

INTERVIEW: Prof. Ivan Rizzi

Scenarios Are Threatening To Make Nuclear War Inevitable

Prof. Ivan Rizzi, President and professor at the Institute for Advanced Strategic and Policy Studies (IASSP) in Milan, Italy provided this interview, in Italian, on May 20, 2022 to Claudio Celani for EIR. He recently wrote an article warning of the dynamic of escalation toward world war which is now underway. Professor Rizzi's views on the subject are presented here in English translation.

Celani: Professor, in a recent article you talked about the “Escalation Algorithm.” Can you explain what this is all about?

Prof. Ivan Rizzi: It seems that this conflict is driven by automatisms that began long before the Russian invasion of Ukraine, and which exclude a way out of this crisis. The deadlock appears irreducible. The human mind in a closed decision-making system has difficulty giving up its choices once once it has resolved on them. It is the effect of a functionalist axiom embodied in an increasingly self-referential systemic apparatus. “We were so technically engaged in organizing as many as 91 divisions that there was no time for reason,” was the defense argument of the Wehrmacht senior officers in their Nuremberg trial.

Celani: Are you saying that the actors in this tragedy move like automatons programmed to lead us all to war?

Prof. Rizzi: Yes. It is not only decisions that create the factual results. It is the very device of enacting them that “invents” them far beyond our expectations. The techno-algorithmic principle drives the dogma; it removes legitimacy from the negative and from all doubtful reasoning. This is the point. The heart of any systemic

device is the algorithm; once “loaded,” its refinement can also be entrusted to the automatism of what some call a *learning machine*. This should make us shudder. Think of an algorithmic sequence, composed of small, unstoppable steps, in their relentless serial succession toward a programmed destination of conflict such as the present one.

Celani: Is the danger of nuclear war real?



Prof. Ivan Rizzi

IASSP

Prof. Rizzi: *The New York Times* published articles on January 16 and 17 devoted to the possibility of the use of tactical nuclear weapons. These were academic speculations, but they had paranoid overtones, to say the least. On March 22, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov went so far as to speculate on the extreme scenario: the use of the atomic deterrent. Conversely, at the staffs of the national defense establishments, of NATO, and the state secretariats, the speculation sparked a rush to perform simulations for appropriate

countermoves. Many U.S. networks in the same weeks revived the conclusions of the simulation carried out two years ago by Princeton University’s Science and Global Security program, dubbed “Plan A.” It predicted immeasurable catastrophe from the first “warning act” by Russia and a symmetrical NATO response through tactical nuclear devices, presumably used in Europe, capable of causing 90 million deaths and serious injuries in a few hours.

The mere fact that this terrifying scenario is being hypothesized and openly talked about even in national debates and talk shows, has inaugurated the pattern of self-fulfilling prophecy. In short, we are articulating a hallucinatory dialogue designed to ignite schizophrenia and make events inevitable.

Once we get into what Graham Allison, a geopoliti-

cal analyst and adviser to the U.S. Secretary of Defense, calls “the deadly current” running through the language being used, it will sooner or later be possible for the strategic algorithm to actualize it. History tells us that when moving forward with such premises, conflict in most cases is inevitable; it is the ontological algorithm that ignites it, a kind of hypnotic process between reasons and drives made collective by the information machine.

Celani: Should we fatally accept this as inevitable?

Rizzi: No. One must still respond against the fatalism of the escalation of the open conflict in Europe, lest we be just helpless spectators. Something must be done to break the algorithm of the apocalyptic *denouement*, to make a middle voice heard—the voice of tolerance. This is because the good is always only a compromise, and evil is always evil that, when it begins, no one knows when and how it ends.

I will give you the example of a little-known fact from the time of the Cuban Missile Crisis, which we are reliving today in reverse. Then, it was the United States that did not tolerate Soviet weapons on its doorstep; today it is Russia that does not tolerate NATO weapons there.

Kennedy, in the midst of the crisis and as part of multilateral consultations, summoned German Chancellor Konrad Adenauer to brief him on the state of the crisis. West Germany was directly bordered by the Iron Curtain and would suffer the first devastating wave of nuclear attack in the event of conflict. The Chancellor, after the first meeting in which the possibility of military escalation became apparent, refused to continue the talks and returned home. That is, a few years after the Axis defeat and in a Europe that was still licking its wounds, no one would agree to sacrifice themselves for the strategic convenience of the United States. I believe this served to rob the Pentagon’s belligerent fervor of its power. Alongside West Germany was all of Continental Europe. In particular, the 4th Fanfani government in Italy invested all available diplomatic prerogative for the removal of the



Schirner Pressebild Berlin

Prof. Rizzi: “In the years after [World War II], no one would agree to sacrifice themselves for the strategic convenience of the U.S.” Not so now. Here, German Chancellor Konrad Adenauer with French President Charles de Gaulle in Paris, 1962.

