

Opinion

Hurricane Katrina and synthetic terrorism: Beware, America

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September 7, 2005—Last month, U.S. Army General Kevin P. Byrnes was suddenly relieved of his command, reportedly for committing adultery.

At the time, Byrnes was separated from his wife (he is now divorced) and less than a year from retirement. Although, traditionally the U.S. military has had higher expectations of the conduct of its commissioned officer than of its enlisted personnel, the dismissal of General Byrnes for even a serious sexual malefaction should—under the circumstances—seem ludicrous to informed observers. Indeed, *real* crimes, those perpetrated upon the people of Iraq and Afghanistan by the U.S. military, have only resulted in infinitesimal administration of justice.

Why then, given the magnitude of U.S. plunder and pillage in the Middle East and central Asia, did the U.S. Army dispense such harsh discipline upon one of its generals for what could hardly even be regarded as an error in judgment, much less an ethical lapse? General Byrnes, it should be noted, headed the Army's Training and Doctrine Command, which was conducting a "nuclear incident exercise" in the area of Charleston, South Carolina. Investigative journalists have provided evidence that the intent of this exercise was to "go live" with an *actual detonation* of a nuclear device as a means of staging a false flag terrorist act. Such a terrorist attack would most certainly have resulted in a dramatic escalation of the war in the Middle East, and quite possibly a tactical nuclear strike against Iran (not to mention, martial law here in the U.S.).

General Byrnes reportedly was preparing to expose the conspirators in the hopes of preventing the "war on terror" from heightening into a broader global conflict. If such is the case, it would not take much to conclude that his firing is intended to silence him, and that he is probably still under the threat of criminal prosecution, or even death.

Since the immediate aftermath of 9/11, Americans have been repeatedly warned of the inevitability of a second terrorist attack on American soil. Another terrorist attack "*is not a matter of if, but when*" we keep hearing. We should also recall that during the summer of 2004, official inquiries were made into the constitutionality of postponing the 2004 presidential elections in the event of a terrorist attack—fueling suspicion that the Bush administration was not about to accept an unfavorable electoral outcome.

Furthermore, just as the inauguration of U.S. banditry in the Middle East and central Asia required the spectacular horror of 9/11 to mobilize public support for military action, so too will the inevitable expansion of Bush's war into Iran, Syria and North Korea—especially given the American public's growing opposition to the war in Iraq, and Bush's own flagging popularity.

That the 9/11 attacks on the United States were acts of synthetic terrorism is no longer a matter for mere speculation. Thanks in large measure to the brilliant research and publications of people like [Michael Ruppert](#), [David Ray Griffin](#) and [Michel Chossudovsky](#)—among others—it is demonstrably clear, that the Bush administration was directly complicit in the worst disaster in U.S. history.

However, even prior to that tragic September morning four years ago, synthetic terrorism carried out by the U.S. was not without precedent. The attack on the U.S.S. Maddox in 1964, which led to the Tonkin Gulf Resolution, hence the U.S. invasion of Vietnam—simply never happened! There is also the recently declassified Operation Northwoods, which, if implemented, would have involved an attack on the United States (presumably Florida), or the shooting down of a civilian airliner by clandestine U.S. forces, for which the Cuban government would have been held at fault. Such, it was believed, would have set off a wave of patriotic recrimination in the United States and demands for military action against Cuba. Fortunately President John F. Kennedy did sign not off on this operation.

Presently, the threat of synthetic terrorism should be addressed with the utmost gravity and immediacy for two reasons. First, the firing of General Kevin P. Byrnes suggests that such a terrorist act might have been—and might even still be imminent. Secondly, most Americans are focused on the aftermath of the devastating Hurricane Katrina.

With the mass deployment of relief and military personnel to the areas affected by Katrina, is it entirely inconceivable that the administration might choose this occasion to stage a terrorist attack? Bush could certainly argue that the diversion of such personnel to the southern states resulted in an unavoidable relaxation of the nation's security networks, thus enabling an attack to occur unhindered. Moreover, what could be more infuriating to Americans than to believe that terrorists exploited the occasion of a horrendous natural disaster to deliver a disaster of their making upon an already grieving American population? A wave of unprecedented patriotic indignation would most certainly follow.

Americans must be vigilant. The leadership of the United States is literally a criminal syndicate operating in the service of a ruling class that is even more iniquitous. For the administration's purposes, the expansion of America's imperial war across the globe is not simply a chimerical pursuit for its own sake. It is a necessity, without which—in their view—American "primacy" will be eroded. In view of the U.S. administration's determination, no catalytic event—however criminal—can be regarded as above the scope of its capability.