

# U.S Threat to Attack Iran with Nukes is “Criminal”

"No Options Off the Table" is an Illegal Threat to the Peace

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The U.S. today is threatening to attack Iran “under the completely bogus pretext” that it might have a nuclear weapon, a distinguished American international legal authority says.

When Obama administration officials, like those of the Bush regime before it, say “all options are on the table,” they are threatening nuclear war and that is prohibited by international law, says Francis Boyle, professor of international law at the University of Illinois at Champaign.

Not only has the International Atomic Energy Commission said this charge against Iran “is simply not true,” Boyle pointed out, but threatening Iran with nuclear war in itself constitutes an international crime.

“If we don’t act now, Obama and his people could very well set off a Third World War over Iran that has already been threatened publicly by (President George W.) Bush Jr.,” he asserted.

In a speech on nuclear deterrence to the 18th conference on “Direct Democracy” in Feldkirch, Austria, Boyle said it has been estimated an attack on Iran with tactical nuclear weapons by the U.S. and Israel could kill nearly 3-million people.

(Boyle charges the U.S. has already committed “acts of aggression against Afghanistan, Iraq, Pakistan, Somalia, Yemen, and has authorized, armed, equipped, and supplied Israel to commit...outright genocide against Lebanon and Palestine.”)

Nuclear weapons and “nuclear deterrence” have “never been legitimate instruments of state policy but have always constituted instrumentalities of internationally lawless and criminal behavior,” Boyle said.

Thus, the governments of all the nuclear weapons states are “criminal” for threatening to exterminate humanity. Boyle named the U.S., Russia, France, Britain, China, India, Pakistan, North Korea and Israel. He reminded that “If mass extermination of human beings is a crime, the threat to commit mass extermination is also a crime.”

“The whole (George W.) Bush Doctrine of preventive warfare, which is yet to be officially repealed by Obama now after 18 months, was made by the Nazi lawyers for the Nazi defendants at Nuremberg, and it was rejected,” Boyle said.

He noted Article 2 of the UN Charter “prohibits both the threat and the use of force except in

cases of legitimate self-defense” and the U.S. wars in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Pakistan, “do not qualify under that definition.” He adds the U.S. today is engaged in “ongoing international criminal activity” for “planning, preparation, solicitation, and conspiracy to commit Nuremberg crimes against peace, crimes against humanity, war crimes, and genocide.”

What’s more, “the design, research, testing, production, manufacture, fabrication, transportation, deployment, installation, storing, stockpile, sale, and purchase and the threat to use nuclear weapons are criminal under well-recognized principles of international law,” Boyle said.

And the leaders of NATO states that go along with U.S. nuclear policies “are all accomplices as well,” Boyle said, noting that pressure is mounting within Germany for the removal of U.S. nuclear warheads and that public opinion in much of Europe favors the elimination of nuclear arsenals.

The expansion of NATO, Boyle says, has now drawn in “almost all of Europe” and that even Sweden, Austria, and Finland have basically abandoned their neutrality. “Even Ireland,” Boyle says, has been compelled to join the so-called Partnership For Peace and send troops to Afghanistan. “The only state in Europe still holding out is Switzerland,” Boyle says, and because it refuses to commit troops to the wars in the Middle East it has been subjected to much pressure by the U.S. “including an attack on its banking and financial system.”

The nonpartisan Arms Control Association of Washington, meanwhile, has published an article in the October issue of *“Arms Control Today”* calling for NATO ministers at their forthcoming Oct. 14th session “to initiate a comprehensive review of outdated NATO nuclear policy” to “reduce the role and salience of nuclear weapons and support reductions of U.S. and Russian tactical nuclear bombs.”

Co-authors Oliver Meier and Paul Ingram point out that NATO’s 28 states “remain divided” over key issues, including “the future role of nuclear weapons in NATO’s defense posture.” What’s more, they say, in Belgium, Germany, and the Netherlands “there now exists broad parliamentary and popular support for a withdrawal of U.S. nuclear weapons from their territories.”

In a related development, the *Associated Press* reported October 9, “From the 1950s’ Pentagon to today’s Obama administration, the United States has repeatedly pondered, planned and threatened use of nuclear weapons against North Korea, according to declassified and other U.S. government documents released in this 60th-anniversary year of the Korean War.”

“Just this past April,” AP writers Charles Hanley and Randy Herschaft said, “issuing a U.S. Nuclear Posture Review, Defense Secretary Robert Gates said “all options are on the table” for dealing with Pyongyang—meaning U.S. nuclear strikes are not ruled out.”

During the Korean War (1950-53), U.S. Air Force bombers flew nuclear rehearsal runs over North Korea’s capital and on August 20, 1953, after the fighting ended, the Strategic Air Command sent Air Force headquarters a plan for “an air atomic offensive against China, Manchuria, and North Korea” if the Communists resumed hostilities. Called OpPlan 8-53, it advocated use of “large numbers of atomic weapons.

President Jimmy Carter scaled back the U.S. nuclear arsenal in South Korea and its complete withdrawal was announced in 1991, “although the North Koreans at times accuse the U.S. of maintaining a secret nuclear stockpile,” *AP* says. Korea specialists generally accept Pyongyang’s stated rationale that it sought its own bomb for defensive reasons in response to U.S. positioning of nuclear weapons in South Korea, *AP* reported.

Professor Boyle is the author of “The Criminality of Nuclear Deterrence” and “Destroying World Order,” both published by Clarity Press.

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