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New York Times  
May 17, 2007

## **Gas May Have Harmed Troops, Scientists Say**

By Ian Urbina

WASHINGTON, May 16 — Scientists working with the Defense Department have found evidence that a low-level exposure to sarin nerve gas — the kind experienced by more than 100,000 American troops in the Persian Gulf war of 1991 — could have caused lasting brain deficits in former service members.

Though the results are preliminary, the study is notable for being financed by the federal government and for being the first to make use of a detailed analysis of sarin exposure performed by the Pentagon, based on wind patterns and plume size.

The report, to be published in the June issue of the journal *NeuroToxicology*, found apparent changes in the brain's connective tissue — its so-called white matter — in soldiers exposed to the gas. The extent of the brain changes — less white matter and slightly larger brain cavities — corresponded to the extent of exposure, the study found.

Previous studies had suggested that exposure affected the brain in some neural regions, but the evidence was not convincing to many scientists. The new report is likely to revive the long-debated question of why so many troops returned from that war with unexplained physical problems. Many in the scientific community have questioned

whether the so-called gulf war illnesses have a physiological basis, and far more research will have to be done before it is known whether those illnesses can be traced to exposure to sarin. The long-term effects of sarin on the brain are still not well understood.

But several lawmakers who were briefed on the study say the Department of Veterans Affairs is now obligated to provide increased neurological care to veterans who may have been exposed.

In March 1991, a few days after the end of the gulf war, American soldiers exploded two large caches of ammunition and missiles in Khamisiyah, Iraq. Some of the missiles contained the dangerous nerve gases sarin and cyclosarin. Based on wind patterns and the size of the plume, the Department of Defense has estimated that more than 100,000 American troops may have been exposed to at least small amounts of the gases.

When the roughly 700,000 deployed troops returned home, about one in seven began experiencing a mysterious set of ailments, often called gulf war illnesses, with problems including persistent fatigue, chronic headaches, joint pain and nausea. Those symptoms persist today for more than 150,000 of them, according to the Department of Veterans Affairs, more than the number of troops exposed to the gases.

Advocates for veterans have argued for more than a decade and a half that a link exists between many of these symptoms and the exposure that occurred in Khamisiyah, but evidence has been limited.

The study, financed by the Department of Veterans Affairs and the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, is the first to use Pentagon data on potential exposure levels faced by the troops and magnetic resonance imaging to scan the brains of military personnel in the exposure zone. It found signs of brain changes that could be due to exposure, showing that troops who had been exposed at higher levels had about 5 percent less white matter than those who had little exposure.

White matter volume varies by individual, but studies have shown that significant shrinkage in adulthood can be a sign of damage.

The study was led by Roberta F. White, chairman of the department of environmental health at the Boston University School of Public Health. Dr. White and other researchers studied 26 gulf war veterans, half of whom were exposed to the gases, according to a Defense Department modeling of the likely chemical makeup and location of the plume. The researchers found that troops with greater potential exposure had less white matter.

In a companion study, the researchers also tested 140 troops believed to have experienced differing degrees of exposure to the chemical agents to check their fine motor coordination and found a direct relation between performance level and the level of potential exposure. Individuals who were potentially more exposed to the gases had a deterioration in fine motor skills, performing such tests at a level similar to people 20 years older.

Dr. White says this study and the results of research from other studies provide “converging evidence that some gulf war veterans experienced nervous system damage as a result of service, and this is an important development in explaining gulf war illnesses.”

Phil Budahn, a spokesman for the Department of Veterans Affairs, said the research required further examination. “It’s important to note that its authors describe the study as inconclusive,” Mr. Budahn said, adding, “It was based upon a small number of participants, who were not randomly chosen.”

Dr. White said she did not describe her study as inconclusive, though she said it would be accurate to call it preliminary.

Lea Steele, a Kansas State University epidemiologist and the scientific director of the veterans department’s advisory committee on gulf war illnesses, said she thought the study was extremely important. Dr. Steele said that gulf war illnesses had been described by their symptoms, but that until now scientists had struggled to find physiological conditions that corresponded with those symptoms.

But the new research, Dr. Steele said, used previously nonexistent brain scanning technology to, essentially, “look into the brain to evaluate the difficult-to-characterize problems affecting gulf war veterans.”

Thus, she said, it is “the first to demonstrate objective indicators of pathology in association with possible low-level sarin-cyclosarin exposures.”

Dr. Daniel J. Clauw, professor of medicine and director of the Chronic Pain and Fatigue Research Center at the University of Michigan, said that while the study indicated that the veterans had not imagined their illnesses, more research was needed.

“Future studies need to compare the results of brain scans of gulf war veterans with individuals with chronic pain and other symptoms who were not deployed to the gulf war before concluding that any changes are due to wartime exposures,” Dr. Clauw said.

For more than five years after the explosions at Khamisiyah, the Pentagon denied that any American military personnel had been exposed to nerve gas. Confronted by new evidence in 1996 and 1997, it acknowledged that up to 100,000 troops might have been in the path of the plume and exposed to low-level doses that produced no immediate effect. In 2002, it released a report saying the exposures had been too low to have caused a long-term adverse effect on health.

Now, the government is straining to handle the health and rehabilitation needs of soldiers returning from the current wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, and lawmakers say they are concerned that veterans facilities will soon need to provide brain scans and treatment to soldiers from the 1991 war who learn of the new research.

