



USAF COUNTERPROLIFERATION CENTER

CPC OUTREACH JOURNAL

Maxwell AFB, Alabama

Issue No. 763, 20 November 2009

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New York Times
November 19, 2009

Obama Takes Stern Tone On North Korea And Iran

By Helene Cooper and Martin Fackler

SEOUL, South Korea — President Obama delivered a stern message on Thursday to North Korea and Iran that they risk further sanctions and isolation if they do not rein in their nuclear ambitions.

Appearing at a joint press conference with President Lee Myung-bak of South Korea, Mr. Obama singled out Iran, where leaders have apparently rejected an offer from the West to take Iran's stockpile of enriched uranium to another country to turn it into fuel rods, which would buy time for diplomatic negotiations.

"We've seen indications that for internal political reasons or perhaps because they are stuck in some of their own rhetoric, they are unable to get to 'yes,'" Mr. Obama said. "As a consequence, we have begun discussion with our international partners" on sanctions, he said.

He said that over the next few weeks the United States would be developing a package of "potential steps we can take that will indicate our seriousness."

Mr. Obama's words were his strongest to date and seemed to signal that he was ready to move to sanctions.

On the North, Mr. Obama said he was sending his North Korea envoy to Pyongyang next month for talks designed to try to get the nation back to the bargaining table. But he warned that even getting the North back to the table would not be enough.

"I want to emphasize that President Lee and I both agree on the need to break the pattern that existed in the past in which North Korea behaves in a provocative fashion, then is willing to return to talks, and then talks for a while, and then leaves the talks and seeks further concessions," Mr. Obama said.

Mr. Obama's visit to Seoul is the last — and perhaps easiest — leg of an Asia trip in which he was forced to deal with a newly assertive Japan and an increasingly powerful China.

South Korea quickly proved true the predictions that it would be more accommodating to Mr. Obama, with whom Mr. Lee has been cooperating closely on key issues, including efforts to eventually halt North Korea's nuclear program.

On Thursday morning, the Koreans put on a rousing welcoming ceremony for Mr. Obama. On the terraced lawn in front of the Blue House of Seoul, the presidential offices, a colorful array of South Korean ceremonial guardsmen, band members and local children greeted Mr. Obama, playing "The Star-Spangled Banner" and waving American flags.

South Korean government officials and diplomatic analysts said that the visit represented a chance for Seoul to raise its profile with the Obama administration by stressing its reliability as a partner in Asia.

Mr. Lee is more closely aligned with American policy than were his liberal predecessors, who saw President George W. Bush's tough stance on North Korea as counterproductive, and he was elected on a platform of getting tough with Pyongyang. But Mr. Lee has been criticized by the left for his decision to send more aid workers and a small military contingent to Afghanistan in support of the American-led effort there.

During large antigovernment protests last year over beef imports from the United States — an issue that tapped into an undercurrent of anti-American feelings — Mr. Lee was accused of kowtowing to American leaders. In anticipation of demonstrators this visit, the government says it will deploy about 13,000 police and soldiers.

The only potential point of contention on the visit was that Washington still was not moving to ratify a free-trade agreement agreed upon two years ago. Mr. Obama said that he wanted to get it down but acknowledged that "there is obviously a concern in the United States of the incredible trade imbalances that have grown in the past few years."

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/11/19/world/asia/19prexy.html>

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PRESS TV – Iran
18 November 2009

Iran Says It Cannot Trust West Over N-fuel

Iran's envoy to the IAEA says the lack of confidence towards the West is the main reason behind Tehran's decision to reject a recent proposal on its nuclear program.

Iran's Ambassador to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Ali-Asghar Soltanieh told Press TV on Wednesday that Iran has refused to further enrich its enriched uranium in a foreign country due to the West's previous performance.

"Iran paid [the West] for the nuclear fuel before the Islamic Revolution but we received neither the fuel nor the money, how can we make sure about the delivery of the 20-percent enriched uranium to Iran. That is the whole issue," Soltaniyeh said.

He noted that Iran was open to further talks about the issue to explore "ways and means" to make sure that it would receive the fuel necessary for the Tehran Research Reactor.

"We are ready for further talks to finalize the matter but we want a 100 percent guarantee," he added.

The draft deal brokered by the IAEA called on Iran to send some 75 percent of its low-enriched uranium to Russia and France, where it would be turned into fuel for the Tehran medical research reactor.

<http://www.presstv.ir/detail.aspx?id=111644§ionid=351020104>

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Global Security Newswire

November 18, 2009

IAEA Visits Syrian Reactor Over Uranium Traces

International Atomic Energy Agency inspectors were in Syria yesterday to investigate the origin of particles found from an undeclared uranium supply at a Damascus research reactor, Agence France-Presse reported see *GSN*, Nov. 16).

Syria indicated earlier this month that the traces at the site, which is routinely inspected by IAEA officials, might have originated from indigenous uranium yellowcake and a previously undeclared supply of indigenously produced uranyl nitrate, IAEA chief Mohamed ElBaradei said Monday in his agency's latest safeguards report for the country.

The U.N. nuclear watchdog, though, found that samples collected from the site "do not support Syria's earlier explanation of the origin and presence of the particles," according to the report. Samples were collected in August 2008 and July of this year, according to AFP (Agence France-Presse I/Spacewar.com, Nov. 17).

"The agency announced its intention to carry out an inspection at the [Damascus reactor] on Nov. 17, 2009 for the purposes of taking samples of the yellowcake and the uranyl nitrate and taking environmental samples at the locations where the materials are stored and where they were used," ElBaradei's report states.

"The agency also requested that Syria provide information concerning the yellowcake, the uranyl nitrate and any other uranium-containing materials which may have been the source of the anthropogenic natural uranium particles," ElBaradei said in the document (Diane Barnes, *Global Security Newswire*, Nov. 18).

Syria's atomic activities are already under scrutiny following the 2007 Israeli airstrike on an alleged nuclear reactor facility said to be built with aid from North Korea. Damascus has denied that the site was nuclear in nature.

However, tiny amounts of uranium have also been found at that location, and the nuclear agency wants to know if there is any connection to the reactor in Damascus (Agence France-Presse I).

The U.S. State Department yesterday urged Syria to provide a "credible explanation" for the uranium particles at the research reactor, AFP reported.

"We want them to open up what the IAEA is asking them to open up in terms of access to sites and access to information," said spokesman Ian Kelly.

The official said the international response to uncertainties over the uranium traces would "depend on [Syria's] response" (Agence France-Presse II/Spacewar.com, Nov. 17).

http://www.globalsecuritynewswire.org/gsn/nw_20091118_5413.php

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Asia Times
November 19, 2009

Secrecy Shrouds Iran's Contingency Centers

By Gareth Porter

WASHINGTON - The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) published new evidence on Monday that Iran had been building "contingency centers" in the event of a United States bombing attack as early as 2002, years before it began building the second enrichment facility at Qom.

But the latest report on Iran's nuclear program by the agency appeared to reject Iran's account of how and when it had decided to build the Qom enrichment plant and implied that it believed Iran was hiding the construction of other facilities.

The report provides new evidence that the Qom enrichment facility was constructed on one of many sites where tunneling had been prepared as early as 2002 to protect various kinds of facilities from a possible US air attack.

The apparent Iranian decision to begin preparations for a US attack in 2002 came after [president George W Bush](#) had declared in his September 20, 2001, speech to a joint session of the US Congress that any nation that "continues to harbor or support terrorism" would be regarded as a "hostile regime" and then named Iran as part of the "axis of evil" with Iraq and North Korea in January 2002.

The new [evidence](#) contradicts the US charge that Iran had been working on constructing a covert enrichment plant for several years - well before March 2007, when Iran announced that it would no longer inform [the agency](#) of new [facilities](#) as soon as the decision had been made to construct them.

