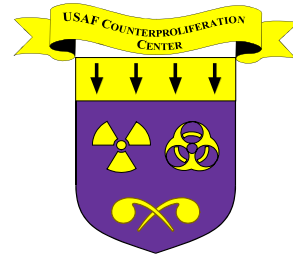


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24 Jan 2003

USAF COUNTERPROLIFERATION CENTER

CPC OUTREACH JOURNAL



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Washington Post

January 22, 2003

Pg. 1

Analysis

Willing To Go To War With Or Without U.N.

By Michael Dobbs, Washington Post Staff Writer

The endgame has begun -- not only with Iraq, but also with America's friends.

By escalating his threats against Baghdad and insisting he is unwilling to participate in "the rerun of a bad movie," President Bush is serving notice on Iraqi President Saddam Hussein that the time for prevarication is over. More immediately, Bush is also signaling U.S. allies that he is prepared to go to war with Iraq without their approval. The increasingly bellicose White House rhetoric puts the Bush administration sharply at odds with many of its European allies, particularly France, which has threatened to veto a second U.N. Security Council resolution authorizing a war with Iraq over its weapons of mass destruction. Even Prime Minister Tony Blair of Britain, Bush's most loyal supporter, has called for U.N. weapons inspectors to be given the "time and space" to complete their work.

There remains a possibility that a "smoking gun" will emerge that would persuade the French and other allies of the case for early military action. For now, however, the United States faces the prospect of fighting a major war with little international support. Less than three months after winning a unanimous Security Council vote that gave Hussein one "last chance" to surrender his nuclear, biological and chemical weapons, the United States and Britain find themselves diplomatically isolated.

The White House hope is that a spirited show of U.S. determination will persuade reluctant allies to fall into line, rather than miss a chance to shape the future of the Middle East. In his remarks yesterday, Bush recalled predictions by "many of the punditry" before the Nov. 8 Security Council vote that "no one is going to follow the United States of America." In the end, he noted, the Security Council followed the American lead.

There is, however, a difference between the last time around and this time around, according to foreign policy analyst Ivo Daalder of the Brookings Institution. Although the Nov. 8 vote demanding that Iraq cooperate with U.N. weapons inspectors was unanimous, it masked deep divisions among Security Council members over the threshold for military action against Iraq and the length of time inspections should be allowed to continue before declaring Baghdad to be in "material breach" of its obligations. As the possibility of war gets closer, these divisions have again burst into the open.

Bush and his advisers say they are determined to avoid a repeat of the cat-and-mouse game Iraq played with U.N. inspectors during the 1990s, when it dribbled out information about its weapons programs only under extreme duress. "Surely our friends have learned lessons from the past," Bush said, referring to French claims that Iraq is cooperating with the inspectors. "It appears to be a rerun of a bad movie. He is delaying. He is deceiving. He is asking for time. He is playing hide-and-seek with the inspectors."

French Foreign Minister Dominique de Villepin yesterday upped the challenge to Washington by saying that Paris planned to lobby other European nations to oppose early military action in Iraq. "It is important that Europe speak on this issue with a single voice," he told reporters after talks with his Belgian counterpart. "We are mobilized; we believe war can be avoided."

Recent polling data suggests that public opinion in both the United States and Europe is closer to the French position than that of the White House. A Washington Post-ABC News poll this week found that seven in 10 Americans would give U.N. weapons inspectors months more to complete their work in Iraq, a finding in line with other public opinion surveys. According to a Gallup poll, Bush's approval rating for his handling of foreign policy has fallen from 75 percent to 52 percent over the past three months.

Many analysts believe that the polling data is illusory, at least in the case of the United States, since Americans will likely rally around the president once it becomes clear that U.S. forces are going into combat.

"It is the outcome of the war itself that will determine public support, not hypothetical polls in advance," said Richard C. Holbrooke, U.S. ambassador to the United Nations during the Clinton administration, who has supported the administration on its looming military confrontation with Iraq. "That is what leadership is all about. Roosevelt

understood that in 1940-41; Bush senior understood it in the first Persian Gulf War; Clinton understood it over Bosnia and Kosovo," he said.

In the case of both the Bosnia and Kosovo wars, the Clinton administration did not have U.N. Security Council backing. It did, however, have fairly solid support among its NATO allies for military action, as well as the tacit agreement of Russia not to interfere. Barring a turnaround by France and other European countries, the United States would be heading into a second Persian Gulf war with less international support than at any time since the late Vietnam War era.

"The critical thing the Bush administration must do is to make a convincing case for action to the American and world public," Holbrooke said. "They have still not done an adequate job of making their case." He noted that the administration had "muddied the waters" by applying "double standards" to the Iraqi and Korean crises.

Several European diplomats said they believed that there was still "wiggle room" for France to reach agreement with the United States on the need for military action against Iraq, if presented with convincing evidence of clandestine Iraqi weapons programs. The diplomats noted that de Villepin used phrases such as "nothing today justifies a recourse to military action," implying that France's position could change tomorrow.

A refusal by France to endorse U.S. war plans would be a diplomatic embarrassment for Washington, but probably not a fatal obstacle, analysts said. Turkey appears likely to agree to host as many as 15,000 U.S. troops, a much smaller force than the original administration request, but enough to open up a northern front. Kuwait, Qatar and Oman would probably cooperate, and Saudi Arabia would provide logistical support, while maintaining a public distance from Washington.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A24783-2003Jan21.html>

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Washington Times

January 22, 2003

Pg. 1

U.S. Presses Security Council On N. Korea Nukes

Sees defiance of resolution as global issue

By Nicholas Kravet, The Washington Times

The Bush administration is pressing the U.N. Security Council to take up North Korea's nuclear defiance in an attempt to show Pyongyang that it considers the issue not simply a bilateral matter but one between the North and the world.

Engaging the council would internationalize the problem, U.S. officials said yesterday, at a time when many regional powers are urging bilateral talks between the United States and North Korea.

A senior administration official also gave the clearest indication to date that the United States would be willing to provide North Korea with a written security guarantee, even though the form of that assurance has yet to be decided.

"If putting it on a piece of paper is important, I'm sure diplomacy can find a way to do that, but what that precise mechanism would be has not been decided yet," John Bolton, undersecretary of state for arms control and international security, told reporters in Beijing on Monday. He had just conferred with Chinese officials.

Meanwhile, at a high-level bilateral meeting in Seoul today, a North Korean delegation said that Pyongyang does not plan to produce nuclear weapons.

"The North stressed that it has no intention to produce nuclear weapons," said Rhee Bong-jo, spokesman for South Korea's delegation to the Cabinet-level talks.

Secretary of State Colin L. Powell said earlier this month that the Security Council would have to deal with the North's nuclear pursuits if the problem could not be resolved by other means. But in private, U.S. officials had made it clear that Washington was not particularly eager to pursue that path.

But in the past couple of days, talk about bringing the matter to the council, in spite of its preoccupation with Iraq, has intensified. Several senior officials have urged the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), which on Jan. 6 gave the North one last chance to comply with its international commitments, to go to the council.

"North Korea has chosen to ignore the resolution from the IAEA and to dismiss it, and I think the IAEA therefore has an obligation to refer the matter to the Security Council for [it] to make its own judgment as to what it wishes to do," Mr. Powell said at the United Nations on Monday.

U.S. officials said the urgency was caused by North Korea's Jan. 10 withdrawal from the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and its refusal to readmit the U.N. nuclear inspectors it expelled on New Year's Eve.

To have insisted on going to the Security Council earlier would have been “premature,” but now that the situation has evolved, such a move is appropriate, a State Department official said.

“This has been an extremely good example of evolution,” the official said.

The Chinese Foreign Ministry said yesterday that “the most effective way” is for “the relevant sides to resume dialogue directly” rather than engage the United Nations.

China, Russia, South Korea, Japan and Australia are all taking part in the diplomatic efforts to ease the tensions. All agree that the Korean Peninsula should be nuclear-free.

Although the Bush administration has expressed “willingness to talk” to the North, it has been saying for weeks that the problem is among North Korea, its neighbors specifically and the international community in general, rather than with the United States alone.

When the IAEA, the Vienna, Austria-based U.N. nuclear watchdog, unanimously adopted its Jan. 6 resolution, its director, Mohamed ElBaradei, said that if the North Koreans “continue their policy of defiance, the board will be bound to refer the matter to the Security Council.”

But on that same day, a senior State Department official said the United States was “not pushing” for a council meeting on North Korea.

A diplomatic source close to the IAEA said that some Bush administration officials wanted the resolution to find North Korea in “noncompliance,” but when the U.S. mission to the IAEA explained that such language meant that the case had to go to the Security Council automatically, the officials backed away.

Another reason for trying to avoid the 15-member Security Council initially was because the issue of economic sanctions would be almost certain to arise, and Washington has said it has no intention of imposing sanctions.

Pyongyang has said that sanctions will be considered an act of war.

But now, administration officials entertain the option of holding a Security Council meeting without talking about sanctions. They say that a resolution calling on North Korea to return to the Non-Proliferation Treaty, refreeze the Yongbyon reactor and dismantle its uranium-enrichment program would be a sufficient first step.

“This is a way of showing to the North Koreans, as we have tried repeatedly to show, that they are completely isolated in their defiance of the Non-Proliferation Treaty and their efforts to acquire nuclear weapons,” Mr. Bolton said in his meeting with reporters.

“There are a variety of things that the council can do, all of which would demonstrate, we hope, to the North Korean leadership that their actions are broadly unacceptable within the international community,” he said.

Mr. Bolton also said that the United States is urging the IAEA to adopt a new resolution as early as the end of the week that would refer the matter to the Security Council.

“In fairness to the IAEA, it only has so much capacity faced with the intransigence of the North Koreans and their evident determination to proceed with two different kinds of nuclear weapons programs,” he said.

“In light of that behavior, I think it is now timely to bring the matter to the Security Council, and I think that we’re confident that it can handle both Iraq and North Korea at the same time,” Mr. Bolton said.

On the issue of providing a formal security guarantee to Pyongyang, his comments were the clearest expression yet of the administration’s willingness to meet the North’s demand.

Even though President Bush has said repeatedly that the United States has no intention of attacking North Korea, Pyongyang insists on a non-aggression pact. Diplomats from countries in the region engaged in trying to resolve the issue have suggested that the North would settle for a letter from Mr. Bush.

Mr. Powell, in a Jan. 8 interview with The Washington Post, hinted that the administration might be willing to consider something “more than just a passing statement” to assure North Korea of its security.

<http://www.washtimes.com/world/20030122-442369.htm>

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(Editor’s Note: Hyperlink for referenced report follows article.)

Washington Times

January 22, 2003

Pg. 1

North Korean Firms Using China As Base To Obtain Missile Supplies

By Bill Gertz, The Washington Times

North Korean companies in China are funneling technology and goods for Pyongyang's missile program, highlighting Beijing's mixed approach to the nuclear crisis on the Korean Peninsula.

"North Korea also has continued procurement of raw materials and components for its ballistic-missile programs from various foreign sources, especially through North Korean firms based in China," the CIA stated in a recent report to Congress.

The public report coincides with other classified intelligence reports obtained in recent weeks indicating that China is also helping North Korea's nuclear program. The issue is a sensitive one for Beijing, as it has publicly called for Pyongyang to cooperate with the international community's demand to freeze its nuclear program.

The reports disclosed that a Chinese chemical manufacturer in the seaport of Dalian, near North Korea, supplied Pyongyang with tons of tributyl phosphate, known as TBP. The chemical has civilian purposes, but U.S. intelligence agencies believe it will be used for North Korea's nuclear-arms program.

The chemical transfer arrived in North Korea just as the secretive communist government announced that it had planned to reprocess spent fuel rods that will provide enough material for several nuclear bombs.

The Chinese Embassy yesterday did not return a phone call seeking comment.

North Korea's announcement last year that it was abandoning a 1994 agreement with the United States not to build nuclear weapons in exchange for oil shipments, along with its withdrawal from the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, has set off a crisis in northeast Asia.

The CIA report to Congress, made public earlier this month, said that fuel rods that were "canned" under the now-abandoned 1994 Agreed Framework "contain enough plutonium for several more weapons."

A congressional report on North Korea in 1999 stated that Pyongyang received most of its nuclear infrastructure from countries in the former Soviet Union, "but also has received equipment and know-how from China."

The final report of the House Speaker's North Korea Advisory Group said China "remains committed to the survival of the North Korean regime" and would be willing to support Pyongyang's needs for nuclear-power-generating reactor fuel if the United States, South Korea and Japan cut off fuel shipments and stop building two new nuclear reactors, as appears likely to happen.

Senior Chinese military leaders in charge of the Chinese military region of Shenyang, located north of the China-North Korea border, continue to have close ties to Pyongyang's military.

The military-to-military connection is believed crucial to the survival of the North Korean regime, according to U.S. analysts.

The North Korean companies operating in China were not identified in the CIA report.

But other U.S. officials have identified several of them as official North Korean government trading firms.

In Shanghai, for example, North Korea has set up a branch of the Maebong Trading Co. and the Amur River National Development General Bureau.

Another trading company that operates in China is the Korea Daesong Trading Corp., which has an office in Hong Kong.

