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Washington Times

December 4, 2004

Pg. 7

North Korea

No Progress In Talks On Nuclear Threat

SEOUL - North Korean and U.S. officials met this week in New York but made no progress on restarting six-party talks on the North's nuclear programs, a North Korean Foreign Ministry spokesman said today.

The official KCNA news agency quoted the spokesman as saying Pyongyang still wanted to talk. It was prepared to be patient to see what the North Korea policy of newly re-elected President George W. Bush's revamped administration looked like, he said.

<http://www.washtimes.com/world/20041203-102137-7301r.htm>

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Los Angeles Times

December 5, 2004

Pg. 1

Global Nuclear Inquiry Stalls

Authorities fear that the extent of a Pakistani scientist's proliferation ring remains unknown and that it will resume work if pressures ease.

By William C. Rempel and Douglas Frantz, Times Staff Writers

VIENNA — The global investigation into Abdul Qadeer Khan's black market trade in nuclear technology has stalled in a clash of national interests that threatens a full accounting of his secret partners and clients, according to interviews with diplomats and officials from several countries.

International authorities fear the full scope of the Pakistani scientist's ring may never be known.

Senior investigators said they were especially worried that dangerous elements of the illicit network of manufacturers and suppliers would remain undetected and capable of resuming operations once international pressures eased.

Investigators also said that records obtained in Libya and elsewhere showed that some nuclear equipment purchased or manufactured by the network had yet to be found, raising the possibility that it was diverted to still unidentified customers.

"We are far from knowing everything," a senior European diplomat involved in the inquiry said. "I'm frustrated by the lack of cooperation. We are losing a lot of time."

Some countries have refused to help, and others have only partially cooperated, said numerous officials involved in the inquiry spearheaded by the United Nations' International Atomic Energy Agency, or IAEA.

Pakistan has not permitted investigators to interview Khan, and his closest confidant is being held in Malaysia under that country's restrictive security act. Investigators also are concerned about the level of cooperation of former Soviet republics and China.

Investigators have suffered setbacks and delays even as they have gathered new evidence of the network's sophistication and have documented its move into Dubai, an ancient smuggling port on the Persian Gulf. Dubai was the hub of Khan's covert distribution operation, a transportation and storage base for parts and machinery destined for the secret nuclear programs in Iran and Libya, shipping records and investigation files show.

The Khan ring used nondescript warehouses scattered throughout Dubai, in the United Arab Emirates, to store and repackage some of the equipment, as well as to complete small-scale manufacturing assignments, according to documents and photos shown to The Times.

Inspectors from the IAEA visited the warehouses in recent weeks and took environmental samples to check for the presence of enriched uranium, which could indicate the shipment of weapons material. Test results are pending, officials said.

Information implicating members of Khan's ring began to surface last December after Libyan leader Moammar Kadafi announced that he was giving up his efforts to build an atomic bomb. In a deal negotiated with the U.S. and Britain, Libya turned over evidence showing that Khan and his associates had sold at least \$100 million worth of technology to Libya, including a nearly completed uranium enrichment plant to produce material for a bomb. The disclosures revealed that Khan, regarded as the father of Pakistan's atomic bomb, also had provided extensive assistance to Iran's nuclear program, dating back to the late 1980s.

Investigators from the IAEA and various police agencies have been trying to piece together the ring's operation, identifying middlemen and suppliers who contributed to what officials call the world's worst case of nuclear proliferation.

Individual countries are conducting their own criminal investigations, but the IAEA has sole responsibility for carrying out the worldwide effort to shut down the black market.

A handful of arrests have been made in Germany, Switzerland and South Africa. Law enforcement authorities also are investigating people in several other countries, including Britain, France and Spain.

Not everyone is eager for full disclosure, however.

Amid speculation that Khan may have operated with the knowledge or assistance of other high-ranking military officials in Pakistan, President Pervez Musharraf pardoned Khan early this year and has refused to permit investigators from the IAEA or the United States to interview the scientist.

"Investigators are very keen to get direct access to [Khan], but I don't think it will ever happen," a Western diplomat said.

Similarly, Malaysia has blocked access to Khan's confidant, Dubai businessman Buhary Syed abu Tahir, who is being held in Kuala Lumpur. Hussein Haniff, Malaysia's ambassador to the IAEA in Vienna, said Tahir was being held under the country's Internal Security Act, which restricts access to him.

The case is politically sensitive in Malaysia. Tahir, who married into a prominent Malaysian family, had arranged for production of centrifuge components at a factory controlled by the prime minister's son.

Risks From Delays

Such delays and obstacles compound fears of the IAEA inspectors that evidence will disappear, memories will fade and leads will turn out to be false. The agency, which is responsible for monitoring compliance with nuclear regulations, lacks the power to compel testimony or subpoena evidence.

"Without state cooperation we have a difficult time. The whole process is so slow," said another senior European diplomat.

Ineffective export controls also appear to be a continuing problem, the investigation has found. Shipments of sensitive material from Malaysia, Dubai, Spain, Turkey and Pakistan have turned up in Libya.

Two officials said they were especially concerned about former Soviet republics and China, which provided assistance to Iran's nuclear program.

The Western diplomat said investigators wanted to question South African officials after The Times reported last week that a complete, ready-for-assembly control system for a Libyan uranium enrichment plant was built undetected near Johannesburg, in part with imported supplies. He questioned whether the Pretoria government should have known more and shared more information about suspicious imports and exports.

But the diplomat said evidence in the Khan case indicated that the problem was much more widespread.

"Some countries say their own customs people wouldn't know a centrifuge rotor from a banana," the Western diplomat said. "The fact that this [black market] trade could have gone undetected in some countries raises doubts about whether it would be noticed next time."

Investigators are uncovering ever more alarming evidence about the reach and sophistication of the Khan network in selling nuclear equipment and knowledge to Iran and Libya over a 15-year period.

A senior investigator said that he was stunned this year when he visited the workshop set up in Libya to manufacture components for the uranium enrichment plant.

"These guys were really organized," said the investigator, who has a long involvement with the nuclear industry and provided a detailed description of the operation.

Machine Shop 1001

The enrichment plant was based on designs provided by Khan. It involved using the centrifuges, an array of spinning cylinders, to purify a uranium gas to produce enriched material for a bomb. Nearly 100 different pieces of machinery from all over the world had been assembled before the scheme was uncovered in late 2003.