The Iranian account documented in the report puts the decision [to build](#) the Qom enrichment facility in mid-2007.

The report quotes from an October 28 Iranian letter to the IAEA stating, "As a result of the augmentation of the threats of military attacks against Iran, the Islamic Republic of Iran decided to establish contingency centers for various organizations and activities ... [elipses in [original](#)]."

No date is cited for that decision, but the IAEA report refers to [satellite](#) imagery of the site indicating [construction](#) began at least as early as 2002. The agency said it had "informed Iran that it had acquired commercially available satellite imagery of the site indicating that there had been construction at the site between 2002 and 2004, and that construction activities were resumed in 2006 and had continued to date."

The IAEA apparently intended to convey the idea that this was construction on a second enrichment plant. In a story published on November 13 - [three days](#) before the report was circulated to IAEA Governing Council members - an Associated Press reporter, George Jahn, reported unnamed diplomats as saying Iran had started building the plant in 2002, that the construction had paused for two years in 2004 because of Iran's suspension of enrichment and had resumed in 2006, when enrichment had been resumed openly.

Independent analysis of satellite imagery has shown, however, that those earlier images were of construction on [the general](#) purpose "contingency centers" rather than an enrichment facility. Paul Brannan, a satellite imagery analyst for the Institute for Science and International Security who has analyzed imagery of the same site from 2004 and 2005, concluded in a September 29 report that it was probably a tunnel facility for a purpose other than an enrichment facility.

Brannan noted that the Qom site was only one of "many throughout the country" with similar characteristics. Contrary to the IAEA's account, he observed that construction had continued between June 2004 and March 2005, although it was at a slow pace.

Brannan's analysis is consistent with the account in the Iranian letter of October 28 of a decision to construct a whole system of "contingency centers" for various purposes in the event of a US air attack.

The Iranian letter quoted by the IAEA said Iran's Atomic Energy Agency had requested one of the already constructed centers for a "contingency enrichment plant", which would assure continuation of enrichment should the Natanz enrichment plant be attacked. The Qom tunnel facility was made available for that purpose in the second half of 2007 and construction on the enrichment facility then began, according to the letter.

Contradicting the Jahn story, however, the IAEA report says "a number of member states" have "alleged that design work on the facility had started in 2006". If design work was only started in 2006, the construction work seen in the earlier years obviously could not have been on an enrichment facility.

A senior official of the Barack Obama administration charged in the September 25 briefing on the Qom site that actual construction of the facility had begun before March 2007. The language of the new report indicates for the first time that the United States has taken a much more nuanced approach to the history of the Qom site in its communications with the IAEA.

The IAEA report seems to imply that it does not believe the Iranian account that construction began on the enrichment facility only in 2007. It said the agency had "indicated that Iran's declaration of the new facility reduces the level of confidence in the absence of other nuclear facilities under construction and gives rise to questions about whether there were any other nuclear facilities in Iran which had not been declared to the agency".

Iran has told the IAEA it has no other nuclear facilities "currently under construction or in operation that had not been declared to the agency", according to the report. But it has not yet responded to a November 6 letter from the agency asking whether it is planning to build any other nuclear sites.

The report, which is the last to be published under outgoing director general Mohamed ElBaradei, appears to reflect his waning influence over the agency's political position on Iran in relation to the director of the Safeguards Department, Olli Heinonen.

After IAEA inspectors had visited the Qom site and discussed the background of its construction, ElBaradei had commented on November 5 that they had found "nothing to be worried about" and that the facility was indeed a backup to the Natanz plant as Iran had maintained. "It's a hole in a mountain," ElBaradei said.

The spin in the report itself takes the opposite approach from ElBaradei's suggestion that the Qom facility is not a threatening development.

It also appears to reflect a common [Western](#) view that treating the Qom site as evidence of a covert nuclear weapons-related program is useful to increase the pressure on Iran to reach agreement with the West to give up the bulk of its low enrichment uranium (LEU) supplies until they could be replenished through more enrichment nearly a year later.

After senior officials of the Obama administration had briefed reporters on September 25 on the allegation that Iran had been working on the site secretly for several years, US officials said the discovery of the site would give the United States "leverage" in the talks with Iran that were to start in Geneva October 1.

Western governments proposed at the October 1 meeting that Iran agree to ship up to 80% of its LEU to Russia in return for eventual shipments of 20% enriched uranium to fuel a small medical reactor in Tehran. That would have allowed the Obama administration to declare a diplomatic victory in regard to Iran's nuclear capabilities and tamp down Israeli pressures to allow it to bomb Iran's nuclear facilities.

At negotiations in Vienna last month under IAEA auspices, ElBaradei presented a draft agreement based on that Western proposal. Iran has effectively rejected that deal, however, and made a counter-proposal that would allow it to husband its LEU supplies.

Obama warned Iran on Sunday, "We are now running out of time," in regard to negotiations on the ElBaradei draft. The United States and other negotiating partners have ignored Iran's counter-proposal.

Gareth Porter is an investigative historian and journalist specializing in US national security policy. The paperback edition of his latest book, *Perils of Dominance: Imbalance of Power and the [Road to](#) War in Vietnam*, was published in 2006.

http://www.atimes.com/atimes/Middle_East/KK19Ak02.html

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New York Times
November 19, 2009

Minister Says Iran Won't Ship Uranium Abroad

By Michael Slackman

CAIRO — Iran's foreign minister said this week that his government would not ship its stockpile of low-enriched uranium out of the country, making him the highest ranking official so far to declare that Iran would renege on a deal aimed at defusing a confrontation with the West over its nuclear program.

"We will definitely not send our 3.5-percent-enriched uranium out of the country," Manouchehr Mottaki, the foreign minister, told the semiofficial ISNA news agency in remarks reported Wednesday.

But Iran has repeatedly sent mixed signals on the nuclear issue, and it was not immediately clear if Mr. Mottaki was staking out a negotiating position or issuing a final rejection of the deal that Iran's negotiating team agreed to last month in Vienna.

While he said that enriched uranium would not be sent abroad, he also said Iran would consider "a simultaneous swap" in which it would give up some of its stockpile after it received more highly enriched fuel. The swap would have to take place on Iranian soil, he said.

In an interview with ISNA published Wednesday, Mr. Mottaki emphasized the rejection. But in an interview with an Indian newspaper, *The Hindu*, earlier this week, he seemed to emphasize Iran's willingness to find a compromise.

"We believe that with the continuation of the diplomacy going on now, it is possible to reach an agreement and compromise," he said in comments published in Monday's edition of *The Hindu* and reprinted in the English-language *Tehran Times*. "Complementary suggestions and proposals are being sent and received by both sides."

In Vienna, a representative of the International Atomic Energy Agency was uncertain what to make of the foreign minister's remarks, saying it was unclear if they were a formal response from the Iranians or simply his personal view.

Iran appeared to reject the deal late last month, but neither the State Department nor the nuclear agency considered that a formal response. When the agency does get a formal response from Tehran, the atomic energy agency representative added, it will address the issue publicly.

The United States and Europe have said that they accepted the initial proposal because it would delay Iran's ability to produce fuel for a nuclear weapon and allow time for further negotiations over its nuclear program. The proposal involved sending about three-quarters of Iran's declared stockpile of low-enriched uranium out of the country to be further enriched, turned into fuel rods and returned to a nuclear reactor in Tehran that makes medical isotopes. The Western nations calculated that it would take about a year for Iran to replace the uranium.

But in Tehran, where officials insist their nuclear program is for civilian purposes only, the deal was attacked from across the political spectrum. When President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad seemed to suggest it was acceptable, he was criticized from all sides, even by the reformists he long called too soft on the West.

