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Washington Post
December 18, 2007
Pg. 2

Nuclear Warhead Cut From Spending Bill

Congress Instead Seeks 'Weapons Strategy'

By Walter Pincus, Washington Post Staff Writer

Congress has cut all funding for continuing development next year of a new nuclear warhead from the omnibus domestic spending bill, handing the Bush administration a significant setback.

Instead, the measure, which Congress expects to vote on this week, directs the administration to develop and submit to lawmakers a "comprehensive nuclear weapons strategy for the 21st century," according to the draft report of the appropriations bill.

That strategy, to be prepared by the departments of Defense and Energy plus the intelligence community, is to contain a mission assessment of the new strategic nuclear deterrent, a definition of the weapons stockpile needed to carry it out, and the modernized weapons complex that could produce it and keep it reliable, the conference report says.

"Moving forward on a new nuclear weapon is not something this nation should do without great consideration," said Rep. Peter J. Visclosky (D-Ind.), chairman of the House Appropriations subcommittee that handles funding of the

nuclear weapons program. With the end of the Cold War and a new threat from terrorists seeking nuclear materials, Visclosky said, "the U.S. needs a comprehensive nuclear defense strategy, and a revised stockpile plan to guide the transformation and downsizing of the complex . . . to reflect the new realities of the world."
Lawmakers directed that the $15 million approved last summer for the Reliable Replacement Warhead program (RRW) be used for a new science program, termed Advanced Certification. That initiative would close gaps in the program currently used to certify that nuclear weapons retain their potency without the need for underground testing. Such gaps, the conferees noted, were first pointed out in a report this summer by an independent advisory group. "Jason," a group of scientists that regularly advises the government on nuclear defense matters, recommended additional scientific steps along with independent peer review, rather than having one of the nation's nuclear labs overseeing the work of another.
A spokesman for the Energy Department's National Nuclear Security Administration, which runs the RRW program, announced disappointment in the conferees' action, saying it means "we will likely have to go down a path of a full-life extension program for nuclear weapons in our stockpile, which in the long run will be more costly, without introducing modern safety and security measures into our weapons."
http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/12/17/AR2007121702126.html

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New York Times
December 18, 2007
Pg. 1

Iran Receives Nuclear Fuel In Blow To U.S.

By Helene Cooper
WASHINGTON — The United States lost a long battle when Russia, as it announced on Monday, delivered nuclear fuel to an Iranian power plant that is at the center of an international dispute over its nuclear program. Iran, for its part, confirmed on Monday plans to build a second such plant.
In announcing that it had delivered the first shipment of enriched-uranium fuel rods to the power plant, at Bushehr in southern Iran, on Sunday, Russian officials said that while the fuel was in Iran, it would be under the control of the International Atomic Energy Agency, the nuclear monitoring agency for the United Nations. Russia also said the Iranian government had guaranteed that the fuel would be used only for the power plant.
The Bush administration took pains not to criticize the Russian move publicly, even expressing support for outside supplies if that led Iran to suspend its nuclear enrichment program.
“If the Russians are willing to do that, which I support, then the Iranians do not need to learn how to enrich,” President Bush said Monday. “If the Iranians accept that uranium for a civilian nuclear power plant, then there’s no need for them to learn how to enrich.”
But from the American standpoint, the timing could not have been worse, coming just two weeks after the release of a United States intelligence estimate that concluded that Iran stopped its nuclear weapons program in 2003. The National Intelligence Estimate also concluded that Iran had not restarted its nuclear weapons program as of mid-2007, undercutting a central tenet of the Bush administration’s basis for maintaining international pressure against Iran.
While administration officials maintain that the intelligence estimate does not mean that the United States and its allies should ease the pressure, the practical consequence of the report has been to embolden Iran. It has also made it more likely that China and Russia, two of the countries with perhaps the smallest appetite for sanctions against Iran, will not agree to a new round of tough sanctions by the United Nations Security Council.
Russia’s decision to deliver fuel to Bushehr further encourages Iran, several administration officials and European diplomats said privately. They did not speak for attribution because they had not been authorized to discuss the matter publicly.
The White House took a different tack in its comments. “There is no doubt that Russia and the rest of the world want to keep Iran from getting a nuclear weapon,” said a White House spokesman, Gordon D. Johndroe. “And today’s announcement provides one more avenue for the Iranians to make a strategic choice to suspend enrichment.”
But privately, administration officials said they had been hoping, with dwindling confidence, that Russia would continue to stall on delivering the fuel, in part to send a message to Iran that the United States and its European, Chinese and Russian allies were hanging tough in their attempts to punish Iran for refusing to suspend enrichment.
“We for many years tried to stop it, and for the last year we’ve known there was no way to stop it, and that it was coming, and we held our breath on the timing,” a senior administration official said.

