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RIA Novosti – Russian Information Agency
16 January 2010

Medvedev Says Arms Deal Talks With U.S. Making Good Progress

Talks on a new strategic arms reduction deal with the U.S. are difficult, but many points have been agreed on, Russian President Dmitry Medvedev said on Saturday.

"Negotiations will continue," he said. "They are tough, but in general we have agreed on many points with the Americans."

A new document to replace the START 1 treaty, which expired on December 5, has not been signed yet over disagreements on verification and control arrangements to be included in the document.

The new treaty's outline, as agreed on by the Russian and U.S. presidents, includes cutting nuclear arsenals to 1,500-1,675 operational warheads and delivery vehicles to 500-1,000.

"We have taken a large step forward, and we have reached agreement to a significant degree in our positions," Medvedev also said.

He also stressed that he would like to discuss the issue with the leaders of Russia's main political parties.

"This is a foreign policy issue, but it is of extreme importance and will, in the final analysis, determine the face of Russia for years to come."

Medvedev also stressed that the ratification of any future deal should be carried out by Russia and the U.S. simultaneously.

"Either we simultaneously ratify the document...or this process may not take place at all," he said.

"I think this is something or American partners should know about," he added.

MOSCOW, January 16 (RIA Novosti)

<http://en.rian.ru/world/20100116/157572345.html>

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China Daily – China
17 January 2010

Russian Parliament Leaders Warn Against U.S. Leverage In START Deal

MOSCOW, Jan. 16 (Xinhua) -- Russia should firmly defend its security interests in talks with the United States over a new nuclear arsenal cut deal, Russian parliamentary leaders said Saturday.

"Our interests of national security must be our primary goal in signing the new treaty," said Sergei Mironov, Federation Council Speaker and leader of the Fair Russia party, in a meeting with President Dmitry Medvedev at Zavidovo of Tver region.

The new document to replace the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty(START-1) that expired on Dec. 5, 2009, said Mironov, should be signed on an equal basis.

When Moscow engaged in negotiations with Washington over specific issues such as number of nuclear warheads and delivery vehicles, he said, no compromise shall be made at the cost of national interests.

Russia and the U.S. "must undoubtedly have equal rights and duties under the new treaty," which first and foremost applies to mutual inspections, said Boris Gryzlov, Russian State Duma Speaker, as cited by the Interfax news agency.

He also voiced support on the linkage between the issues of strategic weapons cut and missile defense, while downplaying U.S. edge on the missile defense.

Equal reductions of warheads would be detrimental to Russia and lead to Moscow's "geographical lose-out," said Liberal Democratic leader Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, as Russia is surrounded by multiple U.S. missile bases.

Zhirinovskiy insisted Russia must not slash its deployment of multiple independent reentry vehicles, and ensure equal rights on mutual inspections.

The strategic arms reduction shall not pose threat to Russia's basis security, said Communist leader Gennady Zyuganov.

If Russia cannot retain its current nuclear power, he said, its security will be intimidated and it will not become U.S. equal.

"There can be no parity with the Americans anyway because they have 30-fold superiority over us in terms of conventional armaments. We can't make a minimum concession," he said.

Insisting Russia and the United States ratify the new START treaty simultaneously, Medvedev also stressed its significance to Russia.

"This is a foreign policy issue, but it is of extreme importance and will, in the final analysis, determine the face of Russia for years to come," he said.

Moscow and Washington have exerted intense efforts trying to clinch a deal on the new START treaty.

The talks are expected to resume in the second half of this month, said Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov earlier.

The START-1, signed in 1991 between the then Soviet Union and the United States, obliged both sides to reduce the number of their nuclear warheads to 6,000 and delivery vehicles to 1,600.

The new treaty's outline agreed by the two presidents at a July summit in Moscow included slashing nuclear arsenals to 1,500-1,675 operational warheads and delivery vehicles to 500-1,000.

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2010-01/17/content_12822678.htm

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International Business Times – U.S.

19 January 2010

Pakistan Blocks Agenda At U.N. Disarmament Conference

By Jonathan Lynn
Reuters

GENEVA - Arms negotiators failed to start talks on Tuesday on cutting nuclear weapons when Pakistan blocked the adoption of the 2010 agenda for the U.N.-sponsored Conference on Disarmament.

The conference, the world's sole multinational negotiating forum for disarmament, spent much of 2009 stuck on procedural wrangles raised by Pakistan after breaking a 12-year deadlock to agree a programme of work.

The impasse on Tuesday suggested 2010 would be another year of halting progress.

Pakistan, which tested a nuclear weapon in 1998, is wary of the proposed focus in the programme on limiting the production of fissile material, which would put it at a disadvantage against longer-standing nuclear powers such as India.

It therefore has an interest in delaying the start of substantive talks, diplomats say.

"Even in the darkest days the agenda was adopted, because everything can be discussed under the agenda," said one veteran official, unable to recall a similar delay in the past.

FROZEN IN TIME

Adoption of the agenda at the start of the annual session is normally a formality, but Pakistan Ambassador Zamir Akram took the floor to call for the agenda to be broadened to cover two other issues.

Akram said the 65-member forum should consider conventional arms control at the regional and sub-regional level, in line with a United Nations General Assembly resolution sponsored by Pakistan and passed last year.

The conference should also negotiate a global regime on all aspects of missiles, he said.

"It is not our intention to create an obstacle but it's also not our intention to create a situation which is oblivious to what is happening around us," Akram said.

The move forced the conference president, Bangladesh ambassador Abdul Hannan, to adjourn the meeting for consultations to find a consensus. He said he hoped to resume on January 21 with a renewed discussion of the agenda.

Sergei Ordzhonikidze, the former Russian diplomat who heads the U.N. in Geneva and is secretary of the conference, said failure to adopt the agenda would be a move backwards, arguing that it was flexible enough to include all topics of concern. But Akram said Pakistan did not want to work with a programme that was "frozen in time."

Reaching a consensus is likely to prove difficult, as India rejected a discussion of regional conventional arms control, arguing that the conference should focus on global issues.

Diplomats said Pakistan's attempt to include regional arms control appeared directed at its bigger and better-armed neighbor.

The U.N. General Assembly also called on the conference last December to agree a 2010 work programme including immediate negotiations to ban the production of fissile material, in a resolution sponsored by Canada.