Mr. Mottaki's statement was one of three recent developments relating to Iran's nuclear program, and Iran experts said they probably were all connected. The first involved a report by inspectors from the International Atomic Energy Agency, the United Nations' nuclear watchdog, who examined a recently revealed enrichment laboratory being built inside a mountain on a military base near the city of Qum. The lab is too small to produce the quantity of fuel needed for a commercial reactor, they said, suggesting it was designed more for making fuel for a weapon.

The second involved President Obama's recent visits to Russia and China. While the Russian president said that Moscow was growing tired of waiting for Iran, he did not commit to joining the United States and Europe in tough new sanctions if Iran continues with its nuclear program. China also did not respond publicly to the president's request to press Iran.

A scientist who is an Iran expert said, "I think in the last week the reluctance of Russian and Chinese presidents meeting with Mr. Obama to overtly and unequivocally support Mr. Obama for more sanctions has given them in Iran a boost to toughen up their brinkmanship." The scientist commented on the condition that he not be identified because he at times travels to Iran for work.

Mr. Mottaki's dueling messages left unclear if Iran's leaders were looking for a compromise that would satisfy the West and their domestic constituency — which strongly supports the nuclear program — or if it was feeling more strongly than ever that it could simply defy the West and keep its enrichment program running.

Rasool Nafisi, an Iran expert who has written extensively about Iran's Revolutionary Guards, an elite military force that is exerting increasing influence over the government and the economy, said that it looked as though the leadership was looking for a way to settle with the West while not losing political ground at home.

In trying to divine Iran's intentions, experts have tried to discern the position taken by Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, the supreme leader. In his public comments he has insisted there will be no compromise with the West.

But the negotiating team that accepted the deal last month was led by Saeed Jalili, a hard-liner and Khamenei loyalist, making it highly unlikely the team had agreed without Ayatollah Khamenei's approval. At the same time, Iranian critics of the deal, also considered Khamenei loyalists, were not likely to attack it without his approval, all of which has left competing views of Iran's ultimate goal.

But the scientist who at times works in Iran said if there was one conclusion to be drawn from Mr. Mottaki's remarks, it was that Washington's strategy of negotiations without preconditions, but with pressure and threats, had not worked.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/11/19/world/middleeast/19nuke.html>

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RIA Novosti – Russian Information Agency
19 November 2009

Turkey Presses Iran On Uranium Compromise

Turkey will continue efforts to persuade Iran to ship its low-enriched uranium abroad to allay international fears over its nuclear ambitions, the foreign minister said on Thursday.

Turkey, a neutral country in the long-running international nuclear dispute with Iran, has agreed to store Iranian uranium as an alternative to a UN-brokered deal that Tehran rejected yesterday.

"We will continue contacts with [the UN nuclear watchdog] IAEA and Iran, seeking diplomatic solutions to issues of crucial importance to the region," Ahmet Davutoglu was quoted by Turkish media as saying.

Iran has not yet responded to Turkey's offer.

Under the compromise proposed by the international negotiators, Iran was to ship its low-enriched uranium to Russia and France for further enrichment and processing into fuel for power plants. Iran would not thereby be able to enrich uranium to make weapons.

The United States and other Western powers have demanded that Iran halt uranium enrichment, fearing it seeks to build nuclear weapons. Tehran insists that it needs nuclear technology only to generate electricity.

Iranian Foreign Minister Manouchehr Mottaki said on Wednesday that the country could consider a simultaneous swap of its nuclear fuel for other uranium, but that the exchange would have to take place on its own territory.

The U.S. and its allies have meanwhile stepped up calls for more sanctions against Iran.

ANKARA, November 19 (RIA Novosti)

<http://en.rian.ru/world/20091119/156904138.html>

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PRESS TV – Iran
19 November 2009

Rafsanjani: Give Us N-fuel Or We Will Produce It

The chairman of Iran's Expediency Council says Tehran will continue its nuclear enrichment program if the West does not provide the Islamic Republic with nuclear fuel.

Ali-Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani said that the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) is responsible for providing the necessary enriched uranium for the Tehran Research Reactor.

"If the US and the West go on with the same policy toward Iran, Tehran will continue its peaceful enrichment program within the legal frameworks," Mehr news agency quoted Rafsanjani as saying.

"The West and the US are well aware that the Islamic Republic of Iran has no interest in developing nuclear weapons and records of Iran's behavior prove that," Rafsanaji said in a meeting with the Swedish Ambassador to Iran Magnus Werndstedt on Wednesday.

"Any fair-minded country, including Iran which is aware of the mass killing and destruction caused by the US nuclear attacks on Nagasaki and Hiroshima will hate nuclear weapons," he stated.

"Before the Islamic Revolution, the West and the US volunteered to build nuclear plants in Iran and this was because of the Shah regime's obedience to them," he noted.

"The US and the West try to control Iran because of its huge energy resources and geographical location, but the Iranian nation who has an old civilization and religious beliefs will not accept dependence and being subordinated again," Rafsanjani said.

He added that the fact that the West and the US are silent about Israel's nuclear weapons shows that they only pretend to be supporters of peace and security.

<http://www.presstv.ir/detail.aspx?id=111653§ionid=351020104>

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Reuters

November 19, 2009

US Warns Iran Of Consequences Over Standoff

By Patricia Zengerle and Manny Mogato

SEOUL/MANILA, Nov 19 (Reuters) - World powers could have a package of measures against Iran "within weeks", U.S. President Barack Obama said on Thursday, warning Tehran of consequences for its failure to respond to an offer of a nuclear deal.

However, Iranian Foreign Minister Manouchehr Mottaki dismissed talk of further punitive sanctions, saying the West had learnt from past failures.

Iran on Wednesday rejected a deal to send enriched uranium abroad for rendering into fuel for medical purposes in Tehran, defying world powers which regarded the offer as a way to delay Iran's potential ability to make atomic bombs by at least a year by divesting the country of most of its refined uranium stock.

Under the plan brokered by the U.N. nuclear watchdog, Iran would ship some 75 percent of its low-enriched uranium to Russia and France, where it would be converted into fuel plates for a Tehran reactor that makes isotopes for cancer treatment.

"Iran has taken weeks now and has not shown its willingness to say yes to this proposal ... and so as a consequence we have begun discussions with our international partners about the importance of having consequences," Obama said at a joint news conference with South Korean President Lee Myung-bak in Seoul.

He said Iran would not be given an unlimited amount of time, likening the Iranian nuclear issue to years of stop-and-start negotiations with North Korea about its nuclear ambitions.

"We weren't going to duplicate what has happened with North Korea, in which talks just continue forever without any actual resolution to the issue," said Obama.

He has advocated a policy of increased engagement, rather than confrontation, on thorny international issues.

Underlying Western concerns, diplomats said U.N. inspectors revisited Iran's second uranium enrichment facility on Thursday -- a site whose belated disclosure by Tehran in September raised fears in the West that more sites may be hidden away.

The inspectors aimed to make further checks of the Fordow site's layout and wanted more Iranian explanations to pinpoint the project's chronology and original purpose, as well as access to its director and designers.

"NO FINAL ANSWER"

Russia said on Thursday Iran had still not given its final response to the proposed fuel deal.

"As far as we know, there has so far been no final official answer from Tehran," Foreign Ministry spokesman Andrei Nesterenko said in a statement. "There is currently no discussion on working out additional sanctions against Iran."

In apparent response to Obama's comments, Iran's President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad reiterated in a speech in Tabriz that Iran would respond positively to a change in big powers' policy.

"I am speaking to the world powers: Those who say they want to have a constructive interaction should know that if the Iranian nation sees a practical change in their behaviour and that they have given up their aggressive attitude and honestly raised a hand to Iran, then we would accept it," he said.

"But if we find they are still continuing their past domineering and hostile policies ... then the response of the Iranian national would be as firm as in the past."

