

Operation Bite - April 6 Sneak Attack

By US Forces On Iran Planned - Russian Military Sources Warn

General Ivashov Calls For Emergency Session Of UN Security Council To Ward Off Looming US Aggression

By Webster G. Tarpley
3-25-7

WASHINGTON DC -- The long awaited US military attack on Iran is now on track for the first week of April, specifically for 4 AM on April 6, the Good Friday opening of Easter weekend, writes the well-known Russian journalist Andrei Uglanov in the Moscow weekly "Argumenty Nedeli." Uglanov cites Russian military experts close to the Russian General Staff for his account.

The attack is slated to last for twelve hours, according to Uglanov, lasting from 4 AM until 4 PM local time. Friday is a holiday in Iran. In the course of the attack, code named Operation Bite, about 20 targets are marked for bombing; the list includes uranium enrichment facilities, research centers, and laboratories.

The first reactor at the Bushehr nuclear plant, where Russian engineers are working, is supposed to be spared from destruction. The US attack plan reportedly calls for the Iranian air defense system to be degraded, for numerous Iranian warships to be sunk in the Persian Gulf, and the for the most important headquarters of the Iranian armed forces to be wiped out.

The attacks will be mounted from a number of bases, including the island of Diego Garcia in the Indian Ocean. Diego Garcia is currently home to B-52 bombers equipped with standoff missiles. Also participating in the air strikes will be US naval aviation from aircraft carriers in the Persian Gulf, as well as from those of the Sixth Fleet in the Mediterranean. Additional cruise missiles will be fired from submarines in the Indian Ocean and off the coast of the Arabian peninsula. The goal is allegedly to set back Iran's nuclear program by several years, writes Uglanov, whose article was re-issued by RIA-Novosti in various languages, but apparently not English, several days ago. The story is the top item on numerous Italian and German blogs, but so far appears to have been ignored by US websites.

Observers comment that this dispatch represents a high-level

orchestrated leak from the Kremlin, in effect a war warning, which draws on the formidable resources of the Russian intelligence services, and which deserves to be taken with the utmost seriousness by pro-peace forces around the world.

Asked by RIA-Novosti to comment on the Uglanov report, retired Colonel General Leonid Ivashov confirmed its essential features in a March 21 interview: "I have no doubt that there will be an operation, or more precisely a violent action against Iran." Ivashov, who has reportedly served at various times as an informal advisor to Putin, is currently the Vice President of the Moscow Academy for Geopolitical Sciences.

Ivashov attributed decisive importance to the decision of the Democratic leadership of the US House of Representatives to remove language from the just-passed Iraq supplemental military appropriations bill which would have demanded that Bush come to Congress before launching an attack on Iran. Ivashov pointed out that the language was eliminated under pressure from AIPAC, the lobbying group representing the Israeli extreme right, and of Israeli Foreign Minister Tsipi Livni.

"We have drawn the unmistakable conclusion that this operation will take place," said Ivashov. In his opinion, the US planning does not include a land operation: "Most probably there will be no ground attack, but rather massive air attacks with the goal of annihilating Iran's capacity for military resistance, the centers of administration, the key economic assets, and quite possibly the Iranian political leadership, or at least part of it," he continued.

Ivashov noted that it was not to be excluded that the Pentagon would use smaller tactical nuclear weapons against targets of the Iranian nuclear industry. These attacks could paralyze everyday life, create panic in the population, and generally produce an atmosphere of chaos and uncertainty all over Iran, Ivashov told RIA-Novosti. "This will unleash a struggle for power inside Iran, and then there will be a peace delegation sent in to install a pro-American government in Teheran," Ivashov continued. One of the US goals was, in his estimation, to burnish the image of the current Republican administration, who would now be able to boast that they had wiped out the Iranian nuclear program.

Among the other outcomes, General Ivashov pointed to a partition of Iran along the same lines as Iraq, and a subsequent carving up of the Near and Middle East into smaller regions. "This concept worked well for them in the Balkans and will now be applied to the greater Middle East," he commented.

"Moscow must exert Russia's influence by demanding an emergency session of the United Nations Security Council to deal with the current preparations for an illegal use of force against Iran and the destruction of the basis of the United Nations Charter," said General Ivashov. "In this context Russia could cooperate with China, France and the non-permanent members of the Security Council. We need this kind of

preventive action to ward off the use of force," he concluded.

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