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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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(Editor's Note: Hyperlinks for referenced report and other related documents follow article.)

## **Study slams biodefense plan**

Poor organization, underfunding cited

By Robert Schlesinger, Globe Staff, 1/23/2004

WASHINGTON -- The Pentagon's efforts at creating new vaccines and drugs to combat biological weapons are poorly organized, underfunded, and unlikely to produce successful results in the near term, if ever, according to a congressionally mandated study released yesterday.

According to the report, the United States has not developed any vaccines and "only a few drugs as medical biodefense countermeasures" since the 1991 Persian Gulf War, when the specter of biological warfare against US troops was first brought to the public consciousness.

The study, by the Institute of Medicine and the National Research Council, recommended that Congress establish a new Medical Biodefense Agency to direct Defense Department research and development of medicines for dealing with biological warfare attacks as well as regular infectious diseases.

"The biodefense efforts of the Department of Defense are poorly organized to develop and license vaccines, therapeutic drugs, and antitoxins to protect members of the armed forces against biological warfare agents," said the report's executive summary. "These efforts are characterized by fragmentation of responsibility and authority, changing strategies that have resulted in lost time and expertise, and a lack of financial commitment commensurate with the requirements of program goals."

The study was commissioned by Congress to look at the Defense Department's research into medical defenses against biological warfare, such as vaccines and other drugs.

"The Department of Defense is evaluating the recommendations of the . . . report. We generally agree with many of them," said a Pentagon statement from Defense officials. "We are committed to doing what is required to ensure protection of the health and well-being of our troops."

President Bush has identified biological weapons as one of the gravest threats facing the United States. He based his call for war in Iraq partly on the allegation -- still unproven -- that the country had vast stores of biological weapons. One of the greatest areas of concern for US military commanders and political leaders in the run-up to the invasion of Iraq last year was the prospect that the Iraqis might unleash biological attacks against advancing allied forces. President Bush ordered US forces to be immunized against anthrax and smallpox.

Indeed, according to the report, there have been no less than a half-dozen declarations since 1993 from either the White House or the Pentagon "that biological warfare poses a significant threat to the safety and effectiveness of the nation's armed forces." Congress mandated in 1993 that all of the Pentagon's biological and chemical defense activities be coordinated in a single office under the defense secretary's office.

Nevertheless, funding for new vaccines and drugs to combat biological attack has fallen short, the report found. While funding for Pentagon medical biological defense research has increased from \$245 million in fiscal year 1996 to \$676 million -- including funds spent by the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency -- in fiscal year 2003, the figure remains small, according to the study. By comparison, funding for the Missile Defense Agency, "which has a different but also difficult research and development task with a high risk of failure," has risen from \$2.8 billion in fiscal year 1996 to \$6.6 billion in fiscal year 2003. The Bush administration budget request for fiscal year 2004 contained a cut in medical research for biological defense, down to \$612 billion, along with a nearly billion-dollar increase for missile defense.

Since the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, the Bush administration has stepped up civilian research into medical defenses against biological agents, most notably with a \$1.7 billion grant in fiscal year 2003 for research at the National Institutes of Health, though the administration's fiscal year 2004 request was \$1.6 billion. The administration has also proposed Project BioShield, which aims to create \$6 billion in incentives over 10 years for the pharmaceutical industry to produce medical countermeasures.

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[http://www.boston.com/news/nation/articles/2004/01/23/study\\_slams\\_biodefense\\_plan/](http://www.boston.com/news/nation/articles/2004/01/23/study_slams_biodefense_plan/)

## **Accelerating the Research, Development and Acquisition of Medical Countermeasures Against Biological Warfare Agents**

The project is a congressionally mandated study sponsored by the Department of Defense to examine DOD's acquisition process for medical countermeasures against biological warfare agents. Among such products are vaccines, chemoprophylactic and chemotherapeutic agents, and antitoxins.

The committee will explore the obstacles to research, development, and licensure of medical countermeasures and will make recommendations for accelerating the availability of these products, while assuring their safety and efficacy.

<http://www.iom.edu/project.asp?id=4901>

## [Accelerating the Research, Development, and Acquisition of Medical Countermeasures Against Biological Warfare Agents: Interim Report](#)

April 8, 2003

Currently, the United States has a limited repertoire of licensed medical countermeasures that the Department of Defense (DoD) can use to protect members of the armed forces against more than a dozen bacteria, viruses, and toxins identified as possible biological warfare agents. As part of its Chemical and Biological Defense Program, DoD is engaged in research and development efforts aimed at making available a broader range of medical countermeasures. In the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2002, Conference Report to Accompany S. 1438, House Rpt. 107-333 (2001), Congress directed the Secretary of Defense to contract with the Institute of Medicine (IOM) and the National Research Council (NRC) for a study of the review and approval process for new medical countermeasures in order to identify new approaches to accelerate that process and to identify methods for assuring that new countermeasures will be safe and effective. The Institute of Medicine/National Research Council Committee on Accelerating the Research, Development, and Acquisition of Medical Countermeasures Against Biological Warfare agents has released an interim report that provides information on study progress, but does not contain findings and recommendations. The committee will issue a final report by the end of 2003.

<http://www.iom.edu/report.asp?id=5906>

<http://www.nap.edu/catalog/10665.html> (Read report free online.)

## [Giving Full Measure to Countermeasures: Addressing Problems in the DoD Program to Develop Medical Countermeasures Against Biological Warfare Agents](#)

January 22, 2004

In recent years, substantial efforts have been initiated to develop new drugs, vaccines, and other medical interventions against biological agents that could be used in bioterrorist attacks against civilian populations. According to this congressionally mandated report from the Institute of Medicine and National Research Council of the National Academies, to successfully develop these drugs, vaccines, and other medical interventions against biowarfare agents, Congress should authorize the creation of a new agency within the Office of the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Defense.

DOD's existing medical biodefense activities, currently carried out by several units in the department, should be transferred along with their funding and personnel to a new Medical Biodefense Agency. To minimize redundancies and take advantage of new knowledge gained through these efforts, the new Medical Biodefense Agency should coordinate its activities with NIH. If DOD fails to make sufficient progress toward an effective program for developing medical countermeasures within three years, then that responsibility should be partially or completely transferred out of DOD, added the committee that wrote the report. However, because protecting troops in the field and ensuring their continued capacity to operate may require different research priorities and products, the agency should keep its efforts focused on meeting unique DOD needs.

The committee recommended that Congress should improve liability protection for those who develop and manufacture these products, to stimulate willingness to invest in new research and development for biowarfare protection. The report also identifies other challenges - such as the need for appropriate animal models and laboratories equipped with high-level biosafety protections - that will require attention if DOD efforts to develop new medical countermeasures are to be successful.

<http://www.iom.edu/report.asp?id=17946>

<http://www.nap.edu/catalog/10908.html> (Read report free online.)

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## **Biodefense Agency Urged For Safety Of U.S. Troops**

### ***Lack of New Vaccines Points to Need, Report Says***

By Vernon Loeb, Washington Post Staff Writer

The Pentagon has not developed a single new vaccine against biological agents since the 1991 Gulf War and should create a new biodefense agency to respond to the growing threat of biological attacks on U.S. forces, according to a congressionally mandated report released yesterday.

The report, by the Institute of Medicine and the National Research Council of the National Academy of Sciences, concludes that the Defense Department's existing biodefense efforts are underfunded and fragmented and offer "dismal prospects for successful results."

The report's authors, directed by Leslie Z. Benet, a professor of biopharmaceutical sciences at the University of California at San Francisco, also found that recent Pentagon attempts to streamline and improve the development of vaccines and other biodefense drugs could make the problem worse by consolidating authority under the Defense Threat Reduction Agency, a unit with "little resident expertise."

"This serious situation exists despite declarations by presidents, secretaries of defense, congressional committees, and advisory groups that biological warfare poses a significant threat to the safety and effectiveness of the nation's armed forces," the report says.

The report's findings come at a time of significant change in the nation's biodefense efforts.

The Pentagon has for decades been the agency with primary responsibility for developing biodefenses. But the 2001 anthrax attacks, the country's first case of domestic bioterrorism, prompted a reevaluation. Congress responded by appropriating \$1.7 billion for new research by the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases. Pentagon biodefense efforts currently receive appropriations totaling about \$322 million.

The Defense Department said in a statement that it is "evaluating the recommendations" of the report and "generally agree[s] with many of them." The department has already taken steps to improve its efforts, it said, including consolidating the chemical-biological defense program, establishing a "military vaccine office" and collaborating with other federal agencies.

"We are committed to doing what is required to ensure protection of the health and well being of our troops," the statement said.

Creation of a new Medical Biodefense Agency within the Pentagon is urgently needed, the report concludes, because of concerns that "advances in bioengineering will make possible the rapid introduction of new biological threats that may prove even more challenging to counter than the already serious threats posed by naturally occurring organisms."

Despite the discovery of weaponized biological agents after the 1991 Gulf War, and the release of anthrax spores through the mail in 2001 that left five people dead and infected 17 others, no new vaccines against biological agents have been made available to U.S. forces in recent years, the report found.

To date, the Pentagon has licensed vaccines against only anthrax and smallpox, both of which "pose substantial challenges," the report says. The anthrax vaccine, the subject of a federal court challenge by a group of service members, requires six shots over 18 months. The smallpox vaccine, which requires only one dose, can in rare cases cause "severe side effects."

"No licensed vaccines are available against botulism, plague, tularemia, or the viral hemorrhagic fevers, although vaccines against all of these are under development," the report says, noting that antibiotics have been approved for treating anthrax, plague and tularemia, a highly infectious disease that can cause severe respiratory illness. Once those programs are consolidated in a new Medical Biodefense Agency, the report says, funding should increase by an initial \$100 million a year, growing to \$300 million a year by the end of the decade. The agency, the report says, should be directed by "a single, highly knowledgeable leader who reports to a senior [Defense] policy official."

"Maintaining the status quo in [the Defense Department] only assures a long, costly, and perhaps fruitless wait for new vaccines and therapeutic products," the report says.

The report concludes that it is "highly preferable" for the Pentagon to maintain its own biodefense program, given the unique need for protecting troops on the battlefield. But if the Pentagon's disparate efforts cannot be unified and focused within three years, the report said, the responsibility for developing military biodefenses should be transferred, most likely to the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases.

"Despite nominally centralized oversight of the Chemical and Biological Defense Program within the Office of the Secretary of Defense," the report says, "the DoD effort is in practice fragmented among multiple chains of command and burdened by organizational complexity. . . . DoD leaders lack an adequate grasp of the commitment, time,

scientific expertise, and financial resources required for success in developing vaccines and other pharmaceutical products."

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A40119-2004Jan22.html>

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January 23, 2004

## CDC plans biodefense testing

By David McGlinchey

[dmcglinchey@govexec.com](mailto:dmcglinchey@govexec.com)

Health officials are developing scenarios to test regional smallpox defenses and bioterrorism preparations by late 2004, a senior official at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said Thursday.

The "federal standards-based exercise scenarios," will be used to measure how state and regional public health and emergency departments have adopted CDC guidelines and how they would respond to a biological terrorist attack, including one involving smallpox, according to CDC Associate Director for Terrorism Preparedness and Response Joseph Henderson.

The tests are part of the CDC's 2004 action plan for boosting smallpox defenses, Henderson said during a speech to a Health and Human Services Department advisory council. CDC officials also are planning a campaign to raise awareness of the smallpox threat and assuage fears about the vaccine.

Those fears, and the perceived lack of a legitimate smallpox threat, undermined the CDC's nationwide smallpox immunization campaign last year. When President Bush announced the campaign in December 2002, health officials said that they wanted to immunize hundreds of thousands - if not millions - of health care and emergency workers within a year. More than a year later, however, fewer than 40,000 civilian emergency workers have received the vaccine.

The program has essentially ground to a halt. Only 305 people have been immunized since the end of November 2003.

While the immunization program has not been abandoned, CDC officials are now emphasizing smallpox "readiness" and the ability to vaccinate the entire United States in 10 days in the event of an attack. CDC Director Julie Gerberding has repeatedly cited the 10-day vaccination benchmark as a public preparedness goal.

During recent visits, Henderson said he was "extremely impressed" by the biological defense preparations of New York and Washington states. He said, however, that officials must conduct testing to ensure that the emergency planning would stand up in a stressful situation.

Henderson also acknowledged that not all states have made such progress, and he said that CDC officials are examining ways for the federal government to assist states that "just can't seem to get their arms around" the smallpox preparation. That problem could soon become exacerbated as CDC smallpox funding runs dry.

CDC funneled \$100 million for smallpox preparedness to states in fiscal 2003, but that was a one-time budget allocation. Henderson said that money had produced "a good return," but states could now potentially struggle with their biological defenses.

<http://www.govexec.com/dailyfed/0104/012304d2.htm>

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New York Times

January 23, 2004

## Former U.N. Inspector Replaces Kay as Head of Iraqi Team

By Douglas Jehl

WASHINGTON, Jan. 23 — Charles A. Duelfer, the former No. 2 United Nations weapons inspector for Iraq, was named today to succeed David Kay as the leader of the American team searching in that country for evidence of illicit weapons.

"Given his knowledge of Iraqi weapons programs and his understanding of the nature and extent of Iraqi efforts to conceal those programs, I can think of no one better suited to carry on this very important work than Charlie Duelfer," George J. Tenet, the Director of Central Intelligence, said in a statement.

Mr. Duelfer recently expressed deep public skepticism that any chemical or biological weapons would be found in Iraq, and he has suggested that the task ahead for American inspectors may be understanding Iraq's intentions on illicit weapons rather than any actual arsenal.