During a visit to the Philippines, Mottaki shrugged off the possibility of further sanctions. "Sanction was the literature of the 60s and 70s," he told a news conference in Manila.

"I think they are wise enough not to repeat failed experiences," he said, speaking through an interpreter. "Of course, it's totally up to them."

Mottaki said the Islamic Republic was willing to discuss the reactor fuel deal but only if the swap of enriched uranium for the fuel took place within Iran.

"Iran raises its readiness in order to have further talks within the framework which is presented," he said. "It's not our proposal to have a swap. They raised such a proposal and we described and talked about how it could be operationalised."

TROJAN HORSE

Obama said he still hoped Iran would change its mind.

"Our expectation is that, over the next several weeks, we will be developing a package of potential steps that we could take, that would indicate our seriousness to Iran," he said.

He said he had confidence in the approach to Iran, which rejects suspicions that its declared programme to enrich uranium for electricity generation is a Trojan horse for efforts to produce atomic bomb fuel.

"I continue to hold out the prospect that they may decide to walk through this door. I hope they do," he said.

"But what I'm pleased about is the extraordinary international unity that we've seen. If you think at the beginning of the year, how disjointed international efforts were and how uneven perceptions were about Iran's nuclear programme, and where we are today, I think it's an indication that we've taken the right approach."

Russia and France also pushed Iran to accept the deal as is.

Diplomats say the six major powers are disunited over how tough the next sanctions should be. Russian and Chinese reservations, they say, all but ensure the next round will be largely symbolic, such as adding names to a U.N. blacklist for asset freezes and travel bans, rather than harsh measures targeting Iran's lifeblood oil and gas sector.

Iran says it needs nuclear technology to generate power but its history of secrecy and restricting U.N. inspections have raised Western suspicions of a covert quest for atom bombs.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/latestCrisis/idUSSP497326>

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Wall Street Journal
November 19, 2009

Iran Imperils Western Nuclear Deal

By CHIP CUMMINS and JAY SOLOMON

Iran's foreign minister appeared to renege on a pact that the U.S. had hoped would curtail the Islamic Republic's ability to build a nuclear bomb, dealing a blow to the Obama administration's efforts to try to resolve the West's standoff with Tehran.

Iranian Foreign Minister Manouchehr Mottaki said Wednesday in Tehran that Iran wouldn't send any of its uranium out of the country, as envisioned in a deal struck Oct. 1 between Iranian negotiators and counterparts from the U.S., France, Russia and the International Atomic Energy Agency.

Two United Nations Security Council diplomats said they view the deal as essentially dead, but expect council members to wait until the end of the year before pushing for fresh sanctions against Iran.

There is growing concern among Washington's European and Middle East allies that with the deal potentially evaporating, the White House's engagement policy toward Tehran is adrift. Mr. Obama has set a year-end deadline for Iran to respond to his overtures, but Western diplomats said there remains little confidence that China or Russia will agree to coercive action.

The U.S. has yet to significantly push its own allies to begin taking steps against Iran, arguing that Iran should be given more time. "We're headed towards crunch time on Iran in the next few months," said a Middle East diplomat involved in Iran diplomacy.

The uranium-enrichment deal was at first seen as a potential breakthrough in the Obama administration's diplomatic outreach to Iran. Washington has so far indicated it is willing to wait out discussions, but Western officials have said they aren't willing to offer significant alternatives to the pact. The White House now views next week's meeting of the IAEA's Board of Governors as a key moment to assess the way forward.

U.S. officials said the administration is walking a delicate diplomatic path. They acknowledge Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad appears to be using negotiations to limit U.N. pressure while also working to legitimize his government domestically.

The White House wants to support moderate opposition forces inside Iran that have challenged the leadership since June elections that were widely viewed as rigged. At the same time, Washington wants to negotiate with the government, to have any hope of curtailing its nuclear activities through diplomacy.

The officials said Mr. Obama remains committed to ratcheting up pressure early next year, and that Washington is cobbling together a coalition of allies to punish Tehran even if Beijing and Moscow balk. The U.S. has also been talking with Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates about how to utilize oil sales to pressure Tehran. "Our patience is limited. The president has made clear that at the end of the year we'll be able to decide" if Iran is serious, said Robert Einhorn, the State Department's top official on nonproliferation, last week. "April 2010 is too late."

U.S. and Western officials have publicly said they are awaiting a formal response by Tehran at the IAEA in Vienna before deciding how to proceed. Privately, U.S. and Western officials express much more pessimism. At the heart of the agreement hammered out in Vienna in October is a proposed transaction in which Iranian negotiators agreed to send out the bulk of their low-enriched uranium to Russia for further processing. The uranium would then be returned to Iran for use in a medical-research reactor.

For Western powers, the deal appeared to be a way of delaying Iran's ability to build a nuclear weapon, essentially transferring enough uranium out of the country to stymie, for a time, such a project. For Iran, the agreement appeared to legitimize what it has always claimed to be a peaceful nuclear program. Shortly after the deal was disclosed, though, Iranian officials started publicly disparaging it.

Mr. Mottaki's statement Wednesday seemed to go further, ruling out any Iranian acceptance of the deal in its current form. "Iran will not send its 3.5%-enriched uranium out of the country," state media quoted Mr. Mottaki as saying. He said Iran preferred to domestically enrich uranium to the 20% purity needed for its medical reactor, or to buy it, according to state media.

He held out the prospect of further talks with the IAEA. He suggested Iran would be willing to agree to some sort of exchange -- presumably Iran's low-enriched stockpile for higher-enriched fuel -- inside Iranian territory. That is a proposal Western powers seem unlikely to endorse.

Mr. Mottaki's statement is the latest in a series of often-contradictory comments from Iran's leadership about the pact.

Even Wednesday, Iran's envoy to the International Atomic Energy Agency said in Vienna he hadn't received instructions from Tehran to reject the deal. The envoy, Ali Asghar Soltanieh, said Iran was still ready for negotiations, according to an IAEA spokesman who witnessed his comments. Iran has long denied it has ambitions to build a nuclear bomb.

Analysts have interpreted Iran's reluctance to embrace or reject the deal in various ways. The weeks of public criticism could simply be aimed at buying extra time to push along its own uranium enrichment before the West's patience runs out.

The criticism could also be a negotiating tactic to win fresh concessions that would help sell the controversial deal to hard-line elements of Iran's leadership, loathe to appear to be taking orders from the West.

The negotiations come as Mr. Ahmadinejad and Iran's arch-conservative clerical establishment attempt to extinguish lingering political opposition to the presidential elections. Some analysts have also interpreted the conflicting statements over the deal as a reflection of a real fissure in Tehran's leadership in the wake of those protests, the most dramatic domestic unrest since the Iranian Revolution 30 years ago. Embattled at home, the regime has been eager to demonstrate it hasn't been bowed on the world stage.

http://online.wsj.com/article/SB125857144924754123.html?mod=WSJ_hpp_MIDDLENexttoWhatsNewsSecond

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RIA Novosti – Russian Information Agency
18 November 2009

Russia Continues To Modernize Its Nuclear Triad

MOSCOW (RIA Novosti) - Russia's Strategic Missile Forces (SMF), the land-based component of the nuclear triad, will put on combat duty a second regiment equipped with Topol-M mobile missile systems by the end of 2009.

Topol-M (SS-27 Stalin) missiles are the mainstay of the ground-based component of Russia's nuclear triad. As of the beginning of 2009, the SMF operated 50 silo-based and six road-mobile Topol-M missile systems.

"We will complete the rearmament of the second missile regiment in the Teikovo division with mobile Topol-M systems," the new SMF commander, Lt. Gen. Andrei Shvaichenko told reporters in Moscow.

The first Topol-M mobile missile regiment has already been put on combat duty with the 54th Strategic Missile Division near the town of Teikovo, about 150 miles (240 km) northeast of Moscow.

