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Washington Post
October 17, 2006
Pg. 3

Mandatory Anthrax Shots To Return

By Christopher Lee, Washington Post Staff Writer

The Defense Department will resume mandatory anthrax vaccinations for more than 200,000 troops and defense contractors within 60 days, a Pentagon official said yesterday, rejecting the concerns of some veterans and service members who say that the vaccine has not been proved safe or effective.

The vaccinations will be required for most military units and civilian contractors assigned to homeland bioterrorism defense or deployed in Iraq, Afghanistan or South Korea, said William Winkenwerder Jr., a physician and the assistant secretary of defense for health affairs. As troops rotate in and out of those regions, the number receiving vaccinations will grow considerably, he said.

A lawsuit filed by six former or current service members had blocked the mandatory vaccinations since October 2004, when U.S. District Judge Emmet G. Sullivan ruled that the Food and Drug Administration had erred in approving the vaccine in 2003 without seeking public comment and conducting a full review.

But the FDA then held a 90-day comment period to overcome that hurdle and granted the vaccine final approval last December, clearing a legal path for the Pentagon to resume the controversial program.

"The FDA went out again . . . and came to the very unambiguous and clear conclusion that the vaccine was safe and it was effective against all forms of exposure," Winkenwerder said. "In our view, that has definitively settled the question."

But Mark Zaid, an attorney for the six plaintiffs, said yesterday that Sullivan's ruling and the Pentagon's remedy both turned on procedural technicalities. The plaintiffs plan to file a new lawsuit challenging the government's contention that human studies from the 1950s and more recent studies in animals demonstrated the safety and efficacy of the vaccine.

"It is an unnecessary, unproven and potentially unsafe vaccine," Zaid said. "Everyone is concerned as to their health, and the fact is that there is no scientific evidence that the vaccine works in humans. . . . I think this program is nothing more than a glorified public relations campaign to demonstrate that they are doing something."

Anthrax is a deadly infectious disease caused by the spore-forming bacterium *Bacillus anthracis*. A month after the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks, letters tainted with anthrax infected people in Connecticut, Florida, New Jersey, New York and the District. The unsolved attacks killed five people, sickened 17 and caused about 10,000 to be put on antibiotics.

Although the previous anthrax attacks occurred on U.S. soil, Winkenwerder said troops overseas are believed to be a higher risk, and military personnel in the United States do not have to receive the six shots.

"I have not been vaccinated because I'm not in any of the targeted groups," Winkenwerder said. "If I was, I would receive the vaccine without hesitation."

The Clinton administration began the mandatory vaccinations in 1997. Over the next few years, hundreds of active-duty service members refused to take the vaccine, and more than 100 were court-martialed as a result.

Winkenwerder said that 27 people refused the vaccine and left the military in 2003, and that 10 did so in 2004. A voluntary vaccination program that Sullivan allowed last year saw participation rates of 50 percent, Winkenwerder said. In all, more than 1.2 million military and civilian personnel have received the vaccine.

Some who received vaccinations for anthrax and smallpox around the time of the 2003 invasion of Iraq have complained of fatigue, migraines, pain and diseases such as multiple sclerosis.

Winkenwerder said that, as with any vaccine, some who receive the shots develop adverse reactions, but that there is no evidence to indicate a particular problem with the anthrax vaccine.

But as recently as this spring, the Government Accountability Office, the investigative arm of Congress, said questions remain about the vaccine. "The long term safety of the licensed vaccine has not been studied," the agency said in a May 9 report. ". . . Also, there is some evidence that the current anthrax vaccine may have diminished efficacy against certain virulent strains of anthrax."

Barbara Loe Fisher, president of the National Vaccine Information Center, said her nonprofit advocacy group is adding more information to its Web site about the research and development of biological defense vaccines.

"The DOD has a moral duty to fully disclose anthrax vaccine risks, as well as benefits, to soldiers and allow them to make an informed, voluntary decision," she said in a statement.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/10/16/AR2006101601084.html>

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USA Today

October 17, 2006

Pg. 1

U.S. Confirms N. Korea Blast Was Nuclear

Rice heading to region to rally allies around enforcing sanctions

By Bill Nichols and Barbara Slavin, USA Today

WASHINGTON — The Bush administration confirmed on Monday for the first time that North Korea conducted an underground nuclear test last week. The office of National Intelligence Director John Negroponte said radioactive materials found in air samples confirmed the test.

Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice expressed concern that North Korea might be planning a second test. "We're watching it," she told reporters. "I hope they would not take such a provocative act."

In a statement, Negroponte's office said the blast was small by standards of nuclear tests; less than 1 kiloton. Each kiloton is equal to the force produced by 1,000 tons of TNT. The bomb the United States dropped on Hiroshima was 15 kilotons.

The confirmation came as Rice prepared to visit Japan, South Korea and China this week to try to shore up efforts by Asian allies to punish North Korea.

A United Nations Security Council resolution passed Saturday calls for nations to prevent North Korea from buying or selling specified weapons and technology. The measure also bans some luxury goods from North Korea and freezes funds outside the country that are associated with weapons programs.

North Korea's neighbors pledged to abide by the resolution. Even China, which had expressed concerns about inspecting cargo bound for North Korea, on Monday checked trucks going to North Korea from the city of Dandong.

China's U.N. ambassador said Beijing would not stop and board ships, however. "The question was raised whether China will do inspections," Ambassador Wang Guangya told reporters. "Inspections yes, but inspection is different than interdiction and interception."

China historically has opposed actions that might destabilize the North Korean regime and send thousands of refugees across the 880-mile border the nations share.

Rice, who is to arrive in Japan on Wednesday, said she was "not concerned that the Chinese are going to turn their backs on their obligations."

Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe said Monday that his country was considering more sanctions. Australia said it would also ban North Korea's ships from entering its ports, except in emergencies.

North Korea remained defiant. The No. 2 ranking leader, Kim Yong Nam, said the country would strengthen its military and "achieve a final victory in the historic standoff with the U.S."

