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Washington Post

June 2, 2007

Pg. 1

## **U.N. Team Still Looking For Iraq's Arsenal**

***Though Work Is Seen as Irrelevant, Security Council Can't Agree to End It***

By Colum Lynch, Washington Post Staff Writer

UNITED NATIONS -- More than four years after the fall of Baghdad, the United Nations is spending millions of dollars in Iraqi oil money to continue the hunt for Saddam Hussein's alleged weapons of mass destruction.

Every weekday, at a secure commercial office building on Manhattan's East Side, a team of 20 U.N. experts on chemical and biological weapons pores over satellite images of former Iraqi weapons sites. They scour the international news media for stories on Hussein's deadly arsenal. They consult foreign intelligence agencies on the status of Iraqi weapons. And they maintain a cadre of about 300 weapons experts from 50 countries and prepare them for inspections in Iraq -- inspections they will almost certainly never conduct, in search of weapons that few believe exist.

The inspectors acknowledge that their chief task -- disarming Iraq -- was largely fulfilled long ago. But, they say, their masters at the U.N. Security Council have been unable to agree to either shut down their effort or revise their mandate to make their work more relevant. Russia insists that Iraq's disarmament must be formally confirmed by the

inspectors, while the United States vehemently opposes a U.N. role in Iraq, saying coalition inspectors have already done the job.

"I recognize this is unhealthy," said Dimitri Perricos, a Greek weapons expert who runs the team, known as the U.N. Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC), and manages its \$10 million annual budget. But, he added, "we are not the ones who are holding the purse; the one who is holding the purse is the council." There was a time when the work of U.N. weapons inspectors on Iraq was the stuff of front-page news and impassioned speeches by world leaders. President Bush even argued that Hussein's refusal to cooperate with U.N. inspectors offered legal backing for the 2003 invasion.

But the inspectors' primary mission -- ridding Hussein's regime of chemical, biological and nuclear weapons -- has become irrelevant since a U.S.-led coalition toppled the Iraqi leader and discovered that his government had destroyed its most lethal weapons shortly after the 1991 Persian Gulf War.

"The reality on the ground is there is no WMD there," said Charles Duelfer, a former U.N. weapons inspector who published the landmark 2004 report of the CIA-led Iraq Survey Group, which concluded that Iraq's weapons had been destroyed. "I think they understand the distance their work is from reality."

But Perricos insists that the U.N. inspectors' work remains relevant and that some of Iraq's chemical and biological weapons could be reconstituted by insurgents, terrorists or even a future Iraqi government.

"Look, Iraq is not Denmark," he said. "They've made botulin, anthrax, VX, sarin; they've made the whole spectrum of horrifying items, and they've used them. We don't know how things are going to develop in the region, and we want to be sure there are some controls."

Last month, Perricos showed the U.N. commission's board satellite imagery of plundered Iraqi chemical factories that produce chlorine, which has been used by Iraqi insurgents in chlorine-bomb suicide attacks. He warned that insurgents may obtain more deadly chemical weapons on the black market, according to U.N. officials.

The U.N. inspection program also stands as a poignant reminder of U.S. intelligence blunders in Iraq and the U.S. failure to secure Iraq's sensitive industrial facilities after the invasion. The commission's prewar assessment -- that there was insufficient evidence to prove that Baghdad had resumed production of weapons of mass destruction -- flatly contradicted U.S. assertions at the time and has long since been vindicated.

The United States and Britain have recently mounted a concerted push to shut down the commission. Zalmay Khalilzad, the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, introduced a resolution last month that would end the inspections. "The U.S. position for years with UNMOVIC has been 'Been there, done that,'" said a senior U.S. official who monitors the commission, speaking on the condition of anonymity.

But Russia has resisted U.S. pressure. A senior Russian official who tracks the group's work said the U.N. inspectors -- not the U.S.-led coalition in Iraq -- must have the final say on whether Iraq has been disarmed. And the inspectors say they cannot confirm Iraq's disarmament without access to the classified reports of the Iraq Survey Group and a final visit to Iraq to verify U.S. assertions. The United States has refused U.N. requests for such information, Perricos said.

Hans Blix, the retired Swedish diplomat who led the U.N. commission before the U.S.-led invasion, said keeping weapons experts in the U.N. system could help train a new generation of inspectors who may be called on to investigate weapons programs anywhere in the world.

"The main part of the job is done," Blix said. "But there is a valuable asset that has stood the test and could be of great use in other areas," he added, noting that no international body conducts missile or biological weapons inspections.

That asset, however, may be losing some value. Many top inspectors left the agency after the fall of Hussein, returning to government posts or taking jobs elsewhere in the United Nations. Some who remain have begun searching for other positions. "There are limited opportunities within the U.N. system" for people steeped in the arcana of Iraqi weapons, observed commission spokesman Ewen Buchanan, who is also looking for a new job. Meanwhile, the commission's budget reserves -- financed by Iraqi oil revenue and valued at more than \$300 million when the last U.N. inspectors left Iraq in March 2003 -- are shrinking. More than \$200 million has been returned to Iraq, and the Iraqi government made a formal request to the Security Council in April to terminate the commission and return its remaining \$63 million to Iraq.

"This is really absurd. We're approaching five years now of this exercise in futility," said Feisal Amin al-Istrabadi, Iraq's deputy permanent representative to the United Nations.

Carne Ross, a former British diplomat who helped draft the 1999 resolution creating the U.N. commission, agrees. "The reason for them disappearing the day Baghdad fell," he said.

But even Ross regards UNMOVIC with nostalgia. He came up with the name one night by tossing cards with the words "commission," "verification," "observation," "inspection" and "monitoring" on a table and rearranging them until he found the least clumsy acronym.

"It doesn't exactly trip off the tongue," Ross said, "but it's my piece of history, and I'm clinging to it."

