

TOP THREE FLASHPOINTS

Ukraine, Reserve Currency, and Israel vs. Iran Update
Trouble is brewing – an earth-shaking crisis will occur soon...

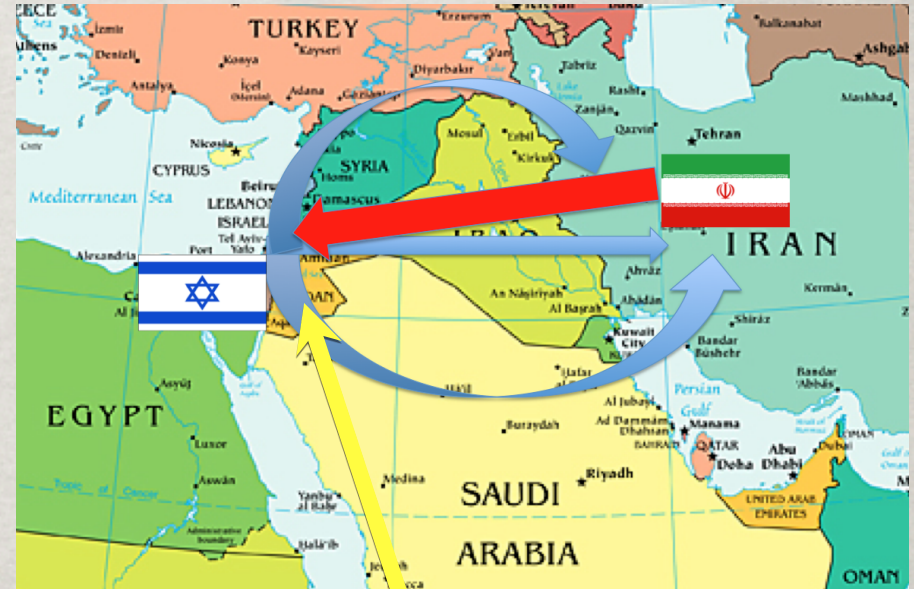
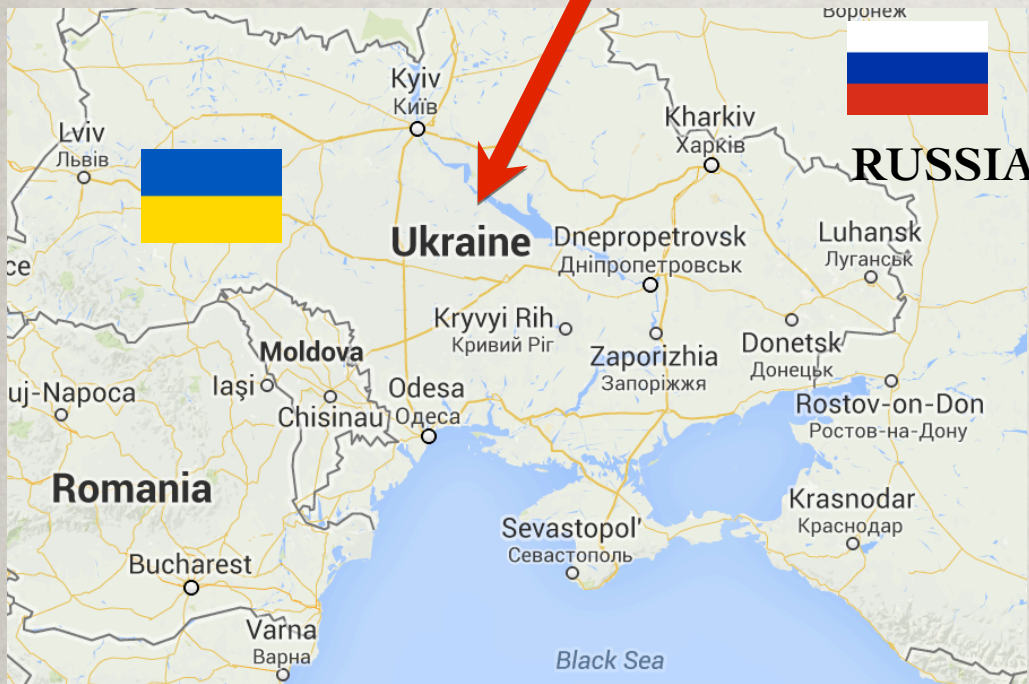
As of 2014-04-02

By John Antal



FlashPoints is a bi-monthly update on the most critical national security issues facing the United States. Author and military expert John Antal will provide you with insights and a quick synopsis of the top three flash points in the world at the time of each report. FlashPoints will list the greatest danger to the USA, and then list risks of medium and serious danger. Keep abreast of the latest impending international crisis by reviewing FlashPoints