On May 2, after learning about the research, Senators Patty Murray, Democrat of Washington, and Christopher S. Bond, Republican of Missouri, wrote the Defense and Veterans Affairs Departments, asking about their plans for outreach and expanded benefits for exposed troops.

The new research, the senators wrote, finally provides "comfort to the thousands of gulf war veterans who have fought for answers and now know that there is a 'significant association' between gulf war illnesses and nerve agent exposure in Khamisiyah, Iraq, in 1991."

The Pentagon has not decided whether to inform veterans about the possibility of a link between exposure and brain damage.

Dr. Michael E. Kilpatrick, deputy director of the Force Health Protection and Readiness Initiative at the Defense Department, said that while Dr. White's study represented an important finding, he did not believe that his department would send letters to potentially exposed veterans alerting them of it.

The impact of the study was limited, Dr. Kilpatrick said, because it did not establish a direct causal connection between sarin exposure and gulf war illnesses, and it depended on Defense Department data that was at best an estimate and at worst a guesstimate of exposure levels by troops.

"But I'm sure we will be talking with members of Congress about it in deciding how to go forward," said Dr. Kilpatrick, who has handled much of the department's work on Khamisiyah and troop health issues.

In 2005, the Pentagon notified about 100,000 gulf war veterans who had been exposed that a study showed a link between brain cancer and gas exposure. Ms. Murray said the Pentagon needed to send similar letters about the new research, expressing concern that many veterans might not know that something might be wrong with them.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2007/05/17/us/17sarin.html>

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Omaha World-Herald

May 15, 2007

Pg. 1

## **U.S. Missile Defense System Under Fire**

*The StratCom-led program, costing \$9 billion a year, tries to deflect allegations that the costs aren't justified.*

By Tim Elfrink, World-Herald Staff Writer

SCHRIEVER AIR FORCE BASE, Colo. -- With a price tag around \$9 billion a year, the U.S. missile defense system is the nation's most expensive weapons program -- and one of the most complex projects ever conceived. Military officials envision a virtual shield enveloping the United States and European allies, protecting from long-range strikes by Iran, North Korea or other potentially hostile nations.

If the system works, a global net of radar -- based on satellites, ships and floating ocean platforms -- could detect enemy launches and quickly trigger an arsenal of interceptor missiles in California and Alaska.

The interceptors would hit enemy missiles midair, knocking them harmlessly out of the sky.

From a tightly guarded high-tech control room at this small base in the shadows of Pikes Peak, U.S. Strategic Command spearheads the task of making the system work.

Some in Congress and the academic realm charge that taxpayers are pouring billions into an unproved system, guarding against a peril that doesn't really exist.

But with potential threats posed by nations such as North Korea and Iran, which someday could be capable of launching nuclear weapons, StratCom officials say the considerable cost and effort are justified.

"We just saw 15 British sailors held hostage by Iran. What if (Iran) had a nuclear-tipped (ballistic) missile?" asked Lt. Gen. Kevin Campbell, chief of StratCom's missile defense command.

"They could hold an entire European city hostage if they wanted. It makes sense, based on where they're headed, that we want to have an answer to that particular challenge," he said.

A recent Government Accountability Office report concluded that it was impossible to predict whether the system would work "because too few tests have been completed to have confidence in the models and simulations used to predict performance."

The House Armed Services Committee last week cut \$764 million from the program's 2008 budget, criticizing it for taking "efforts and resources away from the real threats facing our homeland."

"We all seem to agree that nuclear terrorism is the biggest international threat right now, and no one thinks terrorists would deliver a nuclear weapon with a missile," said Matt Martin, an expert on missile defense at the Stanley Foundation, a nonpartisan think tank in Iowa.

"If the real threat is someone coming across the border in a van with a crude nuclear weapon in the back . . . why aren't we paying more attention to diverting that effort?" he asked.

StratCom took responsibility for the missile defense system in 2002, after it merged with the U.S. Space Command and absorbed a host of new missions beyond its traditional role at the head of U.S. nuclear forces.

StratCom's task is to integrate a variety of independently operated systems into a coherent, interconnected shield against missile attacks:

The Navy has shorter-range interceptors and radar on its ships.

The Army has Patriot missiles on the ground overseas.

The Air Force has radar systems on satellites.

In California and Alaska, the Army operates 17 long-range interceptors.

StratCom's job is to integrate all those separate pieces into a responsive, effective system.

"Our job is to look at the system from a different angle . . . to try to prevent gaps in the seams between all these agencies and services," said Col. Ken Cox, director of operations for StratCom's missile defense command.

Schriever is the nerve center for missile defense efforts.

Its control room, called the Battle Update Center, includes video projections on the front wall showing specific missile defense assets worldwide, computer systems linked to other commanders and secure phone lines and video links.

When North Korea unexpectedly tested long-range missiles over the Sea of Japan last year, StratCom used this room to bring all parts of the missile defense system to alert.

The experience proved that the loosely connected assets were closer to operating like a unified system, officials said. By tracking North Korea's missiles in the air, the system already has helped deter North Korea from pursuing its missile program, officials said.

"It is not lost on our adversaries when we conduct the tests we're conducting. We want them to realize the path they're on is a very expensive one, and the results they hope to realize might not be there," Campbell said.

Officials admit, however, that the system's missile interceptors are still early in their development. The interceptors in California did successfully shoot down a test missile launched from Alaska earlier this year, but some experts say that test was far from a real-world simulation.