Contributing: Wire reports

http://www.usatoday.com/printedition/news/20061017/1a_lede17.art.htm

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USA Today

October 17, 2006

Pg. 11

Atom Bombs Never Fell, But The Ax Did: Cheyenne Mountain Going On Standby

By Robert Weller, Associated Press

CHEYENNE MOUNTAIN AIR FORCE STATION, Colo. — Dr. Strangelove would have a heart attack: The war room buried deep inside this granite mountain is being retired. Not only that, but the Russians have been inside the place.

During the long nuclear standoff with Moscow, the U.S. military's supersecret underground command center was a symbol of both Cold War might and apocalyptic dread, depicted in such movies as WarGames in 1983.

With the Cold War now history, the war room is going on "warm standby" to save money. A smaller staff will keep it ready to resume operations at a moment's notice if needed, but the critical work is being shifted to Peterson Air Force Base, about 10 miles away.

"In today's Netted, distributed world, we can do very good work on a broad range of media right here," Adm.

Timothy Keating, commander of North American Aerospace Defense Command, or NORAD, says from his headquarters at Peterson. "Right there at that desk, including one push-button to the president."

The military says the countries that have succeeded the Soviet Union as major threats — hostile states such as North Korea and Iran — do not have the kind of weapons it would take to hit and destroy a command center in Colorado.

In the 1950s, the United States and Canada spent hundreds of millions of dollars on early-warning systems to detect a Soviet attack. All the information from those systems, however, was funneled into a two-story blockhouse at Ent Air Force Base in Colorado Springs that could have been destroyed by a bazooka, NORAD historian Thomas Fuller says.

So in 1961, crews began digging on the edge of Colorado Springs. They eventually removed 700,000 tons of granite. Two 25-ton blast doors were constructed to protect the 15 tunnel-like buildings 2,400 feet underground. Each of the buildings under Cheyenne Mountain is suspended on thousand-pound springs — or, as the joke goes, "the real Colorado springs."

The mini-city included a barbershop, medical clinic, convenience store, even a fire and police force.

For 40 years, staff in the mountain kept an eye on the Soviets from a command center in a small room.

Glitches resulted in false alarms in 1979 and 1980, though neither came close to the level portrayed in WarGames, in which a computer nearly starts World War III. (The drama Fail-Safe and the black comedy Dr. Strangelove also famously depicted electronic war rooms. Both came out in 1964, two years before the Cheyenne Mountain command center opened.)

The collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 was the death knell for Cheyenne Mountain. Around the turn of the millennium, Russians were invited to Peterson to observe in case of catastrophic computer problems caused by the “Y2K” glitch — antiquated software misreading the year 2000 as 1900.

Then came the Sept. 11 attacks. U.S. Northern Command was created in 2002 to defend the nation from internal attacks. Its headquarters were built at Peterson, and NORAD's commander was put in charge of both commands. It was on orders from Peterson that the military was able to scramble fighter planes 10 minutes after a small plane crashed into a New York City high-rise last week.

Until the later years of the Cold War, when more accurate and high-yield bombs were developed, Cheyenne Mountain probably could have withstood even a direct hit from a nuclear weapon.

“It was the place that made us feel good during the Cold War, especially after the Cuban missile crisis and the Russians had developed intercontinental ballistic missiles,” says retired lieutenant general William Odom, a former director of the National Security Agency.

Keating says the new control room, in contrast, could be damaged if a terrorist commandeered a jumbo jet and somehow knew exactly where to crash it.

But “how unlikely is that? We think very,” Keating says.

Keating says it costs about \$250 million a year to operate Cheyenne Mountain fully staffed. Congress' Government Accountability Office has said efforts to modernize it were too expensive or behind schedule.

Last year, the commander of long-range Russian military aviation visited the command center at Cheyenne Mountain. NORAD recently said it also would like to begin talks with the Russians about joint surveillance flights along the Alaska-Siberia frontier.

“The Russians have been up there,” Keating says. “We've drank vodka at the Broadmoor (Hotel). We've sat here and discussed grave issues. Life goes on. It's OK.”

http://www.usatoday.com/printedition/news/20061017/a_warroom17.art.htm

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Colorado Springs Gazette
October 17, 2006

NorthCom Gets Helping Hand

Army North will assist in disaster response

Colorado Springs-based Northern Command has a new partner in disaster response.

Army North, based at Fort Sam Houston, Texas, became fully operational Monday after operating on a limited basis for a year. It will be the workhorse in a crisis and in training troops for disasters.

Army North is linked to North-Com, which is charged with defending the homeland and coordinating defense support of civil authorities.

“This will mean quicker response to man-made or natural disasters,” said Army Maj. April Cunningham, NorthCom's spokeswoman.

Army North, USARNORTH in military terms, is charged with:

- *Execution of homeland defense and defense support of civil authorities missions;
- *Providing training and readiness oversight of weapons of mass destruction for civil support teams;
- *Conducting the Army portion of theater cooperation with Canada and Mexico;
- *Coordinating activities of defense officers and their staffs assigned in Federal Emergency Management Agency regions; and
- *Organizing task forces that can deploy to oversee Pentagon forces responding to homeland defense or civil support operations.

For example, when the nation's wildland firefighting ground crews were tapped out this year, the National Interagency Fire Center turned to Army North, which deployed personnel to the center in Boise, Idaho, to help manage military ground support.

Although Army North's operational status won't mean additional personnel at Peterson Air Force Base where NorthCom is headquartered, Army North will be able to tap Army additional resources as required.

<http://www.gazette.com/display.php?id=1322740&secid=2>

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North Korean Fuel Identified As Plutonium

By Thom Shanker and David E. Sanger

WASHINGTON, Oct. 16 — American intelligence agencies have concluded that North Korea's test explosion last week was powered by plutonium that North Korea harvested from its small nuclear reactor, according to officials who have reviewed the results of atmospheric sampling since the blast.

The officials, who would not speak for attribution because it was an intelligence matter, were responding to specific questions about what had been learned about the nature of the weapon.

As administration and intelligence officials watched for indications that the North might be preparing a second test, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice warned North Korea on Monday that it risked even further isolation if it took such a provocative action.

