joe Lauria, who each episode chooses three Consortium News authors to discuss their recent articles published on this site.

In this show, Bernstein interviews Max Blumenthal on [The Other Side of John McCain](#); As'ad AbuKhalil on [John McCain: The View from the Middle East](#) ; and Diana Johnstone on her article [The Real Russian Interference in US Politics](#).

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. You can get in touch with the author at dennisjbernstein@gmail.com .

Joe Lauria is editor-in-chief of Consortium News and a former correspondent for *The Wall Street Journal*, *Boston Globe*, *Sunday Times* of London and numerous other newspapers. He can be reached at joelauria@consortiumnews.com and followed on Twitter [@unjoe](#) .

If you valued this original article please consider [making a donation to Consortium News](#) so we can bring you more stories like this one.

NEW— Consortium News Launches Audio and Video Podcasts

Consortium News announces today that its audio and video productions will be available as podcasts on iTunes, Spotify and other popular hosts.

Consortium News Radio and Consortium News Video productions will be archived as podcasts on a variety of hosts, such as iTunes and Spotify. Our first host is Libsyn, which can be found by clicking [here](#):

Consortium News Podcast



Included among the podcasts will be all episodes of Consortium News Radio, Consortium News Video, Consortium News on Flash Points with host Dennis Bernstein (originally broadcast on Pacifica Radio) and the weekly review show, Consortium News Front Page, with host Don DeBar speaking with Joe Lauria, originally broadcast on Community Public Radio in New York.

INTRODUCING: Consortium News on Flashpoints, Our Second Radio Show

This month Consortium News launched [Consortium News Radio](#). Today we begin a second radio show in collaboration with Pacifica Radio's Flashpoints, a biweekly interview program with Consortium News writers.

In collaboration with Dennis Bernstein, host of Pacifica Radio's syndicated show Flashpoints, Consortium News is today launching its second radio program, **Consortium News on Flashpoints**. Recorded and produced in the Berkeley, California studios of KPFA radio, Bernstein will interview three Consortium News writers about their recent articles published on this site. Each program will open with Consortium News Editor-in-Chief Joe Lauria discussing with Bernstein his picks of the three CN articles to be featured. The show will air twice a month on every other Friday. (We are about to launch a podcast of all our radio programming).

On the first show, Bernstein interviews Sam Hussein on his piece [The Limits of Elizabeth Warren](#); Patrick Lawrence about his article, ['Too Big to Fail': Russia-gate One Year After VIPS Showed a Leak, Not a Hack](#); and Joe Lauria, on his [retrospective](#) of Kofi Annan, who died last Saturday.

Now the first episode of **Consortium News on Flashpoints**.

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