

# Putin-Led War Avoidance Is A Strategic Breakthrough

by Jeffrey Steinberg

Sept. 16—The agreement among Russia, the United States, and Syria to eliminate Syria's stockpiles of chemical weapons, as part of a broader effort to end the Syrian conflict through a Geneva II conference, was hailed by Lyndon LaRouche this weekend as a major breakthrough. If the diplomacy prevails, LaRouche told colleagues, this can represent a strategic reversal of the trends toward war and dictatorship that have dominated the global political landscape since January 2001.

The breakthrough came early on Sept. 14 in Geneva, when Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov and U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry signed a bilateral agreement setting a timeframe for Syria to provide a full inventory of its chemical weapons, and turn them over to UN monitors who would supervise their destruction within one year. The agreement has been endorsed by the Syrian government, which earlier this week signed the UN Convention barring the use of chemical weapons. This means that the threatened U.S. military strikes against Syria, bringing the world one giant step closer to thermonuclear extinction, have been postponed indefinitely.

Just three weeks ago, President Barack Obama had ordered military strikes against Syria—without going to the U.S. Congress or to the UN Security Council. At the last moment, Obama reversed that decision, in the face of overwhelming American public opposition, and the threat that Congress would initiate impeachment proceedings against him were he to order the strikes. Since Spring 2013, Obama has faced a succession of

scandals, rendering him a virtual lame duck President, just months into his second term. The fact that Obama pulled back from the strike order, which had already been decided and reported to the National Security Council and to European and Middle Eastern allies, was the result of combined opposition from the public, the Congress, and top military advisors, led by Gen. Martin Dempsey, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

## Obama Reads the Writing on the Wall

After the President had announced that he would go to Congress before striking Syria, it became clear that he would never win Congressional approval, despite the support he had from Republican leaders in the House, and from Senate hawks John McCain (Ariz.) and Lindsey Graham (S.C.). He then scheduled a nationwide TV address for Sept. 10 to win over public support for the action. Obama met privately with McCain and Graham and promised them that he would vastly expand the Syrian military targets to tilt the war on the ground, in favor of the rebels. This is exactly the kind of escalation of American involvement that the Joint Chiefs had warned against, and that the American public fiercely opposes.

The night before the President's scheduled TV address, top political aides told him that he would lose the vote in the House of Representatives by a wide margin, and might even lose in the Senate if there were a filibuster (which had been mooted by Sen. Rand Paul of Ken-



State Department

*Secretary of State John Kerry and Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov announce their landmark agreement on Syrian chemical weapons, Sept. 14, in Geneva.*

tucky). During his TV address, instead of motivating the strikes, President Obama announced that he would work with Russia to finalize a deal to have Syria surrender its chemical weapons to the UN.

While the American media had jumped on a fake story that the idea of U.S.-Russian mediation of the chemical weapons surrender had come out of an offhanded, cynical comment by Kerry, during a stopover in Moscow, the reality was that Russian President Vladimir Putin had proposed just such a plan the previous week, when Putin and Obama had met on the sidelines of the G-20 summit in St. Petersburg, Russia. Obama told reporters before his Sept. 10 address to the nation that Putin and he had discussed such an idea the previous week.

Beginning Sept. 11, Kerry and Lavrov began intense work in Geneva, accompanied by chemical weapons experts. They worked until midnight on Sept. 13, and announced the signing of the bilateral agreement the next morning.

Under the agreement, which was also endorsed by Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, the immediate threat of war has been greatly reduced. However, it cannot be assumed that war has been averted altogether. The British, the Saudis, the Turks, and others are furious at Obama for backing down from his widely circulated pledge to take military action. The danger that the Anglo-Saudi combination could stage a false-flag incident or some other atrocity to rekindle the sparks of war in Syria or elsewhere cannot be underestimated.

## Warnings of a New Financial Blowout

The driving factor behind the war push has, from the outset, been the accelerating disintegration of the entire Anglo-Dutch global financial system. Senior financial community sources from Tokyo to Singapore to London to Washington are warning that a blowout, far worse than September 2008, is imminent, unless the United States and other leading nations adopt Glass-Steagall and a return to a global fixed-exchange-rate system, wiping out quadrillions of dollars in unpayable derivatives and other gambling debts. Because the stakes in Syria were complicated by these motives, it cannot be ruled out that a new military conflict will be conjured up to tilt the global balance away from the peace process now underway.

LaRouche, in his weekend assessments, identified the breakthrough in Geneva as a reversal of the trends in place since January 2001, when the Bush-Cheney Administration first took office. At the time, LaRouche had publicly warned of an imminent “Reichstag Fire” incident to provide a pretext for dictatorship in the United States. His warning, nine months before the Anglo-Saudi-engineered Sept. 11, 2001 attacks, was prophetic. When Bush and Cheney left office, and Obama was elected as the 44th President of the United States, LaRouche warned that Obama would be a continuation of the Bush-Cheney drive for dictatorship—and worse.

Now, with the pendulum swinging away from Presidential dictatorship, driven by a spate of scandals, any one of which could lead to Obama’s impeachment, the potential is there for a profound change in direction. That begins with the enactment of Glass-Steagall, return to an American System of credit for great projects, restoration of a Bretton Woods-type fixed-exchange-rate system, all to bring about a global leap in science and technology. LaRouche has identified a Manhattan Project drive for thermonuclear fusion, the immediate launching of the NAWAPA XXI water-management program, the building of the Bering Strait tunnel and the New Silk Road/Eurasian Land-Bridge plan presented in the early 1990s by Helga Zepp-LaRouche. That New Silk Road program was put on the table this past week at the Shanghai Cooperation Organization annual heads of state meeting (see article below).