



USAF COUNTERPROLIFERATION CENTER CPC OUTREACH JOURNAL

Maxwell AFB, Alabama

Issue No. 588, 27 September 2007

Articles & Other Documents:

[Israel, U.S. Shared Data On Suspected Nuclear Site](#)

[Bush Declines To Lift Veil Of Secrecy Over Israeli Airstrike On Syria](#)

[Middle East Volcano](#)

[Israeli Raid On Syria Fuels Debate On Weapons](#)

[Rice Says Paris Agrees On Pressing The Iranians](#)

[North Korea: High-Level Team Visits From Syria](#)

[The Saga Of A Bent Spear](#)

[Iranian Leader: Tehran Has No Need For Nuclear Bomb](#)

[Israel's Raid On Syria: Prelude To A Nuke Crisis?](#)

[Bush Demurs On Korea Progress](#)

[New Iran Sanctions Passed By House](#)

[Iran President Vows To Ignore U.N. Measures](#)

[Thwarting Terrorists: More To Be Done](#)

[Report Cites Dangerous Gap in Efforts to Thwart Nuclear Terrorism; Calls for Urgent Global Campaign to Reduce the Risk](#)

[Washington Sees An Opportunity On Iran](#)

[U.S.: 'Case Is Not Closed' On Iran Nukes](#)

[Feds Find Gaps in Northern Border](#)

[Border Security: Security Vulnerabilities at Unmanned and Unmonitored U.S. Border Locations \(GAO Report\)](#)

Welcome to the CPC Outreach Journal. As part of USAF Counterproliferation Center's mission to counter weapons of mass destruction through education and research, we're providing our government and civilian community a source for timely counterproliferation information. This information includes articles, papers and other documents addressing issues pertinent to US military response options for dealing with nuclear, biological and chemical threats and attacks. It's our hope this information resource will help enhance your counterproliferation issue awareness.

Established in 1998, the USAF/CPC provides education and research to present and future leaders of the Air Force, as well as to members of other branches of the armed services and Department of Defense. Our purpose is to help those agencies better prepare to counter the threat from weapons of mass destruction. Please feel free to visit our web site at <http://cpc.au.af.mil/> for in-depth information and specific points of contact. Please direct any questions or comments on CPC Outreach Journal to Jo Ann Eddy, CPC Outreach Editor, at (334) 953-7538 or DSN 493-7538. To subscribe, change e-mail address, or unsubscribe to this journal or to request inclusion on the mailing list for CPC publications, please contact Mrs. Eddy, joann.eddy.ctr@maxwell.af.mil.

The following articles, papers or documents do not necessarily reflect official endorsement of the United States Air Force, Department of Defense, or other US government agencies. Reproduction for private use or commercial gain is subject to original copyright restrictions. All rights are reserved

Washington Post
September 21, 2007
Pg. 1

Israel, U.S. Shared Data On Suspected Nuclear Site

Bush Was Told of North Korean Presence in Syria, Sources Say

By Glenn Kessler and Robin Wright, Washington Post Staff Writers

Israel's decision to attack Syria on Sept. 6, bombing a suspected nuclear site set up in apparent collaboration with North Korea, came after Israel shared intelligence with President Bush this summer indicating that North Korean nuclear personnel were in Syria, U.S. government sources said.

The Bush administration has not commented on the Israeli raid or the underlying intelligence. Although the administration was deeply troubled by Israel's assertion that North Korea was assisting the nuclear ambitions of a country closely linked with Iran, sources said, the White House opted against an immediate response because of concerns it would undermine long-running negotiations aimed at persuading North Korea to abandon its nuclear program.

Ultimately, however, the United States is believed to have provided Israel with some corroboration of the original intelligence before Israel proceeded with the raid, which hit the Syrian facility in the dead of night to minimize possible casualties, the sources said.

The target of Israel's attack was said to be in northern Syria, near the Turkish border. A Middle East expert who interviewed one of the pilots involved said they operated under such strict operational security that the airmen flying air cover for the attack aircraft did not know the details of the mission. The pilots who conducted the attack were briefed only after they were in the air, he said. Syrian authorities said there were no casualties.

U.S. sources would discuss the Israeli intelligence, which included satellite imagery, only on condition of anonymity, and many details about the North Korean-Syrian connection remain unknown. The quality of the Israeli intelligence, the extent of North Korean assistance and the seriousness of the Syrian effort are uncertain, raising the possibility that North Korea was merely unloading items it no longer needed. Syria has actively pursued chemical weapons in the past but not nuclear arms -- leaving some proliferation experts skeptical of the intelligence that prompted Israel's attack.

Syria and North Korea both denied this week that they were cooperating on a nuclear program. Bush refused to comment yesterday on the attack, but he issued a blunt warning to North Korea that "the exportation of information and/or materials" would affect negotiations under which North Korea would give up its nuclear programs in exchanges for energy aid and diplomatic recognition.

"To the extent that they are proliferating, we expect them to stop that proliferation, if they want the six-party talks to be successful," he said at a news conference, referring to negotiations that also include China, Japan, South Korea and Russia.

Unlike its destruction of an Iraqi nuclear reactor in 1981, Israel made no announcement of the recent raid and imposed strict censorship on reporting by the Israeli media. Syria made only muted protests, and Arab leaders have remained silent. As a result, a daring and apparently successful attack to eliminate a potential nuclear threat has been shrouded in mystery.

"There is no question it was a major raid. It was an extremely important target," said Bruce Riedel, a former intelligence officer at Brookings Institution's Saban Center for Middle East Policy. "It came at a time the Israelis were very concerned about war with Syria and wanted to dampen down the prospects of war. The decision was taken despite their concerns it could produce a war. That decision reflects how important this target was to Israeli military planners."

Israel has long known about Syria's interest in chemical and even biological weapons, but "if Syria decided to go beyond that, Israel would think that was a real red line," Riedel said.

Edward Djerejian, a former U.S. ambassador to Syria and founding director of Rice University's Baker Institute for Public Policy, said that when he was in Israel this summer he noticed "a great deal of concern in official Israeli circles about the situation in the north," in particular whether Syria's young ruler, Bashar al-Assad, "had the same sensitivity to red lines that his father had." Bashar succeeded his Hafez al-Assad as president of Syria in 2000.

The Israeli attack came just three days after a North Korean ship docked at the Syrian port of Tartus, carrying a cargo that was officially listed as cement.

The ship's role remains obscure. Israeli sources have suggested it carried nuclear equipment. Others have maintained that it contained only missile parts, and some have said the ship's arrival and the attack are merely coincidental. One source suggested that Israel's attack was prompted by a fear of media leaks on the intelligence.

The Bush administration's wariness when presented with the Israeli intelligence contrasts with its reaction in 2002, when U.S. officials believed they had caught North Korea building a clandestine nuclear program in violation of a nuclear-freeze deal arranged by the Clinton administration.

After the Bush administration's accusation, the Clinton deal collapsed and North Korea restarted a nuclear reactor, stockpiled plutonium and eventually conducted a nuclear test. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice convinced Bush this year to accept a deal with North Korea to shut down the reactor, infuriating conservatives inside and outside the administration.

But for years, Bush has also warned North Korea against engaging in nuclear proliferation, specifically making that a red line that could not be crossed after North Korea tested a nuclear device last year. The Israeli intelligence therefore suggested North Korea was both undermining the agreement and crossing that line.

Conservative critics of the administration's recent diplomacy with North Korea have seized on reports of the Israeli intelligence as evidence that the White House is misguided if it thinks it can ever strike a lasting deal with

Pyongyang. "However bad it might be for the six-party talks, U.S. security requires taking this sort of thing seriously," said John R. Bolton, the former U.S. ambassador to the United Nations who was a top arms control official in Bush's first term.

But advocates of engagement have accused critics of trying to sabotage the talks. China on Monday abruptly postponed a round of six-party talks scheduled to begin this week, but U.S. officials now say the talks should start again Thursday.

Some North Korean experts said they are puzzled why, if the reports are true, Pyongyang would jeopardize the hard-won deal with the United States and the other four countries. "It does not make any sense at all in the context of the last nine months," said Charles "Jack" Pritchard, a former U.S. negotiator with North Korea and now president of the Korea Economic Institute.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/09/20/AR2007092002701.html>

[\(Return to Articles and Documents List\)](#)

New York Times
September 21, 2007

Bush Declines To Lift Veil Of Secrecy Over Israeli Airstrike On Syria

By Steven Lee Myers and Steven Erlanger

WASHINGTON, Sept. 20 — President Bush pointedly declined on Thursday to discuss an Israeli airstrike in northern Syria on Sept. 6 that Israeli officials say hit a nuclear-related facility that North Korea was helping to equip. Mr. Bush did, however, warn North Korea that the United States expected it to dismantle its nuclear weapons programs and to stop selling weapons or expertise abroad, as it promised to do this year. He emphasized that he was speaking generally, not specifically, about whether North Korea provided assistance to Syria.

"I'm not going to comment on the matter," Mr. Bush repeated twice when asked about the strike at a news conference at the White House. When pressed, he added, "Saying I'm not going to comment on the matter means I'm not going to comment on the matter."

Mr. Bush's remarks — a relatively rare instance of a president flatly declining to comment — also reflected the extraordinary secrecy here in Washington surrounding the raid. Most details of what was struck, where, and how remain shrouded in official silence.

A day earlier, Benjamin Netanyahu, the Israeli opposition leader and former prime minister, became the first public figure in Israel to acknowledge that an attack even took place. Until now the only public information about the raid has been a muted and vague diplomatic protest from Syria that Israel had violated its airspace and a condemnation by North Korea's Foreign Ministry of what it called "a very dangerous provocation."

In a television interview on Wednesday evening, Mr. Netanyahu said: "When the prime minister takes action in important and necessary matters, and generally when the government is doing things for the security of Israel, I give it my endorsement. I was party to this matter, I must say, from the first minute, and I gave it my backing, but it is still too early to discuss this subject."

Mr. Netanyahu faced criticism for saying as much as he did.

One former diplomat who has spoken to Israelis involved in the decision to attack said the airstrike was aimed at what Israel believed to be a Syrian nuclear program in cooperation with North Korea. The two countries already have a relationship that has concentrated on missile technology, which North Korea has long exported.