(Editing by Stephanie Nebehay and Noah Barkin)

<http://www.ibtimes.com/articles/20100119/pakistan-blocks-agenda-atn-disarmament-conference.htm>

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Washington Post
18 January 2010

Merkel Calls For More Sanctions Against Iran

By Allyn Fisher-Ilan
Reuters

BERLIN (Reuters) - Germany will prepare possible further sanctions against Iran in the coming weeks if there is no change in Tehran's stance on its disputed nuclear program, Chancellor Angela Merkel said on Monday.

Six world powers, including Germany, discussed the prospects for further sanctions over Iran's nuclear work in New York on Saturday but China made clear it opposed more punitive action, at least for now.

Western nations suspect the Islamic Republic will use its atomic technology to develop a nuclear bomb but Tehran says the work is aimed only at generating electricity. It has rebuffed international pressure to halt nuclear fuel enrichment or send its enriched uranium stockpile abroad for refinement.

"Germany has made clear that if Iran's reaction does not change, we will be working on a comprehensive package of sanctions," Merkel said at a joint news conference in Berlin with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

"Of course we would prefer it if these (sanctions) could be agreed within the framework of the United Nations Security Council," she said, adding that officials would be working to that end in the coming weeks.

"But Germany will take part in sanctions with other countries that are pursuing the same goal," she said.

Netanyahu went further, saying the time had come to apply "crippling sanctions" against Iran over its nuclear program.

"If we don't apply sanctions, crippling sanctions against this Iranian tyranny, when shall we apply them? If not now, when? The answer is now," he said.

Israel, assumed to be the Middle East's only nuclear power, sees Iran's project as a threat to its existence, citing hostile rhetoric against the Jewish state by Iranian leaders.

It has not ruled out using force if diplomatic pressure and economic sanctions fail to stop Iran's nuclear plans.

LEVERAGE

Earlier, Iranian Foreign Minister Manouchehr Mottaki said Iran had exchanged messages with major powers on its nuclear energy program and saw signs of progress.

"There have been ongoing negotiations and messages are being exchanged so we have to just wait. There are some minor signs indicating a realistic approach, so any probable developments or progress can be discussed later," Mottaki said in Tehran.

Western diplomats said that whenever it has faced a serious prospect of new sanctions, Iran has begun lobbying key powers and made an appearance of offering concessions.

"The credible threat of further pressure does create some leverage over the Iranian system," one diplomat involved in the talks about sanctions said.

Merkel also urged Israelis and Palestinians to get back to the negotiating table and resume peace talks. Netanyahu said Israel had no preconditions.

"We must stop talking about talks about peace and start talking about peace," said Netanyahu.

President Barack Obama's Middle East envoy George Mitchell is due to launch a fresh round of mediation talks in the region in the coming days in hopes of renewing negotiations stalled since December 2008.

Netanyahu also said Israel did not need international troops to help with the demilitarization of Palestinian areas in the event of a future deal to establish a Palestinian state in the occupied West Bank.

After the Nazi Holocaust, Germany became a major provider of aid to Israel and remains among its staunchest allies, although Berlin has recently joined wider European criticism of some Israeli policy, especially on settlement building.

(Additional reporting by Erik Kirschbaum and Sarah Marsh; writing by Madeline Chambers; Editing by Paul Taylor)

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/01/18/AR2010011801982.html>

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Khaleej Times – U.A.E.
18 January 2010

Signs Of Progress In Nuclear Talks, Says Iran

(Reuters)

Iran has exchanged messages with major powers on its nuclear energy programme and sees signs of progress, Foreign Minister Manouchehr Mottaki said on Monday.

"There have been ongoing negotiations and messages are being exchanged so we have to just wait. There are some minor signs indicating a realistic approach, so any probable developments or progress can be discussed later," Mottaki told a news conference in Tehran.

"We are prepared to help in order to facilitate such realistic approaches and this may bear fruit," he said, in remarks aired on English-language Press TV.

Six powers met on Saturday to discuss prospects of imposing further sanctions against Iran over a nuclear programme they suspect the Islamic Republic will use to obtain nuclear weapons. Tehran says it is interested only in generating electricity.

The talks among diplomats from the United States, Britain, France, Germany, Russia and China failed to reach an agreement, and afterwards participants said China made clear it opposed more punitive action at present.

Iran ignored U.S. President Barack Obama's Dec. 31, 2009, deadline to respond to an offer from the six powers of economic and political incentives in exchange for halting its nuclear enrichment activities.

All the powers except China sent top-level foreign ministry officials to Saturday's meeting. Beijing, which said earlier this month that it was not the right time for new sanctions, sent only a mid-ranking diplomat from its U.N. mission.

China's effective snub dismayed the four Western powers in the group. They had hoped to reach agreement on whether to begin drafting a new U.N. Security Council resolution on a fourth round of sanctions against Iran.

Three previous rounds of U.N. sanctions have targeted Iran's nuclear and missile industries, but Iran has shrugged them off and said it plans to pursue its right to enrich uranium, which can have both civilian and military uses.

The Western powers had originally hoped to impose sanctions on Iran's energy sector but dropped the idea months ago when it became clear Russia and China would never accept this.

http://www.khaleejtimes.com/DisplayArticle08.asp?xfile=data/middleeast/2010/January/middleeast_January383.xml§ion=middleeast

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Budapest Business Journal – Hungary
January 19th, 2010

China Urges Flexibility On Iran, Downplays Sanctions

China urged other powers to show more flexibility in dealing with Iran's disputed nuclear program, playing down prospects of sanctions after six countries met to discuss the standoff.

While Western powers have looked to further sanctions against Iran over its rejection of a UN plan to rein in Tehran's nuclear ambitions, Russia and now especially China have resisted such steps and called for more negotiations.

Envoys from the United States, Britain, France, Germany, Russia and China met in New York at the weekend to discuss the standoff. The Chinese delegate at those talks reiterated Beijing's position that it does not back further sanctions against Iran for now.

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Ma Zhaoxu reinforced that stance on Tuesday, avoiding even using the word “sanctions” in replying to reporters' questions about the meeting.

“Our consistent proposal has been to resolve the Iran nuclear issue appropriately through dialogue and consultation,” Ma told a regular news briefing.

“We hope all sides will enhance dialogue and cooperation, and show a more flexible and pragmatic approach,” he said.

Some Western diplomats said the New York meeting showed a shared commitment to a “dual track” of dialogue and sanctions in dealing with Iran.

But Ma's comments underscored Beijing's reluctance to contemplate fresh sanctions against Iran, which was China's third biggest source of imported crude oil in the first 11 months of 2009, behind Saudi Arabia and Angola.

China keeps other extensive trade and investment ties with Iran.