A true attack could include a barrage of many missiles, plus decoys designed to confuse radar.

"Some people are still startled to hear it, but the hardware being deployed in Alaska and California has no demonstrated capability to defend us against an enemy attack," said Philip Coyle, a former assistant secretary of defense.

During a recent hearing before the Senate Armed Services Committee, StratCom officials defended the system's relatively simple test runs.

"There's nothing that says that we may not be faced with simple threats in the near term from the rogue nations we're gearing the system for," said Lt. Gen. Henry Obering III, director of the Missile Defense Agency. The Defense Department agency is the successor to the Strategic Defense Initiative Organization.

"(Some say) if it can't handle complex countermeasures, it's not worth deploying, and frankly, we don't agree with that."

Sen. Ben Nelson, D-Neb., an Armed Services Committee member, has concerns about the system's viability, but said it could play an important role.

"I don't want America to have a false sense of security with these defense missiles on the ground that may not actually work to knock enemy missiles out of the sky," Nelson said. "I do think a robust program is important, but we have to remember it's just one piece of the puzzle on homeland defense."

[http://www.omaha.com/index.php?u\\_page=2798&u\\_sid=2383887](http://www.omaha.com/index.php?u_page=2798&u_sid=2383887)

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Boston Globe

May 17, 2007

## **Iran Leader Takes Hard Line In Backing Talks With US**

By Nasser Karimi, Associated Press

TEHRAN -- Iran's supreme leader gave his backing yesterday to US-Iran talks about Iraq's security. But he took a tough line, insisting the meeting would deal only with fixing American policies in Iraq, not changing Iran's.

Ayatollah Ali Khamenei's harsh tone appeared aimed at quieting criticism by hard-liners over the planned meeting in Baghdad with the United States and signaled that it's unlikely the talks would make progress in reducing tensions between Washington and Tehran. The Iraqi government has been seeking the talks, hoping the two sides can find a way to ease Iraq's turmoil.

Khamenei said Iran agreed to the "face-to-face negotiation" to "remind the US of its responsibilities and duties regarding security" and "give them an ultimatum." He did not specify what the ultimatum was. "The talks will only be about the responsibilities of the occupiers in Iraq," he said during a speech to a group of clerics in Mashhad, a city about 620 miles northeast of Tehran, according to state-run television. Iran has called for US troops to withdraw from Iraq, blaming their presence for the country's bloodshed. Washington accuses Iran of arming and financing militants in Iraq, a claim Tehran denies. No date has been set for the ambassador-level meeting, although the US has said it would take place in a few weeks. The agreement to hold the talks is seen as a political turnabout, but there has been no sign the two sides will back down in the disputes fueling tensions between them. The two countries are also in a standoff over Tehran's nuclear program. Vice President Dick Cheney warned Iran last week during a visit to the Gulf that the US and its allies would prevent the country from developing nuclear weapons and dominating the region. Iran denies seeking to build nuclear weapons and accuses the US of trying to topple its government. Hard-liners in the cleric-led government have long rejected opening contacts with the country they consider Iran's top enemy. Khamenei underlined that regardless of the Baghdad meeting, Iran maintains its basic stance. "They think the Islamic Republic has changed its firm, logical and defensible policy in rejecting negotiation with the US. They are wrong," he said. "How is it possible to negotiate with the arrogant, bullying, expansionist and colonialist government of the US?" [http://www.boston.com/news/world/middleeast/articles/2007/05/17/iran\\_leader\\_takes\\_hard\\_line\\_in\\_backing\\_talks\\_with\\_us/](http://www.boston.com/news/world/middleeast/articles/2007/05/17/iran_leader_takes_hard_line_in_backing_talks_with_us/)

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New York Times  
May 17, 2007

## **A Defense We Just Don't Need (Yet)**

By Michael O'Hanlon

Washington -- As we all know, there is such a thing as a good idea whose time has not yet come. This adage can hold even for presidents of the United States.

A case in point is the American proposal to establish a new ballistic missile defense site in Poland and the Czech Republic. The system — which would complement the one established in recent years in California and Alaska — is intended primarily to protect Europe and America from a missile launched from the Middle East. It is in principle a worthy idea, but the military benefits in the short term are not worth the worsening of relations with Russia that it has already engendered.

Rather than push the idea now, when the threat of long-range missiles from the Middle East is hardly acute, it would be better to allow a new American president and a new Russian president — Vladimir Putin is barred by his country's Constitution from running again next year — to reconsider the subject in 2009 or 2010.

As planned, the system would consist of a single radar on Czech soil and just 10 interceptor missiles in Poland. Despite its modest size, the proposal is quickly becoming the European security debate of the day. The United States is trying to convince Russia that it does not seek to rekindle the cold war, offering to give the Russian intelligence services detailed briefings on the system's capabilities and to share with Moscow any early warning data we received from it.

Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice tried to make the sale in Moscow on Tuesday, but Russia remains resistant. Mr. Putin has even threatened to suspend his nation's compliance with the Conventional Forces in Europe treaty if the United States goes ahead with its plans.

Many NATO states support the general idea of a missile defense system. Yet they have wondered why Washington has decided to pursue this plan primarily as a two-track process with only Poland and the Czech Republic — two new, modest-sized members of the alliance — given its broader significance for NATO as a whole.

