

Will the 2024 presidential elections alter the course of the new nuclear arms race? (I)

Greg Mello, Trish Williams-Mello, Los Alamos Study Group, public discussion, Santa Fe, August 6, 2024

Key points

Of course the elections will alter the arms race but *how*, and *by how much*, is much less clear. In fact it is unknowable. We should not rush to conclusions.

This is the first part of what are really two presentations; the second addresses nuclear weapons.

Given the uncertainties, what we offer here are some general observations that bear on the title question.

Our most important conclusion is that elections have nothing to do with the most important actions we need to take, which should focus on the practical goals of ending U.S. support for the wars in Ukraine and the Middle East and on halting preparations for producing plutonium warhead cores (“pits”) at Los Alamos specifically.



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REPUBLICANS



DEMOCRATS



An old meme.
Assessment:
generally true
but
oversimplified
and worthy of
discussion. So
here we are!

Welcome! Thank you so much for coming!

First, the Study Group is a 501(c)3 educational organization that does not support or endorse particular candidates or political parties. Nothing we say tonight should be construed otherwise.

Second, there are no easy answers. The inscrutability and complexity of current events insure that.

Third, there is now, and no matter who is elected President there will be, a need for sincere local and national dialogue on political and cultural issues, on war and peace and crimes of war, and on government priorities, for multiple political and personal reasons that apply to every one of us. *We need to open our minds.*

Among other things, that means if we feel “offended” by someone’s political views, we are not listening respectfully enough.

Next, the problem of propaganda overshadows our discussion. We live in the most propagandized country in the Western world. The American public is grossly ignorant.

The situation is worse than most of us think. Our leading newspapers and mainstream media lie all the time, in a coordinated manner. The Biden Administration lies continually, about almost everything. This is now normal. The general lack of dissent from within the Democratic Party in Congress, from academics, and from the media has reached totalitarian levels.

Many realities which seem certain or endorsed by “all,” are just not true.

The *New York Times* is particularly toxic. Don’t depend on it. CNN – ditto.

People ask “what can I do?” It would be good to first ask, “what can I do to get better educated?” There is no one-page “fact sheet” available for any of this. We all need to devote effort to learning, and for most of us also “un-learning,” since we willy-nilly have come to believe in so many fairy tales. This cannot be accomplished through social media, or in a few moments of our time.

Case in point: The Ukraine War, i.e. the U.S. proxy war against Russia, pursued at Ukraine's deepening expense.

The American people and its elected leaders have been fed a line of bull on Ukraine since 2014 and before. This is a critically important issue for U.S. and global survival and is a major issue in this presidential race.

Please see our [Ukraine news page](#), updated almost daily, and the other independent news sources we recommend there.

One highly recommended resource compatible with doing household chores, etc: [Judge Andrew Napolitano's video podcast](#).

Two excellent primers by Jeffrey Sachs, used by Steve Starr in his most recent class:

- **Dec 29, 2023 [Ukraine War primer](#)**
- **June 22, 2024 [Blowing up peace plans can get us all killed](#)**

The increasingly-severe problem of “double government” and the “Deep State” – don’t imagine that presidents can act or do act freely (or are elected democratically).

- [*National Security and Double Government*](#), Michael Glennon
- [*The Deep State: The Fall of the Constitution and the Rise of a Shadow Government*](#), Mike Lofgren
- [*The American Deep State: Big Money, Big Oil, and the Struggle for U.S. Democracy*](#), Peter Dale Scott
- [*JFK and the Unspeakable: Why He Died and Why It Matters*](#), James Douglass
- [*Prelude to Terror: the Rogue CIA, The Legacy of America's Private Intelligence Network*](#), Joseph Trento
- [*The Wuhan Cover-Up: And the Terrifying Bioweapons Arms Race*](#), Robert F. Kennedy, Jr.
- Ray McGovern: “MICIMATT,” the updated “military-industrial complex” (MIC) of Eisenhower, the military-industrial-congressional-intelligence-MEDIA-academic think-tank complex, with “MEDIA” in capitals because it is the keystone of the whole.

Also, citizen opinions are uncorrelated with policy outcomes. See [“Testing Theories of American Politics: Elites, Interest Groups, and Average Citizens,”](#) Martin Gilens and Benjamin I. Page.

