

“The Mother of All Bombs” : a “great weapon” to use on Iran, says US air force chief

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In-depth Report: [IRAN: THE NEXT WAR?](#)

A top US Air Force general has described the biggest conventional warhead – the 30,000-pound bunker buster bomb – as “great” for a military strike on Iran.

Such glib comment about a massive killing device comes in the same week that US President Barack Obama appeared to caution against “loose talk” about war in the Persian Gulf.

“The massive ordnance penetrator [MOP] is a great weapon,” said Lieutenant General Herbert Carlisle, the US Air Force deputy chief of staff for operations, who added that the bomb would likely be used in any attack on Iran ordered by Washington.

The MOP also referred to as “The Mother of All Bombs” is designed to drill through 200 feet of reinforced concrete before detonating its massive warhead. It is believed to be the biggest conventional, non-nuclear, weapon in the American arsenal. In terms of destructive capability, it can be said to be the most fearsome explosive weapon among a range of massive-blast ordnance developed by the Pentagon over the past decade.

“A 30,000-pound (13,600-kg) bunker buster bomb designed to smash through some 200 feet of concrete before exploding is a “great weapon” that could be used by U.S. forces in a clash with Iran over its nuclear program, an Air Force general said on Thursday.

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The Pentagon has begun working on military options if sanctions and diplomacy fail to prevent Tehran from building a nuclear weapon.

Defense Secretary Leon Panetta told the National Journal in an interview on Thursday that planning had been going on “for a long time.”

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The tough rhetoric from the Pentagon came despite President Barack Obama’s effort this week to tamp down “loose talk” and “bluster” about possible military action, saying there was still an opportunity for diplomacy.

Carlisle also told the Credit Suisse-McAleese defense conference that a conflict with Syria or Iran could see U.S. military operations influenced by new tactical thinking at the Pentagon known as Air-Sea Battle.

That approach aims to take advantage of highly networked and integrated U.S. forces.

Carlisle said the tactics focus on operating in multiple domains, from air and sea to space and cyberspace, while networking and integrating information from the different areas, like satellites and sensors on stealth fighters and unmanned aircraft.

“There’s a space capability, there’s a cyber capability, there’s fifth-generation, low-signature force capability,” he said.

“All those things are on the table and being thought about as we do this operational planning,” Carlisle added, noting that Syria and Iran have developed significant defenses aimed at keeping potential attackers at a distance, a strategy Air-Sea Battle was designed to circumvent.

Carlisle said cyberspace could be a factor in a conflict with the two countries. “All of the leadership has said nothing is off the table with respect to what we would employ and use,” he said. ([Reuters](#), 9 March 2012)

The development and deployment against Iran of the MOP was documented in a 2009 Global Research article by Michel Chossudovsky:

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 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)

These are WMDs in the true sense of the word. The not so hidden objective of the MOAB and MOP, including the American nickname used to casually describe the MOAB (“mother of all bombs”), is “mass destruction” and mass civilian casualties with a view to instilling fear and despair. See [Towards a World War III Scenario? The Role of Israel in Triggering an Attack on Iran, Part II The Military Road Map](#), Global Research, August 13, 2010



“Mother of All Bombs” (MOAB)



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



MOAB: screen shots of test: explosion and mushroom cloud

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