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New York Times
September 24, 2003
Pg. 1

Bush, At U.N., Defends Policy Over Iraq

By Elisabeth Bumiller

UNITED NATIONS, Sept. 23 — President Bush stood today before the allies who had opposed the invasion of Iraq and rebuffed calls from some of them to transfer sovereignty rapidly to Iraqis as a means to calm the anti-American violence there.

On a tense opening day of the annual meeting of the General Assembly, Mr. Bush told world leaders that self-government for Iraq could come only through an "orderly" process that should be "neither hurried nor delayed." His message to France and Germany, which have called for immediate or at least rapid empowerment of the 25-member Iraqi Governing Council, seemed clear: the United States, which waged the war and is paying the bulk of its cost, will not be pushed into a transfer of sovereignty and authority that it judges to be premature.

The president was vigorous in his defense of the war, saying that it had ensured that "Iraq's former dictator will never again use weapons of mass destruction," even as he sought the financial assistance of a still skeptical world in building the "young democracy" in Iraq.

The response was cool, reflecting the enduring anger stirred in many parts of the world by a war waged without United Nations backing, and applause was no more than polite. The authority and actions of the world's most powerful nation came under repeated criticism.

Kofi Annan, the United Nations secretary general, appeared to accuse Washington of endangering world peace with its policy of pre-emptive force.

The logic of states that "reserve the right to act unilaterally, or in ad hoc coalitions" is dangerous, representing "a fundamental challenge to the principles on which, however imperfectly, world peace and stability have rested for the last 58 years," Mr. Annan said, without referring specifically to the United States.

However, the secretary general conceded that the Security Council needed to begin a discussion "on the criteria for an early authorization of coercive measures to address certain types of threats," including that posed by terrorist groups armed with unconventional weapons.

Jacques Chirac, the French president, who infuriated the White House by leading the opposition to the war and is now causing irritation again by offering advice on how to manage postwar Iraq, offered a stinging counterpoint to Mr. Bush in his own address to the General Assembly.

"In an open world, no one can live in isolation, no one can act alone in the name of all, and no one can accept the anarchy of a society without rules," Mr. Chirac said in remarks that received more applause than those of Mr. Bush. Mr. Bush came here today needing to coax other countries to contribute billions of dollars toward the rebuilding of Iraq and in search of troops to support the 129,000-strong American force in the country. Postwar Iraq has proved more chaotic, violent and expensive to manage than prewar planners had foreseen.

But his tone was not that of a supplicant. He coupled his appeal for help in rebuilding Iraq with defiance about the war itself, and in his 26-minute speech cast the invasion and American-led occupation as one of the great successes of his presidency.

Mr. Bush said the United Nations should have an expanded role in Iraq — one objective of a draft resolution submitted to the Security Council by his administration — but then offered a very limited description of that role. "As in the aftermath of other conflicts, the United Nations should assist in developing a constitution and training civil servants and conducting free and fair elections," he said. France has suggested that the United Nations oversee the transfer of political authority to Iraqis.

On one of the most sensitive issues in America's relations with the world — the Bush administration's justification of the war as a necessary step to rid Iraq of unconventional weapons — Mr. Bush was defiant despite the fact that no such weapons have been found.

He implied that such weapons, or at least the programs behind them, would still be revealed to the world: "We are interviewing Iraqi citizens and analyzing records of the old regime to reveal the full extent of its weapons programs and its long campaign of deception."

Mr. Bush spoke in the somber, deliberate tone he reserves for his most important speeches. Delegates reacted with short, tepid applause, and afterward some diplomats here simply shrugged their shoulders.

One senior United Nations diplomat said that Mr. Bush, in projecting an image of American authority in Iraq with a limited role for the United Nations, was playing far more to a domestic audience than to an international one.

The president had much riding politically on his speech, particularly at a time when support for his Iraq policy was dropping in the United States. A CNN/USA Today/Gallup poll released on Monday found that his job approval rating among Americans had fallen to 50 percent, the lowest since he became president. White House officials had hoped the speech would project him as confident about the outcome of the occupation of Iraq, and Mr. Bush spent days in preparations.

Mr. Bush spoke extensively about what he said were the positive developments in Iraq, which he said was now free of "the torture chambers and the rape rooms and the prison cells for innocent children."

The Iraqi people, he said, are "a world away from the squalid, vicious tyranny they have known."

Mr. Bush acknowledged the split that the war had created in the Atlantic alliance — "Some of the sovereign nations of this assembly disagreed with our actions," he said.

But it was time to move on, he suggested, driven by the shared conviction that collective security and the spread of human rights demanded joint endeavor. "So let us move forward," the president declared.

Despite the continuing violence in Israel and the West Bank, Mr. Bush said people are safer in the Middle East with Saddam Hussein driven from power. "Iraq as a dictatorship had great power to destabilize the Middle East," he said.

"Iraq as a democracy will have great power to inspire the Middle East." But how quickly to proceed toward Iraqi self-rule and democracy remains in dispute. Ahmad Chalabi, the president of Iraq's interim government, who was seated at Iraq's table in the General Assembly today, said this week that — like the French and Germans — he also wanted Iraqis to assume power more quickly.

After the president's speech, a senior administration official flatly ruled out any transfer of power that was not part of an American timetable to "25 unelected people" of the Iraqi Governing Council. "It's just not going to happen," the official said.

But the biggest chasm between the United States and the Security Council is perhaps over Washington's insistence that it has the right to attack a nation that it thinks might attack it first.

"Nations of the world must have the wisdom and the will to stop grave threats before they arrive," Mr. Bush said.

Mr. Annan, in contrast, painted a dire picture of a world where American policy could encourage rogue nations to justify attacks on others through their own doctrines of pre-emption. Speaking of the American approach, Mr.

Annan said, "My concern is that, if it were to be adopted, it could set precedents that resulted in a proliferation of the unilateral and lawless use of force, with or without justification," he said.

In remarks that were widely expected, Mr. Bush also said it was crucial to counter the spread of nuclear weapons, and called on other nations to help the United States search planes, ships, trains and trucks carrying suspect cargo, and to seize weapons or missile shipments that might contain nuclear material.

Mr. Bush spent the rest of his day meeting with other leaders, including Mr. Chirac, who joined the president at the United States mission across the street from the United Nations headquarters.

No reporters were allowed to observe the two leaders even shaking hands. A senior administration official said that the two men discussed disagreement over when sovereignty should be transferred in Iraq.

"I think we're going to have to keep working on it," the official said.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2003/09/24/international/middleeast/24PREX.html>

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Washington Post
September 24, 2003
Pg. 23

Iran Refines Stance On Nuclear Program

Envoy to IAEA Says Access Negotiable

By Ali Akbar Dareini, Associated Press

TEHRAN, Sept. 23 -- Iran remains willing to negotiate with the U.N. nuclear agency on unfettered access for inspectors but will scale back its cooperation with the agency in the meantime, Iran's envoy to the International Atomic Energy Agency said today.

Ali Akbar Salehi had announced Monday that Iran would cut back its cooperation with the IAEA in response to the agency's Oct. 31 deadline for Tehran to prove that its atomic programs were peaceful. Tehran said the move was politically motivated.

Diplomats had said the Iranian decision did not bode well for efforts to resolve the nuclear dispute, but Salehi said today that his comments were being misinterpreted.

"We have decided to fulfill our obligations under the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and not beyond that," Salehi said.

"It doesn't mean that we are rejecting the additional protocol or are not prepared to talk on that," Salehi said. The additional protocol would provide IAEA inspectors with unrestricted access to any site in Iran.

Salehi appeared to suggest that Iran's latest position would confine its cooperation with the IAEA to the letter of existing agreements while at the same time negotiating its acceptance of the additional protocol.

The United States has accused Iran of running a clandestine nuclear weapons program and wants the IAEA to declare Tehran in violation of the treaty.

Tehran insists its nuclear programs are designed only to generate electricity.

In Vienna, a spokesman for the IAEA, Mark Gwozdecky, said the agency had heard "nothing official from the Iranian government."

"We've put everything in place to make it possible for Iran to comply with the board of governors' resolution," Gwozdecky said, referring to the deadline. "We hope that Iran will do its part in providing the accelerated cooperation that will be necessary for us to resolve the outstanding questions around the nuclear programs."

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A54721-2003Sep23.html>

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New York Times
September 25, 2003
Pg. 1

Draft Report Said To Cite No Success In Iraq Arms Hunt

By Douglas Jehl and Judith Miller

WASHINGTON, Sept. 24 — An early draft of an interim report by the American leading the hunt for banned weapons in Iraq says his team has not found any of the unconventional weapons cited by the Bush administration as a principal reason for going to war, federal officials with knowledge of the findings said today.

The long-awaited report by David Kay, the former United Nations weapons inspector who has been leading the American search for illicit weapons, will be the first public assessment of progress in that search since President Bush declared an end to major combat on May 1.

Mr. Kay's team has spent nearly four months searching suspected sites and interviewing Iraqi scientists believed to have knowledge about the country's nuclear, biological and chemical weapons programs.

The officials, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said that Mr. Kay and his team had not found illicit weapons.

They said they believed that Mr. Kay had found evidence of precursors and dual-use equipment that could have been used to manufacture chemical and biological weapons.

They also said that Mr. Kay's team had interviewed at least one Iraqi security officer who said he had worked in such a chemical and biological weapons program until shortly before the American invasion in March.

Sections of the interim report by Mr. Kay are expected to be made public later this month. A spokesman for the Central Intelligence Agency, Bill Harlow, said in a statement today that Mr. Kay was still receiving information from the field and that his progress report would not "rule anything in or out."

The administration's inability to uncover evidence of banned weapons has prompted increasing criticism from Capitol Hill. Until now, administration officials had insisted that they did not know what Mr. Kay's report might conclude. The effort by the C.I.A. today to emphasize the interim nature of any document seemed intended to minimize political fallout from his findings.

The failure to find banned weapons has been cited by Democratic presidential candidates and other critics of the war as evidence that the administration exaggerated the threat posed by Iraq to secure public support for toppling the government in Baghdad, a course that some of Mr. Bush's deputies had long promoted.

In a telephone interview, Mr. Harlow said that Mr. Kay's report was still being drafted and that it would be premature to describe any draft as reflecting even interim conclusions. Mr. Kay reports to George Tenet, the director of central intelligence, and oversees the Iraq Survey Group, an organization made up of about 1,400 American and British weapons experts, security teams and support personnel.

Mr. Kay returned to the United States from Iraq about a week ago, government officials said, and is working from an office at C.I.A. headquarters in Virginia.

The details of Mr. Kay's findings have been closely held within the administration as part of a strategy that officials said was intended both to prevent unauthorized leaks and to minimize internal disputes about any emerging findings. Issues related to the Iraqi weapons program have been contentious inside the administration as well as outside, with the State Department's intelligence branch and some officials at the Defense Intelligence Agency taking issue with a report made public in May by the C.I.A. that said mysterious trailers discovered in Iraq were used to manufacture biological weapons.

Mr. Bush, who said at the time that the discovery of the trailers meant that the administration had found illicit weapons in Iraq, has not repeated such statements in recent months. But in a recent television interview, Vice President Dick Cheney called the trailers "mobile biological facilities that can be used to produce anthrax or smallpox or whatever else you wanted to use during the course of developing the capacity for an attack."

In early June, American and British intelligence analysts with direct access to the evidence disputed claims that the trailers were used for making deadly germs. They said in interviews with The New York Times that the evaluation process had been damaged by a rush to judgment.

As recently as Monday, Mr. Bush said he believed that Saddam Hussein buried or dispersed his stockpiles of illicit weapons before the United States mounted its invasion in March. But Mr. Bush said it would take Mr. Kay "a while" to uncover the truth about what happened to them.

People who have been hunting for weapons in Iraq have said that Mr. Kay has been frustrated over the lack of progress in the search, initially over problems involving coordination with military commanders charged in some cases with detaining the very Iraqis whose cooperation Mr. Kay's team was seeking.

Those problems have been largely resolved, the weapons hunters said, but Mr. Kay has still found it difficult in recent weeks to investigate leads that seemed worth pursuing, in part because the unstable security situation in Iraq has made it difficult for his teams to travel to some areas.

Iraq acknowledged having stockpiles of chemical and biological weapons after the Persian Gulf war of 1991 but maintained that it destroyed all such weapons after that conflict, a position that Iraqi officials in American custody are said to have reiterated in recent interrogations.

In a formal National Intelligence Estimate last October, the C.I.A. and the rest of the American intelligence community concluded that "Baghdad has chemical and biological weapons" and that "if left unchecked, it probably will have a nuclear weapon during this decade." That general view was shared at the time by the United Nations and most foreign governments but support for the position has been eroded by the American failure to discover the weapons in Iraq.

A United Nations inspection team headed by the Swedish diplomat Hans Blix said in June that Iraq had never accounted for weapons and materials it claimed to have destroyed. But Mr. Blix said in more recent interviews that he now believes that Iraq destroyed its banned weapons long before the United States mounted its invasion in March.

Addressing the United Nations on Tuesday, Mr. Bush showed no sign of backing away from the administration's view that the Iraqi claims were not credible. At the White House on Monday, Condoleezza Rice, the national security adviser, said that at the time of the war there had been "nobody who knew anything about Iraq who believed that Saddam Hussein had destroyed all of his weapons of mass destruction."

"I think we will find that Saddam Hussein's weapons of mass destruction can be accounted for and we'll know the truth," Ms. Rice said, but she added: "David Kay is not going to be done with this for quite some time."

<http://www.nytimes.com/2003/09/25/international/middleeast/25WEAP.html>

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Washington Post
September 25, 2003
Pg. 1

Iraq Weapons Report Won't Be Conclusive

U.S. Has Sought to Lower Expectations For Evidence Amid Growing Criticism

By Walter Pincus and Dana Priest, Washington Post Staff Writers

A much-anticipated interim report by the Bush administration's chief weapons hunter in Iraq will offer no firm conclusions about the former Iraqi government's chemical, biological and nuclear weapons programs, senior officials said yesterday.

The weapons inspector, David Kay, is expected to present his report to Congress late next week -- an event that senior U.S. officials had just weeks ago pointed to as providing a possible vindication for the administration's prewar claims that Iraq had stockpiles of chemical and biological weapons and had restarted its efforts to build a nuclear bomb.

But officials yesterday sought to play down expectations that Kay's report will contain any major revelations. Kay, who is in Washington this week finishing the document, is "still gathering information from the field," the CIA's chief spokesman, Bill Harlow, said yesterday. "Don't expect any firm conclusions. He will not rule in or rule out anything."

Criticism of the Bush administration's rationale for going to war, which was based largely on the threat posed by Iraq's weapons of mass destruction, has grown on Capitol Hill and overseas with the failure by U.S. intelligence and military teams to discover any proscribed weapons in the five months since the government of president Saddam Hussein was toppled.

Just yesterday, Democrats seized on comments by Secretary of State Colin L. Powell -- still posted on the State Department's official Web site -- from Feb. 24, 2001, in which he told reporters during a trip to Egypt about the success of decade-old economic sanctions in containing Iraq. In his remarks, which were unearthed by an Australian journalist and broadcast on the BBC in Britain, Powell said Hussein "has not developed any significant capability with respect to weapons of mass destruction. He is unable to project conventional power against his neighbors."

Kay is CIA Director George J. Tenet's representative in Baghdad and directs the search for weapons of mass destruction being carried out by the 1,200-member Iraq Survey Group.

One senior intelligence official said recently that Kay's early analysis of Iraqi documents will prove that Hussein had the "intent" to resume chemical and biological weapons production once sanctions were lifted and United Nations inspectors were gone. "He also had scientists working in small groups on non-weapons work who could quickly be shifted over if weapons were needed," the senior official said.

Kay said last month he was initially focusing on Iraq's program to deceive U.N. inspectors and that his report would contain illustrations of how large that effort was, using it to indicate there were weapons to be hidden. After testifying before the Senate Armed Services Committee, Kay told reporters that his team had "found some physical evidence." He added: "I think it's very likely that we will discover remarkable surprises in this enterprise."

More recently, however, other officials, some of whom have spent time in Iraq, said the survey team had not gathered any substantial information, in part because the military members of Kay's group were threatening and arresting some Iraqi scientists and technicians who had in the past worked on weapons programs.

The expectations for Kay's interim report have changed significantly in the past few weeks. On Sept. 7, Powell told NBC's "Meet the Press" that the report would show people "that there was no question that such weapons exist, existed, and so did the programs to develop one."

A week later, Vice President Cheney, also on "Meet the Press" said, "I think David Kay will find more evidence as he goes forward, interviews people, as we get to folks willing to come forward now as they become more and more convinced that it's safe to do so, that, in fact, he [Hussein] had a robust plan, had previously worked on it and would work on it again."

White House national security adviser Condoleezza Rice told reporters three days ago that there "may" be interim reports from Kay but, "I don't know what the public nature of them will be."

One former U.N. inspector said any interim report Kay made would be "conservative" because he has working with him two senior British scientists with past experience in Iraq "who will keep him honest."

Meanwhile, Rolf Ekeus, who headed the U.N. weapons inspections team that worked in Iraq from 1992 to 1998, joined those who said that Hussein probably destroyed his chemical and biological weapons stocks after the 1991 Persian Gulf War and that it was a mistake to believe he maintained hidden stockpiles.

Ekeus also said he agreed with Hans Blix, who ran the U.N. inspections that began last year and ended shortly before the war began in March, that Hussein "did not produce anything since 1991." Under Ekeus's supervision, Iraq destroyed thousands of weapons banned by the United Nations.

Kay's group, which also works under the command of Maj. Gen. Keith Dayton of the Defense Intelligence Agency, will likely grow in the near future. Military commanders in Iraq have urged Pentagon officials to send more intelligence resources to help combat the growing violence against U.S. forces and identify those behind it. Pentagon officials are considering ways to restructure the Iraq Survey Group and to make some of its personnel -- mainly translators and interrogators -- available to for that purpose.

Pentagon spokesman Larry Di Rita rejected the interpretation of three other administration officials that the restructuring would shift the group's priority from the weapons hunt to counterterrorism.

The search for weapons of mass destruction "remains the priority" of the survey group, Di Rita said. He said it is "perfectly plausible" that additional intelligence resources will be brought into Iraq soon to help combat attacks against U.S. forces and their supporters.

The intelligence agencies have made what one senior intelligence official described as "a concerted effort in the last couple of weeks to focus attention on" collecting more information about the threat to U.S. troops. More than 1,000 intelligence reports a day from Iraq are filtering to Washington-area intelligence agencies for analysis.

"We sure wish we could be more clear about it," the senior intelligence official said, referring to the anti-American violence.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A61136-2003Sep24.html>

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The Flu Factor In Bioterrorism

By Delthia Ricks

STAFF WRITER

September 23, 2003

The very mention of the words anthrax or smallpox can immediately summon the specter of bioterror. Rarely, though, does mention of the influenza virus inspire thoughts of a weapon of mass destruction.

Scientists at Stanford University, however, theorize that not only could the virus be used for malicious intent, but the pathogen's natural ability for rapid mutation and spread might make it an ideal weapon of terror.

Already scientists are nearing completion on replicating the genetic sequence of the virus that caused the horrific 1918 influenza pandemic. With such knowledge in the wrong hands, experts say, influenza could prove more deadly than anthrax, smallpox or even bubonic plague.

To study how such terrorism might occur - and be thwarted through a new generation of vaccines - a team of Stanford researchers has received a \$15-million grant from the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases. The upcoming study is part of an \$85-million project overseen by the institute to investigate microbial agents that could, under certain circumstances, be transmuted into weapons of terror.

Two Stanford microbiology and immunology experts, Dr. Ann Arvin and Dr. Harry S. Greenberg, are leading the new look into the ancient foe. Their plan is to understand how terrorism might occur by developing a more intimate knowledge of the flu virus.

"We've known for decades that the influenza virus is capable of mutation," said Arvin, a professor of pediatrics, microbiology and immunology. "All of us get the flu periodically, and that's not because we've become more susceptible but because the virus has changed.

"Every few years the virus mutates and infects people who've been infected in the past" with somewhat different strains, she said. "It's a virus that is subject to change because that's how it survives."

Because the virus constantly mutates, vaccines must be continually updated. For the most part, though, such strains are not global killers, and most who catch the flu don't face an imminent threat of death.

Arvin and Greenberg hope to study the immunity that develops following flu vaccination. How vaccines protect the respiratory tract is poorly understood, Arvin said. The researchers' aim is to investigate what is known about immunity and to develop a vaccine that could be used to protect people in the event of an outbreak caused by terrorism.

"That is a very important part of our work, to understand how to design a vaccine, to know the ultimate kind of vaccine to use," Arvin said. "If we could understand how to provide immunity against those proteins of the virus that don't tend to mutate, it would be possible to think about a different vaccine design."

Such a vaccine would not be anything like the immunizations used to prevent seasonal exposure to influenza viruses. To protect against influenza caused by bioterror, Arvin said, a vaccine would have to act quickly in the respiratory tract, in a matter of days.

Current flu vaccines are administered in October and November to provide immunity that takes weeks to develop.

By the time flu viruses flare in January, vaccinated people usually have mounted a sufficient supply of antibodies to fight infection. Flu viruses usually remain active through March.

The real lessons about what influenza might do in an act of bioterrorism, the researchers say, can be learned from past pandemics: Three times in the last century influenza played a nasty trick, transforming into a virus to which no one had immunity. Highly contagious and easily aerosolized, the infections spread among continents through a chain of coughing and sneezing. The 20th century's three influenza pandemics - the 1918 global outbreak also known as the Spanish flu, the 1957 Asian flu and the 1968 Hong Kong flu - killed millions.

But lessons also can be learned from limited outbreaks with unusual strains that carried the threat of broader and deadlier disease. What stopped such viral menaces as the 1976 swine flu, the 1977 Russian flu or the avian flu scare six years ago in China?

"The background for all of this," Arvin said of her study, "is simply knowing what flu can do in and of itself. And as we understand this virus better, it is conceivable to produce vaccines to protect the population.

"We hope we will learn information that is relevant," she added, "whether it is about a natural pandemic or a deliberate effort."

<http://www.newsday.com/news/health/ny-dsbelow3465356sep23,0,1378514.story?coll=ny-health-headlines>

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Washington Times
September 26, 2003
Pg. 1

Enriched Uranium Found In Iran

2nd discovery boosts fear of nukes

By David R. Sands, The Washington Times

International inspectors have found traces of enriched uranium at a second site in Iran, sharply raising fears that Tehran is secretly trying to build a nuclear bomb.

Diplomats with the U.N.'s Vienna, Austria-based International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) told reporters yesterday that the find was made at Kalaye Electric Co., a facility south of the capital, during a visit in August. Iranian officials had blocked IAEA officials from the site for two months before finally permitting the inspection.

President Bush, who included Iran with Iraq and North Korea in his "axis of evil," told reporters at the White House that he repeatedly pressed world leaders about Iran's nuclear programs during meetings this week at the U.N.

General Assembly in New York. He promised it would be a major focus of his talks today and tomorrow with Russian President Vladimir Putin in their Camp David summit.

"It is very important for the world to come together to make it very clear to Iran that there will be universal condemnation if they continue with a nuclear- weapons program," Mr. Bush said. "And I will tell you, the response was very positive."

The Kalaye discovery follows the revelation earlier this year of a similar find of enriched uranium at a plant in the Iranian city of Natanz, about 150 miles from Tehran. The Natanz sample startled experts, for it appeared to indicate

that Iran's Islamic regime was much farther along the path to developing nuclear weapons than had previously been thought.

IAEA spokesman Mark Gwozdecky refused to confirm publicly the newest findings at Kalaye, noting that a team of agency experts will travel to Tehran on Sunday for a five-week fact-finding mission. Iran already faces an Oct. 31 deadline to provide proof that it does not have a nuclear-weapons program, and to allow far more intrusive inspections of suspect facilities.

White House spokesman Scott McClellan called the Oct. 31 deadline "one last chance for Iran to comply," saying the United States would press for U.N. Security Council action if Iran failed to act.

IAEA reports in recent months have tracked a series of deceptions and half-truths about Iran's nuclear programs, including denials by Iranian officials that they had even experimented with enriched uranium or that they had received any outside aid in building their nuclear facilities.

U.S. and U.N. officials also fear that Iran has been delaying inspection missions in order to clean up evidence of nuclear testing.

IAEA chief Mohamed ElBaradei said the agency board's decision to back the Oct. 31 deadline urged by Washington "tells us that there are signals that are worrying."

Iran denies it is seeking nuclear weapons, saying its programs are intended solely for civilian energy needs.

The enriched uranium found at the two sites, the regime says, are trace elements left from imported machinery and materials used to operate the plants.

But Iran's badly divided government — rent by feuds between reformers around President Mohammed Khatami and religious hard-liners close to Ayatollah Ali Khamenei — has sent mixed signals about its willingness to cooperate with international inspectors and bow to pressure from the Bush administration and leading European governments. Iranian Foreign Minister Kamal Kharrazi, who is close to the president, said in New York this week that his country did not have a nuclear-weapons program, accusing Washington of "politicizing the environment" with its pressure on the IAEA.

Asked if Iran planned to follow North Korea's lead and withdraw altogether from the nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty, Mr. Kharrazi replied, "Hopefully not."

But more hawkish elements in the Iranian leadership, fearful that the U.S. military machine that targeted Afghanistan and Iraq will now turn on Iran, have urged the government to resist the IAEA's demands.

The hard-line daily Keyhan, whose editor is close to Ayatollah Khamenei, wrote last week that bowing to international pressure for new inspections would "pave the ground for the collapse of the sacred regime of the Islamic Republic and place the noble Iranian Muslim people under the yoke of savage Americans."

Even Mr. Khatami, in remarks reported yesterday, called the IAEA ultimatum "unjust."

Mr. Bush and Mr. Putin have long been at odds over Russia's \$800 million contract to build Iran's first nuclear power plant at the port city of Bushehr.

Washington contends that oil-rich Iran has no need for such a plant, and argues it will only further Iran's nuclear-weapons programs. But to date Russian energy officials have refused to halt construction at the plant.

But a top foreign policy adviser to Mr. Putin said in New York this week that Moscow might reconsider if it could obtain alternative profit-making projects elsewhere.

"Our nuclear industry has to have projects to survive," said Mikhail Margelov, a Putin ally who chairs the foreign affairs committee of Russia's upper legislative house.

"If there is another economic opportunity to reorient from Iran to another project, we would do it," Mr. Margelov told business leaders Wednesday at a Eurasia Group seminar held on the sidelines of the U.N. gathering. "It's just a matter of zeroes after the comma."

Sharon Behn contributed to this report.

<http://www.washtimes.com/world/20030925-090941-3932r.htm>

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USA Today
September 26, 2003
Pg. 4

Expectations Shrink In Hunt For Saddam's Weapons

By John Diamond and Bill Nichols, USA Today

WASHINGTON — U.S. search teams have dramatically scaled back their expectations for finding weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. They are now looking for a relatively small volume of chemical munitions that might be buried there, according to three U.S. intelligence officials.

Saddam Hussein's regime had no nuclear weapons and only minimal elements of a program to make them, the search teams have concluded, according to the intelligence officials. All three spoke on the condition they not be named, but all have knowledge of the contents of a draft of chief arms searcher David Kay's report, which could be presented to Congress as soon as next week.

Saddam's suspected biological weapons, if they existed, would have a relatively short shelf life, and most or all could now be useless, these officials said. And Kay's team has found no evidence that Iraq shipped illegal weapons out of the country — to Syria, for example — to avoid detection by U.N. inspectors, as some administration officials suggested earlier this year.

Weapons hunters believe the one remaining possibility is that the regime buried some chemical weapons, which can remain lethal for years, at sites as yet undiscovered. The volume of Iraqi chemical agents unaccounted for at the time of the U.S.-led invasion was small enough to fit in a backyard swimming pool, according to an analysis by Kay's team.

"There is still a huge set of missing chemical weapons that will be found," one of the intelligence officials said.

"They do not deteriorate as quickly as the biological weapons." It will take significant effort, the official said. "The guys have a lot of digging to do in hot, remote places to find them."

As time goes by with no discoveries, the Bush administration is under pressure to back up its prewar claims that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction and that they represented a threat to the United States.

The administration has not explicitly backed off that charge.

"We believe that there were weapons of mass destruction and a weapons of mass destruction program" in Iraq, White House spokesman Scott McClellan said Thursday. He declined to address Kay's specific findings.

But officials have also begun to emphasize the idea that the invasion of Iraq eliminated a future threat, and that the risk that Saddam had weapons that he could have given to terrorist groups had to be treated seriously in the aftermath of the Sept. 11 attacks.

"Nine-eleven changed my calculation," President Bush said Thursday. "It made it really clear that we have to deal with threats before they come to our shore."

Officials in Kay's 1,400-member Iraq Survey Group have also concluded, based on documents found in Iraq and information provided by captured members of Saddam's regime, that Iraq did destroy some of its chemical and biological weapons stockpile as the regime claimed before the U.S.-led war.

Saddam apparently decided not to disclose the destruction of his chemical and biological weapons because he wanted potential enemies to think he still had them. U.S. intelligence analysts speculate that Saddam concluded that the weapons would do him little good against a modern force such as the U.S. Army, but that doubt about whether he still had them might deter enemies.

One of the intelligence officials, who has seen early drafts of Kay's report, said it makes no mention of discoveries of actual weapons or banned materials but focuses primarily on circumstantial evidence of Iraq's attempts to acquire or develop weapons of mass destruction.

<http://www.usatoday.com/usatoday/20030926/5537839s.htm>

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Washington Post
September 26, 2003
Pg. 23

Air Force Analysts Feel Vindicated On Iraqi Drones

By Bradley Graham, Washington Post Staff Writer

Flipping through photographs of drone aircraft uncovered by U.S. search teams in Iraq, Robert S. Boyd, the Air Force's senior intelligence analyst, stopped at one showing the inside of a fuselage.

Two glass viewing ports could be seen at the bottom of the metal frame. Fastened above was a bracket, which Boyd said was likely for mounting "a camera or recorder of some sort." Also squeezed into the cramped space were the flight controls, leaving little room, Boyd noted, for much else -- certainly not anything capable of dispensing biological or chemical warfare agents.

Discovery of such remnants of Iraq's drone program since U.S. forces seized Baghdad in April has left Air Force officials feeling vindicated. They argued before the Iraq war that the drones were never meant to spread toxins but to fly unarmed reconnaissance missions.

The CIA, Defense Intelligence Agency and other government intelligence groups disagreed with that assessment. They contended the drones, known in military jargon as unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), were intended to carry biological or chemical agents and therefore posed a particular threat to Iraq's neighbors and to U.S. forces in the

Persian Gulf region. They also warned that if Iraq managed to find a way to launch the UAVs from some place near the United States, the aircraft could threaten American communities.

President Bush and his senior national security aides seized on that assessment to bolster their argument for invading Iraq. In a speech in Cincinnati last October, Bush expressed concern that "Iraq is exploring ways of using these UAVs for missions targeting the United States." Secretary of State Colin L. Powell spoke of the same possibility in his presentation to the U.N. Security Council in February.

What the Bush administration did not reveal until recently was that the government organization most knowledgeable about the United States' UAV program -- the Air Force's National Air and Space Intelligence Center -- had sharply disputed the notion that Iraq's UAVs were being designed as attack weapons. The Air Force dissent emerged publicly in July when the White House released excerpts from an October 2002 National Intelligence Estimate (NIE) on Iraq.

The disclosure has added to the debate over the administration's handling of intelligence on Iraq's weapons programs before the war, when the president and his senior advisers often cited intelligence assessments that supported their argument for invading Iraq without reference to opposing points of view.

Boyd and his Air Force colleagues are not accustomed to airing their intelligence disputes in public. But with the debate now out in the open, Boyd, who is the director of intelligence analysis for the Air Force, has been quite willing to talk.

"We're certainly not ashamed of our position," he said in an interview in his Pentagon office.

According to Boyd, the dissent began in the summer of 2002, when Air Force specialists received a draft of the NIE, a comprehensive assessment of Iraq's weapons capabilities produced by the various intelligence agencies. It asserted that Iraq's drone aircraft were intended to spew deadly chemicals or germs.

"We thought this statement was a little odd," Boyd said, noting that Air Force assessments "all along" had cited reconnaissance -- not weapons delivery -- as the purpose of the Iraqi UAVs.

Iraq had been suspected of trying to develop remotely piloted aircraft for more than a decade, starting with attempts to convert Soviet-made MiG-21 fighter planes. When that failed, Iraqi authorities began experimenting in the mid-1990s with transforming the Czech L-29, a trainer jet, into a UAV. That effort also went nowhere, ending in 2001, Boyd said.

The Iraqis then focused on developing several types of smaller UAVs. But these scaled-down versions were too compact and slight to serve as delivery systems, Boyd said. They ranged in size from derivatives of British and Italian target drones, with wing spans of about 12 feet, to the most common Iraqi UAV, the Musayara-20, which has wings 16 feet long.

In negotiating the wording of the NIE, Air Force officials agreed to acknowledge that Iraq's UAVs had an "inherent capability" to dispense chemical or biological weapons. But they considered this prospect highly unlikely and inserted language saying the "primary role" of the aircraft was reconnaissance.

"What we were thinking was: Why would you purposefully design a vehicle to be an inefficient delivery means?" Boyd said. "Wouldn't it make more sense that they were purposefully designing it to be a decent reconnaissance UAV?"

In addition to the apparent technical limitations of the Iraqi drones, Boyd said, U.S. authorities received reports from intelligence sources indicating the Iraqi program was intended for spying.

At the same time, CIA and DIA analysts were citing other reports from Iraqi expatriates and defectors claiming the UAVs were designed as delivery systems. But Air Force analysts dismissed these accounts as either outdated or not credible, Boyd said.

Another piece of evidence used by the CIA and DIA to bolster their case was an Iraqi effort to procure commercially available route-planning software that contained topographic data of the United States. Such data, the intelligence agencies argued, could facilitate targeting of U.S. sites.

But Air Force analysts were unimpressed. They noted that such topographic information was readily available on the Internet and from other sources. "We saw nothing sinister about the inclusion of the U.S. maps in route-planning software," Boyd said.

In his U.N. address last February, Powell highlighted two other points about Iraq's UAV program to suggest the drones could be used to spread chemical or biological agents. One was an extensive Iraqi effort to develop "spray devices that could be adapted for UAVs." The other involved evidence that Iraq had tried flying UAVs substantial distances, including one test that went for 310 miles.

But Boyd said the spray devices were weighty tanks that were intended for fighter jets and were too heavy for Iraq's UAV fleet. As for the longer-range test flights, he said they did not mean the drones could carry any bigger payload. U.S. teams scouring Iraq in recent months for evidence of Iraq's weapons of mass destruction have unearthed UAVs -- or pieces of them -- in several locations, including a "parking lot" in southwest Baghdad that Boyd described as

part of Iraq's "main UAV development center." He said U.S. officials have determined that before the war, Iraq had an inventory of about 75 UAVs, roughly half of them Musayara-20s.

"Everything we discovered strengthened our conviction that the UAVs were to be used for reconnaissance," Boyd said. Interviews with a number of Iraqis who had been involved in the UAV program have supported this view, he added.

The CIA and DIA, however, are sticking with their prewar assessments, according to spokesmen. A defense official said some of the information that has surfaced since the war supports the argument that the UAVs were intended as delivery systems. He cited a classified report from a captive former member of Iraqi President Saddam Hussein's "inner circle," who has told interrogators that shortly before the war, Hussein ordered production of UAVs sped up for attack missions.

Boyd declined to comment on this report, saying simply, "It comes down to how you weigh the evidence you have." <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A2013-2003Sep25.html>

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Washington Times
September 26, 2003
Pg. 17

Putin Urges More Control Over Arms

By Sharon Behn, The Washington Times

NEW YORK — Russian President Vladimir Putin, on the eve of a two-day Camp David summit with President Bush, sidestepped disputes over Iraq yesterday and urged greater effort to stop global proliferation of deadly weapons.

"These include further universalization of the existing nonproliferation regimes, the strengthening of international verification instruments and the introduction of safe technology in nuclear production and energy," Mr. Putin told the U.N. General Assembly.

He made no mention of Russia's building nuclear power plants in Iran, which the Bush administration views as part of an Iranian effort to make atomic weapons.

One of Mr. Putin's top foreign policy advisers defended Russian efforts to help Iran develop a nuclear power industry.

"Our cooperation with Iran in the nuclear field is not because we want the ayatollahs to have a nuclear bomb," said Mikhail Margelov. Rather, he said, it was a question of economics.

"I call it a wise economic approach: We have that branch of industry and it employs thousands of people. There should be money coming into our nuclear industry. If the project is on the table, somebody should get involved," he said in a telephone interview on the sidelines of the U.N. General Assembly.

Iran's nuclear program will be high on the agenda for today's meeting with Mr. Putin, especially after reports from the United Nations' nuclear watchdog agency yesterday that it had found traces of weapons-grade uranium at a second site in Iran.

The Vienna, Austria-based International Atomic Energy Agency has given Iran an Oct. 31 deadline to demonstrate it is not building nuclear weapons.

Relations between Washington and Moscow have been strained since Russia opposed the U.S.-led war in Iraq. Mr. Margelov said that given the lack of public support, Russia was unlikely to send combat troops to Iraq before the Dec. 7 parliamentary elections.

"After that, anything might be possible," he said.

Mr. Margelov, who is also the chairman of the foreign affairs committee in the upper house of Russia's parliament, said Mr. Putin would also talk about a "new approach to the whole philosophy of international relations and the changing world."

"One of the main challenges for this summit is actually to close the page of the Cold War," he said.

<http://www.washtimes.com/world/20030925-090948-3861r.htm>

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Washington Post
September 26, 2003
Pg. 17

Bush Steps Up Pressure On Iran Over Nuclear Plans

By Glenn Kessler, Washington Post Staff Writer

President Bush turned the screws on Iran yesterday, saying the Islamic republic faces "universal condemnation if they continue with a nuclear weapons program."

Iran has insisted its nuclear program is only for peaceful energy purposes. But the Bush administration earlier this month succeeded in persuading the International Atomic Energy Agency to demand that Iran provide an explanation of its nuclear program by Oct. 31.

The president said he raised his concerns about Iran's nuclear program this week with world leaders attending the U.N. General Assembly.

"I'll tell you, the response was very positive," Bush told reporters. "People understand the danger of the Iranians having a nuclear weapons program."

Bush added that he planned to raise the issue with Russian President Vladimir Putin, who is arriving at Camp David today for two days of talks. Russia is helping to build a nuclear reactor in Iran, and U.S. officials are concerned that the Russian help is aiding Iran in a possible weapons program.

Bush's remarks were made on the same day that the Iranian foreign minister, in an interview published in The Washington Post, signaled a willingness to cooperate on the nuclear issue. "We don't have anything to hide because we do not have a program for producing nuclear weapons," said Kamal Kharrazi. "Therefore, we are ready to be quite transparent."

Asked about Kharrazi's comments, Secretary of State Colin L. Powell said, "I can be nothing but pleased if that's what they intend to be and if that's what they actually do."

Meanwhile, diplomats reported yesterday that U.N. atomic experts have found traces of weapons-grade uranium at a second site in Iran. Experts for the IAEA, which earlier had discovered the substance at a plant in Natanz, found the substance at Kalay-e Electric Co., just west of Tehran.

A source familiar with the Sept. 18 report from the inspectors said the samples found at Kalay-e Electric were consistent with those found at Natanz.

David Albright, president of the Institute for Science and International Security, said the discovery could bolster the Iranian contention that the enriched uranium must have come into the country on imported components, since the materials were assembled in Kalay-e and then shipped to Natanz. But he noted the Iranians had changed their story about the components, having earlier said they were produced in Iran without foreign assistance.

"It would have been very shocking of they had not found HEU [highly enriched uranium] there," Albright said. "But Iran has to prove its point that it did not enrich uranium at all."

White House spokesman Scott McClellan said the discovery was "part of a long-standing pattern of evasions and deception to disguise the true nature and purpose of Iran's nuclear activities."

In a breakfast meeting with reporters in New York yesterday, Kharrazi said the U.S. campaign is causing tensions within the Iranian government, with reformist President Mohammad Khatami "under pressure to pull out of the NPT," the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty. He suggested the debate could give the upper hand to conservative clerics, saying Khatami is "in the middle of two sides of pressure. You could imagine what could be the result of that."

But, Kharrazi added, the Iranian supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, "believes it [a nuclear bomb] is haram, it is forbidden. We do not think having a bomb would create security for us. It would create more problems."

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

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A1602-2003Sep25.html>

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Los Angeles Times

September 26, 2003

Iran Defends Nuclear Plans

Tehran, in new round of verbal sparring with the U.S., says it will never abandon its program. Bush urges the world to take a united stand.

By Robin Wright, Times Staff Writer

NEW YORK — The United States and Iran appear headed for a new round of verbal brinkmanship over Tehran's nuclear program and the war on terrorism, deepening the divide between the two countries despite both capitals' ongoing interest in renewing a diplomatic dialogue.

Iran insists that its nuclear program is strictly for generating energy, but the U.S. and other nations suspect that Tehran is trying to develop atomic weapons and have urged it to allow new inspections.

Iranian Foreign Minister Kamal Kharrazi said Thursday that Tehran would never consider ending its nuclear program.

And Iran would agree to surprise inspections by the U.N. nuclear watchdog agency only if Iran receives guarantees that the United States will not make further demands, he told journalists at a breakfast gathering.

Backed by the U.S., the International Atomic Energy Agency has demanded that Iran agree to surprise inspections by Oct. 31. Kharrazi called the request "untimely and immature" as well as politically motivated.

The issue of appearing to accede to U.S. demands is now so controversial in Iran that Kharrazi said his government is under pressure from "some powerful people" not only to reject new inspections but to withdraw from the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty.

For now, he said, Iran is resisting walking away from the agreement.

U.S. officials have said that if Iran pulls out of the treaty, it could trigger a confrontation with the United States and possibly U.N. sanctions.

"It is very important for the world to come together to make it very clear to Iran that there will be universal condemnation if they continue with a nuclear weapons program," President Bush said Thursday in remarks to reporters.

Bush discussed the Iran nuclear issue with world leaders at the United Nations this week and will take it up with Russian President Vladimir V. Putin this weekend at Camp David.

So far, Bush said, "the response was very positive. People understand the danger of the Iranians having a nuclear weapons program."

The testy words from both sides came amid reports that U.N. experts have found additional traces of weapons-grade enriched uranium at a second Iranian facility. Inspectors already had reported finding such highly enriched uranium traces in two samples taken from a nuclear facility in Natanz, in central Iran.

The second set of traces were discovered at the Kalaye Electric Co., a small complex of buildings in a suburb northwest of Tehran. The IAEA went to Kalaye in March and again in June but was refused full access to the site. Eventually, the IAEA was permitted to take samples, but only after Iranians had cleaned up the site and done some construction, which they said was remodeling so it could be used for another purpose.

White House spokesman Scott McClellan called the second discovery of traces "part of a long-standing pattern of evasions and deception to disguise the true nature and purpose of Iran's nuclear activities."

But Kharrazi said the traces of highly enriched uranium must have come from second-hand equipment purchased to enrich uranium for its power plants.

"The source has to be outside Iran. Some of the components we imported from outside dealers were contaminated," he said. U.S. officials say the equipment came from Pakistan, which has nuclear weapons.

Kharrazi said Iran was "surprised" by the earlier IAEA findings at Natanz and has nothing to hide.

"Enrichment is not illegal as long as it is not for weapons," he added. "We have no program to enrich uranium beyond what we use for power plants."

The foreign minister added that Iran's supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, has forbidden the production of nuclear weapons as *haram*, or prohibited on religious grounds. The government of President Mohammad Khatami also believes that producing weapons of mass destruction is not in Iran's interest because it would not improve security — and could increase the country's vulnerability, he added.

Beyond the nuclear matter, Iran and the United States face a brewing standoff over the war on terrorism. Kharrazi, who is in New York to attend the opening of the U.N. General Assembly, said his government would not provide information about Al Qaeda operatives captured in Iran or otherwise cooperate with the United States on the issue until Washington cracks down on the Moujahadeen Khalq, an armed Iranian opposition group headquartered in Iraq.

The Moujahadeen Khalq is on the U.S. State Department list of terrorist groups, and its political offices in the United States have been shut down. But many of its fighters are still allowed to move around Iraq, Kharrazi said.

Bush administration officials concede that the U.S.-led coalition in Iraq has not fully confined or disarmed members of Moujahadeen Khalq. Nor has it deported anyone to Iran, even though Washington wants Tehran to take such steps with Al Qaeda operatives detained in Iran.

"Cooperation has to be reciprocal," Kharrazi said. "If they want information or action, they have to do the same with other terrorists."

Despite the tense words, both countries still appear prepared to consider renewing a dialogue that was suspended by the Bush administration in May.

U.S. and Iranian officials had held three meetings in Europe to try to find common ground on Afghanistan, Iraq and other foreign policy concerns — and see if that process could help end almost a quarter-century of animosity stemming from the 1979 Islamic revolution.

Iranian officials here this week for the U.N. meeting indicated that their government might be prepared to renew discussions if the Bush administration extends a hand.

Washington broke off talks after suicide bombings in Saudi Arabia targeting Westerners, allegedly conducted by Al Qaeda members or their sympathizers who U.S. officials charge may have communicated with someone in Iran.

As for the American side, Secretary of State Colin L. Powell said Thursday in an appearance on the "Late Show with David Letterman" that the United States still hopes to use diplomacy to deal with Iran.

Times staff writer Douglas Frantz in Istanbul contributed to this report.

<http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/world/la-fg-usiran26sep26.1.173953.story>

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Baltimore Sun
September 26, 2003

U.S. Organizing Network To Track Bioterror Attacks

Labs urged to develop forensics to catch culprits

By Scott Shane, Sun Staff

Drawing on lessons from the anthrax mailings of 2001, the federal government is organizing a national network of laboratories and experts on the chemical fingerprints of deadly germs to swiftly trace the source of future bioterrorist attacks.

The core of the network will be at Fort Detrick in Frederick, where a National Bioforensics Analysis Center will maintain databases of viruses, bacteria and other pathogens for comparison with microbes used in crimes. Fort Detrick houses the chief military biodefense research center, the U.S. Army Medical Research Institute of Infectious Diseases. Next door, the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases is building a \$105 million laboratory equipped to handle the deadliest organisms on earth.

In an article published today in the journal *Science*, scientists from the FBI and other laboratories call on their colleagues to create "a robust microbial forensics field" by helping write standards that can make germ comparisons as reliable as fingerprints or human DNA analysis in solving crimes.

"Scientists can play a substantial role in thwarting the use of bioweapons by developing tools to detect and to determine the source of the pathogen and to identify those who use such biological agents to create terror or to commit crime," write the nine authors, led by FBI scientist Bruce Budowle.

In its two-year search for the person whose anthrax-laced letters killed five people, the FBI has recruited scientists to analyze the powdery spores recovered from the letters.

Genetic analysis identified the anthrax used in the attacks as the Ames strain, named by Army scientists at Fort Detrick in 1981 and used at about 20 of labs. Scientists at the Northern Arizona University and the Institute for Genomic Research in Silver Spring have fine-tuned the research in an attempt to track the mailed anthrax back to a specific lab.

Other scientists have devised ways to trace the geographic origin of the water and the kind of nutrients used to grow anthrax spores. If someone is charged with the anthrax mailings, such studies could become part of the government's case.

<http://www.sunspot.net/news/nationworld/bal-te.bioterror26sep26.story>

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