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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.

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Air Force Print News Today

## **Air Force proactive in combating biological warfare**

by Staff Sgt. Monique Randolph

Secretary of the Air Force Public Affairs

4/19/2007 - **WASHINGTON (AFNEWS)** -- Air Force officials have approved a new Counter-Biological Warfare Concept of Operations and Air Force Instruction to help Air Force installations better respond to biological threats. "Until now, the Air Force hasn't had any formal guidance on how to prepare for or respond to biological attacks or large-scale biological incidents," said Col. Tom Billick, deputy director for Counterproliferation at Air Force Headquarters here.

"The idea behind the Concept of Operations, or CONOPS, was to develop a framework for thinking about a very complex, very difficult problem," the colonel said.

Biological threats can include naturally occurring diseases like influenza or deliberate biological weapon attacks from state actors or terrorist groups. These biological attacks or incidents can occur in a variety of ways, he said. "People talk about a biological, chemical or radiological threat, and it sounds so far off; it doesn't have any immediacy to it," Colonel Billick said. "Biological attacks don't just happen overseas; any area where we operate could be a high-threat area."

The 2001 anthrax attacks in the District of Columbia, New York and Florida demonstrate that U.S. interests in the continental United States are just as vulnerable as U.S. interests -- including military installations -- outside the country.

"The Air Force fights from fixed sites -- from air bases," Colonel Billick said. "Those air bases are centers of gravity for our military operations. In order for us to operate from those locations successfully, we have to be able to protect those locations as best we can. In order to prepare a base to continue to operate and do its mission in a wartime or peacetime environment, we created a concept of operations."

The CONOPS is the product of an extensive 12-month assessment of the biological warfare threat to operations at Kunsan Air Base, South Korea, conducted from May 2004 to April 2005. It outlines an approach to prepare for biological threats, to identify when a biological incident has occurred and to lessen the effects.

"(Pacific Air Forces) allowed us to work with Kunsan to develop tactics, techniques and procedures for how to deal with a biological attack," Colonel Billick said. "(We were looking for) procedures that we could apply across the Air Force. We asked the functional experts how they normally do business within the medical, maintenance, mission support and operations communities."

"Currently, most installations rely heavily on the medical community to respond to biological attacks or disease outbreaks. However, counter-biological response is a base-wide issue; a biological incident could potentially overpower an entire base," he said. "For example, implementing quarantine at an Air Force base requires support not only from the medical group, but it will also require significant support from services, security forces, logistics, civil engineers, public affairs, judge advocate and many others."

"The idea is for installations to be able to use the capabilities they already have the best way they can in the event they are faced with a biological attack or biological incident," Colonel Billick said.

Air Force Instruction 10-2604, Disease Containment Planning Guidance, is the vehicle that will assist installations in doing just that. The new AFI will help installations incorporate the CONOPS into their base plans and markedly increase preparedness against biological attacks and naturally occurring disease outbreaks.

"With the release of AFI 10-2604, installations will have six months to develop their own disease containment plans," Colonel Billick said. A comprehensive sample disease containment plan is available to assist installations in building their own plans.

"It's a matter of writing a base plan, and then exercising it to make sure it's actually implemented across the base," he said. "Ultimately, we'd like this to become part of the (inspector general) process as they go around inspecting Air Force bases. They already evaluate base capability to meet the requirements of the Counter-Chemical Warfare CONOPS. Now we're trying to do the same thing with the Counter-Biological Warfare CONOPS; to make it an integral part of the way the Air Force does business."

Full implementation of the CONOPS is expected to occur over the next two years.

For more information about the C-BW CONOPS or AFI 10-2604, visit <https://www.a3a5.hq.af.mil/a3s/a3sc>. Air Force Instruction 10-2604 is available on the e-Publishing Web site, <http://www.e-publishing.af.mil/>. [http://www.af.mil/news/story\\_print.asp?id=123049505](http://www.af.mil/news/story_print.asp?id=123049505)

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Washington Post

April 20, 2007

Pg. 27

## **Administration Moves To Expedite Indian Nuclear Talks**

By Glenn Kessler, Washington Post Staff Writer

U.S. officials, frustrated by the slow pace of negotiating final agreements with India on President Bush's deal to give it access to civil nuclear technology, have informed the Indian government that they want a major push next month to complete negotiations before the deal unravels from bureaucratic inertia and increased congressional anxiety of India's dealings with Iran.

Indian Foreign Secretary Shiv Shanker Menon will visit Washington on May 1 for a couple of days of negotiations. Undersecretary of State R. Nicholas Burns will visit India later in the month to try to wrap up the agreement.

"There is a strong sense of frustration in Washington, in the administration and in Congress, about the fact that the Indian side has progressed so slowly in this effort. We urge it to accelerate its efforts," Burns said yesterday. "The

bottom line is that we are committed to this deal. We do not question the goodwill of the Indian government, and I believe we will overcome the problems we are encountering."

Bush and Prime Minister Manmohan Singh agreed to the pact in July 2005, then agreed to an implementation plan in March 2006. Now the two sides are negotiating language to comply with a congressional bill passed last year that would permit changes in U.S. law to allow for the nuclear sales, even though India never signed the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. Many nuclear experts condemned the agreement as weakening efforts to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons, but the Bush administration billed the deal as necessary to build close relations with India.

The deal has stirred controversy in India as well, particularly from leftist parties in Singh's coalition and from India's homegrown nuclear industry, which does not want to undergo International Atomic Energy Agency inspections. U.S. officials said that India has made unrealistic demands, such as retaining the right to test nuclear weapons. The congressional bill said nuclear cooperation could be suspended if India conducted a test, and some Indian analysts argue that the congressional bill changed the nature of the deal.

The deal faces other hurdles, including approval by an international consortium that controls nuclear exports, India's reaching a separate agreement with U.N. inspectors, and then a final vote in Congress. The delays have given hope to agreement opponents, who have seized on reports of India-Iranian military cooperation and an indictment last month charging that Indian government agencies conspired to obtain secret weapons technology from U.S. companies.

"India's stealing of U.S.-controlled technology, its formal military-to-military cooperation with Iran, and its rejection of U.S. nonproliferation conditions on nuclear cooperation are what you would expect of an adversary, not a partner," said Henry D. Sokolski, executive director of the Nonproliferation Policy Education Center, a nonprofit organization.

The indictment suggested the Indian government violated a pledge made in 2004 that it would not try to avoid U.S. export control laws and regulations. The indictment listed an unnamed Indian Embassy official as an unidentified co-conspirator. An Indian Embassy spokesman has not returned calls on the matter for several weeks.

The case has raised alarms and anger in Congress, with a number of letters circulating among lawmakers to express their dismay.

"On the one hand, we have India stealing controlled U.S. missile technology, and on the other hand we have India signing a new defense agreement with Iran," said Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who is drafting a letter to Bush. "We are a wink and a nod away from U.S. missile technology winding up in Iran's possession, and the Bush administration has either failed to connect these two problems or they just don't care."