For that reason, the choice of Mr. Duelfer may not be popular among those in the Bush administration who have stuck to the view that illicit weapons — cited by the administration as a principal reason for going to war — will eventually be discovered.

But in accepting the appointment, Mr. Duelfer said, according to the statement: "I'm approaching it with an open mind and am absolutely committed to following the evidence wherever it takes us."

Senior administration officials had said on Thursday that Mr. Duelfer was the leading candidate to succeed Dr. Kay, who had said he would not stay on. Mr. Duelfer's likely selection was first reported on Wednesday night by NBC News.

Mr. Tenet praised Dr. Kay for his "extraordinary service under dangerous and difficult circumstances."

In stepping down, Dr. Kay said, "It has been my honor and privilege to work with a tremendous group of men and women," according to the C.I.A. statement.

"While there are many unresolved issues, I am confident that the I.S.G. will do everything possible to answer remaining questions about the former Iraqi regime's W.M.D. efforts," he said, using the abbreviations for Iraq Survey Group and weapons of mass destruction.

After nearly eight months of searching, the 1,400-person team headed by Dr. Kay in Iraq has not yet turned up any of the biological or chemical weapons that Bush administration officials said before the American invasion in Iraq were in Iraq's stockpiles. Nor have the inspectors found evidence of an active program to build nuclear weapons, which administration officials cited as another reason for war.

In a Jan. 9 interview on "Newshour" on PBS, Mr. Duelfer said, "The prospect of finding chemical weapons, biological weapons is close to nil at this point." He said the inspectors had been "talking to a lot of Iraqi scientists, anyone who has known where they are, they've spoken to. They've had every incentive to show them where they are, and they have come up with nothing."

Those statements are much more pessimistic than those offered publicly to date by Bush administration officials. Instead, they have sought to emphasize what President Bush described in his State of the Union address this week as evidence unearthed by Dr. Kay that Iraq was pursuing "weapons of mass destruction program-related activities," like its importation as late as December 2002 of prohibited rocket engines.

Some senior intelligence officials have said it is far too early to rule out the prospect that banned weapons might be found.

In the PBS interview, Mr. Duelfer said: "There has been every incentive in the world for the Iraqi people and the Iraqi scientists to come forward and say this is where the weapons are. That hasn't happened. So I think the problem right now is what is the extent of the problem and where was it headed? What were the intentions of the regime?"

A former State Department official, Mr. Duelfer served at the United Nations as deputy executive chairman of the United Nations' special commission on Iraq from 1993 until its termination in 2000. In that post, he was the top American official among the United Nations inspectors and served as a link between that team and American intelligence agencies, according to senior government officials.

Near the end of his tenure, the disclosure of a covert American effort to install listening devices and otherwise gather intelligence in Iraq under cover of the inspections effort strained relations between Washington and the United Nations.

Senator John W. Warner, the Virginia Republican who is chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, met during the holiday recess with Dr. Kay. A week ago, he said publicly that Dr. Kay had told him that "a good portion of the work has been done" but that "there is a remaining portion that he feels strongly should be completed."

Dr. Kay issued his last public report on the search in October, and he said he would issue another early this year. A senior American official said Thursday that the new report was still being planned, but that it was unlikely that Dr. Kay would draft it.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2004/01/23/international/23CND-WEAPON.html?hp>

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**FROM JOSEPH FARAH'S G2 BULLETIN**

## **Texas coast eyed by terrorists**

Law enforcement source suspicious about BASF shooting

Posted: January 25, 2004

5:14 p.m. Eastern

*Editor's note: [Joseph Farah's G2 Bulletin](#) is an online, subscription intelligence news service from the creator of [WorldNetDaily.com](#) — a journalist who has been developing sources around the world for the last 25 years.*

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WASHINGTON – While FBI, Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Customs, the U.S. Coast Guard, state police and local law enforcement sources are publicly downplaying terrorism fears in the shooting of a guard at a BASF Corp. ammonia terminal in Freeport, Texas, some of those same sources are telling [Joseph Farah's G2 Bulletin](#), off the record, they strongly suspect the guard stumbled into a terrorism reconnaissance operation.

The FBI, state and local law enforcement are all involved in investigating the incident Friday night on the coast of the Gulf of Mexico. The gunman, described as a dark-complexioned, mustachioed man with dark hair and a thick Middle Eastern accent and a 5 o'clock shadow, was driving a white, club cab, half-ton Chevrolet pickup with black trim at the bottom and dark-tinted windows. The truck had no front license plate.

Robbie House, the guard, questioned the driver of the truck about why he was in the vicinity of a large, multi-story ammonia tank. He told police the truck driver explained that he was taking pictures of it. When the guard turned to radio for help, the driver pulled out a handgun and shot House in the shoulder.

Freeport is about 60 miles south of Houston, but only a few miles from Texas City, where one of the worst disasters in the history of the United States took place April 16, 1947, when the French ship SS Grandcamp, carrying ammonium nitrate, exploded at the docks. The entire dock area was destroyed, along with the nearby Monsanto Chemical Company, other smaller companies, grain warehouses, and numerous oil and chemical storage tanks. Smaller explosions and fires were ignited by flying debris, not only along the industrial area, but throughout the city. Fragments of iron, parts of the ship's cargo, and dock equipment were hurled into businesses, houses, and public buildings. A 15-foot tidal wave caused by the force swept the dock area.

The concussion of the explosion, felt as far away as Port Arthur, damaged or destroyed at least 1,000 residences and buildings throughout Texas City. The ship SS High Flyer, in dock for repairs and also carrying ammonium nitrate, was ignited by the first explosion; it was towed 100 feet from the docks before it exploded about 16 hours later, at 1:10 a.m. the next day.

The first explosion had killed 26 Texas City firemen and destroyed all of the city's fire-fighting equipment, including four trucks, leaving the city helpless in the wake of the second explosion. No central disaster organization had been established by the city, but most of the chemical and oil plants had disaster plans that were quickly activated. Although power and water were cut off, hundreds of local volunteers began fighting the fires and doing rescue work. Red Cross personnel and other volunteers from surrounding cities responded with assistance until almost 4,000 workers were operating; temporary hospitals, morgues, and shelters were set up.

Probably the exact number of people killed will never be known, although the ship's anchor monument records 576 persons known dead, 398 of whom were identified, and 178 listed as missing. All records of personnel and payrolls of the Monsanto Company were destroyed, and many of the dock workers were itinerants and thus difficult to identify. Almost all persons in the dock area – firemen, ships' crews, and spectators – were killed, and most of the bodies were never recovered; 63 bodies were buried unidentified. The number of injured ranged in the thousands, and loss of property totaled about \$67 million.

The Texas City incident was the result of an accident. Terrorism experts have been examining the tragedy to determine the potential damage in a deliberate attack on a port city by a ship laden with chemicals, explosives – even, perhaps, a nuclear weapon. And that was before this latest, highly suspicious attack.

G2B sources say a mysterious armada of al-Qaida ships has been purchased to target, among other things, civilian ports, cruise ships and oil rigs.

House was listed in good condition today at an area hospital where he was recovering from the gunshot wound to the shoulder.

Chemical plants and refineries have tightened security since the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks for fear they may be targets in a future attack. Ammonia can be explosive when mixed with air. In addition, it should be noted that BASF is the second largest producer in the world of ammonium sulfate, a fertilizer with explosive tendencies.

The Ludwigshafen, Germany-based BASF is one of the world's largest chemical manufacturers. The Freeport complex includes 16 plants, including an ammonia plant next to the deepwater cargo port. The facility produces adhesives, super absorbers, paints, nylons and plastics.

"We don't believe we have any kind of a terrorist threat or that there was any way any kind of a terrorist planning or organization was going on with what occurred last night," said Bob Doguim of the FBI's Houston office immediately following the attack.

But other law-enforcement sources say common sense dictates that, in this case, with this extraordinary set of circumstances, "terrorism is everyone's first guess."

One law enforcement source said the signs point to this incident being a "terrorist reconnaissance operation."

"There are no signs of any explosives," he said. "There are no signs of any renegade ships in the area. But there is a strong likelihood this shooter and any companions that may have been with him were scoping out a possible target for terrorism."

[http://worldnetdaily.com/news/article.asp?ARTICLE\\_ID=36765](http://worldnetdaily.com/news/article.asp?ARTICLE_ID=36765)

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## Workers Use Tape to Secure Aging Nuke Bomb

Saturday, January 24, 2004

Associated Press

**WASHINGTON — Workers dismantling an aging nuclear weapon ([search](#)) secured broken pieces of high explosive by taping them together, federal investigators found. An explosion could have occurred, they said.**

The incident was among several recent safety lapses at the **Energy Department's Pantex ([search](#))** plant near Amarillo, Texas, noted by the independent **Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board ([search](#))**. Last fall, workers taking apart another old warhead accidentally drilled into the warhead's radioactive core, forcing evacuation of the facility.

This month's unorthodox handling of the unstable explosive increased the risk that the technicians would drop it and set off a "violent reaction," the safety board said Tuesday in a letter to Energy Secretary Spencer Abraham.

Such a reaction could have "potentially unacceptable consequences," board chairman John T. Conway said in the letter, which raised disquieting questions about safety at the Pantex plant.

About 250,000 people live within 50 miles of the Pantex plant, where the motto on its Web site is "Maintaining the safety, security and reliability of America's nuclear weapons stockpile."

Nothing exploded, and no one was hurt.

The National Nuclear Security Administration, which oversees the Energy Department's nuclear weapons programs, is investigating, spokesman Bryan Wilkes said Friday.

"Safety remains a priority for us," Wilkes said. "We are working to address the issues in the letter."

Safety board chairman Conway's letter did not make clear whether the explosive had been separated at the time from the softball-sized chunk of plutonium that forms the pit, or trigger, of a thermonuclear warhead. To prevent a thermonuclear blast, the pit would have to have been separated from the larger warhead.

If the explosive were still connected to the trigger, an explosion could have injured or killed workers and could have spread plutonium or other radioactive materials around the facility.

The taping and removal of the explosive did not go as planned, and only quick thinking by the technicians prevented them from dropping the explosive, Conway wrote.

Conway said taping the explosives together was one of several mistakes made by Pantex officials that risked an explosion. Pantex officials also played down the risk, Conway said, calling the cracks in the explosive and the fact that workers taped it together a trivial change in procedures.

Jud Simmons, a spokesman for Pantex plant operator BWX Technologies Inc., did not return telephone messages on Friday.

The pit's plutonium is surrounded by an explosive shell. When the explosives detonate, the plutonium is compressed and causes a nuclear explosion. In a thermonuclear weapon, that explosion sets off an even stronger nuclear blast.

Workers dismantling the pit in question found the explosive was cracked, which made it more unstable and easier to detonate, Conway wrote. Their solution was to tape together the cracked explosives and move them to another location.

In his letter, Conway said other problems included:

- Failing to consult the explosives' manufacturer to determine how unstable the cracked explosives might be;
- Performing an incomplete and inadequate safety review before going ahead;
- Allowing workers to perform the taping and removal without practicing on a mock-up;
- Failing to have experts who had developed the procedure watch the taping and removal to try to spot any problems.

Conway's letter does not elaborate on what might have happened had the explosive detonated.

The Nuclear Facilities Safety Board has an inspector stationed at the Pantex plant and at the nation's other nuclear weapons sites. Weekly reports by the Pantex inspector, William White, show several problems with safety at the plant, including flaws in the software designed to control the movement of nuclear and explosive materials around the site.

White reported in October that Pantex technicians had made a mistake while dismantling a W62 warhead from a Minuteman missile. A drill damaged part of the warhead's nuclear core, prompting officials to evacuate the facility until experts determined that no radiation had leaked, White wrote.

<http://www.foxnews.com/story/0,2933,109390,00.html>

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## **Ex-Inspector Says C.I.A. Missed Disarray In Iraqi Arms Program**

By James Risen

WASHINGTON, Jan. 25 — American intelligence agencies failed to detect that Iraq's unconventional weapons programs were in a state of disarray in recent years under the increasingly erratic leadership of Saddam Hussein, the C.I.A.'s former chief weapons inspector said in an interview late Saturday.

The inspector, David A. Kay, who led the government's efforts to find evidence of Iraq's illicit weapons programs until he resigned on Friday, said the C.I.A. and other intelligence agencies did not realize that Iraqi scientists had presented ambitious but fanciful weapons programs to Mr. Hussein and had then used the money for other purposes. Dr. Kay also reported that Iraq attempted to revive its efforts to develop nuclear weapons in 2000 and 2001, but never got as far toward making a bomb as Iran and Libya did.

He said Baghdad was actively working to produce a biological weapon using the poison ricin until the American invasion last March. But in general, Dr. Kay said, the C.I.A. and other agencies failed to recognize that Iraq had all but abandoned its efforts to produce large quantities of chemical or biological weapons after the first Persian Gulf war, in 1991.

From interviews with Iraqi scientists and other sources, he said, his team learned that sometime around 1997 and 1998, Iraq plunged into what he called a "vortex of corruption," when government activities began to spin out of control because an increasingly isolated and fantasy-riven Saddam Hussein had insisted on personally authorizing major projects without input from others.

After the onset of this "dark ages," Dr. Kay said, Iraqi scientists realized they could go directly to Mr. Hussein and present fanciful plans for weapons programs, and receive approval and large amounts of money. Whatever was left of an effective weapons capability, he said, was largely subsumed into corrupt money-raising schemes by scientists skilled in the arts of lying and surviving in a fevered police state.

"The whole thing shifted from directed programs to a corrupted process," Dr. Kay said. "The regime was no longer in control; it was like a death spiral. Saddam was self-directing projects that were not vetted by anyone else. The scientists were able to fake programs."