A bigger question may be why the United States is in such a hurry to get this system going, especially given its inherent limitations. The 10 interceptor missiles could in theory intercept only 10 warheads, and in all probability would do well to destroy a couple. Given the short amount of time available to destroy a missile launched from the Middle East — likely no more than 20 minutes — we would probably have to fire several of the missiles at once to destroy a single warhead, as there would be no time to wait and see if an initial interceptor hit its mark.

In addition, we all know the problems the military has had in testing missiles for the Pacific missile shield, and the interceptors to be used in Central Europe are going to operate in part on a different, even less-proven technology.

True, the flip side of the weaknesses of the antimissile system is that Russia's objections to it are without serious strategic merit. Russia has several thousand ballistic missiles; thus in the unthinkable event of a nuclear war between it and the West, the Central European defense system would be like using a fly swatter against a bazooka. (Not to mention that Russia could do what a rogue regime might not have the technology to accomplish, deploying countermeasures that could make the small system entirely useless. For example, the antimissile program might well be fooled by missiles that release several decoys after they leave the atmosphere.)

But the fact of the matter is that Russia does object to the plan, many European allies are nervous, and the whole idea could reinforce the global image of the United States as a hypermilitarized, go-it-alone superpower. Any major decision to build a new defense system needs to recognize this perception and factor it into the strategic and diplomatic calculus.

Common sense dictates that there is no need to rush ahead just so that we can start to build the system on European soil in the last 20 months of George W. Bush's presidency. If the president wants to make creating a third missile defense site part of his legacy, he can still contribute — by setting up a formal NATO process to study the idea and give our allies a greater voice in the debate. Not only would this calm their concerns, it would give the Pentagon more time to design and test the interceptors.

We should also involve Russia in the discussion. No, Moscow should not have a veto. But its perspective does matter, especially as good diplomacy might be able to turn it into a supporter rather than an opponent of the plan. Just because Mr. Putin has been unswayable on the subject doesn't mean his successor will also be unreasonable. The next president, Republican or Democrat, will carry far less baggage than Mr. Bush, and may have an easier time making the final sale on missile defense to the Europeans. Given the gradual pace at which any threat is materializing and the relative slowness with which our technology is advancing, this is clearly a matter where haste makes waste. Most important, we must bear in mind that, as Secretary of Defense Robert Gates reminded Mr. Putin this winter, "One cold war was quite enough."

*Michael O'Hanlon, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, is the co-author of "Hard Power: The New Politics of National Security."*

<http://www.nytimes.com/2007/05/17/opinion/17ohanlon.html>

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Washington Times

May 18, 2007

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## **Envoy Eyes Visit To N. Korea**

### ***New talks await reactor closure***

By Nicholas Kravev, Washington Times

Senior negotiators in the six-party talks with North Korea -- including U.S. representative Christopher R. Hill -- are considering a visit to Pyongyang soon after it shuts down its Yongbyon nuclear reactor, diplomats said yesterday. Although no trip has been scheduled, they said, the visit would take place in conjunction with the next round of six-party talks in Beijing, probably next month.

The North Koreans are delaying Yongbyon's closure until they receive \$25 million that was frozen in a Macao bank in 2005. An American bank, Wachovia, said yesterday that it had agreed to accept the transfer pending regulatory approval.

"There are no [concrete] plans for a trip to Pyongyang at this time," a U.S. official said. "But at some point, after the North Koreans shut Yongbyon down, the Chinese will call a six-party meeting, and if [the delegates] decide to go to Pyongyang, they will go to Pyongyang."

Any visit to the North Korean capital by an American official is rare and could be used by officials there to further their pursuit of international legitimacy.

Mr. Hill, the U.S. negotiator, told The Washington Times last year that he would not rule out a visit to Pyongyang but said he would not go while the Yongbyon reactor was operating.

"We would consider a trip if it would serve our interest to do so," he said. "But our concern is that North Korea is continuing to run a nuclear reactor whose purpose is to make bombs and to be talking to them while they are making bombs doesn't appear to be in our interest."

As part of a deal concluded in February with the United States, China, Japan, South Korea and Russia, the North agreed to close and seal the reactor by April 14.

Washington, in turn, promised to "resolve" the financial issue. But even though it allowed Macao's Banco Delta Asia to release the money, the North Koreans said they would do nothing until the funds are transferred safely to an account in a third country.

The State Department spent weeks trying to find a bank anywhere in the world, beginning with China, but none agreed to accept the \$25 million, which the Treasury Department has labeled "dirty" because of links to money laundering. The Treasury had barred U.S. financial institutions from dealing with Banco Delta Asia.

The Washington Times reported last week that the State Department found an American bank that was willing to accept the funds.

Wachovia acknowledged yesterday that it had agreed to accept the funds and would be "fully compliant with all U.S. government-imposed sanctions involving North Korea."

"We take any request for assistance from our government seriously and endeavor to cooperate whenever possible," said spokeswoman Christy Phillips-Brown. "Wachovia complies with all laws and regulations and would not agree to any request without appropriate approvals from our regulators."

In her statement, she referred to "an interbank transfer of funds held at other banks." Asked whether the money would be coming from banks other than Banco Delta Asia, she declined to comment. Diplomats said Banco Delta Asia was the only bank involved in the transaction.

State Department officials said they are trying to sort out all the legal issues under the USA Patriot Act associated with transferring North Korean money linked to terrorism financing to a U.S. bank.