Shvaichenko also said that a sixth regiment of silo-based Topol-M systems will be put in service with the Tatishchevo Missile Division near Saratov in southwestern Russia in 2010.

The Topol-M missile, with a range of about 7,000 miles (11,000 km), is said to be immune to any current and future U.S. ABM defense. It is capable of making evasive maneuvers to avoid a kill using terminal phase interceptors, and carries targeting countermeasures and decoys.

It is also shielded against radiation, electromagnetic pulse, nuclear blasts, and is designed to survive a hit from any form of laser technology.

At present, six types of silo-based and mobile ICBM systems are on combat duty with the SMF, including the heavy Voevoda (SS-18 Satan) capable of carrying 10 warheads, and the Topol-M systems.

Shvaichenko said Russia will continue work to extend the service life of the SS-18 missiles to 31 years and the SS-25 Topol and RS-20B missiles to 23 years.

http://en.rian.ru/military_news/20091118/156892231.html

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RIA Novosti – Russian Information Agency
18 November 2009

Russian Missile Forces Report Results of Combat Training in 2009

Russia's Strategic Missile Forces (SMF) conducted a total of 11 large-scale exercises and two test launches of strategic missiles in 2009, the SMF said on Wednesday.

The SMF top brass gathered in Moscow to discuss the results of combat training in 2009 and set plans for the next year. The meeting was chaired by new SMF Commander Lt. Gen. Andrei Shvaichenko.

"A total of 11 command-and-staff drills on strategic and operational levels, and 22 exercises on the tactical level were conducted by the SMF in 2009," the statement said.

The SMF test launched an RS-12M Topol ballistic missile on April 10 and a RS-20B missile (a converted SS-18). Five additional test launches have been scheduled before the end of the year, the SMF said.

At present, six types of silo-based and mobile ICBM systems are on combat duty with the SMF, including the heavy Voevoda (SS-18 Satan) capable of carrying 10 warheads, and the Topol-M (Stalin) systems.

The SMF reportedly has a total of 538 ICBMs, including 306 SS-25 Sickle missiles, 88 SS-18 Satan and 56 SS-27 Topol-M missiles.

http://en.rian.ru/military_news/20091118/156888443.html

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Washington Post
November 19, 2009

Pakistani Nuclear Scientist Said To Affirm Post Article's Accuracy

By R. Jeffrey Smith, Washington Post Staff Writer

A leading Pakistani newspaper said Wednesday that the former director of Pakistan's clandestine nuclear program had affirmed a recent account in The Washington Post of the country's nuclear dealings with China, saying the account was accurately based on a letter that Abdul Qadeer Khan said he sent to his wife.

The News, which describes itself as Pakistan's top English-language daily, reported that Khan, in an interview, said that government agents had removed a copy of the letter from his daughter's baggage and that it had been seen by former military ruler Pervez Musharraf.

In his 2006 memoir, Musharraf wrote that Pakistani intelligence agents had seized a letter from Khan to his daughter that "contained detailed instructions for her to go public" about Pakistan's nuclear secrets through certain British journalists. In its article, The Post said it had obtained Khan's documents and narratives from a former Financial Times journalist, Simon Henderson, who corresponded with Khan.

A spokesman for Pakistan's Foreign Ministry, in a statement Friday to Agence France-Presse, had called Khan's account in The Post's article that day "baseless."

But local press accounts Monday stated that at a court hearing in Rawalpindi about Khan's long-running detention by the government at his home, government prosecutors accused him of leaking national secrets and asked judges to block any new statements by him to foreign journalists. The hearing was adjourned without a decision.

The Post's article quoted descriptions by Khan and others of how China gave Pakistan enough highly enriched uranium for two atomic bombs, a nuclear bomb design and other nuclear materials in the 1980s. In exchange, according to Khan's account, Pakistan helped China modernize its production of bomb-grade uranium.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/11/18/AR2009111804007.html>

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Asia Times
November 20, 2009

Nuclear Fallout Rocks Pakistan

By Syed Saleem Shahzad

ISLAMABAD - Sharp differences between Pakistani leaders over safeguarding the country's nuclear arsenal are placing increasing pressure on the embattled administration of President Asif Ali Zardari.

Zardari is already seriously at odds with the military establishment over dealing with the Taliban-led insurgency and there is a strong likelihood that his government will face a make-or-break test within weeks in the form of mass street protests.

Pakistan has reacted strongly to an article in The New Yorker by investigative reporter Seymour Hersh on November 16, "Defending the arsenal", in which he claimed that Pakistan was discussing "understandings" with the US that could even see specialists take sophisticated nuclear triggers out of the country to prevent them from falling into the wrong hands.

The administration of President Barack Obama is clearly deeply concerned over the safety of Pakistan's weapons, especially after militants last month entered the Pakistani army headquarters in Rawalpindi and subjected it to a bloody 22-hour siege.

General Tariq Majid, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee, said the claims were "absurd and plain mischievous".

This might be the case, but within Pakistan, the issue of the arsenal - estimated to contain between 80 and 100 warheads - has turned into a major political row.

In an obvious attempt to address international concerns, the chairman of the National Assembly's standing committee on defense, Azra Fazal Pechuho, rushed a report of her 17-member committee into the assembly on November 11 seeking immediate legal endorsement to the Nuclear Command Authority (NCA) ordinance of 2007, which sets out a multi-layered structure for the control of the nuclear arsenal.

According to this report, the president would be chairman of the authority and the prime minister would be the deputy chairman. Other members would be the ministers for foreign affairs, defense, finance and interior, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee, three services chiefs and the director general of the Strategic Planning Division.

The operational control of the nuclear weapons is currently solely in the hands of the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of the Staff Committee, General Majid.

The Nuclear Command Authority bill seeks to bring into law an ordinance from the time of former president, General Pervez Musharraf, to strengthen control over the country's nuclear weapons.

However, the bill was deferred by the speaker, Fehmida Mirza, on a request from Parliamentary Affairs Minister Babar Awani, who gave no reason for the move.

Asia Times Online has learned that obstacles created by former premier, Nawaz Sharif, led to the deferment. Sharif, leader of the opposition, apparently sees Zardari as unreliable, and wants the authority to be headed by the prime minister. He also urged that the leader of the opposition be a part of the NCA.

Over the past months, Zardari has become increasingly isolated. He has lost the trust of the military, which the US now views as the power to deal with in Pakistan, the political opposition is growing more assertive.

People close to Sharif say a mass campaign, much like the one in March that forced the government to restore the judiciary that had been dismissed by Musharraf, is inevitable.

The current situation is a fresh episode of an overall political imbalance that occurred after the assassination of former premier, Benazir Bhutto, (Zardari's wife) in December 2007 that led to the August 2008 resignation of Musharraf as president and the election of Zardari as president in September 2008.

In just over a year, General Ashfaq Parvez Kiani, the army chief, has eclipsed Zardari and he is now Washington's point man on the Pakistani side of the South Asian war theater. The Americans believe Kiani will push relentlessly to gain victory in the tribal areas against the Pakistan Taliban and al-Qaeda.

Significantly, the US sees Kiani as the most trusted person to protect Pakistan's nuclear assets. Hersh wrote in his article:

The ongoing consultation on nuclear security between Washington and Islamabad intensified after the announcement in March of President Obama's so-called Af-Pak policy, which called upon the Pakistan Army to take more aggressive action against Taliban enclaves inside Pakistan. I was told that the understandings on nuclear cooperation benefited from the increasingly close relationship between Admiral Michael Mullen, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and General Kayani [Kiani], his counterpart, although the CIA [Central Intelligence Agency] and the Departments of Defense, State, and Energy have also been involved.

General Majid denied parts of the article that suggested an American role in the protection of Pakistan's arsenal, but Kiani, whose dealings were a major discussion point in the article, did not utter a single word.