Pyongyang has also set up a trading company in Macao that is run by the North Korean People's Armed Forces. That company is used to covertly purchase arms and equipment.

A senior administration official said the United States wants China "to use what leverage they have" to persuade North Korea to give up its nuclear-arms program.

"I think that they have talked to the North Koreans," the senior official said. "The general feeling is that there is always more that they could do, and we would encourage them to do as much as possible."

So far, however, China's support for resolving Pyongyang's nuclear crisis has been limited.

John Bolton, undersecretary of state for arms control and international security, said in Beijing on Monday that China could have a "profound influence on Pyongyang's behavior" regarding the nuclear crisis because of its long-standing ties to North Korea.

Mr. Bolton sought to play down criticism that China was not doing enough.

"I wouldn't say there's been a failure on the Chinese side at all," he said. "I think we're still working on the problem."

Mr. Bolton held talks with Chinese officials on other subjects, including Beijing's continued involvement in the sales of weapons of mass destruction to rogue states.

Mr. Bolton said he favors putting the North Korean nuclear problem before the U.N. Security Council and noted that he did not detect opposition to that proposal from Beijing.

The goal would be for the Security Council to issue a "presidential statement" calling on North Korea to again halt its arms program.

A Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman, however, said later that China favors direct talks between North Korea and the United States, apparently fearing that involving the world body could lead to new economic sanctions or even an authorization to use force to dismantle Pyongyang's nuclear program.

James Lilley, a former ambassador to China, said curbing China's arms ties to North Korea is less important than gaining Chinese support for putting economic pressure on Pyongyang.

"I think the main thing is to get them on our side and have them exercise leverage," Mr. Lilley said, noting that pressure can be applied without hitting North Korea with new economic sanctions.

About 70 percent of North Korea's fuel oil and grain come from China.

Chuck Downs, a former U.S. government specialist on North Korea, said nothing happens with North Korean companies in China without the government in Pyongyang knowing about it.

"On the Chinese side, that may not be the case," said Mr. Downs, author of "Over the Line: North Korea's Negotiating Strategy."

Mr. Downs said he is optimistic that Beijing will help resolve the nuclear crisis.

"Some Chinese genuinely appreciate the danger to the security situation that the North Korean nuclear program poses," he said in an interview.

He added that unless the problem is resolved, Japan and Taiwan could seek to build nuclear weapons — triggering a regional arms race.

Another danger is that North Korea could initiate a nuclear war in northeast Asia by staging a fake U.S. attack on its nuclear facilities with the goal of seeking Chinese military support, Mr. Downs said.

<http://www.washtimes.com/national/20030122-87400474.htm>

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CIA

January 7 - Posted

Unclassified Report to Congress on the Acquisition of Technology Relating to Weapons of Mass Destruction and advanced Conventional Munitions, 1 July Through 31 December 2001

http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/bian/bian_jan_2003.htm

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New York Times

January 22, 2003

Russians Say Times Report Is Untrue

By New York Times

MOSCOW, Jan. 21 — Russia's Foreign Intelligence Service today dismissed as false a report in The New York Times on Monday stating that the service had joined forces with the Central Intelligence Agency in the early 1990's to monitor North Korea's nuclear program.

The agency's spokesman, Boris Labusov, said in a telephone interview that the agency denied the details of the article, which he said had alleged that "some deal was struck between the Foreign Intelligence Service of Russia and the C.I.A. of the United States against the interests of the Korean People's Democratic Republic." In a separate interview with the Interfax News Agency, Mr. Labusov called the report "inconsistent with reality."

The Times report, citing American intelligence officials, stated that Russian intelligence officials agreed in the early 1990's to install sophisticated American equipment in the Russian Embassy in Pyongyang, North Korea's capital, to detect telltale signs of any North Korean program to reprocess nuclear fuel into plutonium.

The report said that American experts trained Russians to operate the equipment and that the data generated were turned over to the C.I.A.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2003/01/22/international/europe/22MOSC.html>

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U.S. Is Deploying A Monitor System For Germ Attacks

By Judith Miller

WASHINGTON, Jan. 21 — To help protect against the threat of bioterrorism, the Bush administration on Wednesday will start deploying a national system of environmental monitors that is intended to tell within 24 hours whether anthrax, smallpox and other deadly germs have been released into the air, senior administration officials said today.

The system uses advanced data analysis that officials said had been quietly adapted since the Sept. 11 attacks and tested over the past nine months. It will adapt many of the Environmental Protection Agency's 3,000 air quality monitoring stations throughout the country to register unusual quantities of a wide range of pathogens that cause diseases that incapacitate and kill.

Officials said that although the system would not by itself protect Americans against a germ attack, early detection of such a strike would give the government more time to mobilize medical resources that could save thousands, and even hundreds of thousands of lives. The faster those exposed to most deadly pathogens are vaccinated against a disease, or treated with antibiotics to combat it, the lower the death rate.

Under the system, the E.P.A. monitoring stations will send samples of a tissue-like paper from newly upgraded machines that filter air to the closest of some 120 laboratories across the country associated with the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Results will be available within 24 hours, and possibly within 12 hours.

Although officials declined to say which or how many E.P.A. monitoring stations would ultimately be used, experts on the government's program said the first environmental monitoring stations in the new system, called Bio-Watch, were in New York. The city has more than seven such stations. The stations, which are all outdoors, now mainly monitor for air pollution.

"We will ramp up to other cities and areas of concentrated populations very quickly," one official said. "Within a matter of days, we will be able to tell in almost any major urban area whether a large release of a dangerous pathogen has occurred, what was released, and where and when it occurred."

Officials said today the introduction of the system by the newly created Department of Homeland Security was not linked to a specific terrorist threat. The intelligence community, one senior official noted, has "no credible evidence that Al Qaeda has acquired biological weapons, or any weapon of mass destruction at this time."

But the system is being deployed as the Bush administration moves toward deciding whether to use military force against Iraq. After the 1991 Persian Gulf war, Iraq declared having made thousands of gallons of liquid anthrax, botulinum toxin and other pathogens that cause disease, and it may have kept stocks of deadly smallpox virus as well.

Although Baghdad says it has destroyed these stockpiles, American officials believe it is hiding some of its chemical and germ agents, and that it tested anthrax as an aerosol before the gulf war.

However, one senior official said, the new environmental surveillance system was not being deployed specifically because of Iraq, but "to prepare the country for whatever the weapon and whomever the culprit might be."

While environmental monitoring does not provide instant detection of the release of a dangerous germ, the new system is aimed at giving health officials more time to send doctors, vaccines, antibiotics and medical equipment to the scene of a bioterror attack. Doctors and terrorism experts have long said that the lack of such a system is one of the most glaring deficiencies in the nation's biodefenses.

While the government is still working to develop cheap and reliable instant detectors, the technology has yet to be perfected, officials said. The hand-held detectors, which have been distributed in some cities, and others that are now being tested provide what experts call too many "false positives" — mistaken identifications of a germ release. The new environmental surveillance system uses monitoring technology and methods developed in part by the Department of Energy's national laboratories. Samples of DNA are analyzed using polymerase chain reaction techniques, which examine the genetic signatures of the organisms in a sample, and make rapid and accurate evaluations of that organism.

Officials who helped develop the system said that tests performed at Dugway Proving Ground in Utah and national laboratories showed that the system would almost certainly detect the deliberate release of several of the most dangerous pathogens. "Obviously, the larger the release, the greater the probability that the agent will be detected," an official said. "But given the coverage provided by the E.P.A. system, even a small release, depending on which way the wind was blowing and other meteorological conditions, is likely to be picked up."

The anthrax attacks of October 2001 would probably not have been detected by the new system, officials said, mainly because the outbreak was caused by a tiny amount of anthrax — one to two grams — and because the release was indoors, where the sensors do not monitor.

Officials said the new system would not detect releases in such places as shopping malls, subways and other covered areas.

“But the system is calibrated to detect relatively small amounts of some of the agents of greatest concern,” an official said, referring to smallpox and larger releases of anthrax.

While officials declined to disclose how much the program would cost, they said it was relatively inexpensive. They said it would cost about \$1 million to provide upgraded filters to the selected air quality monitoring stations and another \$1 million per city a year for analyzing samples.

A senior administration official said the White House did not plan to announce the start of the system.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2003/01/22/national/22DISE.html>

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Norfolk Virginian-Pilot

January 21, 2003

Smallpox Shots Start This Week On Navy Ships

By Dennis O'Brien

The sailors and Marines aboard a Hampton Roads-based amphibious task force will be in the first wave of military personnel to receive smallpox vaccinations this week.

The seven-ship Amphibious Task Force East, with 5,000 sailors and 7,000 Marines, will begin receiving vaccinations Thursday. The ships are on their way to the Middle East as part of the U.S. military buildup for a possible confrontation with Iraq.

The inoculations are part of a campaign to protect troops from biological and chemical attacks. The men and women aboard the ships have already received shots to guard against anthrax and have been conducting daily gas mask drills.

Americans have not been routinely vaccinated against smallpox for 30 years, but late last year President Bush authorized 1 million Americans to be vaccinated: 500,000 health care workers and other first-responders, and 500,000 military personnel. Troops at some U.S. military installations quietly began receiving the vaccine late last week.

About 25 medical personnel from the ships were given the smallpox vaccine Sunday aboard the Kearsarge, the Norfolk-based flagship of the task force. Other ships in the group are the Saipan, Bataan, Gunston Hall, Ashland, Portland and Ponce.

The ships left Hampton Roads roughly 10 days ago, and picked up Marines and supplies off the coast of North Carolina last week before sailing east.

The vaccine, the same that has been used to protect against smallpox since World War II, will be administered over three days.

“This is a program that’s been effective for a long time and we expect it to go very well,” said Lt. Jesse Irwin, Kearsarge medical officer and a resident of Norfolk.

The shots are mandatory except for those with certain medical conditions, such as chronic skin disorders, said Lt. Cmdr. Gerard Mahoney, senior medical officer aboard the Kearsarge and a Virginia Beach resident.

Both Irwin and Mahoney received the vaccine Sunday.

In the event of a smallpox attack, even those with medical exemptions will be required to take the shots, because the risk of death from smallpox infection far outweighs the risk for potential side effects.

Smallpox kills about 30 percent of those infected and grossly disfigures survivors. Various studies estimate that the vaccine can cause serious complications for 14 to 52 people out of every million injected, and that roughly one or two per million will die.

Men and women aboard the Kearsarge had the advantages and risks of the vaccine explained to them Monday in a video briefing recorded by Irwin that played repeatedly on the ship’s closed-circuit television network.

Many sailors and Marines shrugged off the potential side effects of the vaccine, which is administered through a series of pin pricks in the recipient’s upper arm.

“It doesn’t bother me,” said Cpl. Eddie Dorman, 25, a helicopter engine mechanic from Tampa. “Every other shot we’ve had could have had some side effects, and I haven’t had one yet.”

Co-worker Cpl. John Parker, of Interlachen, Fla., said he had just one concern.

"I just hope it doesn't mess up my tattoo," said Parker, 23, who has a dragon tattoo on one potential shot site and a phoenix on the other.

The vaccination is administered in three jabs from a dual-pronged needle that looks like a miniature pickle fork, Irwin said. Those who have received the shots before may have some residual immunity to the vaccine, and could need more of it.

Within six to eight days of the needle jabs, the injection site will blister and ultimately form a scab that falls off within two to three weeks. Sailors and Marines have been instructed to flush their scabs down the toilets and put bandages used to dress the vaccination site in bio-hazard bags that will be placed around the ship.

The vaccine makes 95 percent of those injected immune to the disease within 10 days of receiving the shots, Irwin said.

The vaccination blister and scab can cause infections elsewhere on the recipient's body and among those around them if people touch the injection site and do not wash their hands afterward.

Men and women aboard the ships are being urged to wash their hands often and vigorously in soap and water, especially if they have touched the blister or scab. Otherwise, they might transfer the virus to particularly vulnerable areas, such as the eyes.

Because people live in very close quarters onboard ships, the risk of spreading infections is very real.

"I'm not opposed to getting any kind of shot, period, and if they had given it to us back home it would not have been a big deal," said Cpl. Kellie Noble, 20, a field radio operator from Prospect, Conn. "But just the fact that I am living around so many people, you just never know. I wish we had got it before we left."

Irwin's video repeatedly emphasized that the best way for people to avoid infecting themselves and others is simple: wash hands often.

"Personal hygiene is what's really going to make this go well," Irwin said. "I can't say it enough: wash your hands, wash your hands, wash your hands."

Staff writer Dale Eisman contributed to this report. Staff writer Dennis O'Brien is aboard the Kearsarge for its deployment to the Middle East. He joined the Norfolk-based amphibious assault ship off the coast of North Carolina on Jan. 15.

<http://www.pilotonline.com/military/ml0121sma.html>

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Global Security Newswire (nti.org)

January 17, 2003

U.S. Testing: Nuclear Testing May Need To Resume Soon, Official Says

By Bryan Bender, Global Security Newswire

WASHINGTON — The United States may have no choice but to restart nuclear testing to certify that its stockpile of nuclear weapons is safe and reliable, especially if new warhead designs are developed in the coming years, according to a senior government nuclear scientist and adviser (see *GSN*, Mar. 22).