As a permanent member of the UN Security Council, China can veto any potential resolution to censure Iran or ratchet up sanctions.

Western powers fear Iran is developing the means to make nuclear weapons, which Iran denies.

“The urgent task now is for all sides to pay attention to the broader picture and step up diplomatic efforts,” said Ma.

He said the New York “P5 plus 1” meeting “did not touch on specific next steps” over Iran.

China also dismayed other delegations by sending a mid-ranking diplomat from its UN mission to the New York meeting, which had been billed as a gathering of top-level diplomats known as “political directors.”

China has said it could not send its Vice Foreign Minister He Yafei because of scheduling conflicts.

But diplomats from other countries read the move as a snub, speculating it might be to show Beijing's resistance to punishing Iran or ire at US arms sales to Taiwan, which China claims sovereignty over since their split in 1949. (Reuters)

<http://www.bbj.hu/?col=1002&id=51400>

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Washington Times
January 19, 2010

Review Says Iran Never Halted Nuke Work In 2003

Intelligence estimate contradicts '07 report
By Eli Lake, The Washington Times

U.S. intelligence agencies now suspect that Iran never halted work on its nuclear arms program in 2003, as stated in a national intelligence estimate made public three years ago, U.S. officials said.

Differences among analysts now focus on whether the country's supreme leader has given or will soon give orders for full-scale production of nuclear weapons.

The new consensus emerging among analysts in the 16 agencies that make up the U.S. intelligence community on Iran's nuclear arms program is expected to be the highlight of a classified national intelligence estimate nearing completion that will replace the estimate issued in 2007.

The unclassified summary of the 2007 document said the U.S. intelligence community had "moderate confidence" that Iran's nuclear weapons work had halted in 2003. In a footnote, it stated that weapons development was defined as warhead design and not the enrichment of uranium, which has continued unabated contrary to the Iranian government's agreement not to develop uranium enrichment techniques outside International Atomic Energy Agency controls.

A senior U.S. military officer who spoke on the condition of anonymity last week revealed that the new argument among analysts is over Iran's decision to move forward with weaponization.

"There is a debate being held about whether the final decision has been made. It is fair to argue that the supreme leader has not said, 'Build a nuclear weapon.' That actually does not matter, because they are not at the point where they could do that anyway."

The officer, who is knowledgeable about operational matters and intelligence on Iran, said Iran's nuclear program is well-advanced and moving toward the point at which a weapon could be built.

"Are they acting as if they would like to be in a position to do what the supreme leader orders if he gives the thumbs up at some point down the road? The answer to that is indisputably yes," the officer said.

Newsweek magazine first reported Saturday that the new estimate was being drafted and may be released as soon as next month.

The new estimate is under debate as the Obama administration seeks to gain international backing for more sanctions against Iran, and amid growing political opposition to the Tehran government from Iran's "green movement" in recent months.

Iran's government has repeatedly denied that its uranium enrichment is part of a nuclear weapons program.

The new estimate also is expected to update testimony by Director of National Intelligence Dennis C. Blair, who told Congress in March that Iran "has not decided to press forward" with work to put a nuclear warhead on a ballistic missile.

Since his testimony, however, Iran was forced to disclose a new parallel uranium enrichment facility near Qom after U.S. and allied intelligence agencies discovered the previously undisclosed site at a military base.

In addition, an internal document from the International Atomic Energy Agency made public last fall concluded that Iran at least had the know-how needed for weaponization, according to a report by the Associated Press.

The 2007 national intelligence estimate prompted harsh criticism from U.S. allies and some members of Congress and the Bush administration, who said the document had been "politicized" to undermine any policy that would authorize a military strike on Iran's nuclear facilities.

Rep. Peter Hoekstra, Michigan Republican and ranking member of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, said in an interview that "they wrote a political document in 2007 to embarrass President Bush which everyone uniformly agrees was a piece of trash."

The congressman added, "I am glad the intelligence community is redoing it. They were wrong in 2007 when they were doing it, they were wrong by a significant degree. Why would I take the one in 2010 they are doing any more seriously, just because I like the outcome?"

David Albright, president of the Institute for Science and International Security, also said the 2007 estimate was flawed.

The intelligence community's unclassified judgment that it had "moderate confidence" that Iran had not restarted its program "is a little like debating whether the glass is half full or half empty. Moderate confidence does not mean much and many intelligence agencies, such as the ones in Britain, France and Germany, disagreed that the weaponization did not exist in 2007," Mr. Albright said in an interview.

Ross Feinstein, a spokesman for the Office of the Director of National Intelligence, declined to comment.

<http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2010/jan/19/review-says-iran-never-halted-nuke-work-in-2003/>

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Washington Post
January 17, 2010

NKorea's Kim Calls For Stronger Army Amid Tension

By HYUNG-JIN KIM

The Associated Press

SEOUL, [South Korea](#) -- North Korean leader Kim Jong Il said his country must bolster its armed forces, state media reported Sunday, two days after his regime warned it would launch a war against South Korea if necessary.

Kim's all-powerful National Defense Commission had threatened Friday to initiate a sacred "retaliatory battle" against the South in anger over its reported contingency plan to cope with potential unrest in the communist country. The commission also warned it could break off all dialogue and negotiations with the South.

On Sunday, the North's official Korean Central News Agency said Kim had inspected a joint army, navy and air force drill that demonstrated the country's "merciless striking power" against anyone trying to infringe on its territory.

Kim expressed his satisfaction with the drill and assigned the military tasks to develop it into "the invincible revolutionary armed forces," according to the KCNA report.

The report did not say when or where the joint drill took place.

Kim routinely visits military units and inspects their training to bolster his "songun," or "military-first," policy that rewards the 1.2 million-member armed forces - the backbone of his authoritarian rule of the country's 24 million people. He often calls for a stronger military during the visits.

The report of his latest inspection, however, came two days after his defense commission issued a rare statement strongly protesting the South's alleged contingency plan, which it says is aimed at toppling Kim's regime.

The commission said "a sacred nationwide retaliatory battle to blow up the stronghold of the South Korean authorities," including the presidential office, would begin once the plan was completed and put into practice. It also said the country would push for Seoul's expulsion in any negotiations on peace on the Korean peninsula if the South didn't apologize for the plan.

The warning came as a surprise since the North recently offered conciliatory gestures to the South, including a proposal Thursday to discuss resuming stalled joint tour programs.

Seoul expressed regret over the North's threat, which it said was driven by unconfirmed media reports.

