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Plot Shows Security Cut Folly



President Bush addresses U.S. Merchant Marine Academy. Earlier Bush met briefly with Mayor Bloomberg at J.F.K. Airport in Queens to discuss the subway bomb plot.

BY JOHN TOSCANO

Revelations that al Qaeda planned a cyanide gas attack on New York City subways in 2003 was seized upon by public officials as further proof why the city needs a higher level of funding from the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to defend itself, rather than the sharp budget cut the agency recently made.

Assemblymember Michael Gianaris again lashed out at DHS for failing to see the constant danger the city faces from terrorists.

"Every time there's a legitimate threat in this country it's in New York City," declared Gianaris (D-Astoria). "New York is always the center of attention. That's why the 40 percent cut the agency made in our anti-terror budget to give it to other cities where there's no real threat is an atrocity."

Gianaris also took another slap at DHS

Secretary Michael Chertoff, saying, "Every day there's another indication why Chertoff should be giving New York City much more serious attention and change his mind and do what is right for New York City before something tragic happens."

On Monday, Mayor Michael Bloomberg told President George W. Bush directly that the reported al Qaeda subway attack plan showed that New York City's share of anti-terror funds should be greater.

Bloomberg greeted Bush at John F. Kennedy Airport, as the president arrived en route to a speaking engagement on Long Island and the two held a brief meeting. Bloomberg told reporters, "This goes to show why we deserve to get a larger amount of the Homeland Security budget," as he described his brief chat with the president. "If these monies were distrib-

uted totally based on risk, I think that would happen."

Commenting on al Qaeda's reportedly planned subway cyanide attack, United States Senator Charles Schumer (D-New York) said the plan, which was abandoned by the terrorists before it could happen, clearly showed the stupidity of DHS slashing NYC's 2007 anti-terror budget appropriation.

The cyanide bomb plot was reported by *Time Magazine* on its Web site last Saturday and later in local newspapers. The magazine said it came from a soon-to-be published book by Pulitzer Prize-winning author Ron Suskind. Local newspaper stories said Bloomberg and Police Commissioner Raymond Kelly were alerted at the time of the plot and all preparations were made to protect subway riders.

The facts in the book had been con-
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