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New York Times  
June 28, 2008

## **North Korea's Intent In Razing Tower Is Unclear**

By Norimitsu Onishi

TOKYO — International television crews were invited to reclusive North Korea on Friday to witness the destruction of the cooling tower at the country's main nuclear weapons plant. Viewers around the world later watched the most visible symbol of the North's nuclear ambitions collapse in a cloud of shattered concrete.

In North Korea itself, however, the explosion was a nonevent. The state news agency carried no information about it on Friday, and the images had not found their way onto state television.

News blackouts are not big news in isolated North Korea, which also let a full day pass before it let its people know, on state television and radio, that President Bush had removed it from the United States' list of countries that sponsor terrorism. It couched that development in a warning that Washington had not yet fully abandoned its "hostile policy" toward the North.

Mr. Bush characterized the latest steps toward denuclearization as a "moment of opportunity for North Korea." But the North's cagey reaction suggests that any lasting change in Kim Jong-il's secretive, xenophobic approach to governing one of the world's most cloistered nations is likely to be painfully slow, at best.

Though there are hints that North Korea's powerful military may have relaxed what analysts have described as its wariness about bargaining in earnest on nuclear weapons, experts warn that it is far from clear that Mr. Kim intends to give up all of the country's existing atomic bombs or the capacity to produce new ones.

Still, North Korea watchers in neighboring South Korea and China say that this week's deal appeared to have emerged from the shifting dynamics between North Korea's reform-oriented civilian officials and hard-line military leaders. If the civilian leadership keeps the upper hand, that could foreshadow a more robust pace of change in the country's deeply impoverished economy, they say.

"I don't think it was one group winning against the other, but I think this agreement came out of long discussions between civilian and military leaders," said Song Min-soon, who served as South Korea's chief nuclear negotiator and then as foreign minister from late 2006 to early this year. "Groups inside North Korea who want to reform will now gain a voice."

In his past negotiations, Mr. Song said, his North Korean counterparts referred often to objections from "other institutions in Pyongyang," the capital, which the South Koreans interpreted as the military and officials from the ruling party.

"For some time, I thought it was just an excuse not to make a deal, but later I came to believe that it was not just an excuse but the reality there," said Mr. Song, who is now a member of the National Assembly.

Even if they disagreed about the nuclear program and relations with the outside world, however, reformers and hard-liners are driven by a shared goal of survival, experts said.

Paik Hak-soon, a North Korea expert at the Sejong Institute in Seoul, South Korea, said that since the collapse of the Soviet Union, North Korea had basically pursued the long-term goal of formally ending the Korean War and normalizing relations with the United States.

"That is the only way for North Korea to survive," Mr. Paik said. "North Korea wanted the United States to come to the negotiating table, and since the United States did not want to come voluntarily, North Korea used the nuclear card."

It is a card that the North is unlikely to give up easily. In Thursday's declaration, the North disclosed its plutonium-related activities at the Yongbyon reactor, its main nuclear plant. But the much more difficult task of persuading the North to give up its existing nuclear weapons, estimated at roughly half a dozen, comes in the next stage of talks.

North Korea's declaration did not specify how many nuclear bombs it had. Officials there have not formally addressed Washington's contention that, in addition to its well-known efforts to make nuclear fuel from plutonium, the country has a parallel, underground program to make bomb fuel from enriched uranium.

Xu Guangyu, a Chinese analyst often sympathetic to North Korea, said negotiations were unlikely to advance much, given Mr. Bush's short time in office.

"North Korea is not going to give up their nuclear weapons easily," he said. "That is the last card they have to play with America. They want to keep their card to see what the next president will do with North Korea."

Friday's destruction of the tower, the most conspicuous element of the nuclear complex at Yongbyon, 60 miles north of Pyongyang, did reaffirm the incremental progress that had been made in Chinese-brokered multilateral negotiations to end North Korea's weapons programs. While the North has kept its nuclear activities shrouded in secrecy, steam curling from the tower into the atmosphere was captured in spy satellite photographs, providing outside observers with the most visible sign of operations at Yongbyon.

"As you all saw, the cooling tower is no longer there," Sung Kim, a senior State Department official who witnessed the blast from a hill, told South Korean television. "It's a very significant disablement step."

But some experts in South Korea said the demolition did not answer critical questions, such as how many weapons North Korea has built or whether it has exported its nuclear technology to countries like Syria.

"It's symbolic. But in real terms, whether demolishing or not a cooling tower that has already been disabled doesn't make much difference," said Lee Ji-sue, a North Korea expert at Seoul's Myongji University.

The demolition also shows that North Korea has concluded that the Yongbyon complex, in service for several decades, has served its purpose after producing an unknown number of nuclear weapons, Mr. Lee said.

Whether North Korea's removal from the terrorism list and the lifting of other sanctions announced by Mr. Bush on Thursday lead to much economic progress could depend, again, on how the tensions between reformers and conservatives play out.

In the past, China has encouraged Mr. Kim to emulate its own success by reforming and opening its failing state-run economy. In recent years, North Korea has experimented with some isolated market reforms and allowed the opening of a South Korean-run industrial complex in Kaesong, just north of the demilitarized zone.

But Jin Linbo, a senior research fellow at the China Institute of International Studies, said Mr. Kim had shown no real interest in a systemic economic overhaul. "These experiments can only be regarded as ways that North Korea is trying in order to find a way to make money," he said.

As for large-scale economic reforms, "No, that is too dangerous for the regime," he said.

But Moon Chung-in, a political scientist at Yonsei University in Seoul who was South Korea's ambassador for international security affairs until earlier this year, said he believed that economic change would accelerate now that progress had been made on the nuclear accord.

"Whenever I've met party officials in the past, they've told me: 'We don't want the United States or South Korea to dictate how to manage our economy. You cannot make us open up and reform. But we really are desperate and want to modernize the motherland,'" Mr. Moon said.

"You have to be careful about not using the word 'reform'; they are sensitive about that and prefer 'modernize,'" he said.

Thursday's deal could also provide a boost to North Korea's special industrial zone, which, despite restrictions, has been growing steadily since opening in late 2004. Today, 72 companies employing 294,702 North Koreans operate there. They include three foreign companies: two Chinese manufacturers and a German auto-parts maker.

"European companies were careful about going to Kaesong because they didn't want to be linked with North Korea," said Jean-Jacques Grauhar, secretary general of the European Union Chamber of Commerce in Seoul, which toured Kaesong last month. "But now companies will be more serious about looking at business opportunities in North Korea."

*Jim Yardley contributed from Beijing, and Choe Sang-hun from Seoul, South Korea.*

[http://www.nytimes.com/2008/06/28/world/asia/28nuke.html?\\_r=1&scp=1&sq=North+Korea%27s+Intent+In+Razing+Tower+Is+Unclear&st=nyt&oref=slogin](http://www.nytimes.com/2008/06/28/world/asia/28nuke.html?_r=1&scp=1&sq=North+Korea%27s+Intent+In+Razing+Tower+Is+Unclear&st=nyt&oref=slogin)

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Washington Post

June 28, 2008

Pg. 1

## **U.S. Settles With Scientist Named In Anthrax Cases**

*Hatfill Was Called 'Person of Interest'*

By Carrie Johnson, Washington Post Staff Writer

The Justice Department agreed yesterday to pay biological-weapons expert Steven J. Hatfill a settlement valued at \$5.85 million to drop a lawsuit he filed after then-Attorney General John D. Ashcroft named him a "person of interest" in the investigation of the deadly 2001 anthrax attacks.

The agreement, in which the government did not admit wrongdoing, ended a five-year legal saga. It came after months of mediation in a case that pitted investigators and major news organizations against the scientist, who said his privacy rights had been violated in the race to solve the notorious crimes.

Hatfill, who once worked at the Army's elite biological-warfare research center at Fort Detrick, Md., has always maintained that he played no role in the mailing of lethal powder to lawmakers and media figures weeks after the Sept. 11 attacks. He said information that law enforcement agents supplied to the media cost him a job and any chance of employment.

