

Bush Administration War Plans directed against Iran

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Quoting official sources, the Western media is now confirming, rather belatedly, that the Bush Administration's war plans directed against Iran are "for real" and should be taken seriously.

According to official statements, "punitive bombings" directed against Tehran could be launched within the next few months.

The diplomatic mode has been switched off: The Pentagon is said to be "taking steps to ensure military confrontation with Iran" because diplomatic initiatives have allegedly failed to reach a solution.

These diabolical statements come within barely a couple of weeks following the release of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) report. The latter confirms unequivocally that Iran's nuclear program is of a civilian nature and that Iran has neither the intention nor the capabilities to develop nuclear weapons:

Article IV (1): These modalities cover all remaining issues and the Agency [meaning IAEA] confirmed that **there are no other remaining issues and ambiguities regarding Iran's past nuclear program and activities.**

Article IV (3): The Agency's delegation is of the view that the agreement on the above issues shall **further promote the efficiency of the implementation of safeguards in Iran and its ability to conclude the exclusive peaceful nature of the Iran's nuclear activities.**

Article IV (4): The Agency has been able to verify the non-diversion of the declared nuclear materials at the enrichment facilities in Iran and **has therefore concluded that it remains in peaceful use.** (IAEA Report, italics added)

At the same token, the IAEA report is a slap in the face for Washington. It confirms the lack of legitimacy and criminal nature of US foreign policy as well as Washington's resolve to violate international law:

"The Bush administration's abrupt dismissal of last Thursday's IAEA report is one more sign that Washington has no interest in a diplomatic resolution to its confrontation with Tehran. Following Bush's bellicose denunciations of Iran last

week, the US has reiterated its intention to push for tougher UN sanctions against Tehran this month.” ([Peter Symond, Global Research, September 2007](#))

No Public Outcry

Despite the overtly aggressive nature of US statements, these war plans directed against Iran, which in a real sense threaten the future of humanity, are not the object of public concern or debate. A US sponsored pre-emptive war, using thermonuclear weapons, which according to “authoritative” scientific opinion (on contract to the Pentagon), are “harmless to the surrounding civilian population” is simply not front page news in relation to any other trivial topic.

The dangers of a broader Middle East war are downplayed or ignored by the main anti-war coalitions. The proposed use of nuclear weapons in a conventional war theater is not a matter for debate.

Moreover, the planned attacks on Iran and their various devastating consequences are not being addressed by “progressive” civil society organizations including the “Left”, which tacitly considers The Islamic Republic as a real threat to human rights. According to Jean Bricmont:

“All the ideological signposts for attacking Iran are in place. The country has been thoroughly demonized because it is not nice to women, to gays, or to Jews. That in itself is enough to neutralize a large part of the American “left”. The issue of course is not whether Iran is nice or not according to our views — but whether there is any legal reason to attack it, and there is none; but the dominant ideology of human rights has legitimized, especially on the left, the right of intervention on humanitarian grounds anywhere, at any time, and that ideology has succeeded in totally sidetracking the minor issue of international law.” ([Jean Bricmont, Global Research, September 2007](#))

Background of War Planning

For the last three years, in several carefully documented articles, Global Research has been reporting in detail on US sponsored war plans directed against Iran. These war plans include the preemptive use of thermonuclear weapons against Iran in retaliation for Tehran’s alleged non-compliance with the demands of the “international community”.

War plans in relation to Iran have been an advanced stage of readiness since mid 2005. Israel, Britain and NATO are part of the US led coalition and are slated to play an active role in the military operation.

The first phase of these war plans was formulated initially in mid-2003, under a Pentagon scenario entitled TIRANNT (Theater Iran Near Term). The military build-up has occurred over a period of more than three years.

In Summer 2006 as well as earlier this year, extensive war games were conducted in the Persian Gulf and the Eastern Mediterranean.