Officials said Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and Treasury Secretary Henry M. Paulson Jr. made the decision, which in effect provides North Korea -- labeled a state-sponsor of terrorism -- full access to the international financial system.

Miss Rice's purpose, they said, was to remove what Pyongyang says is the only remaining obstacle to shutting down Yongbyon. Mr. Paulson is said to have agreed with Miss Rice because he does not want to risk his good relations with Chinese officials.

Mr. Hill told the Korea Society in New York this week that Washington would not let the \$25 million stand in the way of the nuclear deal.

<http://www.washtimes.com/world/20070518-120159-2048r.htm>

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Arizona Daily Star (Tucson)

May 19, 2007

## **Man With Software In Iran Says He Was Just Showing Off**

By Associated Press

PHOENIX — A former engineer at the nation's largest nuclear power plant who's accused of taking software back to his native Iran claims he was only trying to show off for his family and friends.

Mohammad Alavi, 49, also told FBI agents that he moved to Iran to be closer to his family and was about to start a job with an electric-motor company there.

He also said the laptop computer containing the software is still in a closet at his mother's house in Tehran, according to records obtained by The Arizona Republic.

Alavi, an Iranian native who lived in the United States as a naturalized citizen for 30 years, is being held without bail in Arizona.

He has been charged with a single count of violating a trade embargo with Iran. If convicted, he would face 18 to 21 months in prison. Trial is set for July 3.

Alavi worked at the Palo Verde Nuclear Generating Station west of Phoenix for 16 years until August, when he resigned and moved to Tehran.

He was arrested on April 8 as he stepped off a plane in Los Angeles. He had returned to the United States with his wife for the birth of their first child.

Alavi's attorney said his client wasn't the only Palo Verde employee to download the details of control rooms, reactors and designs as part of a software training package onto a personal laptop and take it home. Palo Verde officials confirm that employees were encouraged to download the software and work on it at home.

APS did not know Alavi had left the country with the information until the Maryland software manufacturer reported attempts had been made to access the Palo Verde training system from an address in Tehran.

<http://www.azstarnet.com/allheadlines/183817.php>

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Washington Times

May 22, 2007

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## **Bush Reassures Putin On Missile Shield Plan**

*NATO chief agrees threats must be faced*

By Joseph Curl, Washington Times

President Bush yesterday sought to placate Moscow over a planned U.S. missile defense system in the heart of Europe, vowing to convince Russian President Vladimir Putin "that this missile shield is not directed at them."

"NATO allies and other nations recognize the threat we face from ballistic missiles launched by a rogue state," the president said from his ranch near Crawford, Texas, where he met over the weekend with NATO Secretary-General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer.

Mr. Bush dispatched Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates to Russia recently "to have a full and transparent conversation with President Putin and his Cabinet to make sure that the Russians understand that this missile shield is not directed at them, but in fact directed at other nations that could conceivably affect the peace of Europe," he said yesterday.

Mr. Putin opposes the U.S. plan for a missile-defense shield and is pressing his European allies to join his opposition. He has criticized planned U.S. military basings in the Czech Republic and Poland, going so far as to compare the project to the stationing of Pershing missiles in Western Europe during the Cold War.

Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said in the Russian capital last week that the United States will not permit Russia to veto its plans to build the shield.

"The United States needs to be able to move forward to use technology to defend itself and we're going to do that," Miss Rice told reporters after meeting with Mr. Putin. "I don't think that anyone expects the United States to permit somehow a veto on American security interests."

Mr. Bush departs early next month for talks in Germany, the Czech Republic and Poland. The Czech Republic and Poland have expressed support to house the shield.

The Pentagon says that missile interceptors and high-tech radar in Europe -- working in concert with a missile defense system installed in California and Alaska -- are intended to protect the United States and Europe from the threat of Iranian missiles.

"Of course, I will continue to reach out to Russia," Mr. Bush said yesterday, noting that "the secretary-general agrees that U.S. missile defense plans complement NATO efforts to keep all nations safe from attack."

"I appreciate the fact that the NATO-Russian Council is an integral part of the secretary-general's plans to make sure that Russia fully understands our intentions," the president said.

Mr. Scheffer said, "It will be now up to NATO -- and I'll try to lead NATO into that direction -- but apart from the third site and the U.S. plans, there will be a NATO system which complements, which will be bolted in the U.S. system so that everybody and everything will be covered for the long-range threats, the medium-range threats and the short-range threats -- an important element, I think."

Mr. Bush and the NATO secretary-general also discussed ongoing efforts to secure Afghanistan. The president vowed to press U.S. allies to do more to share the burden and the risks in fighting in Afghanistan as casualties rise with a resurgent Taliban.

"In order for NATO to be effective it has to transform itself into an organization that actually meets the threats that free nations face," he said. "I pledged to the secretary-general we'll work with our NATO allies to convince them that they must share more of the burden and must all share the risks in meeting our goal."

Mr. Scheffer agreed, saying, "Afghanistan is still one of the front lines in our fight against terrorism."

<http://www.washtimes.com/national/20070521-113252-1150r.htm>

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New York Times

May 23, 2007

## **Missile Test Comes As Financing Is Threatened**

By Thom Shanker

WASHINGTON, May 22 — With Congress considering cutting the Pentagon's budget for missile defenses and Europe on edge over Bush administration proposals to deploy the system to the continent, much is riding on a test scheduled in the next few days of the antimissile shield based in California and Alaska.