At least eight senators, led by Jon Kyl (R-Ariz.) and Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), have signed a letter to Singh that will be sent later this week calling on India to "cease all military cooperation with Iran immediately." The letter notes a recent announcement that the two nations have created a "joint defense working group" and argues that "putting greater military capabilities into the hands of an unstable regime . . . can only damage the long-term security of a responsible nation like India."

Administration officials will not discuss the indictment but argue that India is actually building closer ties with the U.S. military. "All of our allies, every single one, have diplomatic relations with Iran," said one official, speaking on condition of anonymity in order to speak more freely. "It does not have substantial military contacts with Iran."

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/04/19/AR2007041902311.html>

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Los Angeles Times

April 20, 2007

## Iran Keeps The West In A Guessing Game

*Tehran's mixed signals on its nuclear program and other issues only add to the uncertainty about its intentions.*

By Ramin Mostaghim and Louise Roug, Special to The Times

TEHRAN — Iran's president stood at the dais, scolding his nation's enemies. "The army stands against any aggressor and will cut off its hand," Mahmoud Ahmadinejad declared to the television cameras as soldiers and tanks filed by on the avenue before him.

The scene at Tehran's Army Day celebration this week was familiar. But the message was ambiguous.

Was the annual military procession a menacing exhibition of Iran's increasing power in the Middle East or simply a display of the regime's ability to defend itself against any attacker, as Ahmadinejad suggested?

Iran remains inscrutable to Western politicians and analysts who are deeply divided over Tehran's intentions in terms of its nuclear program and relationship with the West.

Mixed signals from Iranian politicians have compounded the problem. And because many Western observers can't be sure who truly wields power in Iran, they have difficulty gauging the significance of the varied rhetoric.

"When there are questions of resuming talks or relations with the U.S., there are contradictory remarks" from Iran, said Mohammed Ismael Hydari, chief editor of Khandani, a political magazine in Tehran. "But the West doesn't understand the real political weight of the people who are making the remarks."

Reading the tea leaves in Tehran might be particularly difficult for the U.S. because it has no diplomatic representation in Iran and only minimal contact with Iranian officials.

### **Who is speaking for Iran?**

"We're sort of flying blind when it comes to decision-making in Iran," said Vali Nasr of the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, Calif. "The U.S. is setting the agenda; most of the assumptions and policies are set by the U.S. But the U.S. has the least amount of contact with Iran. The one country that is in the driving seat happens to know the least."

As a consequence, it's often unclear whether it is Ahmadinejad who speaks for Iran when he thunders from the podium or whether it is Ali Larijani, the powerful but more soft-spoken secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council.

Nor is it clear whether the two Iranians see eye to eye on how to deal with the U.S. and its allies or represent factions vying for power.

Top officials here do appear united in their insistence that Iran has a right to pursue a nuclear program, which they say is aimed solely at generating electricity but which Washington fears will lead to the manufacture of nuclear weapons.

However, statements this week exemplified different political tenors in Tehran.

"No matter how much you cry and no matter what you do, you can't make this nation give up even an iota of its rights," Ahmadinejad told a gathering in Fars province, according to the Fars News Agency, with a dig at the Bush administration: "If you imagine that you can speak to the nations through the language of force and violation of laws, you are making a big mistake, because the era of empires and kingdoms has come to an end."

Larijani and others struck more conciliatory tones, saying Iran has no intention of withdrawing from the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty and is interested in talks with other nations.

Longtime observers of Iran believe that political fault lines exist between factions represented by Ahmadinejad and Larijani, who both ran for president in 2005, with the former emerging the victor. The two conservatives disagree about how to deal with the West and particularly the U.S., Iran's longtime foe and the leader of international efforts to dissuade Tehran from enriching uranium.

According to this view, Larijani, who previously has talked of rapprochement between the two nations, speaks for a more moderate faction.

"The moderates agree with the radicals that to enhance its influence Iran needs a nuclear weapons capability," Ray Takeyh, a Middle East fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations, wrote in *Foreign Affairs* magazine this month.

"But the moderates also believe in restraint. . . . They hope that by improving Tehran's relationship with Washington they can assuage U.S. concerns about Iran's nuclear development without having to abandon the program."

### **'Two dialects'**

One Iranian observer, speaking on condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the subject, said that Larijani had sought to resign several times since Ahmadinejad became president but that Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, Iran's supreme leader, did not accept his resignation.

The observer, who is closer to Ahmadinejad's faction, criticized Larijani for appearing soft during a recent standoff with Britain. The dispute followed the arrest of 15 British sailors and marines accused by Iran of crossing into its territorial waters. Larijani went on British television to emphasize his nation's desire for a diplomatic solution, and Tehran eventually released the Britons.

However, some observers inside Iran caution against reading too much into the difference in tone of rhetoric or the internal squabbling, arguing that there are no fundamental political differences between Larijani and Ahmadinejad.

"The policies are expressed in two dialects," said Behzad Norfard, another analyst in Tehran. "These two dialects are orchestrated to confuse the West and buy time to achieve the predetermined goals," which could be industrial-scale uranium enrichment, he said.

The assumption is a division of labor among the Iranian politicians: Ahmadinejad is talking to Iranians while Larijani is talking to the West.

"Regarding uranium enrichment, the difference of their wording is clear: Ahmadinejad reiterates in the domestic arena that 'uranium enrichment is our red line and we will never budge or back down,' " said Abulfazl Amoei, a political scientist in Tehran. "But Ali Larijani says, 'Everything is negotiable, even uranium enrichment.' "

Said Hydari: "If sometimes somebody says something defiant or some remarks against the U.S. and its allies, it is for domestic consumption. Except for a very tiny minority, in today's Iran nobody is interested in military confrontation with the West."

*Special correspondent Mostaghim reported from Tehran and Times staff writer Roug from Beirut.*

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New York Times

April 21, 2007

Pg. 1

## **Pentagon Invites Kremlin To Link Missile Systems**

By Thom Shanker

WASHINGTON, April 20 — The Bush administration is offering Russia a new package of incentives to drop its strong opposition to American missile defense sites in Poland and the Czech Republic, including an invitation to begin linking some American and Russian antimissile systems, according to senior administration and military officials.

The package includes American offers to cooperate on developing defense technology and to share intelligence about common threats, as well as to permit Russian officials to inspect the future missile bases.

American officials said the initiatives were proposed at least in part at the urging of European allies, and reflected an acknowledgment at the highest levels of the Bush administration that it had not been agile in dealing with Russia — and with some NATO allies — on its plan to place defensive missiles and radar in Poland and the Czech Republic. The initiatives include offers that are “deeper, more specific and concrete” than any previous proposal for cooperation from the Bush administration to the Kremlin, according to one senior official involved in planning talks with the Russians.

In military terms, the American initiative to the Russians on missile defense will include an invitation “toward fundamental integration of our systems,” said a senior military officer involved in the discussions. This concept of linking some American and Russian military systems for common missile defense would be at a level that exists in no other area of United States-Russia military relations.

