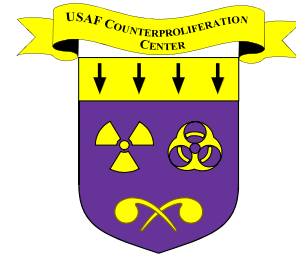


#231

16 Jan 2003

USAF COUNTERPROLIFERATION CENTER

CPC OUTREACH JOURNAL



Air University

Air War College

Maxwell AFB, Alabama

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.

Established here at the Air War College in 1998, the USAF/CPC provides education and research to present and future leaders of the Air Force, as well as to members of other branches of the armed services and Department of Defense. Our purpose is to help those agencies better prepare to counter the threat from weapons of mass destruction. Please feel free to visit our web site at www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/awc-cps.htm for in-depth information and specific points of contact. Please direct any questions or comments on CPC Outreach Journal to Jo Ann Eddy, CPC Outreach Editor, at (334) 953-7538 or DSN 493-7538. To subscribe, change e-mail address, or unsubscribe to this journal or to request inclusion on the mailing list for CPC publications, please contact Mrs. Eddy. The following articles, papers or documents do not necessarily reflect official endorsement of the United States Air Force, Department of Defense, or other US government agencies. Reproduction for private use or commercial gain is subject to original copyright restrictions. All rights are reserved

CONTENTS

[Officials consider faster ways to alert U.S. to terrorism](#)

[Anthrax Island](#)

[Aides Declare U.S. 'Willing To Talk' In Korea Dispute](#)

[Iraq Hunt To Extend To March, Blix Says](#)

[U.S. Expects Iraqi Experts Will Be Questioned Abroad](#)

[Analysts: N. Korea Developing New Missile](#)

[Botulism Babies On Front Lines](#)

[Smallpox Virus: The Secret Stocks](#)

[U.S. Wants U.N. to Talk to Scientists Outside Iraq](#)

[China Offers To Host U.S. Talks With N. Korea](#)

[Suspect Helping U.S. Gauge Al-Qaeda's Arsenal](#)

[Bush Releases Money To Destroy Russian Arms](#)

[Reporters Are Offered Vaccines](#)

[Doctors Are Ironing Out Details For Giving The Smallpox Vaccine](#)

[NE Mail Facility Closed After Possible Anthrax Finding](#)

[Iraqi Ballistic Missile Force Shows Residual Capability, Even Without Consideration Of Possible Secret Stockpiles](#)

[U.S. Asks U.N. To Speed Pace Of Inspections](#)

[2 Koreas Agree To Resume Talks On Nuclear Crisis](#)

[U.S. Sends 600 Troops And Antimissile Systems To Defend Israel If Iraq Attacks](#)

[Medical Panel Has Doubts About Plan For Smallpox](#)

[Commercial Devices Could Fuel 'Dirty Bombs'](#)

[Commercial Radioactive Sources: Surveying the Security Risks](#)

[Iran: U.S. Seeking To Avoid A Third Nuclear Confrontation](#)

[Proliferation: All it takes is thugs with clubs](#)

[Empty chemical warheads found](#)

Officials consider faster ways to alert U.S. to terrorism

January 10, 2003

By Audrey Hudson

THE WASHINGTON TIMES

Television sets suddenly turning on in the middle of the night, Internet messages or nontraditional telephone rings may be the next way Americans are alerted by the government they are under attack by terrorists.

The Emergency Alert System (EAS) in 1997 replaced the Emergency Broadcast System that historically warned that "this is only a test," but lawmakers say new technology is needed to give Americans faster and more practical information.

In announcing his candidacy for president, Sen. John Edwards, North Carolina Democrat, first proposed a telephone warning system for in the event a terrorist attack occurs while Americans are sleeping.

"There are a lot of folks in this country who have no idea what they are supposed to do if an attack occurs," Mr. Edwards said.

Mr. Edwards and Sen. Ernest F. Hollings, South Carolina Democrat and soon-to-be ranking member of the Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee, yesterday announced legislation to explore new alert systems. The bill would authorize the Homeland Security and Commerce departments to work with other government agencies and the media to set standards for warnings.

The color-code warning system established by Tom Ridge, White House homeland security adviser, fails to give information on how to react to a terrorist attack, Mr. Edwards said.

"We have to make sure effective warnings get to every American in times of danger, and we have to make sure those warnings tell folks just what they can do to protect themselves and their loved ones," Mr. Edwards said in a statement.

The EAS is used daily on the local level to issue warnings of events that can endanger the public, including hazardous-material spills.

The EAS is also used to transmit warnings from the AMBER (America's Missing Broadcast Emergency Response) alert system, which notifies the public about child abductions. AMBER was established on a state-by-state voluntary basis in 1996 in response to the abduction and slaying of 9-year-old Amber Hagerman in Dallas.

It would be up to Congress to require the EAS to transmit terrorism warnings from a new alert system.

The EAS has never been used for its primary function, which is to provide the president with a means to address the nation through all broadcast, cable and satellite systems in the event of a national emergency.

It was not activated on September 11 because President Bush did not address the nation.

The bill requires the Commerce Department to develop new technologies to issue warnings based on the National Weather Service system, which is decoded by EAS equipment at broadcast and cable stations and can be delivered almost immediately.

Commerce would also explore new ways to disseminate the warnings through the Internet, cell phones and new technology to turn on TV sets.

Specially equipped televisions, radios, pagers and other devices already exist to decode EAS messages, according to a fact sheet distributed by the Federal Communications Commission.

Consumers can program these products to turn on automatically for the messages they want to receive.

The Edwards-Hollings bill was based on recommendations from the Partnership for Public Warning.

"National warning systems need significant improvement. They enable Americans at risk to save lives and reduce losses from natural and manmade disasters," said Peter Ward, partnership chairman.

<http://www.washtimes.com/national/20030110-90194169.htm>

[\(Return to Contents\)](#)

January 12, 2003

Anthrax Island

By CHRISTOPHER PALA

In one of the most remote spots on earth, a desiccated island in the Aral Sea, lie the remains of the world's largest biological-warfare testing ground. Since Russia abandoned Vozrozhdeniye Island in 1992 to its new owners,

Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan, it has remained uninhabited, its laboratory complex deserted by all but the Kazakh scavengers who pilfer its parts.

The island was briefly used as a bioweapons testing range in the 1930's and then abandoned until 1954. Stalin, having caught up with the United States in nuclear weapons, had decided he was ready to return to biological ones. The Soviets planned to load their germs onto missiles and bombs; on Vozrozhdeniye Island, they concentrated on making them ever more deadly.

The only access to the island now is in the company of the scavengers, who say they began stripping the island bare back in 1996. Using two small boats, the last to ply the waters of the shrunken southern Aral Sea, they have carried away everything from floorboards to wiring. These days they are working on galvanized-steel piping, sealed and towed at a snail's speed to the mainland shore. "We took out 120 tons last year," one said. "We should get the last 80 tons this year."

The trip to the island starts at the scavengers' base in Aralsk, a former Aral Sea port in Kazakhstan. It takes a day's travel over a bumpy road to reach the coast, where we board the scavengers' boat for a 15-mile ride to their camp on the other side. The next day, we travel another 20 miles in their four-wheel-drive truck, the only working vehicle on the island, to reach the abandoned testing site.

Relics of life in what was the island's only town, Kantubek, lie in the dust. They tell parallel stories of a comfortable year-round home for some 1,500 people and a practice field for the most hideous kind of warfare.

Rusting street signs primly warn against parking, or herald a clinic or a pedestrian crossing. A red fire truck, a kindergarten, a soccer field and a klub speak of ordinary life. Inside the buildings, the military side of Kantubek begins to emerge. In the rubble lies a portrait of Capt. Aleksandr Oleksenko: a meritorious soldier, the Soviet equivalent of an employee of the month. A yellowing copy of a January 1989 issue of *Sovietskaya Rossiya* includes the headline "The Soviet People Are With the Party."

In a garage with room for more than 30 trucks, two T-52 tanks and two armored personnel-carriers stand side by side. They were used to test their resistance to germ warfare.

Near the entrance of the laboratory complex, two miles from Kantubek, stand a pair of two-story buildings where animals were kept and monitored for good health before their exposure to bioweapons. Piled up in corners are hundreds of cages designed to hold guinea pigs, hamsters and rabbits. Horses and donkeys were kept in separate stables.

A germproof full-body suit, complete with a glass face mask and an airhose attachment in the back, lies in a corner. An odd smell -- ether, chlorine and something indefinable -- lingers in the air. Poking out of the rubble are dusty issues of *The British Medical Journal* and *The Journal of Infectious Diseases*.

It is all surprisingly low tech: nails are everywhere, but no screws. There are books by Marx and Lenin and yellowed, handwritten ledgers that would not seem out of place in a museum devoted to a 19th-century Russian writer.

Weeks later, I go to see Gennadi Lepyoshkin in his small apartment in Stepnogorsk, 800 miles away in northern Kazakhstan. Lepyoshkin, 55, a heavyset physician, microbiologist and retired colonel in the Soviet Army, once ran a huge bioweapons production plant in Stepnogorsk. He spent 18 summers supervising teams of researchers on Vozrozhdeniye Island. Testing was performed only in the summer, when 120-degree temperatures made the spread of pathogens less likely.

"I first went in 1970, and it was a beautiful place," he recounts over a glass of Kazakh Cognac. "The water was clear; it came right up to the town, and we used to swim and sunbathe after work." Life's pleasures included dancing at the club and duck hunting in the northern part of the island, the opposite end from where the testing took place.

"The atmosphere was friendly, people were earning good money and we were provided with everything, except there weren't a lot of vegetables," he continues.

Lepyoshkin lived and worked at the laboratory complex. "About one-third of our work was on weapons, like anthrax, plague and other bacteria," he recalls, "and two-thirds on matters like testing vaccines or clothing or how long micro-organisms would survive in the soil."

I show Lepyoshkin photographs of the lab complex. He flips through them gloomily. He stops at a shot of a long three-story building.

"That's where I worked," he says. "That's the hot zone, where we kept the pathogens, where the animals were brought after the tests and where they died and were autopsied. It was cleared out so no one could even guess what went on there."

Was it dangerous?

"Yes, there was always danger, but we never had an accident."

He recalls the case of a woman who dropped a petri dish full of anthrax on the floor, then tried to cover up her mistake. The accident was discovered, but the woman's only punishment was a reprimand and a smaller paycheck. Lepyoshkin shrugs. "No one got sick," he says.

Does he ever have any qualms about being part of a program that was making enough germs to kill the earth's population several times over?

"No," he says and shakes his head vigorously. "Absolutely not. Because I knew the weapons would never be used. When nuclear weapons were made, no one thought they would be used. You'd have to be mad to use them."

He pauses and adds: "But now that there's terrorism, it's more scary. You know biological weapons are cheap. We calculated that to achieve an effect on one square kilometer" -- and by "effect," he explains, he means killing about half of the population -- "it costs \$2,000 with conventional weapons, \$800 with a nuclear weapon, \$600 with a chemical weapon and \$1 with a bioweapon. *One dollar.*

"But we never discussed these things among us," he continues. "We were doing interesting work, and we were proud of it. We discovered new methods to improve the immune system. We developed an anthrax vaccine that was given to the whole army, and it's considered to be the best in the world. Same with our plague vaccine; it's been used more than 40 years."

When they arrived for last year's toil, in July, the scavengers discovered that an official U.S.-Uzbek expedition had come earlier in the year and burned down a row of eight warehouses.

But much of the contents of the warehouses survived the blaze, including a vast array of test tubes, bottles and petri dishes, some still in their original wrapping. The fire left some half-melted, looking like figures in a Dali painting, but most are intact underneath a coat of dust.

The Americans' primary mission was to destroy tons of anthrax spores hastily buried here in 1988 by the Soviets to evade possible detection at the site in Sverdlovsk where they were originally stocked, a violation of a 1972 treaty banning all biological arms. A U.S. Defense Department official said that the spores had indeed been destroyed. Looking at pictures of the destruction, Lepyoshkin wonders aloud: "Why did they have to burn the warehouses? The anthrax wasn't dangerous. You'd have to dig it out and rub an open wound on the exact piece of earth where there were spores to get infected. It was buried near the lab, and no one ever got sick from it."

He says he was not on the island when the anthrax was buried, and no one was told about it at the time.

Ten miles from the lab, on a plateau, is the testing range itself. The scrubby trees that dominate the region have leaned into the road, evidence that it hasn't been driven for years. The scavenger driving the truck crashes through them with abandon.

The first site consists of a telephone pole and a row of three-foot-high concrete posts at 300-foot intervals, oriented in the direction of the prevailing winds, which are fairly constant.

"We used monkeys, about 200 to 300 each year," Lepyoshkin later recounts. "Our staff would take them out to the range" -- 15 miles from town -- "and they would put them in cages next to devices that measured the concentration of germs in the air. Then after they were exposed, they were taken to the labs, where we would test their blood and monitor the development of a disease in them. They would die within weeks, and we would perform autopsies." Further on, four poles have been set horizontally on pickets two feet from the ground. Rusty chains hang down, even a few feed troughs. This is where the horses and donkeys were tied up. You can imagine them standing patiently in a row at dusk, when the wind would ease and deadly aerosols would be

At the highest point on the island, a 40-foot observation tower stands near the foundations of a gutted building. A spindly radio antenna still soars. It was a weather station. From the top of the tower, six dirt roads can be seen stretching in various directions to other test sites.

It is all very spare and quiet. The scavengers are silent, too.

Yet it is on this piece of arid scrubland that the legacy of the Soviet germ-warfare program is most menacing.

Before each test, poison was sprayed over the area to kill all insects and animals and make sure they didn't catch whatever disease was being tested. But since many burrow against the fierce summer heat, some probably survived. Lepyoshkin and others who worked on the Soviet bioweapons program say it is most likely that some of these surviving local rodents were exposed to the weapons-grade bubonic plague bacteria and survived that too. Fleas would transmit the plague from generation to generation. The disease is resistant to antibiotics and more contagious than the natural kind, which affects a handful of people each year in Central Asia.

The scavengers, who have little knowledge of and less interest in what went on in Kantubek ("*I don't see any microbes,*" one scoffed) are risking their lives, Lepyoshkin says. They are risking the lives of others too: if a scavenger contracts the plague and makes it to a hospital, he could start an epidemic.

