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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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Washington Post

April 28, 2004

Pg. 1

N. Korea Nuclear Estimate To Rise

U.S. Report to Say Country Has At Least 8 Bombs

By Glenn Kessler, Washington Post Staff Writer

The United States is preparing to significantly raise its estimate of the number of nuclear weapons held by North Korea, from "possibly two" to at least eight, according to U.S. officials involved in the preparation of the report. The report, expected to be completed within a month, would reflect a new intelligence consensus on North Korea's nuclear capabilities after that country's decision last year to restart a nuclear reactor and plutonium-reprocessing facility that had been frozen under a 1994 agreement. Among the evidence used in making the assessment is a detailed analysis of plutonium byproducts found on clothing worn by members of an unofficial U.S. delegation that was allowed to visit North Korean nuclear facilities several months ago.

The increase in the estimate would underscore the strides North Korea has made in the past year as the Bush administration struggled to respond diplomatically while waging a war against Iraq in an unsuccessful effort to search for such weapons there.

Intelligence officials also have broadly concluded that a separate North Korean uranium-enrichment program will be operational by 2007, producing enough material for as many as six additional weapons a year, one U.S. official said. With Democrat John F. Kerry's presidential campaign planning to highlight the dangers of nuclear proliferation, the leap in Pyongyang's nuclear capabilities during President Bush's tenure could leave the administration vulnerable to charges that it has mishandled the North Korea crisis. Experts said an arsenal of eight weapons means that North Korea could use its weapons to attack neighbors, instead of merely deterring a possible attack.

But some Bush administration officials believe the new estimate will help pressure North Korea's neighbors to back the U.S. position that Pyongyang's weapons programs must be dismantled without concessions. During a tour of Asia two weeks ago, Vice President Cheney warned that time is running out for diplomacy as an increasingly cash-strapped North Korea might seek to peddle its nuclear technology or fissile material -- including, Cheney said, to terrorist groups.

The estimates are guesswork based largely on circumstantial evidence, and administration officials in several agencies have yet to agree on specific numbers. The Energy Department has pressed for a higher estimate of North Korea's weapons and the Defense Intelligence Agency believes the uranium program will be operational at the end of this year, but the State Department's intelligence arm has been the most skeptical. The differences in the estimates depend in part on determinations about the power and efficiency of the North Korean design.

Work on the report began late last summer, after the first round of six-nation talks on the North Korea crisis, when various government agencies sought a unified position on the extent of Pyongyang's programs. Much of the report will not be made public, but its conclusions will guide official statements on North Korean capabilities.

In many ways, the official U.S. estimate of "possibly two" weapons lags significantly behind private-sector reports. The International Institute for Strategic Studies in London concluded this year that North Korea's nuclear arsenal could reach four to eight bombs over the next year and increase by 13 bombs per year by the end of the decade. The Institute for Science and International Security in Washington recently estimated that North Korea has a maximum of eight or nine weapons.

"It's long overdue for them to do something," David Albright, president of the Institute for Science and International Security, said of the administration.

Albright said that the January visit of the unofficial delegation -- which included Siegfried S. Hecker, a former director of Los Alamos National Laboratory -- brought back evidence that North Korea has reprocessed all 8,000 spent fuel rods that had been held in a cooling pond under a 1994 agreement negotiated by the Clinton administration.

In late 2002, Pyongyang evicted international inspectors observing the pond after the United States suspended shipments of fuel oil because, officials said, North Korea had nullified the 1994 deal by having a clandestine uranium program.

In February, CIA Director George J. Tenet told Congress: "The intelligence community judged in the mid-1990s that North Korea had produced one, possibly two, nuclear weapons. The 8,000 [spent fuel] rods the North claims to have processed into plutonium metal would provide enough plutonium for several more." Tenet added that North Korea is "pursuing a production-scale uranium enrichment program" using technology provided by A.Q. Khan, a Pakistani metallurgist who recently admitted to making millions by providing nuclear equipment and know-how to other countries.

The delegation members provided samples of the clothing they wore during their tour of the Yongbyon facility, when the North Koreans showed Hecker a jar that they said contained recently reprocessed plutonium. Albright said traces of plutonium byproducts, such as americium, that collected on the clothing could be analyzed to indicate how recently the plutonium had been processed.

"I think it is generally accepted the North Koreans are probably telling the truth when they say some reprocessing activity took place," said Gary Samore, a weapons expert who was the principal author of the London institute's report.

The earlier estimate was based on calculations derived from the amount of plutonium North Korea was believed to possess -- about seven to 11 kilograms -- and the new estimate essentially reflects the number of additional weapons North Korea could produce from the plutonium derived from the 8,000 spent fuel rods. The calculation in part depends on determining how much plutonium is lost during reprocessing.

Albright said he reached his estimate of a maximum of nine weapons by calculating that North Korea possesses about 37 to 39 kilograms of plutonium and would need at least four kilograms per weapon.

U.S. officials have said Khan told interrogators that in the 1990s the North Koreans showed him three devices they identified as nuclear weapons. The report, which has not been confirmed, would suggest North Korea was more efficient in its use of plutonium than previously thought.

But Samore said he thought it was implausible that North Korea would show its weapons to an outsider, let alone keep them all in one place. He added that it was in Khan's interest to assert that North Korea already had nuclear weapons when he began supplying materials for the uranium-enrichment program.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A47833-2004Apr27.html>

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Washington Post

April 28, 2004

Pg. 19

General Says Missile Defense Could Be Ready Soon

By Bradley Graham, Washington Post Staff Writer

The general in charge of the Pentagon's missile defense programs said yesterday that upcoming flight tests are likely to have little bearing on plans to field a national antimissile system later this year.

