



Written by on October 14, 2009

Hillary Clinton Ends Two-Day Trip to Russia

U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton completed a two-day visit to Russia on October 14 by addressing a town-hall meeting attended by almost 1,000 students at Moscow State University.

Standing before a massive mosaic that depicted the old Soviet flag adorned with the communist hammer and sickle emblem, Clinton said the freedom to take unpopular positions and "disagree with conventional wisdom" are the hallmarks of "an innovative society."



Clinton used the event to comment about human rights abuses in Russia, stating: "That's why attacks on journalists and human rights activists are such a great concern, because it is a threat to progress. The more open and dynamic political system you have, the more opinions that will flow in, and the more successful outcomes will flow out."

When she was questioned by a student to name a book that had made an impact on her, Clinton singled out *The Brothers Karamazov* by Fyodor Dostoevsky. In particular, she cited the parable of the Grand Inquisitor in that novel, in which she saw as "an object lesson against servitude."

"I believe one of the greatest responsibilities we have as human beings is to open ourselves up to the possibility that we could be wrong," she said. "One of the greatest threats we face is from people who believe they are absolutely, certainly right about everything and they have the only truth and it was passed onto them by God."

AP reported that Clinton also emphasized a favorite theme of President Barack Obama's — the need to move beyond tensions that existed between the old Soviet Union and the United States during the Cold War. "We have people in our government and you have people in your government who are still living in the past," she said. "They do not believe the United States and Russia can cooperate to this extent. They do not trust each other and we have to prove them wrong."



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Clinton's closing remarks seemed to place the blame for Cold War tensions equally on the shoulders of Americans and the former Soviet leaders, even though Nikita Khrushchev, who led the Soviet Union during that period, is infamously remembered for delivering such lines as "We will bury you!" and "Your grandchildren will grow up under communism."

Clinton went on: "I chose partnership and I chose to put aside being a child of the Cold War. I chose to move beyond the rhetoric and the propaganda that came from my government and yours." She added: "That's a choice every one of us can make every single day."

Following her visit to Moscow, Clinton traveled east to Kazan, the capital of Russia's religiously and ethnically diverse Tatarstan, a Muslim-majority republic. She said in an interview on Ekho Moskvyy radio that she chose to travel to Kazan because she heard it's a beautiful city where Muslims and Orthodox Christians live peacefully together, noting: "I want to see that for myself and hear how successful that has been." During the radio interview Clinton was again critical of human-rights abuses in Russia, such as the killing of journalist Anna Politkovskaya and the imprisonment of ex-tycoon Mikhail Khodorkovsky.

"I think all of these issues — imprisonments, detentions, beatings, killings — is something that is hurtful to see from the outside," she said during the interview. "Every country has its criminal elements, people who try to abuse power. But in the last 18 months ... there have been many of these incidents. I think we want the government to stand up and say this is wrong."

When Clinton was asked during the radio interview why she had gone to see Russia's President Medvedev, she replied:

"The president sets the policy. I carry out President Obama's policy; Minister Lavrov carries out President Medvedev's policy. So making sure we are communicating is very important."

Clinton's October 13 meeting with Russia's Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov and President Dmitry Medvedev did not produce an agreement from Russia to impose tougher sanctions against Iran. Russia's Prime Minister Vladimir Putin was away from Moscow, visiting China.

VOA News reported that after her meeting with Medvedev, Clinton emphasized the need for the U.S. and Russia to work together on key issues, including Iran, North Korea, and nuclear arms control. Medvedev was quoted as stating that cooperation with the United States is at a "high level."

Following his meeting with Clinton that same day, Lavrov said the United States and Russia have made "considerable" progress on plans to cut their nuclear arsenals.?? More significantly, VOA reported that Clinton said negotiators are aiming to reach a new treaty by the time the current START (Strategic



Secretary of State Hillary Clinton speaks at Moscow State University, with the Soviet Hammer & Sickle displayed above her. (photo: AP Images).



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Arms Reduction Treaty) agreement expires in December.

Several ironies concerning U.S.-Russian relations were made evident during the Clinton visit, which was filled with inconsistent statements. During remarks made during a joint press conference with Russia's Foreign Minister Lavrov held at the Osobnyak Guest House in Moscow on October 13, Clinton stated:

President Obama and I believe that it is this cooperative relationship and the acceptance of shared responsibility that is really at the core of the 21st century relationship between the United States and Russia. One example of that is the work that our technical experts are doing on a START agreement to cut our nuclear arsenal to demonstrate leadership from the two largest nuclear powers in the world. We are also committed to working together on the Nonproliferation Treaty. Our goal remains to complete the work on START by December 5th when the current agreement expires. The global initiative on nuclear terrorism to create a joint effort to secure vulnerable nuclear materials and set new standards is another important step that we are pursuing together. And we look forward to Russia's leadership in helping to make the Global Nuclear Security Summit next April in Washington a success.