And more visitors are coming. In 2001, the Kazakh government announced with great fanfare that the Aral Sea region contains major oil deposits. Lepyoshkin says that two shallow wells have been drilled by the Uzbeks on Vozrozhdeniye. So far, no one has fallen ill.

Christopher Pala is the author of "The Oddest Place on Earth: Rediscovering the North Pole." He lives in Almaty, Kazakhstan.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2003/01/12/magazine/12BIOWEAPONS.html?pagewanted=1>

[\(Return to Contents\)](#)

New York Times

January 14, 2003

Pg. 1

Aides Declare U.S. 'Willing To Talk' In Korea Dispute

By Howard W. French

SEOUL, South Korea, Jan. 13 — Faced with narrow options for dealing with North Korea and strained ties with South Korea, a senior Bush administration delegation signaled its willingness today to pursue dialogue to resolve the nuclear crisis on the Korean peninsula.

While stressing its desire to listen closely to the views of the incoming South Korean president, Roh Moo Hyun, the delegation, led by James A. Kelly, the assistant secretary of state for East Asian and Pacific affairs, made the most conciliatory sounds from the United States toward North Korea heard after weeks of rising tensions.

In a news conference here today, Mr. Kelly even contemplated economic assistance to the impoverished dictatorship once its nuclear weapons programs were ended.

"We are of course willing to talk," he said. "Once we get beyond nuclear weapons, there may be opportunities with the U.S., with private investors, with other countries to help North Korea in the energy area."

Mr. Kelly's language, both on North Korea and in his discussions with Mr. Roh, reflected a delicate balancing act in which Washington, preoccupied with Iraq and confronted with unappealing military options in Korea, has been nudged back from a position of unwillingness to engage with the North.

Mr. Roh, a political disciple of the incumbent president, Kim Dae Jung, campaigned on the need for continued dialogue with the North and was sharply critical of what he called Mr. Bush's hard-line approach to the country. His camp was boosted by a strong wave of anti-American protests here, and diplomats say the Americans' giving in to the president-elect's insistence that South Korea play a leading role in shaping allied policy toward North Korea may be the price of maintaining the health of the 50-year-old alliance between Washington and Seoul.

Today, after a one-hour meeting with Mr. Kelly, Mr. Roh said, "The South Korea-U.S. alliance was precious, is now still precious and will continue to be important in the future."

Mr. Roh's spokesman, Lee Nak Yon, also quoted the president-elect as saying: "We now need the United States Forces Korea, and the U.S.F.K. will also be necessary in the future. I hope that the United States will remain our ally in the future."

Mr. Kelly, speaking to reporters after the meeting, called the election of Mr. Roh "a great opportunity to improve, to build upon the alliance for the next 50 years."

Spokesmen for Mr. Roh said the president-elect had expressed concerns to Mr. Kelly about reported United States plans for sanctions against North Korea for ending international surveillance of nuclear power plants suspected of being used for its atomic weapons programs. One spokesman for Mr. Roh said Mr. Kelly had assured him that neither sanctions against North Korea nor a military attack were currently being contemplated in Washington.

When Mr. Roh, a labor lawyer, was an activist in this country's democracy movement two decades ago, he advocated the outright withdrawal of the 37,000 American troops stationed in South Korea. The tenor of his comments today, however, is a far cry even from comments attributed to him last week.

"Although we don't know if it might take 10, 20 or 30 years, someone has to consider an independent defense," Mr. Roh was quoted as saying at that time by the newspaper JoongAng Ilbo. "Senior military officials have to prepare a plan for a special emergency situation when the U.S. Army moves away."

Aides to Mr. Roh have expressed concern recently over the potential for a badly strained start to relations with the Bush administration and were eager to send a friendly and businesslike message to Washington even before the new government here takes office in February.

Along those lines, a senior aide to Mr. Roh said the president-elect planned to visit United States troops before his inauguration, in a gesture of recognition of their importance for the defense of this country.

Members of Mr. Roh's transition team said Mr. Kelly's delegation had pressed for the earliest possible visit of the new South Korean leader to Washington after his inauguration on Feb. 25. But mindful of the strains between the outgoing president, Mr. Kim, and the Bush administration, which many say date to a poorly prepared visit to Washington shortly after Mr. Bush's inauguration, Mr. Roh's aides sounded cautious.

"I think President Kim's visit with President Bush gave us a lesson, and there is more homework to be done between the teams," a senior transition aide said. "We are not going to have a repetition of the visit between Mr. Kim and Mr. Bush. Hopefully it will be much more productive. Our hands are full right now with the deteriorating nuclear issues, and there must be close coordination."

The United States has said North Korea must dismantle its nuclear programs before there can be any talks about aid and improved ties.

The White House spokesman, Ari Fleischer, said today that North Korea's weapons dismantling must be "verifiable" and "irreversible."

"North Korea wants to take the world through its blackmail playbook, and we won't play," he said. "It's up to North Korea to come back into international compliance with their obligations."

North Korea indicated today for the first time that it might reconsider its withdrawal last week from the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty.

Pak Ui Chun, North Korea's ambassador to Russia, said at a news conference in Moscow that his nation could rejoin the pact if its demands were met for changes in inspections by the International Atomic Energy Agency.

His remarks, though laced with invective against the United States, appeared to open the door for a negotiated solution to the confrontation.

"This issue should be resolved taking into account the situation that has taken shape after North Korea's withdrawal from the treaty," Mr. Pak said, according to the Interfax news agency.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2003/01/14/international/asia/14KORE.html>

[\(Return to Contents\)](#)

Washington Post
January 14, 2003
Pg. 1

Iraq Hunt To Extend To March, Blix Says

Official's Timetable Complicates U.S. Plans

By Karen DeYoung and Walter Pincus, Washington Post Staff Writers

Chief U.N. weapons inspector Hans Blix said yesterday that he is significantly expanding his inspection force in Iraq and plans to be working there at least until he presents a major report to the U.N. Security Council in March.

Blix said his next presentation to the Security Council, due on Jan. 27, would be an interim update on the results of the first 60 days of inspections and mark "the beginning of the inspection and monitoring process, not the end of it."

His remarks, in an interview, came after the Bush administration over the weekend described the end of this month as the start of "the final phase" leading to a decision on whether to use military force against Iraq. Yesterday, White House spokesman Ari Fleischer avoided any talk of a deadline, however, saying that President Bush "has not put a timetable on it."

As the U.S. military buildup in the Persian Gulf has accelerated, questions about when and how the administration will decide to use the vast military force it is assembling have become more pointed. To some extent, the administration is being deliberately ambiguous in an effort to pressure Iraq's president, Saddam Hussein, to reveal hidden weapons programs by convincing him that the risk of invasion is real and immediate.

But the inspections timeline presented by Blix, along with near-daily policy calibrations by administration officials and public hesitation by potential allies, have begun to complicate the administration's hopes for a clear-cut scenario that would lead to Hussein's capitulation or a justifiable war by spring.

In his monthly news conference yesterday, Prime Minister Tony Blair of Britain was asked about seemingly conflicting statements he has made over the past several days. Blair, the Bush administration's leading ally on Iraq, said last week that inspectors should be given "space and time" to complete their work before any military decisions are made.

Blair strongly denied that his commitment to use force if necessary was wavering. He told reporters he was confident the United Nations would authorize military action once it was proven Iraq had lied about possessing weapons of mass destruction and was in "material breach" of November's Security Council resolution ordering new

inspections. If the council could not agree, and "someone put an unreasonable or unilateral block down on action," Blair said, "we can't be in a position where we are confined." In that case, he indicated, Britain would join the United States in an attack.

A number of senior Security Council diplomats have said that, barring a major discovery by inspectors or aggressive action by Iraq, there was little hope that a majority would agree by the end of the month that Baghdad had violated the resolution. Senior administration officials have indicated the United States may try to bring the matter to a head by disclosing intelligence it says proves Hussein is hiding chemical and biological weapons and trying to build a nuclear weapon. Several informed U.S. and diplomatic sources said, however, that the evidence is largely circumstantial or dated and is unlikely to convince reluctant council members.

Meanwhile, Saudi Arabia said yesterday that diplomacy should continue even if the United Nations decided to go to war. Saying that his government would propose a new Iraq initiative to Arab leaders at a meeting scheduled for March, the Saudi foreign minister, Prince Saud Faisal pleaded in an NBC News interview: "At least give us a chance. What would be [lost] in that? If, in the final analysis, we don't succeed, those who are working for war can have their war as they please, but which is going to be a catastrophe for the region."

Blix said that the U.S. military buildup has added momentum to his inspections effort, but in a separate interview with the Reuters news service he said the escalation has also caused anxiety. "I represent disarmament through inspections," he said, "and we do our best to move on that line."

Blix said that 60 new inspectors, most of them Americans and Arabs, began training yesterday and would soon bring his total inspection team to nearly 200. "I'm upscaling as fast as I can" in response to Security Council directives, Blix said. "The Pentagon may not be impressed by my numbers [or] by what we're doing. . . . But there's a limit to how many inspections you can do in a day."

In addition to their headquarters in Baghdad, Blix's U.N. Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC) and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), have opened a branch office in Mosul, in the northern part of Iraq, and will soon establish another office in the southern city of Basra, he said. The team also has added eight helicopters and is planning its own high-altitude surveillance throughout Iraq, using unmanned aircraft contributed by several countries.

Although they provide no guarantee of finding all the underground weapons sites or mobile laboratories Hussein is alleged to have, the presence of so many inspectors "fanning out around the country," Blix said, "will constitute a deterrent" to any dangerous Iraqi action. "It's a form of containment," he said.

Although November's Security Council Resolution 1441 instructed UNMOVIC and the IAEA to report on Iraqi cooperation 60 days after inspections began, the Jan. 27 report "is just an update," Blix said, adding that he does not expect the next two weeks of inspections, or his visit to Baghdad with IAEA Director General Mohamed ElBaradei next weekend, to yield any definitive answers.

The resolution does not mandate further reporting dates and, if the Security Council does not set a new one, Blix said he would be operating under an earlier council mandate, Resolution 1284 that created UNMOVIC in 1999, which requires quarterly reports to the council.

The next report, he said, would be in March, when he would provide the council with a list of "key remaining disarmament tasks" for the inspectors and a future work program.

Bush administration officials have said they believe conclusive information about Iraq's weapons programs could be quickly gleaned from interviews with Iraqi scientists and technicians, if they were questioned outside of the country and given assurances of safety for themselves and their immediate families.

U.S. officials said they have turned over a specific outline of how such interviews could be conducted and what guarantees -- including U.S. asylum -- could be given the scientists.

Blix said inspectors would begin interviewing scientists this week, and would seek private sessions. But he said there were still "imponderables" in attempting to take people out of the country. The U.N. inspectors, he said, could not force anyone to leave Iraq.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A51992-2003Jan13.html>

[\(Return to Contents\)](#)

New York Times
January 14, 2003

U.S. Expects Iraqi Experts Will Be Questioned Abroad

By David E. Sanger

WASHINGTON, Jan. 13 — The Bush administration expects that international inspectors will try to bring Iraqi scientists and engineers out of the country starting next week to interview them about weapons programs, according to American and European officials familiar with the plans.

The interviews, officials say, may be conducted on Cyprus or at United Nations facilities in Europe. They are being timed to get information from the scientists before the reports to the United Nations on Jan. 27 by Hans Blix and Dr. Mohamed ElBaradei, who are directing the search for chemical, biological and nuclear weapons programs.

With the approach of the inspectors' report to the Security Council, the pace of inspections is increasingly becoming a central issue. While the administration is pushing for a faster clip, other Security Council members and the inspectors themselves are calling for patience.

In recent days, several European officials and members of the Security Council have said they could not back any military action against Iraq without the discovery of weapons of mass destruction, or evidence that President Saddam Hussein is blocking the inspectors.

Today Dr. ElBaradei, director general of the International Atomic Energy Agency, said the teams "still need a few months to achieve our mission."

His counterpart, Hans Blix, the chief weapons inspector, affirmed that he did not see Jan. 27 as a deadline. "We can see a lot of work ahead of us beyond that date if we are allowed to do so," he said.

So far the inspections have yielded almost no new information. In hopes of speeding things up, American intelligence officials have put together a list of approximately 100 scientists and engineers who they believe are central to the weapons programs, and they are pressing the inspectors to bring willing scientists and their families to a place outside Mr. Hussein's control.

"The idea is to make sure that life starts getting a lot hotter for Saddam in the next few weeks," said one official familiar with the plans. "This is how we will know whether we are getting cooperation or a pattern of noncooperation. This should give us a much better picture."

But American officials are far from sure that the effort will work. Under United Nations Resolution 1441, the scientists must leave voluntarily, and Mr. Blix has often warned that the inspectors are not in what he once called "the abduction business." Exactly how the scientists and their families would be taken out of Iraq is something of a mystery.

American officials have been adamant that the operation be run by the United Nations and the International Atomic Energy Agency, to counter Iraqi accusations that the inspections are being run by American intelligence.

But after the interviews are over, the scientists will most likely be placed into the equivalent of a witness protection program, or offered residency in the United States or other countries.

If the scientists refuse to leave Iraq, or if they seem to be intimidated by Mr. Hussein, the administration would try to cast the issue as another "material breach" of the United Nations resolution. Washington has argued that Mr. Hussein's 12,000-page "declaration" about his military programs in December was such a breach because it omitted information about programs that inspectors had previously detected.

From well before the arrival of the first inspectors in Baghdad, Mr. Bush's top national security aides said they held out little hope that the teams would find much at the sites they had monitored before to their withdrawal from the country in 1998.

Success or failure, they predicted, would depend on defections. But so far there do not appear to have been many.

Mr. Blix has always seemed hesitant, worried either that the scientists would not come, or that they would fear retaliation against their extended families and friends. "We cannot force anybody to go abroad or force them to defect," Mr. Blix said Thursday.

In an interview today with the BBC, Mr. Blix said again that the practical arrangements were a complicated matter, and that he did not want to undertake interviews until all the details were worked out.

Dr. ElBaradei has been more open to the idea, and some American officials feel his group may move first by trying to bring nuclear scientists out of Iraq.

"We know more about the chemical and biological programs, and we know more about those scientists," said one administration official. "It's harder on the nuclear side."

But Mr. Bush's aides say the political impact of a discovery that Mr. Hussein has a hidden nuclear weapons program would be much greater.

At the White House today, Ari Fleischer, the press secretary, said Mr. Bush "has no timetable" in mind.

