Written by John Hallam Monday, 17 February 2020 16:03 -

The below has now been emailed to the UNGA/NPT Revconf, members of the European Parliament, the NZ Parliament, some congresspeople.

It will soon be faxed (yes, faxed) to members of the US Senate and House subcommittees on strategic forces. It will also be emailed to parliamentarians and NGOs in other places.

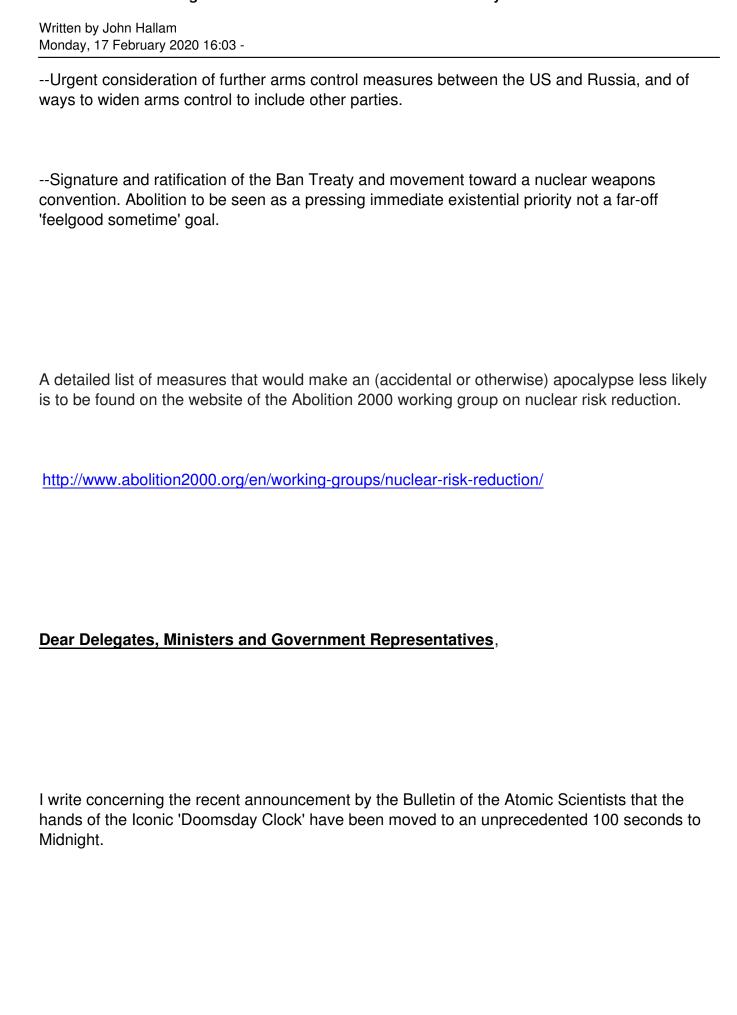
John Hallam

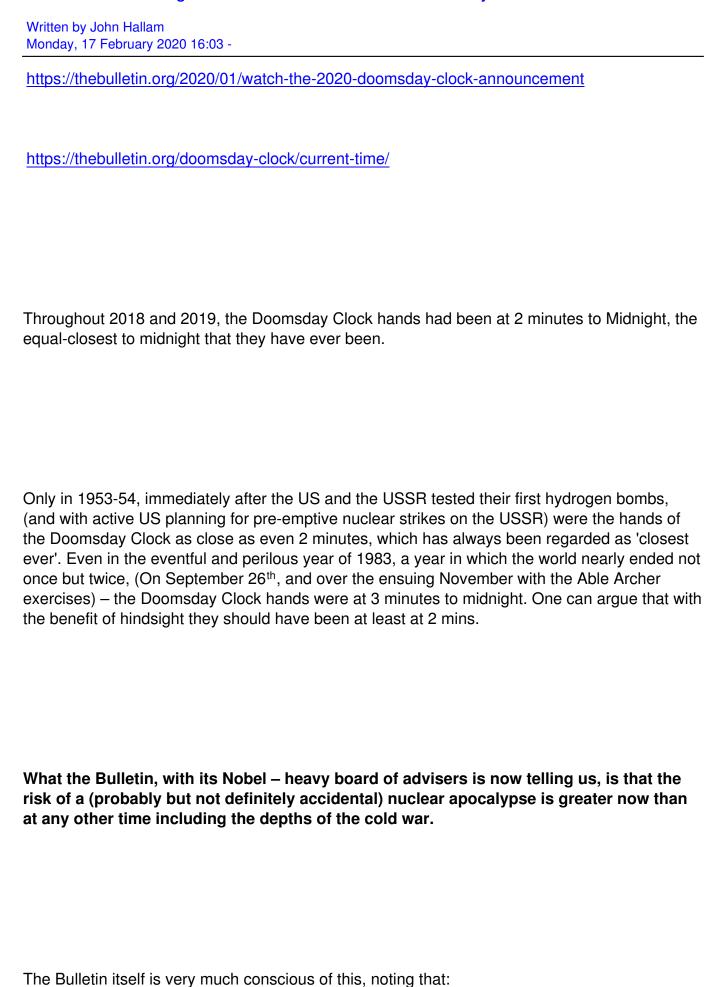
100 SECONDS TO MIDNIGHT

Written by John Hallam	
Monday, 17 February 2020	16:03

MEMO TO UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY/NPT 2020 REVIEW CONFERENCE

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erting, improved or resumed Mil to mil provocative military exercises and





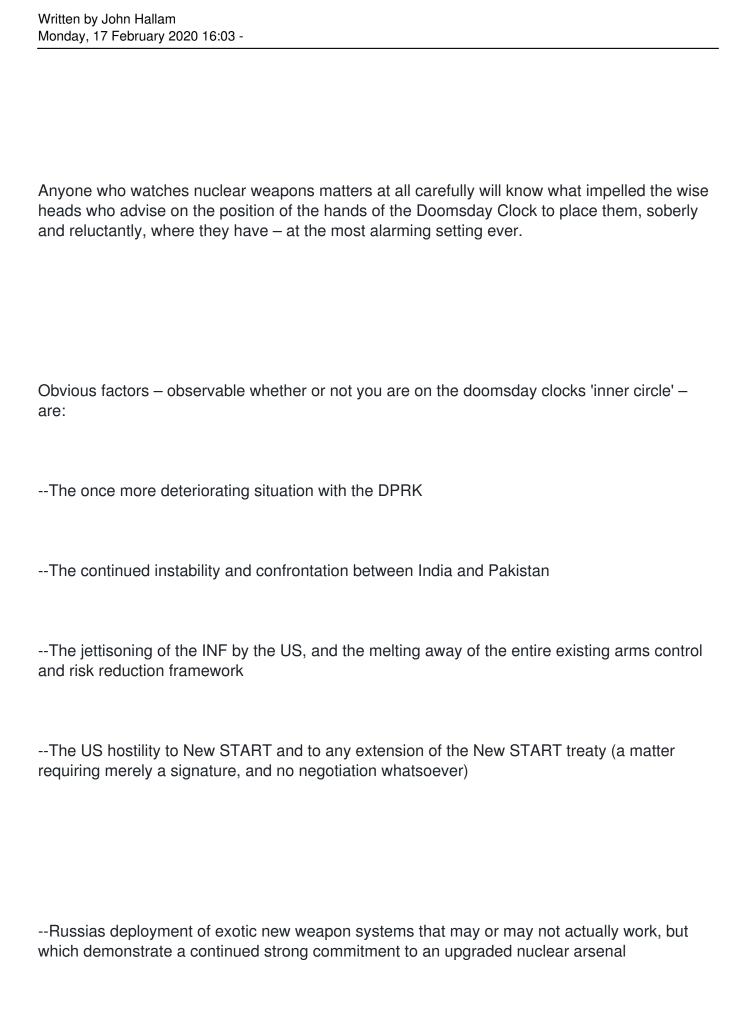
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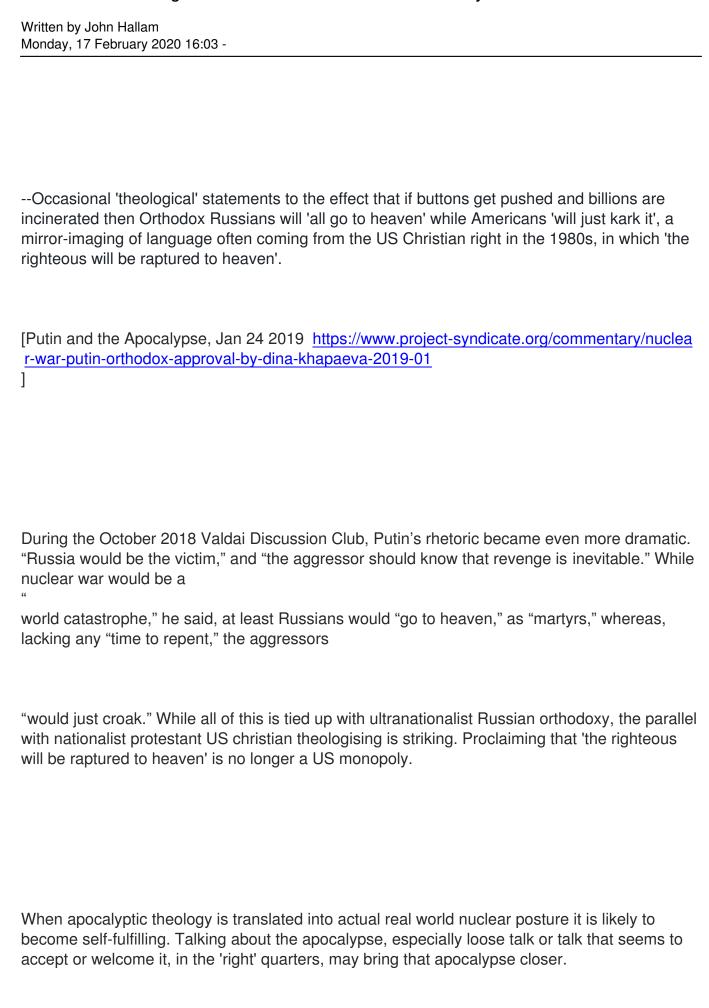
"To say the world is nearer to doomsday today than during the Cold War—when the United States and Soviet Union had tens of thousands more nuclear weapons than they now possess— is to make a profound assertion that demands serious explanation. After much deliberation, the members of the Science and Security Board have concluded that the complex technological threats the world faces are at least as dangerous today as they were last year and the year before, when we set the Clock at two minutes to midnight (as close as it had ever been, and the same setting that was announced in 1953, after the United States and the Soviet Union tested their first thermonuclear weapons)."[emphasis mine]