"I don't think anyone would believe the Department of Justice would . . . pay that kind of money unless they felt there was significant exposure at trial," said Brian A. Sun, a defense lawyer who represented nuclear scientist Wen Ho Lee in a leak case.

The anthrax mailings killed five people, including two postal workers at the Brentwood Road facility in the District, and sickened 17 others, spreading fear on Capitol Hill and across the country.

At a 2002 news conference, Ashcroft named Hatfill a person of interest in the wide federal investigation. Hatfill's home was searched, he was followed and his conversations were wiretapped. He lost his job as an instructor at Louisiana State University and, he said, his reputation was tarnished.

He eventually sued Ashcroft, the Justice Department and the FBI, maintaining that they had violated his constitutional rights and prevented him from earning a living. U.S. District Judge Reggie B. Walton ordered five reporters at news organizations, including The Washington Post, Newsweek, USA Today and CBS News, to answer questions about who provided them information about the investigation and its focus.

Hatfill's attorneys blasted government officials and the media anew as unfairly tarring their client in a statement that was released moments after the settlement was filed with a federal court in the District yesterday.

"As a result of the media circus they created and sustained, Dr. Hatfill must now carry on his scientific work largely independently," according to the statement from Mark A. Grannis, who is representing Hatfill. "This settlement will help him to do so."

Under the terms of the deal, the Justice Department agreed to give Hatfill, 54, a lump sum of \$2.825 million and to purchase an annuity that will provide the scientist an annual income of \$150,000 for the next two decades. A

department spokesman said the total cost to taxpayers will be about \$4.6 million, because the annuity will cost the government \$1.78 million but will mature over time to \$3 million.

The case also focused on interactions between media organizations and law enforcement agents, both in hot pursuit of leads in the case.

Former Washington Post staff writer Allan Lengel was one of six reporters from major news organizations who were deposed in connection with the lawsuit. Lengel confirmed the identities of two sources after they had identified themselves to Hatfill's attorneys and released him from his promise of confidentiality.

Earlier this year, Walton held former USA Today reporter Toni Locy in contempt of court for refusing to reveal her sources. Locy, who previously worked at The Post, appealed the ruling. Yesterday afternoon, Hatfill's attorneys notified the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit in writing that the scientist no longer needs Locy's testimony, which "may or may not make the appeal moot."

Locy, soon to be a journalism professor at Washington and Lee University in Lexington, Va., did not return e-mail messages. Her attorney declined to comment.

Last year, a federal judge in Alexandria threw out a related lawsuit by Hatfill against the New York Times over columns by Nicholas D. Kristof. Hatfill has appealed. Abbe Serphos, a spokeswoman for the Times, declined to comment yesterday.

The October 2001 anthrax mailings, sent to then-Sen. Thomas A. Daschle (D-S.D.), Sen. Patrick J. Leahy (D-Vt.), network television offices in New York and the company that owns National Enquirer, gripped the nation and disrupted correspondence. In addition to the two D.C. postal workers, a Florida photographer, a New York hospital worker and an elderly Connecticut woman died after being exposed to the powder.

Justice Department spokesman Brian Roehrkasse said the investigation of the anthrax attacks continues.

"This investigation remains among the department's highest law enforcement priorities," he said. At one point, as many as 35 FBI agents and 15 Postal Inspection Service agents were involved in the probe, which led to interviews of witnesses as far away as Kabul, Afghanistan. No arrests have been made.

Rep. Rush D. Holt (D-N.J.) sharply criticized the FBI yesterday for what he called failures in evidence collection and for developing a faulty theory in the case. Holt said he would invite FBI Director Robert S. Mueller III to appear before the intelligence oversight panel of the House Appropriations Committee to explain the status of the investigation.

"This case was botched from the very beginning," the lawmaker said.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/06/27/AR2008062702344.html>

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London Sunday Telegraph

June 29, 2008

## **Israel Has A Year To Stop Iran Bomb, Warns Ex-Spy**

By Carolynne Wheeler and Tim Shipman

A former head of Mossad has warned that Israel has 12 months in which to destroy Iran's nuclear programme or risk coming under nuclear attack itself. He also hinted that Israel might have to act sooner if Barack Obama wins the US presidential election.