He also said Mr. Bush believed there was no point to using diplomacy with Mr. Hussein, while he believed diplomacy would work with North Korea.

Mr. Fleischer later amended his comment, saying Mr. Bush "was not optimistic" about the success of a diplomatic solution in Iraq.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2003/01/14/international/middleeast/14PREX.html>

[\(Return to Contents\)](#)

USAToday.com
January 14, 2003

Analysts: N. Korea Developing New Missile

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — North Korea, which says it might resume missile tests, could be ready to test a two-stage rocket capable of reaching Alaska or Hawaii with a nuclear weapon-sized payload, according to U.S. defense analysts.

U.S. officials say North Korea is the world's No. 1 proliferator of missile technology, and the threat it poses is one reason why Washington plans to build a limited missile defense system by the end of 2004.

U.S. defense experts say North Korea has one or two nuclear bombs, as well as chemical and biological weapons that can be deployed in warheads.

Fears that North Korea will go ahead with a missile test rose over the weekend, when its ambassador to China threatened new tests if the United States doesn't take steps to improve ties.

The statement by Ambassador Choe Jin Su followed North Korea's withdrawal a day earlier from the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty in a dispute with the United States and its allies over its nuclear weapons development.

"Because all agreements have been nullified by the United States side, we believe we cannot go along with the self-imposed missile moratorium any longer," Choe said.

Along with the withdrawal from the non-proliferation treaty, Choe's comment appeared to be part of an effort to pressure the United States into negotiations. North Korea wants a nonaggression treaty and economic aid from Washington, and views its arsenal of up to 700 missiles as a way to gain political leverage.

North Korea shocked the region in 1998 by test-firing a Taepodong-1 missile over Japan and into the Pacific. The North said it was an attempt to insert a satellite into orbit.

Communist technicians are believed to be working on the more advanced Taepodong-2. U.S. defense experts believe that the missile, if deployed, could deliver a payload of several hundred pounds as far as Alaska or Hawaii, and a lighter payload to the western half of the continental United States.

Technical difficulties and economic hardship have hampered North Korea's missile programs in recent years, and it is unclear whether the Taepodong-2 is ready for testing. If so, it could be done with relatively little warning.

A big challenge for North Korean engineers is the construction of a reentry vehicle for their long-range missile, said Daniel Pinkston, an analyst at the Monterey Institute of International Studies in California.

"It's easier to launch a satellite, but to have a warhead reenter the atmosphere intact and work is more difficult to do," he said.

He speculated that North Korea could choose to test the Taepodong-2 around the Feb. 16 birthday of North Korean leader Kim Jong Il.

Kim has said that regular rocket launches are "vastly uneconomical" for his impoverished country, but a missile test would enhance his prestige at home as a "high-tech" leader.

A Taepodong-2 launch would likely occur at the Musudan-ri test site in an isolated area on North Korea's east coast. The last ballistic missile test prior to 1998 was in 1993, and both were held at that site.

A large chunk of North Korea's foreign exchange earnings comes from the export of missiles and their technology and components, much of it to the Middle East. The U.S. military estimates that the North made \$560 million from missiles sales in 2001.

Last month, a North Korean vessel carrying Scud missiles bound for Yemen was intercepted and then released after contacts between the United States and Yemen.

North Korea has also sold missile-related material to Iran, Libya, Syria and Egypt, according to CIA reports.

Western media have said that Pakistan gave nuclear secrets to North Korea in return for missile technology. Pakistan denies it.

In talks with the Clinton administration, Pyongyang asked for \$1 billion in aid each year for three years in return for stopping missile exports, but a deal was never signed.

http://www.usatoday.com/news/world/2003-01-14-korea-missile_x.htm

[\(Return to Contents\)](#)

Botulism Babies On Front Lines

'Hole' In Nation's Biodefense Could Harm Them First

By Steve Sternberg, USA Today

The source of the nation's best antidote for botulinum toxin, one of Saddam Hussein's scariest bioweapons, could dry up on the eve of a possible war with Iraq.

The antidote, threatened by budget cuts, is also the only safe treatment for roughly 100 infants who develop potentially deadly botulinum poisoning each year from spores in dust or in the air. The spores germinate in an infant's gut, churning out toxin.

Developed in California by a state health department physician, Stephen Arnon, and his colleagues, the antidote is made of antibodies drawn from the blood of human volunteers, mainly doctors and scientists, who have been vaccinated against botulinum.

The California antitoxin program faces elimination because Gov. Gray Davis, trying to trim a record \$35 billion deficit, dropped it from the budget he gave to state lawmakers Friday, even as the Pentagon ordered more troops to the Middle East.

A limited amount of the California antitoxin has been stockpiled to treat infants nationwide. It also could be used in a terrorist attack to supplement the nation's small supply of antitoxin for older children and adults, made from the blood of vaccinated horses.

Unlike horse antitoxin, the human version doesn't cause rejection or potentially serious allergic reactions, so it is safe for infants. It also works longer. Although the government reportedly has a few thousand doses of Gulf War-era horse antitoxin in the National Pharmaceutical Stockpile, most of the plasma from vaccinated horses hasn't been processed and won't be for another year. Researchers are working on genetically engineered antitoxin that could be made in large quantities quickly, but that research is just beginning.

Botulinum toxin is the nastiest neurotoxin on Earth. It damages nerves that enable people to breathe and eat. People with botulinum poisoning must be sustained in intensive care for weeks or months until their nerves regenerate. Most botulism patients who don't get intensive care die.

Iraq acknowledged in the 1990s that it produced 19,000 liters of toxin and weaponized 10,000 of them for use in bombs and spray devices. U.N. weapons inspectors said Friday that they have found "no smoking gun" proving that Iraq still has bioweapons, but they also lack evidence that the weapons were destroyed as required.

In a news briefing last week, Army Col. Erik Henchal, commander of one of the military's top biodefense labs, the United States Army Medical Research Institute of Infectious Diseases (USAMRIID), called the "hole" in the nation's capacity to counter a botulinum attack "pretty serious."

Kids affected first

Davis' decision to scrap the program would most immediately affect children nationwide who develop infant botulism, now the most common form of botulinum poisoning in the USA. (Only nine or 10 cases are reported each year in adults from food, from drug abuse with dirty needles and from infected wounds.)

An extremely unusual -- and still inexplicable -- cluster of four infant botulism cases occurred recently in the New York City borough of Staten Island. The cluster gives the community the highest rate of infant botulism in the USA. The cluster involved two boys and two girls, ages 3 weeks to 4 months. One of the cases was mild, and all have recovered.

"No common risk factors were reported, and none of the infants were fed honey," says an alert on the cluster issued by the New York City Department of Health & Mental Hygiene. When infant botulism first emerged, many parents fed their infants honey without realizing that it contains spores from *Clostridium botulinum*, the toxin-producing bacterium. Today, honey jars usually carry warnings against feeding honey to infants; most are infected from spores in the environment.

Officials say they have ruled out terrorism because the pattern is typical of infant botulism and there were no cases among older children or adults. "There was no intelligence information to suggest that this was terrorism, so we believe that this was a naturally occurring cluster," says New York epidemiologist Sharon Balter, who investigated the cases.

The human antitoxin, called botulism immune globulin (BIG), "is only available through the California Department of Health," New York's alert notes.

Botulism isn't only tough to treat; it's also tough to diagnose. Doctors at Camden Medical Center in St. Marys, Ga., for instance, thought Lori Krull's 16-week-old son, Ethan, had bronchitis when she brought him to the emergency room last July.

When the medicine they prescribed didn't help, Lori and her husband, Nathan, transferred Ethan to the University of Florida's Wolfson Children's Hospital in Jacksonville. "If we hadn't," Krull says, "he probably wouldn't have lasted the weekend."

His paralysis was so extreme that Ethan couldn't open his eyes to cry, says grandmother Jeannene Helms. "Little tears squeezed out of the corners of his eyes."

A doctor at the hospital examined the little boy and his test results. He told the Krulls that Ethan had infant botulism. Ethan was placed on a ventilator and transferred again, this time to the university's Shands Hospital in Gainesville. Doctors there gave him antitoxin from California. "They gave it to him Sunday," says grandmother Terri Creed. "He was off the ventilator by Thursday."

Much of the credit for Ethan's speedy recovery belongs to Marcia Seeger, 63, of Richmond, Calif., and people like her. A retired National Food Laboratory bacteriologist, Seeger worked with botulinum toxin for 32 years. Because she was vaccinated, Arnon recruited her as an antibody donor.

She has since participated in all three rounds of plasma collection, sitting in an armchair for an hour or two a week for seven weeks while her blood is funneled through a machine. Antibodies removed from the plasma are processed into antitoxin by Massachusetts Biologicals, an offshoot of the Massachusetts Department of Health.

"There are so few people immunized against botulism," Seeger says, "and I didn't mind donating blood. I was happy to do it."

Arnon calls his program "public service" medicine. "It's us," he says. "The core group is made up of current and former employees of the California Department of Health Services."

Hospital costs reduced

Arnon saw an opportunity to pursue human antitoxin for infants when the Orphan Drug Act was signed into law in 1983. The measure made it possible for Arnon to obtain \$100,000 in government research funds and, eventually, Food and Drug Administration approval to test antitoxin in infants.

Since then, he has been painstakingly collecting data and working with a contract research firm to satisfy FDA licensing requirements.

Arnon estimates that he is about \$3 million from obtaining approval, which might never come if the California Legislature agrees to drop the \$1.5 million program from next year's budget.

Without antitoxin, most infants spend about six weeks in the hospital, he says. Antitoxin reduces hospital stays by 60% and hospital costs from \$140,000 to \$55,000 a case, according to an unpublished study by Arnon and his colleagues.

Since antitoxin became available 4 years ago, the study shows, it has cut the collective hospitalization of more than 300 infants by more than 20 years and saved \$25 million in hospital costs, with \$12 million of the savings in California.

"When BIG goes away," Arnon says, "the costs will come back to the state economy -- and babies will be forced to spend months in the hospital with unnecessary complications because they don't have their medicine."

http://www.usatoday.com/news/health/2003-01-12-kid-botulism-usat_x.htm

[\(Return to Contents\)](#)

International Herald Tribune
January 14, 2003

Smallpox Virus: The Secret Stocks

By Barry James

PARIS - Official supplies of the variola virus that causes smallpox are confined to two high-security laboratories in the United States and Russia, but the virus is still regarded as one of about 20 pathogens that could be used in a biological attack.

A recent Bush administration intelligence review reportedly concludes that stocks of the live virus are also held by Iraq, North Korea and, more surprisingly, France, and that Osama bin Laden had devoted resources to developing smallpox as a biological weapon.

The French government vigorously denied the report, but the growing indications that the genie is at least partly out of the bottle is likely to cause governments to review and step up procedures for dealing with infectious threats.

Despite the French denial of the U.S. intelligence report, it would not be surprising if France and other countries were experimenting with something short of the live virus to carry out defensive research. A French Foreign Ministry spokesman, Bernard Valero, acknowledged that scientists were using material "not dangerous to man" in their search for a new smallpox vaccine.

Riccardo Witteck, a smallpox expert at the University of Lausanne, who formerly worked for the World Health Organization, said it was quite usual for researchers to obtain short DNA fragments of the virus for study. "The only restriction under World Health Organization rules," he said, "is that the DNA material must not exceed more than 20 percent of the total genome of the virus."

Some governments are considering whether to follow the United States in building enough vaccine stocks to inoculate the entire population against smallpox. Others argue that it would be sufficient to keep only enough supplies to create firewalls around any outbreak.

The World Health Organization keeps an emergency stock of about 500,000 doses of the vaccine in the Netherlands. Researchers are trying to determine if stocks can be diluted and still retain their efficiency so that many more people may be inoculated while fresh supplies are being manufactured.

The organization advises against mass vaccination against smallpox. The vaccine consists of a live related virus, called vaccinia, which causes generally mild symptoms in most people but can have serious and even fatal effects for some, particularly those with immune system weaknesses. Vaccinia also is infectious.

"No government gives or recommends the vaccine routinely," the World Health Organization said. "It should be given only to those persons who have a high risk of coming into contact with the virus that causes smallpox, or who have been exposed."

Still, senior officials at the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention are considering whether to offer the vaccine to the general public once up to 10 million health care workers have been immunized and after a vaccine has been licensed for general use, which is unlikely to be before 2004.

Any country adopting a policy of universal vaccination might also be considering the use of the variola virus for aggressive purposes. Defense experts said an important tool in preparing for biological attack is tracking the manufacture and use of vaccines.

If the response is quick enough, a smallpox outbreak - which could mean just a single case - could be brought under control using the same method that was used to eradicate the disease in the 1960s and 1970s - quickly identifying and vaccinating anyone who has been in contact with the sick person, experts say. Fortunately, doctors say, the vaccinia virus produces antibodies quickly and is usually effective even after someone has been in contact with smallpox.

The disease spreads relatively slowly, by face to face contact, giving health workers a three- or four-day window of opportunity in which to trace contacts.

[http://www.iht.com/ihtsearch.php?id=83232&owner=\(International%20Herald%20Tribune\)&date=20030114130220](http://www.iht.com/ihtsearch.php?id=83232&owner=(International%20Herald%20Tribune)&date=20030114130220)

[\(Return to Contents\)](#)

Washington Post

January 15, 2003

Pg. 12

U.S. Wants U.N. to Talk to Scientists Outside Iraq

Rice Meets With Top Weapons Inspector to Push for Move That is Seen As Best Way to Gain Information

By Colum Lynch, Washington Post Staff Writer

UNITED NATIONS, Jan. 14 -- U.S. national security adviser Condoleezza Rice flew to New York today to press chief U.N. weapons inspector Hans Blix to exercise his authority to take Iraqi scientists out of the country for confidential interviews on Baghdad's secret efforts to develop chemical, biological and nuclear weapons.

The unannounced meeting, which was held at the U.S. mission to the United Nations, underscores the Bush administration's conviction that candid interviews with Iraqi scientists provide the greatest hope of uncovering evidence of Iraq's efforts to rebuild its banned weapons programs. It also reflects mounting U.S. frustration with Blix, who has been reluctant to demand that Iraqis leave their country against their will.

