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петак, 20 август 2010 10:50

(Global Research, August 13, 2010)

Towards a World War III Scenario? The Role of Israel in Triggering an Attack on Iran

Part II The Military Road Map

To consult Part I of this essay click below:

Preparing for World War III, Targeting Iran

The stockpiling and deployment of advanced weapons systems directed against Iran started in the immediate wake of the 2003 bombing and invasion of Iraq. From the outset, these war plans were led by the US, in liaison with NATO and Israel.

Following the 2003 invasion of Iraq, the Bush administration identified Iran and Syria as the next stage of “the road map to war”. US military sources intimated that an aerial attack on Iran could involve a large scale deployment comparable to the US "shock and awe" bombing raids on Iraq in March 2003:

"American air strikes on Iran would vastly exceed the scope of the 1981 Israeli attack on the Osiraq nuclear center in Iraq, and would more resemble the opening days of the 2003 air campaign against Iraq.(See Globalsecurity)

"Theater Iran Near Term"

Code named by US military planners as TIRANNT, "Theater Iran Near Term", simulations of an attack on Iran were initiated in May 2003 "when modelers and intelligence specialists pulled together the data needed for theater-level (meaning large-scale) scenario analysis for Iran." (William Arkin, *Washington Post*, 16 April 2006).

The scenarios identified several thousand targets inside Iran as part of a "Shock and Awe" Blitzkrieg:

"The analysis, called TIRANNT, for "Theater Iran Near Term," was coupled with a mock scenario for a Marine Corps invasion and a simulation of the Iranian missile force. U.S. and British planners conducted a Caspian Sea war game around the same time. And Bush directed the U.S. Strategic Command to draw up a global strike war plan for an attack against Iranian weapons of mass destruction. All of this will ultimately feed into a new war plan for "major combat operations" against Iran that military sources confirm now [April 2006] exists in draft form.

... Under TIRANNT, Army and U.S. Central Command planners have been examining both near-term and out-year scenarios for war with Iran, including all aspects of a major combat operation, from mobilization and deployment of forces through postwar stability operations after regime change." (William Arkin, *Washington Post*, 16 April 2006)

Different "theater scenarios" for an all out attack on Iran had been contemplated: "The US army, navy, air force and marines have all prepared battle plans and spent four years building bases and training for "Operation Iranian Freedom". Admiral Fallon, the new head of US Central Command, has inherited computerized plans under the name TIRANNT (Theatre Iran Near Term)." (*New Statesman*, February 19, 2007)

In 2004, drawing upon the initial war scenarios under TIRANNT, Vice President Dick Cheney instructed USSTRATCOM to draw up a "contingency plan" of a large scale military operation directed against Iran "to be employed in response to another 9/11-type terrorist attack on the United States" on the presumption that the government in Tehran would be behind the terrorist plot. The plan included the pre-emptive use of nuclear weapons against a non-nuclear state:

"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, Deep Background , The American Conservative
August 2005)

The Military Road Map: "First Iraq, then Iran"

The decision to target Iran under TIRANNT was part of the broader process of military planning and sequencing of military operations. Already under the Clinton administration, US Central Command (USCENTCOM) had formulated "in war theater plans" to invade first Iraq and then Iran. Access to Middle East oil was the stated strategic objective:

"The broad national security interests and objectives expressed in the President's National Security Strategy (NSS) and the Chairman's National Military Strategy (NMS) form the foundation of the United States Central Command's theater strategy. The NSS directs implementation of a strategy of dual containment of the rogue states of Iraq and Iran as long as those states pose a threat to U.S. interests, to other states in the region, and to their own citizens. Dual containment is designed to maintain the balance of power in the region without depending on either Iraq or Iran. USCENTCOM's theater strategy is interest-based and threat-focused. The purpose of U.S. engagement, as espoused in the NSS, is to protect the United States' vital interest in the region - uninterrupted, secure U.S./Allied access to Gulf oil." (USCENTCOM, http://www.milnet.com/milnet/pentagon/centcom/chap1/stratgic.htm#USPolicy , link no longer active)