Shabtai Shavit, an influential adviser to the Israeli parliament's defence and foreign affairs committee, told *The Sunday Telegraph* that time was running out to prevent Iran's leaders getting the bomb.

Mr Shavit, who retired from the Israeli intelligence agency in 1996, warned that he had no doubt Iran intended to use a nuclear weapon once it had the capability, and that Israel must conduct itself accordingly.

"The time that is left to be ready is getting shorter all the time," he said in an interview.

Mr Shavit, 69, who was deputy director of Mossad when Israel bombed the Osirak nuclear facility in Iraq in 1981, added: "As an intelligence officer working with the worst-case scenario, I can tell you we should be prepared. We should do whatever necessary on the defensive side, on the offensive side, on the public opinion side for the West, in case sanctions don't work. What's left is a military action."

The "worst-case scenario, he said, is that Iran may have a nuclear weapon within "somewhere around a year".

As speculation grew that Israel was contemplating its own air strikes, Iran's military said it might hit the Jewish state with missiles and stop Gulf oil exports if it came under attack. Israel "is completely within the range of the Islamic republic's missiles," said Mohammed Ali Jafari, head of the feared Revolutionary Guard. "Our missile power and capability are such that the Zionist regime cannot confront it."

More than 40 per cent of all globally traded oil passes through the 35-mile-wide Strait of Hormuz, putting tankers entering or leaving the Gulf at risk from Iranian mines, rockets and artillery, and Mr Jafari's comments were the clearest signal yet that Iran intends to use this leverage in the nuclear dispute.

Despite offering incentives, the West has failed to persuade Iran to stop enriching uranium. Israeli officials believe the diplomatic process is useless and have been pressing President Bush to launch air strikes before he leaves office on January 20 next year.

They apparently fear that the chances of winning American approval for an air attack will be drastically reduced if the Democratic nominee wins the election. Mr Obama advocates talks with the regime in Tehran rather than military action.

That view was echoed by Mr Shavit, who said: "If [Republican candidate John] McCain gets elected, he could really easily make a decision to go for it. If it's Obama: no. My prediction is that he won't go for it, at least not in his first term in the White House."

He warned that while it would be preferable to have American support and participation in a strike on Iran, Israel will not be afraid to go it alone.

"When it comes to decisions that have to do with our national security and our own survival, at best we may update the Americans that we are intending or planning or going to do something. It's not a precondition, [getting] an American agreement," he said.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/middleeast/israel/2212934/Israel-has-a-year-to-stop-Iran-bomb%2C-warns-ex-spy.html>

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London Sunday Times  
June 29, 2008

## **Iran Ready To Strike At Israel's Nuclear Heart**

By Uzi Mahnaimi, in Tel Aviv

Iran has moved ballistic missiles into launch positions, with Israel's Dimona nuclear plant among the possible targets, defence sources said last week.

The movement of Shahab-3B missiles, which have an estimated range of more than 1,250 miles, followed a large-scale exercise earlier this month in which the Israeli air force flew en masse over the Mediterranean in an apparent rehearsal for a threatened attack on Iran's nuclear installations. Israel believes Iran's nuclear programme is aimed at acquiring nuclear weapons.

The sources said Iran was preparing to retaliate for any onslaught by firing missiles at Dimona, where Israel's own nuclear weapons are believed to be made.

Major-General Mohammad Jafari, the commander of the Revolutionary Guard, told a Tehran daily: "This country [Israel] is completely within the range of the Islamic Republic's missiles. Our missile power and capability are such that the Zionist regime – despite all its abilities – cannot confront it."

An editorial in a government newspaper, Jomhuri Eslami, said: "Our response will hit right at their temple."

The sabre-rattling coincided with a visit to Israel yesterday by the chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff, Admiral Michael Mullen, for talks with his Israeli opposite number, Lieutenant-General Gabi Ashkenazi. This intensified speculation that Israel was seeking US approval for a possible attack on Iran.