The former diplomat, along with current and former American and Israeli officials, said a shipment of North Korean material labeled as cement arrived by ship three days before the attack. That material was transferred to a facility, which Israel bombed.

Current and former American and Israeli officials have said the Israelis gave the Bush administration advance notice of the attack.

North Korea's public reaction prompted speculation about a possible link to the Syrian target, though whether the target involved nuclear activity, missiles or something else remained unknown to all but a handful of officials briefed on what had happened.

This week China abruptly canceled a new round of diplomatic talks that had been planned to discuss a schedule for disbanding North Korea's nuclear facilities under a deal negotiated in February. It is not clear when those talks may resume.

Mr. Bush said Thursday that the United States expected the North Koreans "to honor their commitment to give up weapons and weapons programs, and to the extent that they are proliferating, we expect them to stop that proliferation."

Some current and former American officials, who spoke on the condition of anonymity because information about the raid remained classified, said they believed that the site was involved in Syria's missile program. They said that Israeli intelligence officials believed that they had evidence that the activity at the site involved North Korean engineers believed to work in the nuclear program.

So far, several current and former American officials who have been involved in evaluating the Israeli claims say they are not yet convinced of a nuclear connection. Yet the enormous secrecy around the findings, both here and in Israel, suggests that the activity that prompted the Israeli attack involved "more than a run-of-the-mill missile transaction," one official said, noting that the Israelis took considerable risks in carrying out the attack.

"The Israelis are very proud of what they are doing; they are boasting about it," said one senior American official who has been dealing with Israeli officials. "But we don't know enough yet about what they actually hit."

In Israel, military censors have prohibited the press from reporting any details, while Prime Minister Ehud Olmert's government has succeeded in remaining silent about the raid. The head of Israel's military intelligence, Gen. Amos Yadlin, appeared to refer to the matter obliquely when he told the cabinet that Israel had "restored its deterrence" in the region.

The deputy chairman of the Israel Atomic Energy Commission, Gideon Frank, warned delegates at the International Atomic Energy Agency on Wednesday in Vienna that Israel could not ignore the efforts of various countries in the Middle East to develop weapons of mass destruction and the means to deliver them.

"We can hardly remain oblivious to intensive efforts by some in our region to develop W.M.D. and their means of delivery, accompanied by sustained denial of the very legitimacy of our sovereign existence and calls for our destruction," Mr. Frank said in remarks that were interpreted to refer to Syria, as well as to Iran.

Steven Lee Myers reported from Washington, and Steven Erlanger from Jerusalem. David E. Sanger contributed reporting from Washington.

http://www.nytimes.com/2007/09/21/washington/21prexy.html?_r=1&adxnln=1&oref=slogin&adxnlnx=1190753281-11bCYQdLxmmcwHol0ebY9g

[\(Return to Articles and Documents List\)](#)

Washington Post
September 21, 2007
Pg. 19

Middle East Volcano

By Charles Krauthammer

On Sept. 6, something important happened in northern Syria. Problem is, no one knows exactly what. Except for those few who were involved, and they're not saying.

We do know that Israel carried out an airstrike. How do we know it was important? Because in Israel, where leaking is an art form, even the best-informed don't have a clue. They tell me they have never seen a better-kept secret. Which suggests that whatever happened near Dayr az Zawr was no accidental intrusion into Syrian airspace, no dry run for an attack on Iran, no strike on some conventional target such as an Iranian Revolutionary Guard base or a weapons shipment on its way to Hezbollah in Lebanon.

Circumstantial evidence points to this being an attack on some nuclear facility provided by North Korea.

Three days earlier, a freighter flying the North Korean flag docked in the Syrian port city of Tartus with a shipment of "cement." Long way to go for cement. Within days, a top State Department official warned that "there may have been contact between Syria and some secret suppliers for nuclear equipment." Three days later, the six-party meeting on dismantling North Korea's nuclear facilities scheduled for Sept. 19 was suddenly postponed, officially by China, almost certainly at the behest of North Korea.

Apart from the usual suspects -- Syria, Iran, Libya and Russia -- only two countries registered strong protests to the Israeli strike: Turkey and North Korea. Turkey we can understand. Its military may have permitted Israel an overflight corridor without ever having told the Islamist civilian government. But North Korea? What business is this of North Korea's? Unless it was a North Korean facility being hit.

Which raises alarms for many reasons. First, it would undermine the whole North Korean disarmament process. Pyongyang might be selling its stuff to other rogue states or perhaps just temporarily hiding it abroad while permitting ostentatious inspections back home.

Second, there are ominous implications for the Middle East. Syria has long had chemical weapons -- on Monday, Jane's Defence Weekly reported on an accident that killed dozens of Syrians and Iranians loading a nerve-gas warhead onto a Syrian missile -- but Israel will not tolerate a nuclear Syria.

Tensions are already extremely high because of Iran's headlong rush to go nuclear. In fending off sanctions and possible military action, President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad has chosen a radically aggressive campaign to assemble, deploy, flaunt and partially activate Iran's proxies in the Arab Middle East:

(1) Hamas launching rockets into Israeli towns and villages across the border from the Gaza Strip. Its intention is to invite an Israeli reaction, preferably a bloody and telegenic ground assault.

(2) Hezbollah heavily rearmed with Iranian rockets transshipped through Syria and preparing for the next round of fighting with Israel. The third Lebanon war, now inevitable, awaits only Tehran's order.

(3) Syria, Iran's only Arab client state, building up forces across the Golan Heights frontier with Israel. And on Wednesday, yet another anti-Syrian member of Lebanon's parliament was killed in a massive car bombing.

(4) The al-Quds Force of the Iranian Revolutionary Guard training and equipping Shiite extremist militias in the use of the deadliest IEDs and rocketry against American and Iraqi troops. Iran is similarly helping the Taliban attack NATO forces in Afghanistan.

Why is Iran doing this? Because it has its eye on a single prize: the bomb. It needs a bit more time, knowing that once it goes nuclear, it becomes the regional superpower and Persian Gulf hegemon.

Iran's assets in Gaza, Lebanon, Syria and Iraq are poised and ready. Ahmadinejad's message is this: If anyone dares attack our nuclear facilities, we will fully activate our proxies, unleashing unrestrained destruction on Israel, moderate Arabs, Iraq and U.S. interests -- in addition to the usual, such as mining the Strait of Hormuz and causing an acute oil crisis and worldwide recession.

This is an extremely high-stakes game. The time window is narrow. In probably less than two years, Ahmadinejad will have the bomb.

The world is not quite ready to acquiesce. The new president of France has declared a nuclear Iran " unacceptable." The French foreign minister warned that "it is necessary to prepare for the worst" -- and "the worst, it's war, sir." Which makes it all the more urgent that powerful sanctions be slapped on the Iranian regime. Sanctions will not stop Ahmadinejad. But there are others in the Iranian elite who might stop him and the nuclear program before the volcano explodes. These rival elites may be radical, but they are not suicidal. And they believe, with reason, that whatever damage Ahmadinejad's apocalyptic folly may inflict upon the region and the world, on Crusader and Jew, on infidel and believer, the one certain result of such an eruption is Iran's Islamic republic buried under the ash.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/09/20/AR2007092001955.html>

[\(Return to Articles and Documents List\)](#)

New York Times
September 22, 2007
Pg. 1

Israeli Raid On Syria Fuels Debate On Weapons

By Mark Mazzetti and David E. Sanger

WASHINGTON, Sept. 21 — American concerns about ties between Syria and North Korea have long focused on a partnership involving missiles and missile technology. Even many hawks within the Bush administration have expressed doubts that the Syrians have the money or technical depth to build a serious nuclear program like the one in Iran.

But the Sept. 6 Israeli airstrike inside Syria has reignited debate over whether the Syrians are trying to overcome past obstacles by starting their own small nuclear program, or by trying to buy nuclear components from an outside supplier. It is a particularly difficult question for American spy agencies, which are still smarting from the huge prewar misjudgments made about the status of Iraq's weapons programs.

American officials are now sorting through what they say are Israel's private claims that what their jets struck was tied to nuclear weapons development, not merely to missile production. So far, American officials have been extremely cautious about endorsing the Israeli conclusion.

Syria's efforts to bolster its missile arsenal have been a source of worry for Israel for years, especially given Syria's track record of arming Hezbollah fighters when they clash with Israeli troops. During the summer of 2006, Hezbollah, the militant Shiite group, fired hundreds of missiles at targets inside Israel from Lebanon, surprising Israeli officials with the sophistication of its arsenal.

And North Korean engineers are long believed to have helped Syria develop a sophisticated class of Scud missiles that have a longer range and are more accurate than earlier versions. According to GlobalSecurity.org, a defense research organization, North Korea has helped Syria develop the Scud-D missile, with a range of about 435 miles. Whether Syria is actively pursuing a nuclear program has been the subject of fierce debate in Washington for several years. The dispute was at the center of the fight in 2005 over the nomination of John R. Bolton to become ambassador to the United Nations.

At the time, several intelligence officials said they had clashed in 2002 and 2003 with Mr. Bolton, then an under secretary of state, about the extent of Syria's unconventional weapons programs. According to the officials, Mr. Bolton wanted to include information in a public speech about a Syrian nuclear program that could not be corroborated by intelligence agencies.

In recent interviews, Mr. Bolton has suggested that the Israeli strike may have partly vindicated his view. Yet that is hard to assess, since whatever information a few senior officials in Washington and Jerusalem possess has been so restricted that two senior Asian diplomats, representing close American allies who are frequently updated on North Korea, said late this week that they had received no useful information from their American counterparts.

On Thursday, President Bush declined three times to shed any light on the Israeli strike, although he did repeat a warning to North Korea.

It is unclear to what extent the secrecy about the Israeli strike has been motivated by American doubts about the intelligence or by an effort to protect sources and classified information. But American officials are now looking at the possibility that the Syrians saw an opportunity to buy some of the basic components of a nuclear program on the cheap, perhaps because North Korea is trying to get elements of its nuclear program out of the country to meet deadlines in a precarious denuclearization agreement with Washington.

