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Cheney's Role in 9/11 Put On Center Stage by British MP

by Mark Burdman

For the first time, a prominent British political figure has aired his suspicions, that the group around U.S. Vice President Dick Cheney may have intentionally caused, or allowed to happen, the mega-terrorism in New York and Washington on Sept. 11, 2001, to set into motion an era of neo-imperial wars. Labour Party Member of Parliament Michael Meacher wrote a major feature focussing on Cheney's Project for a New American Century grouping, in the London *Guardian* on Sept. 6. Meacher had resigned in June as Environment Minister, a post he held in Tony Blair's government for six years. This Summer's political wars in Britain, as *EIR* forecast they would, are drawing ever closer to Cheney. This is the context in which Meacher took Blair to task for subordinating Britain's interests to Cheney and his neo-conservative gang in Washington.

Ever since Lyndon LaRouche first affirmed, early in the morning of 9/11, that the attacks were an "inside job," it has been taboo in Britain to publicly discuss this possibility, especially as Blair's Britain joined in the neo-conservatives' wars against Afghanistan and Iraq, becoming the Cheney-acs' main prop overseas. And although Meacher's polemic narrows the motive of Cheney et al. to an oil grab, his intervention is timely.

On Sept. 7, just ahead of the second anniversary of 9/11, London was the scene of huge "anti-terror exercises," including contingency plans for the mass evacuation of the city. During that week, there was heavy police presence and Londoners were very nervous. One European strategist warned *EIR* Sept. 9, that London is the most likely target for a new act of mega-terrorism. But a London insider cautioned *EIR,* on the same day, that Blair and his minions are determined to stoke alarm, to "justify" his war policies and to divert attention from his political woes.

Those woes are bound to get worse. The Lord Hutton inquiry into the July 17 death of weapons expert Dr. David Kelly had produced startling revelations by Sept. 8, blowing apart the case Blair made last year for war against Iraq. One informed source affirmed Sept. 8: "This is only the beginning, and when the inquiry resumes next Monday [Sept. 15], things are going to get a lot tougher, when the process of cross-examining leading officials begins."

Other Labourites are joining the attack on Blair, including former International Development Secretary Clare Short, and former Leader of the House of Commons and former Foreign Secretary Robin Cook. On Sept. 8, Cook drew gasps from MPs, when he blasted Defense Secretary Geoff Hoon for having ignored the reservations of his own Defense Intelligence Staff (DIS), about the fraudulent September 2002 dossier on Iraqi weapons of mass destruction (WMD) issued by Blair's 10 Downing Street. Hoon was then jeered, when he tried to pass off responsibility for the dossier to Britain's Joint Intelligence Committee (JIC). The next day, it was revealed that Hoon had given misleading evidence to the House of Commons Intelligence and Security Committee investigating the dossier in July, flatly denying that DIS experts had expressed such concerns. It is widely assumed that Hoon will soon bite the dust, closely following the Aug. 29 resignation of Downing Street chief spin doctor Alastair Campbell.

On Sept. 8, Foreign Secretary Jack Straw came into the Hutton inquiry fire, as documents were released showing his role in bringing Kelly's name into the public light, as the

source for a BBC report that intelligence experts had regarded the September 2002 dossier as "sexed up." Kelly's death followed shortly after his name was made public. It also came out that Hoon had played a role in "sexing up" that dossier, urging that references to Iraqi WMDs be strengthened and demanding a "killer paragraph" to make the case against Iraq stronger.

A U.K. intelligence expert told *EIR* Sept. 8, that these eruptions are creating a fertile environment, in which the issues Meacher has raised can now be "openly debated and considered. . . . The Hutton inquiry, and other factors, have raised enormous questions about why Tony Blair, in reality, wanted this Iraqi weapons dossier, and that, in turn, is focussing attention on the motives of the administration in Washington, in starting the war in Iraq."

This bad news for Blair in Britain bodes ill for Cheney and Co., and all sorts of surprises may emerge. How nervous certain people are, is becoming clear from the wild attacks on Meacher's article: by the American Embassy in London; by Lord Conrad Black's *Sunday Telegraph;* and by Rupert Murdoch's *Times.*

'The Truth May Be a Great Deal Murkier'

Meacher's *Guardian* article was entitled, "This War on Terrorism Is Bogus," with the sub-title, "The 9/11 attacks gave the U.S. an ideal pretext to use force to secure its global domination."