1. Ukraine



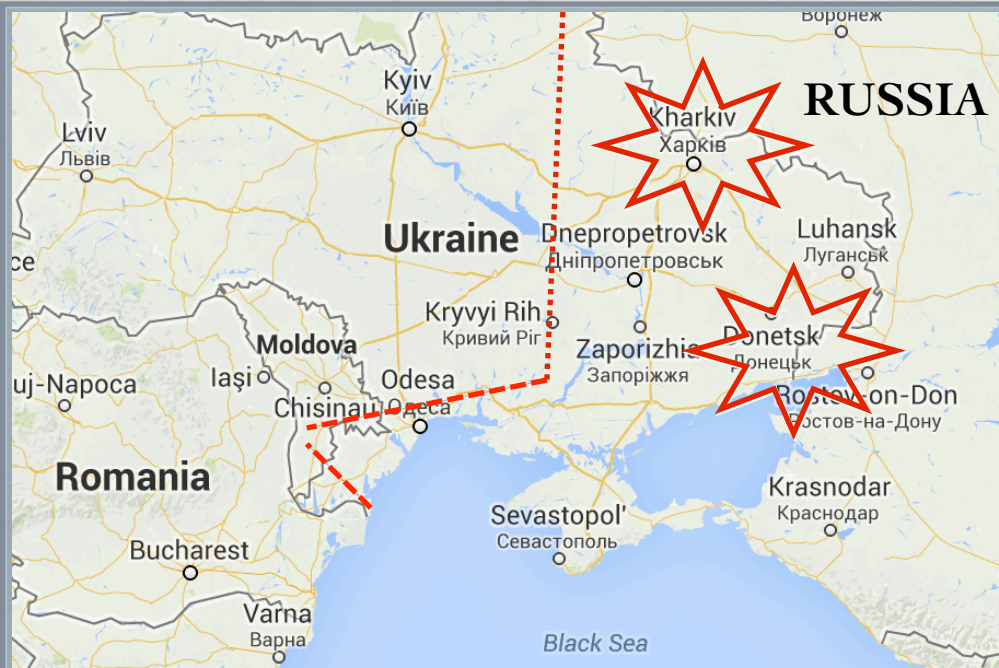
3. Israel vs. Iran update



2. Reserve Currency \$\$

1. Ukraine

Russia will cause unrest in Ukraine and may invade.

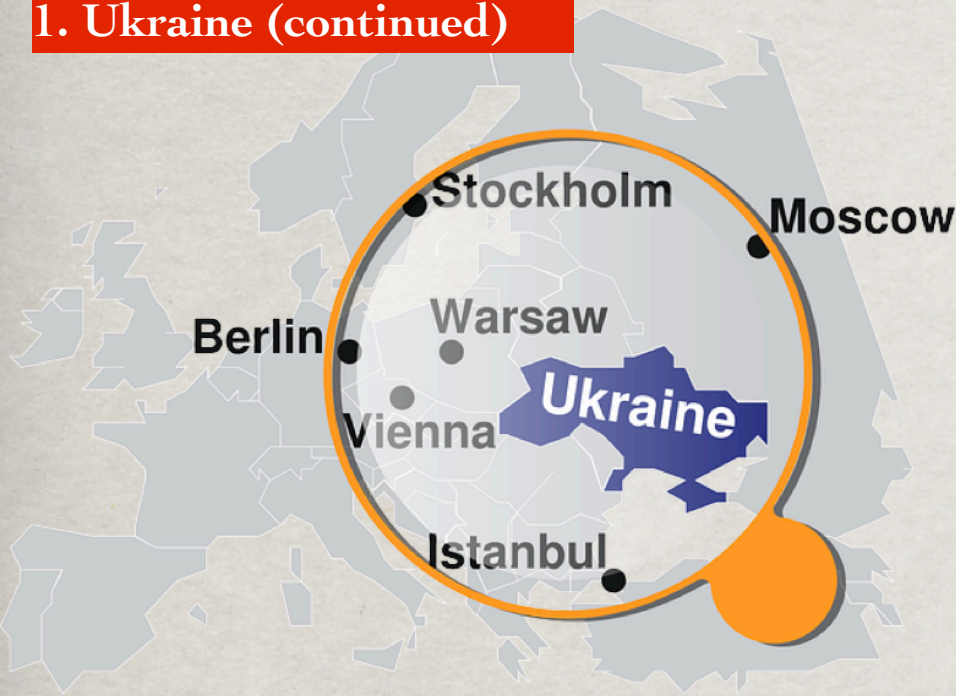


“There is no intention in Moscow to send its troops into eastern Ukraine.” Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov, Russian Foreign Minister, March 29, 2014.