American officials are also studying at least two technology trade agreements between Syria and North Korea that were signed over the summer, trying to determine whether the arrangements may be designed for nascent nuclear cooperation between the two countries.

"One has to balance the skepticism that the Syrians can build an indigenous nuclear program with the very sobering assessment that North Korea is the world's No. 1 proliferator and a country willing to sell whatever it possesses," said a former senior Bush administration official who once had full access to the intelligence about both countries, speaking on the condition of anonymity because he was discussing intelligence assessments.

Though it has long sold its missile technology — to Syria, Iran, Pakistan and other customers — North Korea has never been known to export nuclear technology or material. Last Oct. 9, hours after the North tested its first nuclear device, Mr. Bush went in front of cameras in the White House to issue the North a specific warning that "the transfer of nuclear weapons or material by North Korea to states or nonstate entities would be considered a grave threat to the United States, and we would hold North Korea fully accountable of the consequences of such action."

His declaration that day had been urged for years by hard-liners in the administration who believed that the United States had never been explicit enough with North Korea. They saw their opportunity after the North Korean leader, Kim Jong-il, ignored pressure from China, South Korea, Russia and others and conducted its test.

Even though the Israelis are whispering that there was a nuclear connection to the Sept. 6 attack, so far there has been no hard evidence that the North has ever tried to sell elements of its two nuclear programs. One of those programs, involving plutonium, is quite advanced, enough to produce six to a dozen nuclear weapons. But selling that fuel would be enormously risky, and perhaps easily detectable.

The other program, based on uranium-enrichment equipment believed to have been bought from the network created by Abdul Qadeer Khan, the Pakistani nuclear engineer, is assessed to be in its very early stages, and some doubt the North Koreans ever made much progress on it at all. That program involves the construction of centrifuges to enrich uranium, the path that Iran is taking. But it is complex, expensive and hard to hide, and many experts believe it is beyond Syria's capabilities or budget.

Syria does have one very small research reactor, which is Chinese built. But it was described in a 2004 Swedish defense research agency report as "the smallest on the world market and incapable of military applications."

John Pike of GlobalSecurity.org said that, given its neighborhood, Syria might be interested in a nuclear deterrent, but that he was highly skeptical that Damascus could at this point have developed anything that would pose a significant risk to Israel.

"Any country in the region that was not at least learning what it would take to develop a nuclear program is asleep at the switch," he said. "But the proposition that there is anything sufficiently mature to warrant bombing is difficult to believe."

<http://www.nytimes.com/2007/09/22/world/middleeast/22weapons.html>

[\(Return to Articles and Documents List\)](#)

New York Times
September 22, 2007
Pg. 6

Rice Says Paris Agrees On Pressing The Iranians

By Thom Shanker

WASHINGTON, Sept. 21 — The United States and France agree on increasing diplomatic and economic pressure to force Iran to abandon its nuclear program, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said Friday as the Bush administration played host to a meeting of major world powers to discuss another round of United Nations sanctions.

“I think it’s first important to note that we have set out a diplomatic path that includes negotiation as the preferred means by which to resolve this issue,” Ms. Rice said at a joint news conference with her French counterpart, Bernard Kouchner.

On Sunday, Mr. Kouchner kicked up a small diplomatic storm when he raised the possibility of war with Iran. He subsequently moderated his statements and dropped references to war. Ms. Rice noted that a diplomatic league of the five permanent Security Council members plus Germany had offered “a very, very good package of initiatives that Iran could take up if it wished to stop its enrichment and reprocessing activity.”

But she said, “We will seek further resolutions in the U.N. Security Council should Iran not take up the negotiating track.”

Toward that end, the Foreign Ministry political directors from Britain, China, France, Germany and Russia met at the State Department on Friday with R. Nicholas Burns, the United States under secretary of state for political affairs, to press ahead on a possible third Security Council resolution imposing sanctions on Iran. After the meeting, Mr. Burns issued a statement on behalf of the six officials that “reaffirmed their commitment to maintain a dual-track approach on Iran’s nuclear activities.”

The discussions on Friday “were serious and constructive,” the statement said. The officials “had a detailed discussion of the elements of a new United Nations Security Council resolution, as well as possibilities of continued dialogue with Iran.”

Supporters of new sanctions were buoyed by a decision at the conclusion of Friday’s meeting to schedule another working session next week. That meeting is “to prepare recommendations” for a high-level conference next Friday, at which Ms. Rice and her five ministerial counterparts will discuss the potential for a new sanctions resolution. Although senior officials from all six nations involved in the sanctions talks agreed on the urgency of preventing Iran from going nuclear, deep disagreements remained over the speed of imposing new sanctions, and on how deeply they should cut into the Iranian economy.

Russia and China are the most reluctant to move ahead, while the United States is pushing for faster action. Iranian officials say their nuclear program is for peaceful purposes.

In her public comments on Friday, Ms. Rice said that Paris and Washington were in consensus on Iran. “I think that there is essentially no difference in the way that we see the situation in Iran and what the international community must do, and we are going to work toward that, toward that end,” she said.

American efforts to push for more sanctions appear to have been aided by France’s new leadership under President Nicolas Sarkozy, who has taken a stance on Iran much closer to Washington’s hawkish policy views than that of his predecessor, Jacques Chirac.

That is why special attention was being paid in Washington this week to the words chosen by Mr. Kouchner, the French foreign minister and co-founder of Doctors Without Borders, whose background in the humanitarian world made his remarks about the possibility of war all the more startling. He chose his words carefully on Friday, stressing the need for exploring all diplomatic avenues. Italy on Friday joined those urging more sanctions against Iran.

“There is still room for a strong initiative that can on one end put pressure through sanctions, even more severe sanctions, and on the other end really offer the possibility for negotiations and agreement,” Foreign Minister Massimo D’Alema said in an interview on Italian state television, according to news service reports from Rome.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2007/09/22/world/middleeast/22sanctions.html>

[\(Return to Articles and Documents List\)](#)

Washington Times
September 22, 2007
Pg. 5

North Korea: High-Level Team Visits From Syria

SEOUL — North Korea and Syria held high-level talks yesterday, the state-run news agency said in Pyongyang, amid reports the communist state was secretly helping Damascus to develop a nuclear-weapons facility.

The meeting took place in Pyongyang between Choe Tae-Bok, secretary of the Central Committee of the North’s ruling Workers’ Party, and Saaed Eleia Dawood, director of the organizational department of Syria’s Ba’ath Arab Socialist Party.

<http://www.washingtontimes.com/article/20070922/FOREIGN/109220054/1003/foreign>

[\(Return to Articles and Documents List\)](#)

Washington Post
September 23, 2007
Pg. 1

The Saga Of A Bent Spear

Missteps in the Bunker

Six nuclear missiles were flown across America. It took 36 hours for anyone to notice. How could it have happened?

By Joby Warrick and Walter Pincus, Washington Post Staff Writers

Just after 9 a.m. on Aug. 29, a group of U.S. airmen entered a sod-covered bunker on North Dakota's Minot Air Force Base with orders to collect a set of unarmed cruise missiles bound for a weapons graveyard. They quickly pulled out a dozen cylinders, all of which appeared identical from a cursory glance, and hauled them along Bomber Boulevard to a waiting B-52 bomber.

The airmen attached the gray missiles to the plane's wings, six on each side. After eyeballing the missiles on the right side, a flight officer signed a manifest that listed a dozen unarmed AGM-129 missiles. The officer did not notice that the six on the left contained nuclear warheads, each with the destructive power of up to 10 Hiroshima bombs.

That detail would escape notice for an astounding 36 hours, during which the missiles were flown across the country to a Louisiana air base that had no idea nuclear warheads were coming. It was the first known flight by a nuclear-armed bomber over U.S. airspace, without special high-level authorization, in nearly 40 years.

The episode, serious enough to trigger a rare "Bent Spear" nuclear incident report that raced through the chain of command to Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates and President Bush, provoked new questions inside and outside the Pentagon about the adequacy of U.S. nuclear weapons safeguards while the military's attention and resources are devoted to wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Three weeks after word of the incident leaked to the public, new details obtained by The Washington Post point to security failures at multiple levels in North Dakota and Louisiana, according to interviews with current and former U.S. officials briefed on the initial results of an Air Force investigation of the incident.

The warheads were attached to the plane in Minot without special guard for more than 15 hours, and they remained on the plane in Louisiana for nearly nine hours more before being discovered. In total, the warheads slipped from the Air Force's nuclear safety net for more than a day without anyone's knowledge.

"I have been in the nuclear business since 1966 and am not aware of any incident more disturbing," retired Air Force Gen. Eugene Habiger, who served as U.S. Strategic Command chief from 1996 to 1998, said in an interview.

A simple error in a missile storage room led to missteps at every turn, as ground crews failed to notice the warheads, and as security teams and flight crew members failed to provide adequate oversight and check the cargo thoroughly. An elaborate nuclear safeguard system, nurtured during the Cold War and infused with rigorous accounting and command procedures, was utterly debased, the investigation's early results show.

The incident came on the heels of multiple warnings -- some of which went to the highest levels of the Bush administration, including the National Security Council -- of security problems at Air Force installations where nuclear weapons are kept. The risks are not that warheads might be accidentally detonated, but that sloppy procedures could leave room for theft or damage to a warhead, disseminating its toxic nuclear materials.

A former National Security Council staff member with detailed knowledge described the event as something that people in the White House "have been assured never could happen." What occurred on Aug. 29-30, the former official said, was "a breakdown at a number of levels involving flight crew, munitions, storage and tracking procedures -- faults that never were to line up on a single day."

Missteps in the Bunker

The air base where the incident took place is one of the most remote and, for much of the year, coldest military posts in the continental United States. Veterans of Minot typically describe their assignments by counting the winters passed in the flat, treeless region where January temperatures sometimes reach 30 below zero. In airman-speak, a three-year assignment becomes "three winters" at Minot.

The daily routine for many of Minot's crews is a cycle of scheduled maintenance for the base's 35 aging B-52H Stratofortress bombers -- mammoth, eight-engine workhorses, the newest of which left the assembly line more than 45 years ago. Workers also tend to 150 intercontinental ballistic missiles kept at the ready in silos scattered across neighboring cornfields, as well as hundreds of smaller nuclear bombs, warheads and vehicles stored in sod-covered bunkers called igloos.

