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Articles & Other Documents:

[THE BIOLOGICAL WEAPONS THREAT AND
NONPROLIFERATION OPTIONS](#)

[New Nuclear Weapons Program To Continue](#)

[Blair Urges Keeping Nuclear Arms Program Alive](#)

[U.S. Seeks To Make Stolen Nukes Useless](#)

[New DHS disaster preparedness ads play down terrorism](#)

[U.S. Offers North Korea Aid For Dropping Nuclear
Plans](#)

[Hill Accord Reached On Nuclear Fuel For India](#)

[U.S. Missile Test Thwarted By Failure To Launch](#)

[Six foreign ports to scan cargo for nuclear devices](#)

Welcome to the CPC Outreach Journal. As part of USAF Counterproliferation Center's mission to counter weapons of mass destruction through education and research, we're providing our government and civilian community a source for timely counterproliferation information. This information includes articles, papers and other documents addressing issues pertinent to US military response options for dealing with nuclear, biological and chemical threats and attacks. It's our hope this information resource will help enhance your counterproliferation issue awareness.

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Center for Strategic & International Studies

THE BIOLOGICAL WEAPONS THREAT AND NONPROLIFERATION OPTIONS

AUTHOR: Amy E. Smithson
DATE OF PUBLICATION: November 29, 2006
RELATED RESEARCH FOCUS: Defense Policy
EXPERTS : Amy E. Smithson
SYNOPSIS:

Following Aum Shinrikyo's 1995 sarin attack on Tokyo subway commuters, revelations about the USSR's massive biological weapons program and Iraq's germ warfare program in the 1990s, and the sending of anthrax-laced letters to prominent U.S. politicians and reporters in the fall of 2001, a considerable amount has been said and written about the threat of biological weapons proliferation and what should be done about it.

Those who make and influence U.S. foreign and defense policy have been exposed to and at times participated in this discussion, but this survey constitutes the first systematic attempt to poll senior U.S. decision makers and policy shapers about the nature of the biological weapons threat and the policy options to address it.

The first part of the survey described in this report poses several questions about the biological weapons threat, while the other segments of the survey ask the same individuals to stipulate whether governments should require the

implementation of several nonproliferation tools, to rate the U.S. government's performance on the bioweapons nonproliferation agenda, to prioritize biological weapons nonproliferation policy options, and to state a preference for a unilateral or multilateral approach to biological weapons nonproliferation.

Three groups of individuals received invitations to participate in the survey. The first group consisted of senior members of the Executive Branch, from the deputy assistant level up to cabinet level in the Departments of State, Defense, and Commerce and within the intelligence community, military services, and National Security Council. The category of current senior officials also included senators and members of Congress serving in leadership posts and on committees that have jurisdiction on matters related to biological weapons proliferation, foreign policy, defense, and homeland security. Former senior executive branch officials and legislators were the second group asked to participate in the survey. Nongovernmental experts in nonproliferation, national and international security, and terrorism comprised the third survey group. The survey period ran from 25 October to 15 November 2006. The raw data from the survey is also available - [2006 Biological Weapons Threat and Nonproliferation Options Survey: Raw Data](#).

(To view complete report, please click on link below.)

http://www.csis.org/component/option.com_csis_pubs/task.view/id.3627/type.1/

[\(Return to Articles and Documents List\)](#)

Washington Post
December 2, 2006
Pg. 7

New Nuclear Weapons Program To Continue

By Walter Pincus, Washington Post Staff Writer

The Nuclear Weapons Council, made up of senior Defense Department and National Nuclear Security Administration officials, said yesterday that they plan to continue developing a new nuclear weapons program even though recent studies suggested that existing stockpiles are in better condition than had been thought.

The announcement comes just two days after the release of studies by the Los Alamos and Lawrence Livermore national laboratories showing that plutonium triggers in currently stockpiled weapons will remain reliable for 90 to 100 years.