If the test goes well, those who favor the program may have the best chance in years to argue that it is ready to speed forward. But if it goes poorly, it most likely means more trouble is ahead for a program long criticized as being placed in the field before it was proven.

It is only the second full test of the antimissile system, which has been overhauled and delayed repeatedly over the years. This test has been delayed by software problems for about five months.



As if to lower the pressure, Pentagon and military officials tend to describe the test as just one more in a long sequence of opportunities to validate President Bush's goal of fielding limited missile defenses to shield the United States or its allies from the possibility of attack by a country like North Korea or Iran.

Barring technical glitches or bad weather, a ballistic missile is scheduled to launch from an island in Alaska early Thursday and be tracked by satellite and radar equipment on land and at sea as it arcs over the Pacific Ocean toward California. Less than 20 minutes later, an interceptor will be fired from Vandenberg Air Force Base, north of Santa Barbara, to collide with the missile and destroy it more than 100 miles above the open waters of the Pacific.

In advance of the test, skeptics in Congress have been threatening to cut the missile defense budget, and Russia has warned that relations with Washington could rupture if the United States moves ahead with plans to base interceptors and radar equipment in former Soviet states.

Just last Thursday, the House of Representatives cut more than \$764 million from the administration's proposed spending of \$8.9 billion on missile defenses in the next fiscal year. A new amount of \$205 million was added during floor debate to the House military authorization bill for antimissile projects with Israel, but that money would come from outside the Pentagon's programs for ballistic missile defense.

Representative Ellen O. Tauscher, the California Democrat who is the chairwoman of the Armed Services Subcommittee on Strategic Forces, said the House bill, among other things, deleted money for preparing proposed missile defense sites in Poland and the Czech Republic, and instead focused spending on technologies viewed as having more immediate promise.

"We want the Missile Defense Agency to deal with the near-term threats to the war-fighter, to the American people here at home, and to our European allies and deployed troops," she said. "Too much of the assets were for the future, for yet-to-be-defined science projects."

The House version protected money for three missile defense systems: the Patriot Advanced Capability 3, the Aegis and the Terminal High-Altitude Area Defense. Those all aim at warheads as they close in on their targets, rather than being designed to strike missiles in space during the middle course of their flight, which is the type of system scheduled for this week's test. Money for an experimental airborne laser was also approved.

In the Senate, the Armed Services Committee has been debating its own version of the military spending legislation this week. The House bill and what emerges from the Senate will have to be reconciled before both houses of Congress vote on the Defense Department budget for the 2008 fiscal year, and both Democrats and Republicans say the results from this next missile defense test will weigh heavily as they decide how to cast their ultimate votes on the antimissile portion of the bill.

The administration's diplomatic efforts also moved ahead this week, State Department officials said. John C. Rood, the assistant secretary of state for international security, was traveling between Warsaw and Prague for what one department official said was "the start of formal negotiations" to deploy 10 interceptors in Poland and tracking radar in the Czech Republic.

The previous major test, conducted Sept. 1, was graded a success even by skeptics. It was designed specifically to test the radar at Beale Air Force Base, near Sacramento — but the interceptor actually hit the attacking missile, even though that was not a goal of the test.

Weather is an issue this time around, with military meteorologists warning of foul weather. Safety rules require that the attacking missile be visible to monitors who can push a destruct button if it veers off course.

Richard Lehner, a spokesman for the Missile Defense Agency, said that even though a general time and location for the test would be known to operators of the interceptor, "This will be as realistic as it can be, based upon what we are allowed to do within various safety regulations."

That does not satisfy skeptics.

"The test is highly choreographed, and much simpler than what the system would face in a real battle engagement," said Frederick K. Lamb, a professor of physics and astronomy at the University of Illinois.

Professor Lamb, who conducted a missile defense study for the American Physical Society, expressed concerns that a successful test this week would be cited as proof that "the system has a substantial capability in a real battle situation. That would be a gross exaggeration."

The main engagement radar for this next test is at Beale Air Force Base, but the test will allow two seaborne tracking systems — naval radar aboard an Aegis destroyer and an X-band radar atop a mobile base the size of an oil platform — to track the attacking missile.

[http://www.nytimes.com/2007/05/23/washington/23missile.html?\\_r=1&oref=slogin](http://www.nytimes.com/2007/05/23/washington/23missile.html?_r=1&oref=slogin)

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Washington Post  
May 24, 2007  
Pg. 6

## **New Nuclear Warhead's Funding Eliminated**

By Walter Pincus, Washington Post Staff Writer

The House Appropriations subcommittee that controls the U.S. nuclear weapons complex's funding voted yesterday to eliminate all money that would have been paid for engineering and cost studies for the new nuclear warhead that the Bush administration hoped to put in production in 2012.

In taking that action, subcommittee Chairman Peter J. Visclosky (D-Pa.) said there would be funding for the Reliable Replacement Warhead (RRW) program "only when a future nuclear weapons strategy is established." In so doing, he echoed a call for such a study that was included in the fiscal 2008 Defense Authorization Bill, which passed the House last week.

Officials from the National Nuclear Security Administration, which runs the nuclear program, have said that the RRW program offers a way to build safer warheads for 30 years and perhaps lower the total stockpile, which is about 5,000. Costs and engineering studies were scheduled for completion by 2008, which would have allowed a congressional vote next year on the RRW1 -- a warhead for the submarine-launched Trident missile -- and would have permitted delivery of the first ones by 2012.