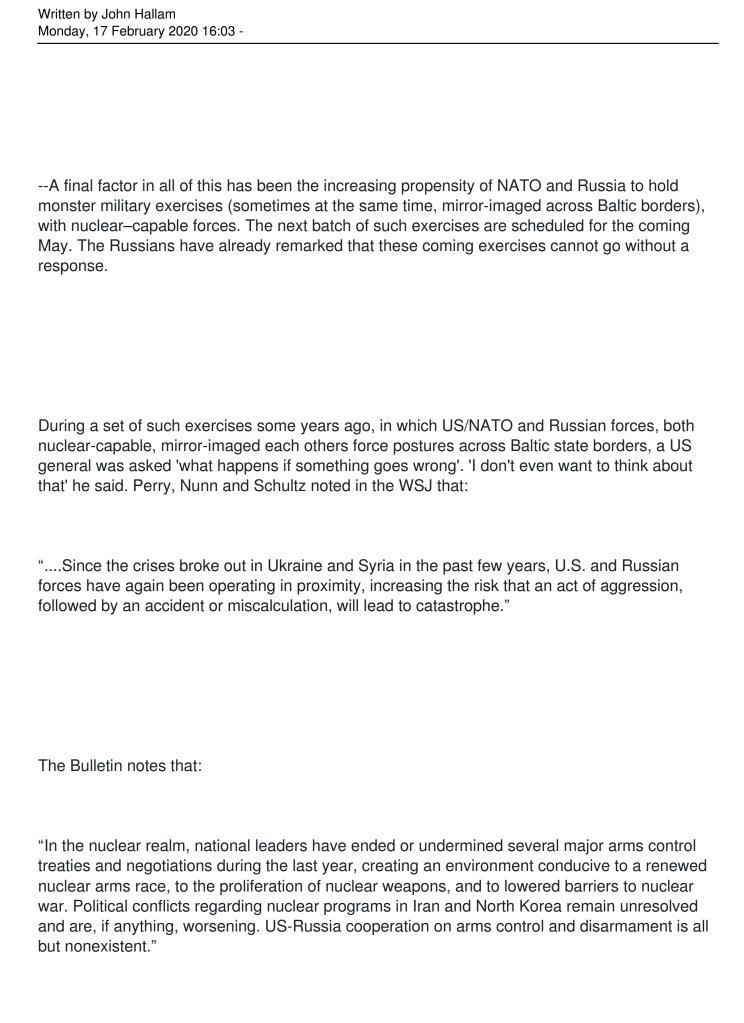
Astonishingly, some commentators have attempted to ridicule and marginalize the clock. This reflects, I think, on the ignorance and prejudice of those who make the comment and not on the clock.