South Korea has reportedly drawn up a military operations plan with the United States to cope with possible emergencies in [North Korea](#). South Korea's Defense Ministry has consistently declined to comment about the existence of such a plan.

North Korea occasionally issues statements that include threats to destroy South Korea. Authorities in Seoul monitor them carefully but usually take them in stride.

South Korea's Defense Ministry said the North had held annual winter military training but had no information on Kim's latest military inspection. A ministry official said there had been no suspicious activities by the North's military in recent days.

Another South Korean government official downplayed the significance of the North's latest joint drill, saying it appeared to be part of routine training. The official said it was the first time the North's media had reported Kim's inspection of a joint drill of the three armed services.

Both officials spoke on condition of anonymity, citing department policy.

The two Koreas remain technically at war because the 1950-53 Korean War ended in a truce, not a peace treaty.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/01/16/AR2010011603813.html>

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Los Angeles Times
January 17, 2010

Japan's Secret Pact With U.S. Spurs Debate

Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama has created a panel to investigate Japan's role in a decades-old secret pact allowing nuclear-armed U.S. vessels to dock at Japanese ports, against Japanese laws.

By John M. Glionna

Reporting from Kyoto, Japan

Professor Koji Murata likes to ask his political science students a tough policy question: Is it ever proper for a government to lie to its constituents?

Class opinions vary, but Murata, a scholar of international security issues at Doshisha University in Kyoto, has his own view.

"I think it's OK to lie to the public for the public good," he said. "As long as what you say is not contrary to national intent, really important secrets must be kept."

The philosophical question has gained urgency in the wake of revelations here of a decades-old secret pact between Tokyo and Washington that allowed nuclear-armed U.S. vessels to dock at Japanese ports, despite laws here against it.

For 40 years, the government denied the existence of the 1969 agreement between President Nixon and Prime Minister Eisaku Sato, the architect of Japan's post-World War II pacifism and staunch antinuclear policies.

Successive Japanese administrations were wary of a public outcry in a nation that suffered two devastating nuclear attacks 65 years ago.

Days after he took office in September, however, Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama assigned a panel of government officials and historians to investigate Japan's role in the agreement.

Since the end of the Cold War, nuclear-armed U.S. ships have stopped docking in Japan, officials say.

The findings, due out this month, could further complicate a tense standoff between Hatoyama and the Obama administration over Japan's calls for the removal of a controversial U.S. military presence on the southern island of Okinawa.

"This revelation makes maintaining a stable alliance even more challenging," said Carl Baker, director of programs at the Center for Strategic and International Studies' Pacific Forum.

Many Japanese applauded Hatoyama's effort to create a more open government but said they felt betrayed by leaders who had publicly railed against nuclear arms, only to secretly acquiesce to the demands of a powerful nation.

Some are particularly incensed that the deal was struck with the United States, which dropped the atomic bombs on Nagasaki and Hiroshima at the end of World War II, killing as many as 220,000 people.

Bloggers have ridiculed Sato's 1974 Nobel Peace Prize, calling Japan's longest-serving postwar prime minister a hypocrite.

As she boarded a train home to Tokyo recently, Aikiko Shiono said she felt betrayed by the pact and the government stonewalling.

"Japan is the only country on Earth to suffer the devastation of a nuclear bomb," said Shiono, who works for a political think tank. "We shouldn't allow nuclear weapons to enter our country. We have to keep advocating to the world how Nagasaki and Hiroshima were a tragedy. To do otherwise is an insult to the victims."

Sitting a few seats ahead, Shiono's father said he disagreed.

"There are things the government has to hide from us," said Kenji Kobori, 60. "They have to make some tough decisions. Some of those have to remain secret."

The agreement, which scholars say violates a Japanese law forbidding nuclear weapons from being made, possessed or stored on this country's territory, was made public by American officials after the U.S. military stopped sending nuclear-armed ships to Japan in 1991.

Despite the U.S. government's admission, Japanese leaders continued to deny that there was such a pact.

"They did not exist," then-Prime Minister Taro Aso said during a nationally televised news conference last year in response to a reporter's query about the pact and revealing documents.

The deal restoring Okinawa to Japanese sovereignty reportedly hinged, in its secret portions, on the U.S. retaining the right to dock nuclear warships at the base in case of emergency.

Security analysts were divided over Japan's handling of the secret agreement.

"I think it's always useful for citizens to know what their government is up to, even decades after the fact," said Jerome Cohen, a legal expert at the New York University School of Law. "We learn what to do for the future from our mistakes of the past."

Baker said the issue was more complex than learning a history lesson.

"Is it useful to bring out information about this pact now? These kinds of things are never useful when it comes to national security."

He said the revelation could play a role as Tokyo and Washington hammer out a deal on a new location for a controversial U.S. Marine Corps air station on Okinawa.

"This is another thorn to deal with, on top of everything else between the two nations," Baker said. "Part of me says that, like it or not, history has to be revealed. But how far do you take it? At what point do you trade off national security for full disclosure? Should we start disclosing past CIA operations? We know they existed.

"It's a tough issue. There's just no easy answer."

One former Japanese government official said that such secrets are kept by all nations.

"It isn't just Japan," said the former ambassador, who requested anonymity because of the sensitivity of the issue.

The ambassador said Sato was empowered to enter into such a deal to help Japan secure the return of Okinawa. But he said the deal should have been made public years ago.

"It was a lie, and they should have corrected it after the Cold War ended and the U.S. nuclear ships stopped coming," he said.

Murata, the political science professor, says the debate will continue in his classes as to how Japan should treat U.S. nuclear vessels in the future.

"It was a betrayal and it went on for decades," he said. "Now the government has finally come clean. But the question remains: With an unstable North Korea, how do we assist our closest ally without a secret pact?"

<http://www.latimes.com/news/nation-and-world/la-fg-japan-secret-deal17-2010jan17.0,1286614,full.story>

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Japan Times
January 17, 2010

Nuke-Free North Top Priority, Say Tokyo, Seoul

Kyodo News

Foreign Minister Katsuya Okada agreed with his South Korean counterpart, Yu Myung Hwan, on Saturday that denuclearization steps by North Korea should come before talks on a peace treaty with the United States or the lifting of sanctions, as proposed by Pyongyang, a Foreign Ministry official said.

Yu, meanwhile, expressed his "expectations" with regard to Tokyo's move toward granting local suffrage to permanent foreign residents in Japan, most of whom are of Korean descent, according to the official.

The government is eyeing submitting a bill to grant such local suffrage during the upcoming ordinary Diet session.