In interviews after he was captured, Tariq Aziz, the former deputy prime minister, told Dr. Kay that Mr. Hussein had become increasingly divorced from reality during the last two years of his rule. Mr. Hussein would send Mr. Aziz manuscripts of novels he was writing, even as the American-led coalition was gearing up for war, Dr. Kay said.

Dr. Kay said the fundamental errors in prewar intelligence assessments were so grave that he would recommend that the Central Intelligence Agency and other organizations overhaul their intelligence collection and analytical efforts. Dr. Kay said analysts had come to him, "almost in tears, saying they felt so badly that we weren't finding what they had thought we were going to find — I have had analysts apologizing for reaching the conclusions that they did."

In response to Dr. Kay's comments, an intelligence official said Sunday that while some prewar assessments may have been wrong, "it is premature to say that the intelligence community's judgments were completely wrong or largely wrong — there are still a lot of answers we need." The official added, however, that the C.I.A. had already begun an internal review to determine whether its analytical processes were sound.

Dr. Kay said that based on his team's interviews with Iraqi scientists, reviews of Iraqi documents and examinations of facilities and other materials, the administration was also almost certainly wrong in its prewar belief that Iraq had any significant stockpiles of illicit weapons.

"I'm personally convinced that there were not large stockpiles of newly produced weapons of mass destruction," Dr. Kay said. "We don't find the people, the documents or the physical plants that you would expect to find if the production was going on."

"I think they gradually reduced stockpiles throughout the 1990's. Somewhere in the mid-1990's, the large chemical overhang of existing stockpiles was eliminated."

While it is possible Iraq kept developing "test amounts" of chemical weapons and was working on improved methods of production, he said, the evidence is strong that "they did not produce large amounts of chemical weapons throughout the 1990's."

Regarding biological weapons, he said there was evidence that the Iraqis continued research and development "right up until the end" to improve their ability to produce ricin. "They were mostly researching better methods for weaponization," Dr. Kay said. "They were maintaining an infrastructure, but they didn't have large-scale production under way."

He added that Iraq did make an effort to restart its nuclear weapons program in 2000 and 2001, but that the evidence suggested that the program was rudimentary at best and would have taken years to rebuild, after being largely abandoned in the 1990's. "There was a restart of the nuclear program," he said. "But the surprising thing is that if

you compare it to what we now know about Iran and Libya, the Iraqi program was never as advanced," Dr. Kay said.

Dr. Kay said Iraq had also maintained an active ballistic missile program that was receiving significant foreign assistance until the start of the American invasion. He said it appeared that money was put back into the nuclear weapons program to restart the effort in part because the Iraqis realized they needed some kind of payload for their new rockets.

While he urged that the hunt should continue in Iraq, he said he believed "85 percent of the significant things" have already been uncovered, and cautioned that severe looting in Iraq after Mr. Hussein was toppled in April had led to the loss of many crucial documents and other materials. That means it will be virtually impossible to ever get a complete picture of what Iraq was up to before the war, he added.

"There is going to be an irreducible level of ambiguity because of all the looting," Dr. Kay said.

Dr. Kay said he believed that Iraq was a danger to the world, but not the same threat that the Bush administration publicly detailed.

"We know that terrorists were passing through Iraq," he said. "And now we know that there was little control over Iraq's weapons capabilities. I think it shows that Iraq was a very dangerous place. The country had the technology, the ability to produce, and there were terrorist groups passing through the country — and no central control."

### **C.I.A. Missed Signs of Chaos**

But Dr. Kay said the C.I.A. missed the significance of the chaos in the leadership and had no idea how badly that chaos had corrupted Iraq's weapons capabilities or the threat it raised of loose scientific knowledge being handed over to terrorists. "The system became so corrupt, and we missed that," he said.

He said it now appeared that Iraq had abandoned the production of illicit weapons and largely eliminated its stockpiles in the 1990's in large part because of Baghdad's concerns about the United Nations weapons inspection process. He said Iraqi scientists and documents show that Baghdad was far more concerned about United Nations inspections than Washington had ever realized.

"The Iraqis say that they believed that Unscm was more effective, and they didn't want to get caught," Dr. Kay said, using an acronym for the inspection program, the United Nations Special Commission.

The Iraqis also feared the disclosures that would come from the 1995 defection of Hussein Kamel, Mr. Hussein's son-in-law, who had helped run the weapons programs. Dr. Kay said one Iraqi document that had been found showed the extent to which the Iraqis believed that Mr. Kamel's defection would hamper any efforts to continue weapons programs.

In addition, Dr. Kay said, it is now clear that an American bombing campaign against Iraq in 1998 destroyed much of the remaining infrastructure in chemical weapons programs.

Dr. Kay said his team had uncovered no evidence that Niger had tried to sell uranium to Iraq for its nuclear weapons program. In his State of the Union address in 2003, President Bush reported that British intelligence had determined that Iraq was trying to import uranium from an African nation, and Niger's name was later put forward.

"We found nothing on Niger," Dr. Kay said. He added that there was evidence that someone did approach the Iraqis claiming to be able to sell uranium and diamonds from another African country, but apparently nothing came of the approach. The original reports on Niger have been found to be based on forged documents, and the Bush administration has since backed away from its initial assertions.

Dr. Kay added that there was now a consensus within the United States intelligence community that mobile trailers found in Iraq and initially thought to be laboratories for biological weapons were actually designed to produce hydrogen for weather balloons, or perhaps to produce rocket fuel. While using the trailers for such purposes seems bizarre, Dr. Kay said, "Iraq was doing a lot of nonsensical things" under Mr. Hussein.

The intelligence reports that Iraq was poised to use chemical weapons against invading troops were false, apparently based on faulty reports and Iraqi disinformation, Dr. Kay said.

When American troops found that Iraqi troops had stored defensive chemical-weapons suits and antidotes, Washington assumed the Iraqi military was poised to use chemicals against American forces. But interviews with Iraqi military officers and others have shown that the Iraqis kept the gear because they feared Israel would join an American-led invasion and use chemical weapons against them.

### **Role of Republican Guards**

Dr. Kay said interviews with senior officers of the Special Republican Guards, Mr. Hussein's most elite units, had suggested that prewar intelligence reports were wrong in warning that these units had chemical weapons and would use them against American forces as they closed in on Baghdad.

The former Iraqi officers reported that no Special Republican Guard units had chemical or biological weapons, he said. But all of the officers believed that some other Special Republican Guard unit had chemical weapons.

"They all said they didn't have it, but they thought other units had it," Dr. Kay said. He said it appeared they were the victims of a disinformation campaign orchestrated by Mr. Hussein.

Dr. Kay said there was also no conclusive evidence that Iraq had moved any unconventional weapons to Syria, as some Bush administration officials have suggested. He said there had been persistent reports from Iraqis saying they or someone they knew had seen cargo being moved across the border, but there is no proof that such movements involved weapons materials.

Dr. Kay said the basic problem with the way the C.I.A. tried to gauge Iraq's weapons programs is now painfully clear: for five years, the agency lacked its own spies in Iraq who could provide credible information.

During the 1990's, Dr. Kay said, the agency became spoiled by on-the-ground intelligence that it obtained from United Nations weapons inspectors. But the quality of the information plunged after the teams were withdrawn in 1998.

"Unscm was like crack cocaine for the C.I.A.," Dr. Kay said. "They could see something from a satellite or other technical intelligence, and then direct the inspectors to go look at it."

The agency became far too dependent on spy satellites, intercepted communications and intelligence developed by foreign spies and by defectors and exiles, Dr. Kay said. While he said the agency analysts who were monitoring Iraq's weapons programs did the best they could with what they had, he argued that the agency failed to make it clear to American policy makers that their assessments were increasingly based on very limited information.

"I think that the system should have a way for an analyst to say, 'I don't have enough information to make a judgment,'" Dr. Kay said. "There is really not a way to do that under the current system."

He added that while the analysts included caveats on their reports, those passages "tended to drop off as the reports would go up the food chain" inside the government.

As a result, virtually everyone in the United States intelligence community during both the Clinton and the current Bush administrations thought Iraq still had the illicit weapons, he said. And the government became a victim of its own certainty.

"Alarm bells should have gone off when everyone believes the same thing," Dr. Kay said. "No one stood up and said, 'Let's examine the footings for these conclusions.' I think you ought to have a place for contrarian views in the system."

#### **Finds No Pressure From Bush**

Dr. Kay said he was convinced that the analysts were not pressed by the Bush administration to make certain their prewar intelligence reports conformed to a White House agenda on Iraq.

Last year, some C.I.A. analysts said they had felt pressed to find links between Iraq and Al Qaeda to suit the administration. While Dr. Kay said he has no knowledge about that issue, he did believe that pressure was placed on analysts regarding the weapons programs.

"All the analysts I have talked to said they never felt pressured on W.M.D.," he said. "Everyone believed that they had W.M.D."

Dr. Kay also said he never felt pressed by the Bush administration to shape his own reports on the status of Iraq's weapons. He said that in a White House meeting with Mr. Bush last August, the president urged him to uncover what really happened.

"The only comment I ever had from the president was to find the truth," Dr. Kay said. "I never got any pressure to find a certain outcome."

Dr. Kay, a former United Nations inspector who was brought in last summer to run the Iraq Survey Group by George J. Tenet, the director of central intelligence, said he resigned his post largely because he disagreed with the decision in November by the administration and the Pentagon to shift intelligence resources from the hunt for banned weapons to counterinsurgency efforts inside Iraq. Dr. Kay is being succeeded by Charles A. Duelfer, another former United Nations inspector, who has also expressed skepticism about whether the United States will find any chemical or biological weapons.

Dr. Kay said the decision to shift resources away from the weapons hunt came at a time of "near panic" among American officials in Baghdad because of rising casualties caused by bombings and ambushes of American troops. He added that the decision ran counter to written assurances he had been given when he took the job, and that the shift in resources had severely hampered the weapons hunt.

He said that there is only a limited amount of time left to conduct a thorough search before a new Iraqi government takes over in the summer, and that there are already signs of resistance to the work by Iraqi government officials.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2004/01/26/international/middleeast/26KAY.html>

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London Sunday Telegraph  
January 25, 2004

## **Saddam's WMD Hidden In Syria, Says Iraq Survey Chief**

By Con Coughlin

David Kay, the former head of the coalition's hunt for Iraq's weapons of mass destruction, yesterday claimed that part of Saddam Hussein's secret weapons programme was hidden in Syria.

In an exclusive interview with The Telegraph, Dr Kay, who last week resigned as head of the Iraq Survey Group, said that he had uncovered evidence that unspecified materials had been moved to Syria shortly before last year's war to overthrow Saddam.

"We are not talking about a large stockpile of weapons," he said. "But we know from some of the interrogations of former Iraqi officials that a lot of material went to Syria before the war, including some components of Saddam's WMD programme. Precisely what went to Syria, and what has happened to it, is a major issue that needs to be resolved."

Dr Kay's comments will intensify pressure on President Bashar Assad to clarify the extent of his co-operation with Saddam's regime and details of Syria's WMD programme. Mr Assad has said that Syria was entitled to defend itself by acquiring its own biological and chemical weapons arsenal.

Syria was one of Iraq's main allies in the run-up to the war and hundreds of Iraqi officials - including members of Saddam's family - were given refuge in Damascus after the collapse of the Iraqi dictator's regime. Many of the foreign fighters responsible for conducting terrorist attacks against the coalition are believed to have entered Iraq through Syria.

A Syrian official last night said: "These allegations have been raised many times in the past by Israeli officials, which proves that they are false."

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/main.jhtml?xml=%2Fnews%2F2004%2F01%2F25%2Fwirq25.xml>

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Washington Times

January 26, 2004

## **Opportunity In South Asia**

By Richard Lugar

The disputed region of Kashmir has been called the most dangerous place in the world. The majority-Muslim territory in the Himalayas is claimed by two nuclear-armed states, predominantly Hindu India and Muslim Pakistan, who have fought three wars since 1947. They nearly fought a fourth in 2002, after terrorists launched a brazen daylight attack on the Indian Parliament in New Delhi. India blamed the deadly raid on Islamic militants backed by a violent, Pakistan-based Kashmiri separatist group. War was averted, barely, thanks to intense, discreet diplomacy by the United States.

An Indo-Pakistani battle over Kashmir could, experts believe, escalate into a nuclear clash, with devastating consequences for the region and the world. Even absent a war, the atmosphere of conflict and distrust between India and Pakistan over Kashmir fuels Islamic extremism. Militant Islamists in Pakistan use Kashmir as a political rallying point, creating fertile ground for terrorist recruiters. Osama bin Laden has cited violence against "our brothers in Kashmir" in his calls for Jihad.

The surge of Islamic radicalism in Pakistan, caused by Kashmir and other factors, worsens the greatest threat of all to U.S. national security — the possibility weapons of mass destruction might fall into the hands of terrorists. The threat of instability became frighteningly clear in December when Islamic extremists twice tried to assassinate Pakistan's President Pervez Musharraf, who has been cracking down on al Qaeda and the Taliban. Those murder attempts raised press speculation about whether the United States should consider action to secure Pakistan's nuclear arsenal if the country plunges into chaos.

For all these reasons, the United States must actively encourage the rapprochement between the leaders of India and Pakistan. In early January, during a regional economic summit in Islamabad, Mr. Musharraf and Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee met for the first time in two years and announced a historic decision to launch a formal dialogue in February.

The two have taken important steps in recent months, including resumption of transport links, restoration of diplomatic ties, and a cease-fire along the Line of Control separating Pakistan's portion of Kashmir from India's. At the South Asian summit, they vowed more cooperation by signing a regional free trade agreement, a poverty-fighting charter and a protocol on combating terrorism.

The process of normalization will require both sides to make painful political decisions and to face down disruptive efforts by violent extremists in Kashmir. Besides providing encouragement from the sidelines, the United States must recognize we have important national security interests at stake and take active steps to bring about conciliation.

(1) We should cooperate with Mr. Musharraf's efforts to root out Islamic extremists within Pakistan, no matter what cause they espouse. He has already boldly banned several sectarian and extremist organizations in the country and has pledged to prevent Pakistan being used as a base for attacks against India. While open U.S. assistance may not be welcome or wise as it could further inflame radicalism, we should work behind the scenes to support his proactive stance.

(2) India must do its part. Indo-American relations have made remarkable strides in the past four years, as shown this month by the unprecedented U.S. offer on high-tech cooperation, including nuclear energy and missile defense. We should make clear to New Delhi such progress can continue only if it eases tensions in Kashmir and builds confidence among the Muslims there.

India has started positively by agreeing to meet with nonviolent Kashmiri separatist leaders, who have split from their hard-line colleagues. In these talks, and in the coming state-to-state dialogue, India, like Pakistan, must go beyond the rhetorical posturing of past meetings. It must be willing to discuss substantive, practical measures, beginning, for example, with the scheduled technical-level talks on reopening bus service across the Line of Control, which would allow families to reunite for the first time in decades. And New Delhi must not use its national elections, now set for April, as an excuse for delay. These moves will be an important gauge of India's sincerity.

(3) The United States should promote confidence-building measures in the nuclear arena. With our unrivaled nuclear expertise, we should establish exchanges between Pakistani and Indian security experts and offer assistance on export controls, border security, and the protection, control and accounting of nuclear stockpiles and arsenals. Progress in these areas will in itself build confidence between the two long-term adversaries and reduce tensions.

In particular, reports that Pakistani scientists have provided nuclear know-how and materials to North Korea, Iran and Libya have raised serious questions about Pakistan's commitment to preventing weapons proliferation and its ability to keep its own weapons safe. The \$3 billion in aid to Islamabad President Bush has proposed should give us some leverage in persuading Pakistan to bring its export controls in line with international standards.

A stable South Asia in which India and Pakistan engage each other politically and economically — instead of with arms — will let each country focus more time, energy and resources on building better lives for its people. At the same time, it will increase American security as another source of global terrorism is transformed into a story of constructive progress.

*Sen. Richard Lugar, Indiana Republican, is chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.*

<http://www.washtimes.com/commentary/20040125-103752-5064r.htm>

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Washington Post

January 25, 2004

Pg. 14

## **Powell Voices Doubts About Iraqi Weapons**

By Peter Slevin, Washington Post Staff Writer

TBILISI, Georgia. Jan. 24 -- Secretary of State Colin L. Powell, who urged the United Nations to endorse a preemptive war to strip Iraq of its weapons of mass destruction, conceded Saturday that Saddam Hussein's government may have no longer had such munitions.

One day after David Kay, the chief U.S. weapons inspector in Iraq, said he believes Hussein had not stockpiled unconventional weapons for years, Powell told reporters that his prominent Feb. 5 argument was based on "what our intelligence community believed was credible."

"What is the open question is how many stocks they had, if any, and if they had any, where did they go? And if they didn't have any, then why wasn't that known beforehand?" Powell told reporters aboard his plane en route to Sunday's presidential inauguration of Mikheil Saakashvili.

Powell said in defense of the decision to go to war that the Bush administration was not simply troubled by the conviction that Iraq possessed unconventional weapons and development programs, but also that Hussein had refused to answer U.N. questions about his government's activities on the subject.

"We were not only saying we thought they had them," Powell said, "but we had questions that needed to be answered. What was it: 500 tons, 100 tons or zero tons? Was it so many liters of anthrax, 10 times that amount, or nothing? What we demanded of Iraq was that they account for all of this and they prove the negative of our hypothesis."

In response, Powell said, "all they did was make statements without proving it to our satisfaction. This is a regime that never lost its intention to have such programs and have such weapons."

Powell's widely watched presentation to the U.N. Security Council represented the heart of the administration case for a war that many governments then and now believe was unjustified on weapons grounds.

Months of investigation in Iraq have failed to support what Powell described Saturday as his "good, solid, comprehensive presentation" of the intelligence community's conclusions.

President Bush, too, has backed away from his assertions about Iraq's weapons programs, referring in Tuesday's State of the Union address to materials hidden from the U.N. inspector and "weapons-of-mass-destruction-related program activities."

On Wednesday, Vice President Cheney told National Public Radio that the administration has not given up looking for weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. "It's going to take some additional considerable period of time in order to look in all the cubbyholes and ammo dumps and all the places in Iraq where you'd expect to find something like that," he said.

A senior administration official told reporters in Davos, Switzerland, on Saturday that the "jury is still out" on the accuracy of intelligence reports that said Hussein possessed such weapons. "We won't know until we've gotten through . . . interviewing all of the people who were involved in those programs."

*Staff writer Mike Allen in Davos, Switzerland, contributed to this report.*

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A45117-2004Jan24.html>

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London Times

January 26, 2004

## **We Told You We Had No WMD, Says Munitions Chief**

*Iraqis admit lying so much that they were ignored when they told the truth*

By Catherine Philp, Stephen Farrell and Daniel McGrory

FOR Tony Blair, it was the worst of news at the worst of times.

Even as his Government piled up the sandbags in preparation for the Hutton report, a bombshell landed from an unexpected direction.

David Kay, the outgoing chief of the unit assigned to find the Iraqi weapons of mass destruction (WMD) cited by Mr Blair as the justification for war, abruptly and very publicly confirmed what many outside the Government had suspected all along.

"I don't think they existed," the outgoing head of the Iraq Survey Group announced. "I think the best evidence is that they (Saddam Hussein's regime) did not resume large-scale production, and that's what we're really talking about."

From Baghdad came the deafening chorus: "We told you so."

Officials involved in Iraq's weapons programmes painted a picture last week of a regime once deeply involved in the production of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons brought to its knees by United Nations inspections, bombing and sanctions and unable to resume on any meaningful scale after 1991.

In a frank admission, Sinan Rasim Said, director-general of al-Qaqa munitions complex, conceded that Iraq had repeatedly lied about its weapons programmes for years, but insisted that all the banned material in his massive plant was destroyed long before the case for war was built.

"We told many lies in the past, we made huge mistakes and we did have weapons of mass destruction programmes.

But by the beginning of 2003 there was nothing left at al-Qaqa," he told *The Times*.

"In fact by 1998 at al-Qaqa we had told Western inspectors everything. Our problem was that we had been so secretive and deceitful in the past that nobody was prepared to believe us in the run-up to war."

In account after account, engineers and scientists detailed the covert manner in which Saddam's regime had built its arsenal of WMD in the years leading up to the ill-fated invasion of Kuwait, only to be brought to a grinding halt in the aftermath of the war.

One told of secretive teams of nuclear engineers arriving suddenly at munitions factories without notice during the 1980s, requisitioning precision equipment and then disappearing as furtively as they came, gathering up the metal shavings from the factory floor. Others spoke of workshops commandeered by the military without explanation, or sudden orders for aluminium warheads to be delivered to al-Muthanna chemicals research facility.

Yet with near-unanimity they insisted that these activities had ended abruptly in 1991 with the arrival of the UN teams. One missile engineer admitted that he had been ordered to conceal 88 long-range Scuds from UN inspectors in early 1991, but said that the order was rescinded just five months later after his bosses panicked, realising the extent of the UN's knowledge. An identical account came from a chemical engineer. "We gave it to them willingly, because we thought we had reached the end of a closed road."

It is, of course, in the interests of scientists still fearful of arrest and interrogation by United States-led forces to paint their past behaviour in the best light, and years of well-documented efforts by Saddam to conceal material from UN inspectors show that evasion had been built into the system until the moment of its collapse.

Yet the scientists' claims that Iraq gave up its stockpiles were given a boost by the departing Mr Kay, who said that while "it really wasn't dormant because there were a few little things going on . . . it had not resumed in anything meaningful".

Although its boss has gone, the WMD team's work will continue at the high-security facility near Baghdad airport, where its 1,400-strong multinational team are based. However, while Iraqi scientists questioned by the Iraq Survey Group in recent months concede that it has built up an exhaustive database on their past activities, they question how much closer it has got to the truth than the UN inspectors so savagely criticised by the Bush Administration in the build-up to war.

"We have answered all these questions from the start of 1991," one senior weapons engineer said. "They have nothing new, their knowledge is much less than the UN inspection teams. The UN had a better system, better information, better approach and were more expert and accurate."

At times, the Iraqis smile, their interrogation sessions bordered on farce. "They didn't know what I looked like, so when they called me for interview, they said: 'Tell us on which street corner you'll be standing, what you will be wearing and carrying so we will know you,'" one scientist said. "They also didn't seem to have much co-ordination with the American military. Once, they were bringing me to a palace to interview me, but the soldiers wouldn't let them in, so they spent the next three hours driving around and around in circles, questioning me in the car."

Other scientists were bemused when interrogators persistently demanded to know the whereabouts of Raed Ismail, a rocket engineer who once headed the project to illegally extend the range of Scud missiles. "We told them he was in Abu Ghraib prison and had been for three months since they arrested him."

Others were blunter still, charging the team with political motives. "All they did was send an intermediary to ask me to make a public declaration admitting that Iraq produced prohibited materials," a senior chemical engineer in the missile programme said. "They offered me money to do it. They just wanted an admission, not the truth." Many scientists believe nothing was found as there was nothing to find. "(Saddam) wanted to portray himself as a powerful man," Dr Ismail said. "The only thing he wanted to hide was a big lie, that he had weapons of mass destruction."

\*Mosul: A US military helicopter crashed in the Tigris River in northern Iraq. Both pilots were reported missing.

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Boston Globe  
January 25, 2004

## **US Shifts Stance Toward Nuclear Agency**

*Bush Libya accord marks softened view of watchdog*

By Brian Whitmore, Globe Correspondent

VIENNA -- When the United States agreed last week to work together with the International Atomic Energy Agency to dismantle Libya's weapons program, diplomats here said it marked a sharp departure from the Bush administration's often stormy relationship with the UN nuclear watchdog.

Ever since the nuclear agency's chief, Mohamed ElBaradei, cast doubt last year on Washington's claims about the extent and scope of Saddam Hussein's alleged nuclear weapons program in Iraq, the White House has been suspicious of the Vienna-based agency. The two have often been locked in public turf battles over who will take the lead in combating nuclear proliferation.

But following successes in curtailing Iran's and Libya's nuclear ambitions and with efforts still underway to persuade North Korea to disarm, officials here say the United States and the international nuclear agency have concluded that it is time to put the animosity behind them and confront together what has fast become one of the top issues in international diplomacy.

"Yes, there were problems with Iraq, but this is 2004, and we have important issues on the table, like Iran, Libya, and North Korea," a Western diplomat in Vienna said. "At a certain time we need to let bygones be bygones. Both sides realize we live or die with each other."

Under an agreement hammered out during three hours of talks Monday among ElBaradei, US Undersecretary of State John Bolton, and British disarmament specialist William Ehrman, Washington and London will provide logistical support for the agency's inspection missions in Libya.

Specifically, the nuclear agency will be in charge of verifying that Libya's weapons program had been properly dismantled, while US and British specialists will carry out the work of physically destroying Tripoli's nuclear capabilities.

Bolton, a frequent critic of the UN nuclear watchdog, called the talks with ElBaradei "very constructive," adding that Washington was "on the same page with the IAEA on this very important project." On Tuesday, agency inspectors arrived in Libya, joining US and British specialists in a tripartite disarmament effort.

Libya's decision to renounce its nuclear ambitions, lauded by President Bush in his State of the Union speech on Tuesday, makes it the second Middle Eastern nation to voluntarily come clean about weapons of mass destruction since the Iraq war. Last year, Iran also admitted to conducting covert nuclear experiments in violation of international law and agreed to snap inspections by the nuclear agency to avoid sanctions.

But the newfound success in enforcing nonproliferation still is accompanied by lingering discord between Washington and the UN nuclear watchdog.

So-called neoconservatives in the Bush administration are deeply suspicious of such international organizations, preferring that the United States act unilaterally. The multilateralists, such as Secretary of State Colin Powell, prefer to work closely with the nuclear agency and the UN.

"There are people in Washington who will never forget Iraq and how unhelpful the IAEA was," a Western official close to that agency said. The official spoke on the condition of anonymity, as did many of those involved in the secretive world of nuclear monitoring.

"But the vast majority recognize that . . . it is better for them to be honest and disagree with the US than be seen as a marionette," the official added.

Diplomats here also point out that the watchdog agency's effectiveness is often hindered by member states' reluctance to share intelligence with the agency, though they say that cooperation is improving.

The latest cause for tension between the White House and the agency was Libyan leader Moammar Khadafy's renunciation of his nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons programs Dec. 19. The Libyan's surprise move followed nine months of secret negotiations with Tripoli, involving the CIA and British intelligence, but without the knowledge of nuclear agency officials.

In late December, eight days after Khadafy's announcement, ElBaradei and a team of agency inspectors traveled to the North African nation and inspected nuclear sites.

After meeting with Khadafy, ElBaradei expressed satisfaction with Libya's cooperation with the watchdog agency. The leader of Libya also agreed to sign a protocol allowing intrusive snap inspections, similar to one Iran signed last month.

The White House was not pleased with ElBaradei's initiative, according to media reports citing unidentified US officials. Washington reportedly accused the IAEA of rushing into Libya and insisted that Washington wanted its own inspectors to take the lead in the North African nation's disarmament.

