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True Texas Scholarship Essay

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Cutesy Time is Over

On June 28, 1914, Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria-Hungary was assassinated by a Serbian nationalist, and less than two months later, due to a complicated series of alliances, World War I began in earnest when Germany invaded Belgium. World War II began when Hitler invaded Poland eventually involving fourteen Allied powers against three Axis powers. Has World War III already started and we're not yet aware of it? Warfare has changed since the 1900's, from tactics to technology and weapons. Now there is the possibility of nuclear war... is it likely? In 1941, America was caught off guard in the surprisingly devastating attack on Pearl Harbor. Are we ready now? Do we have enough soldiers, or will a draft be necessary? Who's to blame for escalating conflict and unrest in the Middle East and Europe?

Before I can form an opinion on whether or not the prospect of nuclear weapons will be used shortly, it is important to understand the countries with nuclear capabilities as well as the leaders of those countries and their alliances. Only a handful of countries currently have nuclear capabilities: the United States, Russia, the United Kingdom, France, China, India, Pakistan, and North Korea. While Israel is believed to possess them, they have neither confirmed nor denied that claim. Russia and the United States control 88% of the world's nuclear warheads, but North Korea has issued many nuclear threats that it can at least partially back up. President Vladimir Putin's Russia stockpiles a nuclear arsenal to be reckoned with and the danger it presents cannot be dismissed offhand. Even in recent weeks, Putin has fired ICBM

missiles capable of carrying nuclear warheads into Ukraine. Evidently, this incident was a statement of power and a threat to the West from Russia on its willingness to use those weapons armed with nuclear warheads should the war escalate and the U.S. and its allies become more involved. Kim Jong Un of North Korea is believed by many to be unpredictable, paranoid, and prone to erratic decisions. His arsenal is sufficient to inflict considerable damage, but that is it. The KPA, Korean People's Army, would not keep North Korea on its feet in a prolonged engagement. Nuclear power is its main military strength. Moreover, if North Korea decides to fire its nuclear weapons, it would have to deploy all of them in the first days of the conflict in rapid succession or have them taken from them and/or destroyed by the U.S. China and Xi Jinping have been making trouble for Taiwan for years with an endless barrage of aggressive behavior, and according to James H. Anderson at USNI.org, "The next Taiwan crisis will almost certainly involve nuclear threats." To further intensify the situation, Putin recently stated that China and Russia are more than just allies, and it is well known that both nations are allies with North Korea. In the Middle East, Israel has been fighting conservatively and limiting civilian casualties as much as possible. However, surrounded by their enemies, they will stubbornly fight for their own existence and will use all weapons at their disposal to ensure national sovereignty.

The United States, on the other hand, might not be using all of the tools at its disposal. The Biden administration set an \$886 billion defense budget, which surpasses previous annual military spending in peacetime. However, according to Admiral William Owens and former Ohio Governor and Congressman John Kasich, "Far too much of this effort has served only to prepare us for facing the threats of yesterday." They go on to say that the military has

failed to incorporate AI, blockchain, machine learning, quantum computing, and other advanced technologies that are currently revolutionizing business and industry worldwide. Conversely, other militaries have used and incorporated these tools into their defense departments. In the current wars in Ukraine and Israel, glimpses of these new technologies can be seen even though they are still used conservatively. Additionally, the United States' oil reserves, which were started in 1975 to ensure access to oil in crises, are at record lows that we have not experienced since 1984. This is due in part to the current administration's releasing of stored oil to reduce skyrocketing gas prices, which they brought about from not drilling. Forgoing drilling, they purchased oil from other countries in the Middle East, creating a reliance on them. The releasing of the oil did reduce the self-inflicted inflated gas prices, but at the high cost of military preparedness. Our country is rich in "Texas Tea" and we can easily and efficiently resolve our low reserve levels by committing to "Drill, Baby, drill!"