American officials have reported recent activity at the test site, leading some to believe that another test might be carried out soon.

The intelligence agencies' finding that the weapon was based on plutonium strongly suggested that the country's second path to a nuclear bomb — one using uranium — was not yet ready. The uranium program is based on enrichment equipment and know-how purchased from Pakistan's former nuclear chief.

Nuclear experts said that the use of plutonium to make the bomb was important because it suggested that North Korea probably had only one nuclear program mature enough to produce weapons.

"This is good news because we have a reasonably good idea of how much plutonium they have made," said Siegfried S. Hecker, the former chief of the Los Alamos National Laboratory and now a visiting professor at Stanford University. Mr. Hecker, who has visited North Korea and is one of the few foreigners to have seen parts of its nuclear infrastructure, said that it was his guess that "they tried to test a reasonably sophisticated device, and they had trouble imploding it properly."

The supply of plutonium materials is known from the days when international inspectors kept tabs on the fuel rods in the North's reactor, and intelligence analysts estimate that North Korea has enough material to make 6 to 10 plutonium bombs.

Politically, the results of the test may revive last week's finger-pointing about who is more responsible for the Korean test: Bill Clinton or President Bush.

As president, Mr. Clinton negotiated a deal that froze the production and weaponization of North Korea's plutonium, but intelligence agencies later determined that North Korea began its secret uranium program under his watch. The plutonium that North Korea exploded was produced, according to intelligence estimates, either during the administration of the first President Bush or after 2003, when the North Koreans threw out international inspectors and began reprocessing spent nuclear fuel the inspectors had kept under seal.

Unlike the Clinton administration in 1994, the current Bush administration chose not to threaten to destroy North Korea's fuel and nuclear reprocessing facilities if they tried to make weapons.

That threat in 1994 — which was ultimately resolved with an agreement to freeze the weapons program — was made by William J. Perry, who was the defense secretary then. In an interview on Monday, Mr. Perry said: "There was a brief window to catch this plutonium before it was made into bomb fuel. It's gone. It's out of the barn now." After a week of some lingering doubt about whether the test had indeed been a nuclear detonation, the office of John D. Negroponte, director of national intelligence, confirmed that much in a statement issued Monday.

"Analysis of air samples collected on Oct. 11, 2006, detected radioactive debris which confirms that North Korea conducted an underground nuclear explosion in the vicinity of Punggye on Oct. 9, 2006," said the statement, putting on the record a conclusion that officials first disclosed Friday, the night before the United Nations Security Council voted on sanctions. "The explosion yield was less than a kiloton," the statement added.

It gave no further details, and the officials who described the early findings did not disclose more beyond the conclusion that plutonium, not uranium, was the device's core.

The determination that the blast was nuclear was announced a day before Secretary Rice was to depart for a trip to Japan, South Korea, China and Russia. She will go to the capitals of the nations that have been engaged in the six-party talks over North Korea's nuclear program except, of course, North Korea.

The unanimous resolution adopted by the Security Council last week imposing sanctions on military material and luxury goods was proof of "a strong and firm hand and strong and firm response," Ms. Rice said Monday during a State Department news conference. She said the international community wanted "to leave open a door for North Korea to take a different course if it wishes to do so."

Pressed to respond to analysts' assessment that desires by China and South Korea for continued economic and business exchanges with North Korea might trump demands for a stiff sanctions and inspections regime, Ms. Rice said her goal was to work out the details of putting the Council resolution into effect.

The Associated Press reported Monday from Dandong, China, that customs officials were examining trucks at the North Korean border as China complied with the United Nations sanctions.

However, China's ambassador to the United Nations, Wang Guangya, indicated that his nation would not conduct similar searches at sea.

Mr. Wang made clear that China would not halt ships and board them to search for ballistic missiles or for bomb-making equipment or material that can be used to manufacture nuclear, chemical and biological arms.

"This is a resolution we have to implement," he told reporters at the United Nations. "The question was raised whether China will do inspections. Inspections yes, but inspection is different than interdiction and interception. I think different countries will do it different ways."

During the news conference on Monday, Ms. Rice said she was "not concerned that the Chinese are going to turn their backs on their obligations. I don't think they would have voted for a resolution if they did not intend to carry through on it."

Mark Mazzetti contributed reporting.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2006/10/17/world/asia/17diplo.html>

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Washington Post

October 17, 2006

Pg. 12

Rice Trip To Push Full Sanctions For N. Korea

U.S. Intelligence Chief Says Radiation Samples Confirm Nuclear Test Last Week

By Glenn Kessler and Dafna Linzer, Washington Post Staff Writers

Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said yesterday that she will push for full implementation of U.N. sanctions against North Korea as punishment for its recent nuclear test when she makes a critical visit to Asia and Russia this week.

The sanctions prohibit trade with North Korea in illicit materials, weapons and luxury items.

"Every country in the region must share the burdens as well as the benefits of our common security," Rice said in comments aimed at China and South Korea, Pyongyang's two largest trading partners. She called on nations to "collectively isolate" North Korea, adding that it "cannot destabilize the international system and then expect to exploit elaborate financial networks built for peaceful commerce."

Rice also warned Iran -- which faces possible U.N. sanctions over its nascent nuclear enrichment program -- that the Security Council will begin work on a resolution condemning Tehran for not suspending that effort. Iran "can now see that the international community will respond to threats from nuclear proliferation," Rice said, adding that Iran's current course "could lead simply to further isolation."

Rice, who departs today, held a news conference on her trip to Japan, South Korea, China and Russia a few hours after the head of U.S. intelligence agencies announced that analysts had confirmed North Korea's nuclear test through radiation samples detected in the air two days after the blast.

A two-sentence statement released by Director of National Intelligence John D. Negroponte said an analysis of radioactive debris "confirms that North Korea conducted an underground nuclear explosion in the vicinity of P'unggye on October 9, 2006. The explosion yield was less than a kiloton."

The extremely small yield surprised U.S. nuclear scientists and intelligence analysts, who had expected a large explosion typical of a first test. The U.S. military dropped a bomb of 20 to 23 kilotons on Nagasaki, Japan, more than 60 years ago.