The UN nuclear watchdog had publicly disagreed with Washington and London about the scope of Libya's nuclear program. The agency said that Tripoli was years away from producing a weapon, while the US and Britain insist they are much closer.

The dispute over who would lead Libya's disarmament was resolved when Powell -- who has maintained good relations with ElBaradei, according to officials -- called the agency chief to soothe tensions.

"The fact that Powell called ElBaradei is an indication of his level of support for the agency," said a Western official in Vienna who is close to the situation.

The dispute over Libya echoed earlier controversies between the agency and the United States. In the run-up to the Iraq war, the Bush administration said Hussein had a nuclear weapons program, but the nuclear agency said it had found no proof of such a program.

After Baghdad fell, Washington sent in its own inspectors to look for weapons of mass destruction, thus far with no success, and has ignored ElBaradei's requests that agency inspectors be allowed to return to complete their work.

In November, some US officials also criticized a report on Iran, which criticized Tehran for conducting covert nuclear activities but said there was no conclusive evidence that the country had a nuclear arms program. Ultimately, the watchdog agency's board of governors condemned Iran for its secret nuclear research, but stopped short of hauling Tehran before the UN Security Council, as Washington had demanded.

The true test of how well the United States and the nuclear agency can work together, according to diplomats and officials here, will become clear if there is an opportunity for inspectors to return to North Korea, after being kicked out in 2002.

Officials stress that the United States and the agency bring different and complementary strengths that will be needed in confronting future nonproliferation crises. The agency's expertise is most useful when it is backed up by muscular US diplomacy, intelligence and logistics.

"It is like the police and the fire department," the Western diplomat in Vienna said. "They need to work together."

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New York Times

January 25, 2004

**News Analysis**



# The Nuclear Market: An Array Of Vendors

By David E. Sanger

WASHINGTON, Jan. 24 — The bluntly worded conclusion by the chief American arms inspector in Iraq, David Kay, that Saddam Hussein "got rid" of his unconventional weapons long before the Iraq invasion last year underscores a point that has become clear to intelligence experts in the past few months: President Bush moved first, and most decisively, against a country that posed a smaller proliferation risk than North Korea, Libya and Iran or even one of America's allies, Pakistan.

While Dr. Kay's team has come up largely empty-handed so far, contributing to his decision to resign on Friday, a team of American experts visiting North Korea were shown what appeared to be at least a rudimentary ability to produce plutonium — though they were not able to confirm that North Korea spent 2003 churning out new weapons. Meanwhile, investigators crawling through Libya's newly opened nuclear weapons program have uncovered a remarkably sophisticated network of nuclear suppliers, spanning the globe from Malaysia to Dubai.

On Friday, Pakistan's president, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, personally acknowledged what his government has slowly begun to admit over the past month: Pakistani nuclear scientists set up a nuclear bazaar that stretches back 15 years, selling sophisticated technology for enriching uranium for what General Musharraf called "personal financial gain." In retrospect, as even some of the administration's own intelligence experts now acknowledge, each of those programs was more advanced than was Iraq's, and consequently posed a greater threat of passing weapons and technology to terrorists.

Speaking to reporters on his plane on Saturday on the way to Tbilisi, Georgia, Secretary of State Colin L. Powell said that Dr. Kay's comments left open the question of whether weapons stockpiles existed in Iraq, but not the question of Saddam Hussein's abilities and intentions to produce and use such weapons. As a result, he asserted, the comments did not undercut the rationale for going to war.

Most important, Mr. Powell said, it was clear that the Iraqis were trying to exhaust their enemies, stretch out the process and have sanctions lifted so they could return to their intention of making weapons.

But the information also shows that the National Intelligence Estimate, produced in 2002 by the Central Intelligence Agency and other agencies, significantly overestimated Iraq's current abilities. The document provided the rationale for going to war quickly, without waiting for the United Nations Security Council to become convinced of the threat.

Intelligence officials now say that comparable assessments understated the progress Iran and Libya were making in enriching uranium and missed many of the signals that Pakistan's scientists had provided their designs to Iran and Libya. To this day, the intelligence agencies are arguing over what exactly the North Koreans are able to accomplish, facing a difficult task of sorting out what is boast and what is real.

Yet of all these threats, Mr. Bush determined, by his own account, that the combination of Saddam Hussein's ambitions and his potential to obtain unconventional weapons some day in the near future posed the greater threat. His critics say he was motivated by settling unfinished business; his defenders say it would have been foolish to wait, only to discover too late that Mr. Hussein could unleash hidden weapons.

Mr. Bush and his aides are still defending their warnings about mobile biological laboratories, active nuclear programs and the like. The president defended his decision all week, with no apologies but using wording that was far more hedged than the claims he made last year.

In a carefully worded assessment in his State of the Union address, he said Dr. Kay's group had found evidence of "W.M.D.-related program activities," words drawn straight from Dr. Kay's interim report to Congress. But he avoided any mention of Dr. Kay's broader conclusions at the time, that Iraq had no active stockpiles of chemical or biological weapons, much less the chief inspector's more recent conclusion that it was highly unlikely that such stockpiles would ever be found.

Traveling the country this week, Mr. Bush made clear that he had no regrets. He told visitors to the White House that he still believed that eventually weapons of mass destruction would be found in Iraq.

In public, he told audiences in Ohio, Arizona and New Mexico this week that Mr. Hussein was a "brutal dictator" who gassed his own people and set up gulags and rape rooms, and deserved the fate he met — a line that drew big applause at every stop. Mr. Bush also argued that Mr. Hussein's fall was making other nations with nuclear ambitions come clean.

"Nine months of intense discussion with Qaddafi worked because the word of this country matters," Mr. Bush said in Roswell, N.M., on Thursday, referring to the Libyan leader, Muammar el-Qaddafi. "When you say something, you better believe it. People now trust the word of America."

But America's allies and competitors are likely to interpret Dr. Kay's findings very differently: that America's word — or at least its intelligence findings — cannot be fully trusted.

Dr. Kay concluded, for example, that Mr. Hussein once had a very active nuclear program — before the 1991 Persian Gulf war. But along with the chemical and biological programs, it was virtually halted, it now appears, by

the combination of intrusive inspections by the United Nations, sanctions that made imports of new technology extremely difficult, and Iraq's own decisions to get rid of some of its stockpiles.

"The strategy of containing Iraq appears to have been largely successful," Mohamed ElBaradei, the director general of the International Atomic Energy Agency, concluded in an interview late last year. "As far as we can tell, the system was working."

But Dr. ElBaradei's other conclusion is perhaps the most alarming: that while Iraq was contained, the rest of the world had turned into a "Wal-Mart of private-sector proliferation," one where many nuclear aspirants — with the notable exception of Iraq — seemed to go shopping regularly, often without detection.

Libya had not actually produced a weapon by the time Mr. Qaddafi decided to dismantle his weapons program. But what was found there has "astounded many of my colleagues," a senior American intelligence official said earlier this week. "It looks like there were factories dedicated around the world to the production of centrifuge parts," including one in Malaysia that American officials are now working to shut down. A network of middlemen, some operating in Dubai, apparently with close ties to the Pakistani scientists, operated with comparative freedom, supplying both Iran and Libya.

Mr. Bush has not ignored that network. His "Proliferation Security Initiative" has gathered more than a dozen nations in a coalition to fight trafficking in unconventional weapons.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2004/01/25/international/middleeast/25DIPL.html>

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Washington Post

January 24, 2004

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## **Probe Of Libya Finds Nuclear Black Market**

By Joby Warrick and Peter Slevin, Washington Post Staff Writers

Libya's quest for atomic weapons was aided by a sophisticated nuclear black market that offered weapons designs, real-time technical advice and thousands of sensitive parts -- some of them apparently manufactured in secret factories, according to diplomats and experts familiar with the probe of Libya's weapons program.

The scale of the black-market operation -- described by one expert as an "international supermarket" for nuclear parts -- exceeds anything seen before, and it was undetected by Western intelligence agencies until recent months, the officials said. The same operation also is believed to have aided Iran, they said.

The smuggling enterprise supplied Libya with thousands of parts for gas centrifuges -- machines that enrich uranium for nuclear weapons -- as well as machine tools for making additional centrifuges, the sources said. It also provided Libya with designs for making a nuclear bomb, officials with the International Atomic Energy Agency revealed yesterday.

Investigators believe some of the centrifuge parts came from factories built expressly to manufacture nuclear components for the black market -- a development that would represent a new and problematic milestone in nuclear proliferation. U.S. and IAEA officials are investigating one possible manufacturing site in Malaysia, with the help of that country's government, well-placed officials said. The site has been visited by U.S. officials in the past two weeks, the sources said.

The identities of the people behind the smuggling operation have not been revealed, but investigators say the centrifuges provided to Libya are of the same design as machines used in Pakistan's nuclear weapons program. In recent weeks, Pakistan's government has begun investigating whether its nuclear scientists sold sensitive information to Iran and possibly others.

Most of the technical assistance was aimed at helping Libya produce enriched uranium, which can be used in weapons or in nuclear power plants. But the discovery of actual bomb designs strongly indicates an intention to build weapons, the officials said. The IAEA, the U.N. nuclear watchdog, disclosed that the designs had been turned over by Libyan scientists and would soon be removed from the country.

"The bomb designs have been placed under seal in Libya," said IAEA spokesman Mark Gwozdecky.

Details about suppliers to Libya's clandestine nuclear program have emerged from a month-long investigation by U.S., British and U.N. inspectors who have been given access to formerly secret nuclear facilities in and around Tripoli. The visits were granted in December after Libyan leader Moammar Gaddafi's dramatic announcement that he would renounce weapons of mass destruction.

While Libya's overall nuclear progress was described as modest -- most of the parts it obtained were still packed in boxes -- the revelations about Libya's procurement network surprised nonproliferation officials on both sides of the Atlantic. The U.S. and British governments have not commented on the results of the investigation, and officials who agreed to interviews did so only on the condition that they not be quoted by name.

"A moral barrier has been breached," said one Europe-based diplomat familiar with the Libya investigation. "Always, in the past, what we saw were single states, acting in their interests, looking to make nuclear weapons. Now we have atomic bomb factories."

David Albright, a former IAEA inspector in Iraq who has closely tracked the Libyan investigation, said Libya's centrifuge supply network was similar to the one developed by Saddam Hussein in the late 1980s -- only much bigger.

"The fact that Libya could go out and buy an entire centrifuge plant without anyone detecting it is startling," said Albright, president of the Institute for Science and International Security. "It represents a failure of the export-control system, and most certainly a failure of intelligence."

Much of the information about Libya's black-market suppliers came from interviews with Libyan scientists and physical inspections of crate after crate of nuclear parts. The interviews and inspections revealed nearly a decade of efforts by Libya to master the difficult arts of uranium enrichment and weapons design, with increasing assistance from outsiders. The centrifuges acquired by Libya are complex machines that spin at supersonic speeds to extract tiny amounts of bomb-usable fissile material from uranium. It takes hundreds of centrifuges working in tandem for months to create enough enriched uranium for a single bomb.

Beginning in the late 1990s, Libya began purchasing components for a relatively simple gas centrifuge made mostly of aluminum. But after acquiring parts for about 100 machines, Libya's scientists decided to switch to a more sophisticated centrifuge design made of a high-strength metal called maraging steel, knowledgeable officials said. Both types of centrifuges were developed by Pakistani scientists in the 1970s and 1980s.

Officials familiar with the investigation said Libya had arranged to purchase 10,000 of the more advanced centrifuges, enough to produce fuel for several bombs a year.

Some of the crates examined by inspectors this month in Tripoli contained what officials described as ready-to-assemble "kits" for centrifuges. "Everything you needed was there," said one source. "Someone had gathered the parts from all over and put them together. The boxes even had company nameplates and quality-control stamps." Other boxes contained machines and precision tools Libya would need to build its own centrifuges, including flow-forming machines and lathes for metalworking, the officials said.

Libyan scientists told inspectors that the parts came with a customer-support service: The scientists were given the names of contacts who provide technical assistance on any matter, at any time.

"They could get answers to questions -- not scientist-to-scientist but through an intermediary," Albright said.

Libyan authorities have indicated that they are prepared to cooperate further, revealing their suppliers and delivery routes, said one U.S. official, who added: "They seem to have no issues or problems with this. They've seen the light. Having said that, it's trust but verify."

The Bush administration believes it has considerable leverage over Libya, which desperately wants a return of U.S. oil companies and renewed investment in the North African desert nation. The Reagan administration ordered oil giants to leave Libya in 1986 to punish Gaddafi.

President Bush has made it clear that U.S. authorities will be preparing what amounts to a report card on Libyan compliance with Gaddafi's promises. The official said the Americans expect Libya to divulge supply sources "as part of the total package."

Indeed, the chance to learn more about the shadowy world of manufacturers, middlemen, shippers and couriers is one of the most tantalizing aspects of Gaddafi's turnaround. One veteran analyst, commenting on the early phase of a debriefing process likely to last months or years, described Libya's revelations as the most remarkable he has seen in his 30 years of experience.

Documents retrieved by the U.S. and British teams will be delivered to the State Department's nonproliferation office for analysis, two officials said. That office is headed by John R. Bolton, undersecretary for arms control and international security. He is considered a hard-liner on proliferation issues and has been openly skeptical of Libya. Condoleezza Rice, the president's national security adviser, "has made clear that we want to make this into a success story," a U.S. official said. But the White House has emphasized that any significant diplomatic and economic opening to Libya hinges on Libya's performance.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A43183-2004Jan23.html>

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London Sunday Times  
January 25, 2004

## **North Korea 'Tested Gas On Prisoners'**

By Michael Sheridan, Far East Correspondent

Chilling testimony about chemical weapons experiments on North Korean prisoners has emerged as a key element in potential indictments of members of the Kim Jong-il regime for crimes against humanity.

The accounts connect North Korean scientists and factory managers with chemical warfare programmes to produce mustard gas and to test it on human victims along with decontamination techniques, protective masks and suits.

Human rights activists are building an archive of evidence because they believe the capture and planned trials of Saddam Hussein and his henchmen will set a precedent if the North Korean regime collapses.

One woman who escaped from captivity has given US congressmen an account of female prisoners lying motionless with blood trickling from their mouths while guards in gas masks examined them.

The statement by Lee Sun-ok, who endured many years in the North Korean gulag, has been compared with some of the most graphic testimony at war crimes trials after the second world war.

“One day in February 1990 I was doing routine paper work at the staff operation office at around 10am when, to my surprise, the prison superintendent, vice-superintendent, intelligence chief and three other officials walked into the room,” she said. “One of them pointed to something outside my window. I was very terrified at their unusual appearance. Then I overheard them saying, ‘Look! How powerful. What a great scientist Dr Lee Sung-ki is indeed. Well, from now on it’s chemical warfare’.”

She knew, as did most North Koreans, that Lee was a scientist regarded as the “father” of the nation’s chemical industry. He developed vinalon, a polymer fibre whose production process employs agents that are “precursor” ingredients for mustard gas.

Lee said: “I took a quick glance outside. I saw many prisoners lying on the slope of a hill, bleeding from their mouths and motionless, enveloped by strange fumes and surrounded by scores of guards in the gas masks I delivered to the chief guard earlier in the morning.”

Lee said that before dawn the chief guard had ordered her to follow him to a warehouse where they checked out six bundles, each containing five gas masks and five rubber suits.

She testified that the guards selected 150 prisoners, most of them disabled and weak women who were less valuable as labour. Then Lee, who worked as an administrative clerk, was ordered to tell the canteen to make the usual number of meals for male prisoners but 150 fewer for the women. She knew the 150 were doomed.

The testimony by Lee and other escapees prompted US congressmen to push for legislation to help North Koreans who have fled to China and to tie food aid to an improvement in conditions in the camps. But after the destruction of Saddam’s regime, some influential US conservatives are pushing for tougher action to oust the North Korean dictatorship.

Norbert Vollertsen, a German doctor who treated famine victims in North Korea and who campaigns for regime change in Pyongyang, has won support in Washington for his argument that the way to get rid of Kim’s weapons is to end his rule.

“North Korea is a real terror state and therefore the leadership of this country has to face the international criminal court,” Vollertsen said. “As a German born after the war I know too well the guilt of my grandparents’ generation for remaining silent.”

Lee, the scientist behind the experiments, is beyond the reach of justice. He died in 1996, garlanded with official praise after half a century of service to the state.

Chemical laboratories were buried in caves to avoid enemy aerial reconnaissance and bombing. The original research, according to one account, went on in “a laboratory built in a great cave carved out of a mountain” in Yanggang province, where scientists lived and worked underground. Human rights activists suspect the worst abuses of prisoners occur in such hidden locations.

The United States is expected to join talks in China in the next few weeks at which North Korea will be pressed to scrap its weapons of mass destruction. But the Americans are in no mood to separate human rights from other problems. The North is facing severe winter food shortages and is dependent on aid, making it temporarily more vulnerable.

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New York Times

January 27, 2004

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## **White House Is Less Certain Now About Iraq's Arms**

By James Risen

WASHINGTON, Jan. 26 — The White House began to back away on Monday from its assertions that Iraq had illegal weapons, saying it now wanted to compare prewar intelligence assessments with what may be actually found there.

The evolving position followed criticism of the intelligence reports about Iraq from the C.I.A.'s former chief weapons inspector, David A. Kay, comments that increased pressure on the C.I.A. and intensified the political debate in Washington over who was responsible for shaping the prewar intelligence that President Bush used to justify toppling Saddam Hussein.

While Republican leaders have focused on the C.I.A. and how it gathered intelligence, Democrats have called for a close look at how the White House used that information.

On Monday White House officials were no longer asserting that stockpiles of banned weapons would eventually be found.

Scott McClellan, the White House spokesman, told reporters en route to an appearance by President Bush in Little Rock, Ark., that the administration would wait for the weapons search team, the Iraq Survey Group, to complete its work before drawing any conclusions about the quality of the intelligence available.

But he said that whatever the group's conclusions, Mr. Bush had done the correct thing in deposing Mr. Hussein because Iraq was clearly working on chemical, biological and nuclear weapons.

"We know he had the intention, we know he had the capability," Mr. McClellan said. "And, given his history and given the events of Sept. 11, we could not afford to rely on the good intentions of Saddam Hussein."

Dr. Kay, who resigned Friday, said that there was scant evidence that Mr. Hussein kept stockpiles of illicit weapons, and that the C.I.A., under its director, George J. Tenet, and other intelligence agencies were wrong in their assessments.

Dr. Kay has avoided placing any political spin on the flaws in the intelligence. But his comments, coming during a presidential campaign and as Congressional panels draw up reviews of prewar intelligence, had immediate political impact.

On Capitol Hill, Democratic leaders used Dr. Kay's statements to argue for a more aggressive investigation by the Republican-controlled Congress into the shaping of prewar intelligence. The Senate Democratic leader, Tom Daschle of South Dakota, complained that the Republican leader of the Senate intelligence committee, Pat Roberts of Kansas, was seeking to limit the scope of that panel's inquiry, even as Dr. Kay was disclosing the extent of the problem.

"Unfortunately, it appears neither the administration nor the chairman of the Senate intelligence committee shares this view" of the need for a vigorous investigation, Senator Daschle said.

Mr. McClellan, pressed on whether the White House still believed that stockpiles of illicit weapons would be found in Iraq — an assertion White House officials made as recently as Friday — replied, "I think it was the judgment of intelligence agencies around the world, as well as the United Nations Special Commission on Iraq, that there were large, unaccounted-for stockpiles." The special commission was the United Nations inspection team.

Caught in the middle is Mr. Tenet, the director of central intelligence, who is both a Bush confidant and a strong defender of the agency.

The Senate intelligence panel has drafted a report strongly critical of the C.I.A.'s handling of prewar intelligence, and is waiting for Mr. Tenet's testimony, among other things, before completing its work. He is scheduled to appear on March 4, for the first time since the committee began its inquiry last spring, a Congressional official said.

Administration officials said a draft of Mr. Tenet's written testimony was being circulated for review within the government, and is expected to be discussed later this week by President Bush's advisers.

Congressional officials said the written testimony was not due until 72 hours before he appears before the panel, but they said they understood that the administration was seeking to deliver the document within the next 10 days in order to influence the final report.

Dr. Kay said in an interview over the weekend that he did not believe that C.I.A. analysts were pressed by the Bush administration to exaggerate the threat posed by Iraq's weapons programs. He also stressed that everyone in the intelligence community, as well as outside experts here and abroad, all thought Iraq had illegal weapons.

He said American intelligence analysts had believed that Iraq had illegal weapons during the Clinton and Bush administrations, and said the fact the intelligence community as a whole was so wrong meant there should be a thorough reappraisal of how such intelligence work is done.

On Monday, Dr. Kay's comments prompted members of both parties to argue that it is time for the Central Intelligence Agency to acknowledge it had made serious mistakes in its prewar assessments.

Until now, both in public and in private discussions with the committee staff members, senior intelligence officials have refused to acknowledge that any mistakes were made, the Congressional officials said. But the officials, both Democrats and Republicans, said they believed that Dr. Kay's candid remarks should prompt Mr. Tenet to provide Congress his best explanation.

"The conclusions reached by the intelligence community weren't substantiated by the intelligence," said one Congressional official, outlining a finding that is expected to be spelled out in a draft report being prepared for members of the committee. "The question is why these conclusions were allowed to permeate the analysis."

Senator John D. Rockefeller IV of West Virginia, the top Democrat on the panel, said over the weekend that Dr. Kay's public statements raised "truly alarming questions about our intelligence, the reasons and justification for going to war and the president's doctrine of pre-emption."

The House intelligence committee is preparing its own report on the administration's handling of prewar intelligence. That panel's top Democrat, Representative Jane Harman of California, said over the weekend that the administration had been "in deep denial" by failing to acknowledge what she called "serious deficiencies in prewar intelligence on Iraq" and by having "no apparent commitment to addressing them."

"The potential threat posed by Iraq's stockpiles of chemical and biological weapons and Iraq's nuclear weapons program was central to the case for war," she said. "In light of Dr. Kay's statement, the president owes the American public and the world an explanation."

*Douglas Jehl contributed reporting from London for this article.*

<http://www.nytimes.com/2004/01/27/politics/27WEAP.html>

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Christian Science Monitor

January 27, 2004

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## **From Iraq To Libya, US Knew Little On Weapons**

*Doubts that Hussein had WMD raise questions about war's rationale and intelligence reliability.*

By Peter Grier, Staff writer of The Christian Science Monitor

WASHINGTON – When it comes to unconventional weapons, Iraq may have been far from the most dangerous country in the world after all. In recent days a string of surprising revelations has scrambled the world's proliferation threat assessments.

Iraq's weapons programs were apparently in shambles, for instance, while Libya's were surprisingly advanced. Pakistan's nuclear scientists might have been rogue agents, proffering secrets for cash. And it appears that North Korea may be the most advanced rogue nuclear nation of all, with an advanced capacity to produce fissile material. The bottom line: In the shadowy world of intelligence, judging capacities to produce biological, chemical, or nuclear weapons is among the most difficult estimating jobs of all.

"These intelligence estimates are not good enough to support a policy of preemptive war," says Joseph Cirincione, of the nonproliferation project at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace in Washington D.C.

It is still possible that traces of weapons of mass destruction will be found in Iraq. The capture of Saddam Hussein might convince cowed scientists that the old regime is never coming back, leading to new tips, documents, or even buried equipment.

But after months of weapons hunting, the US right now is coming up with little. This was underscored over the weekend by forceful comments from the CIA's former chief weapons inspector, David Kay, who characterized Iraq's unconventional weapons programs as being in "disarray" under a leadership that was increasingly out of touch with reality.

Mr. Kay said that almost certainly Iraq had no stockpiles of such weapons, as the administration said it likely did prior to its invasion of the country last year. Iraq did maintain some test capability in regards to chemical weapons, said Kay, and may have been continuing research and development on biological weapons prior to its downfall.

The Hussein regime had made some effort to restart a nuclear program dismantled in the wake of the 1991 Gulf War, but it had made little progress, according to Kay. And he said one dominant feature of all Iraq's unconventional weapons programs was corruption, in the sense that scientists and lower-level officials fooled higher-ups about the real lack of progress, solely to reap money and other benefits.

"The regime was no longer in control. It was like a death spiral," Kay told The New York Times.

Critics of the administration's use of weapons intelligence prior to the Iraq war said Kay's findings should have come as no surprise to anyone. "My reaction? I told you so," says Daryl Kimball, executive director of the Arms Control Association.

IN the run-up to war, the administration clearly took the worst-case scenario for almost all aspects of unconventional weaponry when building its case for invasion, according to Mr. Kimball. It ignored other evidence, including fresh intelligence produced by UN inspectors.

"The [unconventional weapons] programs were essentially in a state of suspension," says Kimball.

It shouldn't be surprising that Iraq's leaders were themselves in the dark about the program, says Kimball. That same dynamic may have been at work in Pakistan, where nuclear scientists apparently sold weapons technology without the central government's knowledge.

Pakistani officials indicated over the weekend that several scientists - who they declined to name - had large bank accounts tied to technology sales.

Thus the most dangerous weapons proliferator in Iraq's region might not have been Iraq itself, but an ally of the United States. Libya's uranium enrichment technology, for instance, is very similar to that used by Pakistan. Now that Libya has pledged to give up its unconventional weapons programs, it turns out its equipment was much better than believed, according to international inspectors who have visited the country.

And North Korea may have the most dangerous programs of all. A group of private experts that recently toured North Korea's nuclear sites said last week that they were shown evidence that Pyongyang is at least producing plutonium metal.

Siegfried Hecker, a senior fellow at the Los Alamos National Laboratory, told Congress that he handled a small sample of what was alleged to be plutonium during the trip, and that its color and weight seemed about right. In addition, the 8,000 spent fuel rods stored in the Yongbyon nuclear facility appear to have been withdrawn, perhaps in preparation for reprocessing for plutonium extraction.

"For all intents and purposes ... those fuel rods are gone," Dr. Hecker told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. <http://www.csmonitor.com/2004/0127/p01s01-usfp.html>

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London Financial Times

January 27, 2004

## **Kay 'Right' About CIA Errors In Weapons Assessment**

By Edward Alden, Salamander Davoudi and Mark Huband

David Kay, the former chief US weapons inspector in Iraq, was probably correct to say that US intelligence agencies erred in key parts of their assessment of Iraq's weapons programmes, a senior US intelligence official said yesterday.

Mr Kay, who said at the weekend that the Central Intelligence Agency "owes the president" an explanation for the information it provided to President George W. Bush on Iraq's weapons, has sent shockwaves through the agency. But with no mass destruction weapons found in Iraq, his allegations are proving difficult for the agency to deny.

"With the caveat that the search for weapons is still going on and that it's not over yet, it would be kind of hard to argue with the substance of what David Kay is saying," the intelligence official told the FT, specifying errors in the assessment of chemical weapons stockpiles and activity related to a nuclear programme.

Mr Kay resigned on Friday as head of the Iraq Survey Group hunting for mass destruction weapons, saying that no large stockpiles of chemical and biological weapons were likely to be found in Iraq. In an interview published yesterday in The New York Times, he said the CIA had failed to realise Iraqi scientists were presenting ambitious and far-fetched weapons programmes to Mr Hussein but using the money he gave them for other purposes.

"Whatever was left of an effective weapons capability was largely subsumed into corrupt money-raising schemes by scientists skilled in the arts of lying and surviving in a police state," he said. The fundamental intelligence errors were so grave, he said, that he would recommend the CIA and other organisations overhaul their intelligence efforts. The White House said yesterday that it would review the pre-war intelligence on Iraq, but continued to insist that the decision to launch the war was "the right decision".

"What we know today only reconfirms that it was the right decision," said Scott McClellan, spokesman.

There is anger within the US intelligence community, however, over Mr Kay's decision to go public with his accusations of intelligence failures. A CIA spokesman said the agency had "no comment" on his charges, adding: "We don't care to discuss it."

The intelligence official said that while the substance of Mr Kay's accusations was difficult to dispute, within the US intelligence community there was growing suspicion of his motives for making statements critical of the CIA, which were being seen as deflecting blame from the White House. "There is the view that Kay did seem to be leaning over backwards not to make trouble for the administration. I am not sure what his unstated agenda is. He is basically apolitical, and I respect him, but I don't know what's going through his mind," said the official.

The CIA-led National Intelligence Estimate concluded in October 2002 that Iraq had significant stores of chemical and biological weapons, a "large-scale" bioweapons production capability and was "reconstituting its nuclear weapons programme".

But it remains unclear whether this represented the honest assessment of the intelligence agencies or if the intelligence was manipulated in the face of White House pressure to bolster the decision to go to war.

Mr Kay said in his New York Times interview that information gleaned from interviews with Iraqi scientists had shown that during the late 1990s the country had plunged into a "vortex of corruption" as an increasingly out-of-touch and fantasy-driven Saddam Hussein authorised more and more fictitious weapons projects.

"Saddam was self-directing projects that were not vetted by anyone else. The scientists were able to fake programmes," he added.

The CIA did not make clear to American policy-makers that their assessments were increasingly based on very limited information, he said.

"Alarm bells should have gone off when everybody believes the same thing. For five years, the agency (CIA) lacked its own spies in Iraq who could provide credible information. The agency became far too dependent on spy satellites, intercepted communications and intelligence developed by foreign spies and by defectors and exiles," he said.

[http://search.ft.com/search/article.html?id=040127001038&query=Kay+%27Right%27+About+CIA+Errors+In+Weapons+Assessment&vsc\\_appId=totalSearch&state=Form](http://search.ft.com/search/article.html?id=040127001038&query=Kay+%27Right%27+About+CIA+Errors+In+Weapons+Assessment&vsc_appId=totalSearch&state=Form)

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Washington Times

January 27, 2004

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## Bush's Decision On War Affirmed

*WMDs report said consistent*

By James G. Lakely, The Washington Times

A former weapons inspector's prediction that weapons of mass destruction (WMD) will never be found in Iraq doesn't invalidate President Bush's decision to go to war, the White House said yesterday.

David Kay, who resigned Friday as the lead weapons inspector in postwar Iraq, said over the weekend that former Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein posed an "imminent threat" to the United States, but he is "personally convinced that there were not large stockpiles of newly produced weapons of mass destruction."

Those comments have prompted Sen. John W. Warner, Virginia Republican, to invite Mr. Kay to testify in front of the Senate Armed Services Committee tomorrow.

A U.S. intelligence official yesterday warned against reading Mr. Kay's comments and jumping to conclusions.

"The search continues," the official said. "We believe it's premature to reach any judgments. There's plenty of work to be done on the ground."

Mr. Kay told the New York Times that Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein was attempting to reconstitute his fledgling nuclear program as late as 2001, and had an active program to use the deadly chemical ricin as a weapon until he was stopped by the U.S.-led invasion in March.

In an interview with National Public Radio, Mr. Kay echoed the Bush administration's claim that "in the shadowing effect of September 11," the president was right to "recalculate what risk [Saddam posed] based on the intelligence that existed."

"I think it was reasonable to reach the conclusion that Iraq posed an imminent threat," Mr. Kay said, adding that "what we learned during the inspection made Iraq a more dangerous place potentially than, in fact, we thought it was even before the war."

Mr. Kay told the New York Times that a "vortex of corruption" overtook the community of Iraqi weapons scientists to the point that Saddam — as well as Western intelligence agencies — were fooled into thinking that he had a growing stockpile of chemical and biological weapons.

Mr. Kay also told the London Telegraph newspaper that he uncovered evidence that components of Saddam's WMD program was spirited to Syria shortly before the war began.

"We are not talking about a large stockpile of weapons," he said. "But we know from some of the interrogations of former Iraqi officials that a lot of material went to Syria before the war, including some components of Saddam's WMD program. Precisely what went to Syria and what has happened to it, is a major issue that needs to be resolved."

White House spokesman Scott McClellan said yesterday that Mr. Kay's comments wholly justify the president's decision to depose Saddam by force because he was a "dangerous and gathering threat."

"In reference to what Dr. Kay said, what we know today only reconfirms that the president made the right decision," Mr. McClellan said. "The world is a safer and better place, and America is more secure because of the actions that we took."

Democrats held up some of Mr. Kay's comments to hammer the president on his decision to go to war.

Sen. John Kerry of Massachusetts said on "Fox News Sunday" that Mr. Kay's opinion "confirms what I have said for a long period of time, that we were misled... in the way the president took us to war."

Former Vermont Gov. Howard Dean yesterday said the White House "has not been candid with the American people about virtually anything with the Iraq war."



Recent polling shows that Democratic criticism of the war is having little effect on public opinion. In a CNN/USA Today/Gallup poll released Jan. 15, 59 percent of respondents said that "all in all" the liberation of Iraq "was worth it."

<http://www.washtimes.com/national/20040126-105857-3644r.htm>

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New York Times

January 27, 2004

## General Denies Letting Secrets Of A-Bomb Out Of Pakistan

By David Rohde

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan, Jan. 26 — Days after Pakistan's president acknowledged that scientists from his country had most likely sold nuclear secrets to other nations, the army commander formerly in overall charge of the program declared Monday that he had never approved a transfer of atomic information.

"I was never confronted with any such situation," said the retired general, Mirza Aslam Beg, who was the army commander from 1988 to 1991.

Last week, a senior intelligence official said that senior nuclear scientists had told investigators that any transfer of technology to Iran would have been approved by General Beg. The general's comments contradicted those assertions.

At a news conference on Monday, Information Minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmed said that a meeting of senior government leaders chaired by Gen. Pervez Musharraf had decided to take stern action against any scientists found guilty of proliferation. Pakistani officials have insisted that the government never approved any transfer.

As head of the army, which tightly controlled the nuclear program, General Beg was believed to have had the clearest knowledge of what happened. But while 11 scientists and military staff officers have been questioned, Pakistani investigators have not spoken to the general.

He confirmed that he had not been questioned, adding: "They would not dare. They would not dare."

In a 90-minute interview, the general, at times combative, asserted that any scientists who sold Pakistan's nuclear technology should not be punished. He also said Muslim countries should not be asked to give up the pursuit of nuclear weapons until India and Israel destroyed their nuclear arsenals.

"Why don't you start from there?" General Beg asked. "This is the discrimination and duplicity which gives heartburn and humiliation to the Muslim world."

Asked if he had looked the other way when technology or information might have been transferred, he replied, "Nothing came to our knowledge."

General Beg's comments reflect the view in some corners of Pakistan that the United States maintains a double standard when it comes to Muslim countries and nuclear weapons. The general said it was natural for countries to want nuclear weapons to counter nuclear-armed rivals. He also said it was natural for nuclear scientists to want to collect "gold dust," a reference to profit from their work.

He expressed deep antipathy toward American foreign policy, saying it was blocking the spread of democracy in the Muslim world, not aiding it. He described himself as an Islamic nationalist, not an Islamic fundamentalist, and called criticism of efforts by Muslim countries to obtain nuclear weapons, as well as his portrayal in the Western news media, unfair. "It's the Jewish lobby, a particular lobby, which tries to portray me that way," he said.

Pakistani government officials said they completely disagreed with General Beg's views, particularly regarding proliferation of nuclear weapons. "He's wrong about that," a close aide to General Musharraf said in an interview on Monday. "This is dangerous technology."

In the last few weeks, General Beg has abruptly emerged as a pivotal figure again in Pakistan's history.

In 1988, he gained a reputation as a selfless hero, the army chief who chose to restore democracy instead of seizing power himself after the death of the country's military dictator, Gen. Mohammad Zia ul-Haq. Today, he sits near the center of the inquiry into whether Pakistan's nuclear secrets were transferred to Libya and Iran in the late 1980's.

The sense of a double standard for Pakistan has also been mentioned by senior Pakistani government officials, including General Musharraf. Pakistani officials pointed out again on Monday that Europeans were also said to have aided Iran's nuclear program, but that there had been far less Western media coverage of the European smugglers.

Since retiring from the army, General Beg has run an organization called the Foundation for Research on International Environment, National Development and Security, or Friends. The general writes analyses of world politics regularly published in Pakistani newspapers.

While dismissed by liberal Pakistanis as extreme, he has a sizable following among hard-line nationalists and Islamists, who believe that the United States is systematically subjugating the Muslim world.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2004/01/27/international/asia/27STAN.html?pagewanted=all>

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Washington Post  
January 27, 2004  
Pg. 14

## **Legislators Optimistic After Talks With Gaddafi**

By Robin Wright, Washington Post Staff Writer

In his first talks with U.S. legislators in almost four decades, Libyan leader Moammar Gaddafi pledged yesterday to take additional steps, particularly on terrorism, to help normalize diplomatic relations with the United States.

Members of two congressional delegations said they came away from talks with Gaddafi in Tripoli, Libya's capital, encouraged by his willingness to work with the United States, another sign of the dramatic change in relations after a quarter-century of tension.

Rep. Tom Lantos (D-Calif.), who met with Gaddafi for more than 11/2 hours in an elaborate tent, said he planned to work with the White House and State Department to lay out a road map enabling Libya to get off the U.S. list of states that sponsor terrorism, begin to improve commercial and cultural contacts and, finally, restore diplomatic relations.

"I am very hopeful and optimistic that this truly historic change will come to fruition, probably in less than a year, allowing the two countries to reestablish embassies in their respective capitals," Lantos said in a telephone interview from Amsterdam after leaving Tripoli.

After secret talks with British and U.S. intelligence, the Libyan government pledged last month to open its nuclear, chemical and biological weapons programs to inspection in an attempt to end two decades of international isolation and some of the world's most punishing economic sanctions.

Lantos said U.S. weapons experts reported "total cooperation" from the Libyans in dismantling components of their programs to develop weapons of mass destruction. "They are very excited and energized about what is happening on the ground," he said.

Upon his return, Lantos said, he will recommend an immediate lifting of the ban on U.S. citizens traveling to Libya, which he said is an "appropriate" first step in response to the "gigantic step" Gaddafi has made.

The next big step, Lantos said, is developing a joint strategy for combating terrorism, which could serve as a basis for removing Libya from the State Department list. "They clearly have to -- in some form acceptable to the U.S. -- develop a working document on jointly fighting terrorism. Gaddafi's very much interested in fighting terrorism," Lantos added.

Libya has gradually improved its standing with the United States and other countries by turning over two government employees to be tried for the 1988 bombing of a Pan Am jetliner over Lockerbie, Scotland, and paying compensation to the families of victims. Gaddafi's government has also renounced terrorism and expelled radical leaders.

After speaking with Lantos, Gaddafi held talks with a congressional delegation led by Rep. Curt Weldon (R-Pa.), who described the meeting as "an extremely positive two hours. . . . We discussed the hope that we will achieve normal relations soon."

Rep. Darrell Issa (R-Calif.) told the Associated Press that the Libyan leader "expressed his regret that a quarter-century has passed of isolation between our countries."

The delegation, which also included Reps. Solomon P. Ortiz (D-Tex.), Candice S. Miller (R-Mich.), Mark Edward Souder (R-Ind.), Elton Gallegly (R-Calif.) and Rodney Alexander (D-La.), also visited the Tajura nuclear reactor, a 10-megawatt research facility east of Tripoli.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A50464-2004Jan26.html>

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London Times  
January 27, 2004

## **Gaddafi's Weapons Chief Promises To Come Clean**

By Richard Beeston, in Tripoli

THE head of Libya's weapons of mass destruction programme emerged from the shadows yesterday to assure the West that the country was sincere in its offer to disarm and promised to reveal how it acquired deadly technology on the black market.

Matoug Matoug, an urbane, Western-educated engineer who has the innocuous title of Minister Responsible for Services Affairs, told an American delegation that he had ordered all his staff to offer "full transparency and co-operation" to American and British experts here to dismantle the weapons.

"We want to remove any suspicions that the US and the UK have," he said at his office in Tripoli. "We don't have anything to hide. We are here today, tomorrow, any time, to answer any questions that you may have for us." The pledge was reinforced at a two-hour meeting between Colonel Muammar Gaddafi and the seven visiting members of the US Congress, who left predicting that the two countries were well on the way to restoring relations more than 20 years after they broke down.

The final hurdle is the removal or destruction of the weapons stocks, including tonnes of chemical weapons built in the 1980s, which will have to be destroyed, and the more recent nuclear programme. Many of the nuclear components, including thousands of parts needed for centrifuges to enrich uranium, are still in crates and will probably be flown to the United States shortly.

The sophistication of Mr Matoug's programme, much of it recently purchased, has been a cause for surprise and concern. Libya may have been years away from building its own nuclear bomb but it proved that it is possible to buy sensitive technology.