Among the machinery were two specialized lathes from Spain, a furnace from Italy, power supply units from Turkey and centrifuge components from Malaysia and Pakistan, the investigator said.

The Libyan plant was code-named Project Machine Shop 1001. Crates shipped to the project used false export documents to disguise the contents, but each was stamped with a tracking number to indicate where in the assembly process the contents were intended.

The operating instructions were drawn from videos of Khan's top-secret, government-owned enrichment plant in Pakistan, designs from that plant and instructions assembled by network participants in Dubai, according to documents and investigators.

Detailed instructions discovered in Libya specified the number of minutes required for each step in the enrichment process and the number of skilled technicians needed at each station in the plant.

Collections of photographs uncovered by investigators provided a surprisingly extensive inventory of machinery that had been shipped to Libya. Because export records and bills of lading routinely were falsified, photos were used as proof to guarantee final payments after delivery.

"They didn't trust each other and they didn't have proper documentation, so they took pictures to prove what they had sent," the senior investigator said.

Using shipping records and information from Libyan officials, investigators determined that much of the machinery had been shipped to Dubai. Once there, it was repackaged for shipment to Libya.

Some components were sent separately, according to investigators and documents.

For instance, two specialized lathes were purchased from a Spanish company without the computerized controls necessary to make precision centrifuge parts. Such computers would have alerted Spanish authorities.

Photos of the machinery shown to The Times indicate that computer controls were purchased separately and attached to the lathes in South Africa and Libya.

Tahir told Malaysian police that in late 1994 or early 1995 he delivered two suitcases containing about \$3 million in cash to a Dubai apartment used by Khan.

The money was payment for two containers of centrifuge components sold to Iran. Investigators said far larger sums were sent to bank accounts in Dubai, Switzerland and other countries.

Investigators said that they believed other sensitive components of the Libyan enrichment plant had been manufactured, and that they were urgently trying to find them.

"Big quantities did not end up in Libya, and the question is, where are they?" said the senior investigator.

<http://www.latimes.com/news/printedition/la-fg-network5dec05,1,3975024.story>

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London Sunday Telegraph
December 5, 2004

Watchdog 'Bowed To Pressure From Iran' On Bomb Materials

By Damien McElroy, Foreign Correspondent

The world nuclear watchdog dropped a claim that Iran bought large quantities of a metal used to trigger explosions in atomic weapons after bowing to objections from Teheran.

The International Atomic Energy Agency at first accepted Western intelligence reports that the Islamic republic had bought "huge amounts" of beryllium from "a number of nations", but removed the claim from its final report on Iranian compliance with nuclear non-proliferation rules, published 10 days ago.

An earlier draft of the IAEA report, seen by The Telegraph, said that Iran had manufactured material to use with the beryllium that it had purchased as a "nuclear initiator in some designs of nuclear weapons".

A spokesman for the IAEA conceded that the agency had removed any mention of beryllium from its report, but said that the change was insignificant. She said: "There are all kinds of technical details in first drafts which are later removed. That's part of the drafting process."

Jacky Sanders, the American ambassador to the IAEA, however, said that Iran's assertions that it has never acquired or used beryllium were no longer reliable.

The climbdown by the IAEA reflected Teheran's insistence that it had never acquired or used beryllium, and helped Iran escape immediate referral to the UN Security Council over its nuclear ambitions. Instead, the IAEA board passed a resolution demanding that the country suspend uranium enrichment while the agency inspects declared nuclear sites.

The compromise agreement has been heavily criticised by American officials and others for failing to compel Iran to open all suspected sites to nuclear inspectors on demand. The IAEA last week revealed that Iran had refused access to two military bases where it is said to be developing nuclear material and missiles capable of carrying an atom bomb. The deal permitted inspections of Iran's existing civilian nuclear energy production sites only.

Western intelligence agencies have intercepted documents suggesting that Iran purchased equipment for delivery to the Parchin military base and a second facility at Lavisan. Satellite photographs suggested that weapons are being tested at the sites. The head of the IAEA, Mohammad ElBaradei said that Iran had repeatedly rejected requests to visit the sites. "We are following every credible piece of information," he said. "It takes time."

Iranian officials claim that they are not obliged to open up the facilities to weapons inspectors. "There is nothing required for us to do," said one Vienna-based official. "They should have evidence that there are nuclear activities, not just, 'We heard from someone that there is dual-use equipment that we want to see'."

The IAEA head, Mohammad ElBaradei, yesterday denied that he had collaborated with the Iranians to expunge the beryllium charge. He said: "We don't negotiate our report. At the end of the day not a single paragraph is shown to any single country until the report is out."

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/main.jhtml?xml=/news/2004/12/05/wiran05.xml>

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New York Times
December 5, 2004

When A Virtual Bomb May Be Better Than The Real Thing

By David E. Sanger

VIENNA — At first glance, the current struggle to force Iran and North Korea to give up their suspected nuclear weapons programs has disturbing echoes of the American fiasco in searching for Iraq's weapons. There are murky intelligence reports. There is strong rhetoric from the Bush administration. There is a mix of threats and denials from paranoid regimes that sound as if they have something to hide. And there are no smoking guns.

But in Iraq's case, the critical question - the one on which American intelligence agencies failed so spectacularly - was whether Saddam Hussein had reconstituted his chemical, biological and nuclear programs, elevating the threat he posed to one that justified urgent military action.

For Iran and North Korea, that is not the right question. Instead, the issue is whether they figured out a way to successfully game the system and build a "virtual bomb."

In this era, a nation doesn't have to parade its nukes in the capital on May Day. In fact, it's probably against its interest to do so. All it has to do is create convincing ambiguity - to leave the world wondering whether, if push

came to shove and shove led to talk of a pre-emptive strike, in a few short weeks the country could screw together a workable, deliverable nuclear weapon. In an age when centrifuge components and bomb designs are on the black market, and when technology has made bomb-building much less expensive and time-consuming, it doesn't take much for the world to take you seriously.

"I call them 'latent weapons states,' said Mohamed El Baradei, the chief of the International Atomic Energy Agency, in an interview last week. "It's a description that fits a lot of countries that have the know-how. The only key is the fissile material. If you are really smart, you don't need to develop a weapon, you just develop a capability. And that is the best deterrence."

Of course, a nuclear weapon, real or virtual, is more than a deterrent. It has the power to shape events in a region. Nuclear ambiguity is all it takes to change the strategic balance. Saddam Hussein lost the chance to do that after the 1991 gulf war, when American and United Nations officials were shocked to discover how much progress he had made on a bomb. They destroyed that capability, and as it turned out Iraq was never able to reconstitute its program. American intelligence believes that North Korea and Iran have taken this lesson to heart. "Both regimes view this as Saddam Hussein's biggest mistake," a former senior American intelligence official said recently, insisting on anonymity because he was citing conclusions from classified assessments. "If Saddam had been able to make a convincing case that he could put a weapon together quickly, they think that no American president would have dared to risk an invasion."

In this analysis, Mr. Hussein's big mistake was that he jumped the gun in invading Kuwait 14 years ago, before convincing the world that he was on the verge of acquiring nuclear weapons. Then he lost all the equipment that could have created that aura - centrifuges to enrich uranium, high-explosive testing areas and intermediate missiles that could have carried warheads. When Mr. Hussein kept insisting in 2002 and 2003 that he had no program anymore, Mr. Bush and the intelligence agencies could argue that he was probably just too wily for them, once again - and that it was time to stop him, before a hidden program turned into a hidden weapon. North Korea and Iran are pursuing a different strategy, flaunting their capability. North Korea has an easy case to make. Before it threw inspectors out nearly two years ago, it had a stockpile of 8,000 spent rods of nuclear fuel that could be converted to weapons-grade plutonium with relative ease. When a small group of American experts was invited into the country early this year, the North proudly showed that the rods had been removed from their cooling ponds, and said the conversion to plutonium was nearly complete. By now everyone figures they are probably right.

Did they turn the rods into five or six weapons? Or just into weapons-ready fuel?

"What's the difference?" Mr. El Baradei asks.

The Iranians are being a little more subtle. They have shown off their centrifuges, and confessed to hiding elements of their program for 18 years, but Mr. El Baradei says he has seen no evidence that they have a dedicated nuclear arms program. The Iranians insist they are enriching uranium only for generating nuclear power, and that the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty allows them to do so. After all, they point out, nations like Japan do the same thing. Last week, Iran agreed to suspend production while it takes part in negotiations that could bring investment and technology into the country. But it made it clear it did not intend to give the technology up.

THE Islamic republic has not renounced the nuclear fuel cycle, will never renounce it and will use it," its top nuclear negotiator, Hassan Rowhani, said. Noting that Iran had again sidestepped Washington's efforts to ask the United Nations Security Council to consider sanctions because of the program, he added: "We have proved that, in an international institution, we are capable of isolating the United States. And that is a great victory."

But even while Iran repeated the mantra about its peaceful intentions, the International Atomic Energy Agency was demanding access to military sites where it suspects that a secret, parallel enrichment program may be under way. The Iranians don't have to let them in, unless there is already reasonable evidence of nuclear material on the site. So far, the evidence is scant.

Meanwhile, the Iranians make no secret of their efforts to develop new missiles that could carry nuclear warheads. If they can keep up the shell game - with a "peaceful" nuclear program that could become military within weeks after renouncing the nonproliferation treaty (as North Korea's did last year) - the Iranians may have figured out how to build the perfect virtual weapon.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2004/12/05/weekinreview/05sang.html?oref=login>

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New York Times

Bush Downplays Thompson's Terror Worries

By **THE ASSOCIATED PRESS**

Published: December 5, 2004

Filed at 9:31 a.m. ET

WASHINGTON (AP) -- President Bush played down on Saturday a stark warning from his resigning health chief that the nation's food supply is largely unprotected from terror attack.

Bush said that the government is doing what it can to safeguard the public from threats, but much work remains.

"We're a large country, with all kinds of avenues where somebody could inflict harm," said Bush, asked about the issue after an Oval Office meeting with Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf. "We've made a lot of progress in protecting our country, and there's more work to be done, and this administration is committed to doing it."

Health and Human Services Secretary Tommy Thompson said in a speech Friday announcing his coming departure from the Bush Cabinet that he worries "every single night" about a possible terror attack on the food supply.

Despite dramatic increases in inspections of food imports, only "a very minute amount" of food is tested at ports and airports, Thompson said.

"For the life of me, I cannot understand why the terrorists have not attacked our food supply because it is so easy to do," Thompson said. "We are importing a lot of food from the Middle East, and it would be easy to tamper with that."

Asked to respond to Thompson's comments, Bush neither criticized them nor implied that the food supply is safer than Thompson asserted.

Bush asked for Congress' help to boost domestic security, urging lawmakers to confirm quickly his choice to take over leadership of the Homeland Security Department. On Friday, Bush nominated former New York Police Chief Bernie Kerik to succeed Tom Ridge, who announced his resignation Tuesday from the department created to oversee the nation's protection from attack.

Of Kerik, Bush said, "I hope the Senate confirms him quickly so he can get to work."

Bush's security efforts on the home front even got a plug from the president's foreign guest.

"You are trying your best to address the issue of terrorism all over the world, and obviously the most important part is to protect your own, the United States, from terrorism," Musharraf said.

<http://www.nytimes.com/aponline/national/AP-Bush-Food-Safety.html?oref=login>

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Los Angeles Times

December 6, 2004

Pg. 1

Russia Seeks Safety In Nuclear Arms

No more a superpower, its conventional forces greatly weakened, Moscow increasingly relies on the deterrent power of atomic weapons.

By David Holley, Times Staff Writer

MOSCOW — It was near the end of President Vladimir V. Putin's reelection campaign early this year, and two days of high-profile military exercises highlighting his role as Russia's commander in chief had been marred by failed tests of submarine-launched missiles.

But with a few cryptic words, Putin dispelled the gloom. The exercises, he said at a news conference, confirmed that Russia would soon possess intercontinental nuclear weapons capable of maneuvering in flight to evade antimissile defenses.

"No other country in the world has such weapons systems," Putin said. "It means that Russia has been and will remain one of the biggest nuclear missile powers in the world. Some people may like it and some may not, but everyone will have to reckon with it."

The end of the Cold War, improved relations with the U.S. and the personal rapport between Putin and President Bush have all served to make Moscow's military seem far less ominous than in Soviet times. On top of that, Russia's conventional forces have vastly weakened.

The sad state of its regular military has forced Moscow to place fresh emphasis on nuclear weapons in order to protect its interests in Europe and Asia. Washington is building military bases in some former Soviet republics. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization has expanded eastward into the former Soviet Baltic republics. Washington has continued to develop missile defenses.