Finally, the military leadership is distracted by DEI policies. There exists an entire sub-department called the ODEI, Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. This office creates policies for all branches of the military which has led to botched recruiting efforts such as the Army's attempt to reach "historically marginalized communities" with commercials such as the one entitled Emma. Apparently attempting to appeal to the independent-thinking, college sorority girls, this commercial portrays the life of a young woman in the Army who was raised by two "mothers" and who supposedly overcame some rather generic first-world life difficulties related to that family circumstance. However, the amount of young people who can identify with that upbringing is an extremely small number, significantly less than 150,000. The commercial was undoubtedly unappealing to many of military age and entirely repulsive to

countless others. The Army is now distancing itself from this 2021 debacle of a recruiting campaign. Unquestionably, the biggest threat to our nation's military is not foreign powers like Russia or China. It is the policy in the military that claims, "Diversity is our strength." According to Pete Hegseth, Trump's nominee for Defense Secretary, "Every time I hear a military leader say, 'Diversity is our strength.' I throw up in my mouth a little bit more because if they believe it, it shows you how sideways and indoctrinated they are." All of this to say, the military is currently unprepared for war in part because it has veered into the ditch from the Founding Fathers' and Continental Congress's statement on the fundamental and arguably sole responsibility of the military, which is the common defense of the United States.

Unfortunately, even if our military became more devoted to its primary function and discarded the countless, useless, socially inclusive policies, the problem of 75% of our military-age citizens being unfit for service remains. According to governmental history expert Robert Longly, "Roughly 1,500 young potential recruits fail their entrance physicals every year because they are too heavy.... (and) 32% have other disqualifying health problems." With the majority of adults of fighting age in this country being unfit to fight, a draft would be almost ineffective in raising our military's numbers to adequate wartime levels. That, in turn, would necessarily lead to lower military standards and an all-around less efficient fighting force which would inevitably fall short of its primary function, the common defense of the United States.

The current escalation of events across the pond can be attributed not only to President Joe Biden, but also to the Obama administration of 2009-17 and its weak stance on foreign affairs. Early on in his presidency, Obama and Russian President Medvedev signed a treaty that would reduce both nations' nuclear weapons arsenal, but as expected, Russia did

not follow the treaty, and the only meaningful result was a reduction of the U.S. nuclear arsenal. Additionally, Obama scrapped the missile defenses of both Poland and the Czech Republic and stood by and watched while Russia invaded Crimea in 2014. When Trump came into office in 2017, Europe, Asia, and the Middle East all experienced relative quiet until 2020. Then Biden became Commander in Chief, and Russia promptly invaded Ukraine, China resumed harassing Taiwan, and more recently the Middle East, funded by Iran, commenced a war with Israel. On October 7, 2023, Israel was attacked by Hamas in Palestine, and since then the Houthis of Yemen and Hezbollah in Lebanon have joined the fight to eliminate Israel. You can see the pattern. For the past 14 years, when Democrats occupy the White House, they permit chaos. On the other hand, when Trumps get into office, our enemies are much more restrained and likely intimidated into good behavior.

On a global scale, when Russia invaded Ukraine in 2022, NATO condemned the war and sent financial aid to Ukraine supporting its right to self-defense. Also, when China resumed bothering Taiwan, NATO began keeping a more focused eye on the situation. Finally, NATO Secretary General Jens Stolberg declared in October 2023 just days after Hamas attacked that "Israel does not stand alone". NATO has publicly condemned these actions but without the strong, tangible support from President Biden, it has not been effective.

To summarize, the situation in the eastern hemisphere is shaping up to potentially be the beginning of another world war. As former Secret Service Agent Dan BonGino put it, "Cutesy time is over." Our enemies are becoming bold and aggressive, and the current administration is not helping to effectively diffuse the situation. Nuclear weapons are being threatened by known nuclear powers, and the American military, which is extremely distracted

by its socially inclusive policies, is not ready to adequately meet these threats either with its technology or with its manpower. It is not just the military that is woefully unprepared for the conflict, but the American people are not ready with the majority of its fighting-age citizens being unfit for service. Consequently, if a draft became necessary, it would be nearly ineffective. Finally, since 2009, when Obama came into office, the Democrats in both the Obama and the Biden administrations, have stood by and watched while Europe and Asia became more and more chaotic and left NATO without powerful, decisive leadership. At the end of the day though, we can say with confidence that God is sovereign and pray in earnest the words of Revelation 22:20, "...Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!"