President Bush expressed growing impatience with the inspections today, noting that more than six weeks of U.N. arms probes have failed to uncover evidence to support U.S. assertions that Baghdad maintains covert weapons programs. "Is Saddam Hussein disarming?" Bush asked at the White House before meeting with Polish President

Aleksander Kwasniewski. "So far, I haven't seen any evidence that he is disarming. Time is running out on Saddam Hussein. He must disarm. I'm sick and tired of games and deception."

Officials familiar with today's talks said Rice pressed Blix to scrap plans to provide the U.N. Security Council with a report on the inspections in late March. In an interview Monday, Blix said he was planning to make the report under terms of a 1999 U.N. resolution that created his inspections agency. But such a move would be at odds with the administration's desire that Blix's next presentation to the council, scheduled for Jan. 27, mark the start of a final phase leading to a decision on whether to go to war.

Blix maintained that the end of this month will represent only the beginning of his inspections effort, and said he plans to outline to the council in March the "key remaining disarmament tasks" Iraq is required to fulfill before sanctions could be suspended. U.S. officials argued that Baghdad would have to disarm before the council could consider any steps to reward Baghdad.

A senior U.S. official said the meeting was also designed to ensure that Blix is "getting all the support that he needs. Which he is."

The United States has been stepping up its intelligence cooperation with Blix, including providing a list of dozens of Iraqi scientists that the administration believes could have crucial information about Iraq's weapons programs. Blix and Mohamed ElBaradei, the director general of the International Atomic Energy Agency, are to travel to Baghdad on Sunday to press Iraqi authorities to answer questions relating to Iraq's weapons programs and to insist that Iraq permit its scientists to meet privately with U.N. inspectors. Blix told the Security Council last week that he would begin interviewing Iraqi scientists in Baghdad this week, preferably in private. But he has insisted that he will not force Iraqi officials to leave the country.

The U.N. resolution mandating the inspections approved in November authorizes Blix to interview Iraqi officials without an Iraqi government representative present and also to invite the scientists and family members outside the country for confidential questioning.

With the Bush administration accelerating its military buildup in the Persian Gulf region in preparation for a possible war, U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan appealed to the United States and other council members today to give the inspectors more time before considering military force. He urged the United States not to launch a unilateral military strike against Baghdad, and said that any decision to respond to Iraqi defiance should be taken by the council.

Annan said he is urging Iraq's neighbors to convince Baghdad that a commitment to "disarm and cooperate fully" with the U.N. inspectors offers the best chance of averting war. "I hope that the [Iraqi] leadership is listening or the leaders of the countries in the region, including Turkey, are sending the same message to Iraq," Annan told reporters. "If they do disarm and comply fully with the demands of the council, the region may not have to go through another military confrontation."

Key Arab leaders echoed Annan's calls for restraint. Saudi Crown Prince Abdullah and Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, meeting in Saudi Arabia today, issued a joint statement calling for "a peaceful resolution" of the conflict to "avoid the dire consequences that military confrontation would have for the Iraqi people."

Annan said he was "both optimistic and hopeful that if we handle this situation right and the pressure on the Iraqi leadership is maintained and the inspectors continue to work as aggressively as they're doing, we may be able to disarm Iraq peacefully without the need for war." But, he added, "if it were to come that Iraq continues to defy and disarmament has not happened . . . the council will have to face up to its responsibility and take the necessary action."

Annan said he is preparing for the worst in Iraq, and he cited concern about the "humanitarian fallout" of a war. He said U.N. relief agencies are preparing contingency plans to care for refugees and to manage the political and administrative tasks associated with a post-Hussein government. "We don't want to be caught unprepared," he said. <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A57078-2003Jan14.html>

[\(Return to Contents\)](#)

Washington Post
January 15, 2003
Pg. 15

China Offers To Host U.S. Talks With N. Korea

Beijing Increases Involvement in Attempts to Resolve Stalemate Over Pyongyang's Nuclear Plans

By John Pomfret, Washington Post Foreign Service

BEIJING, Jan. 14 -- China told a senior U.S. envoy today that the Bush administration should engage in dialogue with the North Korean government and offered to host any talks on the dispute over its nuclear plans. The offer, communicated by the Foreign Ministry spokeswoman, Zhang Qiyue, marked a significant increase in Beijing's willingness to openly participate in attempts to resolve the crisis. It came as Assistant Secretary of State James A. Kelly arrived from South Korea for talks with the Chinese leadership, reportedly to ask for more help in influencing the North Korean government.

Kelly was scheduled to meet Wednesday with Li Zhaoxing, China's vice foreign minister who is expected to ascend to the foreign minister's post. Diplomats said Kelly would ask Li to increase pressure on North Korea to back away from its threats to develop a nuclear weapon and resume testing ballistic missiles. Kelly was also believed to be seeking China's help in convincing the isolated Communist government that the United States has no desire to attack.

The latest phase of a longstanding effort to prevent North Korea from developing a nuclear arsenal began last October when Kelly, during a trip to the region, confronted his North Korean interlocutors with intelligence showing the government had a secret project to enrich uranium, which could be used in atomic weapons, in violation of a 1994 deal with the Clinton administration. After first denying it, U.S. officials reported, North Korea acknowledged the program. The United States and its allies then cut off shipments of fuel oil to North Korea that had been pledged under the deal.

The crisis has intensified over the recent weeks as Pyongyang in quick succession expelled international nuclear weapons inspectors, withdrew from the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty and threatened to resume missile tests. In a statement published today in the Rodong Sinmun, North Korea's most prominent state newspaper, the government threatened to exercise its "options" if the United States responded to its withdrawal from the treaty "with new sanctions, blockade and pressure offensives." Those options could be missile tests or, more extreme, development of weapons-grade plutonium at a reprocessing plant that the North says is ready for operation. As the crisis has intensified, the Bush administration's public position has softened. The White House first announced it would not negotiate with North Korea. Then it said it would be willing to meet with North Korean officials, but not negotiate. On Monday, Kelly said the United States would consider providing North Korea with economic aid if it abandoned its weapons program, an offer repeated by President Bush today.

In her statement, Zhang encouraged both sides to begin talks.

"We hope the United States and North Korea can resume dialogue swiftly because we think that talks are the most effective channel for resolving this problem," she told reporters. "If the relevant sides are willing to hold dialogue in Beijing, I think we would have no difficulties with that."

China has said it opposes development of nuclear weapons on the Korean Peninsula and has criticized North Korea's decision to withdraw from the nonproliferation treaty. But Chinese analysts and officials said Beijing's room to maneuver is constrained by a desire to avoid mayhem on the Korean Peninsula, a collapse of the North Korean government and a massive influx of refugees into Manchuria, in northern China. The country already houses about 250,000 North Koreans who have fled years of disastrous harvests and economic collapse.

When the crisis began, China adopted a traditionally low profile. However, on Jan. 10, President Jiang Zemin called Bush, making rare use of a hotline linking Beijing and Washington. "Since then China has become more and more involved," said Shi Yinhong, an expert on international security issues at People's University here.

Western diplomats consider China uniquely placed to pressure North Korea's mercurial leader, Kim Jong Il. Beijing has been the North's staunchest ally since the Korean War of 1950-53 and today provides the North with food, oil and other essentials at "friendship prices."

Chinese analysts argue, however, that China's influence has waned in recent years. One internal Chinese report said Kim had moved closer to Russia than China, and that among the 51 diplomatic activities in which Kim participated in 2002, 31 involved Russia and only three were related to China.

Shi and other analysts said North Korea's choice of China as the venue to announce, on Saturday, that it might resume missile tests was a slap in China's face. He said he and other Chinese analysts believe Kim was using nuclear brinkmanship as a way to turn his people's attention away from serious domestic problems triggered by North Korea's disastrous economic condition and recent bungled attempts to pursue economic reforms.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A56823-2003Jan14.html>

[\(Return to Contents\)](#)

USA Today
January 15, 2003
Pg. 4

Suspect Helping U.S. Gauge Al-Qaeda's Arsenal

Sources: Captive detailing 'nuke-bio-chem' capability

By Toni Locy and Kevin Johnson, USA Today

WASHINGTON — Alleged al-Qaeda operative Ramzi Bin al-Shibh is providing U.S. intelligence officials with valuable information about the terrorist group's potential for using nuclear, biological and chemical weapons, according to U.S. government sources.

The interrogation of Bin al-Shibh has been "very productive in understanding what the capability was, how close to nuke-bio-chem they were" up to the time of the Yemeni cleric's capture in Pakistan in September, one source says. Bin al-Shibh, one of a handful of living suspects in the Sept. 11 conspiracy, also is revealing helpful details about al-Qaeda's command structure, the sources says.

Since his capture, Bin al-Shibh, 30, has expressed "zero remorse," one source says. "He's made it clear that had he not been captured, he would've continued doing what he had been doing."

The sources will not elaborate on information provided by Bin al-Shibh, who allegedly wired money from Europe to Zacarias Moussaoui, the only person charged in the USA in the Sept. 11 conspiracy.

But officials believe Bin al-Shibh's revelations about weapons of mass destruction and al-Qaeda's command structure will be important to the CIA, FBI and Defense Department for "some time to come," one source says.

Because Bin al-Shibh has been in custody at a secret location and out of touch with al-Qaeda, he cannot tell interrogators whether an attack is imminent, the sources say.

Interrogators, however, are aware of al-Qaeda's practice of having several missions in various stages of planning at all times, and they are trying to get Bin al-Shibh to reveal details about those plots.

Al-Qaeda's interest in weapons of mass destruction is a major concern, especially since the arrests last week of several Algerian men in London after traces of ricin, a poison that is lethal even in small doses, were found during raids by British authorities. Scotland Yard officials believe the Algerians have ties to al-Qaeda through a North African terrorist group.

Although the U.S. military campaign in Afghanistan has disrupted al-Qaeda's operations, the London arrests illustrate how resilient the group is and how far the United States and its allies are from neutralizing it.

As part of its efforts to identify al-Qaeda operations, the FBI has concluded in recent months that the group does not have senior commanders in place in the USA who could activate and control existing cells. Instead, the FBI believes that al-Qaeda has a more informal presence.

Investigators describe the cells in the USA as close-knit groups that are working independently and not taking orders from al-Qaeda operatives overseas. Sources said some members of these cells attended al-Qaeda terrorist training camps in Afghanistan in the 1990s and are committed to the group's goals.

Sources say the FBI also thinks there are individual al-Qaeda sympathizers — described as "fleas and mopos" by one source — who could, on their own, attempt attacks similar to Timothy McVeigh's bombing of the Oklahoma City federal building in 1995.

Not everybody agrees with the FBI's assessment. "Why should America be any different than Europe?" asks Sir John Stevens, Scotland Yard's commissioner.

Stevens says the London arrests show that al-Qaeda remains a sophisticated group that must not be underestimated. "Make no mistake that they are about," he says.

<http://www.usatoday.com/usatoday/20030115/4780111s.htm>

[\(Return to Contents\)](#)

Los Angeles Times
January 15, 2003

Bush Releases Money To Destroy Russian Arms

Move frees \$466 million for securing chemical and other weapons. Funds were frozen because of conditions imposed on Moscow.

By Maura Reynolds, Times Staff Writer

WASHINGTON --President Bush has signed two waivers to free up \$466 million in frozen funding to help Russia destroy its dangerous and deteriorating Cold War arsenal, White House officials said Tuesday.

In particular, the waivers will release \$184 million appropriated by Congress in the last two years to start construction of a Siberian plant to destroy deadly nerve gas and other chemical weapons.

"Russian stockpiles of weapons and materials are the most likely source for terrorist attempts to acquire weapons of mass destruction," said Sen. Richard G. Lugar (R-Ind.), who was co-author of 1991 legislation with then-Sen. Sam Nunn (D-Ga.) that set up the joint program to destroy Russian nuclear, chemical and biological weapons.

"Destroying these weapons at the source is imperative to our national security."

But critics in Congress have been imposing stiff conditions on the release of the funds, saying Russia has not spent enough of its own money on the program or fully complied with its arms control and human rights obligations.

As a result, no funds have been released in more than three years. But the waivers Bush signed Friday override those conditions for one year.

Proponents of the Cooperative Threat Reduction program contend that the critics' concerns are outweighed by the danger that Russia's poorly guarded weapons of mass destruction -- including 40,000 tons of chemical weapons -- could wind up in terrorists' hands.

There is particular fear over the 5,400 tons of nerve agents -- VX, sarin and soman -- stored in a cluster of barns in Shchuchye, a Siberian town near the border with Kazakhstan.

Many of Shchuchye's 2 million chemical artillery shells are small enough to fit in a suitcase and contain enough poison to kill a stadium full of people. In addition, 800 Scud missile warheads at Shchuchye are also loaded with nerve agents.

"The size and lethality of the weapons at Shchuchye are clearly a direct proliferation threat to the American people," Lugar said.

When Bush took office, he ordered a review of the program, commonly known as Nunn-Lugar. The review concluded that the program is a cost-effective way to reduce the threat posed by the weapons.

Sean McCormack, spokesman for the National Security Council, said Bush remains committed to safeguarding Russia's weapons of mass destruction.

"These are crucial programs that need to move forward," he said. "At the same time, we are going to work diligently with the Russians to deal with the problems we discuss in the waivers."

The first waiver will unfreeze \$416 million appropriated for the Nunn-Lugar program in fiscal 2003, including \$134 million for construction of the plant at Shchuchye.

The second waiver will release \$50 million allocated last year for the plant.

<http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/world/la-fg-usruss15jan15.story>

[\(Return to Contents\)](#)

Washington Post

January 15, 2003

Pg. 12

Reporters Are Offered Vaccines

By Reuters

Reporters who travel with U.S. forces in any war with Iraq will be offered smallpox and anthrax shots to help protect them from a potential biological attack, the Defense Department said yesterday.

Pentagon officials told bureau chiefs of wire services, television networks, newspapers and other media at a meeting that the inoculations will be offered on a voluntary basis to journalists once they are selected to travel with U.S. forces into or near combat zones.

The decision could involve several hundred reporters who are expected to be involved in shoulder-to-shoulder coverage of U.S. troops if President Bush decides to order an invasion of Iraq, according to Air Force Col. Jay DeFrank, a Pentagon spokesman.

Thousands of U.S. troops who might be involved in high-risk areas of the world in the war on terrorism are getting anthrax and smallpox immunizations on orders from Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld. Those shots are mandatory unless there is an individual health risk involved.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A56689-2003Jan14.html>

[\(Return to Contents\)](#)

New York Times
January 15, 2003

Doctors Are Ironing Out Details For Giving The Smallpox Vaccine

By Denise Grady

With smallpox vaccinations for half a million health and emergency workers scheduled to begin later this month, doctors advising the government were still ironing out details yesterday of who should avoid the vaccine and how it should be given.