The world may now have only one superpower, but the United States and Russia still could destroy each other many times over.

Source of Prestige

"In the current situation the role of nuclear weapons for Russia is hard to overestimate," said retired Gen. Makhmut Gareyev, president of the Academy of Military Sciences in Moscow. "Basically it is the only factor which can still ensure our country's safety. We have nothing else to repel strategic military threats anymore."

Nuclear weapons also ensure prestige for Russia. Some Russian analysts maintain that their country's nuclear arsenal is the only reason it has been given a seat at the table with the world's major industrial powers.

"It shouldn't be forgotten that Russia was invited to the G-8 because it has around 800 strategic missiles," military analyst Victor Litovkin wrote recently in the weekly newspaper *Moskovskie Novosti*. "Strategic missiles remain the only chance to make the world respect Russia in the near future."

Those within Russia's military and political elite who favor greater spending on nuclear weapons promote such views, said Ivan Safranchuk, head of the Moscow office of the Washington-based Center for Defense Information. "I do not exclude that Putin buys this argument to some extent," he added.

The conventional forces are a shadow of the army that NATO once feared could overrun Western Europe. Dispirited and poorly trained draftees equipped with aging and badly maintained weapons have taken a beating from separatists in the southern republic of Chechnya. A tradition of brutal hazing still leads to high rates of suicide and desertion among conscripts.

The army is top-heavy and works with a technologically outdated command and control system.

But Russia has about 7,800 operational nuclear warheads, roughly divided between 4,400 strategic warheads and 3,400 tactical nuclear weapons, according to the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, an American journal considered among the most authoritative public sources for such information.

An additional 9,000 warheads are in storage or officially out of service and awaiting dismantling.

The United States, the journal said, has about one-third more strategic warheads, but a smaller total stockpile.

Russia's land- and submarine-launched strategic warheads have a total explosive power equal to about 120,000 bombs of the size that destroyed Hiroshima.

A single Hiroshima-sized blast in downtown Los Angeles, according to a computer projection done several years ago by Physicians for Social Responsibility, would kill about 150,000 people immediately and 100,000 more from neutron and gamma radiation. An additional 800,000 people would be exposed to high-level radiation.

Relying on Topol-M

Although the futuristic new weapon that Putin alluded to during his campaign and again in comments on Nov. 17 may never be deployed, Russia is already modernizing its nuclear forces.

The silo-based Topol-M missile, first deployed in 1997, was designed to accelerate faster during its booster phase to counter U.S. efforts to shoot down missiles immediately after launch. At least 36 are now in service, and a mobile version is in final testing. They will form the core of Russia's land-based missile force after 2015, said Yuri Solomonov, director of the state-run Moscow Institute of Thermal Technology, the missile's builder.

The Topol-M "belongs to the next generation of missile weaponry and differs fundamentally from everything that has been done before in this field in our country and abroad," Solomonov told journalists in May.

Russia has had more trouble developing a missile for use on new submarines.

Many of Russia's aging Soviet-era submarines have been scrapped. Some have been refurbished and three new ones are being built.

"The old submarines should go to a junkyard already. It's time," said Pavel Zolotarev, another retired general who is now deputy director of the Russian Academy of Sciences' USA-Canada Institute.

"And a new submarine needs a new missile to be installed in it — more perfect, more safe, more reliable."

Four years ago, leaking torpedo propellant caused an explosion that sank the Kursk nuclear submarine, killing its 118-man crew in what Russia's top prosecutor called a technical malfunction for which no one was to blame.

Prosecutor General Vladimir Ustinov said the accident on Aug. 12, 2000, was triggered by a leak of highly unstable hydrogen peroxide that exploded after contact with kerosene and the metal body of the torpedo.

Construction of the three new submarines has been delayed, partly because of missile failures. Several missiles test-launched in the late 1990s blew up before reaching their targets. A new missile, the Bulava-30, was successfully tested in September, according to a Russian military publication. Like the Topol-M, the Bulava-30 boasts fast acceleration on takeoff and other "enhanced systems" to overcome missile defenses, the journal reported.

The first of the new submarines, named the Yuri Dolgoruky after Moscow's 12th century founder, is scheduled for delivery by 2006. All three are supposed to be in service by 2012.

Washington and Moscow may not have any intention of unleashing these weapons, but neither side fully trusts the other, either. And both are concerned about the possibility of nuclear weapons falling into the hands of terrorists.

Bush and Putin have agreed to reduce deployed strategic nuclear weapons to no more than 2,200 each by 2012.

However, their agreement contributed to the final demise of the 1993 START II treaty. The pact would have eliminated all land-based strategic missiles equipped with multiple warheads.

During the Cold War, missiles fitted with multiple warheads were considered particularly destabilizing. If one side launched the missiles first, it could theoretically destroy a larger number of enemy missiles than the number it used. That arithmetic made it more difficult to reach a stable balance between the two sides.

Both Washington and Moscow now plan to retain missiles with multiple warheads, and neither is under any obligation to destroy nonoperational warheads, leading some critics to question whether real arms control is taking place.

With so many bombs still in so many places, a lot of things could go wrong. The danger of terrorists gaining possession of a nuclear bomb may head the list.

Zolotarev, of the USA-Canada Institute, said terrorists could try to trick Moscow and Washington into firing missiles at each other. He painted a scenario where three events take place simultaneously: a sea-launched missile of undetermined origin is fired toward Russia, a so-called dirty bomb — a conventional device rigged with radioactive materials — explodes in a Russian city, and false information gets into the nuclear weapons management system. "We must take into account that terrorists also get the knack of modern technologies, and to pit one nuclear power against the other nuclear power, to achieve their mutual destruction, can be a very alluring task," Zolotarev said. Although unlikely, he said it was a bigger threat than a war between Russia and the United States. But that possibility hadn't disappeared altogether, either.

"There are forces in the United States which still dream of dismembering Russia and bringing it to its knees, all the way down," said Gareyev, the military academy president. "What if these forces gain the upper hand in Washington?"

Defense Spending

Such worries, together with Russia's new-found oil wealth and the high cost of reforming conventional forces, have combined to trigger a rapid increase in defense spending.

Russia's military budget — including items listed under other headings — has grown 84% in real terms since 1999, according to calculations by Safranchuk. The official military budget is set to jump an additional 17% next year, to about \$22 billion.

In the late 1990s, when funds were tight, maintenance of Russia's nuclear forces was a top priority, Safranchuk said. "The nuclear umbrella was regarded as a must to be funded, and it was taking up to 80% of procurement and research and development money," he said.

The nuclear forces lost their luster for a few years, but now seem to have regained it, he said.

Russia's official budget proposal for 2005 earmarks \$300 million for the nuclear weapons sector and \$2.8 billion for military research, the Russian news agency Itar-Tass reported. Many details of Russian military spending are secret, but the research category could include significant nuclear-related activities.

Alexei G. Arbatov, former deputy chairman of the defense committee of the lower house of parliament, said political leaders should tell defense planners on both sides to stop regarding the other side as a potential enemy. "Until they are told not to do so ... this will continue to poison our relations," he told a forum on U.S.-Russian security issues earlier this year at the Carnegie Center Moscow.

Nuclear weapons take years to develop, and with the Topol-M missile, Russia has countered one element of the Reagan-era "Star Wars" defense idea of a space-based laser system that would destroy missiles during their boost stage, Safranchuk said.

There are no details available on the maneuvering device Putin referred to in February, but it apparently is designed to protect a warhead after a ballistic missile reenters Earth's atmosphere. Russian experts have suggested it might resemble a cruise missile, or that it could be a gliding warhead that could use its momentum and the resistance of the atmosphere to change directions and evade U.S. defense systems.

Whether or not this new technology is deployed, for the foreseeable future Russia still has enough weapons to simply overwhelm any U.S. antimissile defense.

The Bush administration, for its part, insists that the purpose of antimissile defense is not to provide a shield against Russia but against a small number of missiles launched by a rogue state such as North Korea.

Pentagon officials say they closely monitor advances in ballistic missile technology by countries such as Russia and China, especially those that may affect plans for U.S. defense systems.

"We'd be fools to think that Russia is not taking steps to develop its ballistic missile capabilities," said one defense official, who spoke on condition of anonymity.

In the past, defense experts have said that a maneuverable missile could evade a missile defense system. U.S. officials prefer to emphasize U.S.-Russian cooperation on terrorism and on reducing nuclear arsenals.

Brookings Institute President Strobe Talbott, a Russia expert who was deputy secretary of state in the Clinton administration, said that although U.S. policymakers had not completely dismissed the possibility of a confrontation with Russia, "they do not lay awake at night worrying about 'the bad Russia, the bad bear' coming out of its lair and threatening the United States."

However, U.S. officials are expressing concern about Russia's investments in submarines capable of carrying nuclear missiles because the money could be better spent elsewhere, he said.

"They say, 'This is bad because it's money that Russia can't afford. It's money that Russia ought to be spending on becoming a modern country.' "

Zolotarev said Russia and the United States should never allow any other countries to match the size of their nuclear arsenals. That would, in effect, require the two nations to work together to maintain strategic dominance for decades to come. Because Russia today is concerned with security closer to its borders rather than a global ideological conflict, tactical nuclear weapons may be more important than long-range missiles.

"A deterring role will be played by the tactical weapons," Zolotarev said.

'A Great Power'

Talbott said Russia had a choice between emphasizing military strength or other forms of influence — the economic, diplomatic and cultural weight sometimes defined as "soft power."

"Russia is a great power," he said. "It is going to be a great power forever, for all intents and purposes. The question is, is it going to be a great power that defines its greatness in military terms, or will it define its power in other terms.... If they spend too much, as they have traditionally done, on 'hard power,' it's going to be all the harder for them to catch up in 'soft power.' "

Former U.S. Secretary of Defense William J. Perry said in an interview that apart from the cost of maintaining nuclear arsenals and the danger that they could fall into the hands of terrorists, the very existence of the weapons creates a risk that they will one day be used.

"Instead of the weapons being used to implement policy, the weapons may drive policy," Perry said. "I think that is the danger."

Speaking at the Carnegie forum, Perry paraphrased a comment by Russian physicist and human rights activist Andrei D. Sakharov during the Cold War: "Reducing the risk of nuclear war carries an absolute priority over all other considerations."

"During the Cold War it did," Perry said. "Today it should also."

<http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/world/la-fg-russmil6dec06,1,6172221.story?coll=la-headlines-world>

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New York Times

December 6, 2004

North Korea Said To Expand Arms Program

By David E. Sanger and William J. Broad

VIENNA, Dec. 3 - Nearly two years after international nuclear inspectors were ejected from North Korea, the director general of the International Atomic Energy Agency says he is now certain that the nuclear material his agency once monitored there has been converted into fuel for four to six nuclear bombs.

The assessment by the energy agency's chief, Mohamed ElBaradei, in an interview here at its headquarters, aligns with the private assessments of many American intelligence officials. But it goes well beyond anything that the Central Intelligence Agency or President Bush and his aides have said in public. Some Bush administration officials have said they are not eager to update their public assessment of North Korea's abilities, out of a concern that it could create pressure for action - either greater efforts to force the collapse of the North Korean government, or greater concessions in negotiations, as North Korea has demanded.

In the interview, Dr. ElBaradei said his judgment that North Korea had converted its stockpile of spent nuclear fuel into weapons-grade plutonium was not based on new intelligence. Instead, he said, it was based on the agency's years of accumulated knowledge of North Korea's abilities, and the amount of time that had passed since North Korea ejected inspectors and began removing the 8,000 spent nuclear fuel rods that inspectors had been monitoring. "I'm sure they have reprocessed it all," he said. "We know they have the fissile material," he said, a reference to the rods, which can be reprocessed into weapons-grade plutonium. "The production process is not that difficult" to turn the rods into bomb fuel, he said, and now enough time has passed for North Korea to have solved any production problems.

Until now, the United States has insisted that North Korea has enough nuclear material to make only one or two weapons, based on an estimate made in the early 1990's. Because the United States and the I.A.E.A. have never seen that material or any nuclear weapons, it was an educated guess, and one that has been the subject of considerable behind-the-scenes debate.

But it was also assumed that one or two weapons posed relatively little threat: North Korea could not afford to sell its plutonium, or even conduct a nuclear test, if those actions would eradicate its stockpile.

If Dr. ElBaradei's new estimate is right - and several American experts interviewed in recent days said they believed it probably was - then that equation changes, and could give North Korea far more leverage.