"Although the visit had been planned well in advance, we got the feeling he was coming to make sure we'll obey the strict timetable agreed with the US," said an Israeli defence source. He refused to elaborate.

President George Bush has approved the linking of Israel to a US infrared satellite detection system that could spot Shahab missile launches within seconds.

This should enable the Israeli air force to destroy such missiles in the booster stage. The system will also give the Israelis about 15 minutes to seek shelter before any warhead hits.

[http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/world/middle\\_east/article4232021.ece](http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/world/middle_east/article4232021.ece)

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Los Angeles Times  
June 29, 2008

## **Iran Threatens To Shut Down Persian Gulf Oil Lanes If Attacked**

*A military official is quoted as saying Tehran would respond to a confrontation over its nuclear program.*

By Borzou Daragahi, Los Angeles Times Staff Writer

BEIRUT — The commander of Iran's elite Revolutionary Guard said the government might shut down vital oil lanes through the Persian Gulf if the country were attacked by the United States or Israel, according to a newspaper report Saturday.

Maj. Gen. Mohammad Ali Jafari warned that if there were any confrontation over Iran's nuclear program, Tehran would try to damage Western economies by targeting oil.

"Naturally every country under attack by an enemy uses all its capacity and opportunities to confront the enemy," Jafari said to the hard-line newspaper Jaam-e Jam, according to translations of his comments on the English-language website of the semiofficial Fars News Agency.

"Iran will definitely act to impose control on the Persian Gulf and Strait of Hormuz," through which 17 million barrels of oil passes each day.

"After this action, the oil price will rise very considerably and this is among the factors deterring the enemies," he said.

Iran abuts the strategic strait, and Iranian and Western analysts have frequently said that the country could try to blockade or mine it in the event of a war, a move that would send oil prices skyrocketing.

But some military analysts say Iran might not be able to hold the waterway, which is 21 miles wide at its narrowest point, in a confrontation with U.S. warships and aircraft.

The West and Iran remain locked in a standoff over uranium enrichment, which Tehran insists is meant to produce fuel for energy production, but which the U.S. and its allies allege is the cornerstone of an eventual weapons program.

The West has threatened a fourth round of United Nations sanctions as well as a tightening of other economic restrictions if the program is not suspended.

U.S. lawmakers are considering resolutions that would require President Bush to increase pressure on Tehran by preventing the export of refined petroleum products and inspecting "all persons, vehicles, ships, planes, trains, and cargo entering or departing Iran."

U.S. officials this month also leaked word of a large Israeli military exercise that they described as a prelude to a possible attack on Iran.

Tehran has reacted angrily to the pressure, which comes as it considers a package of U.S. and European-backed incentives meant to entice the government to halt enrichment activities. An escalating war of words has rattled nerves and contributed to rising oil prices.

Jafari also warned of possible reprisals against countries that allow the U.S. or Israel to use their territory or airspace to launch attacks against Iran.

"If enemies from outside the region use the soil of regional countries against the Islamic Republic of Iran . . . the governments of those countries will be responsible, and it is our obvious right to act in the same way against their military capabilities and abilities of enemies everywhere," Jafari said.

<http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/world/la-fg-iran29-2008jun29,0,484158.story>

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Washington Post

July 1, 2008

Pg. 2

## **Ex-Agent Says CIA Ignored Iran Facts**

By Joby Warrick, Washington Post Staff Writer

A former CIA operative who says he tried to warn the agency about faulty intelligence on Iraqi weapons programs now contends that CIA officials also ignored evidence that Iran had suspended work on a nuclear bomb.

The onetime undercover agent, who has been barred by the CIA from using his real name, filed a motion in federal court late Friday asking the government to declassify legal documents describing what he says was a deliberate suppression of findings on Iran that were contrary to agency views at the time.

The former operative alleged in a 2004 lawsuit that the CIA fired him after he repeatedly clashed with senior managers over his attempts to file reports that challenged the conventional wisdom about weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. Key details of his claim have not been made public because they describe events the CIA deems secret.