With 2010 marking a century since Japan's annexation of the Korean Peninsula, Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama has said he can gain support from within the government for the issue.

On the stalled negotiations on an economic partnership agreement, Okada said he would like to seek an early resumption of negotiations and Yu promised to make efforts toward that end.

The bilateral meeting was held on the sidelines of a two-day meeting that began the same day in Tokyo, bringing together foreign ministers and senior officials from East Asian and Latin American countries.

The two ministers spent a "considerable time" discussing North Korean issues in the one-hour meeting, during which they also affirmed they would cooperate bilaterally, as well as with the United States, to resume the stalled six-party talks aimed at denuclearizing Pyongyang.

Referring to North Korea's recent call for talks for a peace treaty to replace the armistice that ended the 1950-1953 Korean War and the lifting of sanctions imposed on Pyongyang, the official said the two ministers "agreed that it is important to first resume the six-party talks and that (North Korea) take denuclearization steps."

Officially stating the possibility of returning to the six-way talks for the first time, North Korea said Monday that the proposed peace talks with parties to the Korean War could be held within the six-party framework if sanctions on Pyongyang were lifted.

Tokyo and Seoul believe that confirming their close ties on global issues is especially important as this year's summit of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum will be hosted by Japan, while this year's Group of 20 summit will be held in South Korea.

<http://search.japantimes.co.jp/cgi-bin/nn20100117a5.html>

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Yonhap News – South Korea
18 January 2010

N. Korea Says Sanctions Must Be Lifted Before Nuclear Talks Resume

SEOUL, Jan. 18 (Yonhap) -- North Korea reaffirmed its stance Monday that it will not return to international negotiations on its nuclear arms programs unless sanctions on it are removed.

The statement by an unnamed Foreign Ministry spokesperson came less than a week after the U.S. said the removal of sanctions can only be considered after the North returns to the six-nation talks that also group South Korea, Japan, China and Russia.

If North Korea "goes out for the six-party talks, remaining subjected to the sanctions, such talks will not prove to be equal," it said in the statement carried by its official Korean Central News Agency, pledging it will "never allow this to happen."

North Korea, which last week proposed talks on formally ending the 1950-53 Korean War, also reiterated its demand that they be started to help move forward the six-party talks.

"There will be a starting point of confidence building only if the parties concerned sit at a negotiating table for concluding a peace treaty," it said.

It added that a peace treaty to formally close the war that involved the U.S. on the South Korean side and China on the North Korean side will help "put an end to such vicious cycle of distrust and build confidence to push forward denuclearization."

North Korea "is not opposed to the six-party talks and has no ground whatsoever to delay them," it said.

Following a trip to Pyongyang by U.S. President Barack Obama's special envoy on North Korea in December, the communist state said it was willing to return to the six-nation talks but did not say when.

The country had declared the talks "dead" after it drew U.N. condemnation for its rocket launch seen as a test of ballistic missile technology in April last year. North Korea conducted its second nuclear test less than two weeks later.

Defending its rocket launch as an act of sovereignty, North Korea said it is "nonsensical" to "sit at the negotiating table with those countries that violate its sovereignty."

"Such extreme encroachment upon the sovereignty of a country" has compelled the North to go ahead with its nuclear test, it said.

"If the six-party talks are to take place again, it is necessary to seek whatever way of removing the factor of torpedoing them," it said.

<http://english.yonhapnews.co.kr/northkorea/2010/01/18/5/0401000000AEN20100118008500315F.HTML>

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Pakistan Observer – Pakistan
January 17, 2010

Pak Nuke Capability Sans US Aid: Dr Khan

Islamabad—Renowned Nuclear Scientist of Pakistan Dr. Qadeer Khan has pointed out that Pakistan owing to its best missile technology can target every city of India and Pakistan got its nuclear capability without American assistance. He was talking to visit media fare on Saturday.

Talking to a private TV channel here on Friday, he disclosed that Pakistan had got the nuclear capability in 1984 and Pakistan had not utilized American assistance to for its atomic capability adding that during the decade of ninety annual budget of KRL (Kahuta Research Laboratories) was allocated only \$ 20-25 millions.

He also disclosed that he had written a letter to former Prime Minister Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif regarding permission for atomic explosions as he was threatened of possible sanctions that could be imposed on Pakistan, so he took the courage and directed to atomic explosion.

“Pakistan’s defence has been made incredible and let the history decide itself, what “I served for my country adding that I couldn’t forget the love and honour bestowed on me for my Nation”, the greatest patriot declared.

He also disclosed that Pakistan has assisted North Korea a little bit regarding their nuclear capability and CIA couldn’t detect about Pakistan’s nuclear capability even after ten years’ adding that Israel will never dare to interfere with Pakistan.

Responding to a query, he disclosed that former President Pervez Musharraf has threatened to hang him, unless he ‘admitted the mistake before the Nation for being responsible for transferring nuclear capability to other countries’.

Replying to another he pointed out that PML-N leadership was voicing vehemently about me during their election campaign but after the elections of 18th February they didn’t never even utter my name, adding that “I had no false notions that PML-N after assuming power in the federation will make me President of Pakistan”.—Online

<http://pakobserver.net/201001/17/news/topstories08.asp>

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Sunday London Times – U.K.
January 17, 2010

Elite US Troops Ready To Combat Pakistani Nuclear Hijacks

Christina Lamb in Washington

The US army is training a crack unit to seal off and snatch back Pakistani nuclear weapons in the event that militants, possibly from inside the country’s security apparatus, get their hands on a nuclear device or materials that could make one.

The specialised unit would be charged with recovering the nuclear materials and securing them.

The move follows growing anti-Americanism in Pakistan’s military, a series of attacks on sensitive installations over the past two years, several of which housed nuclear facilities, and rising tension that has seen a series of official complaints by US authorities to Islamabad in the past fortnight.

“What you have in Pakistan is nuclear weapons mixed with the highest density of extremists in the world, so we have a right to be concerned,” said Rolf Mowatt-Larssen, a former CIA officer who used to run the US energy department’s intelligence unit. “There have been attacks on army bases which stored nuclear weapons and there have been breaches and infiltrations by terrorists into military facilities.”

Professor Shaun Gregory, director of the Pakistan security research unit at Bradford University, has tracked a number of attempted security breaches since 2007. “The terrorists are at the gates,” he warned.