Indeed, Iran said it had no intention of suspending its uranium enrichment just because it had received the fuel shipment for Bushehr, and it even confirmed that it intended to enrich uranium for another new nuclear power plant in the south of the country, the Fars news agency reported.
Gholamreza Aghazadeh, the chief of the Iranian Atomic Energy Organization, said Iran needed to produce fuel for a second plant under construction. “We are building a 360-megawatt indigenous power plant in Darkhovin,” Mr. Aghazadeh said.
“The fuel for this plant needs to be produced by Natanz enrichment plant,” he added, according to the news agency.
Darkhovin is a city in the southern province of Khuzistan, north of Bushehr, which is better known for its oil fields. Natanz is the site where Iran has been installing centrifuges for uranium enrichment.
Both Bushehr and Darkhovin were projects planned before the 1979 revolution, and then abandoned. It was not clear how much construction had been carried out at Darkhovin.
Construction of Bushehr has been hindered by repeated delays, most of them a symptom of Russia’s uneasiness about Iran’s nuclear intentions, European and American diplomats said. This year, Russia delayed a fuel shipment expected in March, accusing Iran of tardiness in making its monthly payments of $25 million. At the time, Bush administration officials privately expressed satisfaction about the delay and attributed Russia’s move, in part, to its desire to help the West pressure Iran into more openness about its nuclear program.
Last week, Sergei Shmatko, the director of Atomstroyexport, the Russian contractor responsible for the plant, announced that Russia and Iran had ended their financial disputes over the project, although he did not indicate a date for when the long-awaited opening would occur.
Irina F. Esipova, a spokeswoman for Atomstroyexport, said Bushehr would be ready technically to operate no sooner than six months after all the uranium fuel rods needed to power the station were delivered.
Russia alerted Bush administration officials two weeks ago that the fuel shipment was going ahead, administration officials said. The officials, who spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to speak publicly on the issue, said Russia agreed to put certain safeguards in place to allow for greater international inspections at Bushehr.
The United States had already agreed in principle that it was acceptable for Russia to provide the fuel to Iran, as long as there were safeguards to handle the spent fuel. Administration officials said they decided that the United States had no choice but to concede that it could no longer keep prodding Russia to delay shipping the fuel.
But “when I was under secretary for arms control, we spent a lot of time trying — successfully — to convince the Russians not to ship the fuel,” John R. Bolton, the former United States ambassador to the United Nations, said in an interview on Monday.
He said he believed that Russia’s latest actions reflected a change in the people who were dealing with Russia’s nuclear program, a change of heart by President Vladimir V. Putin and the economics of the deal.
Nazila Fathi contributed reporting from Tehran, and Michael Schwirtz from Moscow.
http://www.nytimes.com/2007/12/18/world/middleeast/18diplo.html?ref=world

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Washington Times
December 18, 2007
Pg. 12

NIE In The Sky?

By James G. Zumwalt
With the recent publication of the National Intelligence Estimate (NIE) suggesting Iran may have halted work on its nuclear weapons capability in 2003, this writer reflected on intelligence reporting received in 1991 as we prepared to advance into Kuwait during Desert Storm.
Assessments made it clear a formidable Iraqi army stood between us and our objective. Aerial photos revealed massive networks of bunkers. Intelligence, from an array of other sources, supported the assessment thousands of enemy soldiers occupied the networks. But one very important intelligence input was missing from the assessment — human intelligence or "humint." Absent the benefit of human eyes and ears on the ground, i.e., an observer, spy or defector providing timely, subjective information, we lacked good intelligence on enemy troop levels, willingness to fight, their ability to fight, etc. Advancing into Kuwait, we encountered little resistance.
Unbeknownst to the analysts, many Iraqi soldiers deserted under cover of darkness. What Saddam Hussein predicted would be the "mother of all battles" became the mother of all defeats as U.S. ground forces routed the Iraqis in four days.
The science of analyzing intelligence is imperfect. Like modern art, it is subject to personal interpretation. At times, intelligence can provide clear evidence of enemy intent. In the 1962 Cuban missile crisis, it proved most

embarrassing for the Soviet ambassador, after being called in by the U.S. State Department and denying the presence of Soviet missiles in Cuba, to be shown indisputable evidence of same in aerial photographs. Edging toward war, Washington remained steadfastly firm, forcing Moscow to back down and remove the missiles. Only later did we discover such U.S. steadfastness was the result of critical humint fed to Washington by a Soviet spy inside the Kremlin, thus providing Washington with a decided edge throughout the crisis.

In the Desert Storm example, no humint was available to indicate enemy levels and intentions; in the Cuban missile crisis example, enemy intentions were clear. Thus, intelligence assessments become a balancing act of trying to determine what elements should be given more weight and which should receive less.

