

IN THE NEWS

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World News

In 1994, on behalf of the United States, President Bill Clinton signed the Budapest Memorandum that requires the US to provide security assurances to the Ukraine in exchange for abandoning nuclear weapons [1]. Expectedly, once Russia took control of the Crimea, the Ukraine called on the US to honor its commitment [2]. In responding to the crisis the US is trying to calm other countries alarmed at Russian events. For instance, Vice President Biden went to Poland but expressed no plans to reverse the US decision to reduce a missile defense capability facing Russia [3].

In anticipation of Western sanctions, it appears Russia withdrew significant funds out of US treasury debt [4]. After freeing money that could have been frozen by sanctions; Russian President Vladimir Putin signed a treaty that annexed the Crimea into Russia [5]. Concurrently, reports indicate Russia is massing its military on the Ukrainian border [6]. The Russians are also reported to be taking over Ukrainian military facilities located in the new Russian territory [7]. In pointing out the obvious, one member of the Ukraine parliament is warning, his country may have to build nuclear weapons if the US and UK do not honor the pact to protect the Ukrainian border [8]. Once again, Russia teaches us the need for a strong nuclear weapons capability. Case in point, an anchor at Russian RT News stated, Russia is the only country capable of turning the US to radioactive ash [9]. Meanwhile, two Senators asked the GAO to investigate why the US State Department withheld information regarding Russian nuclear weapons treaty violations [10]. Nevertheless, the US is allowing Russian inspectors to verify reductions in the number of American nuclear weapons [11].

The real player in responding to the Russia and Ukraine crisis may be China. Readers may recall, last year China placed the Ukraine under its nuclear umbrella [12]. With Russia carving out part of the Ukraine, it is unclear what China's reaction will be. We note that China and Russia did have border fighting back in 1969 [13]. What's more, back in 1979, China invaded Vietnam as punishment for attacking its ally, Cambodia [14]. It remains to be seen what China's response will be should the Ukraine conflict continue to escalate.

The US is not only backing away from commitments made to the Ukraine but also to Asian allies. For example, the US let Japan know that it does not want to get involved with its dispute with China over contested islands [15]. In a further sign of South China Sea trouble, China prevented a Philippines ship attempting to resupply troops on one of the contested islands [16].

1. Nelson, Jack, Los Angeles Times, *Ukraine Agrees to Give Up Its Nuclear Arsenal*, January 11, 1994
2. Alexander, Harriet, The Telegraph, *Ukraine pleads for Britain and US*

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Security

Hacking of university computers continues. Johns Hopkins University becomes the latest hacker victim with 1,300 affected [1].

Once again, it's time to look at security software patches. The latest Mi-

crosoft release fixes 23 security bugs; including one zero-day vulnerability [2]. Then Apple's latest patch corrects 41 bugs [3]. Finally, Adobe released patches to fix 2 bugs [4].

The cost of security continues an upward trajectory.

One study estimates the 2014 costs due to security breaches and malware will be \$491 billion [5].

1. Carman, Ashley, SC Magazine, *Johns Hopkins University web server breached; up to 1,300*

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Special points of interest:

- Russia annexes Crimea

*It is weakness rather than
wickedness which renders
men unfit to be trusted
with unlimited power—
John Adams*

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- affected, March 7, 2014.
2. Walker, Danielle, SC Magazine, *Microsoft's Patch Tuesday release fixes 23 bugs, including IE zero-day*, March 11, 2014.
 3. Walker, Danielle, SC

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- Magazine, *Apple's iOS 7.1 fixes 41 bugs, including numerous Webkit flaws*, March 11, 2014.
4. Colón, Marcos, SC Magazine, *Adobe releases patches for two bugs affecting its Flash Player*, March 11, 2014.
 5. Robinson, Teri, SC Magazine, *Breaches, malware to cost \$491 billion in 2014, study says*, March 20, 2014.