Air Force Lt. Gen. Ronald T. Kadish, director of the Pentagon's Missile Defense Agency, said top administration and military officials have yet to decide when to declare the system on alert -- that is, ready to engage ballistic missiles fired at the United States. But he said such a move could come as early as this summer, when the first missile interceptors are installed in newly built silos in Alaska.

By September, five interceptors are to be in place at Fort Greely near Fairbanks, Kadish said. By the end of 2005, 16 interceptors are slated for Fort Greely and four are planned for Vandenberg Air Force Base in California.

The interceptors, along with several ground- and ship-based tracking radars and an extensive network of electronic links, are intended to give the United States the ability to destroy enemy warheads in space by ramming into them.

But the system has come under fire from some lawmakers, scientists, military specialists and others for being largely unproven.

Although eight intercept tests have occurred since 1999, all have involved surrogates for the interceptor. The first flight test of the actual interceptor -- which consists of a small "kill vehicle" attached to a large booster rocket -- is due this summer. Then comes the first intercept attempt using the system's actual components. Both tests have been delayed several months this year as a result of problems with a redesign of the kill vehicle.

"If they both fail, we've got big problems," Kadish told a breakfast meeting of journalists. He went on to express confidence that both tests would succeed but made it clear that successful outcomes are not necessary for proceeding with deployment. "They're parallel paths," he said of the testing and fielding efforts.

Voicing frustration with the charges of insufficient testing, Kadish said the main reason for building the Alaskan site was to allow for flight trials under more realistic conditions. President Bush later decided to turn the site into an operational one, while keeping its initial purpose as a "test bed."

"The criticism we get is that we're not operationally testing the system before we put it in place," the general said.

"My response to that -- which people don't seem to want to accept -- is, you can't operationally test the system until you put it in place."

Kadish, who is due to retire this summer, said a large amount of information has been gathered through ground tests and flight trials of individual components. This has led to extensive computer modeling and simulations of likely system performance.

Although the Pentagon's chief weapons evaluator has questioned the validity of these models in the absence of more real data, Kadish said they have proven very accurate in predicting test results.

The Bush administration has attached considerable urgency to erecting the antimissile system, citing a growing threat from hostile states trying to acquire long-range missiles. Although two states -- Iraq and Libya -- are no longer the concern that they were, Kadish said the two most worrisome threats remain -- North Korea and Iran. He declined to discuss recent information about missile developments in either country.

Initially, the limited availability of tracking radars will restrict the interceptors in Alaska and California to countering only North Korean missiles.

The planned addition to the system next year of a radar in Britain will enable interceptors to go after missiles launched from the Middle East as well, Kadish said.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A47651-2004Apr27.html>

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Washington Times
April 28, 2004
Pg. 3

Missile Defense Against N. Korea Being Readied

Two crucial tests ahead, program chief says

By John J. Lumpkin, Associated Press

The chief of the military's missile defense programs said yesterday that he expects to protect all of the United States from a North Korean attack by the end of the year, but said failures in two upcoming tests could mean "big problems" for the program.

Air Force Lt. Gen. Ron Kadish, director of the Missile Defense Agency (MDA), told reporters that a decision about when to put the first missile interceptors on alert has not been made, but that plans call for several to be ready to test fire by September.

By the end of the year, about 10 interceptors are expected to be on alert at two sites: Fort Greely, Alaska, and Vandenberg Air Force Base, Calif. They will be linked to a specialized radar able to track inbound missiles over the Pacific Ocean.

But the interceptors face two tests of their ability to find and destroy incoming ballistic missiles, the first expected in late spring or early summer.

"If they both fail, we've got big problems," Gen. Kadish said. "We expect them to be successful."

He stopped short of saying that two failures would delay deployment of the first interceptor missiles in Alaska.

Officials note that the first interceptors will serve a dual role: as subjects of further testing, as well as actual defenses in an emergency.

The Bush administration has made the deployment of missile defenses a key aspect of its national security policy, saying it is vital to defend the country against missiles launched by hostile nations.

Critics say the technology is neither ready nor affordable, and that it fails to address the greater threat of weapons of mass destruction brought into the country by terrorists or other means.

Citing MDA figures, a recent report from the congressional General Accounting Office said missile defense programs will cost \$53 billion from 2004 to 2009.

Despite the apparent elimination of Iraq and Libya as future long-range missile threats, Gen. Kadish said the danger from ballistic missiles is growing. He pointed to North Korea and Iran's missile programs as the most worrisome, although he declined to describe any recent intelligence on developments in either country.

North Korea, which intelligence officials think has an untested intercontinental ballistic missile, is regarded as the most immediate threat, which is why the initial system of radar and interceptors is geared toward strikes from across the Pacific.

"Any adversary that would want to go against this system would have to think more than twice," Gen. Kadish said.

In the longer term, Iran could develop missiles capable of reaching the United States. A radar in Britain, once it is upgraded in 2005, will allow Alaskan-based interceptors to target missiles launched from the Mideast toward North America, Gen. Kadish said.

The general said the United States and European allies are considering a third interceptor base in Europe to protect European countries from those missiles.

Gen. Kadish's agency oversees several other antimissile programs and is working with allies to develop missile defenses in other countries.

He acknowledged delays in the Airborne Laser, a program that aims to mount a laser cannon on a Boeing 747, which would shoot down missiles as they were launched.