The Israeli bombing of Lebanon in July 2006 was an integral part of the broader military agenda. In recent developments, Israel has conducted bombing raids inside Syrian territory

visibly in an act of provocation.

Recent official statements by Washington confirm the broad nature of these war plans:

“Senior American intelligence and defense officials believe that President George W Bush and his inner circle are taking steps to place America on the path to war with Iran, ...

Pentagon planners have developed a list of up to 2,000 bombing targets in Iran, ...

Pentagon and CIA officers say they believe that the White House has begun a carefully calibrated programme of escalation that could lead to a military showdown with Iran.

In a chilling scenario of how war might come, a senior intelligence officer warned that public denunciation of Iranian meddling in Iraq – arming and training militants – would lead to cross border raids on Iranian training camps and bomb factories.

A prime target would be the Fajr base run by the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Quds Force in southern Iran, where Western intelligence agencies say armour-piercing projectiles used against British and US troops are manufactured.

The intelligence officer said that the US military has “two major contingency plans” for air strikes on Iran.

“One is to bomb only the nuclear facilities. The second option is for a much bigger strike that would – over two or three days – hit all of the significant military sites as well. This plan involves more than 2,000 targets.” (quoted in The Sunday Telegraph, 16 September 2007)

US-NATO naval deployments are taking place in two distinct theaters: the Persian Gulf and the Eastern Mediterranean.

In recent developments, it is reported that two aircraft carrier strike groups (USS Nimitz and USS Truman) are en route to the Persian Gulf to join up with the USS Enterprise, which means that there will be, by late September, three carrier strike groups in the Persian Gulf.

According to military sources, the USS Kearsarge Expeditionary Strike Group took up position in late August opposite the Lebanese coastline.

The attacks on Iran are now officially supported by America’s European allies including France and Germany. France’s Foreign Minister Bernard Kouchner has called upon France to support the US war on Iran:

“We have to prepare for the worst, and the worst is war,” Mr Kouchner said in an interview on French TV and radio. Mr Kouchner said negotiations with Iran should continue “right to the end”, but an Iranian nuclear weapon would pose “a real danger for the whole world” .(quoted by BBC, 16 September 2007)

Britain is closely involved, despite denials at the diplomatic level. Turkey occupies a central role in the Iran operation. It has an extensive military cooperation agreement with Israel. NATO is formally involved in liaison with Israel, with which it signed a military framework

agreement in November 2004.

While the US, Israel, as well as Turkey (with borders with both Iran and Syria) are the main military actors, a number of other countries in the region, allies of the US, including Georgia and Azerbaijan have been enlisted.

There are indications from several media sources that Israel is also in an advanced stage of military preparedness and would be involved in carrying out part of the aerial bombardments. Syria and most probably Lebanon would also be targeted.

Already in 2005, the Israeli Air Force had reached a state of preparedness. Israeli air attacks of [Iran's nuclear facility at Bushehr](#) had been contemplated using US as well Israeli produced bunker buster bombs. The attack was planned to be carried out in three separate waves "with the radar and communications jamming protection being provided by U.S. Air Force AWACS and other U.S. aircraft in the area".

(See W Madsen, <http://www.globalresearch.ca/articles/MAD410A.html>)

Escalation Scenarios

If this military operation were to be launched, the entire Middle East Central Asian region would flare up.

The war would encompass an area extending from the Eastern Mediterranean to China's Western frontier.

In this regard, US military planners have analyzed various "escalation scenarios".

In fact, they expect the war to escalate. In other words, escalation, namely retaliation by Iran is a desired objective. It is part of the military agenda.

"A strike will probably follow a gradual escalation. Over the next few weeks and months the US will build tensions and evidence around Iranian activities in Iraq....

Under the theory - which is gaining credence in Washington security circles - US action would provoke a major Iranian response, perhaps in the form of moves to cut off Gulf oil supplies, providing a trigger for air strikes against Iran's nuclear facilities and even its armed forces. (Sunday Telegraph, op cit)

Iran Retaliates

The nature of Iran's retaliation should be understood. General David Petraeus, who is responsible for managing the Iraq war theater, has voiced his opposition to an attack on Iran.