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Los Angeles Times

June 2, 2007

Pg. 1

## **Nuclear Test Fuels Hope For N. Koreans**

*Improving food and housing for its people is supposedly the regime's new priority, but results are hard to see.*

By Mark Magnier, Times Staff Writer

PYONGYANG, NORTH KOREA — The way Son Hye Suk sees it, having nuclear weapons means more than security for this Stalinist state. It means North Koreans will have more food on their plates.

"Our nuclear weapons are a source of great pride in our country, and if anyone insults us now they won't survive," said Son, an ideologically vetted worker at the International Friendship Museum north of the capital. "Now that we have our pride, our great political and military power and nuclear weapons, the economic problems can be solved. The first aim of the Dear Leader is to improve the living standards of average people."

The secretive regime led by "Dear Leader" Kim Jong Il has signaled a shift in its priorities since its reported nuclear test in October. Early hints were seen in the official New Year's message, in which the ruling Workers' Party announced that it would devote proportionately less of the nation's scarce resources to the military and more to providing apartments, food and clothing for its 23 million long-suffering people.

"It is necessary to bring about a revolutionary turn ... in the efforts to improve living standards," major state-run papers reported in a Jan. 1 editorial, North Korea's equivalent of a State of the Union address. "This is the most important task devolved upon the Korean people at present."

Some South Korean analysts say the April appointment of transport and economic expert Kim Yong Il as premier, replacing Pak Pong Chu, who reportedly was embroiled in a corruption scandal, also may be part of this new direction.

An admittedly limited view from the ground in this tightly controlled country, however, provides little evidence that theory is being translated into reality, although some analysts say just setting out such a goal is an encouraging sign that North Korea might be edging toward a more engaged relationship with the outside world.

"Our country is now building many apartments to solve the housing problem," said Lee Yun Chol, a tour guide.

"Until last year the policy was 'Army First.' "

Five days in Pyongyang — North Korea's capital, showcase city and presumably the first in line to see benefits — and day trips to the country's north, south and west saw few apartment buildings under construction. All appeared relatively small, capable of housing at most a few hundred people. Some were being built with plaster-coated mud, most at a snail's pace.

At rush hour, lines stretched for blocks as Pyongyang commuters awaited buses and trams, which appeared to run no more frequently than once every 30 minutes. Well after sunset, the lines were still there, long, ghostly snakes of workers patiently queuing in the dark under street lamps switched off to save energy.

Any nod to improved living standards was even more difficult to discern in the countryside, where people could be seen walking for miles, pushing creaky bicycles up hills, moving listlessly across fields, trimming grass along the cracked highway by hand.

Even the military seemed short of transportation: Small groups of soldiers periodically tried to flag down a rare passing vehicle before realizing it was a tourist bus filled with foreigners.

On the clothing front, people in Pyongyang appeared neat and well-dressed. But there was little evidence of liberalization or individuality in the choice of clothing. "Jeans are not so popular in our country," Lee said. "It's not to our people's current liking."

Nor is it exactly clear how Pyongyang plans to go about this supposed emphasis on the concerns of ordinary people. "There's a lot of talk about more food, housing, consumer goods, but when you say, 'How are you going to do this?' their only response is, 'More discipline,' " said Jean-Pierre de Margerie, the North Korea representative for the United Nations' World Food Program. "That's the extent of their strategy."

Compared with a visit in 2005, however, the inexpensive Chinese goods seeping into the economy appeared more numerous, with low-quality running shoes, toys and tracksuits visible on the shelves of state-owned department stores, in hotels and in the hands of residents on the street.

Another noticeable change was the response of North Koreans to foreigners. Two years ago, people seemed visibly afraid to even acknowledge a visitor's existence. This month, on numerous occasions, children and young adults waved, smiled and showed signs of curiosity.

Even though the regime wrested back some economic control after October 2005 by mandating state distribution of rice and grain, experts say small markets are proliferating. These allow people to buy surplus food produced by farmers, along with consumer goods brought in by ever-adaptive Chinese traders.

This development is not advertised by a regime afraid of even the slightest weakening of its iron grip.

"We have no private markets," government minder Lee Gun Chol said categorically, when asked whether foreigners might visit one. "Our socialist economy is a planned economy. Ours is a better system than capitalism since everyone works together."

In early 2006, Pyongyang sharply reduced or halted the work of many overseas aid groups operating in the country, reportedly concerned about their growing influence. This has made it more difficult to assess economic conditions and the potential for famine, particularly in more remote areas.

But recent interviews by the World Food Program with North Korean refugees along the Chinese border suggest that people increasingly are relying on these small markets, the organization said.

These anecdotal glimpses also suggest that even rice and goods that traders are not supposed to sell are widely available, some kept just out of sight beneath the counter.

"The average salary might be \$3 to \$6 a month, but if they engage in trading or market activities, that can be pushed up to \$25 a month," De Margerie said. "That's how they make ends meet. Authorities turn a blind eye because there are no other real solutions."

If the regime's desire to shift priorities is taken at face value, it is not without political risk. Citizens who start thinking more about their own welfare than national glory, single-minded military might and the home-grown philosophy of self-sacrifice known as *juche* are more difficult to control. More exposure to outside ideas also allows for unfavorable comparisons.

A bigger risk, at least in the short term, is not so much the rising expectations of ordinary people, however, as it is the reaction of hard-liners, analysts say. For 15 years, lower military ranks have enjoyed better food and upper ranks access to luxury items that they presumably would be loath to lose.

Before a recent flight from China into Pyongyang, 20 huge boxes holding 25-inch LG flat-screen televisions were loaded onto the Soviet-built Tupolev TU-154 passenger plane, items ordinary North Koreans could only dream of owning.

"I don't think they have to worry about public opinion because their repressive apparatus is so strong," said Alexandre Mansourov, analyst with the Asia Pacific Center for Security Studies in Honolulu. "The real matter of concern is the military's view. They've been in the front of the line for the past 15 years. All of a sudden they're being told to sacrifice a bit."

Others say North Korea has a history of juggling apparently contradictory positions.

