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New York Times
December 10, 2005

Head Of Nuclear Agency Again Urges Iran To Cooperate

By Walter Gibbs

OSLO, Dec. 9 - Mohamed ElBaradei, the director general of the International Atomic Energy Agency, warned Iran on Friday to stop hindering an investigation into the country's nuclear energy program, which the United States and many other observers suspect is a cover to develop nuclear weapons.

"The international community has begun to lose its patience," he told reporters here before a ceremony on Saturday at which he is to be awarded the 2005 Nobel Peace Prize.

While denouncing Iran's repeated delays in accommodating inspectors from his agency, Dr. ElBaradei also said that forcing a showdown on the matter now could backfire. The United States has urged the agency to report Iran's history of concealment and sluggish cooperation to the United Nations Security Council for possible punitive measures.

"Let us not think we should jump the gun and use enforcement," said Dr. ElBaradei, adding that no "smoking gun" had emerged to prove that Iran's intent was hostile. "If you can wiggle your way to cooperation, that is better than the alternative."

He took a similar approach before the invasion of Iraq, when, he said, inspectors had turned up no evidence to support the Bush administration's claim that Saddam Hussein had revived an old nuclear weapons program. The

subsequent failure of American troops to find such evidence seemed to vindicate Dr. ElBaradei, while burnishing his Nobel credentials.

According to scientists and policy analysts, the case against Iran's openly belligerent regime is harder to dismiss because the existence of its uranium-enrichment program, ostensibly to produce energy, is not in doubt. The question is whether the program will be modified out of view of the atomic energy agency to make bombs.

"ElBaradei needs a touch of Churchill now," said Paul Leventhal, founder and now president emeritus of the Nuclear Control Institute, a nonprofit research center based in Washington. "He must acknowledge the unique danger of this regime, which is comparable to the rise of Hitler in the 1930's. The Nobel will give him a bully pulpit if he's prepared to use it. But so far he has put a rosy picture on things in order to avoid a crisis."

The perception that Dr. ElBaradei has obstructed the United States' plans for Iraq and Iran was possibly behind a yearlong push by members of the Bush administration to deny him a third term as director general of the atomic energy agency. When Washington found itself isolated on the matter, it joined the agency's 35-nation board in re-electing him by acclamation in September.

The Norwegian Nobel Committee divided this year's Peace Prize in equal measures between Dr. ElBaradei and the agency itself. The duties of the I.A.E.A. include monitoring adherence to the 1970 Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty and promoting the safe use of nuclear technology for energy and medicine.

Steve Fetter, a nonproliferation specialist and dean of the University of Maryland School of Public Policy, praised the choice of winners and said Dr. ElBaradei had few options in Iran apart from continued negotiation.

"What do people mean by 'enforcement?' " asked Professor Fetter. "I think they mean something like what we just did in Iraq. The stakes are that high."

At his news conference on Friday, Dr. ElBaradei said: "I don't believe there is a military solution to the problem. I believe that would be counterproductive."

He said the Middle East, including Iran, was one of three "hotbeds" in the world where nuclear-tinged political conflict endangered many people. The others are the Korean Peninsula, where North Korea claims to have built nuclear weapons, and South Asia, where Pakistan and India face off with nuclear weapons.

Dr. ElBaradei took the established nuclear powers to task, saying they had neglected their treaty obligations to reduce weapon stockpiles. A world of nuclear "haves and have-nots," he said, is unsustainable. He criticized the Bush administration in particular for considering the development of a new generation of small tactical nuclear weapons.

"Whether you call them mini-nukes or bunker-busters, it's sending the wrong message," he said.

The Nobel Peace Prize includes a cash prize of 10 million Swedish kronor, or about \$1.3 million, which Dr. ElBaradei and the agency will split evenly. He said he would donate his prize money to orphanages in Egypt, his native country. Yukiya Amano, chairman of the agency's board, said its share would go toward cancer treatment and nutrition in the developing world.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2005/12/10/international/europe/10nobel.html>

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London Sunday Times

December 11, 2005

Israel Readies Forces For Strike On Nuclear Iran

By Uzi Mahnaimi and Sarah Baxter

ISRAEL'S armed forces have been ordered by Ariel Sharon, the prime minister, to be ready by the end of March for possible strikes on secret uranium enrichment sites in Iran, military sources have revealed.