Richard L. Armitage, who is departing as the deputy secretary of state, warned Congress nearly two years ago that if North Korea reprocessed its fuel rods, there was a far more significant risk that it could sell the material. The comment alarmed some administration officials, who have striven to convey a sense that there is not a great strategic difference if North Korea holds one or two weapons or if it holds seven or eight. But internally, there has been significant debate on that subject at the White House and the Pentagon. Last month, Gen. Leon J. LaPorte, commander of United States forces in South Korea, told reporters in Seoul that he was increasingly concerned that "North Korea, in its desire for hard currency, would sell weapons-grade plutonium to some terrorist organizations." Robert J. Einhorn, a scholar at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington and a former senior State Department official who has often dealt with North Korea, said Dr. ElBaradei's comments "certainly create some pressure on the Bush administration."

"Would the North Koreans ever sell their plutonium? I don't think so, but who knows?" he said. "It becomes more plausible if they think we are turning the screws on them. And it makes the military situation more difficult," he said, because North Korea could hide its weapons around the country, making them more difficult to target or seize. A spokesman for the National Security Council, Sean McCormack, said he was unaware of any change in the official assessment of North Korea's abilities.

Dr. ElBaradei's assessment puts him in the opposite position he was in two years ago, when the Bush administration was pressing him to find evidence that Iraq was reconstituting its nuclear weapons program. Dr. ElBaradei balked then, saying there was little evidence of activity since the 1991 Persian Gulf war in 1991. His view was later supported by the American-led Iraq Survey Group.

But in the case of North Korea, it is Dr. ElBaradei who appears more willing to raise alarms. That may reflect, in part, the breakdown in communication between the I.A.E.A. and the United States on North Korea - the agency has been largely frozen out of the little new intelligence that the United States has gathered about North Korea's activities since inspectors left. One senior official of the agency said that was to be expected because "without inspectors in North Korea, there's not much we could do with the intelligence."

Dr. ElBaradei's assessment, in the same week that he raised new questions about whether Iran might be hiding elements of its nuclear program, frames the two most urgent proliferation threats. While Mr. Bush, who said last year that he would not "tolerate" a nuclear-armed North Korea, has avoided public discussion of its apparently expanding nuclear capacity, the subject clearly concerns his aides.

But there have been a few hints of those worries. In September, just before the presidential election, a senior administration official with access to the highest level intelligence told The New York Times that there was satellite evidence indicating that North Korea was preparing to conduct a nuclear test. The statement appeared to be an effort to warn North Korea and China, the North Koreans' main economic lifeline, not to interfere with the election by proceeding with the test. Soon after, activity at the suspected test site diminished, though experts here in Vienna say their own examination of other satellite imagery suggests that a test is still a strong possibility.

In interviews, officials here said that if their assessment was correct, North Korea now had six or more "bomb cores." But it is unclear whether those cores have been made into weapons. Either way, the officials said, North Korea's action could complicate the inspection process if the North agreed to disarm.

"This is going to be a nightmare if we don't have full cooperation and full access" throughout the country, said Pierre Goldschmidt, who directs the department of safeguards at the nuclear agency, which is responsible for inspections. With so much material now produced, he said, North Korea has had time to disperse it around the country and conceal it. "It will almost be an impossible job," he said.

But he said the agency had already developed a plan in case talks between North Korea and five other nations - China, the United States, South Korea, Japan and Russia - resulted in a deal to allow inspectors back into the country. That plan calls for far more intrusive inspections than any the agency has conducted before. Mr. Goldschmidt said that even with full cooperation by the North Koreans, completing the inspections could take several years.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2004/12/06/international/asia/06korea.html>

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New York Times
December 6, 2004

Iran Hints It Sped Up Enriching Uranium As A Ploy

By Nazila Fathi

TEHRAN, Dec. 5 - Iranian officials have hinted in recent days that they sped up their enrichment of uranium in the past year to put Iran in a better position to negotiate with the West.

In a rare admission, Sirous Nasser, a member of Iran's negotiating team with three European countries over its nuclear program, was quoted Sunday in the daily newspaper Shargh as saying that Iran had mastered the nuclear fuel cycle since last year, when it came under international pressure to abandon its uranium enrichment program.

"We are in a better negotiating position for political work than last year," the daily quoted him as saying.

Ali Akbar Salehi, Iran's former ambassador to the International Atomic Energy Agency, told students at Ferdowssi University in Mashhad on Wednesday that the government of President Muhammad Khatami had, for the first time, allocated money and facilities to make "advanced centrifuges" for uranium enrichment, Shargh also reported.

Iran has taken the position that its nuclear activities are for peaceful purposes, though it has pursued technology that could easily be converted to weapons production. The United States has accused Iran of secretly trying to make nuclear weapons and has urged its allies on the International Atomic Energy Agency, the United Nations nuclear monitoring agency, to send Iran's case to the Security Council.

The agency opted for a gentler approach and issued a mildly worded resolution after Iran agreed in talks with the three European nations - France, Germany and Britain - to suspend its uranium enrichment activities. In return Iran expects rewards, including economic benefits, political and security cooperation with Europe and help with nuclear technology.

A Foreign Ministry spokesman said Sunday that Iran was not obliged to allow United Nations inspectors to visit military sites said to be involved in secret nuclear weapons work, but that it was willing to discuss the issue, Agence France-Presse reported.

"It is not a matter of unlimited commitments and unlimited inspections," said the spokesman, Hamid Reza Asefi.

"We will act in accordance with" the nuclear nonproliferation treaty.

Despite statements by Iran's leaders that their nuclear program has wide public support, reaction among Iranians to the agreement to suspend nuclear activities has been muted.

Except for a protest outside the British Embassy in Tehran, for which about 200 members of a militia force were bused in, no noticeable protest has occurred.

Frustrated by more than two decades of isolation and eight years of war with Iraq, many Iranians indicate that they would rather avoid confrontation with other countries. They say their priorities are an improved economy and more political and social freedom.

"The government could spend the \$12 billion it has spent over a nuclear program for development of the country," said Karim Bozorgmehr, 32, an English teacher. An analyst in Tehran, who had done surveys on the subject but who said he feared retaliation if his name was published, said a majority of people he approached viewed the government's nuclear ambition with skepticism, saying the government was seeking nuclear capacity as a deterrent and as a way to consolidate its power.

"The clerics want to get hold of the bomb to rule for another 50 years," said, Reza, 36, a civil servant, who, fearing retaliation, would agree to be identified by only his first name.

News of the United Nations agency's resolution last week helped Iran's economy, in which important sectors like real estate and the stock market had slumped over fears that the nuclear dispute could result in a military confrontation with Israel or the United States.