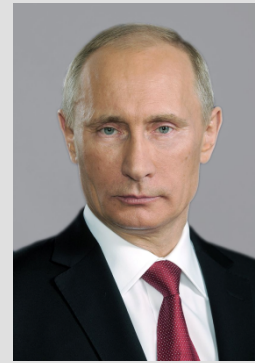
1. Putin is emboldened by his success in Crimea.
2. Ethnic Russians in Eastern Ukraine are asking for his support and provide a pretext for a Russian invasion.
3. Russian propaganda is working overtime to show that the Ukrainian Government in Kiyv (Kiev) is controlled by “Fascists” and is incapable of protecting ethnic Russians and Jews.
4. Russian GRU agents have already infiltrated Ukraine and are setting the conditions for a successful invasion.
5. Between 40,000 and 100,000 Russian troops are massed on the Russian-Ukrainian border and can attack on Putin’s order.

Analysis: It seems that Putin can act with military force in the Ukraine whenever he wants. A Russian attack on Ukraine would most likely be a blitzkrieg style attack (ground, air, sea, special operations and cyber) that will overwhelm and disarm the Ukrainian armed forces as rapidly and as bloodlessly as possible. Some Ukrainian units will go over to the Russians. Some may fight. The big question is if Putin’s forces will seize all of Russia and the Transnistria area of Moldova, or just the eastern half of Ukraine in order to have a land bridge to Crimea. If Putin intent is to secure all of Ukraine, the attack will most likely happen soon and before May 25, the date of the Ukrainian election. The objective of this attack would then place the ousted President, Viktor Yanukovich, back in power.

1. Ukraine (continued)



CNN: April 1, 2014: NATO suspended "all practical civilian and military cooperation" with Russia because of its annexation of Crimea and said that it has seen no sign that Moscow was withdrawing troops from the Ukrainian border.



Vladimir Putin

“It is also obvious that there is no legitimate executive authority in Ukraine now, nobody to talk to. Many government agencies have been taken over by the impostors, but they do not have any control in the country, while they themselves - and I would like to stress this - are often controlled by radicals. In some cases, you need a special permit from the militants on Maidan to meet with certain ministers of the current government. This is not a joke - this is reality.” Putin in a speech on March 19, 2014 at the Kremlin.

2. Reserve Currency \$\$



1. The US Dollar is the reserve currency of the world which anchors the global financial system.
2. One of the reasons the US has maintained global freedom of the seas, and has been involved in numerous conflicts in the past 60 years, is to support the role of the USA as the keeper of the reserve currency. It is our burden to bear.
3. As the reserve currency, the dollar becomes the standard for international transactions that allows the United States government and US Americans to borrow at lower costs, granting us an advantage in excess of \$100 billion per year.
4. Russia's Vladimir Putin wants to change this by replacing the US dollar with some other currency – the Chinese Yuan (renminbi) -- or a super-sovereign reserve currency.
5. In spite of Russia's ideas of a super-sovereign currency, the US dollar remains the reserve currency and **oil is priced in dollars**. The dollar is often called the “petro-dollar” since international transactions occur in US dollars.
6. If the US dollar loses its reserve currency status, the effect would be catastrophic to the US economy. As the US debt increases, and the US withdraws from the world, the argument intensifies to replace the dollar with something else. Russia is leading the charge to replace the dollar as the reserve currency. Former KGB Agent, Vladimir Putin, sees this as a way to destroy the US.
7. On March 19, 2014 the US and EU slapped sanctions on select Russian oligarchs and a Russian bank. Sanctions are an act of war, but the US and EU act as if these sanctions are merely “banking fines.” Russia, and Putin, may view these sanctions very differently.

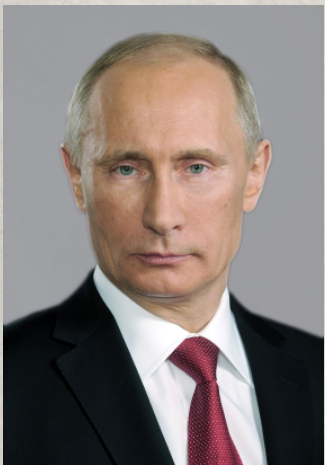
2. Reserve Currency \$\$ (Continued)



8. On March 4, 2014, Sergei Glazyev, a senior adviser to Putin and a leader in the Russian Rodina Party, declared that if the United States imposes sanctions on Russia over Ukraine, Moscow might be forced to drop the dollar as a reserve currency and refuse to pay off loans to U.S. banks.