In a counterterrorism journal, published by America’s West Point military academy, he documented three incidents. The first was an attack in November 2007 at Sargodha in Punjab, where nuclearcapable F-16 jet aircraft are thought to be stationed. The following month a suicide bomber struck at Pakistan’s nuclear airbase at Kamra in Attock district. In August 2008 a group of suicide bombers blew up the gates to a weapons complex at the Wah cantonment in Punjab, believed to be one of Pakistan’s nuclear warhead assembly plants. The attack left 63 people dead.

A further attack followed at Kamra last October. Pakistan denies that the base still has a nuclear role, but Gregory believes it does. A six-man suicide team was arrested in Sargodha last August.

Fears that militants could penetrate a nuclear facility intensified after a brazen attack on army headquarters in Rawalpindi in October when 10 gunmen wearing army uniforms got inside and laid siege for 22 hours. Last month there was an attack on the naval command centre in Islamabad.

Pakistani police said five Americans from Washington who were arrested in Pakistan last month after trying to join the Taliban were carrying a map of Chashma Barrage, a complex in Punjab that includes a nuclear power facility.

The Al-Qaeda leadership has made no secret of its desire to get its hands on weapons for a “nuclear 9/11”.

“I have no doubt they are hell-bent on acquiring this,” said Mowatt-Larssen. “These guys are thinking of nuclear at the highest level and are approaching it in increasingly professional ways.”

Nuclear experts and US officials say the biggest fear is of an inside job amid growing anti-American feeling in Pakistan. Last year 3,021 Pakistanis were killed in terrorist attacks, more than in Afghanistan, yet polls suggest Pakistanis consider the United States to be a greater threat than the Taliban.

“You have 8,000-12,000 [people] in Pakistan with some type of role in nuclear missiles — whether as part of an assembly team or security,” said Gregory. “It’s a very large number and there is a real possibility that among those people are sympathisers of terrorist or jihadist groups who may facilitate some kind of attack.”

Pakistan is thought to possess about 80 nuclear warheads. Although the weapons are well guarded, the fear is that materials or processes to enrich uranium could fall into the wrong hands.

“All it needs is someone in Pakistan within the nuclear establishment and in a position of key access to become radicalised,” said Mowatt-Larssen. “This is not just theoretical. It did happen — Pakistan has had inside problems before.”

Bashir Mahmood, the former head of Pakistan’s plutonium reactor, formed the Islamic charity Ummah Tameer-e-Nau in March 2000 after resigning from the Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission. He was arrested in Islamabad on October 23, 2001, with his associate Abdul Majeed for alleged links to Osama Bin Laden.

Pakistan’s military leadership, which controls the nuclear programme, has always bristled at the suggestion that its nuclear facilities are at risk. The generals insist that storing components in different sites keeps them secure.

US officials refused to speak on the record about American safety plans, well aware of how this would be seen in Islamabad. However, one official admitted that the United States does not know where all of Pakistan’s storage sites are located. “Don’t assume the US knows everything,” he said.

Although Washington has provided \$100m worth of technical assistance to Islamabad under its nuclear protection programme, US personnel have been denied access to most Pakistani nuclear sites.

In the past fortnight the US has made unprecedented formal protests to Pakistan’s national security apparatus, warning it about fanning virulent anti-American sentiment in the media.

Concerns about hostility towards America within elements of the Pakistani armed forces first surfaced in 2007. At a meeting of military commanders staged at Kurram, on the border between Pakistan and Afghanistan, a Pakistani major drew his pistol and shot an American. The incident was hushed up as a gunfight.

<http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/world/asia/article6991056.ece>

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Hindustan Times – India
Islamabad, January 17, 2010

Pak Rejects Report On US Troops Securing Its Nuke Facilities

Press Trust Of India

Pakistan on Sunday termed as "rubbish" a report that elite US troops were ready to counter any move to hijack the country's nuclear arsenal and said it was "a figment of the imagination".

Foreign Office spokesman Abdul Basit said the insinuations made in the report were baseless and Pakistan government had devised and implemented a foolproof safety and security regime for its nuclear arsenal and related materials.

"We are very much confident about our nuclear weapons capability and our custodial controls," Basit said.

He described the news report as "rubbish and a figment of the imagination" of the reporter.

The Sunday Times newspaper had reported that the US Army is training a crack unit to "seal off and snatch back Pakistani nuclear weapons in the event that militants, possibly from inside the country's security apparatus, get their hands on a nuclear device or materials that could make one".

Basit said certain lobbies in the West, particularly in the US, do not like Pakistan's status as a nuclear weapons state and were trying to undermine its nuclear programme.

"Such propagandist reports do not serve any purpose except to unnecessarily keep Pakistan's nuclear weapons programme in focus for no good reason," he said.

<http://www.hindustantimes.com/Pak-rejects-report-on-US-troops-securing-its-nuke-facilities/H1-Article1-498572.aspx>

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Korea Times – South Korea

OPINION

January 18, 2010

Time To Wake Up To Biological Threat

By Jay Ambrose Scripps Howard News Service

Wake up, don't slumber. That was surely a lesson to be learned from the would-be, Christmas day bomber in Detroit, but has the response been focused on the right issues?

To some extent, yes. The mass murder attempt happened on an airplane, and so it's no wonder attention has been paid to airport security.

And it's no wonder, either, that commentators have expressed loud concerns about an administration reaction that initially seemed more like a yawn than a sense of alarm, about information technology that did not pick up on a warning about this guy and about treating him as an everyday criminal instead of as an enemy combatant.

But as fiercely as we need to guard against it _ primarily through profiling _ airplane mayhem is a tiny fraction of the terrorist threat to this country, which could someday leave a city or two or three reeling like Haiti after the tragic earthquake there, and maybe with far more deaths, with hundreds of thousands.

It's weapons of mass destruction that could most completely undo us, that could quite conceivably change the nature of this free, energetic, bold and open country forever.

My own apprehensions were heightened at a Heritage Foundation conference at which experts laid out the potential destructiveness of a number of weapons, including nuclear bombs smuggled into the country and _ what I want to pay the most attention to here _ biological devices that are many times easier to assemble, can be just as deadly and whose ultimate use against us is very nearly impossible to prevent.

It's true that not just any unskilled worker off the street can put a device together, but a couple of years training will do the trick.

There is absolutely no doubt that the training has been going on in al-Qaida camps, something confirmed when we found labs in Afghanistan early in the war there.

The materials needed for nuclear weapons are hard to come by, but a long list of useable pathogens are available in nature and the cost of obtaining them is next to nothing.

As for prevention? Well, relatively small amounts of the stuff will suffice for national chaos, and in the final analysis there is no sure way to prevent smuggling across our coastlines or our borders to the north and south.

