

Lavrov Warns: Arab Autumn May Lead to Nuclear Winter

by Jeffrey Steinberg and Nancy Spannaus

Oct. 2—In a Sept. 25 interview with U.S. talk show host Charlie Rose, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov warned that the ongoing events in the Middle East, particularly the war drive against Syria and Iran, could lead to nuclear war. In answering a question about where the current unrest in the Arab world was leading, Lavrov referred to the escalating violence throughout the Middle East and North Africa as “Arab Autumn,” and then dropped his bomb: “Well, I hope it’s not going to the nuclear Winter”—a reference to the destruction of the Earth’s climate by a thermonuclear war.

Lavrov made the comments in response to repeated badgering by Rose over Russia’s refusal to join in the drive to overthrow Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, through outside military intervention, as was the case in 2011 in Libya. While Lavrov immediately tried to take edge off by saying he was speaking metaphorically, his remarks clearly shocked his host—and *were totally in line with the repeated warnings by the Russian leadership that the global drive for regime change being waged by the Obama Administration and its allies, is leading directly to thermonuclear confrontation.*

So far, the combined efforts of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, of the Russian political and military leadership, and of patriotic American circles, to prevent general war have succeeded. But, as Lyndon LaRouche has warned, until and unless Obama is removed from office for his high crimes and misdemeanors, the danger of thermonuclear extinction will loom large.

National Sovereignty Is Russia’s Red Line

Disclaimers aside, Foreign Minister Lavrov, one of Russia’s most seasoned diplomats, was clearly making a point. It is the same point that was made by Prime Minister Dmitri Medvedev in May of this year, at a forum on international law in St. Petersburg. Medvedev’s policy statement, virtually ignored in the major international press, merits repeating:

“Particularly dangerous, in my view, are unilateral actions made in violation of the fundamental principles of the Charter of the United Nations, which is the main venue where the international community brings its problems. In fact, this is the only venue we have, even though some may not like it. But it truly is the only venue. And we understand that the UN Charter calls for respecting the supreme power of law and the sovereignty of states.

“One more thing that I believe is important, considering my experience in politics, is the concept of state sovereignty. It should not be undermined even if for the sake of achieving some immediate political gain, including an election to a particular post. Such attempts threaten global order. There have been many recent examples of the concept of state sovereignty being undermined. Military operations against foreign states bypassing the United Nations, declarations of illegitimacy of certain political regimes on behalf of foreign states rather than the people of the country involved, and imposing various collective sanctions,



UN photo/JC McIlwaine

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov had one message to repeat at all his appearances in New York City the last week of September: Stick by the UN Charter, or else. Here, he speaks at the UN Security Council's meeting on Peace and Security in the Middle East on Sept. 26.

again bypassing international institutions, are some of them.

“This does not improve the situation in the world, while rash military interference in the affairs of another state usually results in radicals coming to power. *Such actions, which undermine state sovereignty, can easily lead to full-scale regional wars even—I am not trying to scare anyone here—with the use of nuclear weapons.* Everybody should remember this, especially when we analyse the concept of state sovereignty” (emphasis added).

All of Lavrov’s interventions around the UN General Assembly session, including his formal address last week, proceeded from this standpoint. He repeatedly emphasized Russia’s commitment to the Geneva agreement of June 30, in which the parties in Syria were to work out their differences through dialogue, despite the decision by the foreign-sponsored armed opposition and the Security Council not to endorse that agreement. “The number one priority is to save lives,” Lavrov insisted in his speeches and interview, but that is being undermined by foreign intervention by “our partners” for regime change, and by encouragement to the opposition to “keep fighting to the end.”

In the Rose interview, Lavrov effectively provided a lesson in international law, drawing on the conception of the United Nations which the man who inspired its

creation, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, had put forward.

“There is one very straightforward example,” he said. “There were several terrorist attacks against the Syrian government. Not only against the security headquarters but also against absolutely civilian sites, social infrastructure, health infrastructure.” A couple of times the Security Council condemned the attacks, but “as of a few months ago, our colleagues, including the United States, started refusing to condemn terrorist attacks against the Syrian government.... The reason given to us was that, exactly what you said: The regime is absolutely inhuman, and basically anything goes. This is a very scary position to justify terrorist attacks by anything. That was never acceptable to the United States.... I

believe this is a very slippery slope....”