The offers of cooperation will be laid out for Russian officials in the coming weeks in a series of high-level meetings being scheduled by senior American officials, in particular Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates and Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice. If those talks go well, they will continue over the summer and fall between President Bush and President Vladimir V. Putin.

Despite a series of bilateral sessions and meetings under NATO sponsorship to explain the American missile defense plan, Mr. Putin and his inner circle have expressed deep resentment about it, voicing their anger in caustic public comments that have greatly worried some close American allies in Europe.

The German government, in particular, has urged the administration to pull together the exact sort of initiative on missile defense cooperation and transparency that will be presented to Russia. The administration has also heard complaints from other allies, including France, that it must do better at managing the relationship with Russia if the United States wants allied support for the missile defense effort, American officials said.

“In the past, the Russians have not taken our offers of cooperation seriously, whether because they view them as insufficient or because they are obstinate on missile defense,” said another senior administration official involved in planning the initiatives.

“So Gates and then Rice will put their weight behind this new offer,” the official added. “We will not give Russia a veto over our program, but this goes well beyond ‘passive’ cooperation to new and active ways we can work together against common threats.”

Another senior administration official, explaining the accelerated effort to reach out to Russia on the issue, conceded: “We were a little late to the game. We should have been out there making these arguments, making the case more forcefully before people began framing the debate for us — and in false terms.”

The offer would include an invitation to open a joint effort at “research and technical development” of future missile defenses that could protect the territories of the United States and Russia, and their allies, the senior military officer said.

Beyond that, with the permission of the Polish and Czech governments, any eventual American missile defense bases on their territories would be open to Russian inspection, akin to the guarantees that Washington and Moscow negotiated to inspect each other’s missile silos to assure compliance with past arms control treaties, officials said.

“We are committed to the maximum level of transparency, not only with our citizens but with our neighbors,” said Karel Schwarzenberg, the Czech foreign minister, who was in Washington this week for talks with American officials on missile defense.

Details about the new package of invitations for Russia to cooperate on missile defense were described by civilian administration officials and military officers who said they believed that the initiative was a major step forward in calming Russian objections to the American plans.

In its proposals on missile defense, the Bush administration is asking Poland to base 10 antimissile interceptors on its territory and the Czech Republic to be host to a tracking radar. Both systems are designed to defend European territory from missile attack by Iran, but have threatened to rupture ties with Moscow and have upset some NATO allies.

Nevertheless, the Bush administration and the military are showing unusual unanimity about proceeding with missile defense, in sharp contrast to bitter internal disagreements over issues like Iraq strategy and rules for detaining and interrogating terrorism suspects.

The groundwork for upcoming talks with Russia by Mr. Gates and Ms. Rice has been laid over recent weeks by quiet but intensive travels to Moscow and NATO capitals by a group of civilian and military officials. They include the under secretary of defense for policy, Eric Edelman; two assistant secretaries of state, Daniel Fried and John Rood; Lt. Gen. Henry A. Obering III, director of the Missile Defense Agency, and his deputy, Brig. Gen. Patrick O'Reilly; and the American ambassador to NATO, Victoria Nuland.

American officials hold no illusions that the new incentives will guarantee Russia's assent to the missile defense bases in Poland and the Czech Republic, as the Kremlin's opposition to missile bases is wrapped up in domestic politics as well as its view of national security policy in Washington and its NATO allies.

To date, Russian officials have scoffed at any suggestion that Moscow's objections to American missile defense bases in former Soviet states would be eased by offers of cooperation.

"As for possible cooperation in strategic antimissile defense, honestly speaking, I see no reasons for that," said Sergei B. Ivanov, a first deputy prime minister who previously served as Russia's minister of defense, in remarks quoted by the Interfax news agency.

American officials have sought to counter Russian rebukes by pointing out that the limited missile defense system envisioned for Europe — 10 interceptors whose warheads are designed to collide with approaching missiles, and do not even carry an explosive — is numerically no threat to Moscow's vast strategic rocket force.

The proposed system, Americans say, is a prudent deterrent against a potential Iranian attack on American allies in Europe and on American forces based there.

American officials concede that part of the Russian motivation to block American missile defense is a fear that the United States, over time, might develop a bold, new "breakout" technology that could some day neuter the Russian strategic arsenal.

The concept of sharing antimissile technology with the Russians is hardly new. In fact, even when President Ronald Reagan proposed his grand plan for a leakproof missile shield under the so-called Star Wars program, he pledged that the new technology could be shared with the Kremlin in order to assure Russia that it had nothing to fear from American defenses.

The missile defense proposals for central Europe also have become a proxy issue for Russian officials who still rankle at American and NATO expansion east after the collapse of the Soviet Union.

Yet even among some officials in Poland and the Czech Republic, support for the two missile defense bases has more to do with binding the United States closer to their capitals against a future Russian threat than about deterring a future Iranian missile threat.

American officials have not announced the timetable for the coming talks. But in Moscow, Igor Ivanov, the secretary of Russia's Security Council, said that Mr. Gates was due there for Kremlin meetings on Monday and that Ms. Rice would visit in May.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2007/04/21/world/europe/21missile.html>

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Washington Post

April 22, 2007

Pg. 5

## **Congress Skeptical Of Warhead Plan**

*Lawmakers and Experts Question Necessity, Implications of a New Nuclear Weapon*

By Walter Pincus, Washington Post Staff Writer

Congressional hearings over the past several weeks have shown that the Bush administration's plan to move ahead with a new generation of nuclear warheads faces strong opposition from House and Senate members concerned that the effort lacks any strategic underpinning and could lead to a new nuclear arms race.

Experts inside and outside the government questioned moving forward with a new warhead as old ones are being refurbished and before developing bipartisan agreement on how many warheads would be needed at the end of what could be a 30-year process. Several, including former senator Sam Nunn (D-Ga.), suggested linking production of a

new warhead with U.S. ratification of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, a move the Bush administration has opposed.

Rep. David L. Hobson (R-Ohio), who originated what has become the Reliable Replacement Warhead (RRW) program, wants the number of warheads in the current U.S. stockpile declassified as "the first step for an honest dialogue on nuclear weapons." Including warheads that are deployed, inactive and in reserve, the total is assumed to be above 6,000.

"I suspect our potential adversaries know the number of U.S. nuclear warheads with much better precision than do the members of Congress," Hobson said at a recent congressional hearing. "I think I know the number," he added, "but I can't talk about it."

Sen. Pete V. Domenici (R-N.M.), the ranking minority member of the Senate Appropriations subcommittee that funds the nuclear weapons complex, said at a hearing Wednesday on the RRW program that Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates have "not been forthcoming" about their views on the issue.

Domenici, who supports the program, said he has sent letters to Rice, Gates and national security adviser Stephen J. Hadley, "urging them to take a more active role in supporting the RRW program." He told them, "You must answer critics who have argued that the RRW will lead to an arms race."

