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A NATO WAR WITH RUSSIA MAY BE BECOMING INEVITABLE

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No decision can be graver for any leader than to declare war, which involves sending people to their deaths, both one's own and those of any given rival. Yet Russia, not unlike the Third Reich Germany, is making the Western case against war increasingly difficult. The corollary of such a development is even worse, for it would inevitably become a world war, this time, unlike the previous two ones, involving nuclear powers.

Out of the myriad of possible triggers for such a horrific outcome, let us point to just six, some already publicly aired in the mainstream press. We will just list them, without further elaboration or discussion of their merits. The goal is to highlight the gravity of the time:

1. French President Emmanuel Macron called for the [deployment of French forces](#) in Ukraine if Russia advances further towards Kyiv or Odesa (the latter is now not very far from the frontlines, especially if a second frontline opens in Moldova).

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2. On February 28, the breakaway republic of [Transnistria](#), a tiny sliver of land squeezed between Moldova and Ukraine “requested Russia’s help” in a Pavlovian session of the Transnistrian Congress of Deputies, which hadn’t convened in 18 years. As we know from Russian and Soviet history, such requests are often the prelude to nasty developments. In this case, the opening of a possible [second front](#) against Ukraine would also compromise Moldova, on whose sovereign territory this satellite Russian microstate, is.

3. Nuclear weapons are now indirectly being used as a deterrent in the Russian invasion of Ukraine. The little-known, yet publicly available, 2024 [National Threat Assessment](#) by Lithuania’s intelligence service points to a widespread campaign of disinformation and spying targeting the Baltic republic involving not only Russia but also Belarus, Putin’s pawn in the region. More critically, the Lithuanian intelligence report says that the non-strategic nuclear weapons Russia has deployed in Belarus are used as a tactical backup as Russian conventional forces are shipped off to the front lines in Ukraine.

4. The Israeli war against Gaza may rapidly spread throughout the Middle East, especially if it forces Iran into the fray. The fuses lit by a spreading Middle Eastern general conflict would be conducive to [a world war](#).

5. The Pope’s call for Ukraine to negotiate. Regardless of the unfortunate spirit and wording, in which Francis I referred to Ukraine as “defeated,” this may be yet another clear indicator of the gravity of the situation, as the Holy See is possibly privy to more detailed information about the course of the war.

6. The New York Times has reported that in October 2022 President Biden was warned by the CIA about a 50 percent chance or higher that Russia would use its [nuclear arsenal](#) in Ukraine in case of adversity in the battlefield. This warning led to Biden’s “Armageddon” [speech](#).

Any such scenario would also let out other worms that are now lurking in relative darkness, including the regimes of Erdoğan in Turkey and Aliyev in Azerbaijan, two aggressive autocracies with expansionist intentions not only against Armenia, which is faced with existential threats from them, but also Iran.

Two key differences with World War Two are the moral relativism of what we call collectively the West. Not only there is no Churchill to galvanise us all behind the right cause against the enemies of the open society. This is crucial. The monster that Russia

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has evolved into is not only a consequence of what may have been at the time NATO's reckless Eastward expansion, which is now inevitable. It is also the result of the legitimacy the Soviet Union of Stalin, the template of Putin's Russia, acquired with victory in 1945 as one of the Allied Powers, even if it had more in common with its totalitarian former partner, the Nazi regime.

We may not have a Churchill—yet—to unite us all in the righteous fight. Nobody regretted more bitterly declaring war on Germany on September 1st, 1939, than Neville Chamberlain, but he lamented even more that all of his genuine efforts were fruitless. Yet the Czechoslovakia sacrificed on the altar of peace, or appeasement, in Munich in 1938 did not sate the Jurassic appetites of Hitler. Neither will Ukraine, and much less Moldova, those of Putin.

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