"Who says the North Korean military is against reform as long as they get paid off?" said Scott Snyder, a senior associate at the Asia Foundation. "It depends how much of the economy comes under military control."

At this year's Arirang "mass games," held periodically to glorify the regime using tens of thousands of performers, the "Army First" policy was featured. But the tenor seemed softer than in 2005. This year's included a chapter titled "Our Country Is Prosperous," in which thousands of people dressed as goats and rabbits danced as a giant message board proclaimed: "There's a lot of grass. If we use it in an efficient way, we can all have meat."

"After Great Leader Kim Il Sung passed away [in 1994], our country had some difficulties due to the disaster and floods and the hostile U.S. policy," museum employee Son said. "Our people managed to survive by eating the roots of plants."

"Even if we starve, as long as Dear Leader Kim Jong Il is healthy, that is paramount," she said. "Now we will focus on living standards. As long as we follow the Dear Leader, everything will be fine."

<http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/world/la-fg-living2jun02,1,5214539.story>

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New York Times

June 2, 2007

Pg. 5

## Rice Plays Down Hawkish Talk About Iran

By Helene Cooper

MADRID, June 1 — Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice sought Friday to minimize any sense of division within the Bush administration over Iran after the head of the United Nations nuclear watchdog agency delivered a pointed warning against what he called the "new crazies" pushing for military action against Tehran.

“The president of the United States has made it clear that we are on a course that is a diplomatic course,” Ms. Rice said here. “That policy is supported by all of the members of the cabinet, and by the vice president of the United States.”

Ms. Rice’s assurance came as senior officials at the State Department were expressing fury over reports that members of Vice President Dick Cheney’s staff have told others that Mr. Cheney believes the diplomatic track with Iran is pointless, and is looking for ways to persuade Mr. Bush to confront Iran militarily.

In a news conference on Friday, Ms. Rice maintained that Mr. Cheney supported her strategy of trying to deal with Iran’s nuclear ambitions through diplomacy. A senior Bush administration official separately denied that there was a deep divide between Ms. Rice and Mr. Cheney on Iran.

But, the official said, “The vice president is not necessarily responsible for every single thing that comes out of the mouth of every single member of his staff.” The official spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to speak publicly about any divide within the administration.

The reports about hawkish statements by members of Mr. Cheney’s staff first surfaced last week in The Washington Note, an influential blog put out by Steve Clemons of the left-leaning New America Foundation. The reports have alarmed European diplomats, some of whom fear that the struggle over Iran’s nuclear program may evolve into a decision by the Bush administration to resort to force against Iran.

In interviews, people who have spoken with Mr. Cheney’s staff have confirmed the broad outlines of the reports, and said that some of the hawkish statements to outsiders had been made by David Wurmser, a former Pentagon official who is now the principal deputy assistant to Mr. Cheney for national security affairs. The accounts were provided by people who expressed alarm about the statements, but refused to be quoted by name.

“The vice president and his staff fully support the president’s position on Iran” a spokeswoman for Mr. Cheney, Megan McGinn, said.

During an interview with BBC Radio broadcast Friday, Mohamed ElBaradei, the director general of the International Atomic Energy Agency, said he did not want to see another war like the one still raging in Iraq four years after the American-led invasion there.

“You do not want to give additional argument to new crazies who say, ‘Let’s go and bomb Iran,’ ” Dr. ElBaradei said. “I wake up every morning and see 100 Iraqis, innocent civilians, are dying.”

Dr. ElBaradei, who has urged Western powers to consider allowing Iran limited uranium enrichment on its own territory, is already facing criticism from Bush administration officials who say he should stick to monitoring Iran’s nuclear program and leave diplomatic policy to the six countries that have banded together to confront Tehran’s ambitions.

But several Western European officials echoed his concern, and said privately that they were worried that Mr. Cheney’s “red line” — the point at which he believed Iran was on the brink of acquiring a nuclear weapon and a military strike was necessary — may be coming soon. “We fully believe that Foggy Bottom is committed to the diplomatic track,” one European official said Wednesday, referring to the State Department. “But there’s some concern about the vice president’s office.”

Dr. ElBaradei told the BBC that one could not “bomb knowledge.” Asked who the “new crazies” were, he said, “Those who have extreme views and say the only solution is to impose our will by force.”

Exactly one year ago on Friday, the United States, Russia, China, Britain, Germany and France offered a package of incentives to Iran if it stopped enriching uranium, which Iran maintains is for peaceful purposes but which the West believes is directed toward a nuclear weapons program. Iran rejected the offer, and the United Nations Security Council has since passed two sets of sanctions aimed at forcing that country’s governing religious leadership to change its mind.

Ms. Rice was the one who prodded Mr. Bush last year to offer to reverse 27 years of American policy and join European talks with Iran over its nuclear program, provided that Iran suspended its enrichment of uranium. Some conservative hawks in the administration have privately expressed doubt that the diplomatic course would yield much.

Last week, the atomic energy agency issued a report detailing Iran’s progress in enriching uranium, and said that Iran had 1,300 centrifuges running during a surprise inspection in May. The report did say that Iran had fed only 260 kilograms of uranium hexafluoride into the machines for enrichment over the past few months, suggesting that the centrifuges were running quite slowly. But American officials have nonetheless called the report “alarming” because Iran is closing in on the 3,000 centrifuges needed to make a nuclear bomb.

Ms. Rice, traveling through Europe this week, refused to say where her “red line” is on Iran, and, when asked, maintained that she intended to continue to pursue the diplomatic course with Iran. In Madrid on Friday for a brief stop to try to mend the Bush administration’s tattered relations with Spain’s Socialist government, Ms. Rice was asked whether she could assure that Mr. Cheney did not want to use military action to deal with Iran.

"The most powerful set of disincentives that we have now are the collateral effects of Iran being under a Security Council resolution, which has made the private sector think twice about the investment and reputational risk of getting involved with Iran," she said.

"I will tell you what will help to get us to a place where we don't have an unpalatable choice," she said. "We do have a choice, we have a diplomatic choice."