"Gen David Petraeus, Mr Bush's senior Iraq commander, denounced the Iranian "proxy war" in Iraq last week as he built support in Washington for the US military surge in Baghdad." (Sunday Telegraph, op cit)

General Petraeus is fully aware of the underlying implications for the Iraq war theater. A war

on Iran would immediately spill over into Iraq:

Iran is the third largest importer of Russian weapons systems after India and China. In the course of the last five years, Russia has supported Iran's ballistic missile technology, in negotiations reached initially in 2001 under the presidency of Mohammed Khatami.

Iran tested three new types of land-to-sea and sea-to-sea missiles in the context of its "Great Prophet II" military exercises last November. These tests were marked by precise planning in a carefully staged operation. According to a senior American missile expert, "the Iranians demonstrated up-to-date missile-launching technology which the West had not known them to possess."

Tehran has the ability to retaliate and wage ballistic missile attacks against US and coalition facilities in Iraq, Afghanistan and the Gulf states. Israel could also be a potential target, if Israel were to be an active partner in the bombing campaign.

Iranian ground troops could cross the border into Iraq and Afghanistan.

Iran's forces total about 350,000 active military personnel as well 350,000 reserve forces ([Jane's Iran Profile](#)). The Iranian Army disposes of some 2200 tanks. With these capabilities, in terms of military personnel and hardware, Iran could potentially inflict significant losses to US and coalition troops on the ground in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Bush-Cheney Military Appointments

Several key military appointments were made in recent months which tend to reinforce Bush-Cheney control over the Military. Specifically, these appointments pertain to the positions of Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the commanders respectively of USCENTCOM, USSTRATCOM and US Pacific Command. All three commanders recently relinquished their respective positions.

These new appointments are crucial because USSTRATCOM, USCENTCOM and US Pacific Command are slated to play key roles in the coordination and implementation of the Iran military operation, in liaison with Israel and NATO.

1. Joint Chiefs of Staff

In May, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) General Peter Pace was fired ("non-renewal"). General Pace, in recent months, had indicated his disagreement with the Administration regarding both Iraq and the proposed attacks on Iran. General Pace stated (February 2007) that he saw no firm evidence of Tehran supplying weapons to Shiite militias inside Iraq, which was being heralded by the Bush administration as a justification for waging war on Iran:

"[M]aybe that's why he's the outgoing chairman. Maybe that's why they're not renewing him. Because ...He has seen no evidence that Iran is fomenting unrest in Iraq that's causing Americans lives... " (Fox News' Alan Colmes, *ox News*, June, 13, 2007),

General Peter Pace's term as Chairman of the JCS ends at the end of September. Defense

Secretary Gates' chosen successor Admiral Michael Mullen, formerly U.S. Chief of Naval Operations, is slated to replace General Peter Pace as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Mullen's discourse is in marked contrast to that of General Peter Pace. Mullen, who was in charge of coordinating 2006-2007 naval war games off the Iranian coastline, has expressed an unbending commitment to "waging" and "winning asymmetric wars", while also "protecting the United States":

"we must ensure we have the Battle Force, the people, and the combat readiness we need to win our nation's wars...

Our Navy is fighting the Global War on Terror while at the same time providing a Strategic Reserve worldwide for the President and our Unified and Combatant Commanders.... Simply reacting to change is no longer an acceptable course of action if our Navy is to successfully wage asymmetric warfare and simultaneously deter regional and transnational threats (Statement, Senate Armed Services Committee, 7 May 2007)

Admiral Mullen's stance is in line with that of the Bush Administration's key Neo-conservative ideologues. With regard to Iran, echoing almost verbatim the stance of the White House, Admiral Mullen considers that it is "unacceptable that Iran is providing U.S. enemies in Iraq and Afghanistan with capabilities that are hurting and killing U.S. troops." (Inside the Pentagon, June 21, 2007). But on the issue of Iran, the Democrats are on board. There is a bipartisan consensus, expressed by Senator Jo Lieberman:

"I want to make clear I'm not talking about a massive ground invasion of Iran,... [but a] strike over the border into Iran, where we have good evidence that they have a base at which they are training these people coming back into Iraq to kill our soldiers" (AP, June 11, 2007)

In June, Secretary of Defense Gates appoints the Commander of USSTRATCOM, General Cartwright to the position of Vice-Chairman of the JCS. Together with the appointment of Admiral Mullen, who is slated to take on his position of Chairman of JCS in October, these two new appointments imply a significant overhaul in the power structure of the JCS

In the meantime, USSTRATCOM is headed, pending Senate confirmation of a new commander, on an interim basis, by Air Force Lt. Gen. C. Robert Kehler

2. CENTCOM

Admiral. William J. Fallon, was appointed Commander of U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) in March by Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates.

Admiral Fallon is fully compliant with the Bush administration's war plans in relation to Iran. He replaces Gen. John P. Abizaid, who was pushed into retirement, following apparent disagreements with Rumsfeld's successor, Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates. While Abizaid recognized both the failures and the weaknesses of the US military in Iraq, Admiral Fallon is closely aligned with Vice President Dick Cheney. He is also firmly committed to the "Global War on Terrorism" (GWOT). CENTCOM would coordinate an attack on Iran from the Middle East war theater.

Moreover, the appointment of an Admiral is indicative of a shift in emphasis of USCENTCOM's functions in the war theater. The "near term" emphasis is Iran rather than Iraq, requiring the coordination of naval and air force operations in the Persian Gulf.

3. Pacific Command

Another major military appointment was implemented, which has a direct bearing on war preparations in relation to Iran. Admiral Timothy J. Keating Commander of US NORTHCOM was appointed in March, to head US Pacific Command, which includes both the 5th and the 7th fleets. The 7th Fleet Pacific Command is the largest U.S. combatant command. Keating, who takes over from Admiral Fallon is also an unbending supporter of the "war on terrorism". Pacific Command would be playing a key role in the context of a military operation directed against Iran. (<http://www.pacom.mil/about/pacom.shtml>)

Of significance, Admiral Keating was also involved in the 2003 attack on Iraq as commander of US Naval Forces Central Command and the Fifth Fleet.

It should be understood that these new military appointments tend to consolidate the power of Bush-Cheney in the military, overriding potential dissent or opposition to the Iran war agenda from within the upper echelons of the US military.

It is, however, unlikely that a major military operation would be launched immediately following Mullen's instatement as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and prior to the confirmation of a new USSTRATCOM Commander by the US Senate.

USSTRATCOM's Central Role in Coordinating the Attacks

USSTRATCOM would have the responsibility for overseeing and coordinating this military deployment as well as launching the military operation directed against Iran. (For details, [Michel Chossudovsky, Nuclear War against Iran, Jan 2006](#)).

In January 2005 a significant shift in USSTRATCOM's mandate was implemented. USSTRATCOM was identified as "the lead Combatant Command for integration and synchronization of DoD-wide efforts in combating weapons of mass destruction." To implement this mandate, a brand new command unit entitled [Joint Functional Component Command Space and Global Strike](#) , or JFCCSGS was created.

Overseen by USSTRATCOM, JFCCSGS would be responsible for the launching of military operations "using nuclear or conventional weapons" in compliance with the Bush administration's new nuclear doctrine. Both categories of weapons would be integrated into a "joint strike operation" under unified Command and Control.

According to [Robert S. Norris and Hans M. Kristensen, writing in the Bulletin of Atomic Scientists](#),

"The Defense Department is upgrading its nuclear strike plans to reflect new presidential guidance and a transition in war planning from the top-heavy Single Integrated Operational Plan of the Cold War to a family of smaller and more flexible strike plans designed to defeat today's adversaries. The new central strategic war plan is known as OPLAN (Operations Plan) 8044.... This revised, detailed plan provides more flexible options to assure allies, and

dissuade, deter, and if necessary, defeat adversaries in a wider range of contingencies....