The consensus view on Iran's nuclear program shifted dramatically last December with the release of a landmark intelligence report that concluded that Iran halted work on nuclear weapons design in 2003. The publication of the National Intelligence Estimate on Iran undermined the CIA's rationale for censoring the former officer's lawsuit, said his attorney, Roy Krieger.

"On five occasions he was ordered to either falsify his reporting on WMD in the Near East, or not to file his reports at all," Krieger said in an interview.

In court documents and in statements by his attorney, the former officer contends that his 22-year CIA career collapsed after he questioned CIA doctrine about the nuclear programs of Iraq and Iran. As a native of the Middle

East and a fluent speaker of both Farsi and Arabic, he had been assigned undercover work in the Persian Gulf region, where he successfully recruited an informant with access to sensitive information about Iran's nuclear program, Krieger said.

The informant provided secret evidence that Tehran had halted its research into designing and building a nuclear weapon. Yet, when the operative sought to file reports on the findings, his attempts were "thwarted by CIA employees," according to court papers. Later he was told to "remove himself from any further handling" of the informant, the documents say.

In the months after the conflict, the operative became the target of two internal investigations, one of them alleging an improper sexual relationship with a female informant, and the other alleging financial improprieties. Krieger said his client cooperated with investigators in both cases and the allegations of wrongdoing were never substantiated. Krieger contends in court documents that the investigations were a "pretext to discredit."

Krieger maintains that his client is being further punished by the agency's decision prohibiting him from fully regaining his identity. "He is not even allowed to attend court hearings about his own case," Krieger said.

CIA spokesman Paul Gimigliano declined to comment on the specifics of the case but flatly rejected the allegation that the agency had suppressed reports. "It would be wrong to suggest that agency managers direct their officers to falsify the intelligence they collect or to suppress it for political reasons," he said. "That's not our policy. That's not what we're about."

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/06/30/AR2008063001940.html>

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USA Today

July 2, 2008

Pg. 1

## **Chemical Weapons' Transport Opposed**

By Tom Vanden Brook, USA Today

WASHINGTON — The Pentagon is considering a plan to ship deadly chemical weapons to military sites in four states to accelerate the destruction of the munitions, a new report to Congress says.

The idea of transporting such lethal agents along routes such as from Colorado to Oregon is prompting opposition from Congress and watchdog groups.

They say the plan exposes the American public to unnecessary risks as the U.S. government is concerned about terrorist attacks.

To honor a 1997 treaty banning chemical weapons, Congress has ordered the military to destroy all its munitions by the end of 2017.

In an unpublicized report delivered to lawmakers last week, the Pentagon said it probably could not meet that deadline unless it ships nerve agents and mustard gas to additional sites for destruction.

Even adding more people and working around the clock at the two sites with complicated dismantling requirements in Kentucky and Colorado may not help the military meet the 2017 deadline, the report said.

Work would be speeded up if some weapons at Kentucky's Blue Grass Army Depot are moved to sites in Alabama and Arkansas, the report said, while some at the Pueblo, Colo., site are sent to Utah and Oregon.

Congress would have to change laws that forbid moving the weapons, the report said.

That prospect is uncertain. While chemical weapons have been destroyed safely at the Anniston Army Depot in Alabama, it is too risky to ship more there, Sen. Richard Shelby, R-Ala., said in a statement.

"It's shocking and irresponsible for the Department of Defense to even propose to ship large volumes of weapons of mass destruction across the highways of the United States considering the risks and atmosphere of terrorist threats," said Craig Williams, director of the Chemical Weapons Working Group, a Kentucky citizens organization.

Pentagon officials have no preferred option to meet the congressional mandate to destroy all weapons by 2017, said spokesman Chris Isleib. The United States has already said it would miss the 2012 deadline set by the international Chemical Weapons Convention.

Kevin Flamm, the Pentagon's manager for plans to eliminate weapons in Colorado and Kentucky, said he had focused on speeding up weapons destruction by adding workers and operating around the clock. That, he said, would finish destruction in Colorado by 2017 but probably not in Kentucky.