A major reason for starting the new weapons program -- known as the Reliable Replacement Warhead (RRW) -- was the belief that highly radioactive plutonium would degrade so much within 45 years that it could affect the reliability of the weapons in the current stockpile, many of which were built in the late 1960s.

The Nuclear Weapons Council determined that competing designs submitted by both national labs could result in reliable warheads "without underground testing," a key requirement of the program. The council members are expected to choose one of the two designs in the next few weeks and to develop cost estimates. Moving to the next phase of warhead development will require the approval of Congress, which will be controlled by Democrats next year.

Some members of Congress have said the plutonium studies raised questions about the need for the RRW program. Rep. David L. Hobson (R-Ohio), considered the father of the RRW program, said yesterday that, based on the plutonium studies, "they should take a breath because there are lots of demand for money." He added: "Congress is not going to be as robust about this though there is a need to have some scientific work done."

Yesterday, Rep. John M. Spratt Jr. (D-S.C.), the incoming chairman of the House Budget Committee, said it may be time to review not only the RRW program but also the Bush administration's 2001 Nuclear Posture Review (NPR), which established the underlying need for nuclear weapons over the next 20 years.

Sen. Pete V. Domenici (R-N.M.) yesterday hailed the council decision to proceed with RRW, saying it could lead to "a weapon that is safer to store and defend, more reliable, and less costly to manufacture and maintain." Domenici, whose state is home to the Los Alamos laboratory, is currently chairman of the Senate Appropriations subcommittee that handles funds for the NNSA.

Robert W. Nelson, senior scientist at the Union of Concerned Scientists, said that based on the recently released plutonium studies, the submarine-launched warhead up for replacement under the RRW program, the W-76, has a minimum age for reliability of about 85 years. Production of the W-76, the warhead for the Trident I and Trident II sub-launched missiles, began in 1978 and ended in 1987, during which time about 3,000 were turned out. The Trident I can carry up to eight warheads, the Trident II up to 14.

The Bush NPR contemplated reducing deployed warheads, then totaling about 3,800, to a level of 1,700 to 2,200 by 2012. At the same time there would be a non-deployed stockpile of 2,000 to 3,000 more weapons and a capability to resume underground testing and production of new warheads within a reasonable time. The RRW program envisions the initial production of new warheads almost 20 years from now.

Meanwhile, an ongoing program to refurbish the nonnuclear components in currently stockpiled warheads and bombs will continue, giving them an estimated 20 to 30 years of additional reliability.

Administrator Linton F. Brooks of the National Nuclear Security Administration described the RRW program yesterday as providing "the tools we need to build on the president's vision of maintaining the smallest nuclear stockpile that is consistent with national security requirements."

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/12/01/AR2006120101716.html>

[\(Return to Articles and Documents List\)](#)

New York Times

December 5, 2006

Blair Urges Keeping Nuclear Arms Program Alive

By Alan Cowell

LONDON, Dec. 4 — Citing a potential nuclear threat from nations like North Korea and Iran, Prime Minister Tony Blair urged legislators on Monday to extend the life of Britain's nuclear arms program with a new generation of submarines costing as much as \$40 billion.

Mr. Blair made his proposal as he presented a white paper to Parliament on the subject of Britain's nuclear capacity that is expected to be debated at some length before a vote next March.

Mr. Blair proposed a plan to replace four Vanguard nuclear-powered submarines, equipped with Trident D5 missiles manufactured in the United States, that he said were the nation's only nuclear deterrent. The vessels will begin to go out of service in 2022, he said, and it will take 17 years to design and build replacements.

Nuclear weapons are a sensitive issue for the governing Labor Party since many of its supporters — including at one time Mr. Blair himself — have traditionally opposed nuclear weapons. Indeed, until the late 1980s, the party was formally committed to unilateral nuclear disarmament.

Mr. Blair insisted Monday that Britain should not dispense with its nuclear capacity.

"The risk of giving up something that has been one of the mainstays of our security since the war, and moreover doing so when the one certain thing about our world today is its uncertainty, is not a risk I feel we can responsibly take," he said in Parliament. "Our independent nuclear deterrent is the ultimate insurance."