Although the radiation samples confirm the nuclear test, officials at the CIA, the Department of Energy and national nuclear laboratories are still trying to determine the cause of the low yield. The prevailing theory is that North Korea managed to implode only a fraction of the plutonium during the test.

If the test was less successful than the North Koreans hoped, U.S. analysts believe they will conduct another one to determine what went wrong. Officials said they are on the lookout with satellite imagery and communications intercepts for any signs of a new test.

But some scientists and weapons designers are beginning to wonder whether North Korea tested a sophisticated, miniaturized device.

North Korea's nuclear arsenal is believed by U.S. intelligence to have grown significantly during President Bush's tenure, but little is known about the exact design of the device that Pyongyang may have built. U.S. intelligence has

judged, however, that North Korea could be as long as 10 years away from being able to marry a nuclear warhead to a missile delivery system.

Rice told reporters that on her trip she will reassure Japan and South Korea that "the United States has both the will and capability to meet the full range of our security and deterrent commitments." That is a diplomatic way of saying that the U.S. nuclear umbrella will make it unnecessary for those nations to consider developing their own nuclear weapons.

Although Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe has flatly rejected building a nuclear arsenal, the country's ruling party policy chief said Sunday that it is necessary to have a debate over whether Japan should obtain the bomb. U.S. officials are privately concerned that if North Korea is not restrained, Japan in particular might rethink its position on nuclear weapons. During a speech in Shanghai in 2004, Vice President Cheney made an unusually stark public warning that, if faced with a reality that North Korea has a stockpile of nuclear and ballistic weapons, other nations in the region "may conclude their only option is to develop their own capabilities, and then we have a nuclear arms race unleashed in Asia."

Despite Rice's public warning to Iran yesterday, several U.S. and European diplomats concluded privately that any Security Council resolution on Iran would need to be toned down as a result of the action on North Korea over the weekend.

"The DPRK resolution set a standard that the Iranian resolution will be set against, and since Iran hasn't set off a nuclear device, it'll be quite hard to get away with a tougher one than we got on North Korea," said one official, speaking on the condition of anonymity because of diplomatic sensitivities. "In any case, Iran just isn't North Korea. Nothing about these issues are the same."

"Iran has really been on the backburner for the last two weeks," said another U.S. government official whose work focuses on Iranian nuclear issues. "Although the secretary said we can walk and chew gum at the same time, in reality we are only taking baby steps and chewing half a piece of gum."

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/10/16/AR2006101600445.html>

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Los Angeles Times

October 17, 2006

China Reverses Its Refusal To Search N. Korean Cargo

U.S. officials confirm that radioactive debris was found in air samples taken near the test site.

By Maggie Farley, Times Staff Writer

UNITED NATIONS — U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice pressed China on Monday to help stop flows of weapons-related goods to and from North Korea, as Beijing reversed its refusal to conduct inspections but continued to oppose interceptions that might lead to conflict.

On the eve of a weeklong trip to Japan, China, South Korea and Russia to discuss how to contain and engage North Korea, Rice said she was confident that China would make "all efforts" to prevent North Korea from trading in dangerous materials.

China, along with the rest of the U.N. Security Council, backed a sanctions resolution on North Korea that called for aggressive land, air and sea inspections and seizure of materials if necessary.

The council acted Saturday after the government in Pyongyang tested a nuclear device Oct. 9. The office of National Intelligence Director John D. Negroponte confirmed Monday that radioactive debris was detected in air samples collected Wednesday near Punggye.

After the vote, China said it would not participate in the inspections because it feared they would lead to confrontation near its borders. Chinese Ambassador Wang Guangya softened that stance Monday, saying that China has always conducted inspections on its borders and in its ports, and is considering ways to strengthen them. But China is still wary of aggressive interdictions and seizures — especially in international waters or airspace, where the law is murky.

"Inspections are one thing. Interdiction and interception are another. In the high seas or in the air, if you have suspicion of a particular cargo, what do you do?" he asked. "What about freedom of the high seas, and freedom of passage? It has to be done with great care.

"We must be careful that it won't be carried out in such a way like a quarantine, searching every ship going in and out of a country. Most countries consider that an act of war. It could easily lead to unnecessary confrontation," Wang said.

North Korea has warned that it would consider Security Council sanctions "a declaration of war" and take countermeasures.

China stepped up inspections of trucks at the 880-mile border's main crossing in Dandong after the resolution passed, the Associated Press reported.

China is building a massive fence along parts of its border with North Korea, the AP reported. It said farmers and visitors had seen scores of soldiers near the Yalu River erecting concrete barriers and stringing barbed wire.

Rice said she was "not concerned that the Chinese are going to turn their backs on their obligations. I don't think they would have voted for a resolution if they did not intend to carry through on it."

Asked about reports that a second nuclear test might be ahead, Rice said that she did not expect Pyongyang to commit "such a provocative act."

She said the U.N. resolution held a lesson for Iran, whose nuclear program is to be the focus of a sanctions discussion this week at the Security Council.

Tehran "can now see that the international community will respond" to efforts to acquire nuclear weapons, Rice said.

Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad said his country would not be intimidated by the sanctions on North Korea and planned to push ahead with its nuclear program.

Times staff writer Paul Richter in Washington contributed to this report.

<http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/world/la-fg-norkor17oct17.1.1926146.story?coll=la-headlines-world>

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Philadelphia Inquirer

October 17, 2006

More Nuclear Worries

By George Jahn, Associated Press

VIENNA, Austria - The head of the U.N. nuclear agency warned yesterday that as many as 30 countries could soon have technology that would let them produce atomic weapons "in a very short time," joining the nine states known or suspected to have such arms.

Speaking at a conference on tightening controls against nuclear proliferation, Mohamed ElBaradei said more nations were "hedging their bets" by developing technology that is at the core of peaceful nuclear energy programs but could quickly be switched to making weapons.

ElBaradei, chief of the International Atomic Energy Agency, called them "virtual new weapons states."