Siegfried Hecker, former director of Los Alamos National Laboratory and currently a senior laboratory fellow, told *Global Security Newswire* in an interview yesterday that although the "principal focus is how to do we keep the stockpile safe without testing," the nation's nuclear weapons complex is finding it increasingly difficult to continue maintaining the thousands of U.S. nuclear weapons.

Following a testing moratorium initiated by former President George H.W. Bush, the U.S. nuclear weapons laboratories are required to certify annually that the U.S. stockpile works properly and safely.

"We're still able to sign these certification letters today, but we can't do this indefinitely without testing," Hecker said. "If you can't test them you have to understand them better," he added, referring to new and increasingly advanced computer models and other tools now being widely used to study nuclear weapons and to simulate their detonation (see *GSN*, Nov. 19, 2002).

The new tools, however, are not becoming available "fast enough to offset" the loss of expertise and experience that has resulted from more than a decade of not conducting any live nuclear tests, according to Hecker. The last U.S. explosive nuclear test occurred Sept. 22, 1992.

He said a resumption of testing could be even more necessary for the development of any new nuclear weapons designs.

“Some of the more exotic ideas would require nuclear testing,” he said, adding that members of the nuclear weapons complex would “never field a significantly new design without testing.”

He said the Robust Nuclear Earth Penetrator — currently the focus of one feasibility study — would not require testing because the proposal calls for the modification of a current design that has already been tested (see *GSN*, Oct. 10, 2002). In developing a WMD agent-defeat weapon, however, “they might get into effects testing to learn more than the yield,” he added.

So far, “no programs are in the development stage,” Hecker said. “There really isn’t much there,” he said.

Still, the Pentagon last fall raised the prospect of renewed nuclear testing, citing the need to validate aging weapon systems and the possibility of developing new nuclear weapons to respond to WMD-seeking terrorists and rogue states. Such weapons would be designed to destroy underground and heavily fortified chemical, biological or nuclear storage facilities.

“We will need to refurbish several aging weapon systems,” wrote Undersecretary of Defense Edward Aldridge in an October memo. “We must also be prepared to respond to new nuclear weapon requirements in the future,” he said (see *GSN*, Nov. 19, 2002).

Congress recently authorized the nation’s nuclear weapons laboratories to assess their ability to restart underground testing within six months if political leaders determine that the moratorium must be lifted for national security reasons.

Some Pentagon officials “value nuclear weapons highly; consequently, they are very uncomfortable with an extended moratorium on nuclear testing,” wrote Michael Krepon, founding president of the Henry L. Stimson Center, in this month’s *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*.

Indeed, the Bush administration’s Nuclear Posture Review, unveiled a year ago, originally contained an explicit reference to the potential need to restart nuclear tests but it was left out of the final version, according to administration officials and independent experts familiar with the internal Pentagon debate (see *GSN*, Jan. 10, 2002). Meanwhile, the United States is not prevented by any treaties from conducting such tests. Although former president Bill Clinton signed the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty in 1996, the U.S. Senate rejected the treaty in 1999 despite widespread support among several former presidents and dozens of former senior military officers.

Hecker’s personal assessment of the likely need to lift the test moratorium will help refuel the debate over whether to resume nuclear testing. Opposition is widespread (see *GSN*, July 31, 2002).

“If there is a crisis in brainpower, I don’t know if exploding nuclear weapons will solve it,” said Michael Levi, director of the Strategic Security Project at the Federation of American Scientists. Moreover, “everything depends on what sort of standards you want to apply to these weapon systems,” he said. “If you want a 99 percent reliability, maybe you need to test, but not if you put it on a missile that works only 80 percent of the time,” he said. Levi added, “I doubt that Bush wants to run [for re-election] on a platform of having broken a 10-year moratorium on nuclear testing.”

Other critics, however, say the Bush administration position on the potential need for future nuclear testing is characteristic of its larger strategic view.

“Nuclear arsenals will have to be retained indefinitely, not just as a weapon of last resort, or as a deterrent against a nuclear attack, but as an ordinary tool in the military armory, to be used in the resolution of conflicts, and even in pre-emptive strikes, should political contingencies demand it,” said British physicist and 1995 Nobel peace laureate Joseph Rotblat, addressing a nonproliferation conference this month in London.

“This is the essence of current U.S. nuclear policy, and I see it as a very dangerous policy,” Rotblat said.

http://www.nti.org/d_newswire/issues/newswires/2003_1_17.html#7

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(Editor’s Note: Hyperlink to purchase referenced report follows article.)

Atlanta Journal-Constitution

January 21, 2003

World Urged To Fight Spread Of Weapons

By Don Melvin, Cox Europe Correspondent

London -- The possible spread of massively lethal weapons, and the chance that terrorists will acquire and use them, poses a huge threat to global security and must be combated more vigorously by the international community, according to a report released Monday in London.

Analysts from 13 countries helped write the report, which calls for world governments to commit at least \$20 billion over the next 10 years to fight the proliferation of such weapons.

The primary force behind the project was the Nuclear Threat Initiative, a nonprofit American organization funded by Ted Turner and co-chaired by him and former Democratic Sen. Sam Nunn of Georgia, who chaired the Senate Armed Services Committee.

“The greatest danger in the world today is the threat from nuclear, biological and chemical weapons,” Nunn wrote in a forward to the report, produced by the Center for Strategic and International Studies. “The most likely use of these weapons is in terrorist attacks.”

While rogue nations such as Iraq and North Korea could use such weapons, Nunn said, the threat from a terrorist organization “that does not have a return address” is greater, because it is unlikely to be deterred by the possibility of retaliation.

Turner and Nunn have been working on the issue since well before the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001. Turner announced in January 2001, that he was forming the Nuclear Threat Initiative and would commit at least \$250 million to it. Nunn began working to reduce the threat more than a decade ago, while he was in the Senate.

The threat, as Nunn explains it, is a matter of supply and demand. The collapse of the Soviet Union created a huge supply of unsecured weapons, material and know-how. The rise of global terrorist organizations has created the demand.

When the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991, new countries such as Ukraine, Kazakhstan and Belarus were left in control of nearly 4,000 nuclear weapons. More than 40,000 tons of chemical weapons were warehoused at several major storage sites. The Soviet Union also had a huge biological weapons program.

Not all of the weapons and materials are inventoried properly, stored safely or even accounted for.

And numerous Soviet nuclear scientists and engineers were left under-employed or unemployed, and vulnerable to offers of employment.

The four-volume report was paid for with the help of \$1.5 million of Turner’s money from the Nuclear Threat Initiative, which is committed to spend another \$1.5 million over the next two years, Nunn said.

The report does more than highlight the threat. It proposes a point-by-point plan to reduce it.

Among the recommendations:

- *All tactical nuclear weapons should be accounted for and secured.

- * Weapons-grade nuclear materials -- and all chemical weapons -- should be accounted for and destroyed.

- * As Russia increases its efforts to account for and secure its vast arsenal of weapons and materials, other countries should step up their help in that effort.

- * \$20 billion over the next 10 years -- half of it from the United States -- is the minimum needed to fight the threat.

“The gravest danger in the world today is the threat from nuclear, biological and chemical weapons,” Turner said in a statement. “It is significant that experts from around the world have come together and agreed on an agenda that’s a road map for a safer world.”

One of the project’s goals is to build political support for fighting the threat.

People need to understand, Nunn said in an interview, the “fundamental fact that homeland security for the United States begins by securing the weapons and materials at the source. And that source is, in many cases, in other countries. And other countries, like Russia, need help.”

So far, \$18 billion of the \$20 billion deemed necessary to build storage and destruction facilities, among other steps, has been pledged, Nunn said. But he said there is more to do.

“We’ve got to convert pledges into money,” he said, “and we’ve got to convert money into action.”

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Protecting against the Spread of Nuclear, Biological, and Chemical Weapons

An Action Agenda for the Global Partnership

http://www.csis.org/pubs/2003_protecting.htm

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Russia Destroys 50 Tons Of Arms

By Associated Press

Russia destroyed nearly 50 tons of chemical weapons during the first month of operations at a new facility built to help eliminate the country's huge arsenal, Itar-Tass reported Tuesday.

The facility in Gorny, in the Volga River region of Saratov, expects to dispose of 400 tons by April, Sergei Kiriyenko, chairman of the State Commission on Chemical Disarmament, told Itar-Tass.

He said the facility has been working nonstop since opening.

Russia has budgeted \$174 million for destroying chemical weapons in 2003, about the same as 2002 and far less than what officials had hoped for, according to news reports.

Moscow has been trying to convince other nations of the seriousness of its efforts to destroy its chemical weapons arsenal, which at nearly 40,000 tons is the world's largest.

<http://www.themoscowtimes.com/stories/2003/01/22/016.html>

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(Editor's Note: See hyperlink for full report.)

Apparatus of Lies

Saddam's Disinformation and Propaganda 1990-2003

Executive Summary

"It is not a lie when you are ordered to lie."

— a senior Iraqi biological weapons official

In December 1998, when U.N weapons inspector Dr. Richard Spertzel became exasperated by Iraqi evasions and misrepresentations, he confronted Dr. Rihab Taha, the woman the Iraqis identified as the head of their biological weapons program and asked her directly, "You know that we know you are lying. So why do you do it?" She straightened herself up and replied, "Dr. Spertzel, it's not a lie when you are ordered to lie."¹ . . .

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/ogc/apparatus/apparatus-of-lies.pdf>

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Avant Wins Contract for Oral Vaccine for Anthrax and Plague

By ANDREW POLLACK

A biotechnology company has received a contract to develop an oral vaccine for the military that would work against anthrax and plague. If it works, the combination vaccine could be a major advance from current vaccines, which require multiple injections.

The contract, which is expected to be announced today, was awarded to [Avant Immunotherapeutics](#) of Needham, Mass., by the DynPort Vaccine Company, the Defense Department's primary contractor for development of vaccines against possible biowarfare agents.

The new vaccine is an example of how the Pentagon is piggybacking on other developments made by biotechnology companies.

"It uses all the advances that we and the biotech industry have made in peacetime," said Una S. Ryan, chief executive of Avant.

The anthrax vaccine currently used by the military requires six shots over 18 months. The plague vaccine, which also required multiple injections, is no longer made.

DynPort, which is privately held, is developing second-generation injected vaccines for anthrax and plague. The Avant oral vaccine, which will probably take 5 to 10 years to develop, would be a third-generation vaccine, said Terry Irgens, the president of DynPort.

The contract to Avant is for \$2.8 million initially and could grow to \$8 million over two years, Mr. Irgens said. Dr. Ryan said the money would allow Avant, which has about \$25 million in cash on hand, to avoid having to sell stock to raise money at a time when biotechnology stock prices are depressed. "This is really a godsend," she said. Yesterday, Avant's shares fell 5 cents, to \$1.04.

Avant is developing vaccines for infectious diseases like cholera and typhoid. The company's cholera vaccine, now in clinical trials, is a cholera bacterium with its virulence genes deleted so that it does not cause disease but still provokes an immune reaction.

To make the vaccine for the Pentagon, Dr. Ryan said, Avant would start with that cholera vaccine and add genes for particular proteins produced by the anthrax and plague bacteria. She said she hoped the vaccine would confer immunity in days, compared with the weeks required for the anthrax vaccine.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2003/01/22/business/22VACC.html>

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Washington Post
January 23, 2003
Pg. 12

But What If The Iraqis Strike First?

U.S., Allied Forces in Kuwait Prepare for Chemical or Biological Attack

By Peter Baker, Washington Post Foreign Service

CAMP DOHA, Kuwait -- Girding for the worst, U.S. and allied military commanders here have been drilling to handle chemical or biological attacks and reinforcing response teams in case Iraq launches a preemptive strike as U.S. military forces build up in Kuwait and elsewhere in the Persian Gulf.

While U.S. military planners consider a first strike unlikely, they said President Saddam Hussein's erratic history means it cannot be ruled out, and that as the pressure on him increases, he has a greater incentive to lash out. No place, they added, would be more obvious to strike than Kuwait, which is the main staging area for U.S. ground forces and lies just south of the Iraqi border.

Because Hussein is "hostage to his own reality," said Lt. Col. Peter Bayer, chief operations officer of the U.S. Army's 3rd Infantry Division, "I'm not sure there's any of us who has any idea how he thinks." When it comes to weapons of mass destruction, "I've got to assume he will use them. . . . He's capable of it, and we take active measures to protect ourselves all the time."

The U.S. military has two Patriot anti-missile systems on alert and a "consequence management" task force stationed here at its main base, made up of U.S., German and Czech soldiers who are specialists in responding to chemical, biological or nuclear attacks. The task force plans to bring in an additional 107 Czech specialists and 40 vehicles by Feb. 1.

The U.S. military began inoculating its soldiers here against smallpox three weeks ago.

Kuwaiti authorities also have received training on how to cope with mass casualties among civilians. The U.S. Embassy held a course last fall for 100 officers, and the British plan another one next week. The Kuwaitis have been conducting drills at various landmarks almost daily. The government's civil defense department has opened six branch offices, and every government agency or private business with more than 50 employees has been ordered to form a civil defense committee.