"People were in a wait-and-see situation," said Saeed Leylaz, a journalist and an analyst in Tehran. "The decline in the economy and the soaring unemployment led to discontent among people. Iranian society is not ready for any kind of confrontation, and this put pressure on the government to reach a deal with Europe."

Iran began its nuclear program before the Islamic revolution in 1979 with aid from the United States, Germany and France. But the world has been suspicious of the nuclear program of Iran's Islamic government.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2004/12/06/international/middleeast/06iran.html?pagewanted=all>

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Los Angeles Times
December 6, 2004

Musharraf Scorns Nuclear Probe

Pakistani leader defends his decision to deny monitors access to accused proliferator Abdul Qadeer Khan as a matter of national pride.

By Sonni Efron, Times Staff Writer

WASHINGTON — Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf on Sunday defended his decision not to allow international investigators to interrogate Abdul Qadeer Khan, the Pakistani scientist accused of peddling nuclear secrets around the world.

Appearing on CNN's "Late Edition" on Sunday, Musharraf said the requests from United Nations nuclear inspectors indicated a lack of trust in Pakistan, portraying the issue as a matter of national pride.

President Bush met with Musharraf on Saturday and urged the Pakistani military man to ensure that all information about the Khan network's nuclear proliferation be turned over to the Americans. Musharraf promised to do so. But the White House did not ask for direct access to Khan — apparently in deference to Pakistani sensitivities about a man who, as the father of the country's atomic bomb, had been considered a hero.

However, the International Atomic Energy Agency still wants to interview Khan, whom Musharraf has pardoned, and Khan's assistant, who is held in Malaysia.

Lacking such cooperation, officials view it as unlikely that Khan's activities will ever be fully unraveled, The Times reported Sunday.

Musharraf told CNN that Pakistan could do the best job interrogating Khan.

"It shows a lack of trust in us," Musharraf said. "We can question him the best, and then there is ... a domestic sensitivity. This man is a hero for the Pakistanis, and there is a sensitivity that maybe the world wants to intervene in our nuclear program, which nobody wants.... It is a pride of the nation."

Analysts have raised doubts about whether Musharraf is keeping Khan from speaking to international investigators for fear the scientist might reveal the extent to which some of his activities may have been condoned by the Pakistani military.

Musharraf denied "200%" that the Pakistani government or military knew that Khan was making nuclear weapons information available to other nations.

The Pakistani leader, a key Bush administration ally in its war on terrorism, also said that, in hindsight, the U.S. decision to invade Iraq was a mistake.

"We have landed ourselves in more trouble," he said.

There was no new information on where Osama bin Laden could be, Musharraf said, but he suggested that Al Qaeda's command structure in Pakistan has been broken by recent military operations aimed at rousting militants from tribal areas along the Afghan border.

In Pakistan, both pro-government and opposition parties staged large street demonstrations coinciding with Musharraf's foreign tour.

In the central city of Multan, a coalition of six Islamic parties, Muttahida Majlis-i-Amal, held a rally and vowed to force Musharraf to quit as army chief if he reneged on his promise to do so voluntarily by year's end, according to Reuters.

Loosening the military's control over politics has been a key goal of the Pakistani democracy movement, but the parliament recently passed a law that would allow Musharraf to keep the top army job as well as the presidency.

<http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/world/la-fg-musharraf6dec06,1,5584714.story?coll=la-headlines-world>

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Washington Times

December 7, 2004

Pg. 15

Tehran's Nukes A Global Threat, Israeli Warns

By Tom Carter, The Washington Times

Iran's relentless pursuit of a nuclear weapon is the biggest danger facing Israel, the Middle East and the world, a senior foreign-policy adviser to the Israeli government said yesterday.

"We have no doubt that Iran is trying to move ahead on building nuclear capability," Zalman Shoval, a former ambassador to the United States, said in a luncheon meeting with reporters and editors at The Washington Times yesterday.

Since January 2002, when President Bush declared that Iran was part of an "axis of evil," Iran — with Russian help — has been pursuing what it describes as a peaceful nuclear program. But the United States and others suspect that the nation's real goal is to develop nuclear weapons.

The United States pushed a hard line on dismantling Iran's nuclear program, but Europe balked. And in late November, the International Atomic Energy Agency adopted a resolution on a safeguards agreement with Iran, which includes surveillance cameras.

But Mr. Shoval, one of several foreign-policy advisers to Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, said yesterday he was skeptical of the European "step-by-step" plan.

"Iran is formally and ideologically committed to the destruction of Israel, and a nuclear Iran is an immense danger," he said. "Iran is using the express elevator getting to the nuclear bomb."

Mr. Shoval said this was not simply an issue for Israel, but one that puts the world at danger. He charged that Iran was "directly" involved in arming and training terrorists who attack Israel.

"Once Iran gets their hands on nuclear weapons and the delivery system, everyone in the Middle East will want one. It will be a completely new ballgame and a very dangerous one. If the world looks away from this, it will be a very tough awakening," he said.

He said he had no knowledge of any Israeli plan to strike pre-emptively at Iran's nuclear facilities.

Mr. Shoval, who served as Israel's ambassador to the United States from 1990 to 1993 and again from 1998 to 2000, was in Washington to discuss Israeli-Palestinian relations at a seminar at the Brookings Institution.

He said that he planned to meet with several Bush administration officials in the National Security Council and that he had met with his "old friend" Undersecretary of State John Bolton, a pro-Israel hard-liner who has been mentioned as a possible successor to Deputy Secretary of State Richard L. Armitage.

Mr. Shoval said the Bush administration has "done the right thing" by refusing to push Israel into negotiations with the Palestinians while terrorist attacks continue. But with the death of Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat, he said, he is "fairly optimistic" that there is an opportunity to move forward on Israel's plan to disengage from the Gaza Strip and the "road map" peace plan.

"We want to see a Palestinian side with a reformed leadership, more transparency, a civilian government, rule of law," he said.

"If something like that really develops, it will create the foundation for a viable democratic Palestinian state. If all these things happen, we will have arrived at stage two of the road map, a Palestinian state with provisional borders." He said an Israeli-Egypt prisoner swap on Sunday that sent convicted Israeli spy Azzam Azzam home after eight years "was a positive sign, and we may see more."

"Tunis, Morocco, perhaps one of the Gulf states will return to a better relationship [with Israel]," he said.