The House, in voting on the fiscal 2008 defense spending bill, already had reduced funding to complete RRW studies to \$20 million. President Bush had requested \$88 million.

The bill provides money for a year-long, bipartisan commission to reevaluate the U.S. nuclear strategic posture for the post-9/11 world and produce a study along the lines referred to in Visclosky's statement.

Rep. Ellen O. Tauscher (D-Calif.), chairman of the House Armed Services subcommittee on strategic forces, has said the panel will "help frame the debate over the future direction of our nuclear weapons program and place it in the context of related strategic consideration."

In announcing his subcommittee's action, Visclosky said, "There is a need for a comprehensive nuclear defense strategy and stockpile plan to guide transformation and downsizing of the stockpile and nuclear weapons complex." Visclosky also cited the "serious international and domestic consequences of the U.S. initiating a new nuclear weapons production activity." That issue was raised in a Jan. 6 Wall Street Journal op-ed article by former secretaries of state Henry A. Kissinger and George P. Shultz, former defense secretary William J. Perry and former senator Sam Nunn (D-Ga.).

Nunn, a former chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee and current chief executive of the nonprofit Nuclear Threat Initiative, told Visclosky's panel in March: "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 and other arms-control experts have also suggested that if the United States eventually proceeds with the RRW, it should do so only after ratifying the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, which would mean the warhead could be introduced into the U.S. stockpile without new underground testing.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/05/23/AR2007052301512.html>

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USA Today  
May 23, 2007  
Pg. 4D

## **Missile Interceptor Test Launches A Debate**

*Politics And Science Pack A Big Payload*

By Dan Vergano, USA Today

In space, a 15,000-mph collision between a missile and an interceptor rocket makes no noise. But down on Earth, a scientific and political debate is getting very loud.

Barring low clouds, a test target missile will launch today from Alaska's Kodiak Island and should encounter an interceptor rocket from Vandenberg Air Force Base in California, says U.S. Missile Defense Agency spokesman Richard Lehner.

It's a technology that scientists say won't work effectively.

Such midcourse interceptors, designed to destroy their targets in space at their trajectory's peak, already are in place in Alaska and California. A plan to place a \$3.5 billion interceptor base in Poland by 2012 has generated friction with Russian President Vladimir Putin. Missile defense will be discussed at the G-8 summit June 6-8 in Germany.

The interceptor test is part of the agency's plan to spend \$49 billion over the next five years to deploy and test missile defense technologies.

But physicists such as Frederic Lamb of the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, who co-headed a 2003 American Institute of Physics report on missile defense, are saying that midcourse interceptors are losers from a physics standpoint.

According to Lamb: Aside from the difficulty of the interceptor connecting with the missile when both are free-falling outside of the Earth's atmosphere, it will be impossible to detect a decoy missile. Atmospheric drag identifies the qualities of a missile, such as size, speed and heat. Without those signatures, a balloon, for example, would register on radar the same way a rocket would.

The test will take place about 100 miles above the Pacific Ocean, where the atmosphere is thin. Analysts consider anything above 62 miles altitude to be a region of diminished or non-existent air drag, says physicist David Wright of the Union of Concerned Scientists, a science advocacy group in Cambridge, Mass.

"Outside the Earth's atmosphere, the drag is zero on a warhead and a decoy alike," Lamb says. "This is an intractable problem. There is no signature that distinguishes a warhead that can't be cheaply counterfeited."

Lehner says by e-mail: "Critics forget that we have a variety of sensors that are extremely capable of discriminating countermeasures and decoys from lethal warheads."

Rep. Ellen Tauscher, D-Calif., chairwoman of the House Armed Services Subcommittee on Strategic Forces, says, "We've invested billions in missile defense since the 1980s." She favors more proven shorter-range missile defense systems: "It's got to be better than a science project."

[http://www.usatoday.com/tech/science/2007-05-23-missile-test\\_N.htm?csp=34](http://www.usatoday.com/tech/science/2007-05-23-missile-test_N.htm?csp=34)

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New York Times

May 24, 2007

## **U.S., Annoyed By U.N. Report On Iran And Uranium, Hopes To Use It To Widen Sanctions**

By Helene Cooper and David E. Sanger

WASHINGTON, May 23 — The Bush administration said Wednesday that it would use a new report detailing Iran's progress in enriching uranium to encourage European and Asian allies to seek a major expansion of sanctions against Tehran, an economic crackdown that could extend beyond what the United Nations Security Council has authorized.

In an interview, R. Nicholas Burns, the under secretary of state for political affairs, said the report, by the International Atomic Energy Agency, was "alarming" because it showed that earlier this month, Iran was operating 1,300 centrifuges simultaneously.

But it is unclear whether Iran can sustain that level of activity, and Mr. Burns stopped well short of endorsing the conclusion last week by Mohamed ElBaradei, the director general of the agency, that the Iranians "pretty much have the knowledge about how to enrich."

Mr. Burns sharply disagreed with Dr. ElBaradei's characterization of the current stalemate with Iran as evidence that the American-European strategy had failed, and insisted that Iran had been successfully isolated, even though it was pressing forward with uranium production.