"We're worried," said Col. Mustafa Shaban, head of the civil defense department who has been working closely with U.S. commanders. "If you look at CNN now, you know what the Iraqis have and you don't know what they will do next."

This may represent the point of maximum peril in Kuwait, according to U.S. military planners. Once an invasion is underway, they expect to overrun Iraqi troops, quickly pushing them back from the border and out of range of military bases and civilian centers in Kuwait. Until then, however, they must confront what they call the "assembly problem," the phase when they are moving equipment and men into this 6,880-square-mile emirate. At least 17,000 U.S. troops already are here, and tens of thousands more are on the way.

The military tries to obscure these movements by preventing reporters from photographing soldiers landing or coming ashore, and it transports them to their bases aboard civilian buses with the curtains pulled. Once here, soldiers generally remain locked behind barbed wire and sand berms inside heavily guarded camps. After a pair of attacks on U.S. soldiers last fall, off-duty "morale" buses into Kuwait City were suspended, although they had resumed before two U.S. civilian contractors were shot Tuesday, one fatally.

Retired Army Gen. Barry R. McCaffrey, who led the 24th Infantry Division into Iraq during the 1991 Persian Gulf War and serves as a consultant, has warned the military that Iraqis might target points of disembarkation with chemical weapons if they decide to attack.

If they do, among the first on the scene may be the soldiers in moon suits from the U.S.-led consequence-management task force. While officially assigned to respond as a backup to Kuwaitis, few doubt that they will be asked to help in the event of a major episode. The task force has been practicing "hot zone extractions" at a former women's prison just outside Camp Doha. In December, they staged a mock attack on the U.S. Embassy.

Although their abilities overlap, the three nations in the task force split the duties. The Americans provide the command team, the Germans focus on detecting and identifying chemical agents and the Czechs concentrate on decontamination and medical response.

If dispatched to the scene of a chemical attack, the Germans would send in Fox armored vehicles with detection and analysis equipment; their sensors can pick up chemical agents as far as three miles away, and their spectrometers can identify more than 100 liquid chemical agents.

At a training exercise this week, the Czechs used their own airtight reconnaissance vehicle, which is less sophisticated but smaller and easier to maneuver on an urban landscape. A sudden explosion of smoke marked the start of the exercise and quickly shrouded the crumbling abandoned buildings of the former women's prison. The Czech team, in full body suits and gas masks, moved in to mark borders, test the atmosphere and try to determine the type of material, its impact and potential for spreading.

Within minutes, another team of suited Czech soldiers arrived with stretchers and equipment to extract a half-dozen or more of their compatriots who were posing as victims around the prison grounds, some with blood-like red staining their bodies. The victims were taken to a pair of decontamination tents, where they were stripped, hosed down with water and scrubbed before being loaded into an ambulance. As many as 300 people can be decontaminated in an hour.

The Czechs have long-standing expertise in chemical weapons stemming from their days in the Warsaw Pact. A Czech unit was the only one to detect chemical weapons during the Persian Gulf War, finding a trace in the Saudi desert, although too little to identify. Maj. Milan Peciva, who was there, said it was a nerve-paralyzing agent.

"We thought some [chemical weapons] factories were bombed in Iraq by the U.S. Air Force, and because of the wind the agents came to Saudi Arabia," he said.

The Czech parliament last week agreed to let the unit stay in Kuwait during any hostilities with Iraq, and Defense Minister Jaroslav Tvrdik said it could accompany invading U.S. troops if needed.

The presence of the consequence-management unit as well as the Patriot batteries has reassured Kuwaiti officials. Mohammed Salem Sabah, the state minister for foreign affairs, said he has "a lot of confidence in American technology" and none in Iraqi restraint.

"In reality," he said in an interview, "we have been in Iraq's cross hairs for the last 12 years. We have been in constant fear of a repeat of the Iraqi aggression. And we are not imagining a bogeyman here. He exists. He's over there. And his intentions are well known."

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A30119-2003Jan22.html>

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New York Times
January 23, 2003

North Korea Informs South Korea That It Doesn't Plan To Produce Nuclear Weapons

By Howard W. French

SEOUL, South Korea, Jan. 22 — North Korea said today that it had no intention of producing nuclear weapons, making the pledge to South Korea in high-level talks here in which both sides appeared to be playing to different audiences.

The North Korean statement, which was heavily qualified, seemed intended to make the country's position sound more reasonable amid a festering nuclear proliferation crisis, and to appeal to an increasingly sympathetic South Korean audience.

"Although we have withdrawn from the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, we have no intention of producing nuclear weapons at this stage," North Korea's chief delegate, Kim Ryong Song, said in a keynote speech at the first session of the cabinet-level talks in Seoul. "The danger of a war that threatens peace on the Korean Peninsula is coming from the outside not from within."

South Korea officials, meanwhile, pressed North Korea to return to the status quo of a month ago, before it heightened the crisis by expelling international monitors and removing the seals on containers that had housed nuclear fuel, which could be readily used in weapons production. "We demanded that North Korea replace the seals at its nuclear reactor and reverse its withdrawal from the N.P.T. to regain the confidence of the international community," said Rhee Bong Jo, a spokesman for the South Korean delegation.

South Korea, whose incumbent president and president-elect are both ardent advocates of economic support and engagement with North Korea, is being watched closely by Washington, which seeks assurances that South Korea will work with the United States to develop a common strategy on the issue of nuclear proliferation by North Korea.

John R. Bolton, the under secretary of state for arms control and international security, met with South Korean officials today and reaffirmed Washington's intention to take the matter of North Korea's nuclear weapons capabilities before the United Nations Security Council as soon as possible. Mr. Bolton said a consensus had emerged in the region for that approach..

"We're prepared to talk directly with North Korea, but we'll not negotiate," Mr. Bolton said at a news conference in Seoul, after meeting South Korean officials with the Defense Ministry and Foreign Ministry.

"We will not talk to them in a way that rewards them for their behavior, and amounts to a submission to blackmail," he added.

In Washington, Secretary of State Colin L. Powell said in an interview released today that the United States was studying proposals for renewing talks with North Korea, either bilaterally or in conjunction with other countries.

"It's a very delicate time now and a lot of what we're doing, we're doing it quietly and with some discretion," Mr. Powell said. "But I think we made some progress."

His cautious optimism was echoed by a senior Australian diplomat who visited North Korea last week. Australia is one of the few Western nations that has diplomatic relations with North Korea.

"Having been through the three days over there with them, we're mildly encouraged that there might be some prospect of dialogue," said the diplomat, Murray MacLean, the first assistant secretary for North Asian Affairs in Australia's Foreign Ministry, in an interview. "But I would emphasize that achieving dialogue is going to be, in itself, quite a long, slow process, and the dialogue, when it gets going, will be as well."

For weeks, North Korea has been signaling that it is unwilling to discuss the nuclear issue with anyone but the United States. Washington has insisted just as firmly that the problem is a matter for the international community, and not one that the Bush administration is willing to negotiate bilaterally.

The North Korean pledge here today to forgo nuclear weapons development for now appeared to be a reward to South Korea's leaders for their recent insistence in conversations with Washington on what they called the need for a peaceful, negotiated solution to the crisis. Substantively, North Korea conceded little today, but it might have improved its image with the South Korean public.

Relations between the United States and South Korea have grown increasingly strained in recent months, over political differences about how to deal with North Korea, and because of weeks of anti-American protests here, which coincided with a presidential campaign and the election in December of the liberal candidate, Roh Moo Hyun. Mr. Roh has demanded a leading role for South Korea in resolving the North Korean crisis.

North Korea would like to encourage as much distance as possible between Washington and Seoul, and it has lately stepped up its contacts with South Korea, after months of very little contact. The two Koreas are engaged in three separate rounds of talks this week. Red Cross talks at the Mount Kumgang resort in North Korea ended today with an agreement on a new round of family reunions. Negotiations on a stalled project to open cross-border railway and road links were scheduled to begin in North Korea later.

Throughout the crisis, North Korea has been playing on themes — sometimes ham-handedly, sometimes more subtly — that are meant to woo a South Korean public that seems increasingly nationalistic, and yearns for reunification and an end to the cold war in Korea.

"At this moment, all inter-Korean projects face grave obstacles posed by outside forces which do not like us to join our hands," Mr. Kim, North Korea's chief delegate, said today. "The North and South should uphold the great cause of national independence and crush attempts by outside forces seeking to meddle in intranational affairs and forge ahead, without interruption, with all issues including economic projects which have been agreed upon by the two sides."

Almost in direct reply, however, Mr. Rhee, the South Korean spokesman, told reporters, "The South emphasized that overall inter-Korean relations would be unable to move ahead without the nuclear issue being resolved."

North Korea can only have been encouraged by recent developments in South Korea, where Mr. Roh, the president-elect, has rejected the use of force in any dispute involving nuclear weapons in North Korea and of revising the five-decade-old alliance with the United States.

Mr. Roh's advisers have spoken in recent days about greatly increasing economic cooperation with North Korea, where the economy has nearly collapsed, and they have even hinted at seeking a reduction in the 37,000 American troops stationed in South Korea. Today, the newspaper Hankook Ilbo, citing documents it said it received from Mr. Roh's transition team, said Mr. Roh would "invite North Korean leader Kim Jong Il for a second North-South summit meeting and seek ways to establish military confidence-building by scaling back military forces and examining each other's drills."

<http://www.nytimes.com/2003/01/23/international/asia/23KORE.html>

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New York Times

January 23, 2003

Why We Know Iraq Is Lying

By Condoleezza Rice

WASHINGTON--Eleven weeks after the United Nations Security Council unanimously passed a resolution demanding — yet again — that Iraq disclose and disarm all its nuclear, chemical and biological weapons programs, it is appropriate to ask, "Has Saddam Hussein finally decided to voluntarily disarm?" Unfortunately, the answer is a clear and resounding no.

There is no mystery to voluntary disarmament. Countries that decide to disarm lead inspectors to weapons and production sites, answer questions before they are asked, state publicly and often the intention to disarm and urge their citizens to cooperate. The world knows from examples set by South Africa, Ukraine and Kazakhstan what it looks like when a government decides that it will cooperatively give up its weapons of mass destruction. The critical common elements of these efforts include a high-level political commitment to disarm, national initiatives to dismantle weapons programs, and full cooperation and transparency.

In 1989 South Africa made the strategic decision to dismantle its covert nuclear weapons program. It destroyed its arsenal of seven weapons and later submitted to rigorous verification by the International Atomic Energy Agency. Inspectors were given complete access to all nuclear facilities (operating and defunct) and the people who worked there. They were also presented with thousands of documents detailing, for example, the daily operation of uranium enrichment facilities as well as the construction and dismantling of specific weapons.

Ukraine and Kazakhstan demonstrated a similar pattern of cooperation when they decided to rid themselves of the nuclear weapons, intercontinental ballistic missiles and heavy bombers inherited from the Soviet Union. With significant assistance from the United States — warmly accepted by both countries — disarmament was orderly, open and fast. Nuclear warheads were returned to Russia. Missile silos and heavy bombers were destroyed or dismantled — once in a ceremony attended by the American and Russian defense chiefs. In one instance, Kazakhstan revealed the existence of a ton of highly enriched uranium and asked the United States to remove it, lest it fall into the wrong hands.

Iraq's behavior could not offer a starker contrast. Instead of a commitment to disarm, Iraq has a high-level political commitment to maintain and conceal its weapons, led by Saddam Hussein and his son Qusay, who controls the Special Security Organization, which runs Iraq's concealment activities. Instead of implementing national initiatives to disarm, Iraq maintains institutions whose sole purpose is to thwart the work of the inspectors. And instead of full cooperation and transparency, Iraq has filed a false declaration to the United Nations that amounts to a 12,200-page lie.

For example, the declaration fails to account for or explain Iraq's efforts to get uranium from abroad, its manufacture of specific fuel for ballistic missiles it claims not to have, and the gaps previously identified by the United Nations in Iraq's accounting for more than two tons of the raw materials needed to produce thousands of gallons of anthrax and other biological weapons.

Iraq's declaration even resorted to unabashed plagiarism, with lengthy passages of United Nations reports copied word-for-word (or edited to remove any criticism of Iraq) and presented as original text. Far from informing, the declaration is intended to cloud and confuse the true picture of Iraq's arsenal. It is a reflection of the regime's well-earned reputation for dishonesty and constitutes a material breach of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1441, which set up the current inspections program.

Unlike other nations that have voluntarily disarmed — and in defiance of Resolution 1441 — Iraq is not allowing inspectors "immediate, unimpeded, unrestricted access" to facilities and people involved in its weapons program. As a recent inspection at the home of an Iraqi nuclear scientist demonstrated, and other sources confirm, material and documents are still being moved around in farcical shell games. The regime has blocked free and unrestricted use of aerial reconnaissance.

The list of people involved with weapons of mass destruction programs, which the United Nations required Iraq to provide, ends with those who worked in 1991 — even though the United Nations had previously established that the programs continued after that date. Interviews with scientists and weapons officials identified by inspectors have taken place only in the watchful presence of the regime's agents. Given the duplicitous record of the regime, its recent promises to do better can only be seen as an attempt to stall for time.