[http://www.nytimes.com/2007/06/02/world/middleeast/02diplo.html?\\_r=1&oref=slogin](http://www.nytimes.com/2007/06/02/world/middleeast/02diplo.html?_r=1&oref=slogin)

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Washington Times

June 3, 2007

## **Gates Urges Penalties Against Tehran 'Right Now'**

By Robert Burns, Associated Press

SINGAPORE -- Stronger penalties are needed against Iran, "not next year or the year after, but right now" because of the uncertainty over how soon Tehran may acquire a nuclear weapon, Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates said yesterday.

Mr. Gates did not rule out military action to stop Iran's program, though he said it was an unattractive option.

"Probably everybody in this room wants there to be a diplomatic solution to this problem," he told an international audience of military officers, government officials and private security specialists.

Asked about U.S. intelligence estimates of Iran's progress toward getting nuclear arms, Mr. Gates said, "Having to take care of this problem militarily is in no one's interest."

Yet, uncertainty about Tehran's nuclear work, he said, "does put a premium on unanimity in the international community -- especially in the U.N. Security Council -- in terms of ratcheting up the pressure on the Iranians, not next year or the year after, but right now."

The council has ordered two rounds of penalties over Iran's nuclear program.

On Friday, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said the United States was not preparing for war against Iran and that Vice President Dick Cheney supports that policy. Mr. Cheney last month stood on the deck of an aircraft carrier in the Persian Gulf and warned Tehran that Washington would prevent the Islamic republic from dominating the Middle East.

Mr. Gates said the "general view" among U.S. intelligence analysts is that Iran could develop a nuclear device "probably sometime in the period 2010-2011 or 2014 or [20]15."

"The reality is that, because of the way Iran has conducted its affairs, we really don't know," making it even more urgent to strengthen economic penalties in hopes of forcing Iran to change course, Mr. Gates said.

Iran insists its nuclear program is intended to develop nuclear power as an energy source. The Bush administration rejects that explanation.

Iran was not represented at the conference, held each year to exchange views on security issues affecting the Asia-Pacific region. Iran also was not a central focus of the conference, but it was the subject of the first question put to Mr. Gates after he delivered a prepared address offering assurances the United States would remain an Asia power. Asked whether the United States and its allies are winning the fight against terrorism, Mr. Gates said it was too early to say. He called for more focus and progress on combating poverty and other problems that he said are underlying causes of extremism.

"I think we are still early in this contest," he said.

For the first time, China chose to send a senior official, Lt. Gen. Zhang Qincheng, who offered a pointed defense of his country's military buildup and said it was strictly for self-defense.

In response to a question from former U.S. Defense Secretary William Cohen, Gen. Zhang said China expects a final agreement in September on a long-standing U.S. proposal for a "hot line" between American and Chinese defense leaders for use during crises.

<http://www.washtimes.com/world/20070602-110040-5085r.htm>

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Christian Science Monitor

June 5, 2007

## **A Leaner, Looser 'Star Wars' System**

*President Bush's missile-shield plans are stoking cold-war tensions, as Putin threatens to re-aim Russian weapons at Europe.*

By Peter Grier, Staff writer of The Christian Science Monitor

Washington -- The missile-defense plans of today's Pentagon are far less ambitious than those envisioned by the Reagan-era Strategic Defense Initiative. Out, is the concept of an impenetrable domed shield for the US. In, is possible limited security against an accidental launch or rogue power such as North Korea.

Yet 30 years after "Star Wars" roiled world geopolitics, US missile defense remains a contentious issue, both in Washington and abroad.

Support for missile defense in Congress remains mixed. Meanwhile, Russia continues to hammer at Bush administration plans to deploy missile-defense elements in Europe with rhetoric that harks back to US-Soviet cold war days.

In an interview released Monday, Russian President Vladimir Putin suggested that he might respond by re-aiming nuclear weapons at Europe.

Military sites on the Continent could be targeted with "ballistic or cruise missiles or maybe a completely new system," said Putin.

So far the US has placed 17 long-range interceptor missiles at Fort Greely, Alaska, and Vandenberg Air Force, Calif., according to US Missile Defense Agency officials. This system is still under development, though it was raised to operational status during a recent North Korean missile test.

In Europe, plans call for ten interceptors based in Poland, with a radar in the Czech Republic.

Overall, the Missile Defense Agency has conducted more than 35 major tests, Air Force Lt. Gen. Henry Obering III, Missile Defense Agency director, told Congress in April.

"Overall, since 2001 we have built a record of 26 successful hit-to-kill engagements in 34 attempts," said Gen. Obering.

This year the Pentagon is requesting \$8.9 billion in missile defense funds, with \$7.1 billion of that devoted to developing near-term capabilities, and \$1.8 billion earmarked to develop defenses against future threats. Missile defense has enthusiastic boosters on Capitol Hill. Sen. Daniel Inouye (D) of Hawaii, chairman of the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense, said on April 25 that "after nearly 25 years and over \$90 billion spent, I believe we can finally say that ... we have turned a corner. The United States has a [missile defense] system in place that could be operational if needed."

### **Congressional doubts**

But other lawmakers remain skeptical, particularly in light of Russia's continued objections. The House Appropriations Committee, for example, struck from its version of the defense-funding bill money for the placement of interceptor missiles in Poland. The Senate Armed Services Committee has made a similar cut.

"Congress is correct to question whether US resources are best spent on a questionable ballistic missile defense program, or better spent on securing our nation's borders, ports and railways against another 9/11-type attack," said Rep. Robert Wexler (D) of Florida, at a May 3 missile defense hearing.

It's true that the Pentagon has made strides in missile defense development, say some critics of the system. But they claim those advances are limited.

Flight tests of the interceptor have become increasingly complex, for example, in regards to communications between radars, command-and-control personnel, and missile emplacements, says Philip Coyle, who was director of Pentagon Operational Test and Evaluation during the Clinton administration.