The warning came amid heightened fears that North Korea's nuclear test and Iran's defiance of a U.N. Security Council demand that it suspend uranium enrichment could spark a new arms race, particularly among Asian and Middle Eastern states.

ElBaradei did not single out any country in his warning, but he was clearly alluding to Iran and other nations working to develop uranium-enrichment capability, such as Brazil.

Other nations, including Australia, Argentina and South Africa, have recently announced that they were considering developing enrichment programs so they could sell fuel to states that want to generate electricity with nuclear reactors.

Canada, Germany, Sweden, Belgium, Switzerland, Taiwan, Spain, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Lithuania are among nations that either have the means to produce weapons-grade uranium if they choose to do so, could quickly build such technology, or could use plutonium waste for weapons. All are committed non-nuclear weapons states, and no one has suggested they want to use their programs for arms.

Japan also says it has no plans to develop atomic weapons, but it could make them at short notice by processing tons of plutonium left over from running its nuclear reactors. South Korea also has spent reactor fuel and was found a few years ago to have conducted small-scale secret experiments on making highly enriched uranium that would be usable in warheads.

Other countries considering developing nuclear programs in the near future, U.N. officials say, are Egypt, Bangladesh, Ghana, Indonesia, Jordan, Namibia, Moldova, Nigeria, Poland, Thailand, Turkey, Vietnam and Yemen. There are five formally declared nuclear-weapons states - the United States, Russia, China, France and Britain - and four others are known or thought to have such arms - India, Pakistan, Israel, and now North Korea.

North Korea developed its capacities from what it had portrayed as a peaceful nuclear-energy program, and there are widespread suspicions Iran may be trying to obtain arms through its enrichment program, despite Tehran's insistence it seeks only to produce fuel for reactors to generate electricity.

North Korea's nuclear-weapon test a week ago sparked widespread condemnation and led the Security Council to agree on broad sanctions. On Iran, the council plans this week to discuss possible selective penalties for Tehran ignoring its demand to stop enrichment by Aug. 31.

Much of ElBaradei's comments were directed at the potential for misuse of uranium enrichment, which can generate both low-enriched, reactor-grade uranium and highly enriched material for nuclear bombs.

"The knowledge is out of the tube... both for peaceful purpose and unfortunately also for not peaceful purposes," ElBaradei said.

U.S. and Iran Spar Over Arms

Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice challenged Iran to learn from the international reaction to the North Korean atomic test.

"The Iranian government is watching, and it can now see that the international community will respond to threats from nuclear proliferation," she said.

Iran's president, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, yesterday shot back, calling it "illegal" for the U.N. Security Council to demand that Iran suspend its uranium enrichment, Tehran's state-run television reported.

"Some Western countries have turned the U.N. Security Council into a weapon to impose their hegemony," Ahmadinejad was quoted as saying.

"Mounting threats and pressures against Iran's peaceful nuclear activities won't cause even one iota of hesitation in the will of the Iranian nation to continue this path," he said.

<http://www.philly.com/mld/inquirer/news/nation/15775795.htm>

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Washington Times

October 17, 2006

Pg. 19

Sunni-Shiite Travail

By Terence P. Jeffrey

Shortly before Iraq finally formed its coalition government this spring, one of that nation's leading Shi'ite ayatollahs, Ahmad Al-Baghdadi, gave a televised sermon explaining his views on jihad.

"If the objective and subjective circumstances materialize, and there are soldiers, weapons and money -- even if this means using biological, chemical and bacterial weapons -- we will conquer the world, so that 'There is no God but Allah, and Muhammad is the Prophet of Allah' will be triumphant over the domes of Moscow, Washington and Paris," the ayatollah said in a sermon recorded by The Middle East Media Research Institute.

"This Arab Islamic nation must obtain a nuclear bomb," the ayatollah said in a subsequent TV interview.

Now, it is an ironic fact that among those who ought to be praying most fervently for the success of the teetering U.S. experiment in democracy in Iraq are the non-democratic leaders of nearby Sunni Arab regimes.

Last week in Cairo, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice conferred with a group of such leaders from Egypt, Jordan and the nations of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), which includes Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates and Oman.

Her agenda included the efforts to restore stability in Iraq and to stop Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons.

Sunni Arab leaders now see these causes as intimately linked -- because they see themselves sinking into a Cold War, or worse, with a Shi'ite Iran that is exploiting the unrest in Shi'ite-majority Iraq.

Events this summer intensified longstanding Sunni Arab anxiety about Iran's intentions. In Iraq, even after the formation of the coalition government, the level of sectarian violence exploded -- driven in large part by Iranian-backed Shi'ite militias. In Lebanon, Iranian-backed Hezbollah launched an unprovoked war against Israel and plunged that nation into chaos.

An unbridled sectarian civil war in Iraq, Sunni Arab leaders fear, could gallop across their borders, with Iran arming local Shi'ite militants just as it has in Lebanon and Iraq.

Were Iran to secure nuclear weapons, it could sow Shi'ite revolution with impunity.

The Sunni Arab anxiety about Iraq and Iran is rooted in demographics. Every GCC state is a Sunni monarchy or emirate that governs at least some Shi'ites. Bahrain, according to the State Department report on religious freedom, has a Shi'ite majority that has "often resented minority Sunni Muslim rule." Kuwait's Shi'ite minority is 30 percent; the United Arab Emirates', 15 percent; and Qatar's, 10 percent. Oman, said State, has "a small but significant population of Shi'ite Muslims concentrated in the capital area and along the country's Batinah coast."

Saudi Arabia's 26.7 million people include 2 million Shi'ites, mostly concentrated along the Gulf Coast.

As the Iraq war has continued, Sunni leaders have increasingly vocalized their fear of radicalized Shi'ites. In December 2004, King Abdullah of Jordan warned that Iran was seeking a Shi'ite Islamic republic in Iraq that could become part of a "Shi'ite crescent" that would threaten the Arab world.

"Even Saudi Arabia is not immune from this," King Abdullah told The Washington Post. "It would be a major problem. And then that would propel the possibility of a Shi'ite-Sunni conflict even more, as you're taking it out of the borders of Iraq."

Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak put the Sunni fears bluntly. Returning from a tour of the GCC states in April, he spoke with Al-Arabiya TV. "Do you think the Iranian influence is responsible for this critical situation in Iraq?" asked the interviewer.

"Definitely, Iran has influence on the Shi'ites," said Mr. Mubarak. "This is not just talk -- they have many people. The Shi'ites make up around 65 percent of the Iraqis. There are Shi'ites in all these countries. It is a very large percentage. The Shi'ites' loyalty is always to Iran. Most of them are loyal to Iran and not to their countries."

"What will happen in Iraq if the Americans leave today?" the interviewer asked.

"It will be a disaster," said Mr. Mubarak. "The war between them will rage more. And many forces will get involved. Iran and others will get involved. It will be a theater for an ugly civil war. Terrorist operations will also rage, not only in Iraq, but also in a number of other places."

If the Sunni Arab regimes want to avert the catastrophe they envision, they should use every means possible to pressure their Sunni co-religionists in Iraq to shut down their insurgency -- before it's too late -- and cut a deal with the coalition government.

The Bush administration has been rightly criticized for woefully miscalculating the difficulty of postwar nation-building in Iraq. It unleashed a struggle for the soul of that country with the likes of Ayatollah Baghdadadi. But those who demand a quick U.S. withdrawal could make a graver miscalculation. They may find the ayatollah's acolytes starting wars across the Middle East -- and beyond.

Terence P. Jeffrey is a nationally syndicated columnist.

<http://www.washtimes.com/commentary/20061016-100752-4312r.htm>

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Washington Times

October 18, 2006

Pg. 1

U.S., Allies Fear 2nd Nuke Test By Pyongyang

Only 'speculation,' Rumsfeld says

By Bill Gertz, The Washington Times

The United States and two allies voiced new worries yesterday that North Korea is set to conduct a second underground nuclear test, as Pyongyang said that new U.N. sanctions are tantamount to a declaration of war. Asked about the possibility of another nuclear test, Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld told reporters that there is "speculation," but no specific information.

"We've seen them do things in multiples rather than singles," Mr. Rumsfeld said, referring to North Korea's seven missile-flight tests in July.

"There's speculation that they may want to do something additional. There's also speculation they may not. So, only time will tell," he said after meeting with Singapore's former prime minister, Lee Kuan Yew.

In Tokyo, Japanese Foreign Minister Taro Aso said, "We have received such information [about a test], but I cannot tell you the details."

A South Korean official told reporters in Seoul that "there are certain signs that prompted our authorities to cast a very sensitive eye on the matter."

U.S. intelligence agencies on Monday confirmed that a blast Oct. 9 northwest of Kilchu, North Korea, was a nuclear test, although it appeared to be smaller and less successful than anticipated.

The White House warned North Korea yesterday that another nuclear test would lead to greater isolation.

"The first test, while nuclear, did have a low yield, and perhaps it would not be unreasonable to expect that the North Koreans might want to try something once again to be provocative," White House press secretary Tony Snow told reporters. "It would not be a good thing for them, but it certainly would not be out of character."

A U.S. official said yesterday that a second test is possible but that there are no signs one is imminent.

A defense official said that several North Korean nuclear-testing facilities are being watched closely and that some increased activity has been spotted. Normally, such tests are preceded by vehicle movement and increased communications.

North Korea's government, meanwhile, harshly criticized sanctions passed Saturday by the United Nations in response to the nuclear test, issuing its first official statement on the matter.

The Foreign Ministry said North Korea's test was the result of "the U.S. nuclear threat, sanctions and pressure."

North Korea "was compelled to substantially prove its possession of nukes to protect its sovereignty and right to existence from the daily increasing danger of war from the U.S.," the ministry said.

Pyongyang, however, still wants to "de-nuclearize the peninsula through dialogue and negotiations," it stated. North Korea "is ready for both dialogue and confrontation," the Foreign Ministry said. "If the U.S. increases pressure upon [North Korea], persistently doing harm to it, it will continue to take physical countermeasures, considering it as a declaration of a war."

In Seoul, Christopher R. Hill, assistant secretary of state for East Asian and Pacific affairs, told reporters that another nuclear test will be a further sign of North Korean bellicosity.

"We would all regard a second test as a belligerent answer on North Korea's part to the international community," he said. North Korea "really has to understand that the international community is not going to accept [it] as a nuclear state."

Mr. Hill said Pyongyang might view nuclear tests as a way to gain respectability but, in fact, the blasts "make us respect them less."

Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice left Washington yesterday for a diplomatic tour of the region. She will meet with Japanese officials today and South Korean ministers tomorrow on North Korea sanctions. She will also meet with Chinese officials later in the week.

South Korea's Yonhap news agency today quoted Alexander Vershbow, the U.S. ambassador in Seoul, as saying Miss Rice will ask South Korea to help inspect North Korea-bound ships for the components for weapons of mass destruction. Both China and South Korea have expressed reluctance to participate in such actions.

The governments of South Korea and Japan also are worried that a second test is coming.

Intelligence analysis of the likelihood of a second test appeared mixed. Some analysts said there is no evidence indicating that a second test will be conducted soon.

However, a defense intelligence official told Reuters that North Korea has moved equipment and structures that are signs of a coming test.

"This activity could represent prep for a second test, but it doesn't necessarily mean definitively that it is," the defense official said.

People and vehicle activity in North Korea is not a sure sign of an impending nuclear test.

"They may have had the same activity six months ago, but it wouldn't have raised any red flags at the time," one official said. "But now it is."

On the motive behind North Korean actions, Mr. Snow said he would not "do a psychological evaluation of the 'Dear Leader,'" as North Korea's Kim Jong-il is called.

"What we do is, we take a look at his actions, and we'll respond with actions, which we think are going to be louder than words or psychological profiles," he said.

"I think the consequences of a second North Korean nuclear test would be the further isolation of North Korea," Mr. Snow said.

<http://www.washtimes.com/national/20061018-123123-4714r.htm>

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Washington Post

October 18, 2006

Pg. 17

Escalation Not The Aim On N. Korea, Rice Says

By Glenn Kessler, Washington Post Staff Writer

ELMENDORF AIR FORCE BASE, Alaska, Oct. 16 -- Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said Tuesday that there are concerns North Korea might test a second nuclear weapon but that the United States would not take measures to exacerbate tensions in northeast Asia.

"We have no desire to see this crisis escalate," Rice told reporters as she flew on the first leg of a week-long tour of Japan, South Korea, China and Russia. "In fact, it is our goal to see a de-escalation of this, despite North Korean actions."

Under a U.N. Security Council resolution passed Saturday, nations are obligated to prevent North Korea from selling or buying certain banned weapons and technology. But the resolution passed so quickly -- just days after last week's test -- that Bush administration officials say they believe some countries do not have a clear understanding of their obligations and requirements.

On her trip, Rice plans to discuss various administration initiatives to thwart North Korea's trade in illicit materials, but she said: "What we are not looking for is inspecting every ship. This is not some random inspection." She said inspections would be "information-driven," based on tips and other intelligence about North Korean intentions.

A senior State Department official traveling with Rice, and involved in shaping the inspection policy, said the administration was seeking broad cooperation from each of the countries she is visiting and would be willing to provide assistance that would make every suspect North Korean shipment subject to scrutiny at seaports, airports and border crossings.

"We do want states to meet those obligations" in the Security Council resolution, he said, speaking on condition of anonymity under rules set by the State Department. "Success depends on each of the states we are visiting."

Intelligence officials said Tuesday that activity spotted by satellites near the site of the Oct. 9 nuclear test had heightened concerns about the possibility of a second test. The satellites have picked up movements of vehicles, equipment and personnel. It is difficult, however, for intelligence officials to interpret the images. One official cautioned that imagery is "not always the clearest window into what may really be happening on the ground." North Korea's first test produced an extremely small blast yield of less than a kiloton, leading most U.S. analysts to presume that the test may not have been completely successful. If the low yield resulted from only a fraction of the device's plutonium imploding, then the North Koreans may want to test again. Another intelligence official suggested a second test may be conducted for political, rather than technical, reasons.

North Korea criticized the U.N. measures in a Foreign Ministry statement released by the official Korean Central News Agency. "The resolution cannot be construed otherwise than [as] a declaration of a war," the statement said. Japan, Rice's first stop, has already imposed sweeping economic sanctions. A key focus of Rice's trip will be China, which shares a 880-mile land border with North Korea and is responsible for much of the reclusive communist country's trade with the outside world.

China was deeply embarrassed by the actions of its longtime client state. But China also values North Korea as a buffer between its border and U.S. troops based in South Korea, making it reluctant to take steps that might cause the government to collapse.

Rice stressed that the Bush administration was focused on "denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula," not destabilizing the North Korean government. She said the administration remains committed to reversing and ultimately dismantling North Korea's nuclear programs. Last year, the United States joined in a statement with North Korea's neighbors that would offer economic and security incentives in exchange for abandoning the programs. While China may be a reluctant partner, the new government of Japan has eagerly embraced a tough line against North Korea.

Despite a firm statement by Prime Minister Shinzo Abe that Japan does want to build its own nuclear arsenal, administration officials remain concerned that Japan may have a change of heart, launching a potentially destabilizing arms race in the region.

Rice said she will reassure Japan and South Korea that they can rely on the U.S. nuclear deterrent in place of developing their own programs. She also said she would begin a broader discussion with other countries on how "we maintain in northeast Asia and the Asia-Pacific a security environment that is not given to an arms race."

Staff writer Dafna Linzer in New York contributed to this report.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/10/17/AR2006101701056.html>

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New York Times
October 18, 2006

Rice To Urge Radiation Inspections To Thwart North Korea

By Thom Shanker

ELMENDORF AIR FORCE BASE, Alaska, Oct. 17 — Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice will urge the countries of northeast Asia to create a strict system of radiation monitoring and inspections to prevent North Korea from smuggling nuclear materials into or out of the country, a senior State Department official said Tuesday.

But in what appears to be an effort to cajole China to enforce the new United Nations sanctions against North Korea aggressively, the United States will ask the countries to focus their efforts on conducting inspections in their own territories, including ports, and on suspicious ships, trucks and aircraft rather than every piece of cargo.

China has been concerned about taking too harsh a stance against North Korea, and its ambassador to the United Nations has said it will not interdict ships.

On Tuesday, a spokesman for the North Korean Foreign Ministry called the United Nations sanctions against his country a "declaration of war." The tone of the statement was not atypical for the North, which often releases bellicose public announcements.

The United Nations resolution, issued last weekend to punish the North for its Oct. 9 nuclear bomb test, bans trade with North Korea in materials linked with unconventional weapons, and authorizes countries to inspect cargo going

into and out of the North. But this last measure was diluted by China's insistence that the resolution state that countries be asked, not required, to do so.

What Secretary Rice will be negotiating this week with Asian countries is how they will ensure that transfers of nuclear and other material do not happen. China, which voted for the United Nations sanctions, says it is committed to putting the resolution into effect.

The American idea for a new security framework for North Korea, as described Tuesday by the State Department official, was intended to try to ensure that the country's suspicious cargo would be inspected in Asia, but in ways that could not be construed as a blockade.

"We do not envision this regime as an embargo, as a quarantine or as a blockade," said the official, who was accompanying Ms. Rice as she flew from Washington to Asia, with a refueling stop here in Alaska. "It is much more selective in nature" and aimed specifically at materials for manufacturing unconventional weapons, or building missiles to carry them, the official said.

The United States will urge the northeast Asian countries to use radiation monitors to identify suspicious ships, trucks and aircraft and to also consider United States and Asian intelligence in figuring out which cargo to check. Separately, in comments to correspondents at the start of her trip for talks in Tokyo, Seoul, Beijing and Moscow, Ms. Rice stressed that efforts to end North Korea's nuclear program should be carried out in ways that do not escalate the crisis.