He began, that whereas "massive attention" has been paid to Britain's excuse for going to war, "far too little attention has focused on why the U.S. went to war; and that throws light on British motives too.

"The conventional explanation is that after the Twin Towers were hit, retaliation against al-Qaeda bases in Afghanistan was a natural first step in launching a global war against terrorism. Then, because Saddam Hussein was alleged by the U.S. and U.K. governments to retain weapons of mass destruction, the war could be extended to Iraq as well. However this theory does not fit all the facts. The truth may be a great deal murkier."

He went on: "We now know that a blueprint for the creation of a global Pax Americana was drawn up for Dick Cheney (now Vice President), Donald Rumsfeld (Defense Secretary), Paul Wolfowitz (Rumsfeld's deputy), Jeb Bush (George Bush's younger brother) and Lewis Libby (Cheney's chief of staff). The document, entitled 'Rebuilding America's Defenses,' was written in September 2000 by the neo-conservative think-tank, Project for the New American Century (PNAC).

"The plan shows Bush's cabinet intended to take military control of the Gulf region whether or not Saddam Hussein was in power. It says 'while the unresolved conflict with Iraq provides the immediate justification, the need for a substantial American force presence in the Gulf transcends the issue of the regime of Saddam Hussein.' "

Meacher noted that the PNAC blueprint supported an earlier document attributed to Wolfowitz and Libby which said the United States must "discourage advanced industrial nations from challenging our leadership or even aspiring to a larger regional or global role." This early-1990s "Pentagon Guidance Document," a.k.a. "the Wolfowitz doctrine," prescribes pre-emptive military action, and implicitly, pre-emptive nuclear strikes, against potential challenges to an American or Anglo-American empire.

Cheney, then Defense Secretary in President H.W. Bush's Administration, supported this outrage, which was nixed then by senior Administration figures, including the President. With Bush Jr., the policy has been implemented.

In detailing the September 2000 PNAC blueprint, Meacher noted that it refers to allies such as the U.K., as "the most effective and efficient means of exercising American global leadership." Further, the blueprint also calls for "regime change" in China, and advocates imperial control of space and cyberspace, and development of new biological weapons. "Finally—written a year before 9/11—it pinpoints North Korea, Syria and Iran as dangerous regimes, and says their existence justifies the creation of a 'worldwide command and control system.' This is a blueprint for U.S. world domination. But before it is dismissed as an agenda for rightwing fantasists, it is clear it provides a much better explanation of what actually happened before, during and after 9/11 than the global war on terrorism thesis. This can be seen in several ways."

Why Did U.S. Air Security Stand Down?

Meacher next presented his views, of what happened two years ago; *EIR* finds them worth reporting, including his attributed sources:

"First, it is clear the U.S. authorities did little or nothing to pre-empt the events of 9/11. It is known that at least 11 countries provided advance warning to the U.S. of the 9/11 attacks. Two senior Mossad experts were sent to Washington in August 2001 to alert the CIA and FBI to a cell of 200 terrorists said to be preparing a big operation (*Daily Telegraph,* Sept. 16, 2001). The list they provided included the names of four of the 9/11 hijackers, none of whom was arrested.

"It had been known as early as 1996 that there were plans to hit Washington targets with aeroplanes. Then in 1999 a U.S. national intelligence council report noted that 'al-Qaeda suicide bombers could crash-land an aircraft packed with high explosives into the Pentagon, the headquarters of the CIA, or the White House.'

"Fifteen of the 9/11 hijackers obtained their visas in Saudi Arabia. Michael Springman, the former head of the American visa bureau in Jeddah, has stated that since 1987 the CIA had been illicitly issuing visas to unqualified applicants from the

Middle East and bringing them to the U.S. for training in terrorism for the Afghan war in collaboration with bin Laden (BBC, Nov. 6 2001). It seems this operation continued after the Afghan war for other purposes. It is also reported that five of the hijackers received training at secure U.S. military installations in the 1990s (*Newsweek,* Sept. 15, 2001).

"Instructive leads prior to 9/11 were not followed up. French Moroccan flight student Zacarias Moussaoui (now thought to be the 20th hijacker) was arrested in August 2001 after an instructor reported he showed a suspicious interest in learning how to steer large airliners. When U.S. agents learned from French intelligence he had radical Islamist ties, they sought a warrant to search his computer, which contained clues to the Sept. 11 mission (*Times,* Nov. 3, 2001). But they were turned down by the FBI. One agent wrote, a month before 9/11, that Moussaoui might be planning to crash into the Twin Towers (*Newsweek,* May 20, 2002).

"All of this makes it all the more astonishing—on the war on terrorism perspective—that there was such slow reaction on Sept. 11 itself.

"The first hijacking was suspected at not later than 8:20 a.m., and the last hijacked aircraft crashed in Pennsylvania at 10:06 a.m. Not a single fighter plane was scrambled to investigate from the U.S. Andrews Air Force Base, just 10 miles from Washington, D.C., until after the third plane had hit the Pentagon at 9:38 a.m. Why not? . . . Between September 2000 and June 2001 the U.S. military launched fighter aircraft on 67 occasions to chase suspicious aircraft (AP, Aug. 13, 2002). It is a U.S. legal requirement that once an aircraft has moved significantly off its flight plan, fighter planes are sent up to investigate.

"Was this inaction simply the result of key people disregarding, or being ignorant of, the evidence? Or could U.S. air security operations have been deliberately stood down on Sept. 11? If so, why, and on whose authority?"

Meacher affirmed that "the catalogue of evidence does, however, fall into place when set against the PNAC blueprint. From this it seems that the so-called 'war on terrorism' is being used largely as bogus cover for achieving wider U.S. strategic geopolitical objectives. Indeed Tony Blair himself hinted at this when he said to the Commons liaison committee: 'To be truthful about it, there was no way we could have got the public consent to have suddenly launched a campaign on Afghanistan but for what happened on Sept. 11" (*Times,* July 17, 2002). Similarly Rumsfeld was so determined to obtain a rationale for an attack on Iraq that on 10 separate occasions he asked the CIA to find evidence linking Iraq to 9/11; the CIA repeatedly came back empty-handed (*Time* magazine, May 13, 2002).

"In fact, 9/11 offered an extremely convenient pretext to put the PNAC plan into action. The evidence again is quite clear that plans for military action against Afghanistan and Iraq were in hand well before 9/11. A report prepared for the U.S. government from the Baker Institute of Public Policy stated in April 2001 that 'the U.S. remains a prisoner of its energy dilemma. Iraq remains a destabilizing influence to . . . the flow of oil to international markets from the Middle East.' Submitted to Vice President Cheney's energy task group, the report recommended that because this was an unacceptable risk to the U.S., 'military intervention' was necessary (*Sunday Herald,* Oct. 6, 2002)."

Errors of Judgment

Meacher reported that "the PNAC blueprint of September 2000 states that the process of transforming the U.S. into 'tomorrow's dominant force' is likely to be a long one in the absence of 'some catastrophic and catalyzing event—like a new Pearl Harbor.' " He concluded with the charge that "the 'global war on terrorism' has the hallmarks of a political myth propagated to pave the way for a wholly different agenda—the U.S. goal of world hegemony, built around securing by force, command over the oil supplies required to drive the whole project."

Important as is the publication of this charge, from Tony Blair's own party in Parliament, to narrow the "Cheney project" to a physiocratic grab for scarce energy supplies fails to grasp the "nature of the beast."

Cheney's neo-conservative faction is the modern-day embodiment of the fascist-synarchist forces, that threatened both Britain and the United States in the 1940s. Pulling his strings are powerful financier forces—descendants of those private banking families and financial interests who brought Adolf Hitler to power in Germany, and supported Mussolini's dictatorship in Italy. Their aim now, as then, is to establish a world empire that would salvage a crisis-ridden financial system, and eliminate the American humanist-republican tradition associated with Benjamin Franklin, Abraham Lincoln, and Franklin Roosevelt.

LaRouche has demonstrated that 9/11 was a "Reichstag Fire," allowing for dictatorial measures at home, and for Samuel P. Huntington's Clash of Civilizations pitting Western nations against Islam, and potentially China.

The game is much more dangerous than Meacher has described it. But with publication of his article, the "Reichstag Fire" issue—and crucially, that of the relation between the Cheney's gang's desires and Tony Blair's actions as British Prime Minister—is out in the open.