[http://www.usatoday.com/news/military/2008-07-01-chemweapons\\_N.htm](http://www.usatoday.com/news/military/2008-07-01-chemweapons_N.htm)

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Washington Post  
July 2, 2008  
Pg. 2

## **Air Force Finds Lax Nuclear Security**

By Walter Pincus, Washington Post Staff Writer

Most overseas storage sites for U.S. nuclear weapons, particularly in Europe, need substantial improvements in physical security measures and the personnel who guard the weapons, according to a newly available Air Force report.

"Most sites require significant additional resources to meet DoD security requirements," according to the final report of the Air Force Blue Ribbon Review of Nuclear Weapons Policies and Procedures, completed in February.

The report was made public last week by Hans M. Kristensen, director of the Nuclear Information Project at the Federation of American Scientists, who obtained it under a Freedom of Information Act request.

The report said upgrades are needed in "support buildings, fencing, lighting and security systems" at several European sites. It also cited conscripts who serve only nine months and "unionized security personnel" whom some host countries provide as guards.

The panel recommended that the Air Force "investigate potential consolidation of resources to minimize variances and reduce vulnerabilities."

An Air Force spokesman, contacted late yesterday afternoon, said no one familiar with the Blue Ribbon panel was available to discuss the report.

Kristensen said yesterday that the United States keeps several hundred tactical nuclear weapons at six bases in five European countries: Belgium, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands and Turkey.

Although the Pentagon does not officially acknowledge the weapons' presence, Dutch Defense Minister Eimert van Middelkoop said during a parliamentary committee meeting Monday that nuclear weapons security facilities at the Netherlands' Volkel Air Base "are in good order," according to news reports.

Kristensen said that an estimated 10 to 20 U.S. B-61 nuclear bombs are stored at Volkel Air Base for delivery by Dutch F-16s.

The Blue Ribbon review of nuclear security, chaired by Air Force Maj. Gen. Polly A. Peyer, was conducted after it was discovered that a B-52 bomber had flown across the United States, from Minot Air Force Base in North Dakota to Barksdale Air Force Base in Louisiana, with neither the pilots nor ground crews aware that six cruise missiles under one wing held real nuclear warheads.

The panel's conclusions -- and another review ordered by Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates after parts of a nuclear missile were inadvertently sent to Taiwan -- led Gates to remove Air Force Secretary Michael W. Wynne and the chief of staff, Gen. T. Michael "Buzz" Moseley, in early June.

A summary of the Air Force report's findings has been available for months. But the newly declassified version provides additional details. It noted that one of the three wing commanders who controlled facilities with more than 100 nuclear-armed strategic missiles did not have a nuclear weapons background.

"Without an alert commitment for 17 years . . . the bomber force has seen a dramatic atrophy of its nuclear operational and academic skills set," the report concluded.

Only a "limited number" of top Air Force officers had served on 24-hour alerts that ended in 1991, and "within the next few years," the report noted, the Air Force will have no "pool" of "bomber wing commanders who performed nuclear alerts."

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/07/01/AR2008070102623.html>

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USAToday.com  
July 1, 2008

## **Gates: Lithuania Could Be U.S. Missile Defense Base Site**

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Pentagon said Tuesday that Lithuania would be a "good alternative" to Poland as the site for a U.S. missile defense base if negotiations with the Poles fail.

In talks at the Pentagon, Defense Secretary Robert Gates told Lithuanian Prime Minister Gediminas Kirkilas that the Bush administration's preference is to work out a deal with fellow NATO ally Poland, according to Pentagon press secretary Geoff Morrell. The negotiations over a base that would host 10 U.S. missile interceptors have bogged down in a dispute over the extent of U.S. assistance to the Polish military.

"The Lithuanian prime minister indicated that his government was willing to consider hosting the interceptors, and for that the secretary expressed his appreciation," Morrell said. "Our position remains the same: Our preference is to



work out a deal with the Poles. But prudent planning requires that we simultaneously look at backups, if necessary. Lithuania would geographically serve as a good alternative."