The program involves not only coordinating the design and costs of a new warhead for the Trident submarine-launched intercontinental missile, but also a multibillion-dollar plan -- called Complex 2030 by the Department of Energy -- to modernize the aging nuclear weapons facilities where warheads and bombs are designed, built and dismantled.

Rep. Peter J. Visclosky (D-Ind.), chairman of the House Appropriations subcommittee that funds the nuclear complex, said at a hearing late last month that the program is proceeding "although the administration has not announced any effort to begin a policy process to reassess our nuclear weapons policy and the future nuclear stockpile required to support that policy." He also noted that the Pentagon's Defense Science Board reported last year that there has been virtually no high-level, long-term articulation of U.S. nuclear weapons policy.

Gen. James E. Cartwright, commander of the U.S. Strategic Command, which controls the nation's nuclear weapons, said at the hearing that he would like to challenge the proposed level of 1,700 to 2,200 warheads by 2012 as possibly too high, "based on new [conventional weapons] capability, not new nuclear capability."

Former defense secretary William J. Perry, also appearing at the hearing, said current nuclear policies were developed for the Cold War and are "really not appropriate to the world we live in today." A new nuclear plan is "long overdue" and should be shared with the appropriate congressional committees, he said. It should include "not only issues about what numbers we need," Perry said, "but on what a future trajectory of those numbers in our forces should be and what kind of R&D is needed to support it."

At the same hearing, Nunn said he does not favor dismantling the U.S. nuclear arsenal, but he expressed concern about the international impact of the RRW program. Nunn, a former chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee and now chief executive of the nonprofit Nuclear Threat Initiative, told the House panel, "If Congress gives a green light to this program in our current world environment . . . I believe that this will be misunderstood by our allies, exploited by our adversaries, [and] complicate our work to prevent the spread and use of nuclear weapons."

Nunn suggested that the RRW program would be better received "in the context of a ratified test ban treaty." He cautioned that "we can't afford to do it in this atmosphere without being misperceived, not only by Russia but by many others."

Nunn quoted a recent study prepared for the Defense Department that said: "The world sees us as increasing emphasis on nuclear weapons. The world sees us as shifting from nuclear weapons for deterrence and as weapons of last resort to nuclear weapons for war-fighting roles and first use. . . . And the world sees us as blurring the difference between nuclear and conventional weapons -- use whatever fits best."

Perry said there are two "valid" arguments being made in support of the RRW program -- that it would maintain the capabilities of U.S. weapons designers and provide a new warhead that "cannot be detonated by a terror group, even if they were able to get their hands on it."

However, he said, development of the RRW program "will substantially undermine our ability to lead the international community in the fight against proliferation, which we are already in danger of losing." Noting that present U.S. nuclear weapons will retain their capabilities for 50 to 100 years, he said the program could be deferred "for many years."

At Wednesday's Senate hearing, Sen. Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.) said bipartisan agreement on the program is necessary before Congress votes to spend funds to develop the new warheads.

The chairman of the Senate Appropriations subcommittee, Sen. Byron L. Dorgan (D-N.D.), said playing a major role in funding the nation's nuclear weapons poses important questions for him, and he is unsure how he will come

out on the program. There are "serious questions to answer," he said. "The survival of this planet, I think, depends on our getting these things right."

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/04/21/AR2007042101000.html>

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www.time.com

TIME

## **A Nuclear Nightmare**

Saturday, April 21, 2007

By Michael Duffy/Washington

It isn't often that a single Senate subcommittee hearing puts on the table a half-dozen nightmarish scenarios that hardly anyone in Washington is worrying about.

Or, when it does, that hardly anyone pays attention.

But that is what quietly unfolded when former Sen. Sam Nunn, the Georgia Democrat, recently appeared for just over an hour before the Senate Armed Services subcommittee.

Nunn, now 68, left the Senate more than a decade ago and has been largely absent from the Washington scene since. But he returned a couple of weeks ago to brief his former colleagues on the progress the U.S. and Russia have been making on ridding the world of old, obsolete and unneeded nuclear warheads — a project Nunn conceived at the end of the Cold War with Indiana republican Richard Lugar and has in many ways become his life's work. Since then, the Nunn-Lugar program has dismantled and destroyed more nuclear weapons than are in the combined arsenals of China, France and Great Britain.

Still, Nunn's progress report was bleak, and that was only half of it.

He gave the U.S. and Russia a score of 5 out of 10 on making progress in eliminating nuclear materials. He said that as other nations become nuclear capable, the number drops. Progress on rounding up loose, radiological matter — non-weapons-grade material that is the stuff of dirty bombs — is even worse. He said the score drops to 4 out of 10 when it comes to destroying chemical weapons. (He happily noted that Kazakhstan, Ukraine and Belarus all destroyed their stockpiles.)

He said Moscow and Washington were much further behind in jointly working to eliminate biological weapons from their arsenals. The Russians, he explained, are not cooperating on that front and security in other nations is even harder to guarantee. On that score, he said, "I'd say we were about 1 out of 10."

But what seemed to worry Nunn most was not materials at large but procedures on the books — and specifically, the rusty warning mechanisms both nations once kept well-polished and oiled in case of an accidental nuclear launch. Nunn worries that the short time between a launch of a nuclear device from a submarine and its impact — a time span Nunn said was classified but estimated might be as brief as 5 or 10 minutes — might all but guarantee a nuclear exchange. Nunn told the Senators that both Washington and Moscow should work to jointly take their nuclear arsenals off what he called the hair trigger alert. "There is no need, 15 year after the Cold War, [for] both nations to be able [to] destroy each other within an hour or two. And for the president of Russia to have only a few very crucial minutes to decide whether a false warning is in play or whether we are really attacking — and the condition of their satellite and radars have gone down since the cold war. [They're] not as good with warning as they were. That's fundamentally against our interests because we don't want them to make a mistake." Nunn urged the Senators to press the Bush Administration to open talks with Russian to pull back both sides arsenals from their level of alert.

There was one glimmer, literally, of light amidst all the darkness. The Nunn-Lugar program has dismantled and repurposed so much weapons-grade uranium in the last decade that 50% of the fuel currently consumed by U.S. nuclear power plants is now derived from warheads which once sat atop of Warsaw Pact rockets and missiles. Since about one fifth of all electricity in the U.S. comes from nuclear power plants, Nunn added, "One out of 10 of these light bulbs right here in this room, theoretically, comes from missile material that was aimed at us during the Cold War. So we've made some progress."

<http://www.time.com/time/nation/article/0,8599,1613365,00.html>

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Los Angeles Times

April 24, 2007

## **Gates Brings Missile System Campaign To Moscow**



***The Defense secretary says he is optimistic after meeting with Putin about U.S. plans in Poland and the Czech Republic.***

By Peter Spiegel, Times Staff Writer

MOSCOW — Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates took the Bush administration's campaign to install a missile defense system in Eastern Europe to the highest levels Monday, meeting with President Vladimir V. Putin, the plan's fiercest opponent.