Last week's finding by inspectors of 12 chemical warheads not included in Iraq's declaration was particularly troubling. In the past, Iraq has filled this type of warhead with sarin — a deadly nerve agent used by Japanese

terrorists in 1995 to kill 12 Tokyo subway passengers and sicken thousands of others. Richard Butler, the former chief United Nations arms inspector, estimates that if a larger type of warhead that Iraq has made and used in the past were filled with VX (an even deadlier nerve agent) and launched at a major city, it could kill up to one million people. Iraq has also failed to provide United Nations inspectors with documentation of its claim to have destroyed its VX stockpiles.

Many questions remain about Iraq's nuclear, chemical and biological weapons programs and arsenal — and it is Iraq's obligation to provide answers. It is failing in spectacular fashion. By both its actions and its inactions, Iraq is proving not that it is a nation bent on disarmament, but that it is a nation with something to hide. Iraq is still treating inspections as a game. It should know that time is running out.

Condoleezza Rice is the national security adviser.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2003/01/23/opinion/23RICE.html>

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Washington Post

January 23, 2003

Pg. 6

Biowarfare Monitors Are Deployed In U.S.

By Kathy Sawyer, Washington Post Staff Writer

The Bush administration yesterday began deploying a nationwide network of environmental monitors designed to quickly detect anthrax, smallpox and certain other harmful biological agents if they are released into the open air. Officials said the system will piggyback on many of the 3,000-plus air quality monitoring stations that have already been put in place around the country by the Environmental Protection Agency.

Called Bio-Watch, the "biosurveillance" network is designed mainly to alert major population centers in the event of an aerosol attack over a large area, but it would not detect the small releases of pathogens in indoor locations, such as a shopping mall or subway, or attacks such as the 2001 anthrax mailings.

"This is not a panacea, but it is a big step forward at a relatively small cost," said Randall Larsen, a biowarfare specialist and director of the ANSER Institute for Homeland Security, based in the Washington area.

Early detection, if it works, would rob terrorists of a primary advantage of a biological attack -- the disease incubation period, he said. Terrorists, for example, could no longer count on being able to travel through multiple cities, release killer microbes along the way and complete their escape before the alarms were sounded 72 to 96 hours later -- in some cases, weeks later -- after the first victims showed up at hospitals.

In most cases, the faster the exposed population can be treated with antibiotics or vaccinated against the disease, the lower the death rate. Early detection might enable the government to save hundreds of thousands of lives by rushing pharmaceutical stockpiles, emergency response teams or whatever is needed to affected locations, officials said.

The White House Office of Homeland Security under Tom Ridge coordinated the work of at least half a dozen federal agencies on the project, which was first reported in yesterday's New York Times.

The new Department of Homeland Security will provide the funding for Bio-Watch, spokesman Gordon Johndroe said.

A major concern was to avoid the false alarms that often bedevil such surveillance efforts, as anyone with a kitchen smoke detector can attest. A series of tests begun nine months ago provide "a high degree of confidence" that the network would not be prone to false readings, either positive or negative, Johndroe said.

Government laboratories are still struggling to develop hand-held detectors that are cheap, reliable and false alarm-free. The military installs temporary portable detectors at selected public gatherings, such as the Super Bowl.

The EPA has begun installing improved filters and equipment at many of its Air Quality Monitoring Network stations, beginning with seven locations in New York City, and is adding other major urban areas at a rapid pace, officials said. EPA operates the stations with state and local agencies.

The federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention will monitor the testing using its nationwide network of 120 public health laboratories capable of doing the sensitive analysis.

Personnel at the environmental stations, set up to measure air pollutants, will send filtered samples to the nearest participating laboratory on a "regular basis," according to an EPA spokesman. According to the White House and a senior official of the Health and Human Services Department, the samples are to be collected daily.

DNA in the samples will be analyzed using polymerase chain reaction (PCR) techniques that identify an organism based on its genetic signature. The analysts should be able to detect the presence of certain known pathogens within 24 hours after the sample is received, officials said.

Details of the project have been so closely held that "more is unknown than is known," said Scott Becker, executive director of the Association of Public Health Laboratories, which analyze the samples. "No one has talked to us about what it will cost."

Homeland Security's Johndroe said the startup cost is \$1 million, mainly for the upgraded filtering equipment. The bulk of the costs will be in the labor-intensive analyses at the labs, for which the agency has budgeted \$1 million per city per year.

The Bio-Watch system incorporates biological sensing techniques developed at the Department of Energy's national laboratories, which are helping to train state and local agencies in their use, officials said.

Also participating in the project are the Department of Defense and the National Security Agency.

The Homeland Security Office noted that intelligence reports and evidence from al Qaeda operatives have raised the possibility of airborne or ground biowarfare attacks by crop dusters or other means.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A30206-2003Jan22.html>

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Time.com

January 21, 2003

Nukes: To Pyongyang From Nashville?

Backers of a proposed uranium enrichment plant have a bad history with keeping secrets

By Adam Zagorin

Is President Bush's "axis of evil" campaign about to be undermined in his own backyard? A proposed uranium enrichment facility planned in Hartsville, Tenn. (pop. 2,395) raises just that question. One of the plant's principal backers is URENCO, a European consortium linked to leaks of enrichment technology to, yes, Iran, Iraq, and North Korea — as well as to Pakistan.

Sources tell TIME that senior Bush appointees, upset by the ongoing crisis with North Korea, have held detailed discussions in recent days on the need to stop leaks of nuclear technology to rogue states. "To have this company operate in the U.S. after it was the source of sensitive technology reaching foreign powers does raise serious concerns," a high-level U.S. nuclear security administrator told TIME, the first public comment by a federal official on the proposed plant's ownership. "The national security community or the new Homeland Security Department will need to look at this."

Concerns about URENCO first emerged more than 10 years ago when thousands of centrifuge parts, based on URENCO designs, were discovered by U.N. inspectors in Iraq after the Gulf War. A one-time URENCO scientist, known as the "father" of Pakistan's nuclear bomb, is said to have taken URENCO centrifuge blueprints and information on the company's suppliers to his homeland, later passing similar sensitive material to North Korea and Iran.

The company that wants to build the new Tennessee enrichment plant is called Louisiana Energy Services. A consortium of US and foreign companies in which URENCO has a major financial role, LES insists that the link between URENCO and nuclear proliferation is "long ago and far-fetched at this point". URENCO itself has denied authorizing leaks of technology to rogue states.

The only previous attempt by LES to build an enrichment plant involved a multi-year effort in the 1990's targeting a small town in Louisiana. Closed Congressional hearings on Iraqi attempts to acquire nuclear weapons were held not long before, and delved into URENCO's record. Subsequently, powerful Michigan Democrat John Dingell raised concerns that the LES plant in Louisiana might violate provisions governing the movement of classified technology from foreign countries under the federal Atomic Energy Act. That issue was never resolved, but LES gave up attempts to build the Louisiana facility amid controversy over its impact on nearby African-American residents. With its latest effort in Tennessee, LES seems especially anxious to avoid a reprise of those controversies. In an unusual move, LES has asked for a greenlight from the Nuclear Regulatory Commission without the usual public comment on various environmental, safety and security issues. But groups like the Sierra Club and the National Resources Defense Council contend that this will simply, "reduce the . . . licensing procedure to a flimsy rubber

stamp." LES plans to file its 3,000 page license application with the federal government by January 30, to be followed by a review process that could take at least a year.

Also controversial are unanswered questions about the disposal of the Tennessee plant's radioactive waste. Officials in Tennessee have reached a tentative agreement with LES to cap the amount of waste and, last week, the company announced that the material would not stay in Tennessee permanently. But it offered no details as to where the waste might be transferred, a process that can be subject to complex federal licensing procedures.

So far few Tennessee politicians have taken a position on the new enrichment plant. That includes Sen. Bill Frist, the new Senate Majority Leader, who has remained neutral on the proposed plant in his home state. But he plans to follow the debate "very closely," says an aide.

<http://www.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,410102,00.html>

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Washington Post

January 24, 2003

Pg. 1

U.S. Claim On Iraqi Nuclear Program Is Called Into Question

By Joby Warrick, Washington Post Staff Writer

When President Bush traveled to the United Nations in September to make his case against Iraq, he brought along a rare piece of evidence for what he called Iraq's "continued appetite" for nuclear bombs. The finding: Iraq had tried to buy thousands of high-strength aluminum tubes, which Bush said were "used to enrich uranium for a nuclear weapon."

Bush cited the aluminum tubes in his speech before the U.N. General Assembly and in documents presented to U.N. leaders. Vice President Cheney and national security adviser Condoleezza Rice both repeated the claim, with Rice describing the tubes as "only really suited for nuclear weapons programs."

It was by far the most prominent, detailed assertion by the White House of recent Iraqi efforts to acquire nuclear weapons. But according to government officials and weapons experts, the claim now appears to be seriously in doubt.

After weeks of investigation, U.N. weapons inspectors in Iraq are increasingly confident that the aluminum tubes were never meant for enriching uranium, according to officials familiar with the inspection process. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the U.N.-chartered nuclear watchdog, reported in a Jan. 8 preliminary assessment that the tubes were "not directly suitable" for uranium enrichment but were "consistent" with making ordinary artillery rockets -- a finding that meshed with Iraq's official explanation for the tubes. New evidence supporting that conclusion has been gathered in recent weeks and will be presented to the U.N. Security Council in a report due to be released on Monday, the officials said.

Moreover, there were clues from the beginning that should have raised doubts about claims that the tubes were part of a secret Iraqi nuclear weapons program, according to U.S. and international experts on uranium enrichment. The quantity and specifications of the tubes -- narrow, silver cylinders measuring 81 millimeters in diameter and about a meter in length -- made them ill-suited to enrich uranium without extensive modification, the experts said.

But they are a perfect fit for a well-documented 81mm conventional rocket program in place for two decades. Iraq imported the same aluminum tubes for rockets in the 1980s. The new tubes it tried to purchase actually bear an inscription that includes the word "rocket," according to one official who examined them.

"It may be technically possible that the tubes could be used to enrich uranium," said one expert familiar with the investigation of Iraq's attempted acquisition. "But you'd have to believe that Iraq deliberately ordered the wrong stock and intended to spend a great deal of time and money reworking each piece."

As the U.N. inspections continue, some weapons experts said the aluminum tubes saga could undermine the credibility of claims about Iraq's arsenal. To date, the Bush administration has declined to release photos or other specific evidence to bolster its contention that Iraq is actively seeking to acquire new biological, chemical and nuclear arms, and the means to deliver them.

The U.N. inspections earlier this month turned up 16 empty chemical warheads for short-range, 122mm rockets. But inspectors said that so far they have found no conclusive proof of a new Iraqi effort to acquire weapons of mass destruction in searches of facilities that had been identified as suspicious in U.S. and British intelligence reports.

U.N. officials contend that Iraq retains biological and chemical weapons and components it acquired before the 1991 Persian Gulf War.

"If the U.S. government puts out bad information it runs a risk of undermining the good information it possesses," said David Albright, a former IAEA weapons inspector who has investigated Iraq's past nuclear programs extensively. "In this case, I fear that the information was put out there for a short-term political goal: to convince people that Saddam Hussein is close to acquiring nuclear weapons."

The Bush administration, while acknowledging the IAEA's findings on the aluminum tubes, has not retreated from its earlier statements. White House spokesman Ari Fleischer reacted to the IAEA's initial report on Jan. 8 by asserting that the case was still open.

"It should be noted," Fleischer said, "that the attempted acquisition of such tubes is prohibited under the United Nations resolutions in any case." U.N. sanctions restrict Iraq's ability to import "dual-use" items that potentially could be used for weapons.

U.S. intelligence officials contend that the evidence, on balance, still points to a secret uranium enrichment program, although there is significant disagreement within the intelligence services. Those supporting the nuclear theory said they were influenced by "other intelligence" beyond the specifications of the tubes themselves, according to one intelligence official. He did not elaborate.

IAEA officials said the investigation of the tubes officially remains open. Earlier this week, Iraq agreed to provide inspectors with additional data about its intended use for the tubes.

The controversy stems from a series of Iraqi attempts to purchase large quantities -- thousands or tens of thousands -- of high-strength aluminum tubes over the last two years. Apparently none of the attempts succeeded, although in one instance in 2001 a shipment of more than 60,000 Chinese-made aluminum tubes made it as far as Jordan before it was intercepted, according to officials familiar with Iraq's procurement attempts.

Since then, the officials said, Iraq has made at least two other attempts to acquire the tubes. The more recent attempts involved private firms located in what was described only as a "NATO country." In all, more than 120,000 of the tubes were reportedly sought.

In each of the attempts, Iraq requested tubes made of an aluminum alloy with precise dimensions and high tolerances for heat and stress. To intelligence analysts, the requests had a ring of familiarity: Iraq had imported aluminum tubes in the 1980s, although with different specifications and much larger diameter, to build gas centrifuges -- fast-spinning machines used in enriching uranium for nuclear weapons. Through a crash nuclear program launched in 1990, Iraq succeeded in enriching nearly enough uranium for one bomb before its plans were disrupted in 1991 by the start of the Gulf War, according to U.N. weapons inspectors.