9. "China's Yuan (renminbi) may become a third reserve currency in the world in the future, Managing Director and Chief Economist of [Russia's] investment company Sberbank CIB Yevgeny Gavrilenko said at the 15th governmental Chinese economic development forum in the Chinese capital on Sunday." March 23, 2014. Russian ITAR-TASS News Agency.

10. **Look for Russia demanding Chinese Yuan - not dollars -- for Russian oil in the winter of 2014...** especially if Russia invades Ukraine. This will be Russia's economic weapon against the US.



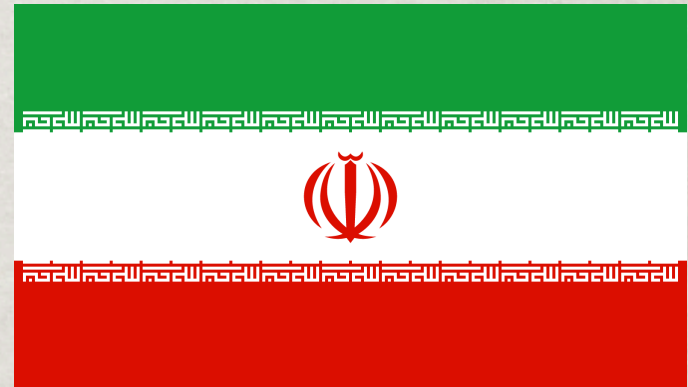
Vladimir Putin

Putin is urging the world to abandon the dollar and is willing to use the oil wealth of Russia to damage the US economy. Russia supplies 66% of the gas exported to Europe and the pipelines run through Ukraine. If Putin declares that he will not accept US dollars for gas, this will be a direct attack on the US dollar as the reserve currency.

3. Israel vs. Iran update



VS



Israel – Iran Crisis Update

While the world is focused on Ukraine and the lost Malaysian airliner, the Israelis are still worried about Iran. To complicate matters, the US policy to keep Iran from developing nuclear weapons depends largely on US-Russian cooperation.

Israel – Iran Crisis Update

1. Israeli and Iranian rhetoric is ramping up as the Iran nuclear talks continue. The Israeli Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, reported on January 28, 2014 that **Iran is “six weeks from a nuclear weapon.”** *JewishPress.com*
2. “A senior Iranian Revolutionary Guard commander said Tuesday the Islamic Republic was prepared and keeping a finger “on the trigger” to attack and destroy Israel at any time given the need.” *The Jerusalem Post, March 1, 2014.*
3. As of Tuesday, March 3, 2014, **Israel closed its embassies and consulates** world wide – due to an unprecedented strike by Israeli diplomats. The official website of the Embassy of Israel to the United States reads, as of April 1, 2014: “Israel's diplomatic corps was left with no other choice but to ratchet up its year-long labor dispute with the Ministry of Finance, after the latter caused the failure of a seven-month mediation process led by the former Chief Justice of the Labor Court.”
4. Israel stopped and seized a ship that carried an Iranian arms shipment destined for militants in Gaza on March 10, 2014. **Netanyahu stressed that Iran must not have nuclear weapons.**
5. “Iran has pursued a longstanding effort to buy banned components for its nuclear and missile programs in recent months, a U.S. official said on Sunday, a period when it struck an interim deal with major powers to limit its disputed atomic activity.” As reported by Vann Van Diepen, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for International Security and Non-Proliferation, in Reuters March, 16, 2014

6. Russia has agreed to build at least two more 1,000 MW nuclear power plants next to the first (and only Iranian one) at Bushehr Iran. March 13, 2014 Iranvajahan.net
7. “The second round of talks between Iran and six world powers over Iran’s nuclear program ended Wednesday [March 19, 2014] with all parties expressing satisfaction with the discussions, which were the most detailed so far on each of the main issues dividing them.” March 19, 2014 New York Times
8. “Russia Hints at Using Iran Talks as Leverage,concern is growing that the escalating animosity between the United States and Russia over the Ukraine crisis could have a corrosive effect on the nuclear talks with Iran.” March 20, 2014, New York Times.
9. “Iran is building a nonworking mock-up of an American nuclear-powered aircraft carrier that United States officials say may be intended to be blown up for propaganda value.” March 20, 2014 New York Times.
10. On March 28, 2014: “Israel recently went public with their fears that the Lebanese based terrorist group Hezbollah was preparing to use UAVs obtained from Iran for attacks on Israel.”
11. In early March 2014 Netanyahu orders IDF to prepare for possible strike on Iran during 2014.
 - **“Despite talks between Iran and West, senior officers tell MKs 10b shekels (\$2.9b) allocated to IDF to prepare for possible attack.”** Haaretz, March 19, 2014
 - The IDF has received “a clear directive from government officials from the political echelon – meaning Netanyahu and Ya’alon – to continue readying for a possible independent strike by Israel on the Iranian nuclear sites, regardless of the talks now happening between Iran and the West...” Haaretz, March 19, 2014