He said pressure from the Europeans — who are expected to offer Mr. Bush help in Iraq and U.S.-European rapprochement if he urges Israel to compromise more — would be counterproductive.

More useful, he said, would be if the Arab states used 1 percent or 2 percent of their recent \$50 billion to \$75 billion oil windfall to help rebuild the Palestinian economy.

"International conferences are never good for Israel, and in the foreseeable future, we will not be able to arrive at a permanent peace plan that the Palestinians can live with and we can live with. But this does not mean we cannot move forward," he said.

"Hopefully, these guys will say, 'Let's not miss another chance,' and work for Palestinian statehood in one form or another. Today, especially after Arafat, everyone understands [disengagement] is the only game in town."

<http://www.washtimes.com/world/20041206-100256-5889r.htm>

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International Herald Tribune

December 7, 2004

Time To Call North Korea's Bluff

The nuclear standoff

By Ralph A. Cossa

SEOUL--North Korea is continuing to play hard to get. While the other five members of the six-party talks - China, Japan, South Korea, Russia and the United States - continue, individually and collectively, to call on the North to resume negotiations over its nuclear weapons program, Pyongyang continues to blame everyone but itself for the current lack of dialogue.

While Washington gets most of the blame - because of its so-called hostile attitude toward the otherwise lovable North - Seoul has now also become a convenient fall guy. North Korean spokesmen have proclaimed that South Korea's "secret nuclear experiments" have "destroyed the foundation" for the talks, exposing Washington's "double standards" regarding the nuclear issue.

In an attempt to divert attention from its own transgression, North Korea insists that the South's nuclear programs be examined at the next round of six-party talks, whenever that might be. Seoul, after initially resisting this demand, has now begrudgingly agreed that its own nuclear activities can be an agenda item. Yet Pyongyang continues to play for more time, no doubt enjoying the spectacle as the others continue to beg the North to come to the table.

Perhaps it's time for a more proactive approach. Perhaps it's time to challenge North Korea to take yes for an answer, and to end the current game in which Pyongyang continues to hold out before each round until receiving sufficient incentives merely for attending. (Beijing has reportedly had to offer significant amounts of economic and energy assistance to get the North to previous meetings, including in one instance an agreement to build a glass manufacturing factory in honor of the birthday of Kim Jong Il, North Korea's leader.)

South Korea's president, Roh Moo Hyun, should seize the initiative. He should formally ask Beijing to arrange another round of six-party talks this month to allow Seoul to explain fully to the other participants the nature and

extent of its past nuclear programs and the steps it is taking, including full cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency to ensure that they are verifiably ended.

Beijing should then set a date for this meeting and invite all the other parties to participate, making it clear that the meeting will proceed as scheduled, even if not all participants choose to attend. This would put the pressure on Pyongyang to come, rather than putting the pressure on Beijing and others to bribe or cajole it into making another appearance.

The nuclear agency should be invited, by Seoul, to send a representative to the meeting to discuss its findings - no fewer than four agency inspection teams have fully investigated South Korea's nuclear programs, at Seoul's invitation and with its full cooperation, since the revelation of South Korea's nuclear wrongdoing.

The big difference between Seoul's admitted transgressions and Pyongyang's indirectly acknowledged violations of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty is that Seoul itself revealed its illegal actions - taken by a small group of scientists without government sanction, four years ago - and then welcomed the nuclear agency to investigate not only the 2000 uranium enrichment experiments but also a 1980s plutonium-based illegal research program as well. Seoul's embarrassing revelations can provide a way out of the crisis for North Korea if it so chooses. If renegade scientists can be blamed for Seoul's transgressions, certainly they can be discovered (or manufactured) in the North. Diplomatic niceties (and a desire by all sides to move forward) would result in acceptance of almost any North Korean excuse if the end result was full disclosure by Pyongyang of its uranium- and plutonium-based programs. Rather than ignore Pyongyang's insults and allegations, Seoul should meet them head-on by demonstrating its subsequent full nuclear transparency at the next six-party talks. It should then challenge Pyongyang to follow its example.

Ralph A. Cossa is president of the Pacific Forum CSIS, a Honolulu-based research institute affiliated with the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington.

<http://www.iht.com/articles/2004/12/06/news/edcossa.html>

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USA Today

Posted 12/6/2004 9:46 PM

FDA completes plan to protect food supply from attacks

By Elizabeth Weise, USA TODAY

The Food and Drug Administration on Monday announced the final portion of its post-9/11 rules to protect the USA's food supply.

The action comes just four days after outgoing Health and Human Services Secretary Tommy Thompson said he can't understand why terrorists haven't attacked the U.S. food supply, because "it's so easy to do."

The rules are the final piece of new authorities given to the FDA by Congress in the wake of the anthrax contamination that followed the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001. That contamination further highlighted the nation's vulnerability to less well-known forms of terrorism and harassment. Five people died because of their exposure to envelopes laced with the deadly bacteria.

The rules require that companies keep records so officials can trace the source of food contamination. The hope is that investigators will zero in on the exact point at which a particular food was tainted.

The new rules will be important in allowing the FDA to deal with food-related emergencies, "such as deliberate contamination of food by terrorists," says Lester Crawford, acting FDA commissioner.

Any company that manufactures, processes, packs, transports, distributes, receives, holds or imports food must keep records showing where it obtained the food and where it shipped it.

Farms, restaurants, food banks and individuals preparing food in the home are exempt.

Companies must retain records, from six months to two years, depending on the shelf life of the food. Larger companies have a year to comply with the new regulations. Smaller companies have 18 months to two years.

Three related rules, all now in effect, require the registration of food producers, prior notice of when food will be imported and the impoundment of food that producers or importers fear could be dangerous.

The Grocery Manufacturers of America and the National Food Processors Association both issued statements emphasizing their commitment to keeping the nation's food supply safe while commending the FDA for making its regulations manageable.

Thompson said Friday that he frets over the vulnerability of the nation's food supply "every single night."

And Caroline Smith DeWaal, a food safety expert with the Center for Science in the Public Interest, says the new precautions are "hardly rock-solid protection against terrorism."

What's needed is a beefed-up government presence in the food industry, much like the steps that have been taken to secure the nation's airports, she says.

"We need enough of a government presence in food safety and food security that it acts as a deterrent to using food as a target," DeWaal says.

http://www.usatoday.com/news/washington/2004-12-06-fda-defense-plan_x.htm

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