"We had a continuous workload in maintaining" warheads, said Scott Vest, a former Air Force captain who spent time in Minot's bunkers in the 1990s. "We had a stockpile of more than 400 . . . and some of them were always coming due" for service.

Among the many weapons and airframes, the AGM-129 cruise missile was well known at the base as a nuclear warhead delivery system carried by B-52s. With its unique shape and design, it is easily distinguished from the older AGM-86, which can be fitted with either a nuclear or a conventional warhead.

Last fall, after 17 years in the U.S. arsenal, the Air Force's more than 400 AGM-129s were ordered into retirement by then-Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld. Minot was told to begin shipping out the unarmed missiles in small groups to Barksdale Air Force Base near Shreveport, La., for storage. By Aug. 29, its crews had already sent more than 200 missiles to Barksdale and knew the drill by heart.

The Air Force's account of what happened that day and the next was provided by multiple sources who spoke on the condition of anonymity because the government's investigation is continuing and classified.

At 9:12 a.m. local time on Aug. 29, according to the account, ground crews in two trucks entered a gated compound at Minot known as the Weapons Storage Area and drove to an igloo where the cruise missiles were stored. The 21-foot missiles were already mounted on pylons, six apiece in clusters of three, for quick mounting to the wings of a B-52.

The AGM-129 is designed to carry silver W-80-1 nuclear warheads, which have a variable yield of between 5 and 150 kilotons. (A kiloton is equal to the explosive force of 1,000 tons of TNT.) The warheads were meant to have been removed from the missiles before shipment. In their place, crews were supposed to insert metal dummies of the same size and weight, but a different color, so the missiles could still be properly attached under the bomber's wings. A munitions custodian officer is supposed to keep track of the nuclear warheads. In the case of cruise missiles, a stamp-size window on the missile's frame allows workers to peer inside to check whether the warheads within are silver. In many cases, a red ribbon or marker attached to the missile serves as an additional warning. Finally, before the missiles are moved, two-man teams are supposed to look at check sheets, bar codes and serial numbers denoting whether the missiles are armed.

Why the warheads were not noticed in this case is not publicly known. But once the missiles were certified as unarmed, a requirement for unique security precautions when nuclear warheads are moved -- such as the presence of specially armed security police, the approval of a senior base commander and a special tracking system -- evaporated.

The trucks hauled the missile pylons from the bunker into the bustle of normal air base traffic, onto Bomber Boulevard and M Street, before turning onto a tarmac apron where the missiles were loaded onto the B-52. The loading took eight hours because of unusual trouble attaching the pylon on the right side of the plane -- the one with the dummy warheads.

By 5:12 p.m., the B-52 was fully loaded. The plane then sat on the tarmac overnight without special guards, protected for 15 hours by only the base's exterior chain-link fence and roving security patrols.

Air Force rules required members of the jet's flight crew to examine all of the missiles and warheads before the plane took off. But in this instance, just one person examined only the six unarmed missiles and inexplicably skipped the armed missiles on the left, according to officials familiar with the probe.

"If they're not expecting a live warhead it may be a very casual thing -- there's no need to set up the security system and play the whole nuclear game," said Vest, the former Minot airman. "As for the air crew, they're bus drivers at this point, as far as they know."

The plane, which had flown to Minot for the mission and was not certified to carry nuclear weapons, departed the next morning for Louisiana. When the bomber landed at Barksdale at 11:23 a.m., the air crew signed out and left for lunch, according to the probe.

It would be another nine hours -- until 8:30 p.m. -- before a Barksdale ground crew turned up at the parked aircraft to begin removing the missiles. At 8:45, 15 minutes into the task, a separate missile transport crew arrived in trucks. One of these airmen noticed something unusual about the missiles. Within an hour, a skeptical supervisor had examined them and ordered them secured.

By then it was 10 p.m., more than 36 hours after the warheads left their secure bunker in Minot.

Once the errant warheads were discovered, Air Force officers in Louisiana were alarmed enough to immediately notify the National Military Command Center, a highly secure area of the Pentagon that serves as the nerve center for U.S. nuclear war planning. Such "Bent Spear" events are ranked second in seriousness only to "Broken Arrow" incidents, which involve the loss, destruction or accidental detonation of a nuclear weapon.

The Air Force decided at first to keep the mishap under wraps, in part because of policies that prohibit the confirmation of any details about the storage or movement of nuclear weapons. No public acknowledgment was made until service members leaked the story to the Military Times, which published a brief account Sept. 5.

Officials familiar with the Bent Spear report say Air Force officials apparently did not anticipate that the episode would cause public concern. One passage in the report contains these four words:

"No press interest anticipated."

'What the Hell Happened Here?'

The news, when it did leak, provoked a reaction within the defense and national security communities that bordered on disbelief: How could so many safeguards, drilled into generations of nuclear weapons officers and crews, break down at once?

Military officers, nuclear weapons analysts and lawmakers have expressed concern that it was not just a fluke, but a symptom of deeper problems in the handling of nuclear weapons now that Cold War anxieties have abated.

"It is more significant than people first realized, and the more you look at it, the stranger it is," said Joseph Cirincione, director for nuclear policy at the Center for American Progress think tank and the author of a history of nuclear weapons. "These weapons -- the equivalent of 60 Hiroshimas -- were out of authorized command and control for more than a day."

The Air Force has sought to offer assurances that its security system is working. Within days, the service relieved one Minot officer of his command and disciplined several airmen, while assigning a major general to head an investigation that has already been extended for extra weeks. At the same time, Defense Department officials have announced that a Pentagon-appointed scientific advisory board will study the mishap as part of a larger review of procedures for handling nuclear weapons.

"Clearly this incident was unacceptable on many levels," said an Air Force spokesman, Lt. Col. Edward Thomas.

"Our response has been swift and focused -- and it has really just begun. We will spend many months at the air staff and at our commands and bases ensuring that the root causes are addressed."

While Air Force officials see the Minot event as serious, they also note that it was harmless, since the six nuclear warheads never left the military's control. Even if the bomber had crashed, or if someone had stolen the warheads, fail-safe devices would have prevented a nuclear detonation.

But independent experts warn that whenever nuclear weapons are not properly safeguarded, their fissile materials are at risk of theft and diversion. Moreover, if the plane had crashed and the warheads' casings cracked, these highly toxic materials could have been widely dispersed.

"When what were multiple layers of tight nuclear weapon control internal procedures break down, some bad guy may eventually come along and take advantage of them," said a former senior administration official who had responsibility for nuclear security.

Some Air Force veterans say the base's officers made an egregious mistake in allowing nuclear-warhead-equipped missiles and unarmed missiles to be stored in the same bunker, a practice that a spokesman last week confirmed is routine. Charles Curtis, a former deputy energy secretary in the Clinton administration, said, "We always relied on segregation of nuclear weapons from conventional ones."

Former nuclear weapons officials have noted that the weapons transfer at the heart of the incident coincides with deep cuts in deployed nuclear forces that will bring the total number of warheads to as few as 1,700 by the year 2012 -- a reduction of more than 50 percent from 2001 levels. But the downsizing has created new accounting and logistical challenges, since U.S. policy is to keep thousands more warheads in storage, some as a strategic reserve and others awaiting dismantling.

A secret 1998 history of the Air Combat Command warned of "diminished attention for even 'the minimum standards' of nuclear weapons' maintenance, support and security" once such arms became less vital, according to a declassified copy obtained by Hans Kristensen, director of the Federation of American Scientists' nuclear information project.

The Air Force's inspector general in 2003 found that half of the "nuclear surety" inspections conducted that year resulted in failing grades -- the worst performance since inspections of weapons-handling began. Minot's 5th Bomb Wing was among the units that failed, and the Louisiana-based 2nd Bomb Wing at Barksdale garnered an unsatisfactory rating in 2005.

Both units passed subsequent nuclear inspections, and Minot was given high marks in a 2006 inspection. The 2003 report on the 5th Bomb Wing attributed its poor performance to the demands of supporting combat operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. Wartime stresses had "resulted in a lack of time to focus and practice nuclear operations," the report stated.

Last year, the Air Force eliminated a separate nuclear-operations directorate known informally as the N Staff, which closely tracked the maintenance and security of nuclear weapons in the United States and other NATO countries. Currently, nuclear and space operations are combined in a single directorate. Air Force officials say the change was part of a service-wide reorganization and did not reflect diminished importance of nuclear operations.

"Where nuclear weapons have receded into the background is at the senior policy level, where there are other things people have to worry about," said Linton F. Brooks, who resigned in January as director of the National Nuclear

Security Administration. Brooks, who oversaw billions of dollars in U.S. spending to help Russia secure its nuclear stockpile, said the mishandling of U.S. warheads indicates that "something went seriously wrong."

A similar refrain has been voiced hundreds of times in blogs and chat rooms popular with former and current military members. On a Web site run by the Military Times, a former B-52 crew chief who did not give his name wrote: "What the hell happened here?"

A former Air Force senior master sergeant wrote separately that "mistakes were made at the lowest level of supervision and this snowballed into the one of the biggest mistakes in USAF history. I am still scratching my head wondering how this could [have] happened."

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/09/22/AR2007092201447.html>

[\(Return to Articles and Documents List\)](#)

Washington Post
September 24, 2007
Pg. 16

Iranian Leader: Tehran Has No Need For Nuclear Bomb

By Robin Wright, Washington Post Staff Writer

Ahead of his appearance this week at the United Nations, Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad said in an interview broadcast last night that Tehran has no need for a nuclear weapon and challenged claims that his country is arming Iraqi militants targeting U.S. troops.

Ahmadinejad also said that tensions between the United States and Iran, which have steadily heightened over Tehran's nuclear ambitions and support for extremists, are not headed toward a military confrontation.

"It's wrong to think Iran and the U.S. are walking towards war," he said on CBS's "60 Minutes." ". . . This is psychological warfare. If you have differences of opinion, you can use logic to resolve your differences."