In a conference call, the group, the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices, addressed questions yesterday that had been raised about draft recommendations the committee developed in October. Its final recommendations will be presented to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, which usually follows the committee's advice. One issue was whether people living with infants under a year old should be vaccinated. In its draft, the group said such adults could safely be immunized. But babies that young should not be vaccinated, because they are vulnerable to dangerous reactions. Some experts fear that a vaccinated adult could infect a baby with the vaccine virus, vaccinia, which is related to smallpox and can be shed from the inoculation site.

That concern led Dr. Thomas R. Frieden, the New York City health commissioner, to urge the committee in December to advise people living with infants not to be vaccinated. Dr. Frieden said the infant of a vaccinated health care worker in Israel had recently become infected and that in the 1947 outbreak in New York City two infants died after adults in their homes were vaccinated. But Dr. Seymour Williams of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, who participated in the conference call, presented information from studies in the 1960's, when smallpox vaccination was routine, showing that vaccinia transmission from adults to infants was very rare.

The group agreed with Dr. Williams and let its recommendation stand, but it acknowledged that some states or cities might choose to exclude people with infants.

Sandra Mullin, a spokeswoman for New York's health department, said, "While we will not exclude individuals with infants from participating, we will continue to advise against it."

The group also expanded the categories of people who should not be vaccinated. It had already said that people with autoimmune diseases like lupus and rheumatoid arthritis should not be vaccinated if they are taking drugs to suppress the immune system. Yesterday, the group said it would recommend that some people with severe autoimmune diseases, even if they are not taking medication, should also avoid the vaccine.

To administer the vaccine, the group recommends the practice of jabbing a person in the arm 15 times with a two-pronged needle, even though Wyeth, which makes the vaccine, said it would probably recommend only two or three jabs for those getting it for the first time.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2003/01/15/health/15SMAL.html>

[\(Return to Contents\)](#)

Washington Post
January 16, 2003
Pg. B7

NE Mail Facility Closed After Possible Anthrax Finding

By Clarence Williams and Martin Weil, Washington Post Staff Writers

A Postal Service facility for sorting U.S. government mail in Northeast Washington was shut last night as a precaution after a letter sent to the Federal Reserve Board showed the possible presence of anthrax spores, officials said.

In halting operations at the facility in the 3300 block of V Street, the Postal Service appeared to be going beyond previous responses to the discovery of possible anthrax contamination of government mail. Thomas G. Day, the postal service's vice president of engineering, said the move was made "out of an abundance of caution."

"There is no evidence that there is any contamination at the facility," Day said, adding there also was "no evidence that any employee or member of the public has been exposed to any health risk."

However, "when you get a lab result that is a preliminary positive, you've got to take that seriously," he said at a news conference last night.

The Postal Service was testing the V Street facility last night, and depending on the outcome, the building could reopen this morning.

The preliminary positive tests on the letter were made by the Fed at its mail-sorting facility, a Fed spokeswoman said. Spokeswoman Michelle Smith said tests at an outside laboratory gave the same findings. Further testing is to be conducted at the Centers for Disease Control in Atlanta.

According to Smith, the letter was addressed to Roger Ferguson, the board's vice chairman. The letter never entered Fed headquarters.

Smith said the letter was tested at a secure off-site processing facility maintained by the Fed. The first indication of possible contamination was obtained Jan. 3; a second test by the Fed, performed Friday, also was positive, she said. After that, she said, material was sent to an outside laboratory, and when its findings came back yesterday, the Postal Service was notified.

The Fed continues to get mail that passes through a second secure off-site facility, the spokeswoman said.

After anthrax-contaminated letters were received here late 2001, authorities shut down the District's main mail processing facility on Brentwood Road. Later, there were reports that preliminary tests indicated the possible presence of the microorganisms on other letters.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A57071-2003Jan14.html>

[\(Return to Contents\)](#)

Defense & Foreign Affairs Daily
January 15, 2003

Iraqi Ballistic Missile Force Shows Residual Capability, Even Without Consideration Of Possible Secret Stockpiles

Analysis. By David P. Murphy, GIS (Global Information System).

This is a general assessment of the effectiveness of the Iraqi ballistic missile force. This assessment offers an analysis of the likely Iraqi view of the past, current, and future progress of their ballistic missile programs, despite the serious material losses during Operation Desert Storm (ODS) and the post-ODS time period. The Iraqi forces employed a mix of ballistic missiles based on the R-11 series of missiles supplied originally by the former Soviet Union. The R-11 was known to NATO as the Scud-A; the successor to the R-11 missile was the R-17, known to NATO as the Scud-B. The Iraqis produced a series of derivatives based on the Scud-B.

Considerable research and analysis were dedicated to the review of Iraqi use of ballistic missiles during ODS. Additional research and analysis efforts were dedicated to the study of the performance of the Patriot surface-to-air missile (SAM) in defense against ballistic missiles as well as the redirection of tactical strike aircraft to attacking transporter-erector-launchers (TEL) dispersed throughout Western Iraq. The US Raytheon Patriot SAM was not designed originally for the ballistic missile defense (BMD) mission and its performance should be viewed with that proviso in mind.

The tactical strike aircraft tasked with destroying Scud missiles and Iraqi-developed derivatives; this task became known colloquially as "The Great Scud Hunt" during the Gulf War. Important lessons learned by the Coalition forces helped spur the development of theater ballistic missile defenses, influenced improvements in intelligence collection and processing, and been a major force behind upgrades in command, control, and communications.

What were important lessons learned for the Iraqi forces?

Force in Being. It is unlikely to have escaped the attention of any of Saddam Hussein's advisors that the threat posed by the Scud-series ballistic missiles to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) and Israel was primarily psychological and symbolic. The total number of missiles fired at both countries varies according the sources cited, but the total number of launches was less than 100. The UNSCOM derived figure was 93 Scud-series launches. This number (93) should be considered in the light of the number of Scud missiles launched during the Iran-Iraq War: 516.

The Iraqi ballistic missile force, as a force in being, exerts disproportionate influence over the policy of the US and other states. The estimated number of systems may range from a low of 20 to a high value of 200. This may not include Iraqi-owned DPRK-origin NoDong-1 ballistic missiles which were shipped to Libya; many (if not all) of these are still in Libya. The effect of the Iraqi ballistic missile force is felt by the deployment of US Patriot SAM systems within likely threatened nations or the positioning of US Aegis cruisers and destroyers armed with Standard

Missile Block IV and Block IVA anti-tactical ballistic missiles just offshore, as well as the priority pace of development of the high-value Israel Aircraft Industries (IAI) Arrow 2 anti-ballistic missile (ABM) system. The Arrow 2 was developed not only to meet an anticipated Iraqi ballistic missile threat to Israel, however, but also to meet a larger, longer-term threat from such missiles from Iran, as well as potential threats from KSA-, Syrian-, Libyan- and Egyptian-based ballistic missiles

Threat Technology Level. The Scud series have been replaced by the SS-21 Scarab in the Russian arsenal, but the Iraqi weapons development teams seem to have chosen the Scud series to fulfill a rôle not unlike that of the MiG-21 Fishbed or SS-N-2 Styx; that of a general-purpose weapon. During the Iran-Iraq War of 1980-1988, the Iraqis modified the baseline Scud design for greater range through two innovations: 1. reducing the payload, or throw weight, in the warhead section; and 2. bolting additional length in the fuel and oxidizer tanks. The modified Scud missiles were named al-Abbas and al-Hussein. Performance figures cited in sources vary which makes planning to deal with the threat difficult.

The al-Hussein is a single-stage, liquid-fueled missile like the Scud, but with the payload reduced from 800 to 1,000 kilograms (1,760 to 2,200 lb.) to 300 kg (660 lb.). This provides a considerable extension in range from values of 280 to 300 km (152 to 162 nautical miles) to a distance in excess of 600 km (320 nm). An official report lists the range of the al-Hussein as variable from 650 to 950 km (355 to 520 nm). The circular error, probable (CEP) degraded from approximately one km (just more than 0.55 nm) to well in excess of four km (2.2 nm).

A variant of the al-Hussein was developed and is known as the al-Hussein Short, or al-Hijara. This missile seems intended for delivery of chemical and biological agents. The range of the al-Hijara missile is comparable to the al-Hussein. The CEP of the al-Hijara is assessed as greater than that of the al-Hussein, which makes that missile well-suited to the delivery of an area-effect payload.

Another variant existed or may still be in existence; it is known to external analysts as the H-3 and is named for the principal combined arms base in the extreme West of Iraq, where the missile was first discovered.

The al-Abbas is also a single-stage, liquid-fueled missile like the Scud. The al-Abbas reportedly carries only a 140 to 180 kg (308 to 396 lb.) warhead section and is fitted with greatly lengthened fuel and oxidizer tanks. This permits a range of 900 km (490 nm).

In addition to the Scud derivatives, Iraq developed a number of modified surface-to-air missiles (SAM) which were displayed originally at the 1989 arms exhibition in Baghdad. The missiles displayed were SAMs optimized for the surface-to-surface missile (SSM) rôle; these included the SA-2 Guideline, SA-3 Goa, and SA-6 Gainful. This is a logical development of the practice reported by former Warsaw Pact SAM battery operators of training to use the larger SAMs as SSMs. The SA-2 Guideline presented a particularly severe threat since it possessed a 195 kg (429 lb) high-fragmentation warhead and was fitted with a proximity fuze. Following further along this development path are the al-Samoud, al-Fahd 300, and al-Fahd 500 short-range ballistic missiles based on the SA-2 Guideline booster section. The payload of these short-range missiles has been similar to the SA-2 for the purpose of weights and balances.

Beating the Defenses. Saddam Hussein's advisors are certain to have pointed out that a postwar analysis of the Iraqi ballistic missile force threat technology level showed it to be superior to that of interceptor missile seekers mounted against it. While at first glance this statement seems fallacious, consider the simple fact that only one Scud derivative missile was "destroyed" by Patriot SAMs. The sole intercepted missile impacted on a warehouse being used as a barracks with considerable loss of life. This was a result of the Scud derivative missile being damaged; as the missile's flight path became erratic, the Patriot missile fire control system assessed the target as a "non-target". Many of the Scud derivatives flew erratically in the endgame maneuver. It is highly probable that many of the incoming missiles missed by Patriot batteries were assessed as non-targets. This is a software problem and may be resolved readily for Patriot. The same erratic pattern in the flight profile of the Scud derivatives may present a different problem for the US Standard Missile Block IVA at higher altitudes; the problem for the Block IVA resides with its imaging infrared (IIR) seeker. The IIR seeker will be able to detect the incoming Scud derivatives, but the erratic flight behavior may enable the threat missile to "dodge the bullet".

The Middle East Military Balance 2001-2002, edited by Shlomo Brom and Yiftah Shapir, lists five launchers and 20 to 30 al-Hussein warshots with an unknown number of al-Samoud short-range launchers and missiles. This assessment appears to be based on the maximum number of targets that could be handled by the Arrow 2 ATBM fire-control system, rather than the actual level of the threat posed by Iraqi missile units.

Using the Missile Body to Maximize Damage. The Iraqis are assessed to have taken a different view of how to achieve a kill using a Scud derivative. Whereas the former Soviet Union and other major powers armed with tactical or theater ballistic missiles focused on the smallest possible CEP for accurate delivery of chemical, biological, or radiological warheads, Iraqi designers appear to have been working on how to use the entire Scud derivative missile

body to inflict damage on an urban target. Following further along this development path are the al-Samoud, al-Fahd 300, and al-Fahd 500 short-range ballistic missiles based on the SA-2 Guideline booster section.

A benefit from the erratic flight path of the Scud derivatives during the endgame phase was their tendency to break up as the missile airframes were overstressed. This resulted, during the 1991 Gulf War, in the disintegration of some Scud derivatives with large pieces impacting at random in Israel and the KSA.

Attacking from Outside. Iraq has also built up a sizeable inventory of ballistic missiles outside of its borders. Iraqi-purchased ballistic missiles are known to be held in reserve in a number of nations, such as Syria and Libya.¹ The threat posed by these missiles complicates defense to such a degree that ATBM systems cannot be focused on only one or two threat axes.

The use of launch sites outside of Iraq can only complicate the response by the US and other nations. If a few missiles are launched from the hinterlands of Libya or Syria, this does not represent a substantive threat to deployed US forces.

It is likely that missiles from these launch sites would be used to trigger retaliatory strikes by Israel and thus widen any future conflict into an Arab-Israeli conflict, thereby attempting to engender Arab and Muslim support for Iraq against the US. During the Cold War, when one side would escalate by employing a nuclear weapon, it was called, "crossing the firebreak". It is quite clear that crossing the firebreak is high on Saddam's priority list. Attacking from outside is but one means of achieving that aim.

Force Camouflage and Deception. Iraqi forces proved themselves quite adept at camouflage and deception during both the Iran-Iraq War and the Gulf War. The level of camouflage and deception and the effectiveness of same is effective in keeping the Coalition, especially the US, guessing at the missile force level available to Saddam Hussein for whatever purpose he has in mind.

The Iraqis were able to reduce the number of successful attacks made by Coalition tactical strike aircraft using precision-guided weapons. While initial reports held that the majority of such attacks had been successful, this number was revised downwards to "40%" after analysis. This percentage has been lowered further since the initial post-ODS exuberance, but the number is still far higher than in any previous conflict involving an aerial conflict.

Beating the Inspectors. UNSCOM witnessed the destruction of only 48 Scud derivatives. Iraq provided documentation on an additional 85 Scud derivatives, 83 of which were confirmed by UNSCOM after excavating the burial pits.

The effect of these weapons on Coalition tactics and force employment was disproportionately more costly than the threat; this has been noted in the many histories written about ODS. An example of the effect that Iraqi Scud derivative missiles had on the conduct war was the fraction of sorties redirected to destroying these systems on the ground; a figure of 25 percent is often quoted.

An official report, quoting an UNSCOM report, liberally seems to show a pathway for the Iraqis to have beaten the arms inspectors. The total number of Scud derivative missiles was 133, with only 48 having been witnessed as destroyed by UNSCOM. The other 85 missiles were allegedly destroyed by the Iraqis, with UNSCOM relying on archaeology to identify the buried material. The total number of warheads produced for Scud derivatives was 210: 157 imported and 103 indigenous.