Engineers have not been able to fire the main laser, which has not yet been put onto the test aircraft. Nor have the targeting optics on the plane undergone full trials, he said.

<http://www.washtimes.com/national/20040427-105458-5494r.htm>

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Washington Post
April 28, 2004
Pg. 6

Experimental Smallpox Vaccine Protects Monkeys From Dying

By David Brown, Washington Post Staff Writer

Researchers at the U. S. Army laboratories at Fort Detrick in Frederick reported a major advance yesterday in the search for a safer smallpox vaccine.

An experimental vaccine made from pieces of the live virus currently used as a smallpox vaccine protected monkeys against monkeypox, their version of the fatal illness. The protection was not absolute -- the animals got mildly ill and developed the characteristic pox rash -- but it was good enough to keep them from dying.

The federal government currently vaccinates many members of the military against smallpox, a disease that was eradicated 26 years ago but that some experts believe might be used as bioterrorism weapon. Both federal and state governments have urged hospitals to vaccinate a small number of physicians, nurses and technicians as the first step in homeland defense against the infection.

Both efforts, however, have been marred by problems. The military program has experienced an unexpected number of cases of a rare complication, a heart-muscle inflammation called myocarditis. The program for health care workers has barely gotten off the ground because many people refuse to accept the small but real risks of the vaccine, which is a live virus related to smallpox that replicates in a person's body after inoculation.

The new experiments, done in rhesus monkeys, suggest that a virtually risk-free "subunit" vaccine made from virus DNA might be an acceptable substitute for the old, whole-virus version.

"This is an extremely primitive version of a vaccine that might ultimately be used in the future," said Jay W.

Hooper, a virologist at the U.S. Army Medical Research Institute of Infectious Diseases at Fort Detrick who led the experiment.

Hooper and his colleagues gave three monkeys a vaccine composed of four genes from vaccinia, the virus used as a smallpox vaccine. Three monkeys got a vaccine to an entirely different disease, Hantaan virus. Two monkeys were given the standard smallpox vaccine.

Then all the monkeys were injected with monkeypox virus.

The animals that got the experimental vaccine developed between one and 30 pox marks each -- a sign they were infected -- but all three survived. The animals that got the Hantaan vaccine, however, developed severe monkeypox, were covered with pox marks, and died. The animals that got live smallpox vaccine got no skin rash and did not become ill.

Two monkeys also got a vaccine that contained only a single monkeypox gene. It worked, but only barely. The animals got more than hundred pox marks and became severely ill but lived.

The researchers plan to repeat the experiment using genes from monkeypox itself to see if it protects better. After that, they may create a similar vaccine using genes from smallpox virus, an effort that would require them to work at a high-security lab at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the only place in the United States that holds samples of the virus.

A research group at the National Institutes of Health recently reported that a highly weakened strain of vaccinia, called modified vaccinia Ankara (MVA), also protected monkeys from monkeypox. If further tests are successful, it might also be an acceptable substitute to the vaccine now in use.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A48089-2004Apr27.html>

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Washington Times

April 28, 2004

Pg. 11

U.S. Sees Nuclear Network Threat

List is growing, says state Department's Bolton

By Edith M. Lederer, Associated Press

NEW YORK — Several countries in addition to Iran and North Korea may be trying to develop nuclear weapons, and Washington is pursuing the customers of an underground Pakistani network, Undersecretary of State John R. Bolton said yesterday.

Mr. Bolton wouldn't name the countries because U.S. officials are still seeking information.

"There are several others," Mr. Bolton said. "There's a lot of information that we don't necessarily have corroboration for, but we are pursuing our concerns where we do have information, trying to get additional information, learning from others and trying to assess the exact magnitude of the threat.

"Certainly one of the things that we're very interested in is finding out if A.Q. Khan's network had other customers, and we're pursuing that in cooperation with a number of other states," he said.

Abdul Qadeer Khan, the father of Pakistan's nuclear program, set up an underground network that supplied nuclear technology to Iran, Libya and North Korea. In February, he admitted being the mastermind of the scheme but was pardoned by Pakistan's president, Gen. Pervez Musharraf.

"There's more out there than we can discuss publicly," Mr. Bolton said, "and it's one of the reasons why the depth of our concern about the international market black market in weapons of mass destruction and related materials is as substantial as it."

Mr. Bolton spoke to reporters after accusing "at least" four countries that have ratified the nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT) of using its provisions "as cover for the development of nuclear weapons," either currently or in the past.

"States like Iran are actively violating their treaty obligations, and have gained access to technologies and materials for their nuclear weapons programs. North Korea violated its NPT obligations while a party, and then proved its strategic decision to seek nuclear weapons by withdrawing from the treaty entirely," he said.

In the past, Iraq and Libya also violated the treaty, Mr. Bolton said at a meeting of the committee preparing for next year's U.N. conference to review the 1968 pact, which is considered the cornerstone of international efforts to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons.

Declaring that "there is a crisis of NPT compliance," Mr. Bolton said President Bush "is determined to stop rogue states from gaining nuclear weapons under cover of supposed peaceful nuclear technology."

<http://www.washtimes.com/world/20040427-094707-4817r.htm>

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New York Times

April 28, 2004

Bush Issues Directive To Bolster Defense Against Bioterrorism

By Judith Miller

WASHINGTON, April 27 — President Bush has approved a series of initiatives intended to enhance the nation's defenses against a catastrophic biological weapons attack, senior administration officials said Tuesday. The steps include creation of a common surveillance system to collect and analyze information about bioterrorist threats.