That echoed sentiments expressed yesterday by the commander of U.S. Central Command, Adm. William J. Fallon, who is on a seven-nation tour of the Persian Gulf region, said in an interview with al-Jazeera that the recent "drumbeat of conflict . . . is not helpful and not useful." Fallon added that he does not expect war between the United States and Iran "and that is what we should be working for."

Ahmadinejad arrived in New York yesterday. He is scheduled to give a speech at Columbia University today, then address the U.N. General Assembly on Tuesday.

The hard-line leader said Iran does not need a nuclear bomb because such weapons have not guaranteed security even for superpowers. "In political relations right now, the nuclear bomb is of no use. If it was useful, it would have prevented the downfall of the Soviet Union. If it was useful, it would have resolved the problem the Americans have in Iraq," he said.

Although Iran had a secret uranium enrichment program for almost two decades, Ahmadinejad said that Iran now has "nothing to hide."

The Iranian leader scoffed at U.S. allegations that his country has provided deadly roadside bombs known as explosively formed projectiles to Iraqi extremists. "It's laughable for someone to turn a blind eye to the truth and accuse others," he said in the interview, taped in Tehran. "It doesn't help. And the reason that I'm smiling again is because the picture is so clear. But American officials refuse to see it."

Ahmadinejad said that instability in Iraq is "detrimental" to Tehran's regional interests.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/09/23/AR2007092301283.html>

[\(Return to Articles and Documents List\)](#)

Newsweek
October 1, 2007

Israel's Raid On Syria: Prelude To A Nuke Crisis?

The Whispers of War

By Dan Ephron and Mark Hosenball

Sam Gardiner plays war for a living. A former Air Force colonel who helped write contingency plans for the U.S. military, Gardiner has spent the 20 years since his retirement staging war-simulation exercises for military and policy wonks within and on the fringes of government (he keeps his client list confidential). Lately, more of his work has focused on Iran and its nuclear program. Gardiner starts by gathering various experts in a room to play the parts of government principals—the CIA director, the secretary of State, leaders of other countries—and presents

them with a scenario: Iran, for example, has made a dramatic nuclear advance. Then he sits back and watches the cycle of action and reaction, occasionally lobbing new information at the participants.

In Gardiner's war games, the conduct of Iran's nemesis, Israel, is often the hardest to predict. Are Israeli intelligence officials exaggerating when they say Iran will have mastered the technology to make nuclear weapons by next year? Will Israel stage its own attack on Iran if Washington does not? Or is it posturing in order to goad America into military action? The simulations have led Gardiner to an ominous conclusion: though the United States is now emphasizing sanctions and diplomacy as the means of compelling Tehran to stop enriching uranium, an Israeli attack on Iran's nuclear facilities could end up dragging Washington into a war. "Even if Israel goes it alone, we will be blamed," says Gardiner. "Hence, we would see retaliation against U.S. interests."

How far will Israel go to keep Iran from getting the bomb? The question gained new urgency this month when Israeli warplanes carried out a mysterious raid deep in Syria and then threw up a nearly impenetrable wall of silence around the operation. Last week opposition leader Benjamin Netanyahu chipped away at that wall, saying Israel did in fact attack targets in Syrian territory. His top adviser, Mossad veteran Uzi Arad, told NEWSWEEK: "I do know what happened, and when it comes out it will stun everyone."

Official silence has prompted a broad range of speculation as to what exactly took place. One former U.S. official, who like others quoted in this article declined to be identified discussing sensitive matters, says several months ago Israel presented the Bush administration with reconnaissance images and information from secret agents alleging North Korea had begun to supply nuclear-related material to Syria. Some U.S. intelligence reporting, including electronic signal intercepts, appeared to support the Israeli claims. But other U.S. officials remain skeptical about any nuclear link between Syria and North Korea. One European security source told NEWSWEEK the target might have been a North Korean military shipment to Iran that was transiting Syria. But a European intelligence official said it wasn't certain Israel had struck anything at all.

While the Bush administration appears to have given tacit support to the Syria raid, Israel and the United States are not in lockstep on Iran. For Israel, the next three months may be decisive: either Tehran succumbs to sanctions and stops enriching uranium or it must be dealt with militarily. (Iran says its program is for peaceful purposes only.)

"Two thousand seven is the year you determine whether diplomatic efforts will stop Iran," says a well-placed Israeli source, who did not want to be named because he is not authorized to speak for the government. "If by the end of the year that's not working, 2008 becomes the year you take action."

In Washington, on the other hand, the consensus against a strike is firmer than most people realize. The Pentagon worries that another war will break America's already overstretched military, while the intelligence community believes Iran is not yet on the verge of a nuclear breakthrough. The latter assessment is expected to appear in a secret National Intelligence Estimate currently nearing completion, according to three intelligence officials who asked for anonymity when discussing nonpublic material. The report is expected to say Iran will not be able to build a nuclear bomb until at least 2010 and possibly 2015. One explanation for the lag: Iran is having trouble with its centrifuge-enrichment technology, according to U.S. and European officials.

Twice in the past year, the United States has won U.N. Security Council sanctions against Tehran. More measures might come up at Security Council discussions later this year, and recently French Foreign Minister Bernard Kouchner warned that European nations might impose their own sanctions. One U.S. official who preferred not to be identified discussing sensitive policy matters said he took part in a meeting several months ago where intelligence officials discussed a "public diplomacy" strategy to accompany sanctions. The idea was to periodically float the possibility of war in public comments in order to keep Iran off balance. In truth, the official said, no war preparations are underway.

There are still voices pushing for firmer action against Tehran, most notably within Vice President Dick Cheney's office. But the steady departure of administration neocons over the past two years has also helped tilt the balance away from war. One official who pushed a particularly hawkish line on Iran was David Wurmser, who had served since 2003 as Cheney's Middle East adviser. A spokeswoman at Cheney's office confirmed to NEWSWEEK that Wurmser left his position last month to "spend more time with his family." A few months before he quit, according to two knowledgeable sources, Wurmser told a small group of people that Cheney had been mulling the idea of pushing for limited Israeli missile strikes against the Iranian nuclear site at Natanz—and perhaps other sites—in order to provoke Tehran into lashing out. The Iranian reaction would then give Washington a pretext to launch strikes against military and nuclear targets in Iran. (Wurmser's remarks were first reported last week by Washington foreign-policy blogger Steven Clemons and corroborated by NEWSWEEK.) When NEWSWEEK attempted to reach Wurmser for comment, his wife, Meyrav, declined to put him on the phone and said the allegations were untrue. A spokeswoman at Cheney's office said the vice president "supports the president's policy on Iran."

In Iran, preparations for war are underway. "Crisis committees" have been established in each government ministry to draw up contingency plans, according to an Iranian official who asked for anonymity in order to speak freely. The regime has ordered radio and TV stations to prepare enough prerecorded programming to last for months, in case the

studios are sabotaged or employees are unable to get to work. The ministries of electricity and water are working on plans to maintain service under war conditions. Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei has also sent envoys to reach out to European negotiators recently, in the hopes of heading off further sanctions or military action.

The question may not be whether America is ready to attack, but whether Israel is. The Jewish state has cause for worry. Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad vows regularly to destroy the country; former president Hashemi Rafsanjani, considered a moderate, warned in 2001 that Tehran could do away with Israel with just one nuclear bomb. In Tel Aviv last week, former deputy Defense minister Ephraim Sneh concurred. Sneh, a dovish member of Israel's Parliament and a retired brigadier general, took a NEWSWEEK reporter to the observation deck atop the 50-story Azrieli Center. "There is Haifa just over the horizon, Ben-Gurion airport over there, the Defense Ministry down below," he said, to show how small the country is. "You can see in this space the majority of our intellectual, economic, political assets are concentrated. One nuclear bomb is enough to wipe out Israel."

But can the Israelis destroy Iran's nuclear program? Gardiner, the war-gamer, says they would not only need to hit a dozen nuclear sites and scores of anti-aircraft batteries; to prevent a devastating retaliation, they would have to knock out possibly hundreds of long-range missiles that can carry chemical warheads. Just getting to distant Iran will be tricky for Israel's squadrons of American-made F-15s and F-16s. Danny Yatom, who headed Mossad in the 1990s, says the planes would have to operate over Iran for days or weeks. Giora Eiland, Israel's former national-security adviser, now with Tel Aviv's Institute of National Security Studies, ticked off the drawbacks: "Effectiveness, doubtful. Danger of regional war. Hizbullah will immediately attack [from Lebanon], maybe even Syria." Yet Israelis across the political spectrum, including Eiland and Yatom, believe the risk incurred by inaction is far greater. "The military option is not the worst option," Yatom says. "The worst option is a nuclear Iran."

The idea of a pre-emptive strike also has popular support. When Prime Minister Ehud Olmert ordered the raid on Syria earlier this month, his approval rating was in the teens. Since then, it has jumped to nearly 30 percent. And though Olmert may not believe Israeli warplanes can get to all the targets, he might be willing to gamble on even a limited success. "No one in their right mind thinks that there's a clinical way to totally destroy the Iranian nuclear facilities," says the well-placed Israeli source. "You strike at some and set the project back. You play for time and hope Ahmadinejad will eventually fall."

Alternatively, Israel might count on Tehran to retaliate against American targets as well, drawing in the superpower. To avoid that outcome, Gardiner believes, Washington must prevent Israel from attacking in the first place. "The United States does not want to turn the possibility of a general war in the Middle East over to the decision making in Israel," he says. Does not want to, certainly—but might not have a choice.

With Rod Nordland in Jerusalem, Christopher Dickey in New York and John Barry in Washington
<http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/20920341/site/newsweek/>

[\(Return to Articles and Documents List\)](#)

Washington Times
September 24, 2007
Pg. 1

Bush Demurs On Korea Progress

By Nicholas Kralev, Washington Times

The Bush administration, desperate for a major foreign-policy success as its time in office winds down, is much closer to a breakthrough in North Korea than in Iraq or Iran or in pursuit of Israeli-Palestinian peace.

But instead of touting its diplomatic achievements on the Korean Peninsula, it has played down the issue, trying instead to focus public attention on its much bigger problems in Iraq.