Because of all the above, a congressional chartered commission predicts a biological attack somewhere in the world over the next several years. It could very well be here, which is not to say that all is hopeless and that we should run around like Chicken Littles screaming that the sky is falling.

The answer, says Randall Larsen, a retired Air Force colonel with credentials enough to paper a ballroom, is containment, taking preparatory steps at the national, state and local levels to quickly detect an attack and make sure

we can react decisively, keeping deaths that could potentially be in the hundreds or tens of thousands in the thousands or in the hundreds.

The Obama administration has not ignored this issue. Last month, it announced a strategy to ward off biological threats. While it is heavy on international preventive measures that might, of course, have some utility, the strategy does include means of helping other countries in their response to an attack.

We have hardly been wholly negligent in readying ourselves for an emergency, but the experts I heard do not think we have done nearly enough and are also quick to point out that the steps needed would also assist us in dealing with natural disasters.

Here is what I propose: commentator clamor of a kind that might lend a greater sense of urgency to this purpose at a time when we're getting ready to throw billions away on matters that don't matter, such as an Environmental Protection Agency initiative to go after smog concentrations in the absence of convincing scientific evidence of harm.

The bio weapons threat is real and we need to do far more.

Jay Ambrose, formerly Washington director of editorial policy for Scripps Howard newspapers and the editor of dailies in El Paso, Texas, and Denver, is a columnist living in Colorado.

http://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/opinion/2010/01/137_59233.html

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Great Falls Tribune – Montana

OPINION

January 18, 2010

Now More Than Ever, Nuclear Mission Essential To U.S.

By DAVID WEISSMAN and PERCY "STEVE" MALICOTT

Before an enthusiastic audience in Prague last April, President Obama declared "America's commitment to seek the peace and security of a world without nuclear weapons."

In his speech, the president declared America has a historic opportunity to lead by example. According to President Obama, other countries will follow the U.S. to "global zero" if we begin — unilaterally — to "reduce the role of nuclear weapons" in our national security strategy.

Since April, the president and his chief negotiators have worked tirelessly to sign a new Strategy Arms Reduction Treaty with Russia, which will enact his promise to further reduce America's nuclear arsenal.

The new treaty will almost certainly mandate the decommissioning of some of America's 1,700 to 2,200 operationally deployed nuclear warheads. This could well lead to reductions at Montana's Malmstrom Air Force Base, home to one-third of the U.S. ICBM force.

President Obama's optimism seems appealing at first blush. Creating a degree of geopolitical stability eliminating the need for nuclear weapons is a praiseworthy ambition.

However, we simply do not live in that kind of world, neither now nor in the foreseeable future. The nuclear threats from North Korea, Iran, and terrorist groups grow everyday, especially since Russia continues to proliferate nuclear technology to terrorist-supporting regimes.

Despite President Obama's idealism, now is not the time to further reduce America's most effective and least expensive nuclear deterrent: the 450-missile ICBM force.

The 150 Minuteman III missiles maintained, operated and secured by the men and women of the 341st Missile Wing at Malmstrom Air Force Base are critical to the United States' ability to provide credible deterrence against our would-be enemies while extending that deterrence to more than two dozen allies and friends overseas.

The 450 single warhead, geographically dispersed, nuclear-hardened missile sites prevent an enemy conducting a successful disarming attack. For such an attack, an enemy would have to expend multiple warheads to eliminate each single-warhead ICBM. The scale of any such attack, and the devastating retaliation it would trigger, would make the attempt irrational. Additionally, the ICBM force has consistently demonstrated extremely high readiness and reliability.

The ICBM, with its constant alert presence, also affords unparalleled flexibility for decision-makers in a time of crisis, providing the president maximum decision-making time. This is all accomplished for less than one-fifth of one percent of the total 2010 Defense budget.

Malmstrom Air Force Base plays a key role America's national security. Yet, Malmstrom could face potential downsizing or closure as President Obama pushes toward his goal of eliminating America's nuclear weapons.

As the ferocity of the fight by Montana's congressional representatives to protect the base indicates, the Great Falls economy and community would be permanently altered by a base closing.

At least 40 percent of the city's economy is directly linked to Malmstrom, which makes an economic contribution of \$372,867,000 to the surrounding communities each year.

In addition to the 4,000 military and civilian personnel who work on the base, 1,547 additional jobs are indirectly supported by its operation. Malmstrom Air Force Base is interwoven into the Great Falls' social identity as well: 11 percent of Great Falls' schoolchildren are military dependents, and 1,900 military men and women chose to live off-base in the Great Falls community.

President Obama's commitment to "global zero", while apparently disregarding the very real data clearly indicating the growing threats from Iran, North Korea, and terrorist organizations, appears to be ill-timed and somewhat reckless.

In light of the increasing world threats, coupled with an inability to accurately predict the future, the 341st Missile Wing — alert-ready since Oct. 26, 1962, in the midst of the Cuban Missile Crisis — with its 150 safe, secure, and responsive ICBMs remains effective and absolutely essential in today's world and for the foreseeable future.

David Weissman is chairman of the Central Montana Defense Alliance and Steve Malicott, is president and CEO of the Great Falls Area Chamber of Commerce.

<http://www.greatfallstribune.com/article/20100118/OPINION/1180304/Now+more+than+ever+++nuclear+mission+essential+to+U.S.>

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London Times
OPINION
January 19, 2010

China's Move To Block New Sanctions Against Iran Could Have Opposite Effect

BRONWEN MADDOX: WORLD BRIEFING

What now? Does China's decision to block more sanctions against Iran mean the end of pressure on Tehran over its nuclear programme? No — it simplifies the task of organising that pressure. The US and the European Union may now move much more quickly. The most important declaration yesterday came from Angela Merkel who, standing next to Binyamin Netanyahu, the Prime Minister of Israel, said that she would be working on new sanctions in the next few weeks if Iran did not halt its controversial work.

The German Chancellor's stand is essential for any new sanctions drive to have effect, as Germany is by far the European Union's largest exporter to Iran. The most likely course now is that the US and EU pursue sanctions on their own, giving up hope of getting a new set backed by the Security Council, because of China's opposition. Such a drive could be uncomfortable for Iran. True, the US has no direct trade with Iran itself, but its longstanding sanctions have had considerable effect by targeting foreign companies, including ones in Europe, that do.