ICBMs stationed in Apulie and Basilicata.

Instead, today Europe is in economic cultural stalemate, a place of waiting, a park of senile remembrances. It lives devoid of any unified perspective and dynamic spirit, unlike the much poorer Europe of 1962. But it survives by abdicating its ideals along with its aggressive determination that made it great. It copies verbatim the censorious ethos of critical race theory, cancel culture and Washington’s militant verbage.

Celani: What should Europe’s leaders do?

Prof. Rizzi: We should realize in time that if we totally isolate Russia, without thinking of a way out to allow it to retrace its steps, stop the massacre, and seek at all costs the start of conflict resolution talks, we are in fact isolating the West. We are lying to ourselves that Russia is isolated, or doomed to be isolated, because of its aggression against Ukraine (52 countries, out of 193, representing 55% of the planet’s inhabitants, have not joined the UN motion condemning Russia).

Celani: You have spoken of the “globalization of resentment.” What does that mean?

Prof. Rizzi: Democracy, the flower of the West, is the greatest gift to humanity, but it is still an uncertain idea in other countries and is gradually being betrayed by us. Representative democracy seems worn out by exhaustion. The legitimacy of democracy is also questioned by the success of so-called authoritarian democracy, which is fueled by resentment over the “great humiliation” (as it is called in China) suffered in the past, especially at Western hands.

But resentment is not only all around the West, it is also within it. It is in the *banlieues* [the poorer suburbs—ed.] of French and English cities; in the Turkish enclaves in Germany; in every city of ours, often protected by an identity rooted in the Islamic homelands. Among African Americans in the United States it is

punctuated by periodic riots as violent as the simmering of unmentionable racial resentment.

Resentment, very often mixed with envy, admiration and frustration, is the relentless response to our inability to understand and respect the world's historical differences, and especially our inability to keep at bay the temptation to take advantage of them. Most of the world's population is looking favorably to the successes of China, which has so far neither colonized nor evangelized any place on Earth except the snows of Tibet.

The humanitarian interventions and evangelizations lavished by the United Nations and NATO on the countries of its wars (Iraq, Lebanon, Kosovo, Afghanistan ...) have not stabilized peace at all—so much so that some are proposing to resurrect the principles of the Peace of Westphalia (1648). It respected different cultures, religions, lifestyles; that is, the differences between peoples, which still persist as feelings in the face of hyper-development and hyper-consumption.

Celani: In [the Peace of] Westphalia, international law was born based on respect for the sovereignty of nations and the “benefit of the other,” as it is written at the beginning of the treaties signed in Münster. The principle of non-interference also underlies the UN Charter. The Schiller Institute revived it by proposing a world security system on that basis. Do you agree with it?

Prof. Rizzi: The Peace of Westphalia, 1648, inaugurated modern Europe. Though distant, that treaty still speaks to us. Law confined within the borders of each country becomes an international code; legitimate interests and advantages of different nation-states are recognized; the principle of non-interference—*cuius regio eius religio* [as part of that peace agreement ending the religious wars]—allows dialogue and exchanges. But first it took 30 years of massacres and a Europe stripped of life, to realize that no one would prevail.

Today, three generations spared from war have only witnessed the ... spectacle of distant wars. The possibility that this conflict may affect our lives, is re-



Gerard ter Borch

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moved with ease by de-emphasizing people's attention and apprehension.

Are we bored with peace? Western administrations arrange co-belligerence in defense of Ukraine. The media agitate the multitudes. Preparations are made. Strategies and alliance systems are prepared. War industries that will replace mature industries are prepared. The game of antagonistic simulation that neglects the precautionary principle, is prepared. The mobilization of sentiments is prepared. The outcome for the post-truth of a “just war” is being prepared.

Here again is “a terrible love of war” as evoked by [American psychologist] James Hillman. The unconscious, for years humbled by triumphant digital acceleration, returns with its slow conscious grip.

Historical memory has never worked. Wars of the past are no longer feared, nor is peace learned.

Even if terminal warfare is posited as impossible, possible warfare—such as the current one—is not yet fully delegable to drones and the remote. It demands men, young men, our meager and very precious Generation Z, and perhaps Y in case of forced replacement. They will be the ones to tremble first, to risk not-being (in Ukraine the number of military dead and wounded again exceeds that of civilians). Those who are bored with peace should take note.