Regarding Congress and the political parties in it:

- **Congress is very different than it was as recently as 2016 or 2020.**
 - **War hysteria and resulting peer pressure, falling over itself in bellicosity**
 - **100% of Dems voted to intensify the war against Russia. A supermajority of Congress voted to fund Israel and Ukraine.**
 - **Only 19 members of Congress, all Republicans, voted against funding the Ukraine War AND the Israeli genocide.**
 - **Military-nuclear porkfest (viz. Martin Heinrich, New Mexico's "Pope of Pork")**
 - **The powerful Zionist lobby and faction – both inside and outside government.**
 - **Congress is the first object of Deep State propaganda. Congress is deeply ignorant, kept off-balance and busy, and individually, members lack power.**
 - **Almost no oversight of the MIC is occurring; members generally rush to add money.**
- **The Ds are relatively unified. "Progressives" are a weak or spent force on war and peace overall, kept in line fairly easily. Biden's people are mostly neocon hegemonists.**
- **The Rs are less unified. Contain diametrically opposed positions, from ueberhawks to isolationists, and these factions often vote oppositely and hold up their own legislation.**

The bottom line is this: we have concluded that the most important actions to *halt the nuclear arms race, prevent nuclear war, reclaim democracy, and prioritize respect for human beings and the environment* centrally involve fostering peace with Russia first, China second, and also our other “enemies” (e.g. Iran, DPRK).

Please try to take this in. It has nothing directly to do with elections.

If continued, a) Russophobia first and foremost, and b) Sinophobia secondarily, will continue to prevent humane priorities in our government. The MIC needs enemies – the bigger the better – and feeds on hate and fear. *It's that simple.*

The MIC consumes more than half of all discretionary spending. It is most of what Congress does. The U.S. government (USG) is primarily a national security state, a war state. Everything else is secondary. The “war machine” mostly runs the USG, including the president.

USG support for Israeli criminality is different – and darker. See “[Gaza As A New\(?\) Western Method To Wage War](#)” (b, *Moon of Alabama*). The scale is smaller, the sickness much greater.

Since roughly 2014, the newly totalitarian nature of our propaganda, the new mass psychosis affecting large groups in our population, and our government’s full support for these two bloodbaths, have created a different kind of government in the U.S. than what came before.

Powerful non-democratic structures and forces are working hard *right now* to a) choose and b) control the next president, and if necessary c) eliminate him or her (please understand: some people and some factions are *that serious*).

Usually, presidential candidates are selected by party elites and donors. In this election, this is true only for Harris.

Nonetheless, barring low-probability events, all candidates require the support of donors and party elites (where applicable) to be elected and then to govern, more or less.

Much of the fear surrounding Trump, and also surrounding the 3rd-party candidates, is based on the MICIMATT-generated fear that these candidates will not “fall in line” and “do what they are told.” They might govern differently. The DNC, “old” RNC, and MICIMATT have a tremendous fear of “populism.” (See *The People, No: A Brief History of Anti-Populism*, Thomas Frank, and *Listen, Liberal: Or, What Ever Happened to the Party of the People?*).

The present election is in most respects a pacifier, an empty spectacle, a con. It deludes most people into thinking they are participating in a “democratic” exercise. However the election can also be a stage on which to communicate important values and messages and build organizations, parties, and movements. There is also a small chance that a 3rd-party candidate could win.

The present election, and U.S. security policies, are still very much influenced by the complex DNC/CIA/FBI/++ psyop called “Russiagate,” which began in 2016 and has really never stopped.

Early on, it involved accusations, quickly shown to be false on the basis of technical metadata, that the Wikileaks organization had been given DNC emails by Russian hackers. This was just the beginning.

Extensive clandestine intelligence community operations against candidate Trump and his associates were undertaken. MI-6 operatives and assets played crucial roles. Very senior employees of the FBI and CIA played active partisan roles during the campaign and afterwards. Once elected, Trump was constantly assaulted politically on the basis his of being a “Russian stooge.”

Almost none of the perpetrators have been punished. There have been very few media apologies.

The alliance between the DNC, intel agencies, and federal “law enforcement” was unprecedented. The resulting “Russophobia” has been a huge factor in devising, and then continuing, the Ukraine War and in increasing the MIC budget to record heights.

Question: Despite all this, can we rate the current candidates on war, peace, arms control, and nuclear disarmament? (We could legally do this, as a 501(c)3). **Answer:** not easily.

We can say that Kennedy, Stein, and West are relatively good on war and peace, with the exception of Kennedy on Israel. We have not been tracking the details.

We can say that the Biden Administration has been very bellicose and is growing more so in Biden's dotage as the Ukraine catastrophe reaches its culminating point and Israel's aggression reaches ever greater heights. Biden's foreign policy, to the extent he has one, has been an epic failure in every way. We finally said, in February 2023 (triggered by the Nordstream fiasco) that Biden should be impeached, (Bulletin 325: [Understanding the Nordstream sabotage and punishing those responsible](#)). His nuclear weapons policies are unremarkably hawkish. Continuing them would assure the U.S. engages in a nuclear arms race, and possibly to nuclear war.