During US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's recent visit to Pakistan, it was made clear that Washington's political administration also approves of Kiani. (See US puts its faith in Pakistan's military Asia Times Online, November 6, 2009.)

This faith in the military, rather than in any political force, comes at a time when the controversial National Reconciliation Ordinance (NRO) is due to expire on November 28 and opposition parties are ready to challenge it in court. Legal experts are unanimous that the ordinance is discriminatory and directly clashes with the constitution and that the judiciary will not allow it to be extended.

The NRO was promulgated in 2007 by Musharraf after a deal was brokered by Washington and London between him and Benazir Bhutto, who at the time was the West's preferred person to succeed Musharraf's military government. The NRO pardoned all corruption cases pending against Benazir Bhutto and Zardari, as well as dozens of activists of her Pakistan People's Party (PPP) who had held important positions in previous governments.

Although Zardari, as president, cannot be tried under the law, cases could be opened against many incumbent ministers after November 28, which would be a major setback for the Zardari government. The PPP's secretary general, Jehangir Badr, has already warned party cadre who benefited from the NRO to obtain bail before possibly being arrested.

The military establishment has seized the moment to hand over a list of names to Zardari of people it believes should be immediately replaced. At the top of the list is the ambassador to Washington, Husain Haqqani, whom the army has always regarded as a foe for being too close to the American administration. Minister of the Interior Rahman Malik is second in line. Although he has been credited with helping destroy the financial arteries of militants, he is regarded as too close to Western intelligence agencies and he often bypasses the military establishment in anti-terror operations.

The ministers for water and power, agriculture, health and many others are also named in the list, accused of incompetence or corruption. Initially, Zardari agreed to replace them, but now he is stalling.

Zardari has also indicated that he is unwilling to immediately shed his constitutional powers, such as the right to appoint armed forces chiefs and dissolve parliament. He has given a March 2010 date for the delegation of these powers to the prime minister.

This is unacceptable to Zardari's main rival, Sharif, who aims to launch a protest campaign against Zardari by mid-December. It was Sharif's campaign that forced Zardari to restore the judiciary this March.

The military has indicated to Sharif that it won't disturb the democratic setup, come what may; rather, it will press for the removal of people with whom it is uncomfortable and live with a weakened Zardari. It does not want mid-term elections in which Sharif's victory would be most likely. Although the military has good relations with Sharif's Pakistan Muslim League, it views him as too independent and too assertive.

In these uncertain times, Musharraf has re-emerged on the scene. Asia Times Online has learned that he is pondering the formation of a new political party and that he recently funneled large amounts of money into the coffers of former aides to promote his cause. These include former minister of information, Sheikh Rasheed, whom some reports say has been paid US\$1 million - the same amount that went to a public relations team to boost Musharraf's image.

Insiders say that Musharraf has vast wealth, much of it accumulated through donations from individuals (these, some say, include Libya's Muammar Gaddafi) and corporations to aid previous election campaigns. There are reports that Musharraf received US\$30 million from the United Arab Emirates via one of its top bankers, and \$3 million from a Pakistani cellular phone company.

Musharraf believes that with his contacts - especially to the Saudi royal family - and being internationally known, he could play a decisive role in the South Asian "war on terror" theater in which the Americans are looking for new ways to approach the Taliban for reconciliation, along with the elimination of al-Qaeda.

The militants, meanwhile, are not standing idly by.

On Tuesday evening, the Taliban chief in the Malakand Division of North-West Frontier Province, Mullah Fazlullah, showed up in Afghanistan and confirmed a report by Asia Times Online that Pakistani militants from

Swat and Malakand - who retreated in the face of military operations earlier this year - were regrouping in the Afghan province of Nuristan. (See Militants change tack in Pakistan Asia Times Online, November 18, 2009.)

Fazlullah claimed that the militants would resume their insurgency in the Swat Valley, and, ominously, he said it would coincide with the planned mass protests against Zardari next month.

http://www.atimes.com/atimes/South_Asia/KK20Df08.html

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Global Security Newswire

November 18, 2009

More Than 23,000 Nukes Found in 14 Nations, Report Says

There are an estimated 23,360 nuclear weapons stockpiled in 14 nations, with the great majority held by Russia and the United States, two nonproliferation experts said in a report issued this week (see *GSN*, Oct. 20).

There are nine nations known or widely assumed to possess nuclear weapons -- China, France, India, Israel, North Korea, Pakistan, Russia, the United Kingdom and the United States. Another five European states -- Belgium, Germany, Italy, Turkey and the Netherlands -- also host U.S. nuclear bombs.

Russia is believed to hold roughly 13,000 nuclear weapons, of which 4,850 are on active or operational status. "The status of the other 8,150 warheads is unclear. Some portion may be in reserve with the balance retired and awaiting dismantlement," Robert Norris and Hans Kristensen stated in the November/December edition of the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*.

The United States holds about 9,400 nuclear weapons, with 2,700 on operational status.

The former Cold War rivals have significantly cut back the number of nuclear-weapon storage sites, the report says. The United States in the 1980s deployed weapons at 75 locations in Germany; that figure is now down to one. "Today, U.S. weapons are stored at a total of 21 locations in 13 states and five European countries."

While the former Soviet Union once used about 500 nuclear storage sites, Russia operates 48 facilities. All such weapons have been removed from the former Soviet republics of Belarus, Kazakhstan and Ukraine (see *GSN*, Oct. 23).

France is believed to possess roughly 300 nuclear weapons, while the United Kingdom keeps about 180. Both nations have made cuts to their nuclear arsenals and the number of storage sites, the report says.

Conversely, the analysts found that China, India and Pakistan were "quantitatively and qualitatively increasing their arsenals and deploying weapons at more sites."

China holds an estimated 240 nuclear weapons, while India is believed to possess between 60 and 80 and Pakistan between 70 and 90.

The storage sites in those nations "are difficult to pinpoint," particularly when it comes to India and Pakistan, the report says.

"Whereas many of the Chinese bases are known, this is not the case in Pakistan and India, where we have found no credible information that identifies permanent nuclear weapons storage locations," Norris and Kristensen stated.

The analysts described Israel -- holder of between 80 and 100 nuclear weapons that it has never officially acknowledged -- as a "wild card because of the opacity of its nuclear weapons program." Any modifications to its nuclear arsenal, which is apparently not maintained on an active status, are likely to be "modest," they said.

There is no known "credible information on how North Korea has weaponized its nuclear weapons capability, much less where those weapons are stored," according to the report, which assigned no specific number to Pyongyang's arsenal. "We also take note that a recent U.S. Air Force intelligence report did not list any of North Korea's ballistic missiles as nuclear-capable" (Norris/Kristensen, *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, November/December 2009).

http://www.globalsecuritynewswire.org/gsn/nw_20091118_4824.php

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Wall Street Journal
November 18, 2009

FBI Suspects Terrorists Are Exploring Cyber Attacks

By Siobhan Gorman

The Federal Bureau of Investigation is looking at people with suspected links to al Qaeda who have shown an interest in mounting an attack on computer systems that control critical U.S. infrastructure, a senior official told Congress Tuesday.

While there is no evidence that terrorist groups have developed sophisticated cyber-attack capabilities, a lack of security protections in U.S. computer software increases the likelihood that terrorists could execute attacks in the future, the official warned.

If terrorists were to amass such capabilities, they would be wielded with "destructive and deadly intent," Steven Chabinsky, deputy assistant director of the FBI's Cyber Division, told the Senate Judiciary Committee Tuesday.

"The FBI is aware of and investigating individuals who are affiliated with or sympathetic to al Qaeda who have recognized and discussed the vulnerabilities of the U.S. infrastructure to cyber-attack," Mr. Chabinsky told the committee, without providing details.