The plan, detailed in a secret directive signed by Mr. Bush last Wednesday, also calls for the Department of Homeland Security to conduct a national risk assessment every two years on new biological threats, like those posed by genetically modified agents that may not respond to vaccines or antibiotics.

In addition, the department is to perform a biological "net assessment" every four years, to evaluate the effectiveness of existing biodefenses and to remedy vulnerabilities.

The directive results from a 10-month review of the government's response to the Sept. 11 attacks and the anthrax attacks that followed. Among other things, it aims to improve coordination among the dozens of offices and agencies that worked unevenly together during and after the anthrax attacks.

The plan does not provide any money beyond the roughly \$6 billion that the administration already spends annually on biodefense, a sum that is itself a vast increase over what was spent before 9/11. But it directs the Department of Homeland Security to allocate \$11 million to begin planning a National Biosurveillance Group, which will create the single place where all relevant information about potential biological threats against the nation will be assessed. A declassified version of the administration's plan, called "Biodefense for the 21st Century," is to be outlined at a news briefing on Wednesday by Tom Ridge, secretary of homeland security; Tommy G. Thompson, secretary of health and human services; and Paul D. Wolfowitz, deputy secretary of defense.

Of the 20 pages in the directive, 11 will be made public at that briefing, and administration officials provided a copy of them in discussing the plan Tuesday.

Several people outside the administration who were asked for reaction said they were hesitant to comment without seeing the plan. One was Tara O'Toole, an assistant energy secretary in the Clinton administration who is now chief executive of the Center for Biosecurity at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center. But Dr. O'Toole did say she would be "disappointed if there was not a very strong emphasis on the urgent need to improve capacity to respond to epidemics."

In particular, she added, "the government needs to engage hospitals in responding to sudden floods of very sick people."

Jerome M. Hauer, a former assistant health secretary for public health emergency preparedness, who was in office when the review was under way, called the effort critical to the nation's defense against bioterrorism. He singled out the center for the integration of all threat information as particularly crucial.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention "has failed miserably in trying to develop a common surveillance system," he said. "There's a hodgepodge of surveillance systems around the country, and none of them is the same. Every contractor is out there trying to sell a different model for surveillance."

At the C.D.C., Joseph Henderson, associate director for terrorism preparedness and emergency response, said his agency endorsed the new effort. "We've been working diligently since 1999 in building a better global surveillance system, and since Sept. 11 to detect epidemics domestically," he said. "But there's always room for improvement." Under the president's directive, assessments resulting from the Homeland Security Department's new analytical system will be provided to the Departments of Defense, Agriculture and Transportation; the Environmental Protection Agency; the disease control centers; the Federal Bureau of Investigation; and the numerous other agencies responsible for preventing or responding to bioterrorism.

The administration will also "expand international efforts to keep dangerous biological material out of the hands of terrorists," the action plan states.

To that end, a senior official said, the administration is sponsoring a resolution in the United Nations Security Council that would criminalize illicit trade in material used to make biological, chemical or nuclear weapons, and that would direct states to adopt stricter export controls on such material and related equipment. The Security Council is expected to consider the resolution as early as Wednesday, an administration official said.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2004/04/28/politics/28BIO.html>

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Washington Post

April 29, 2004

Pg. 23

Bioterrorism Procedures Are Outlined

Bush Directive Specifies Agency Responsibilities

By John Mintz, Washington Post Staff Writer

President Bush recently signed a classified directive governing how the nation should defend itself against biological attacks, and yesterday the administration released an unclassified version that laid out some of the responsibilities of federal agencies.

While U.S. agencies have spent billions of dollars and initiated a number of new programs to counter bioterrorism since Sept. 11, 2001, those efforts were at times ad hoc, temporary or uncoordinated, senior administration officials acknowledged yesterday. Bush's new directive, a year in the making, clarifies which agencies are responsible for what tasks. Most details remain secret.

The directive contains 59 separate "taskings" of agencies, such as ordering the Environmental Protection Agency to develop detailed plans for decontaminating cities after a strike. An unclassified summary also said the U.S. intelligence community is under orders to carry out studies examining the types of genetically engineered "bugs" terrorists could be working on to mount an attack.

"This directive makes sure important things don't fall through the cracks," said a senior Homeland Security Department official who briefed reporters on the condition of anonymity. "Now every single agency knows what its job is, and we don't think there are any gaps."

Usually speaking privately, top U.S. officials for years have identified biological terrorism as perhaps the gravest threat facing the nation. But partly because the specific evidence that terrorists such as al Qaeda have worked to develop biological pathogens is scant and classified, the Bush administration generally has avoided addressing the issue in detail.

Yesterday's gathering at the Department of Health and Human Services to unveil Bush's directive was, for this sensitive topic, characteristically vague and short on details. The eight-page declassified summary contained hardly any examples of specific responsibilities given to specific agencies. Senior administration officials said that was because they do not want to broadcast U.S. vulnerabilities.

The presence at yesterday's news conference of three top administration officials -- HHS Secretary Tommy G. Thompson, Homeland Security Secretary Tom Ridge and Deputy Defense Secretary Paul D. Wolfowitz -- plus dozens of top aides underlined the issue's importance.

Democrats in Congress have for more than a year said the administration was slow in fashioning a bioterrorism strategy, and yesterday they echoed previous statements. "More than two years after the anthrax attacks, the administration should have long since decided who is in charge of implementing a biodefense strategy," Rep. Jim Turner (Tex.), the ranking Democrat on the House Homeland Security Committee, said in a statement. "We need much more than what was announced today."