Sometimes analysts give humint the wrong weight. In December 1941, as the Japanese navy silently approached Pearl Harbor bent on war-making, analysts felt war was not imminent, giving greater weight to the words and actions of Japanese diplomats in Washington they believed to be bent on peacemaking. Thus, even when humint is available, intelligence analysis is seldom perfect.

There are several reasons for concern about NIE's about-face on Iran's nuclear weapons capability.

The assessment appears to have been triggered primarily by recent humint input. Worrisome is the weight given to what may well be a counter-intelligence effort by Tehran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC). The humint relied upon is a claim by senior IRGC official Ali Rez Asgari who defected during a February trip to Turkey. Mr. Asgari told a foreign intelligence agency all activity on Iran's nuclear weapons program stopped four years ago. His claim purportedly was supported by intercepted communications among Iranian officials.

Such information needs to be carefully scrutinized as we have learned some lessons from the Cold War. We now know "critically timed" defections as well as intercepted communications within a targeted country could conceivably be a counter-intelligence initiative. The Iranians are well aware of Moscow's successful use in the past of double agents — Soviet spies who defected to the West only to further U.S.S.R. objectives in obfuscating Moscow's sinister intent.

The role of one such Soviet double agent, Yuri Noshenko, remains a mystery. His timely defection to the United States, shortly after President Kennedy's assassination as the Warren Commission began investigating whether accused killer Lee Harvey Oswald acted alone, has long been cited as a disinformation effort to divert suspicion from Moscow. While claiming coincidentally to have just reviewed the KGB's files on Oswald, who visited the U.S.S.R. prior to the assassination, he said he found no evidence of Soviet complicity. Yet Noshenko later failed two polygraph exams.

Surprisingly, the commission accepted the humint, finding Oswald did act alone. Some critics believe the failed polygraphs cast questionable light on the timing of Noshenko's defection. Likewise, the timing of Mr. Asgari's defection must be questioned, coming at a time the Iranians realized even America's European allies were losing patience with Tehran and considering more severe economic sanctions. Blindly accepting Asgari's claim is a "pie in the sky" approach to NIE analysis.

There are also major concerns about the experience and motivation of the U.S. analysts involved. Newsmax reports it was prepared by inexperienced State Department political and intelligence analysts who, as Democratic Party activists, politicized the assessment. Thus, it was either their political leanings or their inexperience that resulted in several shortcomings in the NIE.

First, they relied upon humint unvetted by U.S. intelligence agencies. Second, as pointed out by Iran expert Alireza Jafarzadeh, they failed to focus on actions of the IRGC — the military arm created in Iran by the Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini in 1979 to safeguard and export the Islamic Revolution. Mr. Jafarzadeh, who first revealed the existence of Iran's nuclear weapons program, reports the IRGC holds the keys to the country's nuclear weapons program. IRGC leaders who are also nuclear scientists, in collaboration with Iranian universities, are fully committed to achieving what they believe is Tehran's religious mandate to be so armed.

Yet the NIE makes little mention of the IRGC. Third, the acceptance of Mr. Asgari's claims Iran's nuclear weapons program ceased in 2003 conflicts with Iranian purchases two years later of 18 North Korean BM-25 long range, land-mobile missiles that are used to carry nuclear warheads.

A post-report concern is the effort just this month by Iran to secretly obtain uranium from Bolivia, through the good offices of Venezuelan strongman Hug Chavez.

Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad is a dedicated follower of Khomeini and believes in the ayatollah's assertion, "Islam makes it incumbent [for believers] to prepare for the conquest of countries so that the writ of Islam is obeyed in every country of the world ... [by fulfilling Islam's mandate to] kill all unbelievers."

Devout believer Mr. Ahmadinejad has made clear, several times, his intention to wipe the U.S. and Israel off the map. So there should be no doubt his intentions remain focused on obtaining nuclear weaponry with which to make good on his threat.

Against this backdrop of declared Iranian intentions to destroy us, of past questionable U.S. intelligence assessments, of the timing of Mr. Asgari's defection, of the inexperience and motivations of the analysts, can we

afford to put the world at risk by blindly accepting it? Previously, the U.S. was able to bounce back following flawed intelligence assessments. But that will not be the case if we are wrong about Iran.
Therefore, the only assessment we can afford to accept is one obtained via verifiable inspection of a nuclear weapons development program Tehran keeps hidden deep beneath the Earth's surface, while claiming peaceful intent.
James G. Zumwalt, a Marine veteran of the Persian Gulf and Vietnam wars, is a contributor to The Washington Times.
http://www.washingtontimes.com/article/20071218/COMMENTARY/871778917/1012/commentary

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Washington Post
December 19, 2007
Pg. 1