Such infrastructure could include power grids and transportation systems.

The control systems of U.S. infrastructure as well as money transfers are now connected directly or indirectly to the Internet. Hackers have been able to penetrate computer systems running components of the U.S. electric grid as well as divert bank transfers.

In an interview Tuesday, former Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff said al Qaeda already has some cyber-attack capability. "I don't think they're the most capable in the world, but they have some capability," he said.

Mr. Chertoff said he expects al Qaeda to develop more cyber-attack skills that would allow them to attack infrastructure that is less well protected, perhaps in the transportation and energy sectors. "It's only a matter of time," he said. "They're getting the capability to do some damage."

These descriptions reinforced concerns that former Director of National Intelligence Mike McConnell raised publicly last month about the potential for a terrorist attack on the computer systems and data underpinning the U.S. financial sector.

"I am worried about some terrorist group [with] the capability to destroy the U.S. money supply," Mr. McConnell said. The impact of such an attack would be "an order of magnitude greater" than the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, he said.

At the Senate hearing, officials from the Homeland Security and Justice departments also told the panel that the country isn't fully prepared for a cyber-attack and current laws don't provide an adequate framework for the government to fend off such attacks.

"We do need to step up our defensive game," said Philip Reitinger, a Homeland Security deputy undersecretary in charge of cybersecurity. He said U.S. systems are attacked every day by criminals and other adversaries who steal money to fund terrorist or criminal activities, as well as valuable information.

Among the chief areas of concern, Mr. Reitinger said, are vulnerabilities introduced when components of technology systems aren't properly vetted for security gaps before they are assembled into larger systems.

Officials also hinted at an internal battle brewing over whether laws that govern technology and surveillance need to be changed to better fend off cyber-attacks.

Associate Attorney General James Baker said the laws are not adequate, when pressed by Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse, a Rhode Island Democrat.

"We are definitely debating these kinds of issues inside the administration," Mr. Baker added.

Separately, the computer antivirus company McAfee Inc. issued a report by Paul Kurtz, who led the cyber-security review for the Obama transition team. He concluded that some cyber-attacks in 2007, including Israeli cyber-attacks on Syria and U.S. cyber-weapons employed in Iraq, constitute cyber-warfare.

The report is the first attempt to spell out characteristics of cyber-warfare and analyze how different attacks measure up.

http://online.wsj.com/article/SB125850773065753011.html?mod=WSJ_hpp_MIDDLENexttoWhatsNewsSecond

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San Francisco Chronicle
November 18, 2009

McAfee Warns Of Cold War-Style Computer Attack

By Alejandro Martínez-Cabrera, Chronicle Staff Writer

The threat of warfare spreading into the digital realm is no longer just a possibility, according to a McAfee report released Tuesday.

The Santa Clara computer security firm concluded that countries like Russia, China, France, Israel and the United States have the technological capabilities to coordinate state-to-state online attacks and are quietly building their computerized arsenals.

"We believe we're seeing something a little like a cyber-Cold War, where these nations have the ability to integrate these capabilities to their military strategies but are still very hesitant to launch these attacks," said Dmitri Alperovitch, vice president of threat research at McAfee. "They know the Internet is the ultimate equalizer, and there's still a great chance of a strategic attack blowing back and affecting the country that launched it."

As the digital arms race threatens to escalate, the report's authors expressed the most concern for the vulnerability of privately owned critical infrastructure, such as power grids, transportation, telecommunications, and health and financial services.

"There's considerable evidence that vulnerabilities exist," said UC Berkeley information management Professor Doug Tygar.

The report, which collects interviews from more than 20 experts in international relations, national defense and computer security, also noted that politically motivated online attacks, network infiltrations and digital espionage are on the rise.

No known computer attack has been severe or sophisticated enough to be considered an act of war, Alperovitch said, but some of the aggressions originating from nations have been testing the boundaries of what's acceptable.

During the war between Russia and Georgia over the region of South Ossetia, Georgian government and media Web sites were bombarded with denial-of-service attacks in August 2008- a common tactic in which overwhelming traffic causes a Web site to crash - started by Russian nationalists.

During the July Fourth weekend, several U.S. government Web sites temporarily went offline after they were hit by a denial-of-service attack. A few days later, a similar attack brought down several South Korean Web sites.

In late October, South Korea traced the attack back to North Korea and accused its telecommunications ministry of originating the aggression. Alperovitch said North Korea might have been trying to test its ability to disrupt communications between the United States and South Korea.

The report calls for a public discussion involving government officials, the private sector and academics with the goal of defining what constitutes computer warfare and determining what threats merit military responses.

<http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/c/a/2009/11/17/BUU81AM9R7.DTL&type=tech>

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New York Times
November 19, 2009

Born In U.S., A Radical Cleric Inspires Terror

By Scott Shane

WASHINGTON — In nearly a dozen recent terrorism cases in the United States, Britain and Canada, investigators discovered the suspects had something in common: a devotion to the message of Anwar al-Awlaki, an eloquent Muslim cleric who has turned the Web into a tool for extremist indoctrination.

Mr. Awlaki, 38, the son of a former agriculture minister and university president in Yemen, has never been accused of planting explosives himself. But experts on terrorism believe his persuasive endorsement of violence as a religious duty, in colloquial, American-accented English, has helped push a series of Western Muslims into terrorism.

Maj. Nidal Malik Hasan, the Army psychiatrist charged with killing 13 people at Fort Hood, Tex., on Nov. 5, is only the latest suspect accused of perpetrating or plotting violence to be linked to the cleric.

In 2006, for example, a group of Canadian Muslims listened to Mr. Awlaki's sermons on a laptop a few months before they were charged with plotting attacks in Ontario to have included bombings, shootings, storming the Parliament Building and beheading the Canadian prime minister.

In 2007, one of six men later convicted of plotting to attack Fort Dix in New Jersey was picked up on a surveillance tape raving about Mr. Awlaki's audio clips. "You gotta hear this lecture," said the plotter, Shain Duka. Mr. Duka called the cleric's interpretation of Muslim duties "the truth, no holds barred, straight how it is!"

Last year, Mr. Awlaki exchanged public letters on the Web with Al Shabaab, a Somali Islamist group that has attracted recruits among young Somali-Americans living in Minnesota. The message from Al Shabaab praised the cleric as "one of the very few scholars" who "defend the honor of the mujahideen."

"Allah knows how many of the brothers and sisters have been affected by your work," it said.

Evan Kohlmann, a counterterrorism researcher who has testified in terrorism trials in the United States and United Kingdom, said Mr. Awlaki's work had also turned up in cases in Chicago and Atlanta and in at least seven in the United Kingdom.

"Al-Awlaki condenses the Al Qaeda philosophy into digestible, well-written treatises," Mr. Kohlmann said. "They may not tell people how to build a bomb or shoot a gun. But he tells them who to kill, and why, and stresses the urgency of the mission."

For at least a decade, counterterrorism officials have had a wary eye on Mr. Awlaki, an American citizen now living in Yemen. His contacts with three of the Sept. 11 hijackers, at mosques where he served in San Diego and Falls Church, Va., remain a perplexing mystery about the 2001 attacks, said Philip Zelikow, who was executive director of the national 9/11 commission.

But in recent years, concerns have focused on Mr. Awlaki's influence via his Web site, his Facebook page and many booklets and CDs carrying his message, including a text called "44 Ways to Support Jihad."

Mr. Awlaki's current site, www.anwar-alawlaki.com, went offline after he was linked to Major Hasan, apparently because a series of Web hosting companies took it down. The home page on Wednesday displayed a Muslim greeting and a promise: "The Web site will be back to normal with a few days time."

Starting late last year, Major Hasan sought religious advice from the cleric in e-mail messages intercepted by American intelligence. He had seen Mr. Awlaki preach at the Virginia mosque in 2001.