The only Scud derivative missiles likely to have been destroyed in toto are the 48 observed by UNSCOM. Similarly, the 50 warheads destroyed under UNSCOM supervision are probably the only warheads that can be counted as destroyed.

The remaining 85 missiles and 210 warheads must be assumed to be most likely still in existence; the disparity between the missile body and warhead figures raises many questions. Additionally, there are boosters unaccounted for; at least 120. Added to these figures are any Scud derivatives brought into Iraq in contravention of the post-ODS sanctions. However the numbers are compiled, Iraq has a considerable number of theater ballistic missiles inside the country and a tactically significant number outside Iraq.

Footnotes:

1. See, particularly, Defense & Foreign Affairs Daily, November 8, 2000: Libyan NoDong SSMs Reported Targeting Southern NATO Sites and Israel. This report highlights Iraq's involvement in procurement DPRK NoDong-1 ballistic missiles through Libya. Also see Defense & Foreign Affairs Daily of October 28, 2002: Iraq Moves WMD Matériel to Syrian Safe-Havens.

[\(Return to Contents\)](#)

U.S. Asks U.N. To Speed Pace Of Inspections

By Julia Preston

UNITED NATIONS, Jan. 15 — The United States, eager to press the pace of arms inspections in Iraq, called today for a Security Council session on Thursday to air a dispute over the inspectors' schedule.

The new argument stems from differing understandings in Washington and other capitals of nations on the Council of the two resolutions that guide the inspections.

It started after Hans Blix, the chief biological and chemical weapons inspector, pointed out that no deadlines were specified after the end of January in Resolution 1441, the Nov. 8 measure that set up the current round of inspections. On Jan. 27 the inspectors are required to report on the first 60 days of their work.

Mr. Blix said that after the Jan. 27 report, he would follow the steps outlined in Resolution 1284, the December 1999 measure that first created the inspection teams. On that basis, he said he would make a new, major report at the end of March. Resolution 1284 holds out much more explicitly than the more recent one the promise that severe economic sanctions will be lifted if Iraq meets the demands of the inspections.

Bush administration officials, particularly the White House national security adviser, Condoleezza Rice, became alarmed that Mr. Blix's view could slow the inspections and suggest to Iraq that the Council was satisfied with its performance so far. She explained her concerns to Mr. Blix in a meeting in New York on Tuesday, and the American ambassador, John D. Negroponte, laid them out at a Council luncheon that day.

British and French diplomats said today they see no conflict between the two resolutions.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2003/01/16/international/middleeast/16NATI.html>

[\(Return to Contents\)](#)

New York Times
January 16, 2003

2 Koreas Agree To Resume Talks On Nuclear Crisis

By Howard W. French

SEOUL, South Korea, Jan. 15 — North and South Korea agreed today to resume high-level talks here next week, as diplomatic efforts to resolve the North Korean nuclear crisis accelerated.

The announcement of the meetings in Seoul next Tuesday, which will be the first cabinet-level talks between the two countries in months, came as North Korea rejected signals by the Bush administration that it was open to dialogue.

"In essence, there is no change in the U.S. conditional stand that it would have dialogue with the D.P.R.K. only after it scraps its 'nuclear program,'" the North Korean Foreign Ministry statement said, using the initials for North Korea's formal name, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. "It is clear that the U.S. talk about dialogue is nothing but a deceptive drama to mislead the world public opinion."

Ari Fleischer, the White House spokesman, called North Korea's assertion an "unfortunate statement." "North Korea has a habit of saying many inflammatory things," he said. Mr. Fleischer denied North Korea's assertion that the United States wanted to disarm the nation. "The U.S. supports a 'denuclearized' Korean Peninsula, he said. "That's not the same as disarmament."

Despite the vitriol that often characterizes North Korean statements in times of crisis, however, the message contained signals that the North might be positioning itself for negotiations with Washington, analysts said.

"It is the consistent stand of the D.P.R.K. to settle the issue on an equal footing through fair negotiations that may clear both sides of their concerns," the statement said. "We have already clarified that the D.P.R.K. is ready to solve the nuclear issue through negotiations on condition that the U.S. recognizes the D.P.R.K.'s sovereignty, assures it of nonaggression and does not obstruct its economic development."

One longtime analyst of North Korea called the language a nuanced reply to the Bush administration, meaning "nice try, but wrong target."

The United States has said that if North Korea verifiably eliminates its nuclear weapons program it will consider economic aid, recognize the country's sovereignty and formalize recent promises not to attack.

One longtime analyst of North Korea said he interpreted the latest North Korean statements as an invitation for Washington to deliver "a piece of paper that has it all written down in one place."

From the beginning of the current crisis, which began when the United States presented North Korea with evidence that it knew the North was secretly developing a program to produce highly enriched uranium, in violation of a

number of the country's international commitments, North Korea has insisted that any solution must come out of direct talks with Washington. North Korea has insisted on a nonaggression treaty with the United States, saying that with formal security guarantees it would open its doors to American inspectors.

The position of the United States has evolved substantially in recent weeks, nudged by South Korea, Japan, Russia and China, from a refusal to engage with North Korea to its current willingness to talk. What has remained, however, is the American insistence that North Korea take a major first step by dismantling its nuclear program and submitting to verification.

President-elect Roh Moo Hyun has insisted that South Korea be allowed to play a leading role in international diplomacy involving North Korea. "The North crisis should be resolved peacefully," Mr. Roh said today. "It could also be resolved through dialogue based on mutual cooperation between South Korea and the U.S. with the help of diplomatic efforts among Japan, Russia, and China." Despite the scheduled resumption of North-South talks next week, however, it is unclear whether South Korea will be able to influence North Korea on nuclear and other security matters.

Meanwhile, South Korea's departing president, Kim Dae Jung, abruptly canceled a meeting scheduled for Thursday with Japan's foreign minister, Yoriko Kawaguchi. The reason was a visit Japan's prime minister, Junichiro Koizumi, made on Tuesday to the Yasukuni Shrine, a Shinto war memorial. The shrine is considered a symbol of Japanese wartime military imperialism.

"We are outraged and deeply disappointed," the South Korean Foreign Affairs and Trade Ministry said in a statement, urging the Japanese government "not to damage the feeling of South Korean people any further."

In another development, South Korea's Supreme Court decided today to recount votes cast across the nation in last month's presidential election amid doubts over the accuracy of the vote-counting machines. The recount will begin before the end of this month at 80 polling districts, including 17 in Seoul, the Supreme Court ruled.

Mr. Roh defeated Lee Hoi Chang by a margin of 570,980. The recount was not expected to change the outcome, however.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2003/01/16/international/asia/16KORE.html>

[\(Return to Contents\)](#)

New York Times

January 16, 2003

U.S. Sends 600 Troops And Antimissile Systems To Defend Israel If Iraq Attacks

By Michael R. Gordon

WASHINGTON, Jan. 15 — The United States has sent Patriot antimissile systems and 600 troops to Israel to strengthen its ability to defend against missile attack.

Officially, the American forces have been sent for an exercise that will test the ability of American and Israeli missile defenses to work together. But the exercise will mean that American forces will work alongside the Israeli military and be in position to help defend against attacks by Iraq's Scud missiles if President Bush decides to take military action soon to oust Saddam Hussein.

"We are now in the process of having an exercise," a senior Israeli official said. "We believe that if the time comes and we shall have hostilities we shall probably have American Patriot batteries deployed to Israel."

In the exercise, United States forces are to be based in Israel until mid-February, American officials said. Their deployment, however, could easily be extended.

American participation in the exercise is also expected to include an Aegis air defense cruiser. The Aegis has a sophisticated radar that can track enemy missiles and integrate the information into the land-based air defense command centers.

American Patriot batteries were dispatched to Israel before the 1991 Persian Gulf war, and the Bush administration has a strong motivation to help its ally now as well. Washington is also trying to dissuade Israel from retaliating against Iraq if it comes under fire.

Ariel Sharon, the Israeli prime minister, has informed American officials that Israel plans to strike back if it is successfully attacked by Iraq. Israel, however, would be under less pressure to respond if Iraqi missiles were intercepted by a combined American-Israeli defense. Washington fears that Israel's entry into a war could be exploited by Iraq, which would try to portray the conflict as one between Islam and an American-Israeli coalition.

The arrival of American forces is just one step that the administration is taking to help defend its allies as it ratchets up the pressure on the Iraqi government.

American officials have asked NATO for six types of assistance. Much of the support is intended to help Turkey, a crucial ally and NATO member. The United States would like NATO to send Awacs radar planes to Turkey. It also wants NATO nations to send Patriot air-defense batteries to Turkey.

Turkey has indicated that it will allow the United States to use air bases to strike Iraq, but officials say it has not decided whether to allow the deployment of a significant number of United States ground troops.

In addition, the United States would like NATO ships to protect ships in the eastern Mediterranean. It would also like NATO nations to provide personnel to help protect American bases in Europe and possibly in the Persian Gulf, according to a senior administration official. NATO forces could also be used to fill other shortfalls that may arise as American forces are dispatched to the gulf.

The measures were worked out by Gen. Joseph W. Ralston, the NATO commander, whose tour of duty is coming to an end this week, and Gen. Tommy R. Franks, the chief of the United States Central Command.

Some of the measures were discussed by Deputy Defense Secretary Paul D. Wolfowitz during a December trip to NATO headquarters, but serious consultations on the details are only now getting under way.

Beyond these measures, Western officials say the United States would like NATO to update and review its contingency plans to defend Turkey in case there is war with Iraq, and the alliance invokes Article V, which calls for the collective defense of NATO members.

While the support being sought by the United States is essentially defensive, it is still politically sensitive. Many allies want to give United Nations weapons inspectors more time before confronting the decision of whether to go to war with Iraq.

But there is no ambivalence about the American deployments on the part of the Israelis. Israeli officials say that the Patriot batteries sent to Israel for the 1991 gulf war were generally ineffective. Iraq fired 39 Scud missiles at Israel during that conflict, and American intelligence believes Iraq has retained a small, secret arsenal of Scuds.

But the Patriot has been upgraded since then, and the Israelis see a role for it in a two-tier system that would include the Israelis' Arrow system, two batteries of which have already been deployed. According to the Israeli plan, the Arrow system would try to shoot down Iraqi Scuds at high altitudes. American and Israeli operated Patriots would concentrate on Scuds that leaked through, intercepting them at lower altitudes.

Not only does the two-tiered approach provide more protection, but it also would enable Israel to husband some of its number of Arrow interceptors.

American officials said that several batteries of Patriots have been sent to Israel. The American forces sent to Israel for the exercise are under the command of Gen. Stanley E. Green, the head of the Army's Air Defense Artillery Center.

As the United States has built up its forces, it has used military exercises as an opportunity to deploy systems in the region and test them for a possible war with Iraq.

For Israel, the exercises are just part of a series of steps being taken to prepare for the possibility of war.

Mr. Sharon met today with Defense Minister Shaul Mofaz and other generals to review plans to protect civilians and the military.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2003/01/16/international/middleeast/16ALLI.html>

[\(Return to Contents\)](#)

New York Times
January 16, 2003

Medical Panel Has Doubts About Plan For Smallpox

By Denise Grady

The government's plan for smallpox vaccinations is too rushed and lacks adequate safeguards, according to a draft report by a panel of independent medical experts convened to advise federal health officials.

The 15-member panel, mostly medical school professors, was formed by the Institute of Medicine at the request of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, which sought advice on putting the program into effect. The panel met Dec. 18-20.

A confidential draft of its report was obtained by The New York Times. A final, revised version is expected to be sent to the disease centers and made public next week, a panel member said.

The panel member added: "I think it's saying the decision to vaccinate was essentially a political one, and there are a lot of scientific reservations about it. We were not asked to talk about the policy, but we're saying there are a lot of reservations and safeguards that need to be put in place."

Dr. Julie L. Gerberding, director of the disease centers, said she had not seen the report. But, she said: "We have enormous respect for the I.O.M. The credibility of their input is always taken very seriously by C.D.C., and we look forward to seeing the final report. That's why we wanted to take this issue to the I.O.M."

The vaccination program, announced by President Bush on Dec. 13, calls for up to 500,000 health workers to be vaccinated in the coming weeks. The second phase is to include 10 million more people: additional health workers, as well as firefighters, police and emergency medical personnel.

Concerns about the program center on risks from the vaccine, which has more dangerous side effects than other vaccines, and caused one or two deaths per million vaccinations when it was in routine use.

The panel urged that there be enough time allowed between the two phases to evaluate the first phase and apply any lessons learned.

But Dr. Gerberding said the disease centers and the states would monitor safety continuously and make needed changes as they went along.

She said she expected each jurisdiction to operate at its own pace, but, she added, the guiding principle would be, "the fastest we can do it with the greatest amount of safety."

The panel also recommended that the disease centers identify specific criteria, like adverse effects from the vaccine, that would lead it to reconsider its guidelines for who should be vaccinated and how potential recipients should be screened.

Dr. Gerberding said she needed to see the full report to evaluate that advice.

In another recommendation, the panel said the disease centers should designate one "voice" for the vaccination program, someone with a strong scientific background, and not a politician.

When asked to comment, Dr. Gerberding laughed and said: "I'd really love to answer that question but I can't comment on that. In reality, there are a lot of people who are going to be involved in providing messages about events related to terrorism."

The panel member said that when the group recommended against politicians, "what we had in mind was the debacle around anthrax and how there was no designated scientific spokesperson and how the public was confused by various sources of information until they finally put Dr. Fauci forward, who is a credible source." Dr. Anthony S. Fauci is director the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases.

Another issue that concerned the panel was who will cover lost wages and medical expenses for people who have adverse effects from the vaccine. The federal government will not provide coverage, and, the panel noted, it is not clear whether state worker's compensation laws will help. It urged the disease centers and state health departments to clarify the issue and to make sure that consent forms describe what compensation is available.

Dr. Gerberding said that although the disease centers provided some guidance, both compensation and consent forms would ultimately be decided by individual states.

The Institute of Medicine panel said the safety board in charge of monitoring the vaccination program should be independent of the government in order to maintain public trust. But current plans call for the safety board to be connected to a disease centers advisory group, and the institute's panel urged the centers to reconsider that arrangement.