Apart from other arguments, Mr. Blair said, "The new dimension is undoubtedly the desire by states, highly dubious in their intentions, like North Korea and Iran, to pursue nuclear weapons capability."

But Mr. Blair's supporters are calculating that they can muster sufficient parliamentary support from the opposition Conservatives to squash Labor opposition in next year's vote. As a sop to Labor dissent, however, Mr. Blair said Britain would consider reducing its nuclear submarine force to three from four and might cut its "stockpile of operationally available warheads" by one-fifth, to "no more than 160."

In addition to Britain, nations with nuclear weapons include the other four permanent members of the United Nations Security Council — the United States, Russia, China and France — and India and Pakistan.

Western nations like the United States and Britain accuse Iran of seeking a nuclear weapons capacity, which it denies. North Korea conducted a nuclear test in October. Israel has not commented on claims that it has nuclear weapons capacity.

"The notion of unstable, usually deeply repressive and anti-democratic states, in some cases profoundly inimical to our way of life, having a nuclear capability is a distinct and novel reason for Britain not to give up its capacity to deter," Mr. Blair said.

"It is not utterly fanciful either to imagine states sponsoring nuclear terrorism from their soil," he said. "We know this global terrorism seeks chemical, biological and nuclear devices. It is not impossible to contemplate a rogue government help such an acquisition."

Some opponents of nuclear weapons said that Britain should spend its money on the environment, not on weapons. But labor unions representing shipyard and engineering workers said thousands of skilled jobs would be secured by a new nuclear submarine program.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2006/12/05/world/europe/05britain.html>

[\(Return to Articles and Documents List\)](#)

Los Angeles Times

December 5, 2006

Pg. 1

U.S. Seeks To Make Stolen Nukes Useless

Bush has told weapons labs to render bombs terrorist-proof. But critics say theft risk is low and more urgent issues are being ignored.

By Ralph Vartabedian, Times Staff Writer

LIVERMORE, CALIF. — In response to a secret order from President Bush, the nation's nuclear weapons laboratories are developing technology to make the weapons virtually impossible to use if they fall into the wrong hands.

The security system will be part of a new generation of nuclear weapons, approved formally last week by a special panel of the Defense and Energy departments.

A nuclear bomb equipped with such safeguards could theoretically be left on the streets of Los Angeles or Manhattan and terrorists would be unable, even given months of tinkering, to detonate it. Scientists say they are working on technology that would destroy every component inside — including the plutonium and uranium — if anyone tampered with it.

But the 3-year-old effort, known as National Security Presidential Directive 28, has drawn strong criticism from many nuclear weapons experts, who doubt that absolute safeguards are necessary or even possible. Instead, they say, the federal government should fix known security weaknesses at bomb labs and factories.

The nation has 6,000 nuclear warheads, on missiles and in military depots in places as disparate as Texas, North Dakota and Europe. They all have electronic locks or other safeguards, known as use controls, that pose a tough challenge to terrorists.

But the new plan aims for a dramatic improvement.

The big leap would involve the self-destruction of the weapon without dispersing radioactivity or causing an explosion. The new system would be able to destroy the electronic and mechanical components and to render the plutonium and uranium materials unusable in any crude improvised device.

How? That's secret. But one possibility is that the bomb would contain a powerful acid or other chemical that would poison the uranium and plutonium. The resulting sludge theoretically could be reprocessed, but only in a highly specialized chemical-processing factory.

And, the thinking goes, terrorists who had access to such a factory probably wouldn't need to steal a bomb.

The nation's two nuclear weapons laboratories — Lawrence Livermore in California and Los Alamos in New Mexico — are competing to design the new generation of bomb, known as the reliable replacement warhead. The Nuclear Weapons Council, a panel of top Defense and Energy officials, could select a winner as soon as this week. The use controls on nuclear weapons are among the most secret parts of a very secret enterprise. Scientists call them the "inner workings of the bank vault door."

The national security order Bush signed in 2003 — the contents of which have not been made public — has only a single unclassified sentence: the instruction that the labs make it impossible for terrorists to detonate a bomb without its "remanufacture." That clause allows for the remote possibility that terrorists could take the remnants and reassemble them into a new weapon.

"It is essential that we make sure our weapons are impossible for terrorists to use," said Bruce Goodwin, chief of nuclear weapons design at Livermore. The weapons produced during the Cold War, he said, were not designed for an age of terrorism.

"There was no motivation for the Red Army to send in a suicide squad to steal an American weapon," Goodwin said. "They had plenty of their own. There is tremendous incentive to certain people who don't have nuclear weapons to terrorize this nation by stealing one."

Before Sept. 11, security experts had not considered the prospect of a nuclear weapons scientist leading a suicide squad to seize and detonate a U.S. nuclear weapon.

But critics say a terrorist seizing a U.S. bomb is the least likely form of future nuclear terrorism. A more probable scenario, they say, is the theft of highly enriched uranium or plutonium that could be fashioned into a crude nuclear device, or the smuggling of a complete nuclear bomb into the U.S.

"The real threat is the uranium and plutonium materials that are spread across the country in totally inappropriate places and inadequate facilities," said Danielle Brian, executive director of the Project on Government Oversight, a Washington group that has long criticized security at Energy Department sites. "So, rather than fixing the problem they have, they are trying to fix a problem they don't have."

The Energy Department stores weapons-grade materials at many sites, including Livermore, Los Alamos, the Y-12 plant in Tennessee, the Nevada Test Site north of Las Vegas and the Pantex plant in Amarillo, Texas. The department is trying to upgrade protection, but some of its sites fail to meet post-Sept. 11 security standards.

"The secret to avoiding an unauthorized nuclear detonation is maintaining custody of the weapon," said Bob Peurifoy, a retired vice president at Sandia National Laboratory who helped to pioneer use controls during the Cold War. "If a terrorist gains possession of a nuclear weapon because of some fault in custody, I assure you that sooner or later there will be a nuclear detonation."

Accidents happen

Although a U.S. nuclear weapon has never been stolen, the U.S. has accidentally lost custody of some. Bombs were dropped or destroyed in a 1961 accident in Goldsboro, N.C.; a 1966 accident in Palomares, Spain; a 1968 accident in Thule, Greenland; and a 1980 accident in Damascus, Ark. Those were recovered, but others have been lost at sea. Philip Coyle, a former deputy director of the Livermore lab, worries that even the best U.S. technology might not be truly tamper-proof.

"They make it sound like you could leave a nuclear weapon on the streets of Baghdad and nobody would know what to do with it," Coyle said. "I don't think that is quite the case. People can reverse-engineer many things."

And the military, which has always worried about putting locks on weapons, is concerned that a use-control malfunction could prevent the authorized use of a nuclear weapon.

"The argument against doing more and more of the use controls is that you lose confidence in the weapon," said nuclear weapons expert David Mosher of Rand Corp., a Santa Monica think tank. Such technical concerns could lead the military to ask to resume underground nuclear testing, he said.

But scientists at weapons labs say their goal of "absolute surety" is not only the right policy but is clearly achievable.

"We know how to do it," Goodwin said. "The details from an engineering, physics and chemistry point of view are superb. They are just compelling."

Piecemeal security

The existing stockpile of nuclear weapons is protected by sophisticated electronic and physical systems, only some of which are acknowledged openly. Not all weapons are equally protected. Some have relatively weak controls, whereas others have very advanced systems.

Bush's order was designed to end this piecemeal approach. All existing systems are to be enhanced and integrated in future weapons. In addition, new technology is to be developed to meet the "impossible" standard.

Until 1962, no locks of any kind existed on U.S. nuclear weapons, including weapons deployed across Europe.

President Kennedy issued the first secret directive calling for locks and raised concerns in a then-secret national security directive that a "psychotic individual" in the chain of command could start a nuclear war.

Peurifoy recalled being sent on a secret mission in 1962 to install the first locks on warheads in Turkey — mechanical combination locks on the arming mechanisms.

As nuclear weapons have spread, so have fears about loose controls abroad. Peurifoy and former Los Alamos director Harold Agnew suggest that the U.S. share some of its know-how with other nations, such as Pakistan and India. But Energy Department and weapons lab officials usually reject these suggestions, saying that the U.S. should not help nuclear-club newcomers to improve their weapons and that declassifying such technology could undermine U.S. systems.

American systems have evolved into sophisticated multistage use controls. Many arming mechanisms have electronic locks — "permissive action links" — that require transmission of a code, believed to be a 12-digit sequence, to a chip deep inside the bomb. A wrong code is supposed to lock the bomb's arming mechanism.

At least two other use controls also exist. Modern warheads have environmental sensors to determine whether the bomb is on the expected trajectory to a target. If certain accelerations and barometric pressure changes are not confirmed by the sensors, the arming mechanism is disabled.

The most secret use controls involve the plutonium and uranium that set off the nuclear reaction. They disrupt nuclear fission and fusion by distorting internal components until the proper arming sequence is executed. It is here that an acid or other material would poison fissile materials, making the bomb essentially worthless to a terrorist.

Goodwin, the Livermore designer, said that if a U.S. nuclear weapon fell into the wrong hands, he would want it so thoroughly damaged that every part would have to be rebuilt.

"It is really the key to security," he said.

Authorizing an attack

How the U.S. would conduct an authorized nuclear attack:

1. The president carries a card bearing authentication codes at all times, so that if he needs to order a nuclear attack he can confirm his identity on a secure line. A briefcase that accompanies the president contains a secure phone and the top-secret nuclear war plan. The call would go to one of the Defense Department's national military command centers — in the Pentagon, on an airborne jet or at a military base.
2. The president would select a preset war plan, authorizing military commanders to issue a launch order encrypted in 30 alphanumeric digits. The code would identify its origin, which plan had been selected, a time to begin the attack and an eight-digit code to unlock weapons.
3. When the message arrived in submarines, in launch-control bunkers or at air bases, crews would unlock a safe containing the eight-digit unlock code to verify the legitimacy of the launch order. Land-based missiles are ready to launch in 60 seconds. Submarine-based missiles take longer because their guidance systems must be activated.

4. Two launch officers would use special keys to unlock consoles and simultaneously transmit the same launch orders to the missiles. The orders would identify which war plan had been selected. The targets and their coordinates are already programmed into the missile-guidance computers.

5. After the missiles were launched, the nuclear weapons would arm themselves. Sensors aboard the missile would verify that it was experiencing the expected accelerations. A mechanical safe-arming device, which looks like a Swiss watch, would insert a piece of high explosive into a detonator circuit. The bomb would then be ready to burst above its target.

Sources: Bruce Blair, World Security Institute; Lawrence Livermore and Los Alamos national laboratories; John Pike, GlobalSecurity.org

<http://www.latimes.com/news/printedition/la-na-nukes5dec05.1.2882682.story>

[\(Return to Articles and Documents List\)](#)

GovExec.com

DAILY BRIEFING

December 1, 2006

New DHS disaster preparedness ads play down terrorism

By Jon Fox, Global Security Newswire

The Homeland Security Department has rolled out a new crop of commercials designed make families aware of the need to prepare for catastrophic emergencies including the aftermath of terrorism.

However, the new public service announcements never mention terrorism as they direct viewers to the government disaster preparedness Web site Ready.gov.

While the Web site's focus was explicitly on terrorism when it was launched in 2003, Homeland Security officials said the agency is now moving toward an "all hazards" campaign.

The new ads feature families realizing during a documentary-style interview that they are generally unprepared to deal with an emergency situation. They stumble into that realization with a smile, seemingly bemused at their own failure to think about preparedness. Each commercial is set to the same jaunty, slightly folksy guitar tune.