In July, the month Major Hasan was transferred to Fort Hood, Mr. Awlaki posted a blistering attack on his Web site denouncing Muslim soldiers who would fight against other Muslims, a conflict that preoccupied Major Hasan, who was facing deployment to Afghanistan.

"What kind of twisted fight is this?" Mr. Awlaki wrote on "Imam Anwar's Blog." A Muslim soldier who follows orders to kill Muslims, he wrote, "is a heartless beast, bent of evil, who sells his religion for a few dollars."

After the Fort Hood shootings, Mr. Awlaki called Major Hasan a hero. "The only way a Muslim could Islamically justify serving as a soldier in the U.S. Army," he wrote on his blog, "is if his intention is to follow the footsteps of men like Nidal."

The question of what to do about terror propagandists like Mr. Awlaki is complex. His writings, though they encourage violence, are protected by the First Amendment's guarantee of free speech, legal authorities say.

Moreover, even as they fuel extremism, Web sites like his can be a valuable counterterrorism tool, because intelligence analysts use them to track those who, like Major Hasan, visit a site, post comments or e-mail its creators.

“The debate has gone on for a long time: take these sites down or leave them up to gather information,” said Brian Fishman, a consultant to several government agencies on terrorism.

Mr. Awlaki was born in New Mexico in 1971, where his father, Nasser al-Awlaki, was studying agricultural economics. After studying Islam in Yemen, Anwar, too, pursued an American education, earning a bachelor’s degree in civil engineering from Colorado State University and a master’s in education at San Diego State. While in San Diego, he was arrested for soliciting prostitutes, law enforcement records show.

At a San Diego mosque where he was an imam, Mr. Awlaki met two future hijackers, Khalid al-Midhar and Nawaf al-Hazmi. In early 2001, Mr. Awlaki moved to the Virginia mosque, attended by Mr. Hazmi and a third hijacker, Hani Hanjour. The 9/11 panel described the connection as suspicious. Law enforcement officials say they strongly doubted Mr. Awlaki knew of the plot, though they could not prove it.

While in the United States, Mr. Awlaki presented a moderate public face. A month after the Sept. 11 attacks, as imam at Dar al-Hijrah mosque in Virginia, he told The New York Times that he would no longer tolerate “inflammatory” rhetoric. The article said Mr. Awlaki “is held up as a new generation of Muslim leader capable of merging East and West.”

Johari Abdul-Malik, imam of the Virginia mosque, said Mr. Awlaki’s sermons were accessible, often witty explorations of Koran passages. “We could have all been duped,” he said. “But I think something happened to him, and he changed his views.”

One thing that happened, after he left the United States in 2002 for London and then Yemen, was eighteen months in a Yemeni prison. He has publicly blamed the United States for pressuring Yemeni authorities to keep him locked up and has said he was questioned by F.B.I. agents there.

Since his release in December 2007, his message has been even more overtly supportive of violence. In “44 Ways to Support Jihad,” he showed a wry awareness of intelligence agencies’ interest in him and his writings.

“The only ones who are spending the money and time translating Jihad literature are the Western intelligence services,” he wrote in English, “and too bad, they would not be willing to share it with you.”

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/11/19/us/19awlaki.html>

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Wall Street Journal

OPINION

November 19, 2009

Hasan, Not KSM, Is Our Real Problem

By Daniel Henninger

If it accomplished nothing else, the Obama administration's announcement last Friday to try 9/11 mastermind Khalid Sheikh Mohammed in lower Manhattan blew the Nidal Hasan murders out of the news. The KSM fiasco deserves all the attention it gets. What Hasan represents, however, is a more immediate concern.

Khalid Sheikh Mohammed is an old-school jihadi. They sit in far-off redoubts, assembling terror teams of foreign nationals who now must figure out how to get themselves and their plot inside the U.S. Not impossible, but harder than before 9/11.

Hasan is new school. He is what's known as a homegrown terrorist. Virtually all the Islamic terrorist plots thwarted here in recent years were homegrown, not designed from afar by a KSM.

Najibullah Zazi, the Colorado airport-shuttle driver arrested in New York this September and charged with conspiring to detonate bombs, came to the U.S. in 1999.

The Fort Dix Six, convicted in December of conspiring to attack U.S. military personnel, were mainly ethnic Albanians whose family came to New Jersey in the 1980s.

Zakaria Amara, the leader of the Toronto 18, who were planning to blow up skyscrapers in Canada, was born in a Toronto suburb.

In testimony to Congress in September, the director of the U.S. National Counterterrorism Center, Mike Leiter, said the Somali terrorist group al-Shabaab includes "dozens of recruits from the United States," mostly ethnic Somalis.

How do individuals sitting in Colorado, New Jersey, Toronto or Texas suddenly transform into mass murderers for jihad? Most of the time, they become radicalized by spending vast amounts of time viewing violent Islamic Web sites run from abroad.

Two years ago, Lawrence Sanchez of the New York City Police Department's intelligence division told the Senate Homeland Security Committee that the Internet is "the most significant factor in the radicalization that is occurring in America." Mr. Sanchez described this process as "self-imposed brainwashing."

In New York Times reporter David Rohde's account of his captivity by the Taliban, he wrote that "watching jihadi videos" was his guards' favorite pastime. He describes them as "little more than grimly repetitive snuff films" of executions.

If you sit in the United States and watch this stuff 'round the clock—self-brainwashing—it is fully protected activity. It qualifies as "speech," protected by the panoply of First Amendment law. These protections exist nowhere else in the world.

The biggest controversy surrounding Maj. Hasan is that the Army knew about his radical Islamic sympathies, from the Walter Reed lecture and the monitored emails to the English-speaking, American-born Yemeni imam Anwar Awlaki, whose Facebook page, with a reported 4,800 "friends," is depicted nearby.

The argument is that the Army should have mustered him out of the service and thereby avoided the 13 murders. Really? After kicking him out of the Army, there was no probable cause for authorities to surveil a civilian Nidal Hasan. In time he as easily could have killed 13 Americans in a suburban Texas mall.

Former Attorney General Michael Mukasey, as the judge presiding over the 1995 trial of the "blind sheikh," Omar Abdel Rahman, for the 1993 World Trade Center bombing, had to instruct the jury that the sheikh's violent, "holy war" sermons at New York mosques were legal, protected activity (he was convicted of conspiracy).

There is a mosque in Manhattan at 96th Street and Lexington Avenue, on whose sidewalk one can hear adherents spouting support for violence against the U.S. That, too, is protected.

A violent ideology is just an ideology, and that is protected speech. It requires acts to put in motion aggressive surveillance, such as wiretapping.

I think the Hasan case shows this is wrong, or at least too dangerous. First Amendment law has never dealt with a widely distributed ideology that has as its *raison d'être* the mass murder of Americans and destruction of American property.

For now this is the way it is: Future Hasans can get jacked up all day on kill-the-Americans Web sites, and we have to wait until they put in motion a conspiracy like Fort Dix or the Colorado jihadists. Or until they start shooting.

Politics is the only recourse.

This is what the political fight was through the Bush years—fights over the Patriot Act, warrantless wiretaps of conversations between U.S. citizens and foreign suspects, using the SWIFT financial data system to track terrorist transfers (or, with KSM, military tribunals versus civil courts). The argument against these policies was that "our values" require that judges review and approve virtually all such activity.

The problem with this view is that "our values" were *already* protected to an unprecedented degree. Raising the bar higher is asking too much of the people assigned to catch all these self-radicalizing jihadists.

The Democrats have cast their lot with tighter restrictions. The past six years and a presidential campaign proved that. In the wake of Hasan's 13 dead people, revisiting the limits of our vulnerability has to be on the table in next year's congressional elections, and then a presidential election.

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB20001424052748704204304574544010614138416.html>

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