Polish and U.S. envoys were meeting Tuesday and Wednesday on the U.S. proposal to place 10 missile interceptors in northern Poland, to be linked to a missile tracking radar that Washington would like to place in the Czech Republic. Negotiations on the proposed Czech site are closer to completion.

Asked about Kirkilas' visit, State Department spokesman Tom Casey said the U.S. discusses missile defense with all NATO allies. But, he said, "we are not, at this point, involved in any negotiations on alternative sites because our goal is to conclude an agreement with Poland. If, for some reason, those arrangements don't work out, then I'm sure we'd look elsewhere."

[http://www.usatoday.com/news/washington/2008-07-01-lithuania-defense\\_N.htm?csp=34](http://www.usatoday.com/news/washington/2008-07-01-lithuania-defense_N.htm?csp=34)

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Christian Science Monitor

## Could North Korea Still Make Nukes?

Destruction of its nuclear cooling tower was important but largely symbolic.

**By Peter Grier** | Staff writer of The Christian Science Monitor

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*WASHINGTON* - North Korea's destruction last week of the cooling tower at its Yongbyon nuclear facility was a spectacular piece of geopolitical theater. But as the concrete crumbled, did Pyongyang's ability to produce plutonium really crumble as well?

The tower's fall largely was symbolic, say experts. In addition, North Korea has yet to take some of the most important steps in its planned nuclear disablement.

But North Korean officials have completed perhaps two-thirds of their disablement actions. While they technically could still resume plutonium production, the effort, expense, and time involved might make such a move prohibitively difficult.

"None of the steps North Korea has taken thus far are irreversible, but the destruction of this tower makes it harder to reconstitute their plutonium program," said Jon Wolfsthal of the Center for Strategic and International Studies in an analysis of the issue.

The events of the last week in June clearly constitute a turning point in the long, difficult effort to get North Korea to shut its fissile material production facilities, and perhaps eventually rid itself of its small nuclear weapon stockpile. Besides destroying the Yongbyon tower, North Korea delivered an accounting of its 30-year effort to produce nuclear weapons to the other countries involved in six-party talks: China, Japan, Russia, South Korea, and the United States.

Much hard diplomatic work remains. As Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice stressed publicly on June 28, the US remains committed to convincing North Korea to turn over any stockpiled fissile material, plus nuclear bombs. US officials will now pore over Pyongyang's nuclear declaration, matching it against intelligence data in an attempt to gauge its accuracy. Already, some have criticized the declaration, saying that North Korea does not admit sharing nuclear technology with other nations, such as Syria. Nor does it admit to what the US suspects is a clandestine effort to produce highly enriched uranium.

But some experts outside government dispute the evidence of an extensive secret North Korean uranium enrichment process. Any efforts by North Korean scientists in this area might be interesting and relevant, but they are a "footnote" in the context of the country's plutonium production, said David Albright, president of the Institute for Science and International Security, earlier this year.

In that sense, the disablement of Pyongyang's plutonium facilities, per an agreement reached in the six-party talks, remains an important diplomatic success.

"Highest priority must be placed on completing the disablement ... and proceeding to the dismantlement state," wrote Siegfried Hecker, a former director of the Los Alamos National Lab and current professor at Stanford University's Center for International Security and Cooperation, in a report on his recent visit to Yongbyon.

The US State Department says North Korea has completed at least eight of an agreed-upon 11 disablement steps. According to Dr. Hecker, actions taken so far include removal of all of the Yongbyon complex's uranium conversion furnaces, the cutting of steel pipe cooling loops outside the reactor building, and the removal of the drive mechanism for the trolley that moves spent reactor fuel into the reprocessing facility.

At this point it would take at least six to 18 months for North Korea to repair and reconstitute its plutonium complex, according to Hecker's report.

Once all fuel rods remaining in the Yongbyon reactor are removed, one of the most important of the disablement steps – the removal of control rod drive mechanisms – is scheduled to occur.

"My overall assessment is that the disablement actions are significant . . . However, they have retained a hedge to be able to restart the facilities if the agreement falls through," wrote Hecker.  
<http://www.csmonitor.com/2008/0702/p02s01-usfp.html>

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