



USAF COUNTERPROLIFERATION CENTER
CPC OUTREACH JOURNAL
Maxwell AFB, Alabama

Issue No. 292, 1 October 2003

Articles & Other Documents:

[Chasing A Mirage](#)

[Iran Says It's Willing To Comply With U.N. Nuclear Precautions](#)

[EU Issues Warning To Tehran On Nukes](#)

[Iran Acknowledges More Arms-Grade Uranium](#)

[Basic Missile Defense Planned For Deadline](#)

[Hussein's Weapons May Have Been Bluff](#)

[Think Tank Study Warns That Iran Is Close To Having Nuclear Arsenal](#)

Welcome to the CPC Outreach Journal. As part of USAF Counterproliferation Center's mission to counter weapons of mass destruction through education and research, we're providing our government and civilian community a source for timely counterproliferation information. This information includes articles, papers and other documents addressing issues pertinent to US military response options for dealing with nuclear, biological and chemical threats and attacks. It's our hope this information resource will help enhance your counterproliferation issue awareness.

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

Time

October 6, 2003

Pg. 38

Chasing A Mirage

The U.S. was sure Saddam had WMD, but Iraqi scientists tell TIME the weapons were destroyed long before the war

By Nancy Gibbs and Michael Ware, Baghdad

The trader was actually sitting at home in Baghdad, waiting. He knew it was only a matter of time before the Americans came. It was just after curfew on the night of June 22, ten weeks after Saddam Hussein's fall, when he heard a helicopter overhead, the humvees in the street outside, the knock at the door. U.S. soldiers came rushing into the house, broke his bed, searched everywhere, then put a blindfold on him and drove him away.

He knew they would come because he knew what they were looking for. He had worked for the import section of Iraq's powerful Military Industrialization Commission (MIC), essentially the state's weapons-making organ, which owned hundreds of factories, research centers—everything you needed if you wanted to build an arsenal of chemical or biological weapons. He spent much of his time in the 1980s buying tons of growth medium, which scientists use to cultivate germs. "We were like traders," he says. "The scientists would tell us what they wanted, and we got it." After Gulf War I, he entertained a steady stream of U.N. weapons inspectors wanting to know what had happened to all that growth medium, how had it been used, what was left.

But there wasn't much he could tell them, not that he could prove, at least. Just before the war, he recalls, the chiefs at the MIC had told people like him involved in the weapons program to hand over some of their documents and burn the rest. "They didn't realize at that time the Americans would insist on every single document," he says. "They thought the (U.S.) attacks would come and that would be it." When in the years after the war U.N. inspectors kept demanding a paper trail, the superiors got nervous. They "started asking us for the documents they had told us to destroy. They were desperate. They even offered to buy any documents we may have hidden."

Ten years and another war later, a new set of interrogators is wondering what happened to Iraq's bioweapons program. On the night of his arrest, the Americans took him to a detention center at the airport, where he was kept in a cell alone, given plenty of water and military rations. Two pairs of Western interrogators took turns asking questions, sometimes through a translator, sometimes directly in English or Arabic. "They asked me about the importation of things like chemicals and about people sent abroad for special missions. The essence of it was, Are there any WMD?" They particularly focused on the period after 1998, when U.N. inspectors left Iraq. "Could any trade have happened without my knowledge within the MIC, not just my section?" The buyer says he had nothing of interest to tell the interrogators; his group, he insists, had long ago quit the weapons-of-mass-destruction business. As they pressed him about what he purchased and for whom, it seemed to him that "it was just like the blind man clutching for someone's hand to hold." After three days he was blindfolded, taken back into the city and released. The trader's story offers a glimpse into the challenges faced by David Kay, a co-head of the Iraq Survey Group, charged by the CIA with finding the WMD the Bush Administration insists Iraq has. Kay is expected to release a status report on his findings soon, possibly this week. While stressing that the account will not be the Survey Group's final word, CIA spokesman Bill Harlow allows that it "won't rule anything in or out." That remark seems a tacit acknowledgment that the U.S., after nearly six months of searching, has yet to find definitive evidence that Saddam truly posed the kind of threat the White House described in selling the war.

Bush Administration officials never anticipated this predicament. They expected that WMD arsenals would be uncovered quickly once the U.S. occupied Iraq. Since then, Iraq has been scoured, and nearly every top weapons scientist has been captured or interviewed. That the investigators have found no hidden stockpiles of VX gas or anthrax or intact gas centrifuges suggests that it may be time to at least entertain the possibility that Iraqi officials all along were telling the truth when they said they no longer had a WMD program.

Over the past three months, TIME has interviewed Iraqi weapons scientists, middlemen and former government officials. Saddam's henchmen all make essentially the same claim: that Iraq's once massive unconventional-weapons program was destroyed or dismantled in the 1990s and never rebuilt; that officials destroyed or never kept the documents that would prove it; that the shell games Saddam played with U.N. inspectors were designed to conceal his progress on conventional weapons systems—missiles, air defenses, radar—not biological or chemical programs; and that even Saddam, a sucker for a new gadget or invention or toxin, may not have known what he actually had or, more to the point, didn't have. It would be an irony almost too much to bear to consider that he doomed his country to war because he was intent on protecting weapons systems that didn't exist in the first place.

These tales are tempting to dismiss as scripts recited by practiced liars who had been deceiving the world community for years. These sources may still be too frightened of the possibility of Saddam's return to power to tell his secrets. Or it could be that Saddam reconstituted an illicit weapons program with such secrecy that those who knew of past efforts were left out of the loop. But the unanimity of these sources' accounts can't be easily dismissed and at the very least underscores the difficulty the U.S. has in proving its case that Saddam was hoarding unconventional arms.

Iraqi engineering professor Nabil al-Rawi remembers being at a conference in Beirut on Feb. 5 and watching on TV as U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell made a presentation to the U.N. laying out the U.S. case that Iraq was pressing ahead with its weapons programs. Conference participants from other Arab countries grilled al-Rawi whether Powell's charges were true. An exasperated al-Rawi tried to reassure his counterparts that he and his teams had abandoned their illegal programs years earlier. Did they believe him? "I don't think so," he says.

Al-Rawi contends that he had been around long enough to know what was what. He had worked on the Iraqi nuclear program before the 1991 war and until the fall of the regime was a senior member of the MIC. He and a nuclear engineer whom TIME interviewed claim that the nuclear-weapons program was not resumed after the plants were destroyed by the U.S. in Gulf War I. In his more recent work at the MIC, al-Rawi had a perspective on the biological and chemical programs as well. Those too, he insists, were shut down in the early 1990s; the scientists transferred to conventional military projects or civilian work. Last November, al-Rawi says, he was asked by Abd al-Tawab Mullah Huweish, head of the Ministry of Industry and Military Industrialization, to give a seminar—essentially career counseling—to MIC scientists "on ways to attract funding for and shape new research projects because there was no weapons work for them."

Sa'ad Abd al-Kahar al-Rawi, a relation of Nabil's, also thinks he would have known had Baghdad revived its WMD efforts. A professor of economics, he was a top financial adviser to the regime and knew the government books well.

He says he would have known if money was disappearing into a black hole created by a special weapons project. Similarly, Iraqi scientists note that their community is small and tightly knit; most of them studied together and worked together. If a new, secret WMD program had started up, they argue, certain core players who held the necessary expertise would have had to be involved. Several scientists told TIME that all their cohort is accounted for; no one went underground. Iraq's premier scientists, according to Nabil al-Rawi, moved on to other things—teaching, water and power projects, producing generic Viagra.

Many did continue developing military technology. After 1991 Nabil al-Rawi worked on electrical controls for unmanned drones and, most recently, Stealth bomber-detection radar. Such projects were meant to be hidden from U.N. inspectors, who, the Iraqis have long asserted, were riddled with American spies. The Furat facility just south of Baghdad was a known nuclear site before the first Gulf War. Last fall the White House released satellite photos showing a new building at the site and suggested it was designed for covert nuclear research. But al-Rawi claims it was rebuilt to produce radar and anti-aircraft systems. When TIME visited the plant this summer, there were signs of heavy bombing, but the new building was intact—and carpeted inside with documents in French, Russian, Arabic and English, all having to do with radar equipment, frequencies and trajectories.

In his U.N. presentation, Powell asserted that the Tariq State Establishment in Fallujah was designed to develop chemical weapons. When TIME visited the site, it was empty. U.N. inspectors visited the facility six times from December 2002 to January 2003 and reported that the chlorine plant that so concerned the Americans "is currently inoperative." Nabil al-Rawi says the hundreds of scientists who worked there are now "doing other things."

Another site mentioned by the allies in the walk-up to the war was the Amiriyah Serum and Vaccine Institute, which both British intelligence and the CIA suspected was part of a biological-warfare program.

TIME visited the site in July to see the two recently built warehouses that had raised those concerns. One had been bombed, its door cascading with a mountain of debris made up of burned and broken empty vials. The intact other building was packed to the rafters with boxes full of glassware and beakers. Pigeons roost in the ceiling, their droppings and feathers—some of it inches thick—caking the cardboard towers. Nothing appears to have been moