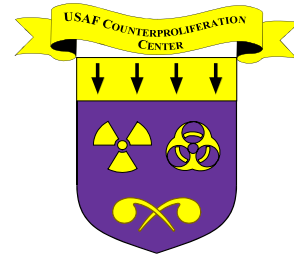


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USAF COUNTERPROLIFERATION CENTER

CPC OUTREACH JOURNAL



Air University

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Maxwell AFB, Alabama

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Reports Place Saddam, Scientists In Libya, But GIS Sources Believe Only Qusay In Libya; Uday In Belarus

Exclusive. Analysis. By Gregory R. Copley, Editor, GIS (Global Information System). With input from resources in Libya and elsewhere.

Reports from several credible intelligence sources have placed former Iraqi Pres. Saddam Hussein, along with some 400 former Iraqi officials and scientists, in Libya. It was understood from those sources that he arrived in the country late in May 2003. GIS/Defense & Foreign Affairs Daily sources, however, in both Tripoli and elsewhere, said that it appeared that only Qusay Saddam Hussein — the son of Saddam — was in Libya with the other Iraqi officials.

GIS sources believed that Saddam had remained in his prepared, secure site inside Iraq, largely because it would be difficult for him to be able to return to Libya if he did, in fact, leave the country at this time.

It was believed, by the GIS sources, that Saddam dispatched Qusay and his other son, Uday, on missions abroad to build the network through which Saddam hoped to revive his fortunes. Uday was now, according to good sources, in Belarus — which had traditionally been a major supplier of defense technology to the Saddam Administration, in defiance of UN embargoes — possibly in or near the capital, Minsk.

Even the authoritative Middle Eastern web-based information service, Debka.com, which clearly has strong sources within the Israeli intelligence community, reported in its Hebrew service on May 31, 2003, and its English-language service on June 1, 2003, that Saddam was in Libya and that Uday "remained" in Belarus.

As GIS exclusively reported on April 11, 2003, a — Al Quwwat al Jawwiya al Jamahiriyah al Arabiya al Libya (Libyan Arab Republic Air Force) — Ilyushin Il-76 Candid transport aircraft departed the former US Air Force base at Wheelus Field, now known as Okba bin Nafa, just outside of Tripoli, on April 10, 2003, and flew to Syria, where, under conditions of extreme secrecy, it embarked a group of seven "VIP" cars, along with considerable baggage and security. The aircraft then returned to Okba bin Nafa where the passengers were disembarked and taken to an undisclosed destination.

[See Defense & Foreign Affairs Daily, April 11, 2003: Libyan Aircraft Collects "VIP Group" From Syria; Flies Back to Libya]

GIS reported at the time that the Iraqis appeared to have gone to Saddam Hussein's private compound in Libya, near Benghazi, in Cyrenaica. GIS/Defense & Foreign Affairs Daily subsequently reported on April 15, 2003, that "a second Libyan Air Force transport aircraft flew into, and out of, al-Mazah AB [Damascus] on Sunday, April 13, 2003, collecting an Iraq-related cargo of people and baggage".

That Saddam remained inside Iraq, at least through late May 2003, and was regrouping was highlighted in the May 30, 2003, GIS/Defense & Foreign Affairs Daily report entitled Iranian Clerics Meet With Iraqi Ba'athists to Form New Terrorist Operation; Bin Laden/Islamists Team With Ba'athists. Equally, the fact that the Saddam Administration had, for at least a decade or more, maintained between 10,000 and 20,000 Iraqi engineers, scientists, workers and specialists inside Libya working on weapons of mass destruction, and particularly delivery systems such as the NoDong-1 ballistic missile (IRBM) program, has been repeatedly documented by GIS.

GIS Washington analysts believed that the US Bush Administration was now paying the price for having deliberately excluded, or discouraged, discussion of the strategic and weapons links of the Saddam Administration to Syria, Libya, the bin Laden terrorist, and Iran, in the build-up to the US-led Coalition war against Saddam. This narrowly-focused approach was designed to ensure that the Bush Administration won a political/public mandate for its war against Saddam, but has resulted in a post-conflict situation in which the US and international audience is asking the US to produce Saddam's "weapons of mass destruction", or the links between Saddam and al-Qaida/bin Laden terrorism.

GIS has consistently — and well in advance of the current conflict period — highlighted these links. Even during the build-up to the 2003 Iraq War, GIS, on October 28, 2002, in a report entitled Iraq Moves WMD Matériel to Syrian Safe-Havens, highlighted the Syrian links with Saddam. This was only one of many reports, including reporting on the Iraqi involvement in the Libyan-based missile programs. As well, when it became apparent that the US, UK and Australia were not highlighting the Saddam links with bin Laden terrorists, GIS/Defense & Foreign Affairs Daily published a report on March 28, 2003, entitled: Strategic Trends in Iraq War Show Coalition Success and Concerns; Linkages Between Osama bin Laden/al-Qaida and Iraq Outlined.

Acknowledgement of these links — viewing the situation in a broader perspective — would have alleviated many of the problems now facing the Bush and Blair administrations. Even in Australia, terrorism "experts" have briefed the

Australian Government on the terrorism situation and have failed to either understand or acknowledge the historic and current linkages between Saddam, the Iranian clerical Administration, Libya and the loose Osama bin Laden network of terrorism, which GIS has consistently documented back into the early 1990s. Failure to understand how "secular" Middle Eastern leaders, such as Saddam Hussein, Libyan leader Mu'ammar al-Qadhafi, and the Palestinian Authority's Yasir Arafat, could work in close harmony with radical Islamists with whom they also share a large measure of mutual distaste, has largely been at the core of the failure of Western intelligence to comprehend the nature of the threats they face.

This is currently working strongly against the US, in particular, in resolving the Iraq situation, and in dealing with Libya and Iran. The fact that some people in the US Government were now contemplating an alliance with the anti-clerical Iranian terrorist organization, the Mujahedin e-Khalq, highlighted the desperation in Washington policy circles in coping with the challenges. [See Defense & Foreign Affairs Daily, May 27, 2003: Iranian Opposition Sources Warn of Dangers of Ill-Judged US Strategic Moves Against Clerics.]

The new developments with regard to Libya accentuate the problem. And significantly, the 30th session of the Islamic Conference foreign ministers meeting which ended in Tehran on May 31, 2003, renewed its call for the immediate lifting of the "unjust sanctions" which were imposed against Libya as a result of Libyan involvement in the December 1988 bombing of the Pan Am PA103 flight over Lockerbie, Scotland. In their final communiqué, the ministers renewed their call for releasing Abdelbaset al-Megrahi — the Libyan former intelligence officer imprisoned over links to the bombing — and affirmed their rejection of the unilateral actions and attempts to impose sanctions against member countries. The Tehran call for this action in support of Qadhafi highlighted the new "solidarity" re-emerging between Tripoli and Tehran.

In some ways, this reflects the re-emerging defensive mechanism between Saddam, Qadhafi and the Iranian clerics, but as this alignment reasserts itself, including the fact that Qadhafi has allowed a growing number of Iraqi Ba'athist officials safe haven in Libya, Qadhafi has demonstrated that he is prepared to risk US hostility.

Meanwhile, on May 30, 2003, it became clear that Libya, at the suggestion of Col. Qadhafi, was considering renaming the state. The official name of the country, the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriyya, would be abbreviated. A new variant of the official name has not yet been published, although it was understood that the word "Jamahiriyya" (essentially meaning "mass-based state") would be preserved. All this reflects that Qadhafi, who is terminally ill, is attempting to re-shape his image and approach in the face of increasing domestic opposition, including strong criticism from his own tribal leaders with the Gadadfa (Qadhadfa) tribe.

Essentially, however, Qadhafi has, like many other Middle Eastern leaders, taken his cue from the fact that the US has failed to take action against him over his direct weapons support and safe-haven for Iraqi Pres. Saddam Hussein, and the fact that the US has — despite its massive efforts — failed to capture or kill its principal opponents: Saddam and his sons, Osama bin Laden and Ayman al-Zawahiri.

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Boston Globe

June 1, 2003

Pg. 9

Ills Tied To Looted Iraqi Site

By Reuters

MADAEN, Iraq -- US officials said yesterday that they were recovering barrels looted from Iraq's nuclear agency, buying back containers that may be radioactive from people who had been washing clothes and storing food in them. Angry residents said their children had fallen ill after wearing clothes washed in barrels once used to store processed uranium at the Iraqi Nuclear Energy Agency, and which may still have had traces of radioactive material.

International Atomic Energy Agency inspectors will arrive shortly to investigate how much radioactive material was lost when looters raided the agency's compound last month after US-led forces toppled Saddam Hussein.

The looters made off with the barrels, dumping the so-called "yellow-cake" uranium inside a waste disposal facility at the sprawling complex south of Baghdad and selling them to unsuspecting residents of the nearby Madaen district for \$2 each.

Residents said US forces had bought back the barrels for \$3.

"We recovered 100 barrels, but we do not know how many more are out there," said Lieutenant Colonel Brent Bredehoff, head of US task force searching for the looted material.

"Yellow-cake radiation is not big, but coming in contact with the heavy metal will harm you," he said in an interview at the waste disposal complex.

Bredehoft said he hoped to get a better idea of the number of barrels from IAEA inspectors, who left Iraq just before the US invasion began in late March.

A research center possibly containing radioactive isotopes was also looted, Bredehoft said, as Iraqi workers sealed windows of the waste disposal building and secured the fence.

Iraqi and US specialists scoured the site with radiation detectors yesterday. "Radiation levels in the surrounding area were normal," said Jamal Akram al-Kubeissi of the Iraqi Nuclear Energy Agency. "US soldiers would not be standing here if there was danger."

But Madaen residents spoke of a mysterious illnesses in the district. Three-month-old Fouad Salman had lumps on his head and scars resembling burns on his back, which his mother said developed after he wore clothes washed in one of the looted blue barrels.

"The barrel looked clean when I used it," the mother said, cradling her infant. "US forces promised to come back with doctors, but they have not done so."

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New York Times

June 3, 2003

Pg. 1

G-8 Leaders Talk Tough On Spread Of Nuclear Arms

By John Tagliabue and Elisabeth Bumiller

ÉVIAN-LES-BAINS, France, June 2 — President Bush and leaders of the major industrialized countries today called nuclear proliferation "the pre-eminent threat to international security" and suggested that force could in some circumstances be used to meet the threat.

At the conclusion of a meeting of the Group of 8 leading industrial democracies, the leaders urged North Korea and Iran to curb their nuclear programs, saying they would not "ignore the proliferation implications of Iran's nuclear program."

The leaders said they had at their disposal a range of tools, like inspections and export controls, to deal with the threat of proliferation. In a clear reference to force, they added that they could employ, "if necessary, other means in accordance with international law."

The United States has accused Iran of developing nuclear weapons under the cover of its civilian nuclear program, and there has been speculation that it could become the next target of the Bush administration. But today, according to Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi of Italy, Mr. Bush said he had no intention of attacking Iran.

"Bush made a clear statement that the idea of an armed operation by American forces in Iran is completely without foundation," Mr. Berlusconi said. He did not say whether Mr. Bush had addressed the use of force against North Korea. In the past, the White House has insisted that the North Korea issue will be resolved diplomatically.

The leaders called on North Korea "to visibly, verifiably and irreversibly dismantle any nuclear weapons programs." Mr. Bush left the summit meeting this afternoon, but not before telling his fellow leaders that he expected the American economy to achieve growth of 2.9 percent in the second half of this year, according to Alfred Tacke, a senior aide to Chancellor Gerhard Schröder of Germany.

The meeting provided the first opportunity for the deep trans-Atlantic rifts caused by the Iraq war to be addressed in person by the leaders involved. The summit leaders' statement avoided any reference to Iraq.

Mr. Bush and President Jacques Chirac of France had a cheerful photo session on a terrace overlooking Lake Geneva before a 25-minute private meeting, their first since the Iraq war divided them. "We can have disagreements," Mr. Bush said, "but it doesn't mean we have to be disagreeable to each other."

Mr. Bush, who had implicitly reprimanded the French as recently as the weekend for the divisions in the Atlantic alliance, seemed to go out of his way to flatter Mr. Chirac. He was particularly solicitous of his advice on the peace talks that the American president will hold with Israeli, Palestinian and other Arab leaders in Egypt and Jordan this week.

"I'm going to meet with Jacques here in a little bit and ask his advice on the Middle East," Mr. Bush said. "He's a man who knows a lot about the Middle East, he has got good judgment about the Middle East, and we will spend some time discussing that."

Mr. Chirac later said it was "possible and probable" that he would travel to the United States before the opening of the United Nations General Assembly in the fall, and that he would then meet Mr. Bush again.

Turning to the world economy, the leaders said the conditions were in place for a revival of economic growth. But they continued to differ on the best means to accelerate the process, with Mr. Bush stressing the value of his new

\$350 billion of federal tax cuts as an effective remedy, while leaders from Europe and Japan stressed the long-term changes to the structure of their economies now under way.

Mr. Tacke said Mr. Bush had "confirmed that a policy of a strong dollar remains." The president's recent remarks in support of a strong dollar have caused it to stem a months-long slide against the euro.

Mr. Chirac, at a news conference, cited the dissipation of uncertainties following the conclusion of the Iraq war, stable oil prices and low interest rates as among the grounds given by the leaders for their optimism.

Clearly, though, the focus of the meetings was on nuclear weapons proliferation, against the backdrop of the continuing efforts to thwart international terrorism. A senior Bush administration official said the tough language on Iran's and North Korea's nuclear programs was made possible by support from France, Germany and Russia, the nations that had been less than supportive on the war in Iraq. "What's key is that the only two countries named are North Korea and Iran and that the language is very strong," the official said, adding that it was the Russians who suggested that the communiqué declare that North Korean behavior was undermining agreements curbing nuclear arms.

The statement on Iran, the official said, clears the way for the International Atomic Energy Agency to deal with Iran on June 16. "Iran's going to be on the griddle," the official said. "This statement confirms it."

Iran's president, Mohammed Khatami, responding to the growing world attention to his country's nuclear program, said today in Tehran that the Islamic republic had no plans to develop nuclear weapons. He noted that Iran was one of the first nations in the Middle East to propose that the region become a zone free of nuclear weapons.

"All of Iran's nuclear activity is under the inspection of the International Atomic Energy Agency, and we have no intention of obtaining nuclear arms," Mr. Khatami said at a diplomatic reception. "Don't use this as a pretext to pressure and threaten Iran."

A senior administration official in Évian, asked whether Mr. Bush had told the leaders that the United States would not invade Iran, as Mr. Berlusconi said, replied: "I actually don't recall that conversation per se. Iran was talked about in the context of proliferation. He may have said, as I recall, something that that kind of speculation was not warranted."

Most of the G-8 leaders were set to meet one last time on Tuesday morning to summarize the results of their meetings, but with the departure of Mr. Bush, much of the wind had gone out of the meeting's sails. And the bulk of the work has been completed.

On the economy, the leaders discussed trade issues, including the latest the Doha round of trade negotiations, where they are seeking to narrow their differences before a crucial meeting in Mexico, in September. But a French official said that they had only "agreed to be in agreement," and that low-ranking officials would be delegated to resolve remaining differences.

The leaders also approved an action plan on health to help developing nations overcome shortages of essential medications. France had proposed a draft version that included measures like ensuring greater access to generic drugs in developing countries, improving access to branded drugs through differential pricing and stimulating local production and technology transfer. But most of these measures were expunged from the final version at the insistence of the United States, which saw them as a menace to intellectual property rights in pharmaceuticals.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2003/06/03/international/europe/03SUMM.html>

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Washington Times

June 3, 2003

Pg. 1

CIA Says Al Qaeda Ready To Use Nukes

Also sees terrorists with chemical, biological weapons

By Bill Gertz, The Washington Times

Al Qaeda terrorists and related groups are set to use chemical, biological and nuclear weapons in deadly strikes, according to a new CIA report.

"Al Qaeda's goal is the use of [chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear weapons] to cause mass casualties," the CIA stated in an internal report produced last month.

"However, most attacks by the group — and especially by associated extremists — probably will be small-scale, incorporating relatively crude delivery means and easily produced or obtained chemicals, toxins or radiological substances," the report said.

Islamist extremists linked to al Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden "have a wide variety of potential agents and delivery means to choose from for chemical, biological and radiological or nuclear (CBRN) attacks," said the four-page report titled "Terrorist CBRN: Materials and Effects."

The unclassified report was produced by the CIA's intelligence directorate, and a copy of it was obtained by The Washington Times.

The report identifies several deadly toxins and chemicals that al Qaeda could use to conduct the attacks, including nerve gases, germ and toxin weapons anthrax and ricin, and radiological dispersal devices, also known as "dirty bombs."

Disclosure of the CIA report comes as the agency is under fire over its reports on Iraq's chemical, biological and nuclear weapons, none of which has been uncovered. Several lawmakers from both parties, including Sens. John W. Warner, Virginia Republican, and John McCain, Arizona Republican, have called for hearings into the intelligence about Iraq that the Bush administration received.

In the latest report, the CIA said terrorist success would depend on planners' technical expertise. However, one likely goal of any attempted attack would be "panic and disruption," the agency stated.

Several groups of al Qaeda tried to conduct "poison plot" attacks in Europe using chemicals and toxins in assassinations and small-scale attacks, the CIA said.

"These agents could cause hundreds of casualties and widespread panic if used in multiple, simultaneous attacks," the report said.

Also, al Qaeda is developing bombs with radioactive material from industrial or medical facilities, and an al Qaeda document obtained in Afghanistan revealed that the group had sketched out a crude device capable of causing a nuclear blast, the report said.

"Osama bin Laden's operatives may try to launch conventional attacks against the nuclear industrial infrastructure of the United States in a bid to cause contamination, disruption and terror," the report stated.

Al Qaeda's plans for chemical arms were revealed in a document obtained in summer 2002 that "indicates the group has crude procedures for making mustard agent, sarin and VX," the report said.

Mustard is a blistering agent, and sarin and VX are nerve agents that can kill humans in small amounts.

The report also states that Mohamed Atta, ringleader of the September 11 attacks, and Zacarias Moussaoui, who is on trial in Virginia on charges related to the attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon, studied methods of delivering biological weapons.

Both men "expressed interest in crop dusters, raising our concern that al Qaeda has considered using aircraft to disseminate [biological warfare] agents," the report said.

According to the report, al Qaeda and other terrorists also could produce what the CIA calls an "improvised nuclear device" capable of causing a nuclear blast.

Such a bomb is "intended to cause a yield-producing nuclear explosion," the report said.

Terrorists could produce a nuclear device in three ways, including a bomb made from "diverted nuclear-weapons components," a nuclear weapon that had been modified, or a new, indigenously designed device, the report said.

A homemade nuclear bomb would be one of two types: either an implosion device that uses conventional explosives to create a nuclear blast, or a "gun-assembled" device. Making a nuclear bomb would require that terrorists first obtain fissile material such as enriched uranium or plutonium as fuel for creating a nuclear blast.

A more likely type of terrorist attack is the use of such nuclear material with conventional explosives to create a "dirty," or radiological, bomb, the report said.

"Use of a [radiological dispersal device] by terrorists could result in health, environmental and economic effects as well as political and social effects," the report said. "It will cause fear, injury, and possibly lead to levels of contamination requiring costly and time-consuming cleanup efforts."

Among the materials that are available to terrorists for this type of bomb are cesium-137, strontium-90 and cobalt-60 — materials used in hospitals, universities, factories, construction companies and laboratories.

A security notice made public by the State Department yesterday stated that "al Qaeda and sympathetic terrorists groups continue to demonstrate their interest in mass-casualty attacks using chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear (CBRN) weapons."

The notice said no information proves the group now is planning an attack in the United States with a weapon of mass destruction, but noted that "such an attack cannot be ruled out."

The FBI also distributed a bulletin recently to law-enforcement agencies identifying the chemical, biological and nuclear weapons available to al Qaeda and other terrorists.

The CIA report contains photographs of a training video obtained in Afghanistan from an al Qaeda training camp showing chemical agents being tested on dogs.

Agents available to the group include toxic cyanides that can kill in high doses and less-lethal industrial chemicals such as chlorine and phosgene. Biological agents al Qaeda could use include anthrax, a bacteria that can cause mass casualties, and botulinum toxin. The CIA stated that methods for producing botulinum have been found in terrorist training manuals. Another toxin weapon, ricin, "is readily available by extraction from common castor beans," the report said. "There is no treatment for ricin poisoning after [the toxin] has entered the bloodstream," the report said. "Terrorists have looked at delivering ricin in foods and as a contact poison, although we have no scientific data to indicate that ricin can penetrate intact skin."
<http://www.washtimes.com/national/20030603-122052-2698r.htm>

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USA Today
June 3, 2003
Pg. 12

U.S., Britain Defend Weapons Claims: 'Our Credibility Is Intact'

By John Diamond and Bill Nichols, USA Today

WASHINGTON — U.S. and British officials defended their allegations that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction amid growing charges that the Bush administration may have overstated ambiguous intelligence to sell the war in Iraq.

Secretary of State Colin Powell said Monday that everything he told the United Nations in his indictment of Iraq's weapons programs in February had been vetted by the CIA and that only information backed by multiple sources were made public. "Our credibility is intact," he told ABC News. "Everybody knows that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction."

Also Monday, British Prime Minister Tony Blair, speaking to reporters at the close of a summit of industrial nations in France, said he stands "absolutely 100% behind the evidence. The idea that we doctored such intelligence is completely and totally false."

The comments came as criticism mounted on Capitol Hill and among intelligence professionals. Senate committees will investigate the issue as soon as this month.

A U.S. intelligence expert who helped prepare Powell's presentation in February said the effort was rushed and, in some cases, relied on circumstantial evidence. For example, Powell said Iraq "could have produced" 25,000 liters of anthrax. According to the expert, who spoke on condition he not be identified, there was no hard evidence that Iraq had produced the anthrax. Instead, the charge grew out of findings by U.N. weapons inspectors in the mid-1990s that Iraq had failed to account for anthrax growth media.

A senior congressional Democrat urged President Bush to personally address questions about the Iraq evidence. "The credibility of the United States is now in question," Rep. Henry Waxman of California said.

Powell's 90-minute presentation Feb. 5 to the U.N. Security Council was a watershed moment in the run-up to war in Iraq. With CIA Director George Tenet seated behind him in a silent endorsement, Powell laid out evidence he said proved Iraq had banned weapons.

"This wasn't material I was making up. It came from the intelligence community," Powell said Monday as he flew to Egypt for a Middle East summit. But Powell, in the news conference and in an interview with ABC News, was careful to say Iraq "had" weapons of mass destruction in the past.

At the CIA, officials rejected suggestions that intelligence had been manipulated. Tenet issued a statement Friday defending the evidence on Iraqi weapons.

Retired Army colonel George Robertson, an authority on biological weapons who served as a U.N. inspector in Iraq, defended the work of the CIA and the Defense Intelligence Agency. But he said U.S. intelligence had been under pressure for failing to warn of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks and did not want to underestimate another threat. Nor did military intelligence analysts want to underplay the threat, only to see U.S. troops in Iraq come under chemical or biological attack.

A majority of Americans seem indifferent to the growing clamor. A USA TODAY/CNN/Gallup Poll shows that 56% of respondents say the war on Iraq would still be justified even if weapons of mass destruction were not found. The poll of 1,019 adults Friday through Sunday has an error margin of +/-3 percentage points.

http://www.usatoday.com/news/world/iraq/2003-06-02-wmd-usat_x.htm

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Miami Herald
June 3, 2003

CIA Lacked Info To Counter Claims About Iraqi Weapons

By Warren P. Strobel and John Walcott

WASHINGTON - CIA assessments of Iraqi chemical and biological weapons generally were more cautious than that of the Pentagon and White House, although its analysts also concluded that Saddam Hussein was hiding weapons of mass destruction, knowledgeable officials say.

CIA chief George Tenet resisted pressure to shape the agency's estimates to provide justification for the war, according to current and former officials with knowledge of the CIA's workings.

But senior intelligence officials said the agency didn't have an extensive network of spies who might have provided an alternate view to the one put forward by the Pentagon and officials in Vice President Dick Cheney's office.

That view, which was more alarmist, was based largely on intelligence passed on by exile groups with their own agendas, particularly the Iraqi National Congress, via a special unit established by Undersecretary of Defense Douglas Feith.

"The real issue isn't whether the intelligence community hyped what we had. It's how little we had. We had no significant high-level political sources inside [Iraq]; we had no significant penetration of Hussein's WMD [weapons of mass destruction] programs and we had no high-level agents in the Iraqi military," said one official, who like the others spoke only without attribution because it's illegal to discuss classified intelligence information.

That left the CIA at a disadvantage in the fierce bureaucratic struggle over intelligence on Iraq, they said.

"You can't beat something with nothing, and nothing's what we had," said one official.

But framing the public debate, congressional inquiries and an internal CIA review around the question of whether officials revised intelligence estimates to serve the Bush administration's purposes "misses the point and lets everybody off the hook," one of the officials said.

"Were estimates doctored? Not to my knowledge. Were analysts told what to write? I don't believe so," the official said. "But was our intelligence on Iraq as good as it needed to be? Absolutely not."

The CIA lost most of its covert network in Iraq in a series of reversals.

Most notable was a failed 1996 coup attempt against Hussein, which the Iraqi regime not only prevented but also used the plotters' CIA-provided satellite phones to tell American operatives that it had failed. The U.S.-backed group that planned the coup, the Iraqi National Accord, was found to have been thoroughly penetrated by Hussein's agents. Top Bush administration officials say evidence of banned-weapons activity by the Iraqis has been found and that much more will surface.

They point to two mobile laboratories that appear to have been designed to produce biological weapons and are similar to those that Secretary of State Colin Powell described before the war to the U.N. Security Council.

An increased U.S. search for Iraqi chemical, biological and nuclear facilities, which began Monday, will be "the most extensive regime imaginable," Powell told reporters Monday in Rome. Another senior intelligence official added that top officials from Hussein's regime who are in custody are slowly beginning to talk about WMD programs.

Knight Ridder correspondent Jonathan S. Landay, traveling with Powell, contributed to this report.

<http://www.miami.com/mld/miamiherald/news/world/6000301.htm>

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ArmyTimes.com
June 2, 2003

More Gas Masks Distributed To Pentagon Workers

By Associated Press

The Pentagon has handed out 25,000 emergency gas masks to prepare defense employees for possible chemical or biological terror attacks.

That completes about one-third of the effort started in late February, when officials began training an average of several hundred people a day in the use of "emergency escape hoods." On Monday, they gave the masks to a few dozen members of the news media corps who work daily in the Defense Department headquarters.

The masks are designed to give wearers up to about an hour of protection to flee chemical or biological contamination, officials said.

Some 80,000 masks are to be made available for department employees and other workers as well as visitors at the Pentagon and its annexes in other office buildings throughout the Washington area.

Workers normally keep their masks at their desks, but if a high-threat period is declared, they are to carry them at all times in a case that hooks onto their belts.

The Defense Department had been working to protect the Pentagon from biological or chemical attacks since the 1995 sarin gas attacks by a doomsday cult on the Tokyo subway system, officials have said. But it decided to issue the masks after a number of additional precautions were instituted following the Sept. 11, 2001 terrorists attacks on the Pentagon and World Trade Center.

Since Sept. 11, officials have created a new 100-person office to oversee defenses against chemical, biological and radiological attacks, have stationed Humvees and military police at checkpoints outside the building and increased patrols inside and out.

There are chemical, biological and radiological sensors inside and outside the building, with samples taken and tested daily, officials said.

Entrances to the subway and bus stops have been moved farther from the building and testing and screening of packages coming into the building has been increased. There are new hallway speakers for the public address system and a computer program for announcing emergency instructions to employees if there is an attack.

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Wall Street Journal
June 3, 2003

North Korea Vows To Expand Its Atomic-Weapons Program

By Jay Solomon, Staff Reporter Of The Wall Street Journal

SEOUL, South Korea -- A group of U.S. lawmakers visiting North Korea said officials of the communist country told them Pyongyang had atomic weapons and was seeking to expand its production program, after having nearly completed the reprocessing of 8,000 spent fuel rods from a nuclear-power plant.

Pyongyang's comments, attributed to three of North Korea's highest-ranking officials, are its strongest affirmation to date that it has become North Asia's third nuclear power, after China and Russia, and come as the Bush administration seeks to build a broad coalition to confront North Korean leader Kim Jong Il. President Bush and Russian President Vladimir Putin demanded over the weekend that Pyongyang curtail its nuclear ambitions. U.S. Deputy Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz said in Singapore that North Asian countries must use their "economic leverage" to force North Korea to behave responsibly.

North Korea "is teetering on the edge of economic collapse," the Associated Press quoted Mr. Wolfowitz as saying. "That, I believe, is a major point of leverage."

South Korean President Roh Moo Hyun said Monday Seoul has no "clear proof" to substantiate Pyongyang's latest claims about its nuclear weapons. But Mr. Wolfowitz, who met with Mr. Roh Monday in Seoul, said the Bush administration "should take what they're saying very seriously."

"We came away totally and completely convinced that they understand what we're about," said Curt Weldon (R., Pa.), the congressional delegation's leader and a senior member of the House Armed Services Committee. But he said the officials not only told him that the country possessed nuclear weapons, but also said that it is actively seeking to develop more.

The delegation visited Pyongyang for three days ended Sunday and was made up of three Republicans and three Democrats. The group said it met with Foreign Minister Paek Nam Sun, Vice Foreign Minister Kim Kye Gwan and Choi Thae Bok, the chairman of North Korea's legislature. Mr. Weldon said that the delegation wasn't acting on behalf of the Bush administration but that its findings would be passed on to Secretary of State Colin Powell and other U.S. officials.

Despite what they learned, the lawmakers said in Seoul that they left North Korea optimistic that Washington could persuade the North to dismantle its weapons programs if the U.S. offered the proper economic incentives and security guarantees. Mr. Weldon said he discussed with senior North Korean officials the prospect of Washington's providing energy, food and economic aid in exchange for North Korea's scrapping its nuclear program and that the response was "overwhelmingly positive."

A U.S. State Department official said in Seoul Monday that the Bush administration was continuing to examine the possibility of holding a second round of talks with the North Koreans in a multilateral forum -- the first round was held in Beijing in April -- but denied a Japanese news report that such talks already had been scheduled for this month. Meanwhile, the Japanese Foreign Ministry said Monday that officials from the U.S., Japan and South Korea would meet in Hawaii on June 12 and 13 to discuss how to coax North Korea into abandoning the weapons-development program. Assistant Secretary of State James Kelly is scheduled to attend the two-day talks with his Japanese and South Korean counterparts, according to the statement.

A number of the American lawmakers said Washington's removal of Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein from power appears to have increased North Korea's desire to obtain nuclear weapons. Pyongyang appears to see nuclear weapons as its "only trump card," said Eliot Engel, a New York Democrat. "They think they need the deterrent or they'll be run over."

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Moscow Times

June 3, 2003

Pg. 3

Russia Needs Iran Proof Or Incentives

By Simon Saradzhyan, Staff Writer

President Vladimir Putin's remarks Sunday that the Russian and U.S. positions on Iran "are closer than they seem" show that the Kremlin has become genuinely concerned with Tehran's alleged nuclear program, analysts said Monday.

But Russia is unlikely to stop its nuclear power cooperation with Iran without solid proof of its nuclear weapons ambitions or U.S. incentives, they said.

"The positions of Russia and the U.S. on the issue are much closer than they seem," Putin said at a news conference with U.S. President George W. Bush. "We do not need to be convinced that the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction should be checked and prevented throughout the world."

Putin also defended Russia's construction of the Bushehr nuclear power plant in Iran. "On Iran, we are against the pretext of using the nuclear program as a lever in unfair business competition against us," he said.

Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov was quick to follow Putin's lead, and he urged Tehran on Sunday to sign an additional protocol to the Nonproliferation Treaty that would open the door to tougher inspections of its nuclear program by the International Atomic Energy Agency.

Iran is a signatory of the treaty but is only obliged to admit inspectors to nuclear sites it has declared to the IAEA, analysts said. Putin's comments represent a verbal concession to U.S. pressure and a genuine interest in preventing the emergence of a new nuclear power on Russia's frontiers, analysts said.

"It seems that Moscow is concerned and may be taking a more cautious approach to its cooperation with Iran in areas that have implications for Iran's programs of WMD," said Brenda Shaffer, research director of the Caspian Studies Program at Harvard University.

Ivan Safranchuk, head of the Moscow office of the Washington-based Center for Defense Information, agreed, saying the prevention of a new nuclear power close to Russia is perhaps one of the few clearly defined interests that Russia has vis-a-vis Iran.

Putin's comments also were timed to react "to the fact that the U.S. is becoming increasingly articulate in its concerns over Iran," Politika head Vyacheslav Nikonov said, referring to media reports that the United States might be considering a regime change in Iran.

Furthermore, the \$1 billion that Bushehr means to the Russian nuclear power industry holds more attraction than the possible threat of nuclear proliferation, Nikonov and Safranchuk said.

Perhaps the only way to get Russia to throw in the towel would be for the United States to tacitly offer adequate compensation behind closed doors, they said.

Safranchuk added, however, that Russia might change its stance on its own if Tehran continues to refuse to sign an agreement requiring it to ship all spent fuel from Bushehr to Russia -- deliveries that would prevent it from enriching the fuel to weapons grade.

Nuclear Power Minister Alexander Rumyantsev said Monday that Russia and Iran have agreed in principle to send the spent fuel to Russia and a document "is practically ready."

<http://www.themoscowtimes.com/stories/2003/06/03/011.html>

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Washington Post

June 3, 2003

Pg. 16

Blix Urges U.N. To Keep Weapons Team Intact

Inspector: Iraq Work Could Restart Soon

By Colum Lynch, Washington Post Staff Writer

UNITED NATIONS, June 2 -- Chief U.N. weapons inspector Hans Blix, who oversaw the United Nations' efforts to peacefully disarm Iraq, appealed to the Security Council today to keep his weapons inspections team intact after he steps down from his post at the end of the month.

Blix, who has been barred by the Bush administration from resuming inspections in Iraq, said in a 45-page report to the council that the inspectors possess extensive knowledge of the U.N. database and archives on Iraq's proscribed weapons programs covering more than 13 years of inspections. He also said that U.N. inspectors could restart inspections in Iraq within weeks if they receive approval from the council and the United States and its military allies.

Blix's appeal comes as Britain is asking the administration to allow the U.N. Monitoring Verification and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC), which was established in 1999 to complete the disarmament of Iraq, to return to the country to certify the elimination of Iraq's chemical, biological and nuclear weapons programs.

"It would be inadvisable to undertake any drastic overall reduction in the present cadre of staff," Blix wrote in his final quarterly report to the council on the inspectors' activities. "In the months to come it may also be desirable that this staff engage in summarizing and digesting unique experience gained" during its hunt for Iraqi weapons.

Blix has recently suggested that UNMOVIC, which has assembled a permanent corps of 76 international arms inspectors at U.N. headquarters with expertise in biological and chemical weapons and missile technology, could be transformed into a permanent inspection arm of the Security Council.

John D. Negroponte, the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, said last month that the United States and its allies had taken over responsibility for the disarmament of Iraq and that Washington "foresees no role" for the U.N. inspectors for the time being.

Influential members of the administration, including Vice President Cheney and Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld, have faulted Blix for failing to take a sufficiently tough line with the former Iraqi government.

U.S. and other Security Council diplomats have indicated that Washington may be prepared to back some role for the U.N. inspection agency in certifying Iraq's disarmament once Blix leaves. "Post-Blix, there may well be some shifting toward UNMOVIC," a council diplomat said.

Blix concluded in his report that the U.N. inspection agency, which continues to sift through millions of pages of data on Iraq's weapons and tests, found no evidence of the "continuation or resumption" of banned weapons programs during nearly three months of inspections from Nov. 27 to March 18.

At the same time, Iraq failed to convince the inspection agency that it had destroyed massive quantities of biological and chemical agents and weapons it possessed at the time of the Persian Gulf War in 1991. "Inspections and declarations and documents submitted by Iraq . . . contributed to a better understanding of past weapons programs," he wrote. "However, the long list of proscribed items unaccounted for . . . was neither shortened by the inspections, nor by the Iraqi declarations and documentation."

Blix provided some new findings on the Iraqi government's efforts to conceal potentially banned programs, noting that Baghdad had apparently never declared the existence of two suspected mobile biological weapons production plants discovered by the United States. President Bush and other senior U.S. officials maintain that the discovery of the trucks last month confirms their contention that Iraq was secretly engaging in an illegal program to produce biological weapons.

Senior Iraqi officials at the al-Kindi Research, Testing, Development and Engineering facility in Mosul, Iraq, where Kurdish fighters seized one of the trucks in April, said the facility produced hydrogen for artillery weather balloons. The CIA and the Defense Intelligence Agency issued a May 28 report that cast doubt over those claims, saying it was an inefficient method for producing hydrogen.

In March, Iraq presented the U.N. inspectors with 39 photographs and four videos containing images of six mobile facilities, including a food testing laboratory, that it said were used for legitimate purposes. "None of the vehicles in these pictures look like the trucks recently described by relevant units of the coalition," Blix said.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A5368-2003Jun2.html>

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New York Times
June 3, 2003

U.N. Inspectors Say Baghdad Never Resolved Arms Issues

By Felicity Barringer

UNITED NATIONS, June 2 — The United Nations weapons inspection office provided a postscript to its truncated mission today, suggesting in a new report that many open questions remain about whether and when Saddam Hussein's government destroyed its chemical and biological agents.

The report by the office of Hans Blix, the executive chairman of the United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission, also noted that none of the vehicles on Iraqis' prewar list of "legitimate vehicles" that could be mistaken for mobile biological weapons labs bore any resemblance to the two mobile facilities found recently in Iraq.

Overall, the report said, despite some late and limited Iraqi cooperation, "the long list of proscribed items unaccounted for and as such resulting in unresolved disarmament issues was neither shortened by the inspections, nor by Iraqi declarations and documents." In particular, the report said, there was no clear evidence how much anthrax and VX nerve gas Iraq had possessed, and how much it had destroyed.

"This assessment does not resolve the question regarding the total quantity of anthrax produced and destroyed by Iraq," the report said. As for VX, it said, "accounting issues remain concerning the chemical."

The report, which was distributed to Security Council members today, seemed to have traveled through a time warp from the prewar period of bitter disputes between antiwar and pro-war camps — a time when every finding in earlier reports was cited in support of one side or the other.

But today, after allied inspectors have been combing Iraq for weeks with little but the labs to show for it, there was scarcely a ripple of reaction to the United Nations report.

The focus in the discussion of unconventional weapons in Congress and elsewhere has shifted to the credibility of the intelligence work that led the Secretary of State, Colin L. Powell, to declare to the Security Council on Feb. 5 that Iraq possessed large stockpiles of such weapons.

At a news conference in Rome today, Mr. Powell reiterated his conviction that there was no evidence that Iraq had destroyed the unconventional weaponry it admitted to assembling before the Persian Gulf war in 1991. Speaking alongside Foreign Minister Franco Frattini, he said: "There were weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. It wasn't a figment of anyone's imagination.

"Iraq used these weapons against Iran in the late 80's," he continued. "Iraq used such weapons against its own people in the late 80's. When the gulf war was over in 1991, we found such weapons and destroyed some of them.

Inspectors were in Iraq for years and were forced to leave Iraq in 1998 without getting the answers that were needed with respect to what weapons remained, where they were and what programs were still under way."

<http://www.nytimes.com/2003/06/03/international/worldspecial/03INSP.html>

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

Global Security Newswire (nti.org)
June 2, 2003

Pentagon Report Outlines Chemical, Biological Defense Needs And Solutions

By David Ruppe, Global Security Newswire

WASHINGTON — A range of new vaccines, real-time multiagent detection systems, safer decontamination solutions and less burdensome protective clothing are among the numerous measures sought by the U.S. military to better protect U.S. forces against chemical and biological warfare threats.

The various needs — and the solutions planned to address them — were outlined in the annual report of the Defense Department's Chemical and Biological Defense Program provided to Congress in April and released to the public last month.

To develop improved chemical and biological defense technologies, the Pentagon this year requested more than \$1.1 billion to research, develop and acquire chemical and biological defenses in fiscal 2004, up \$35 million from the previous year's request.

At a March congressional hearing, the senior Pentagon official overseeing the effort said U.S. forces are becoming better prepared for operating in chemical and biological warfare environments, but conceded that there are shortcomings.

"I believe that the forward-deployed troops are the best protected that they can be," said Dale Klein, assistant secretary of defense for nuclear, chemical and biological defense.

Nevertheless, "we wish we had better standoff detectors, we wish we had better antibiotics, we wish ... we knew what was coming so that we could detect to prevent rather than detect to treat," he said.

Michael Powers, a senior fellow at the Chemical and Biological Arms Control Institute here who recently completed a review of U.S. biological defense activities, similarly said there are two particular weaknesses in U.S. biological defense capabilities in particular, both on the prevention side: detection and vaccine availability.

The detection weakness is of particular concern because the military's approach to chemical and biological defense focuses on preventing contamination. Post-exposure treatment is a less preferable option, as it would inevitably require removing soldiers from the battlefield.

"Their emphasis is really on preventing exposure rather than preventing disease," he said.

Detection Capabilities

The report specifically says there is a need for battlefield chemical and biological detection systems that are able to detect and identify in real time all known chemical and biological agents.

"Current technologies require a high level of logistical support and lack discrimination in biological standoff detection," it said. "Real-time detection of biological agents is currently unavailable and is unlikely in the near- to mid-term, though investment efforts are reducing detection times."

Detection devices are needed for a range of entities, from ships to vehicles to soldiers, according to the report.

Soldier Protection Systems

Insufficient detection systems, Powers said, hinder soldier contamination avoidance efforts because soldiers may not have enough time to don their protective equipment.

"What you want to do is provide ample warning that an agent could be moving through your area so you could don your gas mask," he said.

The recent Pentagon report says efforts are underway to develop protective clothing that is longer lasting and less burdensome to the soldier in terms of weight and heat.

"Individual protection equipment must also provide protection against emerging threats, such as novel agents or toxic chemicals," it says, suggesting that the challenge will be difficult and complex. "Integral respiratory protection requires tradeoffs between physiological performance parameters such as pulmonary function, field of regard, speech intelligibility and anthropometric sizing against constraints of cost, size/weight, protection time and interfacing with other equipment."

A breakthrough could be pending, according to the report, as a new mask now in the final stages of testing is expected to offer increased protection, improved comfort and usability.

Funding also is directed toward technologies to reduce the weight, volume, cost and deployability of chemical- and biological-safe shelters and to integrate skin and respiratory protection systems into major weapons systems.

That, too, can be a challenge, as protection is sought for incorporation into major land, sea, and air weapons systems — for instance, within the Army's Comanche, Crusader, Bradley, Breacher, Heavy Assault Bridge, Future Scout and Cavalry systems.

Decontamination Systems

More efficient, less destructive decontamination systems also are needed, the report says.

"Existing systems are effective against a wide variety of threat agents, yet are slow and labor intensive and present logistical, environmental, material and safety burdens," it says.

According to the report, existing systems are inadequate for decontaminating electronic equipment or for a large area, such as a port or airfield. The military is searching for decontaminants that are not water-based or corrosive, can be used on equipment to neutralize a wide range of agents, pose no "unacceptable" health hazards and require reduced manpower and logistics to implement.

Medical Defense

Another major biological defense weakness, said Powers, is the availability of vaccines for the many possible biological weapons threats.

The nature of the science and technology, he said, forces the Defense Department to develop specific vaccines for a broad array of potential threat agents, often after a lengthy testing processes for safety.

The military currently lacks Food and Drug Administration-licensed vaccines for a number of biological weapons threats. Work is underway to develop and license vaccines for Q fever, tularemia and smallpox. There are options, however, for the development and licensing of 10 other vaccines, the report says.

In the next two years, the military expects to have licensed a paste for reducing chemical agent exposure to skin and a pretreatment for protection against soman, a nerve agent. It also aims to produce a new system for identifying and diagnosing biological agent exposure, licensing the antibiotic cyprofloxacin for treating anthrax and approving a shorter dosing schedule for administering anthrax vaccine, the report said.

Anthrax vaccination currently requires a primary series of six doses given over 18 months, with an annual booster to maintain immunity.

“The protocol makes it difficult to complete before deployment of forces or to ensure that mobile forces, once deployed, are administered the proper regimen,” it said.

Work also is underway to assess the effectiveness of current medical countermeasures on nontraditional chemical and biological agents and to assess the effects of low dose exposure to chemical agents on soldiers.

Powers says the military is much more prepared to deal with the chemical threat than the biological threat.”

“Longstanding programs within the Chemical Corps, a lot of the training and education programs that have been underway for several years if not decades have really focused on the chemical weapons threat, or dealing with the biological threat in sort of the context of a hazardous materials response,” Powers said, noting that the military is much more prepared to deal with a chemical threat than a biological one.

“What DOD I think has come to realize in the past couple of years ... is a sort of gradual shift to recognize the difference in both the threat and necessary response for chemical and biological weapons and a recognition of the important role played by the public health and the medical care providers within DOD in dealing with the biological weapons challenge,” he added.

http://nti.org/d_newswire/issues/newswires/2003_6_2.html

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Department of Defense Chemical and Biological Defense Program

Volume I

Annual Report to Congress

April 2003

<http://www.acq.osd.mil/cp/vol1-2003cbdpannualreport.pdf>

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New York Times

June 4, 2003

Pg. 1

Iraq Arms Report Now The Subject Of A C.I.A. Review

By James Risen

WASHINGTON, June 3 — A top secret United States intelligence report last fall is now at the center of an internal C.I.A. review to determine whether American intelligence miscalculated the extent of the threat posed by Saddam Hussein's weapons programs. The report had concluded that Baghdad had chemical and biological weapons and was seeking to reconstitute its nuclear program.

The document, which was described by intelligence officials familiar with the review, provided President Bush with his last major overview of the status of Iraq's program to develop weapons of mass destruction before the start of the war.

The document, called a national intelligence estimate, was issued last October. It is significant because it provided the White House with the last attempt by the entire intelligence community to reach a consensus concerning Iraq's weapons programs before the war started in March.

The national estimate has been an early focus of attention for a small team of retired C.I.A. analysts who have been brought in by the agency's director, George Tenet, to assess the accuracy of the intelligence reports produced before the war, according to officials familiar with the review. Separately, the C.I.A. is now in the process of turning over

to Congress the underlying documents that were used by analysts to prepare the national estimate, just as lawmakers in both the House of Representatives and the Senate are preparing for their own reviews of the prewar intelligence. Traditionally, a national intelligence estimate is one of the most important reports produced by the intelligence community. It is intended to provide a forum for analysts from all of the different American intelligence agencies to express their differences on a specific topic and then reach a position on an assessment on which they can agree. Such broad-based involvement from top analysts throughout the government lends the estimates special weight among policy makers, including the president.

The review of the intelligence estimate made last fall comes as the failure to find Iraq's weapons of mass destruction so far is flaring into a major political issue for the Bush administration. Both Secretary of State Colin L. Powell and Mr. Tenet have been forced in recent days to defend their handling of intelligence in the months that lead up to the war. At the same time, intelligence analysts inside the government continue to complain about the role played over the past year by a special Pentagon unit that provided policy makers with an alternative, and more hawkish, view of intelligence related to Iraq.

In a prepared statement issued by the C.I.A. late last week, Mr. Tenet denied that the intelligence on Iraq was warped in order to satisfy the Bush administration's desire to find evidence to support its policies. "The integrity of our process was maintained throughout, and any suggestion to the contrary is simply wrong," Mr. Tenet said. But several C.I.A. officials interviewed recently declined to comment on or defend the actions over the past year of the Pentagon's special intelligence unit, which sought to highlight information from Iraqi exiles and other sources that had frequently been dismissed by C.I.A. analysts. And some C.I.A. analysts have said they felt pressure to make their reports conform to the Bush administration's Iraq policy.

Now, officials say that the C.I.A. review team examining prewar intelligence plans to ask the Pentagon for documents from the special intelligence unit to try to determine what its role was in shaping the intelligence during the months leading up to the war.

In Congress, the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence and the Senate Armed Services Committee have announced plans to conduct a joint inquiry into the prewar intelligence, while the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence plans its own examination. In a May 22 letter, the leaders of the House panel asked Mr. Tenet to provide answers to a series of questions on the issue, including whether the "sources and methods that contributed to the community's analysis on the presence and amount of W.M.D. in Iraq were of sufficient quality and quantity to provide sufficient accuracy."

One official familiar with the C.I.A. review said the answer to that fundamental question may be no. The official said it appeared that the C.I.A. and other intelligence agencies had developed fairly solid intelligence on Iraq's weapons programs after the Persian Gulf war in 1991 and through much of the 1990's, as United Nations inspectors scoured the country.

During that time, the United States grew convinced that Iraq had chemical weapons, was trying to develop biological agents and was seeking to reconstitute a nuclear program that had been disrupted by the war. But the official said it now appeared that the quality of the intelligence concerning Iraq's weapons programs subsequently declined, particularly after the inspectors were withdrawn in 1998.

Without conclusive new intelligence to the contrary, it appears that the intelligence community continued to make projections assuming a continued Iraqi weapons effort, in line with its earlier assessments, the official said. The fragments of intelligence that came in periodically after the inspectors were withdrawn were never enough to prove that Mr. Hussein had abandoned his weapons programs, and so the natural inclination was to assume that those programs were still under way.

United States intelligence officials still caution that American forces may yet find conclusive evidence of Iraq's chemical or biological weapons. Mr. Bush has pointed to the discovery of two suspected mobile labs as evidence that Iraq was trying to develop biological weapons.

However, officials now acknowledge that at least some of the pre-war analysis was inaccurate. The United States had, for example, received reports indicating that Iraqi military units had received the authority to deploy and use chemical weapons against advancing American troops. But postwar searches of Iraqi military facilities and interrogations of Iraqi officers have failed to turn up any evidence that chemical weapons were deployed.

It was perhaps inevitable that the national estimate on Iraq's weapons programs would receive special scrutiny. Even as it was being produced last fall, the estimate was already at the center of a political struggle between Democrats in Congress and the C.I.A. and the Bush administration over the threat posed by Mr. Hussein's government.

Last summer, Democrats on the Senate Intelligence Committee, including Bob Graham of Florida and Dick Durbin of Illinois, asked the C.I.A. to produce a national intelligence estimate that would review all of the major policy issues related to Iraq. The intelligence community resisted, agreeing instead to produce one that was more narrowly focused on the status of Iraq's weapons programs.

When Mr. Graham, then the intelligence committee's chairman, finally saw the report, he asked that its findings be declassified in time for the Senate debate on a resolution to support the war in Iraq. When Mr. Tenet provided a letter to Mr. Graham that included some of the report's findings, Mr. Graham complained that only those findings that supported the administration's position on Iraq had been declassified, while others that raised questions were not.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2003/06/04/international/worldspecial/04WEAP.html>

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Los Angeles Times

June 4, 2003

Pg. 1

Iraqi Weapons Expert Insists Search Is Futile

As a new hunt for banned arms begins, a military scientist says the chemical agents he helped develop have been gone for years.

By Bob Drogin, Times Staff Writer

BAGHDAD — After three decades as one of Saddam Hussein's chief chemical warriors, Iraqi Brig. Gen. Alaa Saeed picks nervously at the kebabs on his plate as he talks about the deadly nerve gases and blister agents he once produced.

His hands shake visibly as he describes his last terrifying meeting with Hussein, even though it was more than five years ago. He worries about his culpability for the sweeping documents he wrote declaring to the United Nations that Iraq was free of banned weapons. And thoughts of the price he may pay for his deeds haunt him.

"My future is dark," he says, dropping his voice to a furtive whisper as a waiter passes the table. "I don't know what will happen."

His once-feared boss, Gen. Hussam Mohammed Amin, is now one of five top Iraqi weapons officials known to be in U.S. custody for potential war crimes. A team from Britain's MI-6 intelligence agency grilled Saeed last week. As a new, intensive hunt for weapons gets underway after more than two months of fruitless U.S. Army searches, a U.S. intelligence team has ordered him to appear for questioning Thursday.

Saeed, perhaps the most senior weapons scientist to speak to a reporter since the war, says he would gladly accept a \$200,000 reward U.S. officials here have quietly offered to anyone who can lead them to the poison gases, germ weapons and other illegal weapons that President Bush repeatedly insisted were secretly deployed in prewar Iraq. But Saeed said he cannot take them to what he insists no longer exists.

"Their questions are the same as yours," he said. "Do you know of any documents or inventory of chemical agents? Any stockpiles? Any production programs? Any filled munitions? Do you have any idea where these weapons are? I am ready to give them all the information I have. But the answer is always the same: 'No, no, no.'"

"I tell them there are no hidden chemical or biological weapons," he said. "Maybe there is some other group, like the SSO [Hussein's ruthless Special Security Organization] or the Mukhabarat [the Gestapo-like intelligence agency], who have done it. I don't know. That is not my responsibility."

A U.S. intelligence official in Washington said Tuesday that senior Iraqis in custody have provided little useful information.

Limited Knowledge?

"The high-level folks are stiffing their interrogators," the official said, speaking on condition of anonymity. Those who are talking are sticking to the regime party line. "They say: 'We don't know anything about WMD, don't know anything about war crimes, don't know anything about POWs. Saddam? I hardly knew the man.'"

The official said U.S. interrogators are getting information from lower-level Iraqis that is "more valuable."

Saeed insists that the combined blitz of allied bombing and intense U.N. inspections in the 1990s effectively destroyed Hussein's chemical, biological and nuclear programs. U.N. sanctions, he said, stopped Baghdad from importing the raw materials, equipment and spare parts needed to secretly reconstitute the illegal programs, even after U.N. inspectors left the country in 1998.

"I think, maybe, [Hussein] wanted to rebuild the CW and BW [chemical and biological weapons] programs when sanctions were lifted," Saeed said.

Why, then, didn't the Iraqi ruler help the U.N. resolve hundreds of unanswered questions about banned weapons?

"I don't know," Saeed replied. "Maybe he is too proud."

Saeed said he believed that had he consented to an interview by U.N. inspectors last winter outside Iraq, his wife and three children, perhaps his six brothers, would have been killed.

U.N. inspectors who worked with Saeed for a decade confirmed his identity and role. They cautioned that the story he tells today is consistent with what he told the U.N. after 1995: that all chemical bulk agents and munitions, as well as many key records and reports, were destroyed by 1994.

"We still don't know if that is true," said a U.N. official in New York.

Although Bush last week hailed the discovery of two tractor-trailer rigs filled with laboratory equipment as proof of illegal Iraqi weapons, other U.S. military officials here and in Washington now acknowledge that the initial weapons hunt in Iraq largely failed, a victim of faulty intelligence, poor planning, inadequate support and outsized expectations.

The failure to locate weapons of mass destruction has become a controversial issue for the Bush administration, with several influential lawmakers saying they believe the White House either exaggerated the threat or was misled by the intelligence community.

And in Britain, where Prime Minister Tony Blair's argument for ousting Hussein hinged on the existence of such weapons, a parliamentary committee announced Tuesday that it would investigate the decision to wage war.

Members of the initial weapons-inspection teams in Iraq, part of the 75th Exploitation Task Force, have now begun leaving the country. They are being replaced this weekend by an expanded interagency effort, called the Iraq Survey Group, with a broader mandate.

Rather than simply searching sites, the new mission will seek out intelligence. In addition to analyzing documents for clues, they will interrogate scientists, factory workers, truck drivers and anyone else who might lead them to a hidden stash.

New Search Begins

The effort has already begun. Over the last two weeks, U.S. and British teams have quietly begun interviewing scores of Iraqi scientists, engineers, technicians and others at their homes, their offices and other sites.

On Monday, for example, about 20 neatly dressed Iraqis gathered outside a six-story, dun-colored building to swap rumors and wait their turn in an interrogation room off the marble lobby inside.

An American in jeans with a holstered pistol, who declined to identify himself or his agency, ordered a Times reporter to leave the building. Soon after, half a dozen men in civilian clothes emerged without comment and left in a U.S. military convoy.

Several Iraqis said the Americans interviewed three biological scientists Sunday and one Monday. They said the Americans asked senior scientists and officials from Hussein's chemical weapons and missile production programs to return later this week.

"They ask the same questions every day," said Dr. Mahmoud Dagher, the last director of Iraq's Military Industrialization Company, which supervised a vast network of factories and companies responsible for most of Iraq's weapons production and procurement.

"I told them we gave them everything and nothing was kept," he said. He said he too had turned down the \$200,000 offer. "The money is nothing. The truth is the truth."

Saeed arguably knows more than any other Iraqi about Hussein's former chemical weapons programs.

He is a short, wiry man with an easy smile and a thinning thatch of white hair above gold-rimmed aviator glasses. His English — he earned his doctorate in analytic chemistry from the University of Sussex in Britain in 1988 — is as impeccable as his manners.

He graduated in 1972 from the University of Baghdad with a degree in chemistry and joined the army's newly formed chemical corps. He joined the ruling Baath Party in 1980, and when Iraq invaded Iran that year, he was assigned to Project 922 — the secret development and production of poison gases.

"If I say no, they will ship me to the front and I will disappear," Saeed said in an effort to explain his participation in the project.

His work took place at the Muthana State Establishment, a huge complex of production plants, research laboratories, bunkers and other facilities built on desolate grazing land about 50 miles northwest of Baghdad.

Over the next decade, according to U.N. reports, Muthana would produce thousands of tons of some of the deadliest chemical weapons known, including such toxic nerve agents as VX, tabun, sarin and cyclosarin, as well as mustard blister gas. They were loaded in bombs, artillery shells, rockets and missile warheads and used against Iran.

In 1988, after a three-year break studying in Britain, Saeed was named head of quality control at Muthana. He supervised the continued production of a witch's brew of lethal gases, although U.N. inspectors say the exact amounts — especially of VX, one of the most horrific agents — is still unclear.

Saeed said Hussein ordered Muthana emptied before the 1991 Persian Gulf War. Chemical munitions and other material were dispersed to airfields and military bases across Iraq.

"We would just obey the order," he recalled. "Take 100 munitions to this air base, take 200 to that one." None were used in the war, however, and Muthana was heavily bombed by allied forces.

After the 1991 war, Saeed was quickly assigned to the U.N. teams as Iraq's liaison for chemical weapons. He ultimately became deputy chief of the "minders" attached to the inspectors. He wrote all three of Iraq's "accurate, final and complete" chemical weapons declarations to the U.N. Security Council, including a 2,000-page portion of the 12,000-page document handed in last December. Like its predecessors, that report was quickly denounced as inaccurate and incomplete by both U.S. and U.N. officials. But Saeed confirmed part of what Bush administration officials asserted after U.N. inspectors returned to Iraq last winter. He said he and other scientists were under strict orders to bring "a friend" and a tape recorder to any U.N. interviews. Regime officials had insisted the scientists were under no such pressure. Saeed also explained why neither he nor any other scientist ever agreed to be interviewed outside Iraq, despite U.N. offers of safety. "We were told our families would be killed if we left the country," he said. Steven Black, who served with the U.N. inspection teams from 1992 to 1999, said Saeed "wouldn't necessarily know about covert things" outside his control. "There was a group over the minders who didn't necessarily tell them what was going on," he said. Moreover, Black said Saeed and his colleagues were grilled hundreds of times by U.N. inspectors. "I know he lied to us, and he may be lying to you," he said. "This isn't some bank robber who's been hauled in. These guys have gone through this time and time again. They are very comfortable with this line of questioning." Despite the ouster of Hussein's regime, Black said, senior Iraqis still have reasons to lie. "Some of these guys did really bad things in the past and they don't want to own up to it," he said. "Or they're not convinced that Saddam is gone, and they know that when the U.S. goes, whoever talked will get dipped in an acid bath." Like many Iraqis, Saeed is convinced Hussein is still alive. His hands still tremble when he describes how Hussein's security agents suddenly appeared at his office in late 1997. They ordered him into a car with shades drawn and took him to an unknown location. The dictator was waiting inside. "He thanked me for my work," he recalled. His voice dropped. "But I am still shaking." *Times staff writer Greg Miller in Washington contributed to this report.*
<http://www.latimes.com/news/printedition/la-fg-chemwar4jun04235422.1.3597717.story>

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Wall Street Journal
June 4, 2003

Russia Is Raising The Stakes On Iran's Nuclear Program

Tehran Must Allow IAEA Access to Projects If It Wants Moscow's Help, Putin Says

By Gregory L. White and Marc Champion

Iran appears headed for a showdown over its nuclear program later this month as leading industrial nations, including Russia, Tehran's main civilian nuclear sponsor, turn up the heat on the Islamic republic to prove it's not seeking nuclear weapons.

Russia ratcheted up the pressure Tuesday, making it clear that its civilian nuclear projects with Iran could be at risk unless Tehran agrees to intrusive new inspections by the International Atomic Energy Agency, something Tehran so far has refused to do.

"We will build our cooperation with all countries based on the extent to which they are open and willing to put their [nuclear] programs under the supervision of the IAEA," President Vladimir Putin told a news conference after a meeting with the other leaders of the Group of Eight industrial nations in Evian, France.

Those comments came just a day after the G-8 put Iran on notice in a joint communique that they would "not ignore the proliferation implications of Iran's advanced nuclear program."

Iran insists that it has no nuclear-weapons program. The IAEA, the nuclear watchdog for the United Nations, reports to its board of governors on June 16 on the results of inspections of newly discovered nuclear facilities in Iran. The U.S. is pushing the agency to demand Iran prove that it's not violating its obligations under the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty. U.S. officials have outlined a series of technical questions they say must be answered to determine whether Iran is secretly pursuing nuclear weapons.

"We want Iran put on notice that if it fails to answer key questions by the time of the next board meeting in September," the issue will be referred to the U.N. Security Council, which can impose sanctions and other punishments, a senior U.S. official said. Russian officials so far have said they will wait until they see the latest inspection results before deciding what next steps to take.

If the IAEA doesn't find evidence of a weapons program in Iran, however, the U.S. could find its credibility badly tarnished. Delays in finding weapons of mass destruction in Iraq have fueled talk in Europe that the U.S. misled the world about their existence in order to justify the war, a charge U.S. officials deny. In fact, a British parliamentary committee said Tuesday it would investigate the government's decision to go to war with Iraq, as pressure mounted on Prime Minister Tony Blair to explain claims that Iraq had such weapons.

The Iran issue has the potential to strain already difficult trans-Atlantic relations. France and Germany, which also are on the IAEA board, have taken a softer line with Iran on the nuclear issue through the European Union, hoping to use diplomacy and economic rewards for good behavior.

When Iraq was suspected of developing illicit nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, Russia, France and Germany banded together earlier this year in an attempt to prevent the U.S. from taking military action to disarm Iraq. In Evian, these divisions seemed to close somewhat, when on Monday the leaders produced a joint declaration on how to deal with weapons proliferation, warning both Iran and North Korea.

Tuesday, however, as the G-8 summit ended, interpretation of that document appeared to be in dispute. French President Jacques Chirac said a reference to "other measures in accordance with international law" that are available to disarm uncooperative states didn't include the option of using force. But the U.S. official said, "Of course it refers" to military action, or taking steps such as interdicting ships carrying weapons of mass destruction to preemptive military attacks.

Publicly, Russian officials haven't explicitly linked continuation of a \$1 billion power-plant project to Iran's agreeing to broader inspections. But a senior U.S. official said the Russians had told Secretary of State Colin Powell recently that they were holding up shipment of fuel to the lightwater reactor until Tehran agreed that spent fuel would be returned to Russia.

Nuclear-power plants are one of the few Russian exports that are competitive on the international market, and the project in the southern Iranian city of Bushehr is one of the industry's biggest. Mr. Putin Tuesday reiterated that Russia opposes the use of concerns about weapons programs as a pretext for squeezing Russian companies out of potential export markets.

But revelations in recent months that Iran has been working on a range of nuclear projects beyond the Bushehr station, including the capacity to enrich uranium, have raised Russian concerns, according to analysts. "The possibility that Iran could get nuclear weapons is a much greater threat to Russia than to the U.S.," if only because of Russia's proximity, said Sergei Karaganov, deputy director of the Institute of Europe in Moscow.

--*White reported from Moscow and Champion from Evian, France. Scott Miller in Brussels and Carla Anne Robbins in Washington contributed to this article.*

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Washington Post

June 4, 2003

Pg. 11

Readiness For Chemical Attack Criticized

Most States' Public Health Labs Lack Equipment and Expertise, Group Reports

By Ceci Connolly, Washington Post Staff Writer

Despite repeated warnings by the Bush administration that chemical agents are among the most readily available terrorist weapons, the nation's public health laboratories are "dangerously unprepared" for a chemical attack, according to a state-by-state analysis released yesterday.

The vast majority of labs do not have the equipment or expertise to identify a wide range of potential chemical weapons, including ricin, cyanide, sarin, VX and most pesticides, the nonprofit, nonpartisan Trust for America's Health reported.

"This is a huge area of vulnerability," said Shelley Hearne, the group's executive director. "There has not been an aggressive response to fill this gap."

Nearly 18 months ago, the Department of Health and Human Services identified chemical testing as one of seven priorities for state health departments. But little progress has been made, officials concede, in large measure because bioterrorism projects overshadowed all over preparedness work.

"If we have to respond to a chemical terrorism event, it will be a train wreck," said Scott Becker, executive director of the Association of Public Health Laboratories. "We don't have a national plan or testing methods or a lead agency for many of the laboratory activities that will be needed when a crisis occurs."

Not a single state lab has the capability to test for many of the most common -- and most hazardous -- chemicals, such as phosgene, a poison that can cause severe lung damage, and arsine, a gas that when inhaled can lead to permanent organ damage and death. Only two states, Georgia and Iowa, have the equipment and expertise to test for cyanide, although the highly toxic compound is commercially available or naturally found in 41 states.

Only eight states have drafted plans for responding to a chemical attack. HHS and the Environmental Protection Agency have yet to resolve a dispute over which department has ultimate responsibility for chemical testing.

"We know we need to develop this capacity," said Joseph Henderson, associate director for bioterrorism at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. "It's just not that simple."

He said that the proper lab equipment is expensive and that chemical testing requires extensive training. This year, the CDC intends to allow states to use portions of their federal grants for chemical lab expansion if they choose.

The ability to rapidly detect and identify chemical agents in an emergency "can mean the difference between life and death," the report noted, citing the intentional gassing of hostages in a Moscow theater in 2002. As victims flooded into the hospitals, physicians with no information about the nature of the substance had difficulty treating them.

Unlike the explosion of a bomb, chemical warfare can be surreptitious. Many of the 60 chemical agents on the CDC threat list are invisible, odorless and can take hours or days to cause harm.

If a suspected chemical attack occurred today, human specimens such as blood or urine would be shipped to Atlanta for testing in CDC labs. Henderson said most states are hiring coordinators and developing protocols for packaging and shipping those types of specimens.

Historically, the EPA has analyzed environmental samples, such as contaminated water. But it is less certain that the EPA would handle that testing in the event of a terrorist attack, Henderson said.

"We're getting to a better place," he said, describing the year-long negotiations. "We still need to determine roles and responsibilities."

The result, Hearne said, is "this has not been on anyone's radar screen. Homeland security probably should be stepping in refereeing this."

A spokesman at the Department of Homeland Security said he was unable to answer questions regarding the threat of chemical agents and chemical testing capabilities in the country.

Hearne was sharply critical of the administration's decision to invest large amounts of time and money in a smallpox vaccination campaign that has come to a virtual standstill.

"The HHS mentality was, 'It's bugs or bust,' " she said, referring to germ warfare. "It was a complete smallpox and plague obsession that this money was only to be used for the biological concerns."

The report said that prioritizing was a "startling oversight" given earlier warnings by the General Accounting Office and Jerome M. Hauer, the HHS assistant secretary in charge of terrorism, about the ready availability of chemical agents.

With the nation "reeling from the anthrax attacks" of 2002, Henderson said, HHS made the decision to devote most of its energy to bioterrorism in 2003. "That was the driving advice we were getting from HHS."

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A9900-2003Jun3.html>

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New York Times on the Web
June 5, 2003

Bush Pledges U.S. Will 'Reveal the Truth' in Weapons Search

DOHA, Qatar (AP) -- President Bush argued Thursday the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq was justified and pledged that "we'll reveal the truth" on Saddam Hussein's weapons of mass destruction.

"We've made sure Iraq is not going to be used as an arsenal for terrorist groups," Bush said, his coat off and shirt sleeves rolled up as he spoke to a sea of tan camouflage-clad U.S. soldiers at the command center for the Iraq war. Bush noted the recent discovery of what U.S. officials say are mobile biological weapons labs and said the search for banned arms could take a long time.

"We're going to look. We'll reveal the truth," Bush said. "But one thing is certain: no terrorist network will gain weapons of mass destruction from the Iraqi regime because the Iraqi regime is no more."

Bush's visit comes as questions continue to swirl around his primary justification for the conflict in Iraq -- that Saddam had weapons of mass destruction and was poised to use them.

Bush pointed to the laboratories in a recent interview with Polish television to say, "We found the weapons of mass destruction."

The president, fresh from a two-day mission aimed at bringing peace to the Middle East, said the Iraq war "sent along a clear message that our nation is strong and our nation is compassionate."

"America sent you on a mission to remove a grave threat and liberate an oppressed people and that mission has been accomplished," he told the more than 1,000 troops, who cheered every other sentence.

Bush spoke to troops in a warehouse at Camp As Sayliyah, the temperatures climbing despite the air conditioning. After his remarks, the president paused to shake his hands with troops. The troops held cameras and video recorders above their heads to get a picture of the president.

Earlier Thursday, Bush met privately with Gen. Tommy Franks, the commander of all U.S.-led forces in the Persian Gulf and with L. Paul Bremer, the new head of the occupation authority in Iraq, to discuss the progress of Iraqi reconstruction.

He also paid a courtesy call to the emir of Qatar, a country that has been a longtime U.S. ally.

"You have been a steadfast friend of the United States, and for that we are very grateful," Bush told Emir Sheik Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani.

Bush said Iraq is a better place now, cataloguing humanitarian works by U.S. troops.

The troops are trying to thwart a wave of crime that Bush blamed on Saddam, who he said emptied jail cells of "common criminals" just before the war and left his people hungry and desperate.

The criminals "haven't changed their habits or their ways," Bush said. "They like to rob, loot. ... We'll find them. Day by day the United States and our coalition partners are making the streets safer for the Iraqi citizens."

Bush blamed Saddam for neglecting his country's infrastructure, without mentioning damage from the war. Building the country up will accelerate the emergence of a new government, he said.

"A more just political system will develop when people have food in their stomachs, and their lights work, and they can turn on a faucet and they can find some clean water -- things that Saddam Hussein did not do for them," Bush said. "I've been on the road for a while and I hope you didn't mind us stopping by," Bush said. "I'm happy to see you and so are the long-suffering people of Iraq."

U.S. and British forces have yet to find tangible evidence that Saddam had stocks of chemical and biological weapons ready to use.

The president's major ally in the war, British Prime Minister Tony Blair, is embroiled in the biggest controversy of his six years in power, accused of exaggerating the dangers posed by Iraq.

But Bush's approval ratings remain high in U.S. polls. And his visit here, his first to the region since combat ended, was akin to a victory lap after a seven-day trip to Europe and the Middle East.

Bush has blunted criticism of his role in the Iraq war by throwing his energy into drumming up support for an internationally drafted peace plan that would result in the creation of a Palestinian state by 2005.

He won support for the effort from Arab leaders on Tuesday, and was able to wring concessions on Wednesday from both the Israeli and Palestinian prime ministers.

"Great and hopeful change is coming to the Middle East," Bush said in Aqaba as he shared a platform with the prime ministers of Israel and the Palestinian Authority and the king of Jordan.

On the way from Aqaba to Qatar, Bush told reporters he was pleased with his initial successes on the Israeli-Palestinian front.

"It's progress," Bush said. "These first signs of peace happen when people make up their minds to work toward peace, and that's what you saw."

Still, he added, "I am the master of low expectations. We accomplished what I hoped we'd accomplish. We met expectations."

Qatar has been a close U.S. ally in the region since the 1990 Gulf War. During the latest war, the United States used Qatar as its command headquarters for the conflict.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2003/06/05/international/middleeast/05WIRE-Qatar.html>

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New York Times
June 5, 2003

Russia Pausing On Iran Nuclear Deal, Blair Says; Denial Follows

By Michael Wines

MOSCOW, June 4 — Prime Minister Tony Blair of Britain said today that Russia had pledged to suspend a planned shipment of nuclear fuel to Iran until the Iranian government accepts new international controls on its nuclear program, but Russia's top nuclear official said that no such promise had been made.

Mr. Blair's remarks, and the denial, raised new questions about Russia's once-solid commitment to help Iran build and run a nuclear reactor at Bushehr, on the Persian Gulf.

Russian officials have consistently said they will fulfill a lucrative contract to build the reactor, train its operators and equip it with uranium fuel. But President Vladimir V. Putin has expressed new concern in recent days over allegations that Iran is conducting a secret nuclear-weapons program that could benefit from the reactor's operations. Tonight a spokesman for the Russian Foreign Ministry said it might issue a statement on Thursday clarifying Russia's position on aiding Iran's nuclear-energy efforts.

Mr. Blair's remark came in a speech to the British Parliament today in which he reviewed the results of the Group of 8 summit meeting of industrialized nations in Évian, France. In it, he praised Russia's support for a joint declaration urging Iran to give the International Atomic Energy Agency unfettered access to any site in the county known or suspected to harbor nuclear operations.

Iran has resisted the new condition. At Évian, Mr. Blair said today, Mr. Putin "made it clear that in the meantime, Russia would suspend its exports of nuclear fuel to Iran."

That would mark a turnabout in Russia's public position, reiterated on Tuesday, that it intends to fulfill its contract to ship nuclear fuel to the completed Bushehr reactor.

But in a telephone interview tonight, the atomic energy minister, Aleksandr Y. Rumyantsev, said Russia's commitment to ship the fuel is unequivocal. "We are at a technical stage of issuing an additional agreement with Iran on the return of supplied nuclear fuel after it has been used for a required period of time," he said. "After that, there will be no obstacles to supplies of fresh nuclear fuel to Iran. Everything will carefully correspond to international law."

In an interview with foreign journalists earlier today, Mr. Rumyantsev said Iran is pressing to speed up construction of the reactor, which is currently scheduled for testing next year and a formal start-up in 2005.

A storage building for nuclear fuel — "quite a serious site, with many layers of physical protection, monitors and television cameras," has been completed, he said, and fuel deliveries could begin as early as February. "Last year, there were nearly 70 inspections by I.A.E.A. inspectors on the nuclear activity of Iran," he said. "Everything that was presented was under control."

The United States has been the main critic of Russia's help in building the complex, which eventually would contain two reactors. Partly in response, Russian officials have tightened the agreement with Iran to ensure the return from the reactor of spent nuclear fuel, which can be converted to weapons-grade plutonium.

But American officials say Russian technical help to the project could aid any covert Iranian weapons program. Their concerns rose when Iran conceded earlier this year that it was building a previously undisclosed facility that could be used to refine uranium into plutonium. Iran says the factory is to be used to produce its own reactor fuel.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2003/06/05/international/europe/05RUSS.html>

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Washington Post

June 5, 2003

Pg. 24

Russians Pressure Iran On Weapons

By Peter Baker, Washington Post Foreign Service

MOSCOW, June 4 -- Russian officials signaled today that they are turning up the pressure on Iran not to develop nuclear weapons, while they continue to promote construction of a civilian nuclear power plant in the Islamic republic.

President Vladimir Putin's government, in an effort to ease U.S. concerns, recently has pushed the Tehran government to guarantee that it has no secret weapons program and to accept more robust international inspections. Russian officials also vowed not to ship nuclear fuel to Iran without a written commitment that Iran will return the spent fuel, which could be used for bombs.

U.S. officials said they were encouraged by these steps, after having tried in vain for years to persuade the Russian government to drop its nuclear cooperation with Iran. The extent of Russian willingness to push Iranian officials remained unclear.

Putin's top economics adviser, Andrei Illarionov, suggested today that further work on the nuclear plant would hinge on Iranian acceptance of additional inspections by the International Atomic Energy Agency, the U.N. watchdog agency. That would be "the best way to remove all questions and suspicions," he told Russian reporters at a news conference. "When the IAEA concludes that Iran does not have any military nuclear program, Russia will be able to restore normal ties with this country."

British Prime Minister Tony Blair said Putin had made a similar pledge at this week's Group of Eight summit in France. In a report to Parliament, Blair noted a G-8 statement calling for a more rigorous inspections regime in Iran and said Putin "made clear that in the meantime Russia would suspend its exports of nuclear fuel to Iran," Reuters reported from London.

Yet in an interview in Moscow today, Russian Atomic Energy Minister Alexander Rumyantsev said there was "no link" between Iran's agreement to submit to tougher IAEA oversight and the work on the unfinished 1,000-megawatt, light-water civilian reactor at the Persian Gulf port of Bushehr. No nuclear fuel has been sent to Iran yet, he said, and none will be sent until a spent-fuel agreement is signed. But he said that the fuel shipments do not depend on Iran's response to the inspections proposal.

"Iran has not violated anything," Rumyantsev said in the interview with Western correspondents. "It has not stepped even a microscopic distance outside of the Non-Proliferation Treaty which it signed. So all the accusations about Iran are purely emotional."

The Bushehr plant has been a point of contention in U.S.-Russian relations for years, with successive administrations in Washington expressing alarm that any nuclear cooperation with the Islamic government in Iran could enhance Iran's ability to develop weapons of mass destruction. Officials here have dismissed U.S. suspicions as unfounded and are holding fast to an \$800 million project that represents significant income for the cash-strapped country.

Rumyantsev also minimized concern over two nuclear-related facilities revealed last year by an Iranian opposition group, saying the Tehran government readily acknowledged the sites afterward. Iranian authorities allowed IAEA inspectors in February to visit a pilot uranium-enrichment plant at Natanz, 200 miles southeast of Tehran.

Rumyantsev said the plant contains about 200 centrifuges for fuel enrichment, but added that inspectors reported no violations of international rules. Iran also confirmed that it has a heavy-water production facility at Arak, about 200 miles to the southwest, but Rumyantsev said the facility could be used for a future civilian reactor.

Rumyantsev and other officials have sought in recent days to make concessions to reassure the Bush administration. After meeting with President Bush in St. Petersburg over the weekend, Putin said that "the positions of Russia and the United States on the issue are closer than they seem." At the subsequent G-8 summit, Putin signed the statement warning Iran against trying to develop nuclear weapons.

A U.S. diplomat said last weekend that Russian and U.S. officials had moved closer on the issue. While the government had not committed to dropping the plant construction, the diplomat said, "we think it would be wise for Russia to go slow in support for the Bushehr project" until Iran signs a protocol on additional inspections.

Correspondent Susan B. Glasser contributed to this report.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A15227-2003Jun4.html>

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Washington Times

June 5, 2003

Pg. 15

U.S. Asks Aid Barring Arms From Rogue States

By Nicholas Kralev, The Washington Times

The Bush administration is seeking agreements with its allies to seize suspected arms shipments from proliferators and rogue states such as North Korea before they reach their destination, U.S. officials said yesterday.

"Our goal is to work with other concerned states to develop new means to disrupt the proliferation trade at sea, in the air and on land," John Bolton, undersecretary of state for arms control and international security, told Congress.

"To jump-start this initiative, we have begun working with several close friends and allies to expand our ability to stop and seize suspected [weapons of mass destruction] transfers," Mr. Bolton said.

President Bush first outlined the policy, known as the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI), during his visit to Poland over the weekend. The effort includes stepping up economic sanctions and enhancing global export controls. Mr. Bolton explained the initiative in testimony before the House International Relations Committee yesterday.

"Over time, we will extend this partnership as broadly as possible to keep the world's most destructive weapons away from our shores and out of the hands of our enemies," he said.

The initiative, officials said, is a direct response to a December incident in which the United States and Spain seized a North Korean missile shipment for Yemen but had to let it go because no rules had been broken.

Mr. Bolton warned yesterday that the administration's ultimate goal is "not just to prevent the spread" of illicit arms, "but also to eliminate or roll back such weapons from rogue states and terrorist groups that already possess them or are close to doing so," as it did in Iraq.

Five countries — Britain, Spain, Australia, Japan and Poland — have so far acknowledged publicly that they have discussed the PSI with the United States, although U.S. officials said many more have been approached.

"All of them are generally supportive of the concept and the need to look at creative and proactive measures to stop the proliferation of weapons and missiles," a State Department official said.

Arms-control analysts noted that the list of nations backing the plan resembles the "coalition of the willing" that stood by the United States during the war in Iraq.

"The initiative is worth pursuing, but it should not be a substitute for more effective nonproliferation efforts on part of the administration, including diplomatic engagement," said Daryl Kimball, executive director of the nonprofit Arms Control Association.

"The problems with North Korea and Iran stem from past nuclear cooperation they have had with other countries," he said. "It's regional security problems that drive those states to pursue nuclear and other weapons, we shouldn't ignore diplomatic and legal efforts."

Although the administration's strategy to combat weapons of mass destruction, which was released last year, outlined basic nonproliferation objectives, the PSI is the first concrete effort to change the existing international rules.

If Washington's proposals receive international support, it would be able to confiscate deliveries, preventing them from reaching their intended recipient.

In the event that shipments are being transported by air, the plane carrying them would be denied overflight rights by countries that are part of the PSI, the State Department official said.

The aircraft could also be grounded when they stop to refuel, or even "escorted down" if they refuse to land, the official added.

"At a minimum, interdiction can lengthen the time that proliferators will need to acquire new weapons capabilities, increase the cost and demonstrate our resolve to combat proliferation," Mr. Bolton said.

He cited two recent incidents with weapons-related materials apparently destined for North Korea.

"In the last two months, interception of aluminum tubes likely bound for North Korea's nuclear weapons program, and a French and German combined effort to intercept sodium cyanide likely bound for North Korea's chemical weapons program are examples of recent interdiction successes."

<http://www.washtimes.com/world/20030604-104133-3700r.htm>

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USA Today
June 5, 2003
Pg. 19

U.N. Inspectors To Check Nuclear Facility

United Nations nuclear safety experts were en route to Iraq to inspect a nuclear complex south of Baghdad where some radioactive material is missing. Officials of the International Atomic Energy Agency said looters took barrels of radioactive material from the Tuweitha complex, emptied them, took them home and used them to store water.

The material had been under seal by U.N. inspectors before they left Iraq on the eve of the war. It poses a health danger to anyone near it and could be used in a "dirty bomb" that combines conventional explosives and atomic waste to spread radiation over a wide area.

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Washington Post
June 5, 2003
Pg. 25

Nerve Gas Agent Found In Letters

By Reuters

BRUSSELS, June 4 -- Letters containing a nerve gas ingredient were sent to the Belgian prime minister's office, the U.S. and British embassies and a court trying al Qaeda suspects in Brussels, the federal prosecutor said today.

Two postal workers were taken to the hospital after being exposed to the chemicals in the 10 letters, which were found at mail depots.

No one else was injured by the substance in the letters, which were sent to a variety of targets, including the Saudi Arabian Embassy, three ministries, an airport and a port authority.

The brownish-yellow powder contained phenarsazine chloride, an arsenic derivative used in nerve gas, and hydrazine, an agent used as a rocket propellant, the Health Ministry said. Both substances are also found in pesticides.

The letters contained no more than a spoonful of the chemicals -- not enough to be life-threatening -- but caused irritation to the eyes and skin and affected breathing, said Anne-Francoise Gally, a Health Ministry spokeswoman. Police suspect the letters came from a single source in Belgium, said Lieve Pellens, a spokeswoman for the federal prosecutor's office, which is overseeing the investigation.

"There are clear indications that the sender of the letters is one and the same person," Pellens said. "There are clear similarities among the letters."

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A15250-2003Jun4.html>

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