But the tests themselves are actually simpler than they used to be, according to Coyle. Few decoys or countermeasures are used to try and fool the system's sensors, for example. That makes it easier for the hit-to-kill interceptor missile to hone in on its target.

"It's sort of like having a basketball team that practices more and more complex plays – but doesn't have anybody who can shoot real well," says Coyle, who is now a senior adviser to the Center for Defense Information (CDI).

The Pentagon says that the system has to begin somewhere, and that the addition of further defensive layers, such as quickly deployable Aegis Navy cruisers equipped with upgraded missiles, will gradually increase capabilities.

In any case, the Pentagon is no longer trying to develop a missile defense capable of blunting a superpower's launch of nuclear warheads, say US officials.

### **Cold war talk**

With its plans for Europe, the US is just trying to have a defense in place by the time Iran develops long-range missiles, around 2015, according to US intelligence estimates.

President Putin's continued vehemence about the system appears to indicate that Russia believes the defense is also aimed at them. Theoretically, a capable defense could provide enough of a shield against Russia's now-diminished nuclear forces so that the US develops a first-strike nuclear capability.

Russia may also see US missile defense plans in geopolitical terms. By placing elements of the system in former Soviet satellite nations of Eastern Europe, the US would be pushing its forces right up to Russia's doorstep.

"It may be the principle of the thing that bothers them more than anything," says Mr. Coyle.

Los Angeles Times

June 6, 2007

Pg. 1

## **Bush Sells Missile Defense In Prague**

*He risks further enmity with Russia as he also pushes his 'freedom agenda' at the start of his European tour.*

By James Gerstenzang, Times Staff Writer

PRAGUE, CZECH REPUBLIC — President Bush presented a determined argument Tuesday for support of a U.S. missile defense system to be deployed here and in Poland, and said Russia had nothing to fear from the weaponry. The plan, which has drawn Cold War-style threats of retaliation from Moscow, is coloring the start of the president's weeklong European tour, and, beyond that, overall U.S.-Russian relations.

Risking further enmity with Russia, Bush also delivered a speech Tuesday promoting what he terms his "freedom agenda," designed to encourage the spread of democracy in Russia, China and smaller nations around the world. Russian President Vladimir V. Putin, with whom Bush is due to meet Thursday during a Group of 8 summit in Germany, has objected strenuously to the missile system. In recent days, he has called it a threat to Russia and has said he may respond by aiming new nuclear missiles at European targets.

Bush said Tuesday that the system "is a purely defensive measure, aimed not at Russia but at true threats."

He argued that missile-tracking radar, which would be deployed in the Czech Republic, and missile interceptors, which would be deployed in Poland, were intended to protect Europe and the United States from long-range missiles launched by "rogue regimes," meaning, in this case, Iran.

"That's a true threat to peace," Bush said, referring to the risk of a missile attack.

The Bush administration began negotiations in January to put 10 interceptor missiles in Poland and the radar system here. The two nations would be the third site for Washington's global missile-defense system; the other two, which are still being tested, are in Alaska and central California and are aimed at defending against a North Korean attack. Even skeptics of the missile-defense system acknowledge that Moscow's claim it could be used offensively against Russian missiles or other military assets has little foundation. The warheads used in American interceptor missiles have no explosives, and the silos in which they would reside would take years and billions of dollars to refit for more conventional weapons. Indeed, Russian defense officials have, in the past, quietly acknowledged that the system poses little threat to their nuclear arsenal.

But there has been widespread skepticism about why the Bush administration has been pushing the system so aggressively. Congressional critics have questioned the occasionally erratic system's maturity and have cut funding for the European sites' development in legislation being debated by both houses. In addition, U.S. intelligence estimates predict that the earliest Iran will be able to develop a long-range ballistic missile will be the middle of the next decade.

The question of Czech participation in the project is one of considerable political sensitivity here, since it would bring Prague, which has lost soldiers in the U.S.-led Iraq war, into closer military cooperation with Washington. President Vaclav Klaus has said he supports the radar plan. But he has also said that he has told Bush it is important to win Czech public support for it too.

Bush, previewing the case he will make to Putin, said Tuesday: "My message will be 'Vladimir' — I call him Vladimir — that 'you shouldn't fear a missile defense system. As a matter of fact, why don't you cooperate with us on a missile defense system? Why don't you participate with the United States?'"

Bush, due to meet with Putin in a longer set of meetings planned for July 1 and 2 in Kennebunkport, Maine, said Russia could send scientists and generals to see how the system would work.

The president met Tuesday with Klaus and Prime Minister Mirek Topolánek at 1,100-year-old Prague Castle and gave his "freedom agenda" speech in a grand hall of the 17th century Czernin Palace, where the Warsaw Pact was dissolved, a key moment in the crumbling of Soviet rule across Central and Eastern Europe. In the speech, Bush said that "in Russia, reforms that once promised to empower citizens have been derailed, with troubling implications for democratic development."

He also singled out Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Pakistan, which have generally supported his campaign against terrorism, saying "they have a great distance still to travel" in opening their political systems.

Garry Kasparov, a leader of the Russian political opposition, said it was in his nation's interest to cooperate with the antimissile program, but that Putin, once a member of the Soviet KGB intelligence operations, was using his opposition to gain leverage against Bush's campaign for greater democracy in Russia.



Speaking with reporters in Prague before Bush delivered his address, Kasparov, the former world chess champion, said Putin's objective was to protect his own interests before his term ends next spring.

Putin, Kasparov said, was "trying to follow this algorithm by creating new bargaining chips that he could throw at the table to get ... Western acceptance of any actions he and his regime might undertake in Russia over the next eight to 10 months."

"The only way to deal with Putin is to confront him publicly," Kasparov said. "Putin thrives in an atmosphere of secrecy. He's a KGB spy. Anything behind closed doors gives him advantage. He's vulnerable to daylight."

While Bush's speech was the formal centerpiece of the day, the troubled relationship with Russia, underscored by differences over the antimissile program, formed the backdrop.

