

A club in which membership comes with strings attached

Globally, it's a very exclusive club that counts nine nations, including one whose populace might as well be living in the Dark Ages.

In terms of landmass, the club members range from the largest in the world (6.6 million square miles) to one of the smallest (8,019 square miles), defying the age-old standard that size matters.

Population wise, the club sports the two most populous nations in the world (1.43 billion and 1.38 billion) as well as one ranking (at 8.6 million) with the likes of New York City.

The rush to join the club began in earnest after World War II, which came to a merciful end on September 2, 1945 when aboard a U.S. Navy ship anchored in Tokyo Bay peace was officially proclaimed.

Before long, the one founding member of the club would be joined by four others – several by surreptitious means – over the span of two decades, setting the stage for four more to join from 1974 to 2006.

The club, not surprisingly, includes the United States, its standard-bearer. Other members, in terms of succession, are Russia, the United Kingdom, France, China, India, Pakistan, Israel, and North Korea – with Iran eagerly waiting in the wings.

Collectively, they comprise the so-called Nuclear Club, possessing an estimated 16,000 nuclear weapons, some 4,300 of which are said to be deployed with operational forces, according to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute.

By all accounts, the club also has five auxiliary members in the form of Turkey, Italy, Belgium, Germany, and the Netherlands, nations that to varying

degrees serve as host sites for nuclear weaponry on behalf of NATO.

How to keep the club from expanding further has been a particularly nettlesome problem for the past 20 years, as several rogue nations and global terrorist groups have threatened to develop or somehow acquire nuclear weaponry to advance their political and military agendas.

Stopping the spread, of course, is just part of a much larger problem, one that revolves around Russia's continued threats to turn its invasion of Ukraine into a seismic nuclear event should conventional military means fall short of their objectives. In recent months, the nuclear threat has been coupled with just-as-deadly promises to introduce chemical weapons onto the Ukrainian battlefield, in yet another terrifying tactic employed by Vladimir Putin.

For all of Putin's evil and ill intentions, he may well be remembered not as the man who restored Russia to its former glory, but instead as the spark who lit the flame under the long dormant anti-nuclear movement, which for years has been the proverbial voice in the wilderness, sounding alarm bells that have gone unanswered.

Putin's desire for conquest has been met with global condemnation, setting in motion various plans from around the world to curb the use of weapons of mass destruction, including our efforts at the Primerus™ Foundation.

When we launched the foundation last year, we did so with the lofty goal of making a difference in how the world views the nuclear menace that has the



power to render the earth uninhabitable.

Our aims over the past year began by creating an internal awareness of the world's most pressing problem, and then by developing a strategy for stating our case to a global audience that has the power and influence to sway doubters and skeptics.

There are those who may believe we are crying wolf, likening us to the young shepherd tending his flock who, lonely and fearful, uttered calls for help against a stalking predator.

In this case, we are anything but. Instead, we are in the beginning stages of offering a call to action to help us all avoid nuclear peril. How quickly we can accomplish that goal may well shape the future of a new world order.

Best regards,
Jack Buchanan, President