While Dr. ElBaradei has quietly been arguing that Washington and its European allies should consider letting Iran operate a small number of centrifuges as part of a face-saving compromise that would sharply limit its nuclear activities, Mr. Burns said the United States and its allies were headed the other way: toward tougher sanctions, at the United Nations and beyond. The I.A.E.A. is a United Nations agency.

"Iran is thumbing its nose at the international community," Mr. Burns said.

American intelligence agencies are still trying to assess the significance of Iran's work on uranium enrichment, including whether the progress on centrifuges requires rethinking current estimates that Iran remains at least several years away from producing a nuclear weapon.

While the report indicated that Iran's 1,300 centrifuges were all running during a surprise inspection nine days ago, it also said that Iran had fed only 260 kilograms of uranium hexafluoride into the machines for enrichment over the past few months. Experts said that was a low amount, suggesting the centrifuges were running quite slowly, perhaps to keep them from failing.

The decision to press for tougher sanctions comes one year after the United States and five other nations made Iran an offer that it has so far refused to accept. At its core is a package of economic incentives in exchange for Iran's suspension of its enrichment program.

Mr. Bush's aides insist that even though Iran has spurned the offer for a year, they have no intention of changing course. They say they will continue to demand that Iran suspend enrichment, or face ever tougher sanctions. Within the Security Council, the United States and Britain will push, at the very least, to impose a mandatory travel ban on Iranian officials involved in the nuclear program. That ban could extend to other members of the government, administration officials said.

They also said that outside of the Security Council, the United States would push for a ban on arms sales to Iran, and would prod European countries to cut export credits to Iran.

"The Iranians need to know that we're serious about this," Mr. Burns said.

There were indications that the United States might be able to count on new support from France and its new president, Nicolas Sarkozy. He told a German monthly, Cicero, in an interview published Wednesday, "I for my part think one should not hesitate to toughen the sanctions" if Iran did not cooperate.

His predecessor, Jacques Chirac, often said he did not like to resort to sanctions, even though France supported the initial measures imposed by the Security Council in December 2006 and again two months ago.

American and European officials said they were irked by Dr. ElBaradei's recent comments, primarily in an interview with The New York Times last week, suggesting that their insistence on Iran's full suspension of nuclear activities had been overtaken by events. Dr. ElBaradei made the case that the intent of a suspension was to keep Iran from learning how to enrich nuclear fuel; now, he said, "it is simply a question of perfecting that knowledge."

American, British, French and German officials plan to lodge an official diplomatic complaint to Dr. ElBaradei about his comments, and his suggestion that they consider allowing Iran to retain some enrichment activities.

This is not the first time Dr. ElBaradei has annoyed the Bush administration. In early 2003 he declared there was no evidence that Saddam Hussein had reconstituted Iraq's nuclear weapons program, an assessment that proved correct. American officials tried to block him from winning a second term running the agency. Not long afterward, Dr. ElBaradei was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.

"Mr. ElBaradei believes that there is an imaginary line over which Iran has stepped," one European official said this week. "Well, that is not his judgment to make."

The agency's new report said that Iran had continued to limit the information available to inspectors, and that it had refused to answer longstanding questions about elements of its nuclear program. "Iran has not agreed to any of the required transparency measures, which are essential for the clarification of certain aspects of the scope and nature of its nuclear program," the report concluded.

For the six nations pressing Iran on its nuclear program, progress has been excruciatingly slow. While the United States, Britain and, to a lesser extent, France and Germany, have pushed for tough sanctions, Russia and China have balked. Both Russia and China crossed major diplomatic thresholds last summer when they agreed to seek Security Council sanctions against Iran, but both countries have also dragged their feet about actually imposing them.

Javier Solana, the European Union's foreign policy minister, will meet next week with Iran's top nuclear negotiator, Ali Larijani, in Berlin and will repeat the offer of incentives made last year, American and European diplomats said. If Iran again refuses to suspend enrichment, the six nations will begin drawing up a third Security Council sanctions resolution.

The issue is expected to be discussed at next week's Group of Eight foreign ministers meeting in Potsdam, Germany.

Further inflaming tensions with Iran, the United States has dispatched nine warships with 17,000 troops into the Persian Gulf. The Navy said the ships, including two aircraft carriers, would conduct exercises as part of a long-planned effort to reassure Arab allies of Washington's commitment to their security. Naval officials said the exercise was one of the largest assemblies of ships since 2003.

[http://www.nytimes.com/2007/05/24/washington/24diplo.html?\\_r=1&ref=washington&oref=slogin](http://www.nytimes.com/2007/05/24/washington/24diplo.html?_r=1&ref=washington&oref=slogin)

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## **International Biodefense Handbook 2007**

*An Inventory of National and International Biodefense Practices and Policies*

**Author(s):** Sergio Bonin

**Editor(s):** Andreas Wenger, Victor Mauer, and Myriam Dunn

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**Description:** The handbook compares different political, strategic, and structural approaches to biosecurity in seven countries and five international and supra-national organizations. It provides an overview of national and

multilateral biodefense efforts by examining important policies in this field and through an inventory of the institutions and actors involved. It is an important step towards a comprehensive overview of existing efforts in biodefense. (For full report, please click on one of the links below.)

Pdf version at: <http://se2.isn.ch/serviceengine/FileContent?serviceID=CRN&fileid=669B8D1A-D286-802C-8D45-0DA8C23FB3C2&lng=en>

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