The order came after Israeli intelligence warned the government that Iran was operating enrichment facilities, believed to be small and concealed in civilian locations.

Iran's stand-off with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) over nuclear inspections and aggressive rhetoric from Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, the Iranian president, who said last week that Israel should be moved to Europe, are causing mounting concern.

The crisis is set to come to a head in early March, when Mohamed El-Baradei, the head of the IAEA, will present his next report on Iran. El-Baradei, who received the Nobel peace prize yesterday, warned that the world was "losing patience" with Iran.

A senior White House source said the threat of a nuclear Iran was moving to the top of the international agenda and the issue now was: "What next?" That question would have to be answered in the next few months, he said.

Defence sources in Israel believe the end of March to be the "point of no return" after which Iran will have the technical expertise to enrich uranium in sufficient quantities to build a nuclear warhead in two to four years.

"Israel — and not only Israel — cannot accept a nuclear Iran," Sharon warned recently. "We have the ability to deal with this and we're making all the necessary preparations to be ready for such a situation."

The order to prepare for a possible attack went through the Israeli defence ministry to the chief of staff. Sources inside special forces command confirmed that "G" readiness — the highest stage — for an operation was announced last week.

Gholamreza Aghazadeh, head of the Atomic Organisation of Iran, warned yesterday that his country would produce nuclear fuel. "There is no doubt that we have to carry out uranium enrichment," he said.

He promised it would not be done during forthcoming talks with European negotiators. But although Iran insists it wants only nuclear energy, Israeli intelligence has concluded it is deceiving the world and has no intention of giving up what it believes is its right to develop nuclear weapons.

A "massive" Israeli intelligence operation has been underway since Iran was designated the "top priority for 2005", according to security sources.

Cross-border operations and signal intelligence from a base established by the Israelis in northern Iraq are said to have identified a number of Iranian uranium enrichment sites unknown to the IAEA.

Since Israel destroyed the Osirak nuclear reactor in Iraq in 1981, "it has been understood that the lesson is, don't have one site, have 50 sites", a White House source said.

If a military operation is approved, Israel will use air and ground forces against several nuclear targets in the hope of stalling Tehran's nuclear programme for years, according to Israeli military sources.

It is believed Israel would call on its top special forces brigade, Unit 262 — the equivalent of the SAS — and the F-15I strategic 69 Squadron, which can strike Iran and return to Israel without refuelling.

"If we opt for the military strike," said a source, "it must be not less than 100% successful. It will resemble the destruction of the Egyptian air force in three hours in June 1967."

Aharon Zeevi Farkash, the Israeli military intelligence chief, stepped up the pressure on Iran this month when he warned Israel's parliament, the Knesset, that "if by the end of March the international community is unable to refer the Iranian issue to the United Nations security council, then we can say the international effort has run its course". The March deadline set for military readiness also stems from fears that Iran is improving its own intelligence-gathering capability. In October it launched its first satellite, the Sinah-1, which was carried by a Russian space launcher.

"The Iranians' space programme is a matter of deep concern to us," said an Israeli defence source. "If and when we launch an attack on several Iranian targets, the last thing we need is Iranian early warning received by satellite."

Russia last week signed an estimated \$1 billion contract — its largest since 2000 — to sell Iran advanced Tor-M1 systems capable of destroying guided missiles and laser-guided bombs from aircraft.

"Once the Iranians get the Tor-M1, it will make our life much more difficult," said an Israeli air force source. "The installation of this system can be relatively quick and we can't waste time on this one."

The date set for possible Israeli strikes on Iran also coincides with Israel's general election on March 28, prompting speculation that Sharon may be sabre-rattling for votes.

Benjamin Netanyahu, the frontrunner to lead Likud into the elections, said that if Sharon did not act against Iran, "then when I form the new Israeli government, we'll do what we did in the past against Saddam's reactor, which gave us 20 years of tranquillity".

<http://www.timesonline.co.uk/article/0,,2089-1920074,00.html>

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Washington Times

December 11, 2005

Pg. 2

U.S. Official Warns Of 'Catastrophic' Weapons Use

By Bill Gertz, The Washington Times

A senior State Department official is warning that terrorists are continuing to seek nuclear, chemical and biological weapons for use in future attacks.

"If terrorists acquire these weapons, they are likely to employ them, with potentially catastrophic effects," said Robert Joseph, undersecretary of state for arms control and the senior Bush administration arms proliferation policy-maker.

Mr. Joseph also said the U.S. government will not back off from sanctions imposed on an Asian bank that the Treasury Department said was part of the North Korean government's illegal counterfeiting and money-laundering program.

On terrorism, Mr. Joseph said a well-organized terrorist group with technical expertise could fashion a crude nuclear device once it obtains the fissile material for the bomb's fuel.

Biological weapons also would be used in an attack by terrorists because of the availability of dual-use equipment and access to pathogens, some of which occur naturally, he said.

"The bioterror challenge presents a low-cost means of a potentially high-impact attack," Mr. Joseph said in a speech Friday at the University of Virginia in Charlottesville. A copy of his remarks was obtained by The Washington Times.

"We cannot rest as long as enough material for even one nuclear weapon remains unsecured," he said.

U.S. intelligence officials have said al Qaeda was working on developing nuclear, chemical and biological weapons in Afghanistan under the Taliban regime. Documents obtained from al Qaeda facilities there showed that the group had conducted research and some experiments.

Al Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden also has said that obtaining nuclear arms is a religious duty for his extremist followers.

On North Korea, Mr. Joseph said the administration will not back off the sanctions imposed in September on Macao-based Banco Delta Asia. The Treasury Department has said that senior bank officials took large sums of counterfeit U.S. currency from North Korean government officials and agreed to put it into circulation.

North Korea's government announced recently that because of the sanctions, it would not return to the six-party talks on its nuclear program.

"We have made it clear that, while we are committed to pursuing successful six-party negotiations, we have no choice but to continue our defensive measures to ensure that we can protect ourselves from the proliferation actions of the North, as well as from its illicit activities such as money laundering or counterfeiting," Mr. Joseph said.

He said both the North Korea and Iran are major proliferation challenges.

"There should be no doubt that both countries have such programs," Mr. Joseph said. "President Bush has made clear that, while all options remain on the table, our strong preference is to address these threats through diplomacy."

<http://www.washtimes.com/national/20051210-103635-1375r.htm>

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New York Times
December 11, 2005

Accepting Nobel, ElBaradei Urges a Rethinking of Nuclear Strategy

By Walter Gibbs

OSLO, Dec. 10 - The world should stop treating the nuclear ambitions of Iran and North Korea as isolated cases and instead deal with them in a common effort to eliminate poverty, organized crime and armed conflict, the director general of the United Nations' nuclear monitoring agency said Saturday in accepting the 2005 Nobel Peace Prize. The director general, Mohamed ElBaradei, said a "good start" would be for the United States and other nuclear powers to cut nuclear weapon stockpiles sharply and redirect spending toward international development.

"More than 15 years after the end of the cold war, it is incomprehensible to many that the major nuclear weapon states operate with their arsenals on hair-trigger alert," Dr. ElBaradei, 63, said.

Despite some disarmament, he continued, the existence of 27,000 nuclear warheads in various hands around the world still hold the prospect of "the devastation of entire nations in a matter of minutes."

Feelings of insecurity and humiliation, exaggerated by today's nuclear imbalance, are behind the spread of bomb-development programs at the national level, said Dr. ElBaradei, who has led the International Atomic Energy Agency since 1997. No less dangerous, he added, are the presumed efforts of extremist groups to acquire nuclear materials. With goods, ideas and people moving more freely than ever, the containment of nuclear technology must be part of a broad global effort, he said.

"We cannot respond to these threats by building more walls, developing bigger weapons or dispatching more troops," he said. "These threats require primarily multinational cooperation." Dr. ElBaradei said the manufacture and sale of nuclear fuel for power generation, which can also be enriched to make bombs, should be placed under multinational control, with his agency operating as a "reserve fuel bank" for accredited nations.

The Norwegian Nobel Committee divided the 2005 award between Dr. ElBaradei and the atomic energy agency as a whole. Dr. ElBaradei and Yukiya Amano, the agency's board chairman, were awarded diplomas and medals in a colorful ceremony before more than 1,000 dignitaries at Oslo City Hall.

The committee chairman, Ole Danbolt Mjøs, lauded Dr. ElBaradei and his agency for resisting "heavy pressure" in 2003 to fall in line with an American contention that Iraq had an active nuclear weapons program despite the failure of the agency's inspectors to find hard evidence. "As the world could see after the war in Iraq, the weapons that were not found proved not to have existed," Mr. Mjøs said.

In what appeared to be an allusion to that episode, Dr. ElBaradei said: "Armed with the strength of our convictions, we will continue to speak truth to power, and we will continue to carry out our mandate with independence and objectivity."

For the Nobel committee, this year's choice of winners was a return to basics after last year's untraditional award to Wangari Maathai, a Kenyan environmentalist whose tree-planting campaigns are only tangentially related to war and peace. When Alfred Nobel, the Swedish industrialist who helped develop dynamite, died in 1897, he left money in his will to honor someone each year "who shall have done the most or the best work for fraternity between the nations, for the abolition or reduction of standing armies and for the holding and promotion of peace congresses." Dr. ElBaradei and the agency will split this year's prize money of 10 million Swedish kronor (about \$1.3 million) and have promised their shares to charitable causes.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2005/12/11/international/europe/11oslo.html>

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Newport News Daily Press

December 10, 2005

Pg. 1

DOD Orders Army To Find Dumpsites

A high-ranking official promises a comprehensive effort to locate long-lost chemical weapons.

By John M.R. Bull

The military is plowing through old records to find any and all information on the Army's ocean dumping of chemical weapons decades ago, a high priority effort to determine where they all are located and what danger they pose today.

The Army hopes to finish its record search by the end of March, said Addison Davis, an assistant secretary of the Army.

"What we're conducting right now is probably the most comprehensive search on records ... that has ever been done," he said. "Our goal is to compile the best, most comprehensive, up-to-date information possible."

An order from the highest levels of the Pentagon has gone out to all branches of the military to search for all ocean dumping records, not just of chemical weapons but of conventional ordnance as well, Davis said.

The Army is most interested in discovering where it dumped all its chemical weapons into the sea from World War I until 1970, when the practice was halted.

Officials want to know exactly where they are located and what type of chemical weapons -- as well as how many -- are in each dumpsite.

Then the Army will be better able to assess the risk each site poses to fishermen or the environment, Davis said.

The records search was prompted by a Daily Press investigation published in October -- based on never-before released Army reports covering 1944 to 1970 -- that revealed the military dumped at least 64 million pounds of chemical weapons into the ocean in dozens of locations that virtually ring the country.

The dumpsites -- mostly containing mustard and nerve gases and some radioactive waste -- are off the coastlines of at least 11 states. Additional dumpsites are off the coasts of 16 other countries. The sites were created when the U.S. Army dumped its overseas stockpiles of chemical weapons at the close of World War II.

The Army knows where only half the dumpsites off the U.S. coast are, because the known surviving records are vague and others have been destroyed.

More dumpsites likely exist, because the Army only now is reviewing chemical weapons dumping in the World War I-era, when it was common to throw the weapons over the side of ships in relatively shallow water.

Some scientific evidence suggests the weapons may be slowly leaking after decades of saltwater corrosion.

In the wake of the newspaper's investigation, the Army has begun a military-wide records search which includes a review of ship manifests, a look at historical nautical charts, and perusal of old chemical weapons shipments kept at a variety of Army bases.

The Army also has collected scientific research on long-known dumpsites overseas of chemical weapons. It briefed at least eight federal lawmakers who demanded data about the dumping.

"We've tried to be very responsive in replying to questions on the Hill," said Davis, a civilian near the top of the Army's chain of command. "That I personally did the briefing sends a signal of the importance I place on this."

The Army also has been busy researching the stories of individuals who came forward to report health effects they said are related to their participation in dumping operations long ago.

Davis said the Army has learned that safety measures were taken at the time to ensure that military personnel were not casually exposed to chemical agents or radioactive waste.

Medical records of one former serviceman who helped dump radioactive waste off the coast of Virginia in 1960 show that he was exposed only to the equivalent of eight chest X-rays, Davis said.

No new chemical weapons dumpsites have been identified since the record search began at the end of October. But if others are found, Davis promised that information would be promptly released to Congress and the news media. He also vowed to give Congress progress reports, as the paperwork search continues and as discussions begin on what to do about the weapons that were dumped.

There is no easy answer for handling the weapons, once all the dumpsites are identified and their contents are catalogued.

Most, but not all, are in deep water far from shore, according to Army reports completed in 1989 and 2001, and released to the Daily Press this summer.

Some of the weapons may have released their deadly contents long ago, causing an unknown environmental impact. Others likely remain intact where they were dumped, barnacle-encrusted and too unstable after all these years in the ocean to haul up from the ocean floor.

Shells corrode at different rates, depending on their thickness and the temperature of the water, and some may already be leaking -- an extreme danger to any recovery effort.

A 2002 study by Norwegian scientists who studied chemical weapons dumped off that country's coast by the U.S. or British military after World War II revealed that some shells have leaked. Others are slowly corroding, and some seem to be undamaged, so far, by the saltwater.

Some scientists estimated the weapons pose a continuous risk of leaking over the next 100 years.

"We believe it is highly unlikely any of this stuff is in danger of washing up on shore," Davis said. "But we're putting a full-court press on this issue."

<http://www.dailypress.com/news/dp-35327sy0dec10.1.4001879.story?ctrack=1&cset=true>

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Christian Science Monitor

December 13, 2005

Pg. 3

Battle Brews Over A Bigger Military Role

The Pentagon tilts toward taking more authority in major disasters - worrying governors, lawmakers.

By Mark Sappenfield, Staff writer of The Christian Science Monitor

WASHINGTON -- The lessons learned from hurricane Katrina appear to be putting the Pentagon on a collision course with governors and lawmakers worried about the expanding role of the military in disaster response. Gaining currency at the highest levels of the Pentagon is the idea that during a catastrophic event - either natural or terrorist - the Department of Defense should replace the Department of Homeland Security as the agency in charge of the federal response.

In many ways, the notion is limited, affecting only how the federal government deploys its own resources. Yet in a nation founded on a distrust of military control, any suggestion of giving the armed forces greater authority on American soil faces centuries-old skepticism. Moreover, it comes at a time when governors are already feeling besieged by an administration that, they feel, is too eager to wrest power from them.

"Most members of Congress and nearly all governors have expressed the belief that in the context of a catastrophic event, the Department of Defense should be on tap but not on top," says Paul McHale, assistant secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense. "The question is: How well can you do that?"

The emerging opinion at the Pentagon is that Katrina laid bare the limitations of the nation's current disaster-response plan. Officials are quick to note that the system works well for the 50-odd natural disasters that occur routinely every year: Governors make a request for assistance to the president, and the president then asks the Department of Homeland Security - which includes the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) - to organize federal resources to help local officials.

The Pentagon's concern is with a disaster the magnitude of hurricane Katrina or greater, such as the detonation of a nuclear weapon in a major American city. Katrina showed that when local first responders are overwhelmed or incapacitated, the job of filling that gap falls to the military - not only states' National Guards, controlled by their governors, but also federal troops called in for rescue and humanitarian relief.

Yet during Katrina, the federal military remained under FEMA's control. It meant that the Defense Department, which had the resources to appraise the situation and prioritize its missions more quickly than could FEMA, actually drafted its own requests for assistance and sent them to FEMA, which copied them and sent them back to the Department of Defense for action, says Mr. McHale.

The bureaucratic contortions allowed the Pentagon to move more quickly, but they suggested what now seems obvious to defense officials: In catastrophic disasters, where the Defense Department will bring the most resources to bear, it should marshal the federal response - at least at first.

Yet the mere mention of the Defense Department taking a leading role in disaster response is enough to send governors and civil libertarians scurrying for tar and feathers. "We've had it up to our ears with the federal government telling us, 'We can do a better job than you,' " says Montana Gov. Brian Schweitzer (D).

Like most governors, he has not heard of the new ideas circulating through the Pentagon. Indeed, Secretary McHale says the Pentagon itself has not finished its "due diligence" review of how to apply the lessons learned from Katrina. Yet Governor Schweitzer and others are wary of any attempt by the federal government to meddle in local affairs - especially with armed forces. The perception of an overbearing Bush administration has only added to fears that this is a veiled power grab.

"They take the Guard and its equipment away from us [to send to Iraq], and they say, 'See, you weren't ready to respond,' " he says. "If [the federal military] want to come and help us in an emergency, that's fine. But in no way is it a good idea to decrease the authority or the effectiveness of the National Guard."

As a witness in congressional hearings, McHale tried to disabuse lawmakers of the notion that the Pentagon is seeking to come in, take over, and declare martial law after catastrophic events. At this early stage, it is true that many questions are unanswered, he says. Among them: How long would the military remain the lead federal agency? What would be the trigger for declaring a disaster "catastrophic"? Who would make that declaration and how?

But moving the Defense Department to the top of the federal food chain in responding to catastrophic events would not necessarily "federalize" the disaster response, overriding state authority and putting the federal government in control of the relief effort. Nor would it require diverting soldiers to disaster relief or changing Posse Comitatus, the law that prohibits active-duty troops from engaging in law enforcement.

Instead, McHale says, it is a shift in responsibility that would allow the Pentagon to move quickly and more decisively after a massive disaster: "The Department of Defense will be expected to have ... at least some enhanced authority to control and speed the deployment of [its] capabilities through some carefully defined assignment of leadership responsibility."

<http://www.csmonitor.com/2005/1213/p03s03-usmi.html>

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Washington Times

December 13, 2005

Pg. 17

U.S. Urges Seoul To Coordinate Aid With Nuke Talks

By Andrew Salmon, The Washington Times

SEOUL -- As South Korea scrambled to defuse a growing crisis in Pyongyang-Washington relations by kick-starting six-party nuclear talks, the U.S. ambassador to Korea called for the linking of economic aid with progress on denuclearization.

The communist state, meanwhile, responded to U.S. critiques with predictably strident rhetoric -- but also took the unusual step of inviting Western tourists to visit in 2006.

South Korean Foreign Ministry officials quoted by Yonhap news agency said they hoped Seoul could persuade North Korea to return to six-party nuclear talks -- involving the two Koreas, the United States, China, Russia and Japan -- at inter-Korean ministerial-level talks that begin today. The North has said it will boycott talks, expected to commence next month, unless the United States withdraws financial sanctions against it. The Foreign Ministry officials cited increased North-South "interdependence" as a point of leverage.

Also yesterday, U.S. Ambassador in Seoul Alexander Vershbow, speaking at an economic forum, called on the South to link economic aid with progress at denuclearization talks.

Noting that Washington and Seoul are "working to calibrate our approach toward economic cooperation with North Korea," he added: "We also see a need for coordination between economic cooperation and progress on the six-party talks."

Since last year, 15 Southern companies, employing 5,000 Northern workers, have set up factories at the Kaesong Industrial Zone, an insulated business park on North Korea's border with the South. In the next few years, Seoul policy-makers expect 2,000 Southern companies to establish themselves, employing 300,000 to 700,000 Northern workers.

Seoul hopes the complex will provide a model for North-South economic cooperation and is reluctant to link progress at the complex with strategic issues.

Under international agreements, South Korea is required to consult with the United States before transferring any U.S.-patented technologies that could have potential military use to North Korea. This has caused frustration in the South, with such pedestrian equipment as telephones and personal computers destined for Kaesong being subject to clearance.

Mr. Vershbow, appointed in October, has shocked some in South Korea with his tough attitude toward Pyongyang, calling it a "criminal regime." Also last week, Jay Lefkowitz, the U.S. special envoy on North Korean human rights, spoke combatively about the state's purported human rights abuses.

On Saturday, the Korea Central News Agency called the statements a "provocative declaration of war" and warned that the North would "mercilessly retaliate."

Amid the diplomatic storm, North Korea sent a less-than-combative message by inviting Westerners -- including Americans -- to visit the self-proclaimed socialist paradise as tourists.

North Korean tourism authorities contacted Koryo Tours, a Beijing-based company, Saturday night, extending an invitation for all foreigners to attend a performance of Mass Gymnastics in 2006, the company said. The spectacle, presented this fall, was expected to occur again in 2008, but has been moved forward to 2006.

<http://www.washingtontimes.com/world/20051212-100737-7239r.htm>

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