Detailing a complex set of policies on such an emotionally charged and controversial issue in the middle of a presidential election campaign was risky because it implicitly acknowledges the administration has not done everything it could before today, experts on homeland security policy said.

"I give them kudos for advancing such a tough set of policies in a campaign year when most issues grind to a halt," said Frank Cilluffo, a former homeland security official in the Bush White House and now an administrator at George Washington University. "It shows this is a clear priority for them."

All the ranking administration officials who addressed the news conference, both on the record and anonymously, stressed the Bush team's accomplishments on the bioterrorism front for the \$10 billion it has spent -- including stepping up medical research and improving health surveillance.

At the news conference, Ridge said various agencies have been aggressively pursuing biological defenses, but now their responsibilities are defined by the president.

The directive was coordinated by retired Air Force Gen. John A. Gordon, who heads the Homeland Security Council and coordinates the numerous agencies with a role in countering biological pathogens such as anthrax, smallpox and ebola.

Tackling the bioterrorism dangers requires wrangling many federal agencies, to say nothing of state and local governments, hospitals and universities.

Homeland Security handles many tasks, such as erecting air-sniffing sensors in dozens of cities to detect attacks, while HHS develops vaccines and immunizes health workers. The Pentagon also is deeply involved, training National Guard units for civil emergencies, and coordinating military health research.

Unlike nuclear weapons work, which probably can be performed only by advanced laboratories working for nations, biological advances can be made by graduate students using information off the Internet, U.S. officials say.

Assigning Homeland Security and the intelligence community to track this kind of global research is one point described in the classified version, officials said.

The government's performance on biodefense has come under criticism in the past. In 2002 Bush called for millions of U.S. health workers to be immunized for smallpox, but only about 40,000 have been vaccinated.

Tara O'Toole, a bioterrorism expert at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center and a frequent critic of the administration's performance in this area, said she was "deeply disappointed" by the directive. "It's not a strategy but a list of projects and goals," she said, adding that keeping secret large portions of it was "a strategic error."

"They've got to start talking to the public about this issue," she said.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A51413-2004Apr28.html>

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HHS Fact Sheet: Biodefense Preparedness

Public Health Emergency Preparedness "Transforming America's Capacity to Respond"

"What has been accomplished to better prepare America's Biodefense and bolster our public health emergency preparedness capacity?"

Federal investment in Biodefense is up 17 times, and the President has proposed another significant increase for next year.

- *Combined HHS and DHS Biodefense preparedness spending:*

FY 2001 -- \$294 million [HHS budget]

FY 2002 -- \$3 billion [HHS budget]

FY 2003 -- \$4.4 billion [combined HHS and DHS budgets for Biodefense]

FY 2004 -- \$5.2 billion [combined HHS/DHS - incl. BioShield proposal]

An unprecedented partnership effort with states and hospitals was launched quickly.

- A total of \$2.7 billion has been made available for state, local and hospital preparedness since 2001. Another \$1.5 billion is being provided this year, with a further \$1.3 billion proposed for FY 2005.
- These awards comprise two programs: CDC's program to upgrade state and local capacity (\$2 billion to date); and HRSA's program for hospital preparedness (\$650 million to date).
- Funds go through state public health agencies, but 75 percent will ultimately go for direct or indirect support of local public health departments and hospitals.
- States are drawing these funds as quickly as they are able to ramp up their preparedness efforts and invest the money productively.

Public health systems are already much stronger and better prepared for bioterrorism and other mass casualty incidents.

- All 50 states have bioterrorism response plans in place, including mass vaccination plans (few states had such planning in 2001.)
- All states have established systems to rapidly detect a terrorist event through mandatory reportable disease detection systems.

- 90 percent of CDC awardees so far report they could initiate a field investigation within six hours of receiving an urgent disease report.
- All States have plans in place for receiving and distributing Push Packages from the Strategic National Stockpile.
- States are updating their laws for dealing with public health emergencies, using the draft model legislation on emergency health powers that was prepared by CDC. As of 2003, 32 states and the District of Columbia had passed bills or resolutions related to the draft model legislation.

More workers and expertise have been directed at public health emergency preparedness.

- Within the past 18 months, at least 3,850 new state and local public health staff have been funded (in whole or part) by the CDC awards.
- HHS staff dedicated to public health emergency preparedness in now 1,700, up from 212 in FY 2001. Next year, the number will rise again, to over 2,000.
- CDC has trained 500 staff for immediate emergency support. CDC is also providing expert staff to state and local public health agencies, with 500 to be assigned out by 2008.
- CDC continues to provide expert assistance, especially through its "disease detectives," the Epidemic Intelligence Service. This two-year program has grown from 148 EIS officers in 2001 to 168 in 2004.

America's public health laboratory capacity, a crucial element in detecting and understanding any disease outbreak, is greatly expanding.

- The Laboratory Response Network, connecting labs of many kinds that can help in an emergency, has been expanded to 120 member labs in all 50 states, up from 80 labs in 2001. By the end of FY 2004, the network will include 145 member labs. This includes 47 state and local public health labs at the BSL-3 biosecurity level, four times the number in 1999.
- Last year, CDC provided specialized bioterrorism-related training to 8,800 key laboratorians.
- Eleven new high-level biocontainment research laboratories are being funded by NIH primarily for research purposes, but they would also be available to assist in public health response to bioterrorism or infectious disease emergencies.

Communications capacity within the public health structure has been expanded and improved.