His revelations will provide a windfall for Western intelligence agencies. Scores of officers have already begun to debrief the Libyans and to inspect documents that will expose the middlemen who trade in nuclear technology. Some of it is thought to have come from Pakistan, where an investigation is under way. American reports suggest that a company in Malaysia is being investigated.

The Libyans expect something in return for giving up their weapons programmes and handing former enemies such sensitive information, described by one American analyst as the most remarkable that he had seen in 30 years. Saif al-Islam, Colonel Gaddafi's son, said that Libya had been promised financial compensation for any equipment removed and generous assistance to build a civilian scientific base, including nuclear research. Although thousands of Libyan students study in Britain and America, there are restrictions placed on some scientific courses with possible military applications.

Curt Weldon, head of the US congressional team, which left Tripoli after a two-day visit, said that his meeting with the Libyan leader had been incredibly positive. He pledged that the United States was ready to spend millions of dollars to boost Libya's non-military scientific research, much as it has done in post-Soviet Russia.

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London Financial Times  
January 27, 2004

## **Return To The Fold: How Gadaffi Was Persuaded To Give Up His Nuclear Goals**

By Stephen Fidler, Mark Huband and Roula Khalaf

In September 2002, as the world's attention focused on impending war in Iraq, Tony Blair composed a letter to Muammar Gadaffi, the Libyan leader.

Libya's efforts to seek international rehabilitation appeared to be on track as it negotiated a settlement with relatives of the 270 people killed by the 1988 bombing of Pan Am flight 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland. But the British prime minister wanted to raise two other aspects of Libyan policy that continued to concern him: Tripoli's economic backing for President Robert Mugabe in Zimbabwe and its continuing programmes to acquire weapons of mass destruction.

British officials say they are now satisfied that Libya has curtailed its support for Mr Mugabe. But they say Mr Blair knew that he would not be able to persuade Libya to deal with its WMD programmes unless he could hold out the carrot of a normalisation of relations with Washington. Mr Blair got political cover to proceed with the approach from President George W. Bush at a meeting that same month at Camp David, a British official said.

After the terrorist attacks of September 11 2001, Libya had offered support to Washington's fight against terrorism. According to a western intelligence official, the Libyans "have been keen to be good partners in the war on terror. They see the Islamic movement as a threat and are keen to co-operate." But it was clear to anyone who asked that Libya's WMD programmes were Washington's main preoccupation.

United Nations sanctions, imposed in 1992 because of Libya's involvement in Pan Am 103, had been suspended in 1999. But the US had made plain that even when a deal over Lockerbie was accepted and UN sanctions lifted - as eventually occurred last September - it would not be compelled to follow suit by lifting its bilateral sanctions.

"I know, you're going to say we moved the goalposts," said a senior Bush administration official when asked in May 2002 why US sanctions would not be lifted. Then, with a smile, he picked up two imaginary goalposts from one side of his chair, and placed them with an exaggerated gesture on the other. "There, I've moved them."

He continued: "Some people would say we're moving the goalposts. I would say we are committed, especially after September 11 . . . to make sure the world's most dangerous nations don't get the world's most dangerous weapons." British officials said earlier attempts to raise the issue of WMD had met with Libyan denial. But Col Gadaffi's reply to the Blair letter suggested he had been thinking hard about it.

A western diplomat in Tripoli, paraphrasing the letter, said the Libyan leader responded by asking: "Why are you picking on me, my good friend?" The diplomat said Col Gadaffi proposed international mechanisms to curb WMD and mentioned Israel. "He said any contribution Libya might make (was) a drop in the ocean. Nonetheless, he said, 'I accept that countries like mine have to reassure others and I've told my foreign minister to talk to you about signing conventions'."

So why the Libyan change of mind? Interviewed at the weekend, Shukri Ghanem, Libya's prime minister, said: "Countries think about things for a long time. For a small country like Libya, with limited resources and big power opponents, your thinking is to defend yourself by all means, especially when a country like Israel has all these weapons.

"But then you find out that they're eating all your money. Israel is pampered by different countries; (North) Korea went into starvation. So economically it's not wise to develop it. Guns are costing you more every day and you find out that in this international atmosphere, this is taken against you. So economically and politically it becomes a burden. Then you find out you can't use these weapons. Even the US used them only once, so it doesn't make any sense. It gives you a false sense of power. Can Israel use this arsenal?

"And there are internal problems of how to guard them: if someone steals them or misuses them. They make you even more crippled. Logically they are not useful . . . The conclusion was reached a long time ago but you have to talk (about) it with other people and do it in the hope this will also improve your relations with other countries." Libya's economic isolation has indeed taken a heavy toll. Going to Tripoli, says a recent visitor to the city, is like returning to a car left in an airport parking lot for 30 years. Libyan businessmen complained that the oil-rich economy, backward technologically and losing out on oil investment, was falling behind neighbouring Egypt and Tunisia. Libyan economists calculated that, once all sanctions were lifted, the maximum cost of the Pan Am 103 settlement to relatives - Dollars 2.7bn (Pounds 1.5bn, Euros 2.1bn) - could be recouped in new investments in 20 months.

According to others, from the Libyan standpoint the urgency of normalising relations with Washington grew. A senior Bush administration official says: "They saw the war in Iraq coming . . . For people like Gadaffi their survival is the be all and end all . . . He wants to end his isolation but the question is: how much is he willing to give up for this?"

Some Arabs who were in regular conversations with Libyan officials say the regime was increasingly desperate to secure a deal as the war in Iraq loomed, worried that "it would be next" in some unspecified way.

As usual in the Middle East, there was no shortage of people willing to act as intermediaries between Libya and Washington. Prince Bandar bin Sultan, Saudi ambassador to Washington, had mediated the arrangement over the 1988 Pan Am 103 attack that resulted in the suspension and the eventual lifting of UN sanctions. At various times, would-be emissaries from Qatar, Egypt and Tunisia offered their services.

According to someone close to the regime, Tripoli approached France in early 2000 to act as an intermediary with the west on the weapons issue but "the French never came through". The Libyans then approached the British Embassy in Tripoli, which had reopened in 1999, and Musa Kusa, the Libyan intelligence chief who was deputy chief of Libyan intelligence at the time of the Lockerbie bombing, visited the British Foreign Office and met Mike O'Brien, foreign office minister.

Yet it was through another channel that the talks really got off the ground last March: Britain's Secret Intelligence Service, also known as MI6. Through years of negotiations with Libya over Pan Am 103, over Libyan support for the IRA and over Yvonne Fletcher, the policewoman murdered outside the Libyan embassy in London in 1984, MI6 had established a businesslike relationship with Libyan officials.

Nonetheless, negotiations proved long and difficult. Most of the meetings were held in London, where Mr Kusa went monthly, but some contacts were made in Rome. The bulk of the work was done by just six people: two each from MI6, the US Central Intelligence Agency and Libya.

As the extent of Libyan procurement efforts has become known (see below), western intelligence has been criticised for allowing it to go on so long. But a senior intelligence official says the Libyans were told that western intelligence was aware of a continuing Libyan effort to develop WMD. "Enough was known from different agencies to allow us to have a serious negotiation with them. They couldn't deny what we were saying. They went into the room to negotiate and then we switched on the lights," the official says.

Yet the Libyans were still reluctant to agree to let US and British officials into the country to inspect Libya's WMD sites, an aspect of the deal that the Americans knew would be essential to gain support in Congress for lifting sanctions. US officials say that, even as it began negotiations, Libya had not made a final decision to give up its programmes.

The turning-point came only after a discovery that emphasised just how active Libya's nuclear procurement effort had been - and how difficult it would be for Tripoli to continue with it while negotiating to end sanctions. In late September British and American intelligence discovered a German cargo ship headed for Libya from Dubai in the United Arab Emirates. The ship, diverted to southern Italy, was carrying a cargo of centrifuge parts that had been manufactured to Libyan specifications in Malaysia.

"The seizure showed them how much we knew about the programme," says a senior US official. "Even though the Libyans said 'You can come and look', months went by and they didn't grant access. When the interdiction took place, they said: 'You can come in.'"

Some diplomats have speculated that the Libyans told London and Washington about the ship, perhaps as a gesture of goodwill. But that version is rejected by US and British officials. Mr Ghanem, the Libyan prime minister, laughs at the suggestion there was a Libyan tip-off.

When the Libyans eventually relented, intelligence experts from the US and UK, including 12 SIS agents, visited Libya twice. They saw 10 sites where they examined evidence not only of the nuclear fuel cycle but also of the existence of chemical agents and missile programmes, UK officials said.

As the secret diplomacy neared its end, it was time for the public diplomacy to begin. From the British and American perspectives, it was essential not only that Col Gaddafi curbed his nuclear ambitions but also that he made an unequivocal public statement to that end. For his part, the Libyan leader needed to know that if he were to eschew non-conventional weapons, he would receive public support from Mr Blair and Mr Bush.

Libyan, British and American officials hammered out the final details of this accord of December 16 in a now well-known six-hour meeting at the Travellers' Club, on London's Pall Mall. In those conservative British surroundings, Mr Kusa - once the scourge of British intelligence and supporter of the IRA - was joined by Mohammed al-Zu'ai, Libyan ambassador to London, and Abdul-Ati Obeidi, ambassador to Rome. Over 24 hours, before the final public announcements were made a day later, three versions of Col Gaddafi's proposed statement whizzed between Washington, London and Tripoli. In the final hours, Libya agreed to admit in its public statement to the possession of centrifuges, and also that it would not just get rid of substances and equipment related to internationally banned weapons but also, critically, abandon its weapons programmes.

After the statement was made public, Jack Straw, the British foreign secretary, described Col Gaddafi as "statesmanlike and courageous" for his decision. This description was not entirely welcomed in Washington. "We thought it was way over the top," says a senior US official. "Jack said it on his own."

Nonetheless, the Bush administration was eager to claim a policy victory for the Libyan move, suggesting its decision to go to war against Iraq had made the difference.

Yet it was also clear that Libya had made a decision to do whatever it took to re-enter the international fold long before war was inevitable. Crucial roles in bringing the deal to fruition were played by diplomats and - significantly, in a week where the publication of the Hutton report in Britain will put them under intensified scrutiny - by the intelligence services.

### **TREASURE TROVE**

Even as Libya intensified its efforts to move closer to the west, it had from the mid-1990s been undertaking serious - and unusually successful - efforts to acquire nuclear technology. According to a senior US official, procurement accelerated after the suspension of United Nations sanctions in 1999.

Knowledgeable officials and diplomats said that when inspectors were given access to nuclear sites they found Libyan ambitions had surpassed their expectations.

The Libyan inventory included a warehouse containing equipment to transform uranium oxide - sometimes called yellow cake - into uranium hexafluoride, the feedstock for the centrifuges that enrich uranium. Tripoli had acquired and tested a number of these units, though some were missing, including the last that would have converted uranium tetrafluoride into hexafluoride.

Libya also obtained two sets of centrifuge designs, suspected of being acquired either directly or indirectly from Pakistan. Centrifuges separate weapons-usable Uranium 235 from the far more common U238 isotope in a process that eventually creates highly enriched uranium (HEU).

Libya assembled a so-called cascade of the first version, known as the P-1, derived from a Dutch design allegedly stolen from the Anglo-Dutch-German consortium Urenco in the early 1970s by Abdul-Qadir Khan, the so-called father of the Pakistani nuclear bomb. Dozens of the centrifuges were set up and tested, though uranium hexafluoride was not introduced.

Yet it appears that the Libyans were not satisfied with this design, which has often proved problematic. Like the Pakistanis before them, Tripoli discarded the P-1 and embarked on an aggressive effort to secure centrifuges based on a more sophisticated and reliable Urenco model, this one designed in Germany, called the G-2.

Many parts for the G-2 centrifuge construction had already arrived in Libya. The inspectors found them still in crates and cartons. Some were on the way from Malaysia, via Dubai, when they were seized in October aboard a German freighter. According to a US official, more shipments are likely to be on their way.

Officials said Libya did not appear to have taken steps towards "weaponisation". It had not worked on high explosive or trigger technology.

According to David Albright, a well-connected nuclear weapons expert who heads the Institute for Science and International Security: "The programme really focused on buying enough components to buy several thousand of these G-2 machines and so that's quite a capability." While he had not calculated what this would have produced, "certainly they were thinking about making enough HEU for a bomb a year".

But another surprise was the access that Libya had not just to components but also to designs, manufacturing guide books and construction advice - what Mr Albright describes as a "treasure trove" of information. The Libyans were also able to get advice in "real time" from the international network that supplied the hardware. "That's one of the scary things; that the Libyans were able to go through an intermediary to ask questions about centrifuge technology," Mr Albright says.

The scale of Libya's ambitions and apparent success has forced a rapid reassessment of the black market in nuclear technology.

The assumption had been that governments would not risk large-scale acquisitions for fear of discovery. Iran's programme aimed to build domestic manufacturing capability so that it would not have to rely on imported components, specialists said. By contrast, although Libya wanted ultimately to have manufacturing capability, it tried to import the equipment needed to make HEU.

Experts suspect that Pakistani nationals are at the centre of the network that has provided the technology, most of which appears to have been shipped from European and Asian suppliers through Dubai. Pakistani technology has also found its way to North Korea and Iran. What is not yet clear is the extent of official Pakistani complicity over the past decade or more in the trade.

According to Mr Albright, the shock to the international system of export controls could be as great as that generated by the discovery after the 1991 Gulf war of the extent of Iraqi nuclear acquisition efforts - particularly because Pakistan appears to be at the other end of the chain. "Pakistan has got to get these people under control and stop this ...I hate to put it this way but Pakistan has to got to arrest and convict these people and have a full accounting of what happened."

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