In response, Dr. Gerberding said, "We've had input from a variety of sources on that and will take whatever input we get from I.O.M. very seriously."

<http://www.nytimes.com/2003/01/16/politics/16SMAL.html>

[\(Return to Contents\)](#)

(Editor's Note: Hyperlink for referenced study follows article.)

Washington Post

January 16, 2003

Pg. 14

Commercial Devices Could Fuel 'Dirty Bombs'

Report Outlines Threat From Lax Controls

By Joby Warrick, Washington Post Staff Writer

Tens of thousands of radioactive devices currently used in medicine and industry are powerful enough to inflict major damage if used by terrorists in a "dirty bomb," yet governments worldwide have failed to take steps needed to prevent them from falling into the wrong hands, according to a study scheduled for release today.

Despite a growing awareness of dirty bombs, U.S. law places few limits on exports of radioactive equipment, even to troubled states such as Afghanistan or the former Soviet republics, says the report by the Center for Nonproliferation Studies at Monterey Institute of International Studies. Dirty bombs are crude weapons that use conventional explosives to spread dangerous radiation.

Lax controls have left a legacy of thousands of lost and abandoned radioactive devices around the world, especially in the former Soviet Union. "The locations of many unauthorized dumps of radioactive sources remain unknown," the report says. The study, the result of a yearlong investigation, is among the first to examine security risks posed by commercial radioactive equipment.

The risks involve only a small fraction of the millions of commercial radioactive devices manufactured since the 1940s -- a finite number of highly radioactive machines and tools that could be quickly identified and secured if governments acted aggressively to fix the problem, the study's authors said. A half-dozen nations produce the vast majority of radioactive equipment that poses the greatest threat, they said.

"The threat is challenging but manageable if we prioritize the small fraction of sources that pose the highest security risk," said Charles D. Ferguson, a physicist who is the center's scientist-in-residence and one of three authors of the report.

Radioactive materials such as cesium-137 and cobalt-60 have thousands of commercial applications ranging from medical diagnostics to food irradiation and household smoke detection. In most commercial devices the amount of radioactivity is extremely small, but a few are "hot" enough to deliver a lethal dose within a few minutes of direct exposure.

While there has never been a dirty-bomb attack, U.S. officials believe they disrupted plans by al Qaeda to unleash a dirty bomb -- also known as a "radiological dispersion device" -- on a U.S. city with the arrest last May of Jose Padilla, a U.S. citizen linked by the FBI to al Qaeda.

Most terrorism experts contend that a dirty bomb explosion would likely cause few immediate casualties but could create panic and cause extensive property damage.

The Monterey report calls for tighter controls on exports of radioactive equipment and better oversight of the use and eventual disposal of the devices. It calls for improved international efforts to round up radioactive devices that have been abandoned or illegally dumped. An Energy Department initiative that recovered 10,000 "orphaned" devices in recent years is being threatened this year with deep funding cuts, the study notes.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A63720-2003Jan15.html>

[\(Return to Contents\)](#)

CNS Occasional Papers: #11

Commercial Radioactive Sources: Surveying the Security Risks

Charles D. Ferguson, Tahseen Kazi, and Judith Perera

January 2003

This occasional paper focuses on the security of commercial radioactive sources, the sources that represent a significant category of radioactive materials that are widely used throughout the world for beneficial applications in medicine and industry, and--until recently--have not been considered high security risks.

<http://cns.mii.edu/pubs/opapers/op11/index.htm>

[\(Return to Contents\)](#)

Global Security Newswire (nti.org)

January 15, 2003

Iran: U.S. Seeking To Avoid A Third Nuclear Confrontation

By Bryan Bender, Global Security Newswire

WASHINGTON — U.S. officials and private experts are increasingly concerned a developing Iranian nuclear power industry might demand more attention at the same time the United States wrestles with nuclear crises in Iraq

and North Korea. They contend that Iran's efforts to build a nuclear power plant and other nuclear fuel cycle facilities could provide Iran with valuable nuclear expertise and materials.

The third member of U.S. President George W. Bush's so-called "axis of evil," Iran has until recently remained largely in the background. The United States has instead trained its attention first on the Iraqi regime of Saddam Hussein and his suspected WMD arsenal and now on North Korea, which last week pulled out of the Nonproliferation Treaty.

Recent revelations of two new Iranian nuclear facilities, however, threaten to complicate U.S. foreign policy.

"If Iraq is a crisis at our doorstep and North Korea is a crisis we keep kicking down the road, then Iran, I believe, could well turn out to be the crisis just around the bend in the road," Michael Eisenstadt, senior fellow at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, said Monday at a seminar sponsored by the Arms Control Association. Experts contend that the two sites, made public last month, could be used to advance a nuclear weapons program, adding to long-running official U.S. concern over the construction of a light-water reactor at Bushehr on the Gulf coast.

A planned visit by the International Atomic Energy Agency next month to survey the new suspect Iranian facilities will again place the issue at the forefront of the U.N. disarmament and Bush foreign policy agenda.

In the meantime, private experts are urging both the United Nations and the Bush administration to act sooner rather than later to avoid the problems encountered with North Korea.

Pyongyang last year bowed out of a 1994 agreement with the United States to freeze its nuclear weapons program, withdrew from the Nonproliferation Treaty last week and is now moving to restart mothballed plutonium production facilities. The CIA says North Korea produced enough plutonium to construct one or two nuclear bombs prior to the 1994 freeze agreement. Only in recent days has the Bush administration agreed to talk to Pyongyang.

By refusing to engage with North Korea and branding it a member of the "axis of evil," critics charge, the Bush administration is partially to blame for the recent nuclear brinkmanship.

Washington-Moscow Rift

The global stakes could be even higher in addressing Iran's alleged nuclear weapons program. The issue puts Washington at odds with Russia, one of the most active supporters of the U.S. war on terrorism.

Russian officials say that no part of their nuclear assistance to Iran violates nuclear nonproliferation regimes. This week a senior Russian official reiterated Moscow's intention to complete construction of the Bushehr reactor and to continue planning to build one or more additional nuclear power plants in Iran.

Alexander Rumyantsev, Russia's atomic energy minister, said Monday that "continuing the construction of atomic power plants in Iran" would be among the Russian energy sector's "main areas" of attention in 2003.

That pledge will only serve to fuel growing U.S. consternation with Russian nuclear assistance to Iran, according to government officials and private analysts.

Last month, the private Institute for Science and International Security released commercial satellite images depicting two facilities — one near the town of Arak and the other near the city of Kashan — where Iran appears to be building a heavy-water plant and a uranium enrichment facility (see GSN, Dec. 13, 2002).

"We're in their face all the time because we still have serious concerns," U.S. Ambassador to Russia Alexander Vershbow said in Washington last week. "We think that the best course would be for [Russia] to terminate the Bushehr project, but if that can't be achieved, we are pushing for a variety of steps to contain the proliferation risk." Last month Russia and Iran agreed in principle to return all spent fuel from the Bushehr reactor to Russia, a key step that U.S. officials say is critical to preventing Iran from diverting nuclear material to make a bomb.

"Now an intergovernment agreement must be agreed between the ministries and agencies," Rumyantsev said last month after returning from a trip to Iran, where he toured the Bushehr reactor. "It begins with the words that Russia undertakes to deliver and the Iranian side undertakes to return spent nuclear fuel" (see GSN, Dec. 31, 2002).

The United States would welcome such a step, Vershbow said last week, but Washington's concerns go beyond the Bushehr reactor, originally a German-assisted project before Washington persuaded Berlin to cut off assistance.

"We think the Russians definitely should not build any more reactors, despite provisional agreements in the '90s to build a second one at Bushehr and potentially another four at other sites," Vershbow said Jan. 9 at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

"In the coming year Russia really needs to make some fundamental choices," Vershbow added. "It needs to fully contain the proliferation risks from the light-water reactor that they're building at Bushehr. In addition, the Russians need to crack down more effectively on other transfers of technology to Iran, both for WMD and ballistic missiles." "If the situation doesn't get better," he added, "it will likely get worse in terms of pressures for new U.N. sanctions and new political frictions."

Iran's Security Requirements

The experts said Iran is seeking a nuclear weapons capability for what in Tehran's view are legitimate security reasons.

Facing neighboring Iraq, which has a long history of seeking nuclear weapons, along with the existence of a potential nuclear enemy in Pakistan, Iran's nuclear ambitions are considered by many experts to be defensive. "Iran is undoubtedly laying the infrastructure that is needed to make a decision at some later point" whether to develop nuclear weapons, said Gary Sick, director of the Middle East Institute at Columbia University. "A big driver has been Iraq," he said.

Experts currently doubt that Iran will change its approach in the coming years (see GSN, Nov. 18, 2002). Indeed, U.S. policy regarding its own nuclear weapons and its strategies for containing Iran will have as much impact as anything, according to a recent RAND report (see GSN, Dec. 31, 2002).

Iran's military and security services deeply believe that the country cannot count on outside assistance in a time of crisis, Iran experts told a nonproliferation conference sponsored by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace in November. With growing uncertainty about some of its immediate neighbors, Tehran will continue to pursue a nuclear deterrent that it sees as the only guarantee of security, the experts said.

"They need a country-protecting" weapon, said Patrick Clawson, director of research at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy.

Growing Proliferation Risk

New U.S. intelligence information indicates that Iran is accelerating its search for such a weapon. Despite Russian assertions that its nuclear assistance to Iran is for purely civilian purposes, U.S. officials say there is growing evidence of Tehran's true nuclear intentions.

A CIA report released last week, updating U.S. lawmakers on several countries' acquisition of WMD technology between July 1 and December 31, 2001, repeated earlier charges of nuclear weapons proliferation in Iran (see GSN, Jan. 8).

"Despite Iran's status in the Treaty on the Nonproliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), the United States is convinced Tehran is pursuing a nuclear weapons program," the report said.

Of most concern is the Bushehr reactor, estimated by Russian officials to be about 70 percent complete. "Despite Bushehr being put under IAEA safeguards, Russia's provision of expertise and manufacturing assistance has enabled Iran to develop its nuclear technology infrastructure – which, in turn, can benefit directly Tehran's nuclear weapons R&D program," according to the CIA.

"In addition," according to the report, "Russian entities continued associations with Iranian research centers on other nuclear-fuel-cycle activities" during the reporting period. "Facing economic pressures, some Russian entities have shown a willingness to provide assistance to Iran's nuclear projects by circumventing their country's export laws. " Meanwhile, Iranian opposition sources contend that the two new suspect sites, in Arak and Kashan, are being developed through a series of phony Iranian trading companies to obscure the true nature of the nuclear program.

Double Standard?

U.S. efforts to rein in the Iranian nuclear program are hampered by the appearance of what some experts consider a double standard.

The Bushehr reactor is considered similar to those the United States agreed to build for North Korea in return for its pledge to end its nuclear activities and Iran, as a member of the NPT, has the right to pursue nuclear energy "Our position now is that anything poses a nuclear threat and it doesn't matter what the treaty says about the right to civilian nuclear power," Sick said.

Moreover, the experts said, the Bushehr reactor — like the proposed reactors in North Korea — is not well suited to developing nuclear weapons. For example, Anton Khlopkov of the Russian Center of Political Studies said recently that it was extremely difficult to produce plutonium from the Bushehr reactor to build a nuclear weapon.

He said that only time a weapon has been successfully developed from plutonium produced in a light-water reactor was in 1962 in the United States and only after 62 unsuccessful attempts.

As a result, Iran — unlike North Korea — is believed to be years away from having a usable nuclear weapon. "They are nowhere close to moving toward a weapon at this stage," said Sick.

"The problem is that Iran is not cheating" any arms control regimes, said Henry Sokolski, executive director of the Nonproliferation Policy Education Center. "They haven't broken any rules, and they won't until they have weapons," he said.

The good news is that "there is still time," Sick said. "This is the time to talk to Iran, before they make a decision and before they go down that road."

Planned IAEA Visit

The International Atomic Energy Agency is expected to try its hand next month. Director General Mohamed ElBaradei is to visit Iran Feb. 25 to address allegations the country's civilian nuclear efforts are being used to pursue an atomic bomb.

"I'm scheduled to meet with President [Mohammad] Khatami," ElBaradei said in Washington Jan. 10 after meeting with members of the U.S. Congress. "And I'm supposed to visit the facilities that are being constructed there. I've discussed with them two facilities ... that are being built right now in Iran. They indicated to me that they are ready to show maximum transparency, that they will take us to these facilities and others," he said.

Due to the growing attention on Iran's nuclear ambitions with the release of the recent satellite data, "I think it will be a lot harder for Iran to put off that trip," which was already delayed once, said Corey Hinderstein of the Institute for Science and International Security. "They will declare those sites and allow IAEA access," she predicted.

However, "a visit is not same as an inspection," she warned, calling on the IAEA to conduct a thorough survey of the facilities and to take the allegations seriously. "We are worried that the IAEA visit will legitimize the [two new suspect] sites" as civilian nuclear facilities. "We hope the IAEA will use the situation to press for the Additional Protocol to be signed by Iran," she said.

The Additional Protocol to each NPT nation's IAEA safeguards agreement is designed to empower the agency to conduct more intrusive monitoring and verification activities than the original safeguards agreements allowed. The protocol was created following the 1991 Gulf War when IAEA inspections in Iraq revealed weaknesses in the safeguard systems. To date, however, only 28 of the more than 180 NPT parties have brought the protocol into force.

ElBaradei indicated last week that he intends to urge Iran to adopt the Additional Protocol when he travels there. "I also would like to impress on them the importance of maximum transparency, the importance of joining what we call our Additional Protocol which gives us additional authority to visit sites," he said.

Others expect the visit will put pressure on Tehran. "The IAEA has tightened up their procedures," added Sick. "I can't believe they will go in and just walk by. They are worried about their own reputation. I don't believe they will come in heavy and hostile, but I think they will do a serious look," Sick said.

Call for Engagement

Supporting increased transparency is what some experts said is the only way to avoid a future nuclear crisis with Iran, and transparency will come only through engagement with Tehran, not isolation, they said.

Sick supports offering Iran incentives to rein in its nuclear program, including security guarantees and cooperation on the Bushehr reactor. "There are things that can be done that Iran would consider very seriously," he said.

The message Tehran is getting from the U.S.-North Korean standoff, he added, is that Washington will negotiate with countries if they are nuclear powers, according to Sick, who served in the Carter administration.