The television spots, produced free of charge by the New York firm BBDO along with the Advertising Council, are a stark contrast to a more alarmist tack taken in the past.

An older Spanish language commercial, still featured on the Ad Council Web site, is much darker in tone and focused directly on terrorism. Its approach echoes the rhetoric used by former Homeland Security Secretary Tom Ridge when he announced the Ready.gov campaign in 2003.

He appeared on CNN to warn Americans of the unpredictable nature of terrorism and to remind them to make an emergency kit that included duct tape and premeasured plastic sheeting to create a home shelter from chemical weapons.

"The next attack could happen to any community at any time," Ridge said then. "Terrorists force us to make a choice: We can be afraid or we can be ready. American's aren't afraid, and we will be ready."

In the Spanish-language public service announcement two angels -- an element the Homeland Security Department said was specific to the Spanish ads because research showed "it's something that would appeal to Hispanics" -- look out over a darkened city from a high hillside.

"They can't see the threat, so they don't feel the danger," the first angel says, going on to remind the second angel that "the crab that is not aware of the tide is swept out to sea."

An announcer then tells viewers in Spanish: "Even if you don't think about it, the possibility of a terrorist attack is real. Are you ready?"

The older commercials for Ready.gov were "more terrorism-focused," said Homeland Security spokeswoman Joanna Gonzalez. The Spanish-language advertisements, like their English-language counterparts, are being redone, she said.

The new concepts are part of a long look at what is needed to actually persuade Americans to plan for the emergencies, including terrorism: "What do we need in an advertisement to get someone to actually act?" Gonzalez said. "You need a motivator. These ads have real families."

Along with the commercials, the Web site itself has changed drastically. In 2003, the main page of the site declared "Terrorism forces us to make a choice. ... Don't be afraid. Be ready." There are links to information about what might happen in the event of biological, chemical, nuclear and radiological attacks.

In the Web site's most recent iteration in 2006, the word terrorism does not appear on the site's home page. Instead, a smiling family sits on their porch. Families are advised to "Prepare. Plan. Stay informed."

Information about what to do in the event of fires, floods, hurricanes and tornadoes has been added the tips about what to do in the event of WMD attacks.

Michael Stebbins, a scientist with the Federation of American Scientists, applauded the shift. His organization has been critical of Ready.gov in the past, and even created an alternative site called ReallyReady.org that the group says has more complete information on preparedness.

"I think the move away from terrorism probably reflects the fact that it's not resonating as well anymore and people don't want to be scared anymore," Stebbins said. "It's better to reach out and appeal to them on a different level."

"Talking about terrorism events specifically only scares somebody and it actually misses the point," he said, adding that the real goal is spurring someone to devise an emergency plan.

The new ads went out to television stations in mid-November, but it is impossible to know yet when they are going to be televised, said Ellyn Fisher, an Ad Council spokeswoman. The Ready.gov site has registered more than 1.7 billion hits since it was launched.

A survey in February 2004 found that the percentage of parents who stock emergency supplies had increased from 28 percent to 40 percent since the beginning of the campaign. The number of families that had created an emergency plan had increased from 17 to 27 percent.

http://govexec.com/story_page.cfm?articleid=35589&dcn=todaysnews

[\(Return to Articles and Documents List\)](#)

New York Times

December 6, 2006

Pg. 14

U.S. Offers North Korea Aid For Dropping Nuclear Plans

By Helene Cooper and David E. Sanger

WASHINGTON, Dec. 5 — The United States has offered a detailed package of economic and energy assistance in exchange for North Korea's giving up nuclear weapons and technology, American officials said Tuesday.

But the offer, made last week during two days of intense talks in Beijing, would hinge on North Korea's agreeing to begin dismantling some of the equipment it is using to expand its nuclear arsenal, even before returning to negotiations.