Gates emerged hopeful after meeting with Putin and senior Russian officials, saying the two sides had reached an agreement to set up a bilateral committee of experts to go over Russia's objections, including Putin's concern that the bases could be converted to other uses.

"We made some real headway," Gates told reporters after the daylong discussions.

Putin did not comment on the substance of the talks, but his new defense minister, Anatoly E. Serdyukov, reiterated Moscow's objections after meeting separately with Gates.

"The Russian position remains unchanged," Serdyukov said.

The Bush administration opened negotiations in January to place 10 interceptor missiles in Poland and a missile-tracking radar in the Czech Republic as the core of what would be a third site for the Pentagon's global missile-defense system.

The first two sites, which are still being tested in Alaska and central California, are aimed predominantly at defending against an attack from North Korea.

The administration says the European site would defend the United States and its North Atlantic Treaty Organization allies against any long-range Iranian missiles.

Senior U.S. military and diplomatic officials have fanned out across Europe to counter growing popular opposition to the plan. But Gates' hastily organized visit to Moscow, which will be followed by stops in Warsaw and Berlin, marks the first time a Cabinet-level official has made the trek to push the program. Russian officials said Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice also has scheduled a visit to Moscow.

Senior administration officials traveling with Gates said they recently provided Moscow with a list of five areas in which the two countries could cooperate, including working together on research and development of the system, sharing data gathered by the system's radars, and joint testing of the system's components.

Many of these proposals have been made before, and U.S. officials indicated that they had yet to get a firm response to the offer. But Gates said informal discussions showed Russia was willing to work with the United States. He said he was not discouraged by Serdyukov's reiteration of Russia's objections.

"I had the impression, frankly, that that statement was prepared before the meeting," Gates said. "There were a number of side conversations going on among the experts, senior Russian military officers and our experts that even went beyond some of the discussions at the table."

U.S. officials deny there is any new urgency to their efforts, saying the diplomatic push is tied to bilateral negotiations with Prague and Warsaw. A senior administration official traveling with Gates said the U.S. would like to strike a deal with both countries in weeks.

U.S. and Eastern European officials also acknowledged that they failed to lay the public relations groundwork needed to win over Europe.

Andrzej Karkoszka, a former senior Polish defense official, said recently that efforts to justify the missile defense system had been discouraged by the Polish government, which viewed such debate as legitimizing critics.

Russian officials have dismissed U.S. rationales for the system, arguing that Iran is years away from developing viable long-range missiles. They accuse the Bush administration of trying to gain a military foothold in the region.

U.S. officials say converting the facilities to other military uses would be difficult and expensive. One official added, however, that the United States would not allow Moscow to veto a deal with Prague and Warsaw.

"We believe the countries that emerged from the wreckage of the Soviet Union are actually sovereign countries," said the official, one of several senior administration aides traveling with Gates. "We don't believe in spheres of influence."

*Times staff writer David Holley contributed to this report.*

<http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/world/la-fg-gates24apr24,1,7858913.story?coll=la-headlines-world>

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New York Times

April 24, 2007

## **Russia Cool To U.S. Call For Cooperation On Missile Defense**

By Thom Shanker

MOSCOW, April 23 — Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates pressed the Kremlin's top leaders on Monday to accept a detailed new plan for cooperation on missile defense in Europe that he said would make Russia a full partner in the American effort by sharing information, jointly developing new technology and even combining the two countries' defensive radar systems.

The immediate answer from Russia's new defense minister, Anatoly E. Serdyukov, was a firm statement that the Kremlin had not dropped its strong opposition to American proposals for antimissile bases in Poland and the Czech Republic.

"The Russian position with respect to this issue remains unchanged," Mr. Serdyukov said in brief comments to reporters. "We do believe that deploying all the strategic elements of the ballistic missile defenses is a destabilizing factor that may have a great impact upon global and regional security."

But Mr. Gates was just as firmly undeterred as he opened an initiative by the Bush administration over several months to calm Moscow's complaints about placing American missile defenses in former Soviet states.

The United States says the bases are necessary to defend European allies and American forces based in Europe from a potential Iranian attack. Russia fears that the missile defense system is meant to deter its weapons.

During an evening news conference, Mr. Gates said he believed that Mr. Serdyukov's statement had been written before the meetings on Monday. After a full day of talks with a range of senior Kremlin leaders, Mr. Gates said he was ending his visit "on a very positive tone."

"We made some real headway in clearing up some misunderstanding about the technical characteristics of the system that are of concern to the Russians," Mr. Gates said.

"The key to this is cooperation," he added. "We would like to have the Russians as partners in this process. We would like to share information with them. We are prepared to co-locate radars with them."

A joint missile defense effort offers "some real opportunity here for both sides," Mr. Gates said. "And that involves a great deal of transparency on our part — and we are prepared to do that."

In one action growing out of the talks on Monday, the two sides agreed to order a group of Russian and American government and military experts to formally address the Kremlin's questions and concerns, Mr. Gates said.

Mr. Gates said he invited Russian officials to visit the American missile defense site in Alaska and see the nonexplosive interceptors, similar to the 10 proposed for locations in Poland. He also invited the Russians to inspect the American missile tracking radar in California, which is similar to one proposed for the Czech Republic.

Separately, senior administration officials have said that, with the permission of Poland and the Czech Republic, the Russians would also be allowed routine inspection of any eventual American missile defense bases in those countries, to help quiet Moscow's concerns that the sites could be used for offensive weapons.

The invitations for cooperation laid out for the Russians, Mr. Gates said, "went well beyond anything anybody had seen before in terms of details and scope of what we are talking about."

In addition to meeting with the defense minister, Mr. Gates also had talks with President Vladimir V. Putin and with Sergei B. Ivanov, the first deputy prime minister, who previously served as minister of defense.

Although he expressed the expected cautious optimism about the way ahead, Mr. Gates did not deny that significant gaps existed in American and Russian perceptions of the Iranian threat and, therefore, over the real purpose of the proposed missile defense sites. The Russians, Mr. Gates said, remained skeptical that Iran would have an intercontinental ballistic missile capable of reaching all of Europe in the foreseeable future.

The arrival of Mr. Gates in Moscow early Monday illustrated the importance that the Bush administration places on calming Kremlin fears about missile defense, fears that have threatened to rupture relations between the United States and Russia and have greatly worried NATO allies.

In February, Mr. Gates received a dramatic invitation for a visit, delivered by Mr. Putin at an international security conference in Munich. The Russian president gave an unexpectedly caustic analysis of American foreign policy, including a harsh critique of American missile defenses, but he concluded the address by walking across the conference hall to Mr. Gates's table and inviting the American defense secretary to come see him in Russia.

In the weeks since then, rising tensions with Moscow over missile defense had reached such levels of concern among top Bush administration officials that Mr. Gates moved his tentative visit up from the fall and, less than 48 hours after a grueling trip to Iraq, the defense secretary was back aboard his government plane for the flight to Moscow on Sunday.