- CDC's Public Health Information Network can reach 1 million recipients quickly, including 90 percent of all county public health agencies so far, up from 68 percent in 2001.
- CDC's EPI-X system also connects more than 1,800 public health officials for immediate sharing of emergent public health data, compared with 200 in 2001.
- These improvements will help make public communications clearer and faster in an emergency.

Hospital preparedness efforts have resulted in new state- and region-wide coordination, with coherent plans for investment and response.

- For the first time, a nationwide initiative bought about joint planning for public health emergencies by public systems and hospitals working together toward federally-identified goals.
- All states have developed plans with their hospitals for dealing with mass casualty incidents, including terrorism, accidents or naturally-occurring disease.

Nationwide training for health care professionals is being implemented, and scientific expertise is growing.

- Almost 174,000 health professionals are being trained in FY 2003 and 2004 through HRSA's Bioterrorism Training and Curriculum Development program, with 19 grants for continuing education aimed at the diverse health care workforce, and 13 grants to health professions schools to develop curricula.
- NIH's new "Regional Centers of Excellence for Biodefense and Emerging Infectious Diseases" will build a strong infrastructure for research and development while also developing our base of scientific expertise by training a new generation of science professionals to perform Biodefense research.
- CDC's Centers for Public Health Preparedness (CPHP) help prepare frontline health workers at the local level. There are now 34 CPHPs in 46 states, comprised of schools of public health, schools of medicine and other local institutions.

Federal emergency resources have been expanded to back-up local resources when they become overwhelmed.

- The Strategic National Stockpile has increased 50 percent since 2001, now including twelve 50-ton "Push Packages," up from eight. The amount and variety of stockpile contents has also grown.
- The National Disaster Medical System has 33 percent more personnel for its emergency response teams - 8,000 personnel today, up from 6,000 in 2001.
- HHS had quadrupled the Readiness Force in the U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps, from 600 in 2001 to almost 2,300 today.

FDA is implementing the most fundamental enhancements of its food safety activities in many years.

- FDA has more than doubled its presence at ports of entry, from 40 ports in 2001 to 90 ports today.
- This year, FDA is performing 60,000 inspections of imported foods, five times more than in 2001. In FY 2005, FDA proposes to conduct 97,000 inspections, eight times higher than 2001.
- FDA is implementing its new authority for registration of food facilities (some 425,000 are expected to register); for prior notification of food import shipment (some 20,000 notices per day expected); and for record-keeping and administrative detention of suspected foods.
- FDA has created a Food Emergency Response Network, with 63 labs representing 34 states - no such network existed in 2001.
- FDA is expanding its eLEXNET communications network for immediate exchange of critical food testing data. At present, there are 108 laboratories representing 49 states and the District of Columbia. They are capable of dealing with more than 3,700 analytes. In 2000, there were eight labs, capable of tracking a sole analyte.

The Biodefense research initiative is the largest single increase in resources for any initiative in the history of NIH.

- Biodefense research funding at NIH has increased from \$53 million in FY 2001 to \$1.6 billion in FY 2004.
- The increased effort is guided by strategic plans developed with the guidance of panels of scientific experts.
- More than 50 biodefense initiatives have been developed to address research and development priorities in therapeutics, vaccines, diagnostics, and basic research including genomics, proteomics and bioinformatics.
- NIH has invested more than \$800 million for 11 extramural labs and three intramural labs, and physical security. These are critical to developing countermeasures against agents of bioterror.
- NIH will emphasize product development and cooperative enterprises with private industry and academia, in addition to its traditional role of supporting basic scientific research.

Progress in Biodefense research has been swift and substantial.

New and improved vaccines against smallpox, anthrax, and other potential bioterror agents are being developed and evaluated and will soon enter the national stockpile through Project BioShield.

- NIH rapidly developed a fast-acting Ebola virus vaccine and showed its efficacy in monkeys; it is now being tested in human volunteers.
- NIH-supported scientists have identified antivirals that may play a role in treating smallpox or the complications of smallpox vaccination, as well as new antibiotics and antitoxins against other major bioterror threats.
- NIH has established eight Regional Centers of Excellence for Biodefense and Emerging Infectious Diseases Research (RCE). This nationwide group of multidisciplinary centers is a key element in the HHS strategic plan for biodefense research.
- NIH has supported the genomic sequencing of all bacteria (including the anthrax bacterium) considered to be bioterror threats, as well as the sequencing of genomes for at least one strain of every potential viral and protozoan bioterror pathogen.

Capacity is being expanded to produce medical countermeasures to protect Americans from bioterrorism attacks.

- The supply of smallpox vaccine has increased from 15.4 million doses available in 2001, to more than 300 million full doses today, enough to vaccinate every American, if necessary.
- The Strategic National Stockpile includes enough antibiotic to treat 20 million people for anthrax exposure, significantly higher than in 2001. Research is also underway toward an improved anthrax vaccine.
- The President has launched the BioShield initiative, to create a more stable and assured source of funding to purchase new vaccines or treatments. BioShield will provide \$5.6 billion over the next 10 years for new products.
- FDA has approved new medical countermeasures, including therapies for anthrax, radiation exposure and antidotes to nerve agent poisoning. FDA has also implemented programs to facilitate development of new products.
- In the past two years, FDA finalized the "animal rule," which provides for using animals to test the safety and efficacy of products where human tests would be unfeasible. This rule can important in development of many Biodefense countermeasures.

Federal coordination and capacity has been expanded.

- The Department of Homeland Security creates a focal point for federal leadership.
- HHS has created a top-level Office of Public Health Emergency Preparedness to coordinate Department-wide efforts.

- HHS operating divisions work closely with states, providing specific performance measures and benchmarks, with semi-annual review of progress. HHS' Office of Inspector General is also increasing its activities to ensure proper accounting and expenditure of federal support.
- In collaboration with the Department of Justice, CDC launched the "Forensic Epidemiology" course in 2002 to train frontline public health, public safety and law enforcement professionals to conduct effective joint investigations. So far, 42 states have elected to take part, and 5,000 professionals have been trained.

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<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2004/04/20040428-4.html>

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Washington Post

April 29, 2004

Pg. 21

Weapon Transfers Targeted

U.N. Security Council Resolution Seeks Criminalization

By Colum Lynch, Washington Post Staff Writer

UNITED NATIONS, April 28 -- The U.N. Security Council unanimously adopted a resolution Wednesday that will compel governments to make it a crime to transfer nuclear, biological and chemical weapon materials to terrorists and black-market arms dealers.

The vote was a diplomatic success for President Bush, who appealed in a September speech to the 191-member U.N. General Assembly for a Security Council resolution that would criminalize the proliferation of such weapons and strengthen export controls to prevent smuggling across international borders.

"The important resolution we adopted today fulfills these key goals," said James B. Cunningham, the deputy U.S. ambassador to the United Nations. "The council is responding appropriately to what all agree is a clear and present threat to global peace and security."

But U.S. and U.N. diplomats conceded that it could take years to determine what practical impact the resolution will have on the campaign to keep the world's deadliest weapons out of the hands of terrorists.

The agreement follows nearly seven months of intense negotiations in the 15-nation council over the scope of the resolution. The talks concluded after Pakistan, the most vocal critic of the U.S. initiative, dropped its opposition, saying that the United States had assured it that the resolution would not increase international scrutiny of its own nuclear weapons program.

After the vote, Pakistan's U.N. ambassador, Munir Akram, said his government would abide by the terms of the resolution but would continue to bar any outside interference in its own nuclear program.

"Pakistan will not accept any demand for access, much less inspections, of our nuclear and strategic assets, materials and facilities," said Akram, adding that Pakistan will continue its nuclear weapons program.

Pakistan, Brazil, Germany and other council members had criticized earlier versions of the American-backed resolution on grounds that it could subject governments to economic sanctions or military force, and could undermine an international system of disarmament treaties. But none of the council's members were willing to stand in the way of a resolution that addressed an important gap in international arms treaties, which were designed to halt the spread of weapons between states, not the transfer of such devices involving individuals or organizations.

"In the end, lots of delegations still had some misgivings about the text of the resolution," said Germany's U.N. ambassador, Gunter Pleuger. But he said that most shared the goal of halting the spread of weapons to private groups.

The United States offered a series of concessions to broaden support for the resolution. Last month, the United States secured China's support by dropping a provision authorizing the interdiction of foreign vessels suspected of ferrying banned weapons on the high seas. More recently, the United States added language to ensure that violations that occurred before the resolution's approval would not be covered.

The latest concession was aimed at assuring Pakistan that the resolution would not force it to take legal action against A.Q. Khan -- a Pakistani scientist whose role in developing Pakistan's weapons program has made him a national hero -- for secretly selling nuclear weapons components to Libya, Iran and North Korea.

The resolution calls on countries "to combat by all means" the spread of such weapons. It requires that the United Nations' 191 members "adopt and enforce appropriate and effective laws" to prevent "any non-state actors" from being able to "manufacture, acquire, possess, develop, transport or use nuclear, chemical or biological weapons and their means of delivery."

States are required to report within six months on steps they have taken to implement the resolution.

Daryl Kimball, executive director of the Arms Control Association, said the resolution did not go far enough. For instance, he said, the resolution largely leaves it up to countries to decide what kind of action is appropriate to fight proliferation.

"The measure is a useful exhortation for states to take measures within their national laws," he said. "But it does not constitute a really serious additional impediment to proliferants."

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A51412-2004Apr28.html>

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April 30, 2004

Pg. 16

Book Names Iraqi In Alleged '99 Bid To Buy Uranium

By Susan Schmidt, Washington Post Staff Writer

It was Saddam Hussein's information minister, Mohammed Saeed Sakhaf, often referred to in the Western press as "Baghdad Bob," who approached an official of the African nation of Niger in 1999 to discuss trade -- an overture the official saw as a possible effort to buy uranium.

That's according to a new book Joseph C. Wilson IV, a former ambassador who was sent to Niger by the CIA in 2002 to investigate reports that Iraq had been trying to buy enriched "yellowcake" uranium. Wilson wrote that he did not learn the identity of the Iraqi official until this January, when he talked again with his Niger source.

That knowledge has not altered Wilson's much-expressed view that the Bush administration distorted intelligence on Iraq's weapons capabilities to help make the case for going to war. Wilson maintains that someone in the administration retaliated against him by disclosing to columnist Robert D. Novak that his wife was a CIA operative, a leak now the subject of a grand jury investigation. The revelation about Sakhaf, contained in "The Politics of Truth: Inside the Lies that Led to War and Betrayed My Wife's CIA Identity," adds an odd bit of detail to the uranium saga.

Sakhaf was dubbed "Baghdad Bob" and "Comical Ali" by the Western news media for his often farcical televised pronouncements about how Iraq was winning the war last April even as U.S. troops were rolling into Baghdad.

"Those Iraqi fighters are slapping those gangsters on the face, and then when they flee, they will kick their backsides," he asserted at one point.

