

## The Pentagon's "Second 911"

"Another [9/11] attack could create both a justification and an opportunity to retaliate against some known targets"

By Michel Chossudovsky

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One essential feature of "defense" in the case of a second major attack on America, is "offense", according to Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff: "Homeland security is one piece of a broader strategy [which] brings the battle to the enemy." (DHS, [Transcript of complete March 2005 speech of Secr. Michael Chertoff](#))

In the month following last year's 7/7 London bombings, Vice President Dick Cheney is reported to have instructed USSTRATCOM to draw up a contingency plan "to be employed in response to another 9/11-type terrorist attack on the United States". Implied in the contingency plan is the certainty that Iran would be behind a Second 9/11.

This "contingency plan" uses the pretext of a "Second 9/11", which has not yet happened, to prepare for a major military operation against Iran, while pressure was also exerted on Tehran in relation to its (non-existent) nuclear weapons program.

What is diabolical in this decision of the US Vice President is that the justification presented by Cheney to wage war on Iran rests on Iran's involvement in a hypothetical terrorist attack on America, which has not yet occurred:

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. (Philip Giraldi, [Attack on Iran: Pre-emptive Nuclear War](#), The American Conservative, 2 August 2005)

Are we to understand that US, British and Israeli military planners are waiting in limbo for a Second 9/11, to extend the war beyond the borders of Lebanon, to launch a military operation directed against Syria and Iran?

Cheney's proposed "contingency plan" did not focus on preventing a Second 9/11. The Cheney plan is predicated on the presumption that Iran would be behind a Second 9/11 and that punitive bombings could immediately be activated, prior to the conduct of an investigation, much in the same way as the attacks on Afghanistan in October 2001, allegedly in retribution for the alleged support of the Taliban government to the 9/11 terrorists. It is worth noting that one does not plan a war in three weeks: the bombing and invasion of Afghanistan had been planned well in advance of 9/11. As Michael Keefer points out in an incisive review article:

"At a deeper level, it implies that "9/11-type terrorist attacks" are recognized in Cheney's office and the Pentagon as appropriate means of legitimizing wars of aggression against any country selected for that treatment by the regime and its corporate propaganda-amplification system.... (Keefer, [February 2006](#))

In a timely statement, barely a few days following the onslaught of the bombing of Lebanon, Vice President Cheney reiterated his warning: "The enemy that struck on 9/11 is fractured and weakened, *yet still lethal, still determined to hit us again*" (Waterloo Courier, Iowa, 19 July 2006, italics added).

**"Justification and Opportunity to Retaliate against ...the State Sponsors [of Terrorism]"**

In April 2006, Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld launched a far-reaching military plan to fight terrorism around the World, with a view to retaliating in the case of a second major terrorist attack on America.

"Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld has approved the military's most ambitious plan yet to fight terrorism around the world and retaliate *more rapidly and decisively in the case of another major terrorist attack on the United States*, according to defense officials.

The long-awaited campaign plan for the global war on terrorism, as well as two subordinate plans also approved within the past month by Rumsfeld, are considered the Pentagon's highest priority, according to officials familiar with the three documents who spoke on the condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to speak about them publicly.

Details of the plans are secret, but in general they envision a significantly expanded role for the military -- and, in particular, a growing force of elite Special Operations troops -- in continuous operations to combat terrorism outside of war zones such as Iraq and Afghanistan. Developed over about three years by the Special Operations Command (SOCOM) in Tampa, the plans reflect a beefing up of the Pentagon's involvement in domains traditionally handled by the Central Intelligence Agency and the State Department. (Washington Post, 23 April 2006)

This plan is predicated on the possibility of a Second 911 and the need to retaliate if and when the US is attacked:

"A third plan sets out how the military can both disrupt and respond to another major terrorist strike on the United States. It includes lengthy annexes that offer a menu of options for the military to retaliate quickly against specific terrorist groups, individuals or state sponsors depending on who is believed to be behind an attack. *Another attack could create both a justification and an opportunity that is lacking today to retaliate against some known targets, according to current and former defense officials familiar with the plan.*

This plan details "what terrorists or bad guys we would hit if the gloves came off. The gloves are not off," said one official, who asked not to be identified because of the sensitivity of the subject. (italics added, WP 23 April 2006)

The presumption of this military document, is that a Second 911 attack "which is lacking today" would usefully create both a "justification and an opportunity" to wage war on "some known targets [Iran and Syria]".

The announcement on August 10 by the British Home Office of a foiled large scale terror attack to simultaneously blow up as many as ten airplanes, conveys the impression that it is the Western World rather than the Middle East which is under attack.

Realities are twisted upside down. The disinformation campaign has gone into full gear. The British and US media are increasingly pointing towards "preemptive war" as an act of "self defense" against Al Qaeda and the State sponsors of terrorism, who are allegedly preparing a Second 911. The underlying objective, through fear and intimidation, is ultimately to build public acceptance for the next stage of the Middle East "war on terrorism" which is directed against Syria and Iran.

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