By several accounts, Iraq's recent attempts to buy aluminum tubes sparked a rancorous debate as Bush administration officials, intelligence analysts and government scientists argued over Iraq's intent.

"A number of people argued that the tubes could not possibly be used as artillery rockets because the specifications were so precise. It would be a waste of dollars," said one knowledgeable scientist.

Ultimately, the conclusion in the intelligence discussion was that Iraq was planning to use the tubes in a nuclear program. This view was favored by CIA analysts. However, there were dissenting arguments by enrichment experts at the Energy Department and officials at the State Department. What ultimately swung the argument in favor of the nuclear theory was the observation that Iraq had attempted to purchase aluminum tubes with such precise specifications that it made other uses seem unlikely, officials said.

By contrast, in Britain, the government of Prime Minister Tony Blair said in a Sept. 24 white paper that there was "no definitive intelligence" that the tubes were destined for a nuclear program.

The tubes were made of an aluminum-zinc alloy known as 7000-series, which is used in a wide range of industrial applications. But the dimensions and technical features, such as metal thickness and surface coatings, made them an unlikely choice for centrifuges, several nuclear experts said. Iraq used a different aluminum alloy in its centrifuges in the 1980s before switching to more advanced metals known as maraging steel and carbon fibers, which are better suited for the task, the experts said.

Significantly, there is no evidence so far that Iraq sought other materials required for centrifuges, such as motors, metal caps and special magnets, U.S. and international officials said.

Bush's remarks about the aluminum tubes caused a stir at the IAEA's headquarters in Vienna. Weapons experts at the agency had also been monitoring Iraq's attempts to buy the aluminum but were skeptical of arguments that the tubes had a nuclear purpose, according to one official who spoke on the condition of anonymity. The IAEA spent seven years in the 1990s documenting and ultimately destroying all known vestiges of Iraq's nuclear weapons program, including its gas centrifuges.

After returning to Iraq when weapons inspections resumed in November, the IAEA made it a priority to sort out the conflicting claims, according to officials familiar with the probe. In December, the agency spent several days poring

through files and interviewing people involved in the attempted acquisition of the tubes -- including officials at the company that supplied the metal and managers of the Baghdad importing firm that apparently had been set up as a front company to acquire special parts and materials for Iraq's Ministry of Industry. According to informed officials, the IAEA concluded Iraq had indeed been running a secret procurement operation, but the intended beneficiary was not Iraq's Atomic Energy Commission; rather, it was an established army program to replace Iraq's aging arsenal of conventional 81mm rockets, the type used in multiple rocket launchers.

The explanation made sense for several reasons, they said. In the 1980s, Iraq was known to have obtained a design for 81mm rockets through reverse-engineering of munitions it had previously purchased abroad. During the Iran-Iraq war, Iraqis built tens of thousands of such rockets, using high-strength, 7000-series aluminum tubes it bought from foreign suppliers. U.N. inspectors in the 1990s had allowed Iraq to retain a stockpile of about 160,000 of the 81mm rockets, and an inspection of the stockpile last month confirmed that the rockets still exist, though now corroded after years of exposure in outdoor depots.

By all appearances, the Iraqis were "trying to buy exact replacements for those rockets," said Albright, the former IAEA inspector.

Albright, now president of the Institute for Science and International Security, a Washington research group, said that even a less sinister explanation for the aluminum tubes did not suggest Iraq is entirely innocent.

"But if Iraq does have a centrifuge program, it is well-hidden, and it is important for us to come up with information that will help us find it," Albright said. "This incident discredits that effort at a time when we can least afford it."

Staff writer Walter Pincus contributed to this report.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A35360-2003Jan23.html>

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Washington Post

January 24, 2003

Pg. 1

U.N. Team Still Unable To Meet Scientists Alone

Iraq Suspected of Discouraging Private Talks With Inspectors

By Rajiv Chandrasekaran, Washington Post Foreign Service

BAGHDAD, Iraq, Jan. 23 -- U.N. and U.S. officials said today that weapons inspectors have not been able to question any Iraqi scientists in private, even though Iraq pledged to encourage such confidential interviews, because the government has not been active enough in urging the scientists to speak without an official monitor present.

The officials, some speaking on condition of anonymity, said inspection leaders believe Iraq may be dissuading scientists from agreeing to confidential interviews despite its public promise to the contrary last Monday. A U.N. official said the inspectors regard their inability to conduct the interviews as "a clear sign of noncooperation" that almost certainly will feature prominently in a report that the chief weapons inspector, Hans Blix, is scheduled to present to the Security Council on Monday.

Iraq's chief liaison with the inspectors, Gen. Hossam Mohammed Amin, said his government "did our best to push the scientists" to agree to private interviews, but that all have insisted that government officials be present. He said they refused because they fear that, without an official Iraqi as witness, the inspectors might later distort or manipulate their testimony.

Iraq's promise to encourage confidential questioning had appeared to strengthen the hand of France, Germany, Russia and other council members that support continued inspections rather than a swift finding that Iraq has failed to cooperate. But a report by Blix that President Saddam Hussein's government is not fulfilling its pledge could help the Bush administration forge support for an early determination and eventually a military invasion to oust the Iraqi leader.

The administration, which is deploying tens of thousands of additional troops to the Persian Gulf region in anticipation of a conflict, cited Iraq's failure to get scientists to consent to private interviews to reinforce its argument that Hussein's government is in "material breach" of a Security Council resolution passed Nov. 8 demanding that Iraq extend full cooperation to weapons inspectors and give a complete account of weapons programs.

"Iraq has yet to make a single one of its scientists or technical experts available to be interviewed in confidential circumstances, free of intimidation, as required by the U.N. resolution," Deputy Defense Secretary Paul D. Wolfowitz said in an appearance before the Council on Foreign Relations in New York.

Wolfowitz said the United States has learned from "multiple sources" that Iraq has "ordered that any scientist who cooperates during interviews will be killed, as well as their families." He said that Iraqi scientists are also "being tutored on what to say to U.N. inspectors and that Iraqi intelligence officers are posing as scientists to be interviewed by the inspectors."

The issue of interviews, along with Iraq's refusal to allow inspectors to employ U-2 surveillance aircraft, could put Blix in the position of criticizing Iraq's level of compliance while arguing that inspections should nonetheless continue. "We regard this as very troubling, but not something that means we should pack up in Baghdad," a U.N. official said.

The inspectors regard interviews with scientists as a crucial investigative tool in determining whether Iraq has, or is developing, weapons of mass destruction. The inspectors want to be able to question the scientists in private because of concerns they might feel intimidated and not speak candidly in the presence of government officials.

"I think we're going to make it a big deal," said a U.N. official, referring to the report on Monday.

Although Iraqi officials have maintained that the scientists are free to choose how they want to be questioned, U.N. officials said the government here effectively dissuaded scientists from consenting to private interviews by getting senior scientists to say publicly that they would never agree to questioning without officials present.

Before Blix arrived in Baghdad for talks on Sunday, his inspectors had asked to speak to six scientists in private, but all refused to do so without an official. After two days of discussions, Blix, director of the U.N. Monitoring, Inspection and Verification Commission, and Mohamed ElBaradei, director of the International Atomic Energy Agency, announced an agreement with the Iraqi government on 10 procedural issues, the most important of which was that Iraq would start to encourage its scientists to accept private interviews.

After Blix and ElBaradei left, U.N. inspectors asked Iraqi authorities to summon six scientists for interviews. It is not clear whether any or all of them are the same as the six scientists the inspectors sought to query last week.

Amin said his liaison office, the National Monitoring Directorate (NMD), "encouraged our scientists to make the interviews." In one case, he said, inspectors spent one hour trying to persuade a scientist to speak privately.

"No interference took place from my representatives," Amin said. But the scientist, he said, told the inspectors: "I am not ready to make an interview alone in private. I have to be accompanied by NMD representatives."

Amin said the inspectors even asked him to telephone the scientist, who was not named. Although Amin made the call, he said it failed to sway the scientist.

"How can we solve this?" he said. "Should we put him in prison and say to him, 'Make an interview in private?' This is contrary to his human rights. This is unrequired and unnecessary."

The Iraqi government, he said, "has done what it had been asked to do."

"The decision to make the interview belongs to the scientist himself," Amin said. "He will decide if the interview will be conducted or not."

But U.N. officials said they are not convinced the authoritarian government here did enough, noting that it is highly unusual for ordinary citizens, let alone scientists working for the state, to disobey official orders. "If authorities would tell them to go through with these interviews, they would do it," a U.N. official said.

In the agreement that Blix and ElBaradei reached with the Iraqi government, scientists can record their interviews. The questioning also will not occur at the main U.N. building here, but at a private hotel. "There's no reason for scientists to feel threatened," the U.N. official said.

U.N. officials and diplomats here offered various explanations for Iraq's stance. Some suggested that Hussein and other senior leaders have concluded war is inevitable and fear a disclosure by a scientist could strip away some of the sympathy Iraq has tried to build in Europe and the Arab world. Another possibility is that the scientists contacted by the inspectors may possess -- and are willing to share -- incriminating details of banned weapons programs. A third explanation is that Iraq is calculating that a dispute over interviews, even with other claims of Iraqi intransigence, will not be enough to move the Security Council to authorize war.

Amin said he hopes Blix's report will not put a "magnifying glass on disagreement points," such as the failure to reach an understanding on U-2 flights, to which Iraq objects because it fears photographs of its war preparations might be shared with the United States.

On another point, Amin criticized the U.N. commission for conducting what he said was an inspection of a recently built Baghdad mosque on Monday without government escorts. A U.N. spokesman said a small group of inspectors visited the Al-Nida mosque as tourists, but Amin said he does not believe that explanation.

Staff writer Colum Lynch in New York contributed to this report.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A35359-2003Jan23.html>

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Los Angeles Times
January 24, 2003

U.S. Official Says Iraq Hiding, Not Dismantling, Arms *Deputy defense chief contrasts other nations' cooperation in converting arms programs with Iraq's recalcitrance.*

By Maggie Farley, Times Staff Writer

NEW YORK -- Deputy Defense Secretary Paul D. Wolfowitz on Thursday gave the clearest picture yet of why the White House believes that Iraqi President Saddam Hussein is committed to concealment -- not disarmament -- and that he won't be disarmed without force.

Wolfowitz asserted that the U.S. has evidence that Baghdad is hiding weapons and documents from inspectors and threatening scientists and their families with death for cooperating with U.N. officials, and that Iraqi intelligence officers are posing as scientists to be interviewed by inspectors.

But he said that the White House cannot yet share that evidence, frustrating would-be U.S. allies in the campaign to disarm Iraq and failing to convince skeptical challengers that an immediate attack on the country is necessary.

"You need something more decisive than this general feeling that Iraq is not really cooperating," a senior British official told The Times on Thursday. "For our point of view, we don't have enough to go to war at this point."

Wolfowitz's comments, made to the Council on Foreign Relations in New York, were the latest in the White House's carefully choreographed campaign to make its case this week before the chief U.N. weapons inspectors deliver their assessment Monday of Iraqi cooperation.

The remarks come at a time when key members of the U.N. Security Council -- France, Germany, Russia, China and now even the United States' staunchest ally, Britain -- are insisting that the inspectors should have more time to try to disarm Iraq before resorting to force.

Wolfowitz's hourlong presentation followed an elaborate argument Tuesday by Deputy Secretary of State Richard L. Armitage, statements Monday by Secretary of State Colin L. Powell at the United Nations, and a series of talk-show appearances by Powell and National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice last weekend.

Taking a Different Tack

Like the others, Wolfowitz laid out a familiar litany of missing weapons material, recited decades-old details of deception and Baghdad's history of tricks.

But Wolfowitz, a former political science professor, also tried a slightly different tack. His speech contrasted the cooperative conversion of nuclear weapons programs in South Africa, Ukraine and Kazakhstan against what has not been happening in Iraq.

While those nations had entire divisions devoted to dismantling their weapons programs, he said, Iraq has departments dedicated to concealing them.

"If a government is unwilling to disarm itself, it is unreasonable to expect inspectors to do it for them. They cannot be charged with a search-and-destroy mission to uncover so-called smoking guns -- especially not if the host government is intent on hiding them and impeding the inspectors' every move."

If the Iraqis won't disarm themselves, he concluded, the U.S. will do it for them.

That's an action that Wolfowitz, one of the administration's most influential hawks, has been advocating for almost as long as Hussein has been facing off with the U.N.

He had already focused on Hussein's potential threat to the region a decade ago while he was in the first Bush administration. Under then-Defense Secretary Dick Cheney, Wolfowitz advocated a doctrine of preemptive action and a flexibility in foreign policy that would allow the U.S. to act independently when collective action couldn't be orchestrated -- two keystones of present policy.

Wolfowitz began agitating for an invasion of Iraq shortly after the Sept. 11 attacks. In his speech Thursday, he tied the situation in Iraq to the war on terrorism, saying that if terrorist networks connect with rogue states possessing weapons of mass destruction, there would be a catastrophe of a "magnitude greater than Sept. 11."

"Iraq's weapons of mass terror and the terror networks to which the Iraqi regime are linked are not two separate threats, they are part of the same threat," he said.

But he said the most persuasive bit of his speech -- "two rather stunning paragraphs" -- had to be cut out because they "would say too much about what we're observing even today."

The White House has not laid out its evidence more clearly because "Saddam Hussein must watch CNN," he said.

Providing Assistance

But in what might be a close-mouthed administration's most extensive description of U.S. intelligence support so far, Wolfowitz said Washington is providing weapons inspectors with "names of individuals whom we believe it would be productive to interview," giving information about suspected sites of hidden weapons and helping the inspectors to thwart Iraqi infiltration of their operations.

He cited "reports" that Iraqi intelligence agents were posing as weapons experts to be interviewed by inspectors, who are empowered to offer asylum in return for helpful information. So far, no scientist has agreed to private interviews. "We know from multiple sources that Saddam has ordered that any scientists who cooperate during interviews will be killed, as well as their families," he said.

Acting on U.S. intelligence tips, inspectors visited the homes of two nuclear scientists last week and copied a box of documents found in one house about Iraq's uranium-enrichment programs.

He said that the U.S. has evidence that Iraq is moving documents and weapons material around "in a shell game" one step ahead of inspectors, and hiding them not only in homes but also in universities and farms, beneath mosques and hospitals, and even in lakes and rivers.

The United States has also "suggested an inspection strategy and tactics," he said, and provided U2 spy planes and drone Predator aircraft.

Iraq so far has blocked U2 flights and claims to have shot down two Predators.

Wolfowitz cautioned that U.S. intelligence is "extraordinary" but not "omniscient." But intelligence experts have gathered enough information to decide that Baghdad is not intent on disarming on its own, he said, asserting that the longer the U.N. waits to take action, the more likely Hussein is to use his hidden weapons.

"We're at a point of real decision," he said, "and if we lost that point, the credibility not only of the United States but of the entire world body is going to go down the tubes."

Times staff writer Ronald Brownstein in Washington contributed to this report.

<http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/nation/wire/la-fg-wolfowitz24jan24.story>

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Washington Times

January 24, 2003

Pg. 16

Wolfowitz Cites 'Massive' Iraqi Lies

Recites litany of Saddam's violations

By Betsy Pisik, The Washington Times

NEW YORK — Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz yesterday delivered a strong denunciation of Iraq, charging that it refused to cooperate with U.N. weapons inspectors and that Saddam Hussein is in violation of Security Council resolutions calling for his disarmament.

"A process that begins with a massive lie and proceeds with concealment, penetration, intimidation and obstruction cannot be a process of cooperative disarmament," said Mr. Wolfowitz, at a heavily touted address to the New York-based Council on Foreign Relations.

"Instead of a high-level commitment to disarmament, Iraq has a high-level commitment to concealing its weapons of mass terror."

Specifically, he said, Baghdad is refusing to allow U.N. inspectors to use a U-2 spy plane, on loan from the United States, for surveillance activities.

He also noted that Iraq has been shooting at unmanned U.S. planes patrolling the "no-fly zones." U.N. officials and many council members believe these flights to be unjustified by existing council resolutions.

Mr. Wolfowitz noted that Iraq has denied permission for scientists and experts to be interviewed privately by weapons inspectors, and repeated U.N. complaints from 1998 that Iraq had refused to account for tons of missing chemical and biological weapons, including VX, ricin, botulinum, anthrax and other toxins and germs.

"Evidence of WMD material is being relocated to agricultural areas, private homes, hidden beneath mosques or hospitals," said Mr. Wolfowitz, one of the most hawkish members of the administration. "It is a shell game played on a grand scale with deadly serious weapons."

Mr. Wolfowitz said that Iraqi officials had threatened with death scientists who cooperated with U.N. investigators, targeted U.N. computer networks for cyber-terrorism, and had infiltrated U.N. inspection teams.

"Today we know from multiple sources that Saddam has ordered that any scientist who cooperates during interviews will be killed as well as their families," he said. "Furthermore, we know that scientists are being tutored on what to

say to the U.N. inspectors and that Iraqi intelligence officers are posing as scientists to be interviewed by the inspectors."

Many of these accusations were not documented. A U.S. official said later that these could not be corroborated because they were based on confidential intelligence.

U.N. inspectors could not be reached for comment yesterday, because of a daylong meeting of their advisory board. Hans Blix, chief of the U.N. Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission, (Unmovic) acknowledged some problems with Iraq's cooperation yesterday, during a break in the proceedings.

Specifically, he said, the issue of overflight was problematic.

Mr. Blix and Mohammed ElBaradei, the executive director of the International Atomic Energy Agency, are to present the Security Council on Monday with an evaluation of their findings so far.

The inspectors, who met with Iraqi officials in Baghdad last weekend and with their own advisory boards later, are expected to issue a report that outlines both cooperation and conflict.

Iraqi Gen. Hussam Mohammad Amin told reporters in Baghdad yesterday that he expects the inspectors to file "a gray report," not particularly damning or praising of Iraq's performance in the first 60 days.

"Iraq has failed to account for weapons, failed to answer questions, failed to allow private interviews, failed to identify scientists, failed to permit aerial reconnaissance, failed to explain its procurements, failed to encourage cooperation with the inspectors, failed to provide what the inspectors asked for, which was credible evidence of destruction of weapons of mass destruction," said State Department spokesman Richard Boucher on Wednesday. "In sum, Iraq is failing to disarm. We need to face these facts. We need to deal with this reality and not pretend that inspectors can disarm Iraq while Iraq is actively blowing smoke and hiding its programs."

Mr. Wolfowitz drew heavily Iraq's historical refusal to cooperate with international inspectors to illustrate his points about current-day intransigence.

He drew from U.N. and U.S. intelligence to catalog the gallons and tons of toxins known to have been produced and often weaponized before 1997.

Mr. Wolfowitz's remarks were the latest in a near-daily schedule of briefings and appearances by senior Bush administration officials aimed at rallying flagging support for a U.S.-led military action against Iraq.

The administration in November won an unexpected victory with the unanimous support of the 15-member council to a tough resolution that demands Iraq disarm or face "serious consequences."

Washington says this is all the authorization it needs to go to war, although several council nations — including France, Russia, Germany and Syria — say that a second resolution explicitly authorizing force is required. But key allies remain wary of a military engagement that does not have a clear blessing from the council.

<http://www.washtimes.com/world/20030124-79814189.htm>

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Denver Post

January 24, 2003

Pentagon Eyes Mass Graves

Option would fight contamination after bioterror deaths

By Greg Seigle, Special to The Denver Post

WASHINGTON - The bodies of U.S. soldiers killed by chemical or biological weapons in Iraq or future wars may be bulldozed into mass graves and burned to save the lives of surviving troops, under an option being considered by the Pentagon.

Since the Korean War, the U.S. military has taken great pride in bringing home its war dead, returning bodies to next of kin for flag-draped, taps-sounding funerals complete with 21-gun salutes.

But the 53-year-old tradition could come to an abrupt halt if large numbers of soldiers are killed by chemical or biological agents, according to a proposal quietly circulating through Pentagon corridors.

Army spokesmen said the option to bury or even burn bodies contaminated by chemical or biological weapons is being considered, along with the possibility of placing contaminated corpses in airtight body bags and sending them home for closed-casket funerals.

"All due care is taken to honor the remains of our fallen comrades," said Maj. Chris Conway, an Army spokesman. "It's just too premature to speculate on any plan or policy."

Lt. Col. Ryan Yantis, an Army spokesman, said, "Military planners look at an operation in the full spectrum from the best-case scenario to the worst, and you have to make plans accordingly."

Yantis said that if a biological or chemical attack occurs, "we're going to treat the wounded with the best possible medical care. Those who are, unfortunately, deceased, we're going to treat with the utmost dignity and respect. ... We're going to have to take care of the mission and we're going to have to ensure the safety of the force."

Iraq admitted to United Nations inspectors in 1995 that it had produced large amounts of chemical and biological weapons during the 1980s and 1990s. American and British intelligence agencies say Iraqi President Saddam Hussein has continued to produce the deadly weapons covertly since then, despite Iraqi denials.

U.N. inspectors have found no proof Iraq is hiding weapons, but the U.S. insists they are there and is massing troops in the Persian Gulf for a possible war.

The U.S. had a plan for mass burials during the Gulf War in 1991, said Lt. Gen. William "Gus" Pagonis, the chief logistician for that conflict and the man who conceived the plan.

"The bulldozers were all lined up and ready to go," to deposit contaminated bodies in "mass graves," Pagonis said. "You'll use whatever equipment is necessary to avoid contaminating more people," Pagonis said in a recent interview. "You don't want anybody else to die."

Pagonis said that before the Gulf War, he sent the plan simultaneously to commanding Gen. H. Norman Schwarzkopf and the Department of the Army and no one responded. "When you send a plan and no one gets back to you, you assume it's been approved," he said.

Army spokesman Capt. Ben Kuykendall said the Pagonis plan is similar to the option currently under consideration - except that bodies infected by biological agents might be both cremated and buried.

If soldiers are killed by "something like smallpox in which bodies cannot be decontaminated, we would have to cremate them right there," Kuykendall said. He said he recently discussed the option in detail with Brig. Gen. Steve Reeves, program executive officer for the Army's chemical and biological defense office. Reeves declined to comment.

"You would have to protect the living, so you'd have to get rid of the (contaminated) bodies as quickly as possible," Kuykendall said. "You don't want to contaminate any survivors who are not already contaminated."

It is possible to decontaminate bodies, but such efforts would be "very sensitive, expensive and time-consuming," particularly for corpses infected with contagious biological agents, Kuykendall said.

But even if a body was believed to be decontaminated, it could not be sent stateside for fear it might still contain lethal germs or viruses that could fester deep inside and seep out later, he said. "That just would not be worth the risk."

If bodies contaminated with biological agents such as smallpox or anthrax were flown home, they could pass potentially lethal contaminants to every vehicle, aircraft, building and person that came in contact with them, Kuykendall said.

Bodies infected with chemical agents such as VX and mustard gas, which are very persistent, could also contaminate others, said Jonathan Tucker, a Washington-based senior scholar at the Monterey Institute of International Studies who has written extensively about chemical and biological agents.

It is easier to decontaminate chemically contaminated bodies for shipment and traditional burials than those infected by biological agents, Tucker said.

But in the heat of battle, Pagonis said, a field commander doesn't have time to make the distinction. "You want to do away with this (biological threat) as quickly as possible," he said.

Military veterans said they hope those commanders will never have to make such a choice.

"I know this is a plan to protect people and to make sure that we don't bring back any biological agents, but we're more concerned with how the (living) soldiers are going to protect themselves on the battlefield," said Steve Robinson, a retired Army Ranger and executive director of the National Gulf War Resource Center.

"It makes sense" to bury or burn contaminated bodies, Robinson said, "but it's still going to be hard on the families. ... If you are told your son was killed in Iraq but buried in a mass grave, you are going to be forever speculative on how he died."

Mass burial is "a sensitive issue, and we don't want to think about it because our hopes and prayers are that it won't happen," said Tom Corey, president of the Vietnam Veterans of America who was wounded in Vietnam and now uses a wheelchair.

A top Army mortuary official said he is confident his nearly 700 soldiers could decontaminate any corpses and send them home for proper burial.

"They would process them as best they could and move them to the rear," said Douglas Howard, deputy director of the Army Mortuary Affairs Center in Fort Lee, Va., which is responsible for handling the bodies of soldiers.

"If we bury on the battlefield, it will only be as a last resort," Howard said.

But mortuary teams would have to be wary of charging into areas filled with noxious fumes or deadly germs.

"The primary difficulty is concern for the safety of the mortuary affairs soldiers," said Howard, who has been an Army mortician for 30 years. "We never launch forth into a contaminated area without the advice and consent of the chemical community."

Pentagon officials declined to reveal exactly how many people staff the decontamination teams. The Army mortuary affairs center has only one such group - the 246th Quartermaster Mortuary Affairs Company, a 220-soldier reserve unit based in Puerto Rico.

Kuykendall said the Army's limited decontamination assets would have to be concentrated on survivors. Pagonis and other defense experts agreed.

"The military's first concern would be its own people - if they're still alive they would be the top priority. Next would be civilian noncombatants. People who are already dead would not be at the top of the triage," Philip Coyle said.

Coyle served as an undersecretary of defense from 1997 to 2001 and oversaw the testing and evaluation of much of the military's new decontamination and protective gear but said he was never informed of the option for cremation or mass burial of casualties.

Decontamination teams use large, showerlike pressure washers to spray victims with special disinfectants, cleaning solutions or even water. The teams, which can operate together or in small subgroups, rely on the guidance of specialists in chemical-biological warfare and sometimes even transport from other units.

Soldiers contaminated by chemical weapons would need to leave the scene as quickly as possible to limit their exposure. Those contaminated by biological agents would need to stay put to avoid spreading germs or viruses to their colleagues or civilians, Tucker said.