It is unclear whether North Korea will accept the offer, which is more specific — in both the details and the timing — than a vaguely worded statement of principles that the North signed in September 2005, a year before its first nuclear test.

The combination of incentives and demands was the focal point of three-way meetings on Nov. 28 and 29 involving Assistant Secretary of State Christopher R. Hill; North Korea's vice foreign minister, Kim Kye-gwan; and Chinese officials at the Diaoyutai State Guesthouse in Beijing. The incentives offered by the United States include food aid from the United States, Japan and South Korea, a senior administration official said.

The offer is significant because the administration has resisted making clear to North Korea exactly what kind of aid it would receive if it agreed to begin taking apart facilities like the plutonium reprocessing facility that turns spent fuel into weapons, and to provide a list of all its nuclear facilities. Hawks in the administration, particularly in Vice President Dick Cheney's office, have long opposed what they call "rewarding" North Korea for its nuclear test. But State Department officials have argued that while the argument has gone on in Washington, the North has produced fuel for six or more weapons. They say the only successful strategy will be one that results in the beginning of dismantlement.

The incentives package also includes a pledge by the United States to work with North Korea toward finding a way to end the financial restrictions placed last year on a Macao bank, Banco Delta Asia, that was a main hub of the North's international financial transactions. The Bush administration accused Banco Delta Asia of helping North Korea to launder money from drug smuggling and other illicit activities and to pass counterfeit \$100 bills manufactured by the North's government.

While the United States remains unwilling to lift the sanctions until the counterfeiting issue is resolved, a senior administration official said American officials had told the North Koreans they would work with them on the issue. "We would help them to help themselves," the official said. "We would expect them to come forward with what they know, and we'd work through the problem."

Describing the North Koreans' response to the entire package of incentives and demands, the official, who was in the room during the exchanges in Beijing, said: "They listened intently. They were clearly in a listening and probing mode, and they said they were glad to be hearing this from us."

The Beijing discussions took place in advance of planned six-country talks on the nuclear program. Diplomats from the other five countries — the United States, China, Japan, South Korea and Russia — are wary that the off-again-on-again talks risk irrelevancy; they began in 2003 and have yet to produce anything beyond the agreement in principle of dismantlement for eventual aid.

No date has been set for the official talks.

North Korea boycotted the six-party talks last year after the United States cracked down on Banco Delta Asia, and on Oct. 9, Pyongyang conducted a nuclear test. On Oct. 31, North Korea agreed to return to the six-party talks. Since then, though, American officials have balked at scheduling a meeting until first receiving a commitment from the North to start dismantling the nuclear program.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2006/12/06/world/asia/06korea.html>

[\(Return to Articles and Documents List\)](#)

Washington Post

December 8, 2006

Pg. 17

Hill Accord Reached On Nuclear Fuel For India

By Associated Press

Lawmakers reached agreement yesterday on allowing U.S. shipments of civilian nuclear fuel to India, clearing the way for overturning decades of American anti-proliferation policy.

After several days of talks, congressional negotiators signed off on the measure, which reconciles separate versions previously endorsed overwhelmingly by the House and the Senate, said a spokesman for House Majority Leader John A. Boehner (R-Ohio).

Both chambers of Congress must vote again on the bill before sending it to President Bush to sign into law.

Boehner's office said the House was expected to consider the bill today. Details of the final bill were not immediately available.

The bill's passage would be a rare victory for Bush, whose popularity has tumbled. He will also have to deal with a Democratic-controlled Congress in January after his Republican Party was defeated in the Nov. 7 midterm elections. The White House promotes the India plan as a major shift in U.S. policy toward a country that is strategically an important Asian power, one that has long maintained what the United States considers a responsible nuclear program. Critics say the extra nuclear fuel that the deal would provide could free India's domestic uranium for use in its weapons program. India developed its nuclear weapons outside the Non-Proliferation Treaty, which it has refused to sign.

Congressional aides said the bill became bogged down this week when Boehner halted action, apparently in an attempt to attach unrelated legislation. The majority leader's office said he was not holding up the bill.