Sakhaf, now a broadcast correspondent in Abu Dhabi, could not be reached for comment yesterday. He was interviewed when the U.S. military took control of Iraq but was not held. "He wasn't wanted for anything.

Unfortunately, being a bad spokesman is not a crime," a U.S. official said.

Sakhaf's role casts more light on an aspect of Wilson's report to the CIA that was publicly disclosed last summer. On the heels of Wilson's public criticism that intelligence was exaggerated and his statement that his trip to Niger had turned up no uranium sales to Iraq, agency Director George J. Tenet took the blame for allowing President Bush to make assertions about the Iraqi quest for nuclear material in his 2003 State of the Union address. Tenet said the intelligence had been too "fragmentary" to merit inclusion in the speech.

Tenet's statement noted that Wilson had reported back to the CIA that a former Niger official told him that "in June 1999 a businessman approached him and insisted that the former official meet with an Iraqi delegation to discuss 'expanding commercial relations' between Iraq and Niger. The former official interpreted the overture as an attempt to discuss uranium sales."

In his book, Wilson recounts his encounter with the unnamed Niger official in 2002, saying, he "hesitated and looked up to the sky as if plumbing the depths of his memory, then offered that perhaps the Iraqi might have wanted to talk about uranium." Wilson did not get the Iraqi's name in 2002, but he writes that he talked to his source again four months ago, and that the former official said he saw Sakhaf on television before the start of the war and recognized him as the person he talked to in 1999.

Much of Wilson's book recounts the events surrounding the disclosure that his wife, Valerie Plame, worked for the CIA. A grand jury investigating the disclosure has been highly active in the past seven weeks, suggesting that it may have reached a new stage, people familiar with the probe said. Plame was a covert operative. Under the Intelligence Identities Protection Act of 1982, it is illegal to knowingly disclose the name of a covert CIA employee.

FBI agents and prosecutors have interviewed some current and former White House officials repeatedly, people involved in the case said. Several administration officials testified before the grand jury in recent weeks.

Staff writer Linton Weeks contributed to this report.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A54640-2004Apr29.html>

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North Koreans Agree To Mid-Level Talks

By Anthony Faiola and Edward Cody, Washington Post Foreign Service

TOKYO, April 29 -- North Korea agreed Thursday to attend a round of mid-level diplomatic talks starting May 12 aimed at dismantling its nuclear weapons program but bluntly stated that it must receive a "reward" for taking even the preliminary step of a nuclear freeze.

Agreement on the new round of talks, to be held in Beijing between mid-ranking delegations from the United States, China, Russia, Japan, South Korea and North Korea, was confirmed Thursday by participating countries, including China and South Korea. The new negotiations will follow two previous rounds that involved higher ranking diplomats from the six countries but failed to yield significant results.

Chinese and South Korean officials said the new talks were a step toward breaking the stalemate over North Korea's nuclear ambitions. But the government's statement on Thursday, attributed to a North Korean Foreign Ministry source on its official KCNA news service, immediately signaled just how far apart the two main participants -- the United States and North Korea -- remain from a meaningful agreement.

The Bush administration has taken a hard-line position that North Korea must agree to a complete, verifiable and irreversible dismantling -- referred to in diplomatic circles as CVID -- of its nuclear programs without any immediate benefits up front. North Korea insists that talks address its demands for economic and diplomatic compensation including oil shipments and a dropping of existing sanctions against it in exchange for a temporary freeze. It is also demanding security assurances from the United States, something the Bush administration has said it was willing to provide only within the context of a regional agreement involving North Korea's neighbors. Many U.S. officials are skeptical the working-level talks will yield much progress, in part because there is little incentive for either North Korea or the United States to reach an agreement before the U.S. presidential elections in November.

On Thursday, the North Korean government restated its demand of "reward for freeze." But the Bush administration has been loath to even use the word freeze at the negotiating table, believing it sounds too similar to a suspension deal on North Korea's nuclear programs reached in 1994 with the Clinton administration, which later fell apart. Instead, the Bush administration has said a freeze would be acceptable only if it were clearly tied to further steps toward dismantlement.

U.S. officials say the North Koreans admitted to breaking the Clinton agreement in late 2002. Since then, North Korea is believed to have made significant headway on its nuclear arsenal. U.S. intelligence officials said this week that they are set to raise its estimate of the number of nuclear devices North Korea possesses from two to at least eight.

China, Russia and South Korea have urged the United States to be more flexible in order prevent North Korea from officially becoming the world's newest nuclear power.

Chinese officials suggested that despite North Korea's public demands, "this time the agenda will be open, and all the parties can present their views," said a spokesman for the Chinese Foreign Ministry, Kong Quan. "The basic goal is to prepare for the next round of six-party talks" between higher-ranking officials.

At a regular ministry briefing, Kong called on the governments involved in the talks to be patient, a request seen as an appeal to the Bush administration. Indeed, Vice President Cheney on his recent tour of Asia suggested that time was running out on the Chinese-led diplomacy.

"There is a saying in China, that you must be very patient to achieve results," Kong said.

The nuclear issue was a centerpiece of a surprise summit held this month in Beijing between Chinese officials and North Korea's leader, Kim Jong Il. But Kong evaded questions whether North Korea's agreement to attend the working-level talks resulted from Kim's visit.

Cody reported from Beijing. Staff writer Glenn Kessler in Washington contributed to this report.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A53194-2004Apr29.html>

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GAO-04-521, April 30.

<http://www.gao.gov/cgi-bin/getrpt?GAO-04-521>

Highlights - <http://www.gao.gov/highlights/d04521high.pdf>

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