

Dick Cheney's Plan To Nuke Iran

Stand athwart the apocalypse, and shout: "No!"

By [Justin Raimondo](#)

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A recent poll shows six in ten Americans think a new world war is coming: the same poll says about 50 percent approve of the dropping of the atomic bomb on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki at the end of World War II. Somewhat inexplicably, about two-thirds say nuking those two cities was "unavoidable." One can only wonder, then, what their reaction will be to this ominous news, revealed in a recent issue of The American Conservative by intelligence analyst Philip Giraldi:

"The Pentagon, acting under instructions from Vice President Dick Cheney's office, has tasked the United States Strategic Command (STRATCOM) with drawing up a contingency plan to be employed in response to another 9/11-type terrorist attack on the United States. The plan includes a large-scale air assault on Iran employing both conventional and tactical nuclear weapons. Within Iran there are more than 450 major strategic targets, including numerous suspected nuclear-weapons-program development sites. Many of the targets are hardened or are deep underground and could not be taken out by conventional weapons, hence the nuclear option. As in the case of Iraq, the response is not conditional on Iran actually being involved in the act of terrorism directed against the United States. Several senior Air Force officers involved in the planning are reportedly appalled at the implications of what they are doing that Iran is being set up for an unprovoked nuclear attack but no one is prepared to damage his career by posing any objections."

Two points leap out at the reader or, at least, this reader quite apart from the moral implications of dropping nukes on Iran. The first is the completely skewed logic: if Iran has nothing to do with 9/11-II, then why target Tehran? As in Iraq, it's all a pretext: only this time, the plan is to use nuclear weapons. We'll wipe out the entire population of Iran's capital city because, as Paul Wolfowitz said in another context, "it's doable."

The other weird aspect of this "nuke Iran" story is the triggering mechanism: a terrorist attack in the U.S. on the scale of 9/11. While it is certain that our government has developed a number of scenarios for post-attack action, one has to wonder: why develop this plan at this particular moment? What aren't they telling us?

I shudder to think about it.

The more I look at it, and the more I think of it, the more I sense a monumental evil casting its shadow over the world, and I have to tell you, it makes me wonder how much more time I want to spend on this earth. In my more pessimistic moments, I doubt whether we can avoid the horrific fate that seems to await us just around the next corner, the next moment,

looming over the globe like a gigantic devil stretching its wings and blotting out the sun.

It seems to me that the question of whether life is really worth living anymore is inextricably bound up with the question of whether or not these madmen can be stopped. If not, then the only alternative is to live it up while we can and laugh defiantly in the face of the apocalypse. Why write columns, why comment at all, if we can't have any effect on the outcome? On the other hand, some ask

"Surely the New York Times and the Washington Post can find a lede here: 'US has plan to nuke Tehran if another 9/11.' Can we get at least a bloody story out of this?"

Might I suggest another lede?: "Armageddon approaches." Or perhaps, for the literary-mind secularists among us: "After many a summer dies mankind."

Where oh where is the "mainstream" media on this? That's a laughable question, because the answer is heartbreakingly obvious: they are nowhere to be found, and for a very good reason. As the Valerie Plame case is making all too clear, the MSM has been a weapon in the hands of the War Party at every step on the road to World War IV. It's an American tradition. As William Randolph Hearst famously put it to an employee in the run-up to the Spanish-American conflict of 1898:

"You furnish the pictures, I'll furnish the war."

Any objective examination of the Anglo-American media's role as a megaphone for this administration's "talking points" would have to conclude that the Hearst school of journalism has been dominant since well before the invasion of Iraq. Aside from the post-9/11 hysteria that effectively swept away all pretenses of a critical stance, the MSM was well acclimated to simply reiterating the U.S. government line on matters of war and peace all through the Clinton era, when friendly media coverage of the Balkans and numerous other Clintonian interventions habituated the press corps to a certain mindset. By the time the Bush administration set out on a campaign of deception designed to lie us into invading and occupying Iraq, the MSM was largely reconciled to playing the role of the government's amen corner.

With the U.S. and British media in the pocket of the Powers That Be, what hope is there that the American people who don't believe anything if they don't see it on television will awaken to the danger in time? Again, in my more pessimistic moments, there doesn't seem to be any such hope: television news seems firmly in the camp of the War Party, and the "mainstream" print media also doesn't seem a likely venue for this kind of reporting.

On my more optimistic days, however, I almost believe it's possible to outflank the War Party on the media front because the Internet is a mighty weapon that will defeat them in the end. A recent Pew study shows that this is not just a technophilic fantasy:

"The Internet continues to grow as a source of news for Americans. One-in-four (24%) list the internet as a main source of news. Roughly the same number (23%) say they go online for news every day, up from 15% in 2000; the percentage checking the Web for news at least once a week has grown from 33% to 44% over the same time period.

"While online news consumption is highest among young people (those under age 30), it is

not an activity that is limited to the very young. Three-in-ten Americans ages 30-49 cite the Internet as a main source of news.

“The importance of the Web for people in their working years is even more apparent when the frequency of use is taken into account. One-third of people in their 30s say they get news online every day, as do 27% of people in their 40s. Nearly a quarter of people in their 50s get news online daily, about the same rate as among people ages 18-29.”

What this means is that we can put the news the MSM won't cover e.g., the story about Cheney's Dr. Strangelove plan to strike Iran on the front page of Antiwar.com and potentially reach one-in-four Americans. Last month we had over 2 million readers; this month is headed toward the same range and that's in summertime, a traditionally slow time for us. Yet we're setting new records.

This, it seems to me, is the only reason for hope: a strategy of doing an end run around the mass media. We must mount a last desperate attempt to stand athwart the apocalypse shouting “No!” The alternative doesn't bear thinking about.

Never for a minute did any of us who founded Antiwar.com imagine we would one day be front and center in a twilight struggle to protect the country and the world from such a monumental evil, and yet here we are, a band of hobbits up against all the dark powers of Mordor. Without getting any more melodramatic than is absolutely unavoidable, I can only note that we've come a long way on our quest to rid the world of this particular Ring of Power, and the battle seems to be reaching some sort of dramatic climax. As to whether or not the Cheney-neocon-War Party axis of evil will be defeated in the end, no one can confidently predict at the moment. Yet one thing does seem clear: as long as Antiwar.com is around, we have at least a fighting chance.

I want to thank each and every one of our readers who have supported us down through the years, even as I remind them that their future support is even more vitally important than ever before. Together we can beat the War Party but not without constant vigilance. We stand on the watchtower just as long as you, our readers and supporters, keep us there. I hope and trust we will continue until the end whatever that end may turn out to be.

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Articles by: Justin Raimondo

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