Lavrov then drew the conclusion, as have Putin and Medvedev before him: This is a question of the UN Charter and international law. That also includes the right to veto, which, in fact, the United States itself had insisted upon at the founding of the United Nations.

In his speech before the General Assembly, Lavrov also singled out the so-called Responsibility to Protect doctrine as a threat to the entire global order. That is the Tony Blair doctrine of a new “liberal imperialism,” which the Obama Administration and its UN representative, Susan Rice, have pursued with a vengeance, starting particularly with the unconstitutional Libyan war.

But Obama et al. Are Moving Ahead

Despite these repeated Russian efforts to de-escalate the crisis spots, the Obama Administration, along with its British and French allies, is pressing toward confrontation in both Syria and Iran.

Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, who continues to mouth the Obama line that Syrian President Assad’s removal is the bottom line for all diplomacy, presided over a meeting of the so-called Friends of Syria on Sept. 28, at which she announced that the Obama Administration would be giving an additional \$45 million in non-lethal aid to the Syrian opposition, including \$15

million towards the training of an alternative “government in the wings” that does not yet exist.

The meeting was a pathetic gathering of 20 nations, dominated by the shared assessment that the internal conflict will not be settled soon. Indeed, the Assad government has now successfully repulsed two major assaults by the armed opposition on the key city of Aleppo, and there is no end in sight to hostilities. The usual suspects—Turkey, Saudi Arabia, and Qatar, with strong backing from Britain, France, and Germany—all pressed again for the United States to establish a no-fly zone—something the U.S. military leadership has forcefully intervened to veto.

The whole thrust of the meeting, however, was shifted, when Iraqi Foreign Minister Hoshyar Zebari presented a two-phase peace plan for Syria. The first phase simply involved implementing the very agreement that was signed at the Geneva meeting, hosted by Kofi Annan on June 30. The second phase involved convening a conference in a neutral country outside the Middle East, with the participation of the Assad government and all of the “legitimate” opposition groups, to hammer out a transition. Zebari insisted that there be no preconditions, such as the removal of Assad from

power. Following the meeting, Zebari met with Lavrov, who indicated to him that Russia would support his proposal.

On Iran, the Obama Administration signalled its warmongering intentions by the outrageous action of de-listing the MEK (Mujaheddin e-Khalq) from the U.S. terrorist list. Obama’s taking the group off the list of terrorists is an open endorsement of terrorism, wrote Richard Silverstein, a U.S.-based journalist with close ties to Israeli political, military, and intelligence officials who oppose war against Iran. Silverstein is right.

In a Sept. 24 column in Britain’s *Guardian*, Silverstein blasted Obama for his impending decision to take the MEK, a group that has assassinated U.S. diplomats and military officers, off the Treasury Department’s terrorism list. According to Silverstein’s Israeli sources, including a “former senior minister and IDF officer,” the Israeli Mossad has used the MEK to plant phony information about Iran’s nuclear program, and been involved in the assassination of “four nuclear scientists [in Iran] and caused the explosion that obliterated an Iranian Revolutionary Guard missile base.”


Obama’s giving the MEK a “seal of approval” shows that he has no commitment to using diplomacy with Iran, Silverstein argued.

U.S. War-Avoidance Moves

The Russian reiteration of the danger of general war and even thermonuclear war was echoed in the United States as well last week. On Sept. 28, *Foreign Policy* magazine published an article by historian Mark Perry, drawing heavily on interviews with U.S. military and intelligence figures, to expose Israeli plans to conduct an Entebbe-style commando raid on the nuclear enrichment facility at Fordow, Iran (see accompanying article).

A number of other recent commentaries have emphasized that, according to U.S. and Israeli intelligence, Iran has not yet decided to go ahead with building a bomb, but a bombing raid on the country would definitely impel it to do so.

Yet, as adamant as U.S. Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. Martin Dempsey and his colleagues may be about preventing a war that will bring the U.S. nose-to-nose with the Russians, the existence of a Commander-in-Chief who is committed to the British imperial approach and objective represents a clear and present danger that such a war could be launched. Obama’s removal from power is thus the central strategic issue of the immediate weeks ahead.



Unsurvivable

A dark, gruesome, but wholly true depiction of the threat of thermonuclear war, its consequences, and Obama’s deployment of a major portion of the U.S. thermonuclear capabilities in multiple theaters threatening both Russia and China.

<http://larouhepac.com/unsurvivable>