One member of the new family is CONPLAN 8022, a concept plan for the quick use of nuclear, conventional, or information warfare capabilities to destroy-preemptively, if necessary—"time-urgent targets" anywhere in the world. Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld issued an Alert Order in early 2004 that directed the military to put CONPLAN 8022 into effect. As a result, the Bush administration's preemption policy is now operational on long-range bombers, strategic submarines on deterrent patrol, and presumably intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs)."

The operational implementation of the Global Strike would be under CONCEPT PLAN (CONPLAN) 8022, which now consists of "an actual plan that the Navy and the Air Force translate into strike package for their submarines and bombers,' (Japanese Economic Newswire, 30 December 2005, For further details see Michel Chossudovsky, Nuclear War against Iran, op. cit.).

CONPLAN 8022 is 'the overall umbrella plan for sort of the pre-planned strategic scenarios involving nuclear weapons.'

'It's specifically focused on these new types of threats — Iran, North Korea — proliferators and potentially terrorists too,' he said. 'There's nothing that says that they can't use CONPLAN 8022 in limited scenarios against Russian and Chinese targets.' (According to Hans Kristensen, of the Nuclear Information Project, quoted in Japanese Economic News Wire, op. cit.)

USSTRATCOM would play a central decision making and coordinating role in the eventuality of a war on Iran. The administration has demanded USSTRATCOM to elaborate centralized war plans directed against Iran. CENTCOM would largely be involved in carrying out these war plans in the Middle East war theater.

USSTRATCOM's is described "a global integrator charged with the missions of full-spectrum global strike".

USSTRATCOM is in charge of the coordination of command structures under global C4ISR (Command, Control, Communications, Computers, Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance). "Day-to-day planning and execution [by STRATCOM] for the primary mission areas is done by five Joint Functional Component Commands or JFCCs and three other functional components:"

If Iran Retaliates, the US Could Use Nuclear Weapons

US, NATO and Israeli military planners are fully aware that the aerial "punitive bombings" could lead coalition forces into a ground war scenario in which they may have to confront Iranian and Syrian forces in the battlefield.

Tehran has confirmed that it will retaliate if attacked, in the form of ballistic missile strikes directed against Israel as well as against US military facilities in Iraq, Afghanistan and the Persian Gulf, which would immediately lead us into a scenario of military escalation and all out war.

Iranian troops could cross the Iran-Iraq border and confront coalition forces inside Iraq.

Israeli troops and/or Special Forces could enter into Syria.

If Iran were to retaliate in a forceful way, which is contemplated by US military planners, the US could then retaliate with tactical nuclear weapons.

This scenario of using nuclear weapons against Iran has been in the pipeline since 2004. In 2005, Vice President Dick Cheney ordered USSTRATCOM to draft a “contingency plan”, which “includes a large-scale air assault on Iran employing both conventional and tactical nuclear weapons.” (Philip Giraldi, [Attack on Iran: Pre-emptive Nuclear War](#) , The American Conservative, 2 August 2005).

In relation to current war plans, Cheney has confirmed his intention to strike Iran with nuclear weapons.

“The vice president is said to advocate the use of bunker-busting tactical nuclear weapons against Iran’s nuclear sites. His allies dispute this, but Mr Cheney is understood to be lobbying for air strikes if sites can be identified where Revolutionary Guard units are training Shia militias.

Recent developments over Iraq appear to fit with the pattern of escalation predicted by Pentagon officials.” (Sunday Telegraph, op cit)

Nuclear Weapons Deployment Authorization

In May 2004, National Security Presidential Directive [NSPD 35 entitled Nuclear Weapons Deployment Authorization](#) was issued.