Gordon D. Johndroe, the spokesman for the National Security Council, said missile defense was also discussed Monday morning in a phone call between Mr. Bush and Mr. Putin. Mr. Johndroe did not provide details, except to say the two men talked briefly about Mr. Gates's visit.

*Jim Rutenberg contributed reporting from Washington.*

<http://www.nytimes.com/2007/04/24/world/europe/24gates.html>

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Washington Post  
April 24, 2007  
Pg. 12

## **U.S. Aims To Reassure Russia On Defense Sites**

*Missile, Radar Facilities in Poland, Czech Republic Have Worried Moscow*

By Walter Pincus, Washington Post Staff Writer

Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates said yesterday in Moscow that Russian leaders appear concerned a U.S. plan to place 10 missile-defense interceptors in Poland and a radar system in the Czech Republic could pose threats to Russia, should the characteristics of the facilities change in the future.

After meetings with Russian President Vladimir Putin and Defense Minister Anatoly Serdyukov, Gates said: "The current design and current 10 interceptors, they acknowledge are not probably a threat to Russia in any way."

But, Gates added: "I think one of their concerns is . . . a few years from now, the character of these sites might change and, in fact, become a greater concern in terms of Russia's strategic security. And I think those are issues that we can address."

Gates said Putin mentioned his concerns about the forward base agreements the United States has reached with Bulgaria and Romania. And recently, other U.S. officials have publicly discussed how the missile-defense agreements with Poland and the Czech Republic will lead to deepening bilateral defense relationships with those countries.

Gates, who spent much of his CIA career analyzing intelligence about the Soviet Union, said: "I think there are some misunderstandings about some of the technical characteristics" of the radar and interceptors, and he said they could be clarified.

The U.S. plan calls for putting in Poland 10 silo-based interceptor missiles, which would carry non-explosive warheads and would occupy an area about the size of a football field. The "kill vehicles" on the interceptors are objects of about 150 pounds, designed to destroy enemy warheads at heights of 45,000 feet by hitting them at great speeds. The missile will not be tested until 2010.

In addition, Washington proposes to place a fixed midcourse radar system in the neighboring Czech Republic, possibly along with a transportable one. The system would be rebuilt from one now based in the Marshall Islands. The stated purpose of the facilities is to protect U.S. forces deployed in Europe -- as well as allies and friends -- from long- and intermediate-range missiles launched from Iran or another Middle Eastern site. The plan is to have the systems in place by 2013, two years ahead of when U.S. intelligence believes Iran could develop an intercontinental ballistic missile and a nuclear warhead to go with it.

Gates said yesterday he thinks that the Russians "are skeptical" Iran would have such a weapon, but that he told them they had to think 10 to 20 years ahead.

"Based on my own experience in the intelligence world," Gates told U.S. and Russian reporters, "anyone who would argue that Iran or other countries in the Middle East might not have missiles with that kind of range and capabilities would be making a very risky assessment."

The defense secretary said the Russians have been invited to look at the U.S. interceptor site in Alaska and a radar system in California similar to the one planned for the Czech Republic. We "would like to have the Russians as partners in this process," he said.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/04/23/AR2007042300378.html>

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USA Today  
www.usatoday.com

## **Chlorine bombs pose new terror risk**

By Mimi Hall, USA TODAY

WASHINGTON — The Homeland Security Department is warning U.S. chemical plants and bomb squads to guard against a new form of terrorism: chlorine truck bombs.

At least five chlorine truck bombs have exploded in Iraq in recent months, killing scores of people and injuring many more after they breathed the toxic fumes. A chlorine truck blast April 6 in Ramadi killed 27 people and injured dozens more.

The Chlorine Institute, a trade group that represents more than 200 companies that make and distribute chlorine, recently alerted the FBI to several thefts or attempted thefts of 150-pound chlorine tanks from water treatment plants in California.

"This is now being used as a tactic against us in another part of the world," says Robert Stephan, Homeland Security's infrastructure protection chief. "We've got to be prepared for it." Several of the bombs made by insurgents have been found and dismantled by military and police before they were set off, says Lt. Col. Christopher Garver, U.S. military spokesman in Iraq. The 150-pound chlorine tanks typically used in the bombs are "ubiquitous across the world," Stephan says. Homeland Security officials are working with intelligence and Defense Department officials to try to prevent similar acts in the USA, he says. There is no intelligence indicating such an attack is imminent or that terrorists have stolen any chlorine from the nation's chemical or water treatment plants, which use chlorine to purify drinking water. Even so, four members of the House Homeland Security Committee, including Chairman Bennie Thompson, D-Miss., and Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., on Monday sent a letter to Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff expressing "deep concern" about chlorine thefts in California. The attacks in Iraq "make clear the reality that the terrorist risk associated with these deadly chemicals is by no means theoretical," the letter says. Stephan says department officials are briefing bomb squads, urging plants to tightly guard their chlorine supplies and sharing photographs of unexploded truck bombs with police chiefs. New federal regulations on chemical plant security are set to take effect this summer. Homeland Security teams will begin inspecting hundreds of chemical plants that make and store chlorine and other potentially deadly chemicals. Frank Reiner of the Chlorine Institute says companies "recognize their obligation" to keep chemicals secure. "True to form, terrorists are trying to manipulate a beneficial and everyday part of our lives," he says. Rick Hind of Greenpeace says the terrorists' use of chlorine, an ingredient used to make an array of products from pesticides to paper, shows that safety rules are not enough. Instead, he says, plants should switch to safer chemicals. Legislation being considered in Congress would require plants to do so. However, Hind says the government is moving too slowly. The attacks in Iraq are "ominous and chilling," Hind says, "but so is our inaction here." [http://www.usatoday.com/news/washington/2007-04-23-chlorine-truck-bomb\\_N.htm](http://www.usatoday.com/news/washington/2007-04-23-chlorine-truck-bomb_N.htm)

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New York Times  
April 25, 2007

## **Poland Ties U.S. Missile Plan To Security Pledges**

By Thom Shanker

WARSAW, April 24 — Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates was told Tuesday that the Polish government supported proposals to base 10 American missile interceptors on its soil, but only so long as Poland's security was enhanced along with that of Western Europe.

The Polish defense minister, Aleksander Szczygło, chose the words carefully in expressing his government's desire to move forward with negotiations for an American missile defense base, clearly hinting that the eventual price to the United States could be an even broader range of security guarantees.

"We came to a common conclusion that this U.S. project should first and foremost serve to increase the level of security in Europe and, in this case, specifically in Poland," he said.

The United States argues that the interceptor base under discussion for Poland and a tracking radar proposed for the Czech Republic are to counter the possibility of missiles from Iran. But some officials in both of those former Soviet bloc states make no secret that one rationale for supporting the plan is to more closely tie the United States to their security as a hedge against potential Russian pressure.

But by proceeding with negotiations over the antimissile bases, Poland in particular risks provoking even more concern from the Kremlin, of the type that Mr. Gates heard Monday and Tuesday during his visit to Moscow.