Administration Plans To Shrink U.S. Nuclear Arms Program

By Walter Pincus, Washington Post Staff Writer

The Bush administration yesterday announced its intention to modernize and sharply reduce the size of the nation's aging nuclear weapons program by closing or abandoning 600 buildings at facilities across the country and gradually reducing the associated workforce by at least 7,200.
The plan, which requires congressional approval, would substantially shrink operations at some of the most storied sites for bomb-building during the Cold War, including a Tennessee plant that enriched uranium for thousands of nuclear arms over the past half-century and a California laboratory where the hydrogen bomb was refined.
But it would also leave key parts of the U.S. nuclear weapons program intact, including research centers where scientists study the effects of nuclear blasts, monitor how existing warheads are faring and examine potential designs for new warheads. Nearly 30,000 people would continue to be employed in nuclear-arms-related work.
"Today's nuclear weapons complex needs to move from the outdated, Cold War complex into one that is smaller, safer and less expensive," Thomas P. D'Agostino, administrator of the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA), which runs the weapons program, told reporters yesterday.
The reductions are an outgrowth of Energy Department studies that began in the mid-1990s. At first, 12 weapons-related sites were reduced to eight. After the administration signed a nuclear reduction treaty with Moscow in 2003, NNSA officials began looking at how to resize the production complex to match a smaller arsenal.
Post-2001 worries about terrorism provided a further impetus to consolidate activities and shrink the acreage of key sites, so that the Energy Department could better defend them. NNSA spends about $800 million each year for security, an amount that it wants to reduce.
D'Agostino also announced that President Bush has approved a new reduction of 15 percent in active U.S. nuclear weapons, which is scheduled to be completed by 2012. Those reductions will leave the active stockpile at "less than one-quarter its size at the end of the Cold War," White House press secretary Dana Perino said yesterday.
Several independent experts said yesterday that roughly 4,600 warheads will remain in the U.S. arsenal, down from about 16,000 at the end of the Cold War and from 10,500 when Bush came into office. President George H.W. Bush eliminated thousands of tactical nuclear weapons, mostly ones placed in Europe and Asia.
While the overall size of the arsenal is classified, NNSA officials confirmed that only 1,700 to 2,200 of the remaining warheads will be deployed with bombers, missiles, and submarines, as agreed in a treaty with Moscow in 2003. The remaining active weapons will be kept as spares and for testing with delivery systems.
Hans M. Kristensen of the Federation of American Scientists called the 15 percent cut announced yesterday "a bookkeeping event," since the number of warheads deployed with bombers, missiles, and submarines will not be substantially reduced, including the number kept on 24-hour alert. He also noted that the weapons taken out of the active stockpile will be transferred from the Defense Department to the Energy Department for storage but will not be dismantled.
Under the larger reduction proposal, which could take a decade to implement, the Oak Ridge, Tenn., facility, which produced weapons-grade uranium for the nuclear bomb dropped on Hiroshima, would gain a building complex but would lose almost 90 percent of its acreage. The Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory in California, established in 1952 at the urging of physicist Edward Teller, father of the hydrogen bomb, and now surrounded by suburban sprawl, would close a test site and reduce the quantity of sensitive nuclear material it stores. That would enable its nuclear-related acreage to shrink by 90 percent. Livermore would also build a new facility for nuclear design and engineering, as well as one for research and development of high explosives.
The Pantex Plant, near Amarillo, Tex., where nuclear weapons are both assembled and disassembled, would not be as sharply affected. The plan proposes new buildings for assembly and disassembly of weapons, as well as a new

high-explosives facility. Staff reductions at Pantex are projected to range between 5 and 10 percent -- less than half those projected for some other facilities in the nuclear complex.
Another facility that would not substantially change is the Savannah River plant in South Carolina, where tritium -- a key gas component of thermonuclear weapons -- is produced. A staff reduction of 5 percent or less is forecast there.
D'Agostino said agreement by Congress to eliminate funding for the next-generation Reliable Replacement Warhead program, which the Bush administration has long backed, would not affect plans for extensive modernization of the complex. The plan still faces public hearings and must go through an environmental impact review.
"We must . . . stop pouring money into an old, Cold War-era nuclear weapons complex that is too big, too expensive, and doesn't offer updated and safer ways of maintaining our nuclear stockpile," D'Agostino said. He added that he has already discussed the plan on Capitol Hill and believes it could be carried out without substantial changes to the NNSA budget.
http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/12/18/AR2007121801253.html

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New York Times
December 19, 2007

Russia And Poland To Discuss U.S. Missile Shield

By Judy Dempsey
BERLIN — Signaling a thaw in relations that had chilled under the previous Polish government, Russia and Poland said Tuesday that they would hold consultations over plans by the United States to deploy elements of a missile-defense system in Eastern Europe.
The announcement in Moscow was welcomed by the NATO military alliance, which supports talks between the countries.
“NATO would certainly welcome the greatest possible bilateral consultations on the issue of the U.S. missile defense proposal, and not just in the NATO context,” said James Appathurai, an alliance spokesman. “We need to lower the temperature on this issue and move to common ground.”
In Moscow, Sergei V. Yastrzhembsky, an adviser to President Vladimir V. Putin, said the talks would be held in Warsaw early next year.
“I am happy there will be discussions over the missile defense shield,” he said. He added that the government of Jaroslaw Kaczynski, which was defeated in October by the center-right Civic Platform led by Donald Tusk, had refused to discuss the issue with Moscow.
On taking office, the Tusk government moved quickly to improve relations. Radoslaw Sikorski, the new foreign minister, held talks with his Russian counterpart, Sergey V. Lavrov, in Brussels this month at a meeting of NATO foreign ministers. Both agreed to start consultations over the antiballistic-missile shield, according to the Polish Foreign Ministry.
Russia has taken a tough stance against the American plan to deploy missile interceptors in Poland and a radar system in the Czech Republic, saying it would undermine Russia’s national security — a concern Warsaw, Prague and Washington have repeatedly dismissed. They maintain that the system was conceived to protect Europe from attacks by so-called rogue states.
This month, Russia backed out of the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe in part because of Moscow’s opposition to the missile shield.
http://www.nytimes.com/2007/12/19/world/europe/19shield.html?ref=world

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Baltimore Sun
December 20, 2007

Iran Hails Fuel From Russia As Building Ties

By Associated Press
TEHRAN, Iran--Iran called this week's delivery by Russia of fuel for its first nuclear reactor a step in strengthening ties between the two countries and a sign of Moscow's confidence that Iran's nuclear program is peaceful.
The shipment of the nuclear fuel, which arrived Monday at Iran's Bushehr power plant paved the way for the long-delayed startup of the 1,000-megawatt light-water reactor in 2008.

Iran is hoping the shipment signals Russian willingness to prevent the United Nations from imposing new sanctions against it over Tehran's refusal to halt uranium enrichment, as sought by Washington. Russia is one of the five veto-wielding permanent members of the U.N. Security Council.
"With nuclear fuel shipped to Bushehr, we are going to see a new approach in deepening strategic relations with Russia in all fields in the future," Mohammad Saeedi, deputy head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran told the official IRNA news agency yesterday.
http://www.baltimoresun.com/news/nation/bal-te.iran20dec20,0,5081884.story

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Washington Post
December 20, 2007
Pg. 29

A Nuclear Site Is Breached

South African Attack Should Sound Alarms

By Micah Zenko

An underreported attack on a South African nuclear facility last month demonstrates the high risk of theft of nuclear materials by terrorists or criminals. Such a crime could have grave national security implications for the United States or any of the dozens of countries where nuclear materials are held in various states of security.
Shortly after midnight on Nov. 8, four armed men broke into the Pelindaba nuclear facility 18 miles west of Pretoria, a site where hundreds of kilograms of weapons-grade uranium are stored. According to the South African Nuclear Energy Corp., the state-owned entity that runs the Pelindaba facility, these four "technically sophisticated criminals" deactivated several layers of security, including a 10,000-volt electrical fence, suggesting insider knowledge of the system. Though their images were captured on closed-circuit television, they were not detected by security officers because nobody was monitoring the cameras at the time.
So, undetected, the four men spent 45 minutes inside one of South Africa's most heavily guarded "national key points" -- defined by the government as "any place or area that is so important that its loss, damage, disruption or immobilization may prejudice the Republic."
Eventually, the attackers broke into the emergency control center in the middle of the facility, stole a computer (which was ultimately left behind) and breached an electronically sealed control room. After a brief struggle, they shot Anton Gerber, an off-duty emergency services officer. Gerber later explained that he was hanging around because he believed (reasonably, in retrospect) that his fiancÂ¿e -- a site supervisor -- was not safe at work.
Although badly injured, Gerber triggered the alarm, setting off sirens and lights and alerting police stationed a few miles away.
Nevertheless, the four escaped, leaving the facility the same way they broke in.
Amazingly, at the same time those four men entered Pelindaba from its eastern perimeter, a separate group of intruders failed in an attempt to break in from the west. The timing suggests a coordinated attack against a facility that contains an estimated 25 bombs' worth of weapons-grade nuclear material. On Nov. 16, local police arrested three suspects, ranging in age from 17 to 28, in connection with this incident.
In response to the successful attack, the South African Nuclear Energy Corp. suspended six Pelindaba security personnel, including the general manager of security, and promised an "internal investigation which will cover culpability, negligence and improvements of Security Systems." It should be noted that Pelindaba's security was considered to have been upgraded after a break-in there two years ago (one individual was detained shortly after breaching the security fence).
It is still unclear why the two groups of intruders sought to break into this particular facility. More important, however, is that had the armed attackers succeeded in penetrating the site's highly enriched uranium storage vault, where the weapons-grade nuclear material is believed to be held, they could have carried away the ingredients for the world's first terrorist nuclear bomb.
As this incident shows, nuclear terrorism is a global issue, extending far beyond the familiar policy talking points of U.S. cooperation with Russia over its nuclear stockpiles, the security of Pakistan's nuclear arsenal in the face of threats from Islamic extremists, and concerns that if Iran acquires nuclear capabilities it could provide a bomb to sympathetic terrorist organizations.
Indeed, the essential ingredients required for making a nuclear weapon exist in more than 40 countries, in facilities with differing levels of security. Unfortunately, there are still no binding global standards on how to secure nuclear weapons and weapons-grade nuclear material. In the absence of sustained political leadership from the world's nuclear powers to develop, agree to and implement effective nuclear security standards, armed attacks such as the one at Pelindaba could become commonplace.

Micah Zenko is a research associate in the project on Managing the Atom at Harvard University's Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs. The views expressed here are solely those of the author.
http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/12/19/AR2007121901857.html

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Washington Times
December 20, 2007
Pg. 15

Vetting The Iran NIE

By James Lyons

The recently released National Intelligence Estimate (NIE) on Iran's nuclear weapon program not only left many questions unanswered but left our friends and allies caught offbase and confused. I am sure they wonder how they are to support efforts for more stringent sanctions against Iran's enrichment program.

Let's not forget that Iran's drive to achieve the enrichment of uranium is the key element in its efforts to attain a nuclear weapons program. However, the NIE has had the reverse effect. Russia has now announced it intends to complete construction of the nuclear power plant. And with China moving rapidly to expand its commercial and military relations programs with Iran, any hope of stiffer sanctions coming out of the United Nations Security Council has been scuttled by our own ineptness.

Compounding the problem, there most likely will be a rush from the appeasement crowd to move forthright to see how we can establish normal relations with Iran. Let's not forget Iran is an acknowledged state-sponsor of terrorism that has declared war against the United States not once but several times over the last 28 years with no meaningful retaliatory response from us.

Iran's corrupt regime, by previously fomenting regional instability, has displayed an unwillingness to play a constructive role except on its own terms. The regime's goal is hegemony over its neighbors with the United States driven from the region. This is unacceptable.

The damage caused by the inept release of the NIE must be addressed promptly. In my view, the authors of the NIE have been very cleverly subjected to "perception management" by the Iranians. They have used perception management in a very clever way to shift the focus of the main issue from uranium enrichment to nuclear weapons warheads. Certainly, the statement by the former Iranian President Hashimi Rafsanjani to a group of visiting American experts in 2005 that Iran had halted its nuclear weapons research program in 2003 was a key factor in the perception management ruse.

The NIE fails to address what state the nuclear weapon warhead had achieved in 2003. Nor does it address whether it has been restarted. It is stressed that the "new evidence" supporting the conclusion Iran halted its nuclear weapons development program was subjected to "Red Team" analysis. This is supposed to somehow raise our comfort level. We need to ask, "Who were the members of the DNI Red Team?" If they came within the DNI (Office of the Director of National Intelligence) structure, their credibility is suspect.

A commission needs to be formed immediately to examine in detail all the intelligence gathered that formed the basis for the NIE's conclusions. The commission also must examine, in a comprehensive but time-constrained review, how the DNI's Red Team challenged the conclusions of the NIE and what the Red Team's findings were.

The fact that Iran has accelerated its work on uranium enrichment with more than 3,000 centrifuges at its Natanz site is a key factor in its drive to attain a nuclear weapon capability that cannot be ignored. They are continuing work on a range of technical capabilities that could have dual use for producing nuclear weapons.

With Iran's track record over the last 28 years for supporting terrorist operations throughout the Middle East plus its current support of the insurgency in Iraq, we cannot afford to be wrong on Iran's nuclear weapons program.

James Lyons, U.S. Navy retired admiral, was commander in chief of the U.S. Pacific Fleet, senior U.S. military representative to the United Nations, and deputy chief of naval operations, where he was principal adviser on all Joint Chiefs of Staff matters.

http://www.washingtontimes.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20071220/COMMENTARY/751807330

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Baltimore Sun
December 21, 2007