Undersecretary of State R. Nicholas Burns and his Indian counterpart, Foreign Secretary Shiv Shankar Menon, yesterday expressed confidence that each side would be satisfied with the outcome of Congress's work.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/12/07/AR2006120701563.html>

[\(Return to Articles and Documents List\)](#)

Los Angeles Times

December 8, 2006

U.S. Missile Test Thwarted By Failure To Launch

By Associated Press

HONOLULU — An "incorrect system setting" caused the shutdown of two interceptor missile launches in a failed test Thursday of the sea-based U.S. missile defense system, the military announced.

One dummy enemy ballistic missile was launched from the Pacific Missile Range Facility on Kauai, Hawaii, simulating a missile attack on U.S. territory, and the second shorter-range missile was launched from a Navy aircraft and aimed at the anti-missile ship intended to stop the attack, the U.S. Missile Defense Agency said.

But both interceptor missiles aboard the cruiser Lake Erie failed to launch — one because of the automatic fire-control system aboard the ship and the other intentionally, because the drill was intended to test defense against a dual-missile attack, the agency said.

Both target missiles dropped harmlessly into the ocean. The first one was lost, and the second was being recovered for future tests as intended, said agency spokesman Chris Taylor.

Taylor said it represented the second failure in nine tests of the system.

<http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/nation/la-na-missile8dec08,0,4187818.story?coll=la-headlines-nation>

[\(Return to Articles and Documents List\)](#)

Six foreign ports to scan cargo for nuclear devices

By Chris Strohm, National Journal's Technology Daily

The Energy and Homeland Security departments on Thursday announced that new cargo-detection equipment will be installed at six foreign seaports to scan U.S.-bound containers for weapons of mass destruction. The goal is to meet, and even exceed, congressional requirements.

Under the Secure Freight Initiative, detection equipment will be installed at Puerto Cortes in Honduras, Port Qasim in Pakistan, and Southampton in the United Kingdom. All U.S.-bound cargo originating from those ports will be scanned by a radiation-detection system and X-ray machine, and have their identification numbers read by an optical character reader.

Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff said doing so will meet a mandate from Congress in a port security bill cleared two months ago. It requires that all U.S.-bound cargo at three foreign ports be scanned.

"Our highest priority and greatest sense of urgency has to be aimed at preventing a nuclear weapon or dirty-bomb attack against the homeland," Chertoff said. "This initiative advances a comprehensive strategy to secure the global supply chain and cut off any possibility of exploitation by terrorists." A dirty bomb is a small, nontraditional nuclear device.

Chertoff said the department would go beyond the congressional mandate by also installing radiation detection and X-ray scanners at three other ports: the Gamman Terminal at Port Busan in South Korea, Port Salalah in Oman, and the Port of Singapore. Only a portion of containers at those three ports will be run through some screening lanes equipped with the technology.

The new detection equipment will become operational at the ports in Honduras and Pakistan in February, followed by Southampton in June or July. Equipment will be deployed to the remaining three ports late in 2007.

Chertoff said the data on each container will be sent electronically to U.S. Customs and Border Protection officials, who will decide whether it needs to be inspected further. "We will not outsource our security," he said. "In the end, the go-no decision rests with our guys sitting in a CBP office."

Local law enforcement at each port would be responsible for doing further inspections. The two departments plan to spend \$60 million for deploying the equipment to the six ports.

Once the scanning equipment is deployed at all six ports, a total of 7 percent of all U.S.-bound cargo will be scanned for weapons of mass destruction, Chertoff said.

Some Democrats in Congress have supported a mandate that would require Homeland Security to ensure that all U.S.-bound cargo is scanned for weapons of mass destruction within five years. Chertoff said meeting any such mandate would require reaching agreements with foreign governments.

"It's going to take foreign governments to agree to this," he said. "I certainly don't want to have the United States appear to be bullies."

It was not immediately clear how the Energy and Homeland Security departments would select which companies provide technology under the initiative.

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