The two stops by Mr. Gates underscored how the Bush administration would have to manage difficult negotiations in the months ahead, dealing with harsh complaints from Russia and complications from other countries as it moves forward with its plans to add missile defense sites in Europe.

Mr. Gates, during a joint news conference with his Polish counterpart, said that additional layers of missile defense were under discussion within NATO, which includes the United States and Poland.

"I don't believe that Russia is a military threat to Poland, either now, or should we install missile defenses," he said.

Mr. Gates said Russian fears that missile defense sites in the region could be altered in years to come to counter Moscow's sizable nuclear missile fleet "is a matter that can be negotiated over time," and he stressed that Russia as well as NATO allies would benefit from American missile defenses.

[http://www.nytimes.com/2007/04/25/world/europe/25gates.html?\\_r=1&oref=slogin](http://www.nytimes.com/2007/04/25/world/europe/25gates.html?_r=1&oref=slogin)

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Washington Times  
April 25, 2007  
Pg. 3

## **N. Korea Making Nukes, Will Test Again, General Says**

By Bill Gertz, Washington Times

North Korea is continuing to develop nuclear weapons and will conduct additional underground blasts aimed at regional "intimidation," the commander of U.S. forces in South Korea said yesterday.

"Unless the six-party talks process prevails, we expect North Korea to continue nuclear weapons research and development to perpetuate its strategy of intimidation," Army Gen. Burwell B. Bell told the Senate Armed Services Committee.

North Korea is continuing to produce plutonium from a reactor at Yongbyon and now has produced up to 110 pounds of the radioactive material, enough for several weapons, Gen. Bell said.

Its plutonium and uranium production "places it on track to become a moderate nuclear power, potentially by the end of the decade," he said.

By developing a small nuclear warhead, North Korea "could eventually field missiles capable of striking targets within the United States homeland with nuclear weapons," Gen. Bell said.

He also warned that North Korea's record of selling missiles and arms could lead the regime to "proliferate nuclear weapons technology, expertise or material to anti-American countries, rogue regimes or non-state actors."

Both Gen. Bell and Adm. Timothy J. Keating, commander of the U.S. Pacific Command, told committee members they have doubts North Korea will follow through on its pledge to give up nuclear weapons.

"[North Korean leader] Kim Jong-il has a history of manipulating the international community in an attempt to shape the political and military environment to meet his objectives," Gen. Bell said.

Adm. Keating said the Pacific region remains peaceful, but the United States is closely watching China's military expansion and global outreach.

Asked by Sen. James H. Webb Jr., Virginia Democrat, about China's global expansion of bases and alliances, Adm. Keating said, "It is a concern of ours at Pacific Command."

U.S. alliances and bases in Asia are designed to "provide an increasingly effective hedge against what may be actual Chinese expansionist policies or, more specifically, Chinese military intentions to move beyond, as you say, just the Taiwan Straits into a blue-water capacity," Adm. Keating said.

Adm. Keating said China's test of an anti-satellite missile in January likely was intended to show that it has arms that "could be used in a time of conflict to disable some military systems that would be important to us and others."

He also said the encounter in October between a Chinese Song-class submarine and the USS Kitty Hawk aircraft carrier in the western Pacific showed "we must work to maintain our operational advantage in the face of fast-paced [Chinese navy] modernization and ever-expanding area of operations."

<http://www.washtimes.com/national/20070424-104648-6053r.htm>

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Miami Herald  
April 25, 2007

## **U.S. Reaches Out To Iran Via Back Channel**

*In what amounts to a major shift for the White House, the United States is using Switzerland as an intermediary in order to exchange diplomatic messages with Iran.*

By Warren P. Strobel and Nancy A. Youssef, McClatchy News Service

The United States has quietly increased its back-channel diplomatic contacts with Iran in recent months, a sign that those who favor engagement with Tehran have strengthened their hand in the Bush administration, according to U.S. officials.

Using Switzerland as an intermediary, American and Iranian officials have exchanged diplomatic messages on a variety of subjects, including the fate of a U.S. citizen missing in Iran, the future of five Iranian operatives whom American forces seized in Iraq, and old financial and property disputes.

### **Shift in approach**

The contacts amount to a shift for the White House, which rebuffed an Iranian offer of wide-ranging talks on Iran's nuclear program, Middle East peace and direct relations after the March 2003 U.S.-led invasion of Iraq. Instead of

engaging Iran, the White House largely shut down the Swiss channel, which both countries use in the absence of formal diplomatic relations.

"There's no doubt there's more willingness to talk now than there was a few years ago," one State Department official said.

U.S. officials, who discussed the sensitive issue only on condition of anonymity, cautioned that it doesn't amount to a secret dialogue over the biggest American-Iranian dispute: Iran's uranium-enrichment program, which U.S. officials say is intended to develop a nuclear weapon.

And it's unclear whether the change in the American approach is a long-term shift or a tactic to persuade Iran to attend a regional meeting next week about Iraq's future.

Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice is due to travel to the Egyptian Red Sea resort of Sharm el Sheik for the meeting of Iraq's neighbors and has urged Iran to send an envoy. It would be a "missed opportunity" for Iran if it didn't show up, she told the Financial Times this week.

Iran has threatened to boycott the session unless the United States releases the five Iranians seized in the northern Iraqi city of Irbil in January.

The U.S. military said the five are members of Iran's paramilitary Quds force who were arming factions to fight each other; Iran said they're diplomats. While some State Department officials favor releasing the Iranians, the White House has decided not to do so, at least for now.

In another example of U.S. outreach, Washington has enlisted Iraqi Foreign Minister Hoshyar Zebari, who has close ties with Iran, to try to persuade the Iranians to attend the meeting. Zebari, who's about to travel to Tehran, said that the United States recognized that, for the violence in Iraq to decline, Iran must be included in the discussions.

"This has nothing to do with the [nuclear] threat," Zebari said. Washington is "doing everything they can to get them to participate."

The shift in approaches toward Iran began shortly after the November midterm elections, in which voters rejected Bush's Iraq War policies and handed control of Congress to Democrats.

### **Seeking leverage**

Before ramping up its diplomacy, the Bush administration took a series of military and diplomatic steps to win more leverage against Iran, which under President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad has pursued newly assertive policies in Iraq, Lebanon and elsewhere.

Those steps included sending another American aircraft-carrier strike group to the Persian Gulf, dispatching Patriot missile defenses to Arab allies, arresting the five Iranians, and accusing Iran of arming factions in Iraq.

Some Democratic lawmakers and European diplomats had voiced alarm that Bush was contemplating airstrikes on Iran's nuclear facilities, a policy Vice President Dick Cheney and his allies are said to favor. That doesn't appear to be the dominant view in the administration right now.

After the U.S. failures in Iraq, "There is a feeling that we can't get Iran wrong," a second State Department official said.