Klaus praised Bush for promising to "make maximum efforts to explain" the missile-defense plan "to Russia and President Putin."

He said the matter was "very sensitive" to the Czech people, for whom Cold War memories remain strong. For four decades the Czechs were trapped in the antagonism between Moscow and Washington, their lives controlled by Kremlin-imposed rule.

"The Cold War is over," Bush declared. "It ended. The people of the Czech Republic don't have to choose between being a friend to the United States or a friend with Russia. You can be both."

But Putin has presented the missile defense in Cold War-era terms.

He told reporters in Moscow in a pre-summit interview, according to the Associated Press: "We are being told the antimissile defense system is targeted against something that does not exist. Doesn't it seem funny to you, to say the least?"

He continued: "If a part of the strategic nuclear potential of the United States appears in Europe and, in the opinion of our military specialists, will threaten us, then we will have to take appropriate steps in response. What kind of steps? We will have to have new targets in Europe."

These could be targeted with "ballistic or cruise missiles or maybe a completely new system," he said.

Deputy White House Press Secretary Dana Perino said Tuesday of Russian objections: "Clearly, there's been an escalation of rhetoric, which we find unfortunate. But it's something we need to work through."

Bush began the day with a motorcade ride through the hairpin turns leading up to Prague Castle, where, on the cobblestones of the entrance courtyard, Czech soldiers greeted him in a high-stepping, heel-clicking display.

The castle overlooks the city and has been home to Czech kings, Holy Roman emperors and, at times, Czech presidents.

For Czechs, the debate over the antimissile system is joined with a dispute over a U.S. requirement that they obtain visas before visiting the United States — a requirement not applied to visitors from Western Europe.

"I cannot imagine having a radar base near Prague while my countrymen still need a visa to visit our great ally, the United States," Deputy Prime Minister Alexandr Vondra was quoted as saying.

But Prime Minister Topolánek, with Bush at his side, suggested that his government was not directly linking the two, and that it would be arguing for the visa-less access even if the United States was not asking to put the antimissile radar on Czech territory. "We would want to help our allies, protect our allies, against a rogue state's rockets, even if there was no visa problem," he said.

Bush said he was sympathetic to the Czech complaints, and said he would work with Congress to win Czechs easier access to the United States. He noted that the matter was part of the immigration debate taking place in Congress.

"I understand the issue well," Bush said, summarizing the Czech view as one focused on the "contradiction" of sending troops to fight alongside Americans in Iraq, but being denied the privilege of visiting the United States without visas, while citizens of Western Europe, some from countries that did not send troops to Iraq, may make such visits.

*Times staff writer Peter Spiegel in Paris contributed to this report.*

<http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/nation/la-fg-bush6jun06.1.2917303.story>

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Washington Times

June 6, 2007

Pg. 12

## **China Warns U.S., Japan Against Missile Defense**

By Edward Lanfranco, Washington Times

BEIJING -- China's Foreign Ministry yesterday reiterated the country's apprehension over U.S. and Japanese efforts to develop a missile defense system in Asia, warning both nations to act with caution.

China has "grave concerns" about U.S. and Japanese plans, Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Jiang Yu told reporters yesterday, noting that a missile defense system will "impact stability and the strategic balance."

"It is not conducive to mutual trust of major nations and regional security," Ms. Jiang said. She warned, "It may also cause new proliferation problems."

She made the comments in response to remarks by Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates and his Japanese counterpart, Fumio Kyuma, over the weekend at the sixth Asia Security Summit, hosted by the International Institute for Strategic Studies in Singapore.

"I'm not sure why [the Chinese] are so worried," Mr. Gates told reporters. "Just as with the Russians, we would be pleased to sit down with them and talk about the capabilities and technical characteristics of this system and its limitation."

Mr. Gates and Mr. Kyuma emphasized that a defense was necessary to stop rogue nations and terrorist organizations from using rockets to deliver weapons of mass destruction.

China's concerns mirror growing tensions between Russia and the United States over U.S. plans to deploy a missile defense system in Eastern Europe.

Apart from the European plan, the U.S. and Japan have been intensifying efforts to build a joint missile defense system in the wake North Korea's nuclear test in October.

North Korea has missiles capable of hitting much of Japan and is suspected of developing multistage rockets able to hit the U.S., but its capability to arm such weapons with nuclear warheads remains uncertain.

Lt. Gen. Zhang Qinsheng, deputy chief of the People's Liberation Army, told reporters at the Singapore conference that the development of an anti-missile system by the United States, Australia and Japan could destabilize Asia.

China would oppose "very strongly" any attempt to extend such a system to cover Taiwan, Gen. Zhang said.

The Taiwan Relations Act enacted by Congress in 1979 requires the U.S. to help defend the island, which China considers a breakaway province, if it is attacked. Defense analysts estimate the mainland has at least 600 missiles aimed at Taiwan.

The United States shares a broad range of security interests with China, including terrorism, nonproliferation and energy issues, as well as broad, remarkably interconnected economic and trading ties, Mr. Gates said.

Despite differences on some issues, "there is reason to be optimistic about the U.S.-China relationship," Mr. Gates said, but he promised "we will fulfill our commitments in Asia."

<http://www.washtimes.com/world/20070605-101405-4868r.htm>

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New York Times

June 6, 2007

## **Iranian Warns Against Added Nuclear Sanctions**

TEHRAN, June 5 (AP) — President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad said Tuesday that it was "too late" to stop Iran's nuclear program and warned the United States and its allies not to push for new United Nations sanctions, comparing his country to a lion sitting quietly in a corner.

"We advise them not to play with the lion's tail," Mr. Ahmadinejad said, as he drew applause from a room of reporters, Iranian officials and foreign dignitaries at a news conference here.

"It is too late to stop the progress of Iran," he said. "Iran has passed the point where they wanted Iran to stop."

The Security Council is preparing to debate a third set of sanctions against Iran in response to the government's continuing refusal to suspend uranium enrichment, which can produce fuel for civilian energy or material for a bomb. Iran has consistently said it is developing its nuclear industry only for peaceful purposes.

