

Cheney Leads London War Drive Against Iran

by Jeffrey Steinberg and Michele Steinberg

Vice President Dick Cheney is leading a drive for military strikes against Iran before the Bush Administration leaves office. As the result, he is in a brawl with Defense Secretary Robert Gates and other sane elements inside the Bush Administration, who say that military action against Iran would be “catastrophic.”

With the entire international financial system already in free fall, a spike in oil prices—an inevitable consequence of U.S. strikes against Iran—would wipe out the world economy. This is precisely what the British wish to unleash. To the extent that Cheney’s actions are not seen in this larger context, there is a danger that the anti-war factions could lose the fight.

Sources close to the Pentagon report, with alarm, that the U.S. military has been ordered to accelerate plans for strikes against Iran, for implementation immediately. While no Presidential orders to strike have yet been given, the acceleration of the preparations are seen as a Cheney move to get President Bush, who is intellectually and emotionally incapable of considering the consequences of such an order, to approve such military action.

With Iran clearly pulling back from provocations in Iraq, the pretext for war has increasingly focussed on Iran’s alleged nuclear weaponization program. Pentagon sources confirm that operational plans for a “range of military actions” are being updated, including for an air war campaign, and for more limited airborne raids, to seize evidence from suspected Iranian nuclear weapons sites, including the enrichment facility at Natanz and the nuclear power plant nearing completion at Busher. One retired senior U.S. military officer reported

that there are as many as 40 targets for an air war.

New Yorker magazine reporter Seymour Hersh charged, in a July 31 interview with ThinkProgress.org, that Cheney and his allies have discussed staging a “Gulf of Tonkin” incident in the Strait of Hormuz, in which the U.S. would fake an attack by Iranian Revolutionary Guard speedboats on an American patrol boat, and engage in “defensive” combat. Because the scheme was ultimately rejected, Hersh complained, his editors at the *New Yorker* would not allow the details to be published in his recent article detailing Cheney’s war plans, including covert operations inside Iran.

U.S. intelligence community sources report that Cheney is also pressing for an early release of a new “Special National Intelligence Estimate” on Iran’s pursuit of nuclear weapons, aimed at countering last December’s NIE, which found that Iran had abandoned work on weaponization in 2003. The sources say that Cheney wants the document out by late August, to have the war option in place by September.

In an extraordinary series of moves to counter Cheney’s war drive, Defense Secretary Gates has issued two published reports, challenging the demand for war now. First, the latest issue of *Parameters*, the journal of the Army War College in Carlisle, Pa., published a signed article by the Secretary, in which he stated that a war against Iran would be “catastrophic.” Gates argued that the U.S. military is already straining under the demands of the Iraq and Afghanistan wars, and could not bear the burden of another.

The second document, the Pentagon’s 2008 National Defense Strategy, is still in preparation, but has

been released to the public, to buttress the argument that war with Iran is not in the U.S. strategic interest. In both reports, Gates downgrades the U.S. relationship with Israel, by citing Israel as a regional ally, rather than a strategic ally. This coincides with recent private messages from the Pentagon to its Israeli counterparts, that, under no circumstances, would the U.S. support Israeli “unilateral” military strikes against Iran. In Israel, a parallel factional brawl is under way. Israeli Defense Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Gabi Ashkenazi, who is opposed to a new war, recently briefed the Israeli Cabinet on the consequences. Among the Israelis backing Cheney’s war drive is Defense Minister and Labor Party head Ehud Barak, who was in Washington in late July, pushing Cheney’s line.

In addition to his public stance against preventive war against Iran, Gates recently purged the top civilian and military leadership of the U.S. Air Force, ostensibly over two security breaches. But sources close to the Secretary confirm that the real issue is the Air Force top command’s promotion of “shock and awe” air war. One source described it as the Air Force belief that “you can carry out regime change from 50,000 feet.” Gates is reportedly committed to crushing the air war utopians, allies of the Cheney war party.

Cheney a British Agent

Lyndon LaRouche has repeatedly emphasized that Cheney’s insistence that Iran be attacked before the Bush Administration leaves office, can only be understood from the standpoint of his British controllers. Cheney’s ties to the imperial faction in London date back decades. Through his own and his wife’s ties to Baroness Liz Symons, a former Tony Blair Cabinet insider and Iraq War promoter, the Cheneys maintain collaboration with the Fabian imperialists in London. Cheney has been an American asset of the British war party since his time in the Ford White House, when he was recruited by Irving Kristol to the hard-core neocon faction.

What most people do not understand, is that the so-called neoconservative movement is pure British imperialism. In a recent book, *The Neocon Reader*, Rupert Murdoch hit-man Irwin Stelzer boasted that what passes for American neoconservatism, has been British imperial policy of preventive war, dating back to George Canning, Lord Palmerston, and Winston Churchill. The Murdoch media machine, led in the United States by Fox TV, the *Wall Street Journal*, and the *New York Post*, and in Britain by the *London Times*,

has been the main propaganda arm of the apparatus leading the drive for the attack on Iran.

Cheney and the Coup Plot in Turkey

In what may prove to be part of the push-back against Cheney’s war drive, Turkish prosecutors have publicly linked the American Vice President with a recently exposed right-wing coup plot against the Erdogan government. Cheney’s role was exposed in a July 15 criminal indictment against former top military officials and others linked to the Ergenekon gang, who plotted a “strategy of tension” coup against the government.

The 2,500-page indictment shows:

In **February 2002**, two Cheney advisors met with the Washington representative of the Turkish newspaper *Cumhuriyet*, Elcin Poyrazlar. Cheney’s aides reviewed the prospects for instability in Turkey, and for a post-Erdogan regime, more friendly to the war party.

On **March 14, 2008**, ten days before Cheney was scheduled to visit to Turkey, a suit was brought against the governing party, the AKP, charging that it had violated the Constitution and should be banned (the Supreme Court has rejected that demand, but subjected the AKP to fines against the promotion of Islamic law, which is banned under the Constitution). The clear aim of the suit was to provoke civil war that could lead to a coup.

On **March 21, 2008**, the publisher of *Cumhuriyet* was interrogated by Turkish prosecutors, on the meeting with Cheney’s people in Washington. Clearly there was concern that the coup schemes of the Ergenekon group (see last week’s *EIR*) had Cheney’s blessing.

On **March 24, 2008**, Cheney arrived in Ankara, to press the Turkish government for cooperation against Iran. Turkey refused, just as it refused to allow the U.S. and Britain to use its territory to stage the 2003 invasion of Iraq.

Deeper British Motives

British Fabian imperialists, including former Prime Minister Blair and Prince Philip, have made it clear that imperial policy is driven by the demand for a post-nation-state world, in which the world’s population is reduced by as much as 80%, to make the world safe for oligarchical one-world rule. The British have long been out to destroy the United States, as a key part of that policy. Now, with the world financial system in the final collapse phase, London is intent on war and Schachtian death-camp economics. Iran, with its strategic location, is its target of choice.