Five years ago, North Korea was a charter member of President Bush's "axis of evil," and he rarely missed a chance to express his dislike and distrust of the reclusive state's leader, Kim Jong-il.

This month, however, U.S. officials toured the North's main nuclear facility in Yongbyon and held discussions with their North Korean counterparts on how exactly to disable and dismantle the complex.

"They also visited and had an extensive walk-through and worked with North Korean experts in the reprocessing facility, and that's where you take the spent fuel rods from the reactor and you reprocess them into plutonium," chief U.S. negotiator Christopher R. Hill told reporters at the State Department.

If Pyongyang cooperates fully on the nuclear account, the administration has offered not only to establish diplomatic relations, but also to take it off its blacklist of state sponsors of terrorism and to support a peace treaty that would formally end the 1950-53 Korean War.

U.S. officials and analysts said there are two main reasons why the administration is lying low when it comes to its dealings with North Korea: The first has to do with the nature of the regime in Pyongyang; the second, with the administration's political base.

"Trusting and negotiating with a country like North Korea is not a popular thing," said Jon Wolfsthal, senior fellow at the Center for Strategic and International Studies. "Dismantling their programs is far from a done deal." Mr. Wolfsthal noted that the Clinton administration was not that much more eager to advertise its diplomatic successes with the North, even after it negotiated the so-called Agreed Framework that froze Pyongyang's plutonium program in 1994.

Administration officials said there is no guarantee that Mr. Kim won't change his mind about an agreement reached with the U.S., China, South Korea, Japan and Russia in February, which would dismantle the North's nuclear capabilities in exchange for political and economic benefits.

Wendy Sherman, who was President Clinton and Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright's senior adviser on North Korea in the late 1990s, said the Bush administration also is trying not to anger its conservative supporters with its more conciliatory approach to the North.

"They have to be very careful with their base," she said. "They desperately need to hold on to the base on Iraq, so they need to be careful about everything else they do."

When reports surfaced this month about purported North Korean exports of nuclear material to Syria, some former officials involved in Korea policy during Mr. Bush's first term called for an immediate suspension of the negotiations.

But the State Department, which has been driving North Korea policy since Condoleezza Rice became secretary of state, said the suspected Syria link highlights the value of the six-party process.

"It's an important reminder of the need to accelerate the process that we are already engaged in, and to push for what we've already agreed to do, which is to achieve denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula," Mr. Hill said. "And that, of course, involves any issues of proliferation."

<http://www.washingtontimes.com/article/20070924/FOREIGN/109240064/1003/foreign>

[\(Return to Articles and Documents List\)](#)

Washington Times
September 26, 2007
Pg. 10

New Iran Sanctions Passed By House

Senate decries terrorist ties

By S.A. Miller, Washington Times

The House yesterday approved stricter economic sanctions against Iran, and the Senate moved to also denounce the country's terrorist activities in a spate of activity coinciding with Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's address to the United Nations in New York.

The House voted 397-16 to pass a bill that would expand sanctions, to further isolate Iran economically and thwart its development of nuclear weapons.

In the Senate, a separate amendment was introduced to the Defense authorization bill, calling for the U.S. to designate Iran's Revolutionary Guard Corps as a foreign terrorist organization and imposing economic sanctions. The legislation followed a speech Monday by Mr. Ahmadinejad at Columbia University in which he defended Tehran's nuclear program and Iran's hostility toward Israel, riling opponents of the leader who has called for the destruction of Israel and has denied the Holocaust happened.

"Iran faces a choice between a very big carrot and a very sharp stick," said Rep. Tom Lantos, chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee, who sponsored the House bill.

"It is my hope that they will take the carrot," the California Democrat said. "But today, we are putting the stick in place."

The sanctions would, in part, penalize foreign companies — including energy giants Royal Dutch Shell, France's Total, Italy's ENI and Inpex of Japan — that now do business with Iran without repercussions from the U.S., Mr. Lantos said.

The Senate measure also includes calls for action to stop Iranian support of insurgents in Iraq, but Sen. Joe Lieberman, Connecticut independent and the amendment's co-sponsor along with Sen. Jon Kyl, Arizona Republican, said, "This amendment is not about starting a war on Iran."

"It's about responding with economic might to Iran's war on us," Mr. Lieberman said, noting U.S. military reports stating that Iran is arming and supporting anti-American Shi'ite militants in Iraq.

"Iran is trying to murder as many of our men and women in uniform in Iraq as it can," he said. "Iran's aggression in Iraq is part of a global pattern of aggression and extremism against our troops and our allies. It is a campaign of terror that stretches from Lebanon to Palestine, from Iraq to Afghanistan, and it is led by the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps."

[\(Return to Articles and Documents List\)](#)

New York Times
September 26, 2007
Pg. 1

Iran President Vows To Ignore U.N. Measures

By Warren Hoge

UNITED NATIONS, Sept. 25 — Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, the president of Iran, said Tuesday that he considered the dispute over his country's nuclear program "closed" and that Iran would disregard the resolutions of the Security Council, which he said was dominated by "arrogant powers."

In a rambling and defiant 40-minute speech to the opening session of the General Assembly, he said Iran would from now on consider the nuclear issue not a "political" one for the Security Council, but a "technical" one to be decided by the International Atomic Energy Agency, the United Nations' nuclear watchdog.

Mr. Ahmadinejad's assertion that the matter belonged with the nuclear agency indicated his preference to work with Mohamed ElBaradei, its director.

Dr. ElBaradei has been at odds with Washington, and some European powers, who have accused him of meddling in the diplomacy by seeking separate accords with Iran, and in their eyes undercutting the Security Council resolutions. "Today because of the resistance of the Iranian nation, the issue is back to the agency, and I officially announce that in our opinion, the nuclear issue of Iran is now closed and has turned into an ordinary agency matter," Mr.

Ahmadinejad said. A senior Bush administration official said after the address that the only person who thought that the issue was closed was Mr. Ahmadinejad.

As the Iranian president moved to speak, the United States delegation left, leaving only a note-taker to listen to the speech, which occurred just hours after President Bush had spoken from the same podium about the need for nations to live up to the rights guaranteed by the United Nations.

In a barely disguised barb, Mr. Ahmadinejad asserted, "Unfortunately human rights are being extensively violated by certain powers, especially by those who pretend to be their exclusive advocates."

Mr. Ahmadinejad's declaration that the nuclear issue was closed comes just as the Bush administration is seeking to turn up the pressure on the country, both through the United Nations Security Council and in concert with European powers.

"In the last two years," the Iranian president said, "abusing the Security Council, the arrogant powers have repeatedly accused Iran and even made military threats and imposed illegal sanctions against it."

In recent weeks, American and French officials have described an emerging strategy of broadening the number of banks, mostly in Europe, that have refused to lend new capital to Iran, making it difficult for the country to invest in new oil facilities or other infrastructure.

"We want more banks, and now suppliers, to assess the risk" of dealing with Iran, Stephen J. Hadley, President Bush's national security adviser, said in a meeting on Tuesday with editors and reporters of The New York Times. The issue now, he said, is "at what point the regime, or elements of the regime, say 'this policy is taking us into a ditch.'"

Administration officials insist that despite Mr. Ahmadinejad's high profile in New York this week, he is being marginalized at home. If true, it makes it hard to assess whether he was speaking for the rest of the Iranian leadership with his declaration.

Only last month, Iran's leaders reached an agreement with Dr. ElBaradei to answer questions that nuclear inspectors have been raising for years about possible connections between Iran's nuclear program and military projects.

Inspectors are in Iran this week, seeking further answers to questions that Iran has refused to discuss.

But even if Iran answers all the outstanding questions, it could still be in violation of the Security Council resolutions. Those resolutions call on the country to cease enriching uranium.

The enrichment has continued, though not yet on a scale large enough to produce a bomb's worth of material in the near future. Mr. Hadley refused to speculate on how much time the United States and its allies had to stop the program before Iran had enough material to manufacture a weapon.

Mr. Ahmadinejad, as he has in the past, argued that Iran's nuclear program was solely for civilian purposes and fell within the legal requirements of the atomic energy agency.

The Security Council powers believe that Iran's real purpose is to build nuclear weapons, and it has backed up that conviction with two resolutions and economic sanctions against the Tehran government.

Britain, China, France, Russia and the United States, the permanent members of the Security Council, have been holding meetings in various capitals this fall to see if sterner measures are needed to gain compliance.

France's president, Nicolas Sarkozy, told the General Assembly in a speech earlier Tuesday that allowing Iran to build a bomb would be an "unacceptable risk to stability in the region and in the world."

He said the Security Council should not relax its guard while it continued to negotiate with Tehran. "Firmness and dialogue go hand in hand," he said. "And I weigh my words carefully."

To that, Mr. Ahmadinejad had his own reply. "The decisions by the United States and France are not important," he said during his address. "What is important is that our nuclear program is within the rules of the I.A.E.A. and our program as such will continue."

Without mentioning the United States by name, Mr. Ahmadinejad used his speech to carry out a full-scale assault on the country as power-mad and godless. He said its leaders "openly abandon morality" and act with "lewdness, selfishness, enmity and imposition in place of justice, love, affection and honesty."

"Certain powers," he said in a thinly veiled reference to Washington, were "setting up secret prisons, abducting persons, trials and secret punishments without any regard to due process, extensive tapping of telephone conversations, intercepting private mail."

In answer to questions at a news conference about having proposed the extinction of Israel, he said he was instead proposing a referendum of all people living in the Palestinian territories and Israel, which he referred to as the "illegal Zionist regime" to see what their choice of country would be.

He said countries had been eliminated peaceably before, and he cited the case of the Soviet Union.

"What befell the Soviet Union?" he said. "It disappeared, but was it done through war? No. It was through the voice of the people."

Asked by an Israeli journalist about the possibility that Iran was helping Syria acquire nuclear knowledge, he said, "Next question."

Mr. Ahmadinejad was not alone in attacking the United States. So did Daniel Ortega, the president of Nicaragua. Saying that Washington's actions against Iran were like those of "God telling people what is good and bad," he proposed that the countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America join him in a march against the forces of "global capitalist imperialism."

Late Tuesday, Hugo Chávez, the outspoken Venezuelan president who called Mr. Bush a devil last year from the General Assembly podium, announced in Caracas that he was no longer planning to come to New York to deliver his country's speech on Wednesday.

He said instead that he planned to travel shortly to Saudi Arabia to defend the price of oil. "To \$100," said Mr. Chávez. "That is where we're headed."

David Sanger contributed reporting.

http://www.nytimes.com/2007/09/26/world/26nations.html?_r=1&ref=world&oref=slogin

[\(Return to Articles and Documents List\)](#)

(Editor's Note: News release and link for referenced report follows article.)

Washington Post

September 26, 2007

Pg. 19

Thwarting Terrorists: More To Be Done

Today, Harvard University's Project on Managing the Atom and the Nuclear Threat Initiative publish their annual report on the security of nuclear weapons and materials around the world. The good news in "Securing the Bomb 2007" is that much progress has been made toward upgrading security for nuclear stockpiles. The bad news is that the essential ingredients of nuclear weapons exist in hundreds of buildings in more than 40 countries, and terrorists are actively trying to get a nuclear bomb or the materials to make one.

As early as 1993, al-Qaeda attempted to buy highly enriched uranium (HEU) in Sudan. Seized documents from Afghanistan detail al-Qaeda's efforts to get nuclear weapons from 1996 to 2001. In Russia, Chechen terrorist teams carried out reconnaissance at two secret nuclear weapons storage sites in 2001.

While there is a global threat, Russia, Pakistan and research reactors using fuel made from highly enriched uranium pose the most urgent dangers of nuclear theft. Russia has the world's largest stockpiles of nuclear weapons and the materials to make them. Security measures have improved dramatically since the early 1990s, but serious weaknesses remain, along with threats from terrorist attackers and insider thieves.

Pakistan has a relatively small nuclear stockpile, believed to be heavily guarded -- but it faces immense threats from al-Qaeda and other jihadist groups, along with nuclear insiders with a demonstrated willingness to sell sensitive technology. Roughly 140 research reactors fueled by highly enriched uranium exist in dozens of countries, some secured only by a night watchman and a chain-link fence.

U.S.-funded security upgrades have been completed for more than half of the Russian buildings with potential bomb material and more than half of Russia's warhead sites. Nuclear security cooperation with Pakistan is underway, though the details are secret. And the Energy Department's Global Threat Reduction Initiative has been helping operators of HEU-fueled research reactors around the world upgrade security, convert to fuel that cannot be used in a bomb and remove their HEU.

But there is still a gap between the urgency of the threat and the scope and pace of the U.S. and international response. Closing that gap will take an urgent global campaign to lock down all the world's stockpiles of nuclear warheads and the materials needed to make them.

-- **Matthew Bunn**

The writer, an adviser in the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy during the Clinton administration, is a senior researcher in the Project on Managing the Atom at Harvard's Belfer Center and the author of "Securing the Bomb 2007."

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/09/25/AR2007092501347.html>

[\(Return to Articles and Documents List\)](#)

Securing the Bomb 2007

News Release

Report Cites Dangerous Gap in Efforts to Thwart Nuclear Terrorism; Calls for Urgent Global Campaign to Reduce the Risk

WASHINGTON – New steps are urgently needed to broaden and accelerate work to keep nuclear weapons and the materials needed to make them out of terrorist hands, according to *Securing the Bomb, 2007*, a report released today. “With al-Qaeda’s central command reconstituting in the mountains of Pakistan, we urgently need a stepped-up global campaign to secure every nuclear weapon and every significant cache of potential nuclear bomb material worldwide to stringent standards,” said Dr. Matthew Bunn of Harvard University’s Managing the Atom Project, the report’s author. “We need to make sure these stocks are locked down before thieves and terrorists can get to them – and that they stay that way for the long haul.”

The new report, commissioned by the Nuclear Threat Initiative (NTI), provides a comprehensive assessment of efforts to secure and remove vulnerable nuclear stockpiles around the world, and a detailed action plan for reducing the risk of nuclear terrorism.

Even with increasing strains in U.S.-Russia relations, the two countries have made important progress in securing nuclear weapons and materials, the report concludes.

“Thanks to the good and sometimes heroic efforts of men and women around the world who are working every day to keep nuclear weapons and materials secure, we have made significant progress,” said former Senator Sam Nunn, NTI’s Co-Chairman. “But we are still not moving as quickly as we can or we must. Those in the field doing the hard work in security and safety – whether from Russia or America or other countries – need and deserve for their leaders to knock down all the obstacles that impede their progress.

Preventing nuclear terrorism must be a front-burner issue for leaders at the highest level of governments around the world every day. And so far it is not.”

The Threats

The new study describes troubling indications that the threat of nuclear theft and terrorism remains high in many parts of the world. In Russia in 2006, a senior general who was the deputy chairman of the group charged with law and order in Russia’s closed nuclear cities was fired – for organizing smuggling in and out of those cities. In Pakistan, serving military officers cooperated with al Qaeda in two plots to assassinate President Musharraf – raising questions about the reliability of the military officers who guard Pakistan’s nuclear stockpile. Some 140 research reactors around the world still use highly enriched uranium (HEU) as their fuel -- some with no more security than a night watchman and a chain-link fence. The seizure of nearly 80 grams of stolen 89-percent HEU in Georgia in early 2006 adds to the growing list of cases of theft of potential nuclear bomb materials.

Progress and Gaps

Most of the US government’s work to secure nuclear weapons and material has been focused in Russia and the former Soviet Union, though these efforts are now expanding worldwide.

- Comprehensive U.S.-funded security and accounting upgrades had been completed for approximately 55-percent of all the buildings with nuclear weapons material in the former Soviet Union by the end of fiscal 2006. (If only the buildings where the two sides have agreed on cooperative upgrades are counted, 63-percent of the work was completed.)

- Roughly half of the nuclear warhead sites in Russia have completed US-funded security and accounting upgrades by the end of fiscal year 2006. (If only those sites on the agreed upgrade list are counted, 64-percent of the work was completed.)
- The U.S. government is expanding its nuclear security cooperation with other countries, but much remains to be done. U.S. officials have worked with counterparts in Pakistan, but the scope and progress of this work remains secret. Security at one nuclear site in China has been upgraded with U.S. cooperation, and US-China nuclear security discussions and training activities are continuing, but these talks have not yet led to major nuclear security upgrades. And in India, despite the signing of a new U.S.-India nuclear cooperation agreement, nuclear security cooperation between the two countries has not begun.
- For HEU-fueled research reactors around the world, security upgrades designed to meet basic International Atomic Energy Agency security recommendations have been completed for four-fifths of the facilities that needed them – but only a small percentage have security upgrades adequate to protect against demonstrated terrorist and criminal capabilities.
- The Department of Energy’s National Nuclear Security Administration’s Global Threat Reduction Initiative has expanded and accelerated efforts to remove potential bomb material from vulnerable sites and convert HEU-fueled reactors to use fuel that cannot be used in a nuclear bomb, but only about a quarter of the world’s HEU-fueled research reactors have had all their HEU removed, leaving a major gap yet to be closed.

The Recommendations

Closing the nuclear security gap will require sustained global leadership to overcome the obstacles to securing, removing, and reducing nuclear stockpiles. The report outlines key steps to convince world leaders and nuclear managers of the urgency of the threat and the need for action. Specific recommendations include:

- An urgent global campaign to reduce the risk of nuclear terrorism. Participants should commit to locking down nuclear weapons and weapons material worldwide as rapidly as possible using a system of tough security standards.
- The President should appoint a full-time senior official, based at the White House, charged with preparing an integrated plan to comprehensively address the threat of nuclear terrorism and keeping the issue on the front burner at the White House every day.
- The United States should play a leading role in convincing world leaders of the danger nuclear terrorism poses to their countries. Activities should include exercises with international participation that would present in compelling terms nuclear terrorism scenarios tailored to various parts of the world. Summit meetings of world leaders should include threat briefings on the reality of the nuclear terrorist threat. States with nuclear weapons and weapons materials should establish review teams to test and rate levels of security at their nuclear facilities and share databases of nuclear security incidents and lessons learned from them.
- The international community should establish and achieve the goal of removing all nuclear material from the world’s most vulnerable sites in four years.
- Beginning with Russia, countries upgrading their security measures for nuclear weapons and weapons material should make presidential-level commitments to putting in place the money, trained staff, and effective security rules needed to sustain security and accounting of nuclear materials.

Sustained leadership from Washington, the report concludes, could reduce the threat dramatically by the end of the next presidential term. “Every presidential candidate,” writes Bunn, “should be asked a central question: What is your plan to prevent terrorists from incinerating the heart of a U.S. city with a nuclear bomb?”

The report and its online companion at www.nti.org/securingthebomb is the only available source for “one-stop shopping” on all aspects of these critical U.S. security programs. Since NTI first commissioned this annual report from the Managing the Atom Project in 2002, the report and its recommendations have increased public awareness of the nuclear terrorism threat and helped spur increased government action to reduce nuclear dangers.

The Managing the Atom Project, based at the Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs at Harvard’s John F. Kennedy School of Government, is Harvard’s principal research group focusing on nuclear weapons and nuclear energy policies. NTI is a Washington-based non-profit organization, focused on reducing the threats from nuclear, biological and chemical weapons and materials.

http://www.nti.org/c_press/release_stb07.pdf

For more information and full report please see link below.

http://www.nti.org/e_research/cnwm/overview/cnwm_home.asp

[\(Return to Articles and Documents List\)](#)

New York Times
September 27, 2007

Washington Sees An Opportunity On Iran

By David E. Sanger and Thom Shanker

WASHINGTON, Sept. 26 — A year and a half after President Bush told top aides that he feared he might be forced someday to choose between acquiescing to Iran's nuclear ambitions and ordering military action, the struggle to find an effective alternative — sanctions with real bite — is entering a new phase.

The speech at the United Nations on Tuesday by President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad of Iran is already being used by American officials in an effort to convince European allies that Iran's leadership will respond only to a sharp new wave of economic pressure, far greater than anything it has endured so far. Mr. Ahmadinejad, trying to make the case that no additional sanctions would derail Iran's uranium enrichment program, declared that "the nuclear issue of Iran is now closed."