There are two real decisions. The first is how much of its trade Germany is prepared to lose. The second is whether to target petrol and heating oil, the products that Iran is unable to refine for itself. That would hit ordinary Iranians; something that the EU and US have so far avoided doing. There is a debate even within the State Department about whether this would prompt Iranians to rise against the regime, or to turn against the US. One analyst, formerly of the department, described it as a split between those who thought the US actively secured the fall of the Soviet Union (and so should try to engineer the same in Iran), and those who thought that it collapsed from within (and so Iran should be left to do the same).

Tehran yesterday put out the now-routine, superficially reasonable statement, saying that it might be prepared for talks. But there seems little chance the regime wants to risk giving Iranians any impression that it is surrendering to Western pressure, with the opposition still so widespread and probing for any sign of weakness.

A breathing space may possibly come from technical difficulties that Iran appears to be having in its uranium enrichment efforts; the most controversial work, which can be used either to make fuel for reactors (as Iran claims) or weapons.

A fierce debate among Iran watchers has surrounded recent reports that in the past year its centrifuges have been working at much less than full capacity because of technical problems. According to Western officials, inspections by the International Atomic Energy Agency, the UN watchdog, had noticed no deliberate go-slow on their visit to the Natanz plant last week. But in November, the agency found that the yield had dropped by up to a fifth.

If true, that would buy only a bit of time as Iran amasses fissile material. The regime's leaders may be convinced that, with China as a friend, they can ignore all other pressure. The hope is that millions of Iranians want links with the US and Europe as well.

http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/comment/columnists/bronwen_maddox/article6992946.ece?openComment=true

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Washington Post
Book World: Review of *The Dead Hand*, by David E. Hoffman
By Matthew Dallek
January 17, 2010

THE DEAD HAND

The Untold Story of The Cold War Arms Race and Its Dangerous Legacy

By David E. Hoffman

Americans are obsessed with weapons of mass destruction and the damage they could inflict on us all. Books and films ranging from journalist John Hersey's "Hiroshima," published in 1946, to ABC's television extravaganza "The Day After," broadcast in 1983, from Fox's ongoing counter-terrorism Armageddon drama "24" to apocalyptic novels like Cormac McCarthy's "The Road," reflect a preoccupation with a nuclear-, chemical- or biological-weapons attack and its aftermath dating from at least the end of World War II. The fear that scientific expertise will be married to ideological conflict, technological advances and social hate pervades these doomsday-themed books and movies.

Now comes David E. Hoffman's "The Dead Hand," a welcome, unsettling, nonfictional addition to this still timely genre. Hoffman, a Post contributing editor and former Moscow bureau chief, examines the Soviet struggle to build biological, chemical and nuclear weapons as a counterweight to American power in the Cold War's final years. "The Dead Hand" argues convincingly that America's victory in the Cold War wasn't nearly as triumphant as the most self-congratulatory among us have tended to believe. When the arms race between the two superpowers ended in the 1990s, a second terrifying competition replaced the first. The collapse of the Soviet regime precipitated a breakdown in internal controls on weapons of mass destruction. Russian scientists began losing their jobs, and weapons facilities and nuclear materials were often left undefended. Hoffman reports that terrorist organizations and rogue regimes rushed into this breach to acquire these horrific weapons, while U.S. officials worked furiously to prevent them from falling into hostile hands.

Against the backdrop of this reconfigured arms competition, Hoffman's book is a chillingly modern historical tale about a collective failure with lasting consequences. Chronicling the breakneck drive in the U.S.S.R. to develop methods for inflicting death on a massive scale, Hoffman captures the reckless abandon with which the Soviet Union (and the United States) pursued the arms race, from the 1970s to the early '90s.

We learn, for instance, that the U.S. record on biological weapons was far from sterling. When the Nixon administration abolished the program in 1969, the United States had already developed a vast trove of agents of death, including some "220 pounds of anthrax dried agent . . . 804 pounds of dried tularemia bacteria and 334 pounds of the incapacitating agent Venezuelan equine encephalomyelitis virus."

As the U.S. program ended, the Soviet initiative was only just beginning. Code-naming biological weapons programs "Bonfire" and "Ecology" and establishing an organization called "Biopreparat" to develop such weapons, communist officials endeavored to weaponize "the most dangerous pathogens known to man." Tons of anthrax

spores cultivated in top-secret facilities were manifestations of the late-Soviet era times, while a "630-liter smallpox reactor, standing five feet tall" offered more evidence still of this frenzied weapons quest.

Equally disconcerting, Hoffman reports, was that Soviet leaders invented a doomsday program dubbed the "Dead Hand": If communist officials were killed in a first nuclear strike by the United States, then "a small crew of duty officers surviving deep underground" would still be able to retaliate using nuclear weapons. Hoffman sings the praises of Mikhail Gorbachev and Ronald Reagan for envisioning a world liberated from the chokehold of nuclear missiles.

"The Dead Hand" at times veers too quickly from stories of spies to politicians and to scientists and varied weapons facilities, and its portrait of Reagan is surprisingly benign. Hoffman shortchanges Reagan's decades-long description of the Cold War as a fight to the death that could involve military means, and his lengthy record of belligerent commentary (for instance, he proposed that North Vietnam be paved into a parking lot).

But Hoffman also makes a convincing case that Reagan and especially Gorbachev deserve credit for embracing arms control and reaching accords that significantly cut each nation's nuclear stockpiles. Yet as the Cold War wound down, some U.S. diplomats and political leaders in the East and West understood that, despite these reductions, the Soviets' formidable WMD arsenal posed a major problem. Non-proliferation efforts, including the bipartisan Nunn-Lugar initiative, helped secure Russian weapons facilities, protect Russian trains transporting "loose nukes" and ship highly enriched uranium used for building nuclear bombs to the United States from unstable states such as Kazakhstan. Americans paid Russian scientists not to assist rogue regimes and terrorists seeking chemical, biological and nuclear weapons from the former Soviet Union.

Two decades have now passed since the Berlin Wall was toppled, and the Soviet Union has long since vanished as a national security threat. Yet as "The Dead Hand" demonstrates, the symbol of triumphant democratic capitalism -- the tearing down of the Berlin Wall -- also has a less well understood counterpoint: the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Far from being an unadulterated moment of democratic triumph, the two-decade anniversary of the Berlin Wall's fall should also remind Americans that unsecured Soviet-era weapons of mass destruction coveted by terrorists and rogue regimes are the Cold War's most unnerving legacy.

Matthew Dallek, a visiting scholar at the Bipartisan Policy Center, is the author of "The Right Moment: Ronald Reagan's First Victory and the Decisive Turning Point in American Politics."

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/01/15/AR2010011501387.html>

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