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- to come to its rescue as Russia accused of 'invasion', February 28, 2014.
3. Wilson, Scott, Washington Post, *Biden in Europe to reassure U.S. allies over Russia's moves in Ukraine*, March 18, 2014
 4. Earle, Geoff New York Post, *\$100B withdrawal from US Treasury bills hints at Russian move*, March 15, 2014.
 5. White, Gregory L., Wall Street Journal, *Russia's Putin Signs Treaty to Annex Crimea*, March 18, 2014.
 6. Washington Free Beacon, *Russian Troops, Tanks Massing Near Ukraine's Eastern Border*, March 13, 2014.
 7. Hille, Kathrin, Financial Times, *Russian forces occupy Ukrainian Navy HQ in Sevastopol*, March 18, 2014.
 8. Dorell, Oren, USA Today, *Ukraine may have to go nuclear, says Kiev lawmaker*, March 11, 2014.
 9. Washington Free Beacon, RT Anchor: *Russia Capable of Blasting U.S. Into 'Radioactive Dust'*, March 17, 2014.
 10. Gertz, Bill, Washington Free Beacon, *Failure to Report*, March 21, 2014.
 11. Gertz, Bill, Washington Free Beacon, *Russian Inspectors to Check U.S. Nuclear Cuts Amid Ukraine Crisis*, March 17, 2014.
 12. Yu, Miles, Washington Times, *Inside China: Ukraine gets nuclear umbrella*, December 12, 2013.
 13. Ignatius, Adi, Time, *Clashing With the Soviet Ex-Master*, September 27, 1999.
 14. Blanchard, Ben, Reuters, *China downplays anniversary of Vietnam border war*, February 17, 2009.
 15. Kubo, Nobuhiro, et. al., Reuters, *Japan, U.S. differ on China in talks on 'grey zone' military threats*, March 9, 2014.
 16. Teves, Oliver, AP, *Philippines Protests China Stopping Troop Resupply*, March 11, 2014.

Terrorism

Syria continues to be a problematic area that fosters terrorist activities. For example, the Syrian government displayed a car bomb factory recently captured [1]. What's more, there is a potential to drag Turkey into the war in Syria. For example, Turkey warned rebels to expect retaliation if there is any attack on the tomb of Suleyman Shah, grandfather of the founder of the Ottoman Empire [2]. Additionally, Israel bombed several targets within Syria following a roadside bomb attack by Syrian based terrorists [3].

It is looking more likely that terrorism will once again dominate Afghanistan once the US withdraws. Case in point, a suicide bomber riding a rickshaw detonated his explosives at a checkpoint killing at least 17 people [4]. Then another suicide bomber killed at least 10 police and one civilian [5]. Finally, terrorists killed at least 9 people in a gun attack at a hotel in Kabul [6].

In Asia, the missing Malaysia

Airlines Boeing 777-200ER that disappeared on March 8 with 239 passengers and crew; is being investigated as a hijacking [7] China assessed the list of passengers and found no links to terrorists [8]. The most troubling evidence to date is that two Iranians were on the flight using passports stolen in Thailand [9].

1. The Daily Star (Lebanon), Syria shows off car-bomb assembly site, March 18, 2014.
2. Jones, Gareth, Reuters, Turkey vows to protect Ottoman tomb in northern Syria from rebels, March 14, 2014.
3. Washington Free Beacon, Israeli Air Force Strikes Syria After Bomb Wounds Four Soldiers, March 19, 2014.
4. Faiez, Rahim, AP, Suicide Bomber Kills at Least 17 in Afghanistan, March 18, 2014.
5. Fox News, Taliban attack against Afghan police kills 11, March 20, 2014.
6. BBC News, Nine killed in Kabul hotel gun attack, March 21, 2014.
7. Ananthalakshmi, A., Reuters, Malaysia rejects criticism of lack of cooperation in plane search, March 18, 2014.
8. Brummitt, Chris, AP, China finds no terror link to its nationals on jet, March 18, 2014.
9. Dokson, Thanyarat, AP, Missing plane throws spotlight on passport theft, March 17, 2014.

*People sleep peaceably in
their beds at night only
because rough men stand
ready to do violence on
their behalf—George*

Orwell

Economy

The weak economy continues to ravage American business. For instance, the 400 Italian restaurant chain, Sbarro LLC has filed for bankruptcy [1]. Then Quiznos filed for bankruptcy protection [2]. According to the Labor Department, the number of first time unemployment claims for the week ending March 8 was 315,000 [3]. Then for the

following week, the number reported was 320,000 [4].

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2. Kosman, Josh, New York Post, *Fortress poised to get biggest stake in bankrupt Quiznos*, March 14, 2014
3. Chandra, Shobhana, *Jobless Claims in U.S. Fall to Lowest Level Since November*, Bloomberg, March 13, 2014.
4. Boak, Josh, AP/AC News, *Applications for US Jobless Aid Rose Slightly*, March 20, 2014.

*Politics is war without
bloodshed while war is
politics with bloodshed—
Mao Tse-Tung*

China Pollution

Given the massive pollution problem; it's getting hard to encourage people to work in China. In response, the Japanese company Panasonic will pay its workers compensation for China's air pollution [1].

Currently, First lady Michelle Obama is in China [2]. We hope water, air, and soil pollu-

tion will be a topic of discussion. At the very least, the first lady will observe the ecological consequences of massive export of US industry to China. Perhaps this will result in fair trade policies.

1. BBC News, *Panasonic to pay China workers pollution compensation*, March 12, 2014.
2. Time, *Michelle Obama Tours Beijing With China's First Lady*, March 21, 2014.