Her comments could be heard as assurances to the leadership in Beijing. As worried as China may be about North Korea's decision to explode a nuclear bomb, it is equally worried that international sanctions, led by the United States, could cause its neighbor to implode, sending thousands of refugees streaming across its border.

Ms. Rice repeated the Bush administration's official formulation that the United States has no intention or desire "to attack or invade North Korea." But she also said that "the long-suffering people of North Korea should not be forgotten by the international system."

She warned of dangers if other nations moved toward developing their own nuclear arsenals to counterbalance North Korea — one reason that she said she planned to reaffirm American security commitments to Japan and South Korea.

Officials aboard Ms. Rice's airplane gave the most detailed description to date of how the Bush administration hopes to enlist North Korea's neighbors to implement the Security Council sanctions. They described how a more stringent monitoring and inspection program might focus on the placement of radiation sensors at the land crossings along China's lengthy border with North Korea, and at airfields and ports across the region and around the world that are known to handle cargo to and from the North.

The number of border crossings, airports and maritime ports used in trade by North Korea's feeble economy is limited.

Officials who described details of these initial ideas did so on condition of anonymity, under traditional ground rules for speaking in advance of diplomatic talks.

Tuesday's statement by North Korea said the country would "deliver merciless blows without hesitation to whoever tries to breach our sovereignty and right to survive under the excuse of carrying out the U.N. Security Council resolution."

Referring to the North by the initials of its official name, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the statement also said: "The D.P.R.K. had remained unfazed in any storm and stress in the past when it had no nuclear weapons. It is quite nonsensical to expect the D.P.R.K. to yield to the pressure and threat of someone at this time when it has become a nuclear weapons state."

In Seoul, South Korea's top nuclear negotiator, Chun Yung-woo, said the statement contained "no surprises," and was just "the usual rhetoric that they have been using," according to Agence France-Presse.

Choe Sang-Hun contributed reporting from Seoul, South Korea.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2006/10/18/world/asia/18korea.html>

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Philadelphia Inquirer

October 18, 2006

Why China Reluctant To Board Ships Of N. Korea

By Alexa Olesen, Associated Press

BEIJING - China's reluctance to board North Korean ships and inspect them for banned weapons underscores the difficulties of enforcing the U.N. sanctions against the communist government - and Chinese concerns about U.S. naval power.

China fears that searches at sea might trigger military clashes and that the United States could use them to police northeast Asian waters, an area vital to China, analysts said yesterday.

"If intelligence can prove the ships are loaded with dangerous material, I don't think Beijing would be opposed to stopping them," said Zhu Feng, a professor at Peking University's School of International Relations. "But we just worry that the United States will abuse its naval power."

China maintains that the resolution does not obligate it to interdict ships. A neighbor of North Korea, it is worried about touching off a wider conflict.

This stance puts China at odds with the United States and is likely to be high on the agenda when Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice visits Beijing this week.

Though China, a permanent U.N. Security Council member, voted for the sanctions, it immediately criticized a provision on inspections. Its ambassador to the United Nations, Wang Guangya, drew a firmer line Monday, saying China would carry out some inspections, but appeared to rule out ship searches.

"Inspection is different than interdiction and interception," Wang told reporters. "I think different countries will do it different ways."

China is key to the success of the sanctions, imposed after the North's Oct. 9 nuclear test. China provides critical financial, energy and food assistance to North Korea, and most of the North's trade passes over the Chinese border. The U.N. resolution, passed Saturday, calls for inspections of all cargo leaving from and arriving in North Korea to prevent illegal trafficking in unconventional weapons or ballistic missiles.

In addition to pressing China to carry out searches for North Korean arms, Rice said Monday that she also would talk with the Chinese about joining a separate U.S.-led global initiative that aims to search ships feared to be carrying material for unconventional weapons.

Washington has assembled 60 nations to join the proliferation security initiative, which interdicts ships to prevent unconventional weapons from reaching nations Washington is concerned about, such as North Korea, Iran, Sudan, Syria and Cuba.

China has declined to participate but has not spoken out against the program.

<http://www.philly.com/mld/inquirer/news/nation/15784004.htm>

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New York Times

October 18, 2006

Europeans Back Gradual Steps Against Iran's Nuclear Program

LUXEMBOURG, Oct 17 (Reuters) — The European Union, spurred by North Korea's nuclear test, backed limited United Nations sanctions against Iran's nuclear program on Tuesday after Iran rejected conditions for opening negotiations.

The 25 foreign ministers of member nations, meeting here, called for incremental measures concentrating first on individuals and materials involved in Iranian uranium enrichment activities, which the West suspects are aimed at making a bomb.

After four months of talks with the European Union's foreign policy chief, Javier Solana, Iran this month rejected a United Nations demand that it suspend enrichment.

"The Iranians' refusal leaves us no choice today but to take to the Security Council route," the French foreign minister, Philippe Douste-Blazy, told reporters. "The Security Council should adopt gradual, reversible measures proportionate to Iranian actions."

Germany's foreign minister, Frank-Walter Steinmeier, called it the "first step in sanctions," but stressed that the Europeans' offer of cooperation remained on the table if Iran was willing to meet the conditions.

The European Union's commissioner for external relations, Benita Ferrero-Waldner, said: "The most important thing is to have a united response, as we showed with North Korea. We must show Iran that the international community is completely determined to remain united." She told reporters, "We offered a very attractive package which could be beneficial for Iran, but up to now we have not received an acceptance."

Mark Fitzpatrick of the London-based International Institute for Strategic Studies said the approach with Iran would be gentler than that with North Korea.

"A sanctions resolution on Iran will not be swift or biting, as it has been with North Korea," he said, noting that while North Korea openly stated its nuclear weapons intentions, Iran insisted its program was peaceful. There was no conclusive proof that Iran sought an atom bomb, he said.

In a statement, the foreign ministers expressed deep concern that Iran had not yet suspended enrichment activities, and said the European Union had no choice but to support consultations in the United Nations on measures on the basis of Resolution 1696, which told Iran to suspend enrichment by Aug. 31 or face sanctions.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2006/10/18/world/middleeast/18iran.html>

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