The contents of this highly sensitive document remains a carefully guarded State secret. There has been no mention of NSPD 35 by the media nor even in Congressional debates. While its contents remains classified, the presumption is that NSPD 35 pertains to the deployment of tactical nuclear weapons in the Middle East war theater in compliance with CONPLAN 8022.

Tactical nuclear weapons directed against Iran have also been deployed at military bases in several NATO non-nuclear states including Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Belgium and Turkey.

It should be understood that even without the use of nukes, the proposed US aerial bombardments of Iran’s nuclear facilities could result in a nuclear Chernobyl type disaster on a significantly larger scale.

World War III Scenario

While the war on Iran is acknowledged by the Western media, it is not front page news.

The broad implications of an impending catastrophe are simply not addressed.

Escalation could lead us into a World War III scenario.

Through media disinformation, the seriousness of a US-led war on Iran allegedly in retaliation for Iran’s defiance of the “international community” is downplayed . The objective is to galvanize Western public opinion in support of a US-led military operation, which

would inevitably lead to escalation.

War propaganda consists in “fabricating an enemy” while conveying the illusion that the Western World is under attack by Islamic terrorists, who are directly supported by the Tehran government.

“Make the World safer”, “prevent the proliferation of dirty nuclear devices by terrorists”, “implement punitive actions against Iran to ensure the peace”.
“Combat nuclear proliferation by rogue states”...

Supported by the Western media, a generalized atmosphere of racism and xenophobia directed against Muslims has unfolded, particularly in Western Europe, which provides a fake legitimacy to the US war agenda. The latter is upheld as a “Just War”. The “Just war” theory serves to camouflage the nature of US war plans, while providing a human face to the invaders.

What can be done?

The antiwar movement is in many regards divided and misinformed on the nature of the US military agenda. In the US, United for Peace and Justice tacitly supports US foreign policy. It fails to recognize the existence of an Iraqi resistance movement. Moreover, these same antiwar organizations, which are committed to World Peace tend to downplay the implications of the proposed US bombing of Iran. More generally the antiwar movement fails to address the existence of a broader Middle East military agenda, a long-war. Its actions are piecemeal, focusing on Afghanistan, Iraq and Palestine without addressing the relationship between these various war theaters.

To reverse the tide requires a massive campaign of networking and outreach to inform people across the land, nationally and internationally, in neighborhoods, workplaces, parishes, schools, universities, municipalities, on the dangers of a US sponsored war, which contemplates quite explicitly the use of thermonuclear weapons. The message should be loud and clear: As confirmed by the IAEA report, Iran is not the threat.

Debate and discussion must also take place within the Military and Intelligence community, particularly with regard to the use of tactical nuclear weapons, within the corridors of the US Congress, in municipalities and at all levels of government.

Ultimately, the legitimacy of the political and military actors in high office must be challenged.

The corporate media also bears a heavy responsibility for the cover-up of US sponsored war crimes. It must also be forcefully challenged for its biased coverage of the Middle East war.

For the past two years, Washington has been waging a “diplomatic arm twisting” exercise with a view to enlisting countries into supporting its military agenda. It is essential that at the diplomatic level, countries in the Middle East, Asia, Africa and Latin America take a firm stance against the US military agenda.

What is needed *is to break the conspiracy of silence*, expose the media lies and distortions, confront the criminal nature of the US Administration and of those governments which support it, its war agenda as well as its so-called “Homeland Security agenda” which has

already defined the contours of a police State.

The World is at the crossroads of the most serious crisis in modern history. The US has embarked on a military adventure, “a long war”, which threatens the future of humanity.

It is essential to bring the US war project to the forefront of political debate, particularly in North America and Western Europe. Political and military leaders who are opposed to the war must take a firm stance, from within their respective institutions. Citizens must take a stance individually and collectively against war.

This article includes a few selected excerpts from my previous writings on US war plans in relation to Iran. For a review of US war plans in relation to Iran, see [Global Research's Iran dossier](#).



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