Until now, Washington has relied on gradually escalating sanctions, including convincing a growing number of banks that it is risky to lend new funds to Iran for major oil projects. Yet in interviews, American diplomats, White House officials and military officers acknowledge that the strategy has been largely ineffective.

So have veiled threats of military action. While President Bush and his aides insist that "all options are on the table," senior officials say there is little enthusiasm in the White House or the Pentagon for military attacks on Iran's nuclear facilities, though they acknowledge that such war plans are always being refined.

The officials say the Iranians fully understand that while the United States could destroy Iran's major nuclear facilities, it would be far harder to manage the probable response, which could include heightened attacks on American forces in Iraq, possible retaliation on Israel or the destabilization of governments from Lebanon to Pakistan.

Administration officials say that the chances appear slim that the United States can enlist Russia and China behind really tough sanctions against Iran, and that it could take several months for such sanctions to emerge, if they do at all.

But for the first time, administration officials say, the European allies are talking about a far broader cutoff of bank lending and technology to Iran than any tried so far. The lead is being taken by the new government in France, whose president, Nicolas Sarkozy, issued a starker warning to the United Nations this week about a nuclear Iran than did Mr. Bush.

That has created a new initiative between Washington and Paris unlike any since they split over the invasion of Iraq. The effort, said Stephen J. Hadley, the national security adviser, is intended to convince Iranians that the nuclear program is "taking us into the ditch," and to make the pressure so great "that they finally have to make a strategic choice."

In a meeting on Tuesday with editors and reporters for The New York Times, Mr. Hadley conceded that the United States was still struggling to understand how much pressure it would take to force Iran to make what he called a "strategic choice" and said that intelligence estimates "vary widely" about how much time remained before the Iranians could have a weapon.

One senior European official who is taking part in conversations in New York this week to design sanctions that the entire European Union might agree to said it was now "a race between how fast they can build centrifuges and we can turn up the pain."

So the discussions now center on cutting off even more lending to the Iranians and — for the first time — supplies of technology and other goods. But that would require severing, one by one, deep ties between European and Iranian businesses, and necessitate what Mr. Hadley called a consensus for "aggressive action, even if that means compromising their commercial interests."

A range of officials acknowledged the difficulty of designing a military strike option effective enough to set the Iranian program back for many years.

While many of the sites have long been known — especially the giant underground complex at Natanz, where just shy of 2,000 centrifuges have been installed — there is no certainty that military action could destroy the entire system of well-disguised factories and laboratories, some known and some hidden.

And the turmoil certain to follow such an attack may not be worth military action that simply delays nuclear development, officials say.

That probably explains why Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates and Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice have both vowed to pursue the diplomatic track, saying that military action is a last resort. But those comments have not silenced the speculation here, in Europe and in the Middle East that America is planning for an attack.

"This constant drumbeat of war is not helpful, and it's not useful," said Adm. William J. Fallon, the senior American commander in the region.

In a telephone interview this week as he visited various regional capitals, Admiral Fallon pledged that the United States would "maintain our capabilities in that region of the world in an attempt to make sure that if they opt for military activity there, that is not going to be very useful to them."

At the same time, he said, "we will pursue avenues that might result in some kind of improvement in Iranian behavior."

"I am not talking about a war strategy, but a strategy to demonstrate our resolve," Admiral Fallon said. "We have a very, very robust capability in the region, especially in comparison to Iran. That is one of the things that people might want to keep in mind. Our intention is to make sure they understand that, but we are being prudent in our actions and certainly not trying to be provocative."

In recent days others have begun to speak openly about what the United States would face if Iran successfully fielded nuclear weapons or manufactured enough uranium to make clear that it could produce weapons in short order. It is that second possibility — in which Iran would stay within the strict rules of the nuclear nonproliferation treaty — that worries many intelligence officials.

Gen. John P. Abizaid, who retired this year as senior American commander in the Middle East, said that while the United States must do all it can to prevent Iran from going nuclear, the world could live with a nuclear Iran and could contain it.

"I believe that the United States, with our great military power, can contain Iran, that the United States can deliver clear messages to the Iranians that makes it clear to them that while they may develop one or two nuclear weapons, they'll never be able to compete with us in our true military might and power, and they should not underestimate either our resolve or our ability to deal with them in the event of war," General Abizaid said in a speech last week at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, a Washington policy institute

He said the broad rules of deterrence that kept a nuclear peace between the United States and the Soviet Union during the cold war, and remain in effect with nuclear Russia and China today, would be effective against a nuclear Iran.

"I believe nuclear deterrence will work with the Iranians," General Abizaid said.

Inside the administration, senior officials say they have also considered organizing a regional forum to confront Iran, using as a model the "six party" talks with North Korea, an effort to put pressure on that country from all its neighbors. But in the Middle East, officials say, the idea has hardly gotten off the ground.

"As we talk to the regional leaders, we have yet to hear a single good idea for ways to find common ground, or a forum or framework for dealing with Iran," said one senior official involved in Iran policy. The problem, officials say, is that none of Iran's neighbors are willing and able to play the decisive role alongside the United States.

http://www.nytimes.com/2007/09/27/washington/27iran.html?_r=1&adxnml=1&oref=slogin&adxnmlx=1190916687-RtUMhII2o08fi2OveQxKoA

[\(Return to Articles and Documents List\)](#)

Miami Herald

September 27, 2007

U.S.: 'Case Is Not Closed' On Iran Nukes

U.S. officials said Iran's nuclear dispute is far from over a day after the country's president, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, declared the issue closed.

By Jonathan S. Landay

WASHINGTON -- The dispute over Iran's nuclear program is far from over, despite Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's assertion before the U.N. General Assembly that his government considers the issue "closed."

"The case is not closed," retorted Undersecretary of State Nicholas Burns on Wednesday, a day after Ahmadinejad's remarks. "He is completely mistaken, and the international community is not going to allow him to forget about the fact that his country is operating against the wishes of the [U.N.] Security Council."

Iran has defied demands that it suspend the enrichment of uranium, a process that can produce low-enriched uranium for electrical production or highly enriched uranium for nuclear weapons.

The Bush administration, backed by France and Britain, is campaigning for tighter U.N. sanctions against Iran. But Iran reached an agreement with the U.N. International Atomic Energy Agency last month to reveal the full extent of its long-secret program after years of non-cooperation -- a step that might avert further U.N. sanctions.

President Bush has refused to rule out using military force against Iranian nuclear facilities, and his charges that Iran is training and arming Shiite Muslim militias in Iraq have fueled concerns that his administration has begun making a case for attacking the Islamic republic. Iran denies the allegations.

The Democratic-controlled Senate on Wednesday gave symbolic support to the Bush administration by voting 76-22 for a nonbinding resolution endorsing the use of military force and other "instruments" of U.S. power in Iraq to halt the "violent activities and destabilizing influence" of Iran and "its proxies." The resolution also calls on the administration to declare Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps a foreign terrorist organization.

Under the Aug. 21 agreement with the IAEA, Iranian officials are to answer a series of outstanding questions about unexplained activities at a uranium mine, work on advanced centrifuges -- the machines used to enrich uranium -- and a document on the casting of uranium metal spheres, which can be used only in nuclear weapons.

U.S. and European officials have criticized the IAEA deal, saying it gives Iran time to complete the installation of 3,000 centrifuges in an industrial-scale facility in Natanz. They could produce enough highly enriched uranium for one bomb a year.

Failure by Iran to answer all of the IAEA questions would buttress U.S. charges that Iran is concealing a nuclear weapons development effort and inject new life into the Bush administration's drive for tighter U.N. economic sanctions, or, failing that, for military action.

But if Iran cooperates with the IAEA, it would doom new U.N. sanctions.

<http://www.miamiherald.com/news/world/story/251804.html>

[\(Return to Articles and Documents List\)](#)

(Editor's Note: Hyperlink for referenced report follows article.)

Las Vegas Sun

September 26, 2007

Feds Find Gaps in Northern Border

By **DEVLIN BARRETT**

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) - A smuggler could easily carry radioactive material or other contraband across the northern border into the United States, government investigators have found.

The Government Accountability Office sent out investigators to test how easily they could transfer large red duffel bags at unguarded and unmonitored spots along the more than 5,000 miles of U.S.-Canada border.

The GAO, the investigative arm of Congress, described in a 13-page report to be delivered to Congress on Thursday how easily they were able to penetrate the border at several spots. A copy of the report was obtained Wednesday by The Associated Press.

"Our work shows that a determined cross-border violator would likely be able to bring radioactive materials or other contraband undetected into the United States by crossing the U.S.-Canada border at any of the locations we investigated," the GAO report concluded.

The investigators tested four northern border states, which they did not identify, and conducted a 10-minute exercise at one site where they set up an exchange of a red duffel bag from one side of the border to another. Some investigators took video and pictures of the exercise.

In that instance, an alert citizen notified border officials, but authorities called to the scene were unable to find the GAO investigators.

It is illegal to cross the border at any place other than an official port of entry.

Investigators said that for security reasons they did not conduct similar tests at the southern border, but they also found gaps there. Investigators who examined the U.S.-Mexico border said they observed a significant number of National Guard troops and Border Patrol personnel while driving on state roads, but found little law enforcement presence on federally managed land.

Customs and Border Protection officials told the GAO "the northern border presents more of a challenge than the southern border."

The report notes that, as of May, there were 972 Border Patrol agents on the northern border, and 11,986 agents on the southern border.

<http://www.lasvegassun.com/sunbin/stories/bw-cong/2007/sep/26/092603341.html>

[\(Return to Articles and Documents List\)](#)

Border Security: Security Vulnerabilities at Unmanned and Unmonitored U.S. Border Locations

by Gregory D. Kutz and John W. Cooney, forensic audits and special investigations, before the Senate Committee on Finance.

GAO-07-884T, September 27.

<http://www.gao.gov/cgi-bin/getrpt?GAO-07-884T>

Highlights - <http://www.gao.gov/highlights/d07884thigh.pdf>

[\(Return to Articles and Documents List\)](#)