Addressing the West, Mr. Ahmadinejad said a third set of sanctions would only "make things harder for you and distance you from resolving the issue." He said the Americans and their allies should "give up stubbornness and childish games."

The Council first imposed sanctions on Iran in December and modestly tightened them in March over Iran's refusal to suspend uranium enrichment. Iran says it is within its rights to pursue uranium enrichment for peaceful purposes. The country's chief nuclear negotiator, Ali Larijani, said this week that the nuclear standoff could be settled in the coming weeks if the Council stopped preparations to debate the third round of sanctions.

Mr. Ahmadinejad's news conference was his first since talks between American and Iranian diplomats in Baghdad on May 28. The two sides are supposed to meet again in less than a month.

Mr. Ahmadinejad rejected American accusations that Iranian agents were helping fellow Shiites in Iraq and said that the Iranians wanted to help calm the violence there. The American forces in Iraq "have lost the way," he said. "They don't know what to do. They imagine that by accusing others, they can resolve problems."

“Now, they said help us,” he added, apparently in a reference to the American invitation to the Iranians to hold additional talks in Baghdad. “We are prepared, for the sake of the Iraqi people, to help. We won’t spare any efforts.” Iranians have largely welcomed the talks, although state television quoted Mr. Ahmadinejad as saying Iran agreed to them only after the United States asked Iran 40 times and sent a formal diplomatic note.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2007/06/06/world/middleeast/06iran.html>

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Washington Times

June 6, 2007

Pg. 14

## Missiles Everywhere

By James T. Hackett

All of a sudden, we face more new missiles since the end of the Cold War. China and Russia are about to deploy new missiles and nuclear warheads specifically designed to strike this country, while India, Pakistan, North Korea and Iran are increasing the range of their missiles. In contrast, we are building missile defenses.

A Pentagon report issued last month on China’s military buildup describes a growing arsenal of ballistic missiles. It was followed by a successful Russian flight test of a new multiple-warhead intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM). China’s missile buildup has been under way for years. Beijing has steadily increased its short-range missiles opposite Taiwan until they total about 1,000, some 900 ballistic missiles and 100 cruise missiles.

At the same time, the Pentagon report says, “China is qualitatively and quantitatively improving its strategic forces.” For years, China has had some 20 CSS-4 ICBMs with enough range to reach the United States, and about 90 medium- and intermediate-range missiles that can target U.S. bases and allies in the Pacific.

But now new long-range missiles are coming on line. The pride of China’s strategic forces are the three-stage, solid-fuel, road-mobile DF-31, which can reach Alaska and Hawaii, and the DF-31A ICBM, which targets the U.S. mainland. The DF-31 is operational and the ICBM version could be this year or next.

The only purpose of the DF-31A is to threaten the United States with nuclear weapons. The most likely scenario has Beijing threatening to use it to hold the U.S. at bay while applying military force against Taiwan. Another weapon apparently designed for the same purpose is China’s new Type 094 Jin-class ballistic missile submarine. With Russian help, China has achieved major progress in submarine technology.

The first Jin-class submarine was launched in 2004 and five more are coming. Each will carry 16 JL-2 ballistic missiles (sea-launch versions of the DF-31). With a range of 5,000 miles, they can be launched against the United States from the safety of China’s coastal waters. The JL-2 is believed to carry a single 400-kiloton nuclear warhead. When the Jin-class submarines are operational, China will have the third-most-powerful sea-based nuclear missile force in the world. Considering China sold a nuclear warhead design to A.Q. Khan of Pakistan, head of an international nuclear black market, there is legitimate concern that Beijing’s new missile technologies might also leak to other countries, or even to terrorists.

Russia’s new weapons are even more advanced. On May 29, Russia conducted successful flight tests of both a new ICBM and a short-range cruise missile. The RS-24 ICBM appears to be a larger version of the single-warhead Topol-M ballistic missile Moscow now is producing. There are 42 Topol-Ms in silos and three mobile ones operational, with 70 more planned. They carry a single nuclear warhead, but Moscow intends to convert them to three warheads each. A high-speed, maneuvering warhead designed for the three-warhead version has been flight-tested twice with great fanfare.

The RS-24 ICBM probably combines stages of the Topol-M and Russia’s new Bulava 30 submarine-launch missile, which has much greater throw-weight and can carry six nuclear warheads. All three ICBMs were developed by the same organization, the Moscow Thermotechnical Institute.

The Bulava 30 has failed in several flight tests, but its development continues and Moscow plans to deploy it in five new Borei-class missile submarines, and use it to replace the aging missiles in Russia’s existing undersea fleet.

These new missiles and warheads have been designed to evade U.S. missile defenses.

Russia’s new cruise missile, the Iskander-M, is a longer-range version of the Iskander-E, which was designed for export. The E model carries a high explosive warhead to a range of 280 kilometers, within the 300-kilometer export limit of the Missile Technology Control Regime. But the M model, designed for Russia’s own army, can deliver a nuclear warhead at least 490 kilometers to countries near Russia. It is a blunt warning to Poland and the Czech Republic not to accept U.S. bases, and to Georgia and the Ukraine not to join NATO.

President Vladimir Putin’s heavy-handed attacks on the U.S. and his talk of Europe becoming a “powder keg” is underlined by Moscow’s new nuclear missiles. Development of such weapons in both Russia and China, and their

potential spread elsewhere, shows the urgent need to deploy missile defenses, including in Europe. It is better to build defenses that harm no one than to return to the nuclear arms race.

*James T. Hackett is a contributing writer to The Washington Times based in Carlsbad, Calif.*

<http://www.washtimes.com/commentary/20070605-092644-6294r.htm>

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Washington Times

June 7, 2007

Pg. 1

## 'Russia Is Not An Enemy'

*Bush calls cease-fire in war of words with Putin at G-8 summit*

By Joseph Curl, Washington Times

ROSTOCK, Germany -- President Bush yesterday sought to tone down the fiery rhetoric in his weeklong dispute with Russian President Vladimir Putin over a proposed U.S. missile shield in Eastern Europe, saying, "Russia is not an enemy."