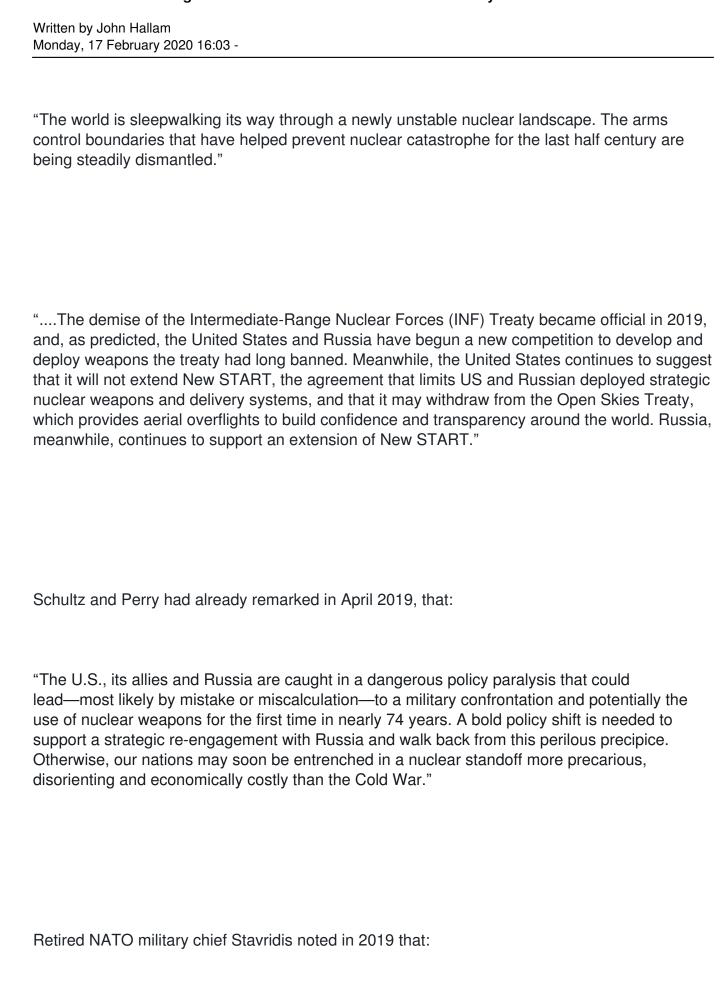
Contrary to what is implied by critics, the clock hands are set after prolonged discussion amongst some of the world's best qualified if not THE best qualified people to form judgements about the likelihood of nuclear war and the severity of climate change. These judgements may not be absolutely perfect and some of them might have been tweaked with hindsight, but they are made soberly and carefully by people who spend their lives thinking about these issues. No better judgement, no more reliable evaluation of the global nuclear security situation, exists.

In this case the clock hands were unveiled by someone who will be very well known to anyone who has spent much time in the UN, namely former UN Secy-General Ban Ki Moon. Extended commentary was given by another figure well known in the UN namely Mary Robinson, former President of Ireland and undersecretary-general for human rights. Detailed commentary by members of a board of experts.









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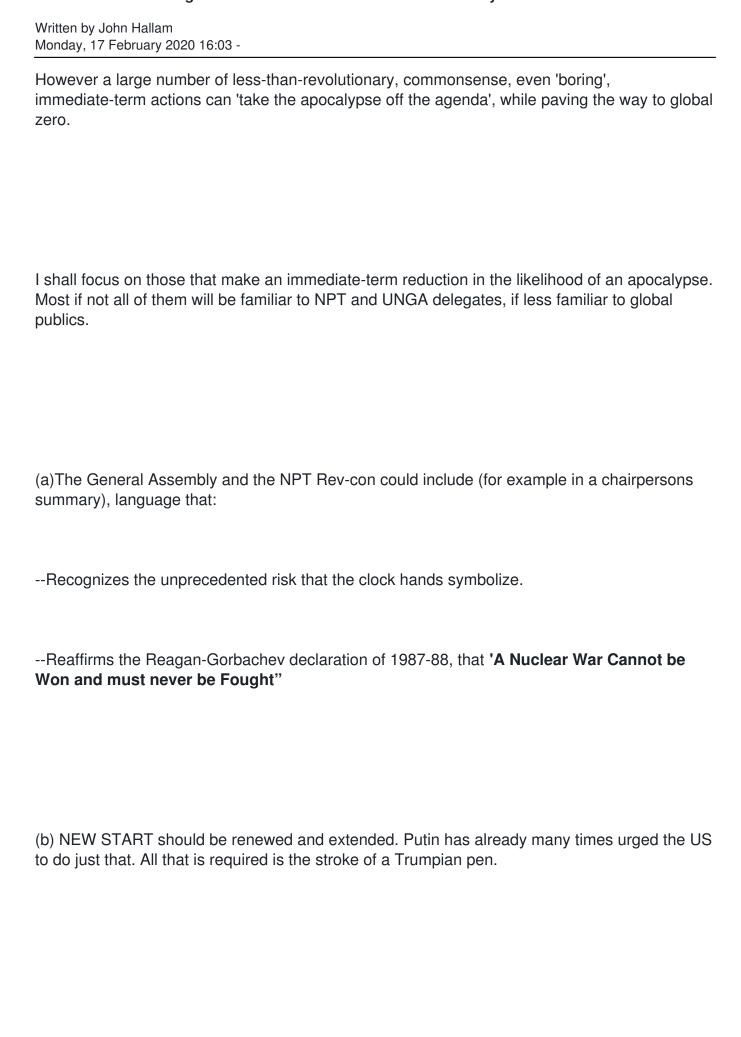
"We are in danger of stumbling backward into a Cold War that is to no one's advantage," he said in an email exchange. "Without steady, political-level engagement between the defense establishments, the risk of a true new Cold War rises steadily."

The bottom – line in all of this however, is an increasing carelessness about nuclear weapons, and an increasing willingness to at least contemplate their use – a willingness that finds material expression in the deployment of the latest 'mini' 'tactical' nuclear weapon , the W76-2 – on the USS Tennessee. The deployment of any kind of 'tactical' nuke (of any size) on an SLBM makes no sense whatsoever, and serves to blur the line between 'war-fighting' (which still makes some kind of warped sense), and a spasm of city-destruction.

The recognition that the hands are as close as they now are – the recognition that the risk of an (accidental or otherwise) apocalypse is **AS GREAT AS IT HAS EVER BEEN, EVER,** – surely demands attention and action from the Governments of the world, whether assembled as UNGA (esp First Cttee) or as the 2020 NPT Review Conference.

This placement of the clock hands says business as usual is not an option.

Above all it shows the critical importance of the elimination of nuclear weapons.



Written by John Hallam Monday, 17 February 2020 16:03 -(c) A series of risk reduction measures should be implemented. These include: --No First Use --Lowering of operational readiness of nuclear weapons systems/increased presidential decision-making time. --Improved or restored mil-to-mil communication --Implementation of the 1998 (and multiple times reaffirmed) US-Russian agreement to establish a joint data exchange centre (JDEC). --Avoidance of massive military exercises of a potentially provocative nature especially with nuclear-capable forces and especially where these may be 'mirrored' on the other side of the border. The exercises planned for May should be cancelled. --Avoidance of language or statements that might cause opposite numbers to assume that the apocalypse is being seriously contemplated and/or prepared for. Statements that in the event of the unthinkable the 'righteous' (Russian orthodox or US protestant) will be 'raptured to heaven', if made by senior policymakers, are decidedly unhelpful, indicating a willingness to countenance universal destruction – omnicide. So are more 'secular' statements or 'warnings' that 'we have powerful nuclear forces', or that this or that action will be met with a 'befitting response'. This

kind of language serves merely to up the ante. De-escalation starts first of all with talk, and

proceeds to weapons posture.