"By increasing the demand for nuclear weapons by threatening to attack them, our policy encourages them" to seek nuclear weapons, he said. The Iranian view is that "the U.S. will make deals with you" if you have nuclear weapons. They believe that "when they are close [to developing a nuclear weapon] we will talk to them. By then we'll have to give more," Sick said.

"The way to deal with Iran is to engage them and talk before they have made a final decision and are on their way to drop out of the NPT," he said. "My way might not work, but I think you could buy years and slow them down and accomplish what nonproliferation, as opposed to counterproliferation, was intended to do, buy time," Sick said.

"You have to be willing to give something and we haven't even been willing to talk to them," he concluded. "Pre-emptive strikes are not the most effective way to deal with this problem," Sick said.

http://www.nti.org/d_newswire/issues/newswires/2003_1_15.html#5

[\(Return to Contents\)](#)

Proliferation: All it takes is thugs with clubs

By Sergei Blagov

MOSCOW - As the tension over Pyongyang's nuclear program develops, one serious nuclear incident in Central Asia has indicated proliferation hazards in that region.

Early in January, masked men armed with clubs forced their way into the Kyrgyz Chemical-Mechanical Plant in Keminsk district. They beat two guards and stole 23 boxes with 460 kilograms of the europium oxide powder used in nuclear reactors.

The powder had been stored at the plant since the Soviet era, when the material was supposed to be used in manufacturing the rods that control nuclear reactions at the Orlovka Uranium Plant in Kyrgyzstan's Chuiskaya

region.

Experts say that europium oxide does not explode, and is slightly radioactive. Nikolai Shingariyev, head of information at Minatom, Russia's nuclear power ministry, told the RIA news agency that the europium oxide cannot be used to manufacture nuclear weapons and that it is not banned by non-proliferation agreements. He conceded that europium oxide is a very expensive material, which could be stolen for merely criminal reasons. However, the theft of europium indicates how poorly Central Asia's nuclear facilities are guarded these days.

And there are many potentially dangerous industrial sites in the volatile region. For instance, last year Russian and Kyrgyz formed a US\$10 million uranium joint venture. From 2003 on, the venture's Kara-Baltinsk processing plant in Kyrgyzstan is due to process raw uranium from Zarechnoye field in southern Kazakhstan, where reserves are estimated at 19,000 tons.

There have been concerns over nuclear safety in other Central Asian states as well. Last fall, there were reports of a \$4 million US-Russian joint operation with Uzbek officials to remove an estimated 70 kilograms of enriched uranium from the Institute of Nuclear Physics at Ulugbek, near Tashkent, close to porous borders with Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan. Russia's Minatom has confirmed that the operation was discussed, but so far has not revealed any details.

Last October, Ulbinsk Metallurgical Combine (UMZ) in Ust-Kamenokorsk, eastern Kazakhstan, announced the reception of a 2 million euro grant from the EC designed to improve security of the nuclear materials stored at the plant, which produces the usual uranium used in atomic power plants.

There have been reports that up to three tonnes of plutonium have already been moved from the Aktau nuclear reactor in western Kazakhstan to UMZ, on the border between eastern Kazakhstan and Russia, which is considered more secure. The Aktau BN-350 reactor was shut down in April 1999 because the Kazak authorities considered it too isolated.

Kazakhstan held Soviet nuclear weapons during the Cold War but returned them to Russia after the Soviet collapse in 1991. Semipalatinsk in Kazakhstan used to be the main nuclear weapons test center for the Soviet Union.

Last fall, five Central Asian nations agreed to a treaty declaring their region a nuclear weapons-free zone. It would prohibit Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan and Turkmenistan from developing, producing or testing nuclear weapons, or helping any other country to do so. It would also ban them from allowing other nations to station nuclear weapons there.

These days, Central Asian nations do not have nuclear weapons themselves, but are surrounded by nuclear powers Russia and China. The region is also close to nuclear-armed rivals India and Pakistan, and Iran as well is believed to have sought fissionable material to build nuclear devices.

In their negotiations, Kazakhstan, presumably acting on Russia's behalf, reportedly insisted on a clause saying that the new treaty did not affect obligations of past treaties. Russia believes that the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) collective security treaty signed in Tashkent in 1992 gives it the right to deploy nuclear arms in Central Asia, but some former Soviet states dispute this interpretation.

On the other hand, Russia has proliferation concerns of its own. Last December, Yury Vishnyevsky, head of Gosatomnadzor, conceded that small amounts of weapons and reactor-grade nuclear materials had disappeared from the country's nuclear facilities. Instances of the loss of grams of weapons-grade or kilograms of the usual uranium used in atomic power plants have been recorded, he told journalists in Moscow.

These instances took place at plants producing nuclear fuel: Elektrostal in the Moscow region and Novosibirsk, Vishnyevsky said. He did not give further details on when the losses were discovered or how the material might have gone missing.

The International Atomic Energy Agency lists two known thefts of uranium from Elektrostal, in 1994 and 1995. In both cases, the uranium was seized by police. The agency also lists the 1994 seizure in Germany of 400 grams of plutonium brought in from Moscow.

Moreover, earlier in January, Russia shut the Mayak reprocessing plant in the formerly closed Urals city of Ozyorsk. Russia's Gosatomnadzor denied the plant an operating license for 2003 over fears that radioactive waste dumped into the nearby Lake Karachay and in specially built water tanks was tainting local water supplies. A tank containing radioactive waste exploded at Mayak in 1957 and exposed nearly half a million people to radiation in a major nuclear accident.

On the other hand, some three decades ago, the former Soviet Union carried out an agricultural research project, Gamma Kolos, to expose plants to radiation and measure the effects. All the experiments used lead-shielded canisters containing radioactive cesium 137 as a source of radiation.

In recent months, there have been fears that the cesium devices could be easily exploited for terrorism: they are small, portable and possessing a potent core of cesium chloride in the form of powder. Cesium 137, a silvery metal isotope used commonly in medical radiotherapy, emits powerful gamma radiation and is believed to have "dirty

bomb" potential.

None of the cesium devices is known to have been stolen, but in some Central Asian states there are no records showing how many of the devices exist or what happened to them. Estimates of the total number of devices vary from 100 to 1,000.

Although Central Asian nuclear facilities used to be either technological or designed to produce isotopes, remnants of the former Soviet nuclear complex in the region are still believed to remain potentially hazardous. Moreover, Pyongyang's nuclear program also started with a small isotope producing facility.

The Soviet Union and North Korea signed a nuclear cooperation treaty in 1956. In 1965, Soviet experts launched Yongbyon 5 thermal megawatt reactor 100 kilometers north of Pyongyang. Its primary function is isotope production.

By 1974, the North Koreans upgraded the reactor up to 8 megawatt capacity and enabled the facility, Yongbyon Reactor I, to produce 80 percent, ie weapons grade, plutonium. In the early 1980s, the North Koreans launched their own Yongbyon Reactor II - a 50 MW MAGNOX-type facility, believed to be capable of producing some 20 kilograms of weapons grade plutonium every year. It has also been speculated that North Korea could have some nuclear material from the former Soviet republics.

According to some Russian estimates, theoretically Pyongyang could have enough plutonium for more than 60 nuclear bombs. However, Russian official news agency RIA commented on January 10 that North Korea was unable to develop operational nuclear bombs without live tests.

Subsequently, on January 12, Russia's Defense Minister Sergei Ivanov stated that North Korea's decision to quit the non-proliferation treaty "was not a security threat for Russia". However, Moscow remains keen to play a role in dealing with the crisis. On January 14, Ivanov announced that President Vladimir Putin will send a special envoy, Deputy Foreign Minister Alexander Losyukov, to China, North Korea and the United States, in an effort to defuse international concerns over Pyongyang's nuclear threats.

http://atimes.com/atimes/Central_Asia/EA16Ag02.html

[\(Return to Contents\)](#)

Empty chemical warheads found

MSNBC NEWS SERVICES

BAGHDAD, Iraq, Jan. 16 — A U.N. spokesman said Thursday that inspectors had discovered empty chemical warheads — not previously declared by Iraq — during a visit to a storage area in the country earlier in the day. Though a U.S. official said the discovery was a “smoldering gun,” Iraq dismissed the warheads as old items that were packed away and forgotten, not an indication of an ongoing weapons program. Also Thursday, a team of experts made an unprecedented search of the homes of two Iraqi scientists, prompting charges of provocation. THE U.N. SPOKESMAN, Hiro Ueki, did not give comment on the significance of the find during an inspection of the Ukhaider Ammunition Storage Area. He said an inspection team had gone there to inspect a large group of bunkers constructed in the late 1990s.

“During the course of their inspection, the team discovered 11 empty 122 mm chemical warheads and one warhead that requires further evaluation,” Ueki said in a statement.

“The warheads were in excellent condition and were similar to ones imported by Iraq during the late 1980s. The team used portable X-ray equipment to conduct preliminary analysis of one of the warheads and collected samples for chemical testing,” the statement said.

There was no immediate comment from the Iraqi side.

In early December, inspectors reported locating a dozen artillery shells filled with deadly mustard gas. But that finding was not a surprise. The shells were discovered by inspectors in the 1990s, and tagged for destruction. That round of inspections was halted and inspectors left Iraq because they were unable to get the access to many suspected weapons sites. Part of the job of the UNMOVIC inspectors is to account for all banned weapons identified earlier.

Inspectors complained Thursday, as in the past, that Iraq has failed to provide evidence of action it says it took to destroy stocks of banned weapons after previous U.N. teams left in 1998.

A senior U.S. official told NBC that the discovery constituted “a smoldering gun,” but “not necessarily a smoking gun” in the inspections. The White House has threatened to use military force against Iraq if it fails to disclose its banned weapons programs and disarm, but has said it does not necessarily need to find a “smoking gun” to justify an attack. Many U.S. allies are pressing for solid evidence that Iraq is developing banned weapons.

The U.S. official said that Thursday's discovery was made without the help of U.S. intelligence.

The official added that this and the discovery of a relatively large number of solid fuel missile engines are the biggest finds so far, but noted, "this is a target-rich environment" and he anticipates there will be others once the flow of U.S. intelligence, already underway, is stepped up.

Iraq dismissed the discovery of the empty warheads.

"These are 122 mm rockets with an empty warhead. There are no chemical or biological agents or weapons of mass destruction or linked to weapons of mass destruction," said the head of the Iraqi National Monitoring Directorate, General Hussam Mohammad Amin.

"These rockets are expired ... they were in closed wooden boxes ... that we had forgotten about," he told a news conference.

He challenged U.N. inspectors to disprove his claim and described the issue as a "storm in a teacup."

SCIENTISTS HOMES SEARCHED

Thursday's inspections created a stir after the inspectors — accompanied by Iraqi escorts and journalists — cordoned off a street in al-Ghazalia, a west Baghdad residential district, by parking their vehicles across the road at both ends shortly after 9 a.m.

An Iraqi official on the scene said they entered the homes of physicist Faleh Hassan and his next-door neighbor Shaker el-Jibouri, a nuclear scientist.

During the six-hour visit, the inspectors were seen going through documents at a table set up near Hassan's front door. They engaged in an animated discussion with the Iraqi liaison officers in Hassan's front yard.

El-Jibouri told Reuters that the search was a "provocative act."

"They did not leave any piece in the house unturned. They searched every corner including personal possessions, furniture and even the mattresses," he said. His children were frightened by the inspectors' "police action," added el-Jibouri, a nuclear scientist who denies any involvement in Iraq's past nuclear weapons programs.

Witnesses told Reuters that Hassan refused to hand over documents to inspectors at his house but after long discussion agreed to go with them to the Iraqi National Monitoring Directorate to have the papers copied and given to the experts.

Hassan and the inspectors did not speak to reporters.

Hassan heads al-Razzi State Company, which was founded in 1997 by Iraq's Military Industrialization Commission and employs several people who were involved in Iraq's past nuclear program, according to weapons inspectors' earlier reports.

Hassan had a box of documents with him as he got into a U.N. car with Dimitri Perricos, a team leader among the U.N. experts, and an Iraqi liaison officer.

"I'm not happy about all of this," Perricos could be heard telling Iraqi liaison officers before driving off.

Under a tough new U.N. sanctions regime, inspectors are allowed to speak to Iraqi scientists in private and even take them outside the country for interviews — requirements Washington hopes will prompt scientists to reveal hidden arms programs.

EYES AND EARS

The liaison officers are assigned to help smooth the way for the inspectors, but they likely also act as their government's eyes and ears. The inspectors have been demanding they be allowed to speak alone with scientists connected to Iraqi nuclear, biological or chemical programs.

The convoy drove about 10 miles west of Baghdad and stopped at an agricultural area known as al-Salamiyat.

There, Hassan, two inspectors and a liaison officer walked across a footbridge over a canal to a bare field that contained what appeared to be a manmade earth mound. The group spent about five minutes looking at the mound before returning to their vehicles and heading back to Baghdad.

There, Hassan was seen entering a hotel where some inspectors are living, carrying a box the size of a small television set visibly stuffed with documents.

"The inspectors, as is usual, did not speak with reporters and it was not known what they were looking for at the site. The inspectors are charged with verifying Iraq's claims that it has eliminated all its nuclear, biological and chemical weapons, as well as long-range missiles.

The U.N. chief weapons inspector, Hans Blix, as well as the head of the International Atomic Energy Agency, Mohammed ElBaradei, will visit Baghdad on Sunday and Monday to press Iraqi officials for more information.

Blix said Baghdad had to do more. "They need to be more active ... in order to convince the (U.N.) Security Council that they do not have weapons of mass destruction."

Iraq has denounced the inspectors' methods. Vice President Taha Yassin Ramadan, in an interview with state news agency INA, again accused the monitors of being spies, adding that Baghdad was ready for the worst.

You now see the inspection teams carrying their work in an intelligence (gathering) manner and the American administration is stepping up its aggressive tone while preparing for its attack on Iraq," Ramadan said.

“We don’t call for war but we are ready for the worst eventualities. God willing, we will foil the plots of the evil-doers,” he added.

The United States and Britain have deployed tens of thousands of troops in the Persian Gulf region after warning Iraq’s Saddam Hussein that he must surrender weapons of mass destruction. Otherwise, the allies have said they will disarm the Iraqi leader.

The Associated Press and Reuters contributed to this report.

<http://www.msnbc.com/news/842500.asp?0cv=CA01>

[\(Return to Contents\)](#)