Arriving in Germany for the annual Group of Eight summit -- and with a private meeting with Mr. Putin planned for today -- the president pulled back from a game of brinkmanship that had prompted Moscow to threaten to aim missiles at Europe.

"Russia is not going to attack Europe," Mr. Bush told reporters at the Baltic Sea resort town of Heiligendamm, where the leaders are meeting. "There needs to be no military response because we're not at war with Russia. ... Russia is not a threat. Nor is the missile defense we're proposing a threat to Russia."

Mr. Putin has ratcheted up rhetoric for a week, saying the U.S. plan to install 10 missiles in Poland and a radar system in the Czech Republic is tantamount to returning to the Cold War. He threatened to aim his own multiwarhead missiles -- capable of penetrating the shield -- if the United States does not abandon its plan.

Mr. Bush said Russia's missile capability is vastly superior to the shield, and he offered to open up its installation to officials from Russia.

"A missile-defense system that is deployed in Europe can handle one or two rocket launchers. It can't handle a multiple launch regime. Russia has got an inventory that could overpower any missile-defense system," he said. In addition, he said if the Russian leader thinks that the missile-defense system is a threat to his nation, the United States would ease his fears.

"There's all kinds of ways you can do that. One is total transparency between our militaries and scientists -- military people and scientists, which I'm more than happy to do."

As he has said many times before, Mr. Bush said the real object of the shield is "aimed at a country like Iran, if they ended up with a nuclear weapon, so that they couldn't blackmail the free world."

And he said the United States simply cannot wait for Iran to construct a nuclear weapon, which the U.N. nuclear watchdog agency said last month could come in as little as three years.

"I would argue that it's best to anticipate what might happen and work to see that it doesn't happen, as opposed to not be prepared if it does happen. I mean, if somebody pops up with a weapon and says, hands up, people will say, 'Well, how come we didn't have a shield?' And so it's -- I think we need to do both. I think we need to protect ourselves of what might happen, and then work collaboratively to make sure it doesn't happen," the president said. But Putin spokesman Dmitri Peskov said yesterday that Mr. Bush has failed to make a persuasive case for deployment of missiles in Eastern Europe, which he said would upset the balance of power on the Continent. He dismissed the president's contention that the United States cannot wait and Mr. Bush's assertion that he is simply protecting U.S. allies in Europe from an Iranian missile.

Mr. Peskov sought to pull back Mr. Putin's threat to target missiles at Europe, saying the statement was hypothetical and was just one of the options that Russia is considering.

"It was not some kind of threatening statement on the part of Mr. Putin. He was just asked by a journalist if he would be ready, hypothetically to consider re-targeting ... and he confirmed that that would be one of the ways Russia could respond," he said.

Still, the souring relationship of the two leaders -- which began when Mr. Bush said he had looked into the soul of the former KGB man and seen a man he could deal with -- has drawn all eyes toward their bilateral meeting today. The once-hot issue of climate change has faded into the background, and other leaders at the summit -- including Britain's Prime Minister Tony Blair -- have waded into the fray.

The summit brings together leaders from eight leading industrialized countries -- U.S., Canada, Britain, France, Germany, Italy, Japan and Russia -- as well as officials from China, India, Mexico, Brazil and South Africa.

On another major world issue, Mr. Bush stood firm during a bilateral meeting with the summit's host, German Chancellor Angela Merkel, on the U.S. refusal to have the meeting endorse her plan to limit the global temperature rise to two degrees Celsius (3.6 degrees Fahrenheit).

Mr. Bush reiterated his opposition, stated earlier this week, forcing the German chancellor to back down and pursue more modest goals on greenhouse gases that all eight nations could support. The U.S. leader offered instead to discuss a post-Kyoto pact in the context of an upcoming U.N. conference in Indonesia.

Jim Connaughton, chairman of the Council on Environmental Quality, said all the biggest-emitting nations had to be involved in any deal, although such developing countries as China and India have said they will not cut their own carbon-dioxide emissions.

Meanwhile in Moscow yesterday, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said his nation will not quit a key arms-control pact next week at a conference in Vienna, Austria.

<http://www.washtimes.com/national/20070607-123058-7480r.htm>

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Los Angeles Times  
June 7, 2007

## **U.S. Speeding Up Nuclear Disarmament**

*The Energy Department says it's stepping up the pace of dismantling decades-old bombs and has met its goal this year.*

By Ralph Vartabedian, Times Staff Writer

The Energy Department will announce today that it has accelerated its program to dismantle surplus nuclear weapons by more than 50% and has already met its goal for the fiscal year, about four months early.

Since the Cold War ended, the U.S. has been sharply reducing its stockpile. But reductions in the active weapons held by the Defense Department have left hundreds or even thousands — the exact numbers are classified — of surplus obsolete weapons in storage.

Thomas D'Agostino, the designated chief of the Energy Department's National Nuclear Security Administration, said in an interview Wednesday that he ordered the agency's main bomb factory in Amarillo, Texas, and other facilities across the nation to step up the pace.

The agency is developing procedures, special tools and a trained workforce to disassemble decades-old bombs, in some cases with rusty bolts, in as safe a way as possible, he said.

The agency is spending \$800 million annually on security to protect its weapons and facilities. With fewer bombs, the agency will have less to protect, he said.

Disarmament advocates have criticized the Energy Department for not moving faster to get rid of the weapons.

Some experts had estimated it would take decades to reduce the backlog.

Separately, the House Appropriations Committee on Wednesday voted to eliminate funding for development of a new nuclear bomb known as the reliable replacement warhead.

The bomb, being designed by Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, is intended to replace the W76 warhead used on submarine-launched missiles.

D'Agostino said he was "concerned" about the political fate of the program and said "more engagement" with Congress was needed.

<http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/nation/la-na-nukes7jun07.1.5476693.story>

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