<http://www.miamiherald.com/578/story/85703.html>

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Christian Science Monitor

April 25, 2007

Pg. 1

## **New US Missile Proposals Cause Old Adversaries To Stir**

*Russia and China appear to be worried that possible new US weapons really are aimed at them.*

By Peter Grier, Staff writer of The Christian Science Monitor

Washington -- Missile defense. Space weapons. A new nuclear warhead design.

Issues from the 1980s? Yes – and issues for today. This spring has been a time of traveling back to the future for US strategic weapons policy as old controversies return in new geopolitical contexts.

The US government says it is just trying to adapt to a new world of threats. For instance, a proposed missile defense site in Eastern Europe is meant to counter Iranian long-range missiles, according to the White House.

But America's old cold war adversaries don't see things quite the same way. Russia and China appear to be worried that the burgeoning missile-defense system and possible new US weapons – such as nonnuclear intercontinental ballistic missiles and a new nuclear Reliable Replacement Warhead – really are aimed at them.

The Russians and Chinese see these various steps "as a potential threat to their own nuclear deterrent capabilities," says Daryl Kimball, executive director of the Arms Control Association. "So the US has to look carefully at the costs and benefits of these various military systems."

Missile defense has been an item of contention between superpowers since the days of President Ronald Reagan's Strategic Defense Initiative. Soviet leaders took SDI seriously, despite the fact that its early technology often failed development tests – seeing the system as something which US technological prowess might eventually turn into a capable shield.

Today's missile defense is intended to protect against only a few incoming weapons, rather than provide a shield against massive attack. The US has erected sites in Alaska and central California, which for the most part are still being tested. The ground-based interceptors it commands are meant to protect against North Korean long-range missile development, according to the US.

The US also wants to erect a defense site in Eastern Europe, with 10 interceptors based in Poland and a radar system in the Czech Republic. But Russian leaders remain adamantly opposed to this defense site, for much the same reason cited by their Soviet predecessors.

The Russians do not worry as much about possible Iranian missile threats as do American officials. They do worry that defenses, even imperfect ones, might blunt the power of their own vast nuclear arsenal.

Secretary of Defense Robert Gates, after a visit to Moscow on April 23, said that he felt as if he had made some "headway" on this subject. He offered to work with the Russians on defense concepts and technologies, and to perhaps locate Russian and US defense radars together.

"We face new threats that require new strategies for deterrence and defense," said Mr. Gates.

But public comments by Russian officials suggested continued opposition.

"We do believe that deploying all the strategic elements of the ballistic missile defenses is a destabilizing factor that may have a great impact upon global and regional security," said Russian Defense Minister Anatoly Serdyukov.

Missile defense isn't the only new US program that Moscow opposes. Russian officials also told Gates of their concerns about a US Navy plan to replace nuclear warheads with conventional ones on some Trident sub-launched ICBMs.

Russia worries that the US launch of a conventionally tipped missile might look just like the launch of a nuclear one, forcing Moscow – or Beijing – into a rushed decision on a possible retaliatory nuclear strike.

But US officials say they need a big club such as a conventional ICBM for the same reason they need missile defense: to guard against emerging threats.

China's recent successful test of an antisatellite (ASAT) weapon, for instance, shows how vulnerable America's valuable eyes-in-the-sky may soon become. Conventional ICBMs would allow the US to quickly attack an ASAT launcher without crossing the terrible threshold of nuclear war, according to the Pentagon.

"We need to have an alternative to those nuclear weapons," said Gen. James Cartwright, head of the US Strategic Command, in March 29 Congressional testimony.

Proponents of arms control say the Chinese ASAT threat might be handled better via negotiation of a treaty to ban weapons in space. Daryl Kimball of the Arms Control Association and others point out that China has long advocated such a pact.

"We really need to come to terms with what the rules of the road are going to be, or we face a potentially destabilizing free-for-all," says Mr. Kimball.

Other experts think China's position on the ASAT ban has long aimed at banning any future US space-based weapons, while allowing ground-based ASATs such as their own.

Blinding US reconnaissance satellites is likely to be a crucial part of any Chinese military plan to seize Taiwan, says John Pike, director of GlobalSecurity.org.

"They can only win if they act quickly and we react slowly, and blinding us might get them an extra couple of days," says Pike.

Against this background, US officials are also asking Congress to fund development of the first new US nuclear warhead in years.

The Reliable Replacement Warhead is meant to be safer, more robust, and easier to manufacture than current models.

But the current arsenal is safe and reliable enough, say critics – and a new US warhead might send the wrong message to potential nuclear proliferators such as Iran and North Korea.

"If Congress gives a green light to this program in our current world environment ... I believe that this will be misunderstood by our allies, exploited by our adversaries, [and] complicate our work to prevent the spread and use of nuclear weapons," said former Sen. Sam Nunn (D) of Georgia, co-chairman of the Nuclear Threat Initiative, at a March 29 House hearing.

<http://www.csmonitor.com/2007/0425/p01s02-usmi.html>

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Los Angeles Times  
April 25, 2007

## **U.S. Nuclear Arms Policy For Future Is Ill-Defined, Panel Says**

*Scientists also warn of obstacles to creating updated bombs.*

By Ralph Vartabedian, Times Staff Writer

The United States lacks a clear policy on the future of its nuclear weapons forces, complicating an effort to develop a new generation of bombs, a group of highly influential scientists said Tuesday.

At the same time, they said, bottlenecks have developed in the weapons production system, particularly at a Texas assembly plant, that could undermine efforts to produce large numbers of new bombs or even maintain the existing stockpile.

The Energy Department is designing the first new hydrogen bomb in two decades, known as the reliable replacement warhead. But continuing the effort "would present significant challenges," according to the report, which was sponsored by the American Assn. for the Advancement of Science.

The carefully worded report provides a less than rousing endorsement for building the new bomb, said Philip Coyle, a panel member who is senior advisor to the Center for Defense Information and a former deputy director of Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory.

C. Bruce Tarter, chairman of the panel and former director of Livermore, said a "lot of work needs to be done before we can introduce something new" to the nuclear stockpile. The panel includes some of the nation's top nuclear weapons and national security experts.

The report warns that weapons labs need more intensive technical reviews of the bomb's predicted reliability, though on balance it said the bomb could be produced and certified without an actual test. Another significant warning in the report involves the decayed condition of the Energy Department's nuclear weapons production plants, particularly the Pantex plant in Texas.

"The biggest problem for the program as it exists today is Pantex," Tarter said. The sprawling plant near Amarillo dismantles retired weapons, services existing weapons and conducts testing to ensure the bombs are reliable. Guards at the high-security facility are currently on strike.

The Energy Department has a plan, called "Complex 2030," to modernize the entire nuclear weapons infrastructure, allowing the production of 125 new bombs per year.

"They don't have anything like a good estimate on the cost of '2030,' " Tarter said. "It is bound to cost a bunch of money."

Until the national security establishment can provide a sound rationale for the new bomb, credible estimates of the cost and the strong backing of the military, the program could end up lacking the political support it will need, the report suggests.

<http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/nation/la-na-nuke25apr25,1,3528940.story?coll=la-headlines-nation>

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