Chemical weapons generally contaminate relatively small areas, while biological weapons such as smallpox, which is highly contagious and lethal, can spread for long distances if contaminated people, bodies, gear or equipment are moved around, Tucker said.

Every U.S. soldier deployed to a potential combat zone carries an advanced gas mask and at least one air-tight, charcoal-lined protective suit. But such gear is useless if ripped open by bullets or shrapnel, or if troops are caught without all their garb on. Experts worry that the troops might be tempted to remove some or all of the bulky, uncomfortable equipment, particularly in the searing heat of the gulf region.

U.S. troops also carry auto-injecting needles that can inject atropine and oxime to counteract the effects of chemical nerve agents. But those must be applied immediately after contamination to be effective, Tucker said.

Tucker said the Iraqis are believed to have large, hidden stockpiles of chemical weapons, including "very high quality" mustard gas, a blistering agent, and nerve agents such as sarin, cyclosarin and VX. The chemicals are liquids that can be administered in person, or by aircraft, missiles or artillery shells.

"A drop (of VX) on the skin can kill within 15 to 20 minutes unless antidotes are immediately administered," Tucker said. "In the case of smallpox it would be impossible to decontaminate the body ... or the linens or anything else the body comes in contact with."

Iraq also has produced "significant quantities" of highly lethal biological agents such as anthrax, botulinum toxin, aflatoxin, gas gangrene and ricin, Tucker said. The Iraqis are also believed to harbor lesser amounts of smallpox. The possibility of U.S. troops having to bulldoze or burn comrades killed by chemical or biological weapons foreshadows the possibility that similar methods would have to be used on civilians caught in similar attacks, Pagonis said.

That could happen overseas during wartime or even in the United States in the event of a terrorist attack, he said. Most Army officers deflected questions about the mass graves option to Pentagon superiors, who in turn deferred to the White House. White House officials also declined to comment, saying any such plan is a Pentagon issue.

"I'd have to refer you to the Defense Department," Sean McCormick, spokesman for the White House's National Security Council, repeated several times during a brief telephone conversation. "We don't comment on military plans, operations or procedures."

A final decision on the option would have to be made by President Bush or Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, Kuykendall said.

"Not everybody's going to support whatever we do," he said.

<http://www.denverpost.com/Stories/0,1413,36%257E6439%257E1132683%257E.00.html>

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Inside The Ring

By Bill Gertz and Rowan Scarborough

CBW suits

Defense officials say the warfighting suits used to protect troops from chemical or biological weapons attack are inadequate.

"The suits are designed to defend against an attack," said one official. "What that means is that if you get hit, you put on the suit and run. They are not good for fighting."

The suit consists of a zip-up coverall, mask, boots and gloves known as the Joint Service Lightweight Integrated Suit Technology, or JSLIST.

The protective power of the suits is limited by the length of time the suit's masks can filter weapons agents from the air. The filters are good only for several hours, the officials said.

The issue of chemical warfare protective gear is a major issue as U.S. forces head to the Persian Gulf region. Intelligence assessments say that if Saddam Hussein's regime is threatened, he will break out his stockpiles of chemical, nerve and blister agents, as well as germ weapons, including deadly anthrax, and use them against advancing forces.

Iraq recently imported a special silicon powder under the U.N. oil-for-food program that can enhance its chemical and biological weapons by helping the agents penetrate the suits.

<http://www.washtimes.com/national/20030124-7454848.htm>

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New York Times

January 24, 2003

Korean Talks Make Little Progress On Arms Issue

By James Brooke

SEOUL, South Korea, Friday, Jan. 24 — North and South Korea ended an all-night negotiating session here today with South Korea acknowledging that the talks had "not produced a progressive position from the North over the nuclear issue."

Papering over differences after three days of talks, the two sides issued a statement before dawn. "The South and North fully exchanged each other's positions regarding the nuclear issue and agreed to cooperate toward a peaceful resolution to this problem," it said.

South Korea had sought what it called concrete steps from North Korea. But it was a minor victory that North Korea would talk about nuclear weapons on the Korean Peninsula at all. North Korea's government maintains that it will only negotiate its bomb program with the United States, which it views as the primary threat to its territory.

By holding fast to a common front against North Korea's nuclear program, South Korea reaffirmed its common interest with Washington, the country's key ally but one that has come in for criticism recently.

"We will also continue efforts to resolve North Korea's nuclear issue through close cooperation with the U.S. and Japan," a South Korean statement said. "The South Korean government will continue urging North Korea, through various channels, to live up to all of its duties regarding the nuclear issue."

On Wednesday, North Korea's chief delegate, Kim Ryong Song, said his country's nuclear program was for peaceful purposes to generate electricity, and he accused the United States of using the nuclear issue to dominate the Korean Peninsula.

Unmoved, South Korea's unification minister, Jeong Se Hyun, on Thursday night urged North Korea to clear up the nuclear weapons impasse, saying, "We must completely remove the security concerns which have been formed on the Korean Peninsula recently."

In a briefing for reporters today, Rhee Bong Jo, a South Korean spokesman, said South Korea "strongly demanded" that the North promise to abandon its nuclear weapons program. But he said the five North Korean delegates refused to make concessions, saying North Korea would only discuss nuclear issues directly with Washington.

"North Korea kept contending that this nuclear issue should be resolved through dialogue with the United States," Mr. Rhee said.

On Thursday, Russia's foreign minister, Igor S. Ivanov, called for "direct dialogue between Washington and Pyongyang." President Vladimir V. Putin of Russia briefed President Bush by telephone on a Russian envoy's recent

trip to Pyongyang, North Korea's capital, and said the visit created a "good foundation for a productive dialogue" with North Korea.

On Thursday, North Korea accused one potential mediator, the United Nations secretary general, Kofi Annan, of bias in urging it to reconsider its decision to pull out from the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty. Calling the withdrawal "an unavoidable, self-defensive measure," North Korea said Mr. Annan "had created a misleading impression as if our country alone was violating treaties to disarmament."

<http://www.nytimes.com/2003/01/24/international/asia/24KORE.html>

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New York Times

January 24, 2003

Pg. 1

Plot To Poison Food Of British Troops Is Suspected

By James Risen with Don Van Natta Jr.

WASHINGTON, Jan. 23 — Islamic militants arrested in Britain this month may have been plotting to lace the food supply on at least one British military base with the poison ricin, according to American government officials. The revelations raised concerns in Britain and the United States about the security of allied forces as war preparations continue.

American officials said they had received intelligence reports showing that the British authorities suspect that a group of militants arrested there in a series of raids may have been trying to gain access to the food supply on at least one military base in the United Kingdom. British officials found traces of ricin in a London apartment where the first arrests were made in the case.

"It's a very live theory," said one American law enforcement official familiar with the information from the British. American officials said the reports showed that one of the suspects worked for a food preparation company and had been in contact with individuals who worked on at least one British military base. The United States officials said they did not know the identity of the suspect. They said they also did not know which British military base or bases might have been targets of the plot. Officials cautioned that the assessment is a working theory among British investigators, and that conclusive evidence had not yet been obtained.

"There are some investigators who believe the ricin was being developed to poison British troops," an American official said. "But we still have found no direct evidence between the ricin discovery and that kind of plot."

A spokesman for the British Home Office declined to comment on the reports.

But the potential threat has clearly heightened concern in Britain, where Prime Minister Tony Blair recently ordered an increase in the number of troops being deployed to the Middle East in preparation to join the United States if it uses force against Iraq.

Pentagon officials also said they had ongoing fears about the potential for terrorists to attack the food and water supplies at American bases. They said they had been taking precautions to protect American troops being deployed in the Persian Gulf region and elsewhere overseas.

Few details of the British investigation have so far been made public, but the possibility that the plotters were planning to poison British troops helps to explain why the British authorities have been moving so aggressively on the case in recent weeks.

On Jan. 5, the British antiterrorist police found traces of ricin in a north London apartment. Six men were arrested on various terrorism-related charges. Some of the men were described as Algerians, but none have been identified publicly.

Ricin is derived from the castor bean, the same plant used to make laxatives and castor oil. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta, the poison can exist in pellet form, mist or powder, and can dissolve in a liquid. The poison can be inhaled, injected or ingested, though studies have shown that ingestion causes the most damage with the least amount of ricin.

When ingested, ricin causes severe and rapid bleeding to the stomach and intestines. If the poison gets into the bloodstream, it can attack the liver, kidneys and spleen, often leading to death.

The initial discovery of traces of ricin led to an intensified series of arrests after the first raid. On Jan. 14, during a raid in Manchester, England, that was linked by the authorities to the ricin discovery, at least one suspect fatally stabbed a British policeman and wounded four other antiterrorist officers. Three men, described as being of North African descent, were arrested.

Shortly after midnight on Monday, a team of 150 police officers used battering rams in a raid on a mosque in the Finsbury Park section of London, where seven men were arrested.

The mosque has long been suspected by the authorities in the United States and Britain as having connections to the Qaeda terror network. In the raid, the police seized a stun gun, a weapon that fires blanks and a gas canister. The authorities also said they had found a number of forged passports and hundreds of other documents related to forging identities. Of the seven men who were arrested, six, ranging in ages from 23 to 48, are from North Africa, and another, 22, is from Eastern Europe, the authorities said.

A spokesperson for the Metropolitan Police Service in London said a 31-year-old North African man was also arrested in northeast London on Wednesday and is being held under Britain's Terrorism Act.

In addition to the raids that have been publicized, law enforcement officials briefed on the continuing investigation said the British antiterrorist police have conducted about 10 secret searches of homes and apartments connected to the inquiry in the past several weeks.

British authorities have not publicly linked the suspects to Al Qaeda, but one government official in London said there was evidence of significant links between the men and the terrorist network established by Osama bin Laden.

That official said that at least one of the men in custody was trained at a Qaeda training camp in Afghanistan.

Several London newspapers this week reported that one of the Algerians was regarded as a key player in the Qaeda network, and had been sought for months by Scotland Yard. A senior American government official confirmed that officials believed some of the men arrested at the mosque had strong Qaeda links, but the official cautioned that they may also be connected to a militant Algerian organization.

Since the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon on Sept. 11, 2001, more than 280 terrorism suspects have been arrested in Britain. The authorities have said that most of the detained men were of North African descent, and that there were dozens of Algerians among them.

Within the last year, militant Muslims in England have warned that British military and government officials would be targets of terrorist attacks. In an interview in January 2002 with the BBC, Hassan Butt, a 22-year-old native of Manchester who was living in Pakistan, predicted that a "new phase" of terrorism would be conducted against Britain, saying the targets would be "British military and government institutes, as well as British military and government individuals."

On Tuesday, Mr. Blair said the most recent arrests at the mosque demonstrated that the level of terrorist activity had increased in recent months. In November, he said there was a dramatic increase in intelligence reports indicating that terrorists were plotting a spectacular attack.

"Supposing they were able to kill instead of 3,000 people, 30,000 people," Mr. Blair said. "Does anyone doubt that they would do it?"

<http://www.nytimes.com/2003/01/24/international/europe/24TERR.html>

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Friday, 24 January, 2003, 14:27 GMT

Iraq 'preparing for chemical war'

Documents smuggled out of Iraq by an opposition group appear to indicate that Baghdad is equipping key units with protection against chemical weapons.

The hand-written papers, said to have been smuggled out by the Iraqi opposition, refer to new chemical warfare suits to protect soldiers and distribution of the drug atropine to counter the effects of nerve gas.

The notes, passed on by the opposition Iraqi National Coalition to the BBC, also included details for attacking ships in the Gulf.

BBC diplomatic correspondent Bridget Kendall says the Iraqi opposition groups that provided these documents has vested interests in seeing Saddam Hussein undermined, so it is very difficult to assess whether we should believe the documents.

She adds that the timing of their release is significant at a time when the United States and the UK are trying to win over opinion to their approach to the Iraq crisis.

A spokesperson for UK Prime Minister Tony Blair said the documents would fit with Saddam Hussein's efforts to hide weapons of mass destruction.

BBC defence correspondent Paul Adams says US and British planners have speculated on the possibility of Iraq using drones to spray chemical weapons on coalition troops, but there is no conclusive proof this has been done.

Opposition in Exile

The Iraqi National Coalition is a group of former Iraqi army officers who have turned against Saddam Hussein and are now living in exile.

The Secretary General of the coalition, Tawfik al-Yassiri - a former brigadier-general - told the BBC's Today programme that the documents originated from serving members of the Iraqi military.

"We have members of our organisation in most of the camps and cities in Iraq, from soldiers to generals," he said.

Mr al-Yassiri said the information had been verified through various sources.

Iraq's Republican Guard and Special Republican Guard are among the recipients of special suits and atropine, according to the documents.

A former arms inspector, Bill Tierney, told Today that "if both these two units have new equipment, then it would indicate that they are prepared to use chemical weapons".

The report of Iraqi war preparations is bound to intrigue UN weapons inspectors, the BBC's Rageh Omaar reports from Baghdad.

According to a UK Government report last year and UN inspectors' findings, Iraq has undeclared stocks of VX and sarin nerve agent. It is thought Iraq could deploy such chemicals quickly.

http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/2690163.stm

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