Clinton's preceding statement and another that follows, are based on the premise that since the Cold War is dead (she chooses "to put aside being a child of the Cold War") the militaristic mindset that dominated the old Soviet Union is also gone with the wind, replaced by a kinder and gentler Russia. This writer likes to remind those overly impressed by the Soviet Union-to-Russia transition that changing its name from Kentucky Fried Chicken to KFC does not necessarily mean that the chicken in question (no matter *how* finger lickin' good) is no longer fried!

But let us continue with more of Clinton's rhetoric:

The United States believes that it is better to be prepared and defended against possible aggressive offensive action by Iran or others who might develop such weapons, and therefore, the phased adaptive approach which we have outlined is intended to protect against that threat....

And as Minister Lavrov said, we want to ensure that every question that the Russian military or the Russian Government asks, we answer. We have invited your leading experts to our missile command and control center in Colorado Springs. We want to be as transparent as possible, because this is important so that we agree on the common threat and we agree as to how we will address that common threat. And we see this as yet another area for deeper cooperation between our countries.

Apparently, part of Clinton's exercise in putting "aside being a child of the Cold War" involves ignoring the fact that the agreement signed between President Obama and Russian President Medvedev on July 6 states: "Within seven years after this treaty comes into force, and in the future, the limits for strategic delivery systems should be within the range of 500-1,100 units and for warheads linked to them within the range of 1,500-1,675 units."

If those are the target goals for the treaty, then it may be presumed that Russia currently possesses more than 1,100 "delivery systems" (aka missiles) capable of carrying more than 1,675 warheads. And yet, during her conference with Lavrov, Clinton said that "we would like to see the United States and Russian collaborate closely on missile defense."

Missile defense against whom? That question was answered during the conference when Clinton said:



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We had a very long discussion about missile defense and we outlined for the minister and the other officials at the meeting the basis of our threat assessment, which President Obama ordered to be conducted upon taking office. And the conclusion we reached that the concerns about the ICBM development in Iran were not as urgent as new concerns regarding the short- and medium-term missiles that they are developing.

If the administration is not concerned about Iran's ICBMs (InterContinental Ballistic Missiles) — the only type of missile capable of reaching the United States — then it is obvious that the proposed U.S.-Russian cooperative effort is designed to protect Russia and others against a “common threat” that does not threaten the United States! Since protecting the United States from invasion is the only type of defense provided for in our Constitution, why should a threat against Russia concern us at all?

Is this another case of Uncle Sam being suckered once again, as when U.S. Lend Lease materials helped the old Soviet Union defend itself against Germany during World War II, and no sooner had Germany been defeated than the Soviets occupied all of Eastern Europe?

The other question that should be asked is: If a U.S.-Soviet cooperative effort is necessary to defend Russia, et al., against Iran, how many nuclear warheads does Iran possess? And if Iran should manage to build one or two, how many of those would be small enough to be carried aboard a missile? The answer is zero.

Also implicit through all of the discussions between Secretary Clinton and her Russian counterparts is that Russia — unlike the bad old Soviet Union of Cold War days — is not a communist-controlled nation intent on world hegemony.

As we noted in our March 6 article, [“Clinton Wants Closer NATO-Russia Ties”](#): “Some might argue that Russia is an entirely different nation than the old Soviet Union, but members of the Soviet Union's notorious KGB, including Vladimir Putin, continue to exert powerful influence over Russia's policies.”

It is generally recognized both inside and outside of Russia that President Medvedev is Putin's hand-picked successor.

As *The New American* magazine Senior Editor William F. Jasper noted in his September 18 online article [“KGB/FSB: The ‘Game’ Remains the Same”](#):

The KGB-FSB continuity does not extend merely to espionage; it also includes all of the traditional KGB activities: active measures, disinformation, propaganda, assassination — and terrorism. As *The New American* has demonstrated in a series of articles, the modern terrorism phenomenon, which was launched by the Soviet KGB in the 1960s and '70s, is continuing today under the auspices of the Russian FSB. The main difference today is that the Kremlin strategists have determined that it will be far more effective — for many reasons — for them to run their terror operations as deniable assets under the banner of Islam.

To engage in cooperation with Russia in order to counter a perceived militant Islamic threat is the equivalent of the old “protection” racket. It is the Russians who control the Islamic terrorist network as surely as Al Capone once controlled the mob in Chicago.

And for those who think the Russians have changed their spots, just look at the hammer and sickle backdrop behind Hillary Clinton as she spoke at Moscow State University. If today's Russians had *really* abandoned their communist, KGB roots, that mosaic would long ago have been torn down.

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