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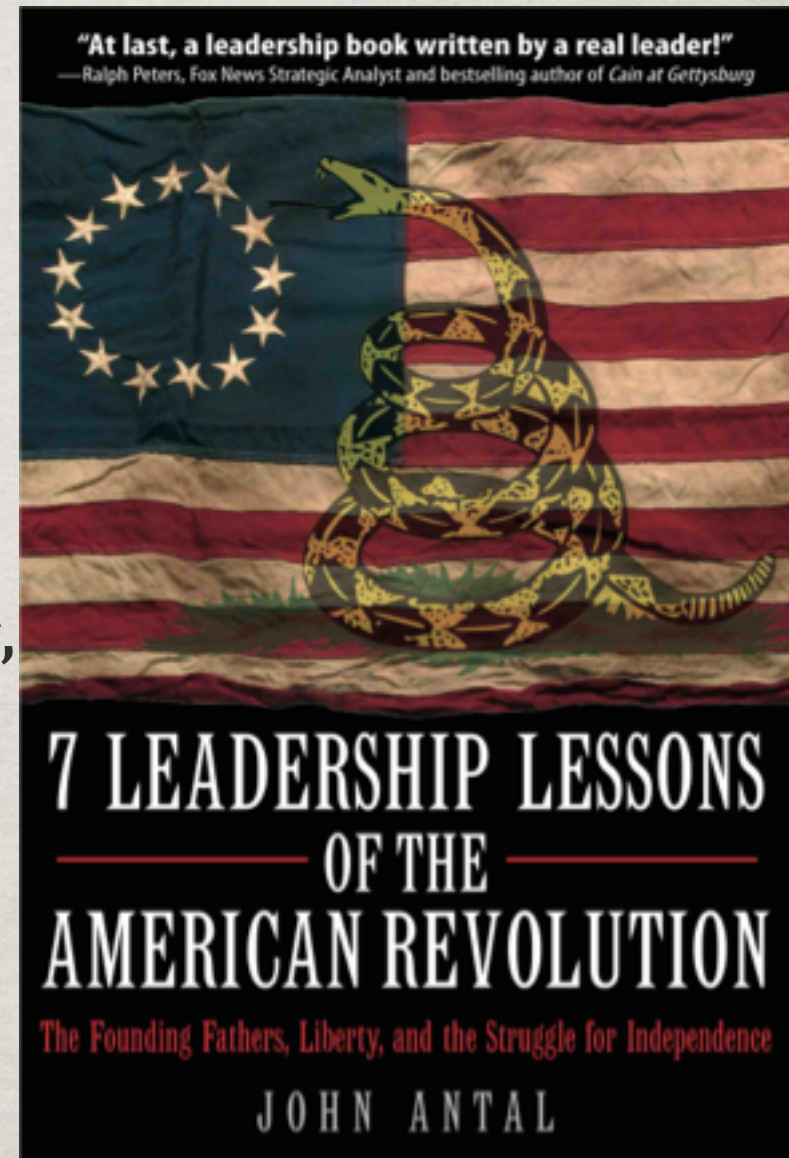
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Some more Reviews of 7 Leadership Lessons of the American Revolution

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“John Antal’s timely book, 7 Leadership Lessons of the American Revolution is succinctly written and easily understood. On the surface, it demonstrates how those who risked all to create this republic used specific leadership principles to overcome tremendous challenges in that endeavor. These same techniques are just as valid in this century as in theirs. Along the way, Antal paints these revolutionaries as living, breathing human beings with high-risk tasks to accomplish. But Antal’s study actually goes much farther – because behind his straightforward storytelling lies something much more important: an examination of what principles that leadership came from, and what principles it should serve. You’ll come away with the feeling that the founders of this country weren’t “historical figures” but living, breathing human beings with huge problems to solve, for which they used methods available to any one of us who cares to learn.”

Bradley Thompson, television writer and producer and the co-writer for the hit TV series’ Battlestar Galactica and the second season of Falling Skies.

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