Battelle Team Wins $333 Million Pentagon Pact

By Allison Connolly, Sun reporter

A team lead by Battelle Memorial Institute has won a five-year, $333 million Defense Department contract to provide biological and chemical detection support at Aberdeen Proving Ground and 11 other hubs around the world. Battelle will administer the program from Aberdeen.
The Columbus, Ohio, institute manages or co-manages seven national laboratories for the Department of Homeland Security and the Department of Energy. Battelle has been expanding in Harford County, where it has had offices for 20 years.
Half of its 400 employees in Maryland work at Aberdeen Proving Ground, an Army testing and training facility. As a result of this contract, Battelle and its team will add about 25 jobs in Maryland and another 125 around the world.
Battelle's team includes Lockheed Martin Corp., of Bethesda, as well as General Dynamics Corp., Analogic Corp., Sentel Corp., Advint, and SESI.
The contract consolidates several existing ones held by Battelle and its team members and adds new work, said Mike Janus, vice president of the company's systems integration product line. The contract covers such services as chemical and biological detection, medical support and information technology.
One of Battelle's main research and development centers is the Battelle Eastern Science and Technology Center, which opened in 2003 across from Ripken Stadium in Aberdeen. The company plans to double the size of the $20 million, 78,000 square-foot building and employ as many as 1,000 there.
Last month the company won a 10-year, $257 million contract from the National Institutes of Health to operate a biological defense laboratory at Fort Detrick in Frederick County.
http://www.baltimoresun.com/business/bal-bz.batelle21dec21,0,593272.story

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Washington Post
December 21, 2007
Pg. 25

Uranium Traces Found On N. Korean Tubes

Discovery Appears to Clash With Pyongyang's Denial of Secret Nuclear Program

By Glenn Kessler, Washington Post Staff Writer

U.S. scientists have discovered traces of enriched uranium on smelted aluminum tubing provided by North Korea, apparently contradicting Pyongyang's denial that it had a clandestine nuclear program, according to U.S. and diplomatic sources.
The United States has long pointed to North Korea's acquisition of thousands of aluminum tubes as evidence of such a program, saying the tubes could be used as the outer casing for centrifuges needed to spin hot uranium gas into the fuel for nuclear weapons. North Korea has denied that contention and, as part of a declaration on its nuclear programs due by the end of the year, recently provided the United States with a small sample to demonstrate that the tubes were used for conventional purposes.
The discovery of the uranium traces has been closely held by senior U.S. officials concerned that disclosure would expose intelligence methods and complicate the diplomatic process. North Korea has steadfastly refused to open up about its past practices, simply asserting that it is not engaged in inappropriate activities. However, the uranium finding will force U.S. negotiators to demand a detailed explanation from Pyongyang.
Ross Feinstein, spokesman for the director of national intelligence, declined to comment on the uranium discovery, as did officials at the State Department.
North Korea has made rapid progress on disabling its nuclear reactor in Yongbyon, which produces a different type of fuel: plutonium. But now U.S. officials have encountered resistance from Pyongyang on the crucial next steps in the six-nation agreement to end North Korea's nuclear ambitions. A top State Department official, Sung Kim, is in Pyongyang this week to discuss the declaration with North Korean officials.
"We expect a complete and accurate declaration from North Korea," Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice told reporters yesterday during a news conference with the Canadian foreign minister. "If we are to move forward, and if we are to move forward on all of the benefits that would come to North Korea through the successful completion of this second phase, we really must have an accurate declaration."
In addition to the possibility that the tubes acquired traces of uranium as part of an active enrichment program, sources said the tubing could have been contaminated by exposure to other equipment. Pakistan, for instance, has acknowledged providing North Korea with a sample centrifuge kit, and so the tubes might have acquired the enriched uranium from the Pakistani equipment. In 2003, inspectors from the International Atomic Energy Agency detected traces of enriched uranium at an Iranian nuclear facility and ultimately determined that the material came from Pakistani equipment provided by a nuclear smuggling network.

David Albright, a former U.N. weapons inspector and president of the Institute for Science and International Security, said the equipment did not need to be in the same room but could have picked up the uranium traces from a person who was exposed to both sets of equipment. He said that several Energy Department laboratories have highly sophisticated methods of detecting the nuclear material from items that had been thoroughly decontaminated.
"There is a real art in extracting enriched uranium from samples," Albright said. The labs can detect micrograms of enriched uranium, which he said is "way beyond what any normal radiation detector would pick up." However, he said, such minute quantities could easily have come from other sources.
Ultimately, he said, it might be possible to match up the enriched uranium discovered on the North Korean tubes with information known about the Pakistani material discovered in Iran to determine whether the enriched uranium on the tubes had been inadvertently transferred.
U.S. intelligence analysts first concluded in July 2002 that North Korea had embarked on a large-scale program to produce highly enriched uranium for use in weapons, with a key piece of evidence being North Korea's purchase of 150 tons of aluminum tubes from Russia in June 2002. The Bush administration's accusation that Pyongyang had a clandestine program led to the collapse of a 1994 agreement that had previously frozen the Yongbyon reactor.
Plutonium and highly enriched uranium provide different routes to building nuclear weapons. After the 1994 agreement fell apart, the North Koreans were able to reprocess 8,000 spent fuel rods -- which had been held in a cooling pond and monitored by U.N. inspectors -- to acquire enough plutonium for as many as 10 weapons. A uranium program would have required Pyongyang to build a facility with thousands of centrifuges to obtain the highly enriched uranium needed for a weapon.
North Korean officials have indicated to U.S. officials that any experimentation with uranium enrichment did not work out and so any materials acquired abroad were used instead for conventional purposes. But the North Koreans have refused to explain why the purchases were made in the first place, preferring to show that the materials are not being used in any illicit program, sources said.
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Missile Defense Going Global