Harris, who has no experience or ability to resist, is likely to do whatever the MIC wants her to.

"Team Trump" is probably bad on the middle East, possibly better on Russia and possibly worse on China and Iran. Trump is probably more unpredictable but remember, no president is entirely in charge. Radical change is impossible for better or worse, absent changes in Congress, for starters.

FYI: Republicans have cut more nuclear weapons than Democrats in the post Cold War period.

Remember, this presidential election will be not decided by NM voters. So don't worry about it.

Saying a US politician is “bad on foreign policy but good on domestic policy” is like saying “Sure my husband spends his weekends murdering hitchhikers, but he’s a good provider and he knows how to fix a flat tire.” You’re talking about genocide, nuclear brinkmanship, mass military slaughter and deliberate mass starvation, and you’re placing these things on the same moral level as a candidate’s position on student loan debt.

(Caitlin Johnstone)

We need to understand that none of our climate goals, our social justice goals, our economic goals, our civil liberties goals – none of them – will be possible to achieve with a federal government that remains in thrall to, and is in fact largely defined by, its national security functions.

Behind the scenes, the U.S. government works very differently from how most people imagine it does, and differently than it did 10 or 15 years ago. Most of the evidence is in plain sight but ignored because of normalcy bias and lack of interest.

This is particularly relevant in New Mexico, which is an *administered* federal territory.

So what can we do? (I).

- **First**, New Mexicans have won great victories against the new arms race already: these victories are called “SNML” and “[CMRR-NF](#)”. We contributed to another, called “MPF.” LANL’s “own goals” against pit production were called “CMRU” and underground “modules.” As a result, *the U.S. has no place to make any useful number of pits and it will be years before it does.* We gained 30 years. That’s huge.
- **Next**, bear in mind that *New Mexico is possibly the best place in the whole world to fight against the new Cold War.* It’s easier here than anywhere else. But it can’t be done by appealing to our congressional delegation. They are too corrupt. We are not in a democracy, as explained above. We are a colony, federally speaking. We need to rebel.
- **Next**, I’m sorry to say that most of the actions people want to take are insufficiently serious, or else isolated, or else naïve and easily coopted, to be effective. They amount to little more than flailing, or else serve purely personal ends. Really easy things are mostly not worth doing. *To the extent we want to accomplish something, we need to clearly focus on opposing the U.S. wars in Ukraine and the Middle East, and LANL’s bomb factory.*
- Sincerity, commitment, and sacrifice are needed. We won’t get any change we don’t pay for. We are doing this for ourselves, after all – for our own transformation first and foremost.

So what can we do? (II)

- All that said, in whatever we do we will be “over our heads.” We will need to grow into the work. So we will need patience, tolerance, forgiveness, and humility.
- But *we can't wait*. We are in a dire situation. We are caught up in a war against our common future, against the earth, against what is good in our civilization. It is all being sacrificed to our military Moloch, to Capital, to Empire.
- *Many* things can be done. There is no “one size fits all.” In the northern New Mexico context, what we do will harmonize if we:
 - Keep the focus on halting pit production here and now, at LANL;
 - Oppose U.S. wars and the “enemy-making” process, and of course genocide;
 - Are serious, truthful, and respect others.
- Popularity is not a good measure of merit, in our debauched situation.
- We ought to be open to inner conversions, enabling greater service, joy, and maturity. Again, we are the primary ones we are working on.

So what can we do? (III). Just to remind ourselves of the big picture:

- A. The *res privata* (the private thing, the private good), h/t H.D. Thoreau, *Walden***
 - a. Simplify our needs and wants gracefully, to free ourselves**
 - b. As we know, there will be no maturity without responsibility, including political action, and no effective action without at least some maturity.**
 - c. We need to understand our responsibilities and fulfill them. “My” rights are not important, most of the time. Overall, we have forgotten that responsibilities are more important than rights (Weil, *The Need for Roots*).**
- B. The *res publica* (public good)**
 - a. Direct service. We who act politically need more of this.**
 - b. The “constructive program” (Gandhi) Ed Grothus: “Always build, never destroy.” Present economic arrangements are fragile and breaking. We need to build anew amid the hopefully gradual collapse of the old.**
 - c. Public policy and politics, which is what we have been talking about all this time. My point in offering this taxonomy is primarily to say *politics is necessary but far from enough. It, and we, have to be grounded in all the rest.***