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EDITORIAL

81 Years Later: Humanity at a Crossroads

May 10—May 8 in the West, and May 9 in Russia, marked the 81st anniversary of the victory over fascism in Europe in World War II. Though a distant event for many alive today, much of today's world was formed in its wake, including the current UN-centered order—despite the attempt to corrupt it with the barbaric dropping of the atomic bomb. Nations and civilizations are often shaped by history-altering events. In this case, the events of 1933-45 were so monumental that their resolution transformed all those who survived; the principles upon which a new world was built were viscerally and irreversibly transmitted to all future generations with the key lesson being: Learn from this so that humanity never again is forced to repeat this horror.

Yet, 81 years later, the structures of this architecture are buckling, and many of its core principles are being ignored.

In the run-up to Victory Day this year, German police announced that no Russian or Soviet flags or insignia commemorating the Allied victory in 1945 would be allowed near the war memorials in Berlin. Likewise, any singing of the famous Soviet military songs and marches was prohibited. This is occurring as NATO countries, and Germany in particular, are undergoing the largest military buildup since 1945—specifically targeted against Russia. Even worse, they are fostering the growth of neo-Nazi sentiments within a growing faction in Ukraine, and in other parts of Europe.

In Southwest Asia, Israel has been allowed to sidestep the pledge of "Never Again!" in the case of Gaza and Palestine, presiding over a genocide that is now spreading into Lebanon. Their actions have destroyed another of the inviolable principles established at the close of World War II—all while receiving military supplies and support from leading Western nations.

The U.S.-Israeli war against Iran, now stretching into its tenth disastrous week, shows the erosion of another inviolable principle—that of no wars of aggression. The final judgement at the Nuremberg Military Tribunal in 1946 declared the following regarding wars of aggression: "War is essentially an evil thing. Its consequences are not confined to the belligerent states alone, but affect the whole world. To initiate a war of aggression, therefore, is not only an international crime; *it is the supreme international crime,* differing only from other war crimes in that it contains within itself the accumulated evil of the whole." (emphasis added)

It shouldn't be surprising, therefore, given the historic amnesia dominating the West, as expressed by the above examples, that the world is careening toward another world war more quickly than at any time over the last 81 years.

These principles by themselves don't constitute a comprehensive approach to solving the world's crises today. But a civilization and people that forget them are

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doomed to disaster.

The challenge posed 81 years ago remains unresolved, and humanity today stands at a crossroads: Will we overcome the disease of imperial geopolitics and instead establish a world committed to the common aims of all?

An initial breakthrough in this direction has just come in the form of a bill introduced into the U.S. House of Representatives on May 5 to halt all funding for U.S. President Donald Trump's illegal war against Iran—H.R. 8707. Currently, there are 18 members of the U.S. Congress who have added their names, indicating that much more work needs to be done. Nonetheless, it is a major breakthrough from a Congress that has largely been remiss in its constitutional responsibilities.