By James T. Hackett
The Dec. 17 interception of a ballistic missile by a Japanese Aegis destroyer off the Hawaiian Island of Kauai is a milestone in the U.S.-Japan missile defense collaboration.
The Bush administration's goal of global missile defenses is becoming reality, but to effectively protect the Eastern United States defenses in Europe are needed.
For years, representatives of Japan and a number of other countries attended missile defense conferences. They regularly announced plans to study the need for missile defenses. Each year they said the same, but there was little sense of urgency and no sign of progress, except in Israel and the United States.
The United States developed the Patriot PAC-2 to stop short-range missiles just in time to defend U.S. troops and Israel in the first Gulf war. Then Israel, surrounded by enemies, developed and deployed its Arrow missile interceptor in record time.
Land-based Patriots were sent to defend U.S. forces and allies around the world, but the ABM treaty prevented the U.S. from developing either a national missile defense or ship-based defenses. The problem became critical in 1998 when North Korea launched a Taepodong missile over northern Japan. It was a blatant threat to Japan and its three stages meant it also had the potential to reach the United States. Tokyo began deploying defenses.
Japan placed 27 Patriot PAC-2 batteries around the country, put in orbit its own spy satellites, bought Aegis radar systems for six new destroyers, joined the U.S. in developing a longer-range ship-based missile interceptor, and allowed the U.S. to put an X-band radar in northern Japan. Last March, Japan began deploying more capable Patriot PAC-3s at 16 locations to protect major cities, military installations and other potential targets.
Japan also is modifying its four operational Aegis destroyers to carry SM-3 missile interceptors. The destroyer Kongo, which made the successful intercept on Monday, is the first non-U.S. ship to shoot down a ballistic missile. The U.S. Navy already has shot down 11 in 13 attempts with ship-based interceptors.
By the end of 2008 the United States will have 18 Aegis warships equipped for ballistic missile defense. Japan eventually will have six, and Australia, South Korea, Taiwan and others also likely will put missile defenses on their ships. Ship-based defenses can be coordinated with land-based defenses, including the various models of Patriots in Japan, South Korea and Taiwan, and the Terminal High Altitude Area Defense when it is ready in a few years.

Ship-based SM-3s can intercept missiles outside the atmosphere. Any that get through can be stopped inside the atmosphere by the land-based interceptors. Such defenses can both protect against North Korean missiles and reduce intimidation by China, which has nearly 1,000 missiles opposite Taiwan.

For decades the Soviet missile defenses around Moscow were the only defenses against long-range missiles anywhere. The Russians are now modernizing those defenses against the kind of missiles being developed by Iran. Even though Russia claims Iran is no threat, in August Col. Gen. Alexander Zelin, commander of the Russian air force, announced activation of the first S-400 interceptors as part of Moscow's missile defense.

Russian reports claim the S-400 can reach out 250 miles and stop missiles with ranges greater than 2,000 miles. This covers both Iran's Shahab-3 and the new solid-fuel Ashura, the development of which Tehran announced three weeks ago, claiming a range of 1,250 miles.

With the constraints of the ABM treaty removed by President Bush, the United States is putting missile defenses in Alaska and California, at U.S. bases abroad, and on ships at sea. Other countries also are developing and buying missile defenses. India, surrounded by nuclear missile-armed Russia, China and Pakistan, plans to deploy its own two-tier missile defense in a few years. On Dec. 6, India conducted a successful intercept within the atmosphere, while a year ago it killed a ballistic missile outside the atmosphere.

Proliferating missile defenses diminish the value of the nuclear-armed ballistic missile. In the Middle East, Israel is expanding its missile defenses, while Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Kuwait and Turkey have bought or are seeking to buy such defenses. In Europe, Britain and Denmark are hosting early warning radars.

The Polish and Czech governments are resisting Russian pressure and are expected to sign basing agreements early next year. Meanwhile, the threat continues to grow as Iran develops new longer-range missiles. Ship-based defenses in the Persian Gulf and Mediterranean can help, but to effectively protect the U.S. East Coast and Europe, bases in Europe are needed.

Sea-based defenses now are advancing quickly. It is time to move forward with land-based defenses in Europe.

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