The war on Iran was viewed as part of a succession of military operations. According to (former) NATO Commander General Wesley Clark, the Pentagon's military road-map consisted of a sequence of countries: "[The] Five-year campaign plan [includes]... a total of seven countries, beginning with Iraq, then Syria, Lebanon, Libya, Iran, Somalia and Sudan." In "Winning Modern Wars" (page 130) General Clark states the following:

"As I went back through the Pentagon in November 2001, one of the senior military staff officers had time for a chat. Yes, we were still on track for going against Iraq, he said. But there was more. This was being discussed as part of a five-year campaign plan, he said, and there were a total of seven countries, beginning with Iraq, then Syria, Lebanon, Libya, Iran, Somalia and Sudan. (See Secret 2001 Pentagon Plan to Attack Lebanon , Global Research, July 23, 2006)

The Role of Israel

There has been much debate regarding the role of Israel in initiating an attack against Iran.

Israel is part of a military alliance. Tel Aviv is not a prime mover. It does not have a separate and distinct military agenda.

Israel is integrated into the "war plan for major combat operations" against Iran formulated in 2006 by US Strategic Command (USSTRATCOM). In the context of large scale military operations, an uncoordinated unilateral military action by one coalition partner, namely Israel, is from a military and strategic point almost an impossibility. Israel is a de facto member of NATO. Any action by Israel would require a "green light" from Washington.

An attack by Israel could, however, be used as "the trigger mechanism" which would unleash an all out war against Iran, as well retaliation by Iran directed against Israel.

In this regard, there are indications that Washington might envisage the option of an initial (US backed) attack by Israel rather than an outright US-led military operation directed against Iran. The Israeli attack --although led in close liaison with the Pentagon and NATO-- would be presented to public opinion as a unilateral decision by Tel Aviv. It would then be used by Washington to justify, in the eyes of World opinion, a military intervention of the US and NATO with a view to "defending Israel", rather than attacking Iran. Under existing military cooperation agreements, both the US and NATO would be "obligated" to "defend Israel" against Iran and Syria.

It is worth noting, in this regard, that at the outset of Bush's second term, (former) Vice

President Dick Cheney hinted, in no uncertain terms, that Iran was "right at the top of the list" of the "rogue enemies" of America, and that Israel would, so to speak, "be doing the bombing for us", without US military involvement and without us putting pressure on them "to do it" (See Michel Chossudovsky, Planned US-Israeli Attack on Iran , Global Research, May 1, 2005): According to Cheney:

"One of the concerns people have is that Israel might do it without being asked... Given the fact that Iran has a stated policy that their objective is the destruction of Israel, the Israelis might well decide to act first, and let the rest of the world worry about cleaning up the diplomatic mess afterwards," (Dick Cheney, quoted from an MSNBC Interview, January 2005)

Commenting the Vice President's assertion, former National Security adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski in an interview on PBS, confirmed with some apprehension, yes: Cheney wants Prime Minister Ariel Sharon to act on America's behalf and "do it" for us:

"Iran I think is more ambiguous. And there the issue is certainly not tyranny; it's nuclear weapons. And the vice president today in a kind of a strange parallel statement to this declaration of freedom hinted that the Israelis may do it and in fact used language which sounds like a justification or even an encouragement for the Israelis to do it."

What we are dealing with is a joint US-NATO-Israel military operation to bomb Iran, which has been in the active planning stage since 2004. Officials in the Defense Department, under Bush and Obama, have been working assiduously with their Israeli military and intelligence counterparts, carefully identifying targets inside Iran. In practical military terms, any action by Israel would have to be planned and coordinated at the highest levels of the US led coalition.

An attack by Israel would also require coordinated US-NATO logistical support, particularly with regard to Israel's air defense system, which since January 2009 is fully integrated into that of the US and NATO. (See Michel Chossudovsky, Unusually Large U.S. Weapons Shipment to Israel: Are the US and Israel Planning a Broader Middle East War?
Global Research, January 11,2009)

Israel's X band radar system established in early 2009 with US technical support has "integrate[d] Israel’s missile defenses with the U.S. global missile [Space-based] detection

network, which includes satellites, Aegis ships on the Mediterranean, Persian Gulf and Red Sea, and land-based Patriot radars and interceptors." (Defense Talk.com, January 6, 2009 ,)

What this means is that Washington ultimately calls the shots. The US rather than Israel controls the air defense system: "This is and will remain a U.S. radar system,' Pentagon spokesman Geoff Morrell said. 'So this is not something we are giving or selling to the Israelis and it is something that will likely require U.S. personnel on-site to operate.'" (Quoted in Israel National News, January 9, 2009, emphasis added).

The US military oversees Israel's Air Defense system, which is integrated into the Pentagon's global system. In other words, Israel cannot launch a war against Iran without Washington's consent. Hence the importance of the so-called "Green Light" legislation in the Congress sponsored by the Republican party under House Resolution 1553, which explicitly supports an Israeli attakc on Iran:

"The measure, introduced by Texas Republican Louie Gohmert and 46 of his colleagues, endorses Israel's use of "all means necessary" against Iran "including the use of military force." ... "We've got to get this done. We need to show our support for Israel. We need to quit playing games with this critical ally in such a difficult area."' (See Webster Tarpley, Fidel Castro Warns of Imminent Nuclear War; Admiral Mullen Threatens Iran; US-Israel Vs. Iran-Hezbollah Confrontation Builds On
, Global Research, August 10, 2010)

In practice, the proposed legislation is a "Green Light" to the White House and the Pentagon rather than to Israel. It constitutes a rubber stamp to a US sponsored war on Iran which uses Israel as a convenient military launch pad. It also serves as a justification to wage war with a view to defending Israel.

In this context, Israel could indeed provide the pretext to wage war, in response to alleged Hamas or Hezbollah attacks and/or the triggering of hostilities on the border of Israel with Lebanon. What is crucial is that a minor "incident" could be used to spark off a major military operation against Iran.

Known to US military planners, Israel (rather than the USA) would be the first target of military

retaliation by Iran. Broadly speaking Israelis would be the victims of the machinations of both Washington and their own government. It is, in this regard, absolutely crucial that Israelis forcefully oppose any action by the Netanyahu government to attack Iran.

Global Warfare: The Role of US Strategic Command (USSTRATCOM)

Global military operations are coordinated out of US Strategic Command Headquarters (USSTRATCOM) at the Offutt Air Force base in Nebraska, in liaison with the regional commands of the unified combatant commands (e.g.. US Central Command in Florida, which is responsible for the Middle East-Central Asian region, See map below) as well as coalition command units in Israel, Turkey, the Persian Gulf and the Diego Garcia military base in the Indian Ocean. Military planning and decision making at a country level by individual allies of US-NATO as well as "partner nations" is integrated into a global military design including the weaponization of space.

Under its new mandate, USSTRATCOM has a responsibility for "overseeing a global strike plan" consisting of both conventional and nuclear weapons. In military jargon, it is slated to play the role of "a global integrator charged with the missions of Space Operations; Information Operations; Integrated Missile Defense; Global Command & Control; Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance; Global Strike; and Strategic Deterrence.... "

USSTRATCOM's responsibilities include: "leading, planning, & executing strategic deterrence operations" at a global level, "synchronizing global missile defense plans and operations", "synchronizing regional combat plans", etc. USSTRATCOM is the lead agency in the coordination of modern warfare.

In January 2005, at the outset of the military deployment and build-up directed against Iran, USSTRATCOM was identified as "the lead Combatant Command for integration and synchronization of DoD-wide efforts in combating weapons of mass destruction." (Michel Chossudovsky, Nuclear War against Iran , Global Research, January 3, 2006).

What this means is that the coordination of a large scale attack on Iran, including the various scenarios of escalation in and beyond the broader Middle East Central Asian region would be coordinated by USSTRATCOM.

Map: US Central Command's Area of Jurisdiction

Tactical Nuclear Weapons directed against Iran

Confirmed by military documents as well as official statements, both the US and Israel contemplate the use of nuclear weapons directed against Iran. In 2006, U.S. Strategic Command (USSTRATCOM) announced it had achieved an operational capability for rapidly striking targets around the globe using nuclear or conventional weapons. This announcement was made after the conduct of military simulations pertaining to a US led nuclear attack against a fictional country. (David Ruppe, Preemptive Nuclear War in a State of Readiness: U.S. Command Declares Global Strike Capability , Global Security Newswire, December 2, 2005)

Continuity in relation to the Bush-Cheney era: President Obama has largely endorsed the doctrine of pre-emptive use of nuclear weapons formulated by the previous administration. Under the 2010 Nuclear Posture Review, the Obama administration confirmed "that it is reserving the right to use nuclear weapons against Iran" for its non-compliance with US demands regarding its alleged (nonexistent) nuclear weapons program. (U.S. Nuclear Option on Iran Linked to Israeli Attack Threat - IPS ipsnews.net , April 23, 2010). The Obama administration has also intimated that it would use nukes in the case of an Iranian response to an Israeli attack on Iran. (Ibid). Israel has also drawn up its own "secret plans" to bomb Iran with tactical nuclear weapons:

"Israeli military commanders believe conventional strikes may no longer be enough to annihilate increasingly well-defended enrichment facilities. Several have been built beneath at least 70ft of concrete and rock. However, the nuclear-tipped bunker-busters would be used only if a conventional attack was ruled out and if the United States declined to intervene, senior sources said."(Revealed: Israel plans nuclear strike on Iran - Times Online , January 7, 2007)

Obama's statements on the use of nuclear weapons against Iran and North Korea are consistent with post 9/11 US nuclear weapons doctrine, which allows for the use of tactical nuclear weapons in the conventional war theater.

Through a propaganda campaign which has enlisted the support of "authoritative" nuclear scientists, mini-nukes are upheld as an instrument of peace, namely a means to combating "Islamic terrorism" and instating Western style "democracy" in Iran. The low-yield nukes have been cleared for "battlefield use". They are slated to be used against Iran and Syria in the next stage of America's "war on Terrorism" alongside conventional weapons.

"Administration officials argue that low-yield nuclear weapons are needed as a credible deterrent against rogue states. [Iran, Syria, North Korea] Their logic is that existing nuclear weapons are too destructive to be used except in a full-scale nuclear war. Potential enemies realize this, thus they do not consider the threat of nuclear retaliation to be credible. However, low-yield nuclear weapons are less destructive, thus might conceivably be used. That would make them more effective as a deterrent." (Opponents Surprised By Elimination of Nuke Research Funds Defense News November 29, 2004)

The preferred nuclear weapon to be used against Iran are tactical nuclear weapons (Made in America), namely bunker buster bombs with nuclear warheads (e.g. B61.11), with an explosive capacity between one third to six times a Hiroshima bomb. The B61-11 is the "nuclear version" of the "conventional" B LU 113.
or Guided Bomb Unit
GBU-28
. It can be delivered in much same way as the conventional bunker buster bomb. (See Michel Chossudovsky,
http://www.globalresearch.ca/articles/CHO112C.html
, see also
http://www.thebulletin.org/article_nn.php?art_ofn=jf03norris
). While the US does not contemplate the use of strategic thermonuclear weapons against Iran, Israel's nuclear arsenal is largely composed of thermonuclear bombs which are deployed and could be used in a war with Iran. Under Israel's Jericho-III missile system with a range between 4,800 km to 6,500 km, all Iran would be within reach.

Conventional bunker buster Guided Bomb Unit GBU-27

B61 bunker buster bomb

Radiactive Fallout

The issue of radioactive fallout and contamination, while casually dismissed by US-NATO military analysts, would be devastating, potentially affecting a large area of the broader Middle East (including Israel) and Central Asian region.

In an utterly twisted logic, nuclear weapons are presented as a means to building peace and preventing "collateral damage". Iran's nonexistent nuclear weapons are a threat to global security, whereas those of the US and Israel are instruments of peace" harmless to the surrounding civilian population**".**

"The Mother of All Bombs" (MOAB) Slated to be Used against Iran

Of military significance within the US conventional weapons arsenal is the 21,500-pound "monster weapon" nicknamed the "mother of all bombs" The GBU-43/B or Massive Ordnance Air Blast bomb (MOAB) was categorized "as the most powerful non-nuclear weapon ever designed" with the the largest yield in the US conventional arsenal. The MOAB was tested in early March 2003 before being deployed to the Iraq war theater. According to US military sources, The Joint Chiefs of Staff had advised the government of Saddam Hussein prior to launching the 2003 that the "mother of all bombs" was contemplated to be used against Iraq. (There were unconfirmed reports that it had been used in Iraq).

The US Department of Defence has confirmed in October 2009 that it intends to use the "Mother of All Bombs" (MOAB) against Iran. The MOAB is said to be "ideally suited to hit deeply buried nuclear facilities such as Natanz or Qom in Iran" (Jonathan Karl, Is the U.S. Preparing to Bomb Iran? ABC News, October 9, 2009). The truth of the matter is that the MOAB, given its explosive capacity, would result in extremely large civilian casualties. It is a conventional "killing machine" with a nuclear type mushroom cloud.

The procurement of four MOABs was commissioned in October 2009 at the hefty cost of $58.4 million, ($14.6 million for each bomb). This amount includes the costs of development and

testing as well as integration of the MOAB bombs onto B-2 stealth bombers.(Ibid). This procurement is directly linked to war preparations in relation to Iran. The notification was contained in a 93-page "reprogramming memo" which included the following instructions:

"The Department has an Urgent Operational Need (UON) **for the capability to strike hard and deeply buried targets in high threat environments**
. The MOP [Mother of All Bombs] is the weapon of choice to meet the requirements of the UON [Urgent Operational Need]." It further states that
the request is endorsed by Pacific Command (which has responsibility over North Korea) and Central Command (which has responsibility over Iran)
." (ABC News, op cit, emphasis added). To consult the reprogramming request (pdf)
click here

The Pentagon is planning on a process of extensive destruction of Iran's infrastructure and mass civilian casualties through the combined use of tactical nukes and monster conventional mushroom cloud bombs, including the MOAB and the larger GBU-57A/B or Massive Ordnance Penetrator (MOP), which surpasses the MOAB in terms of explosive capacity.

The MOP is described as "a powerful new bomb aimed squarely at the underground nuclear facilities of Iran and North Korea. The gargantuan bomb—longer than 11 persons standing shoulder-to-shoulder [see image below] or more than 20 feet base to nose" (See Edwin Black, "
Super Bunker-Buster Bombs Fast-Tracked for Possible Use Against Iran and North Korea Nuclear Programs",
Cutting Edge, September 21 2009)

"Mother of All Bombs" (MOAB)

GBU-57A/B Mass Ordnance Penetrator (MOP)

POLAND
BELARUS
CZ. REP.
AUST.
SLVK.
HUNG.
UKRAINE
MOLD.
ROMANIA
SERB.
BULG.
GREECE
RUSSIA
1,200-mile Range
KAZAKHSTAN
Black Sea
Caspian Sea
UZBEKISTAN
KYRGYZ.
CHINA
GA.
ARM.
AZER.
TURKEY
TURKMEN.
TAJIK.
Med. Sea
CYPRUS
SYRIA
LEB.
ISRAEL
Tehran
IRAN
AFGHAN.
IRAQ
NEPAL
JOR.
PAKISTAN
LIBYA
Persian Gulf
EGYPT
KUWAIT
INDIA
BAHRAIN
QATAR
Strait of Hormuz
U.A.E.
SAUDI ARABIA
OMAN
Red Sea
Arabian Sea
ERITREA
YEMEN
SUDAN
0
500
MILES
1,200-mile Range
DJIB.
ETHIOPIA
SOMALIA

Photo : Satyar Emami. FARS NEWS AGENCY

According to Vice Admiral Lowell E. Jacoby, "the intensity of the military exercises in progress, the deployment of [illegible] (www.globalresearch.ca, 30 November 2008) [illegible]

Photo : Hossein Fatemi FARS NEWS AGENCY

Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran - Wikipedia

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Kosovo
Macedonia
Albania
Bulgaria
Kazakstan
2
Black Sea
Aral Sea
Greece
Georgia
Uzbekistan
Kyrgyzstan
Turkey
Armenia
Azerbaijan
China
Mediterranean Sea
Cyprus
Caspian Sea
Tajikistan
Lebanon
Syria
Turkmenistan
Palestine
Kashmir
Israel
Jordan
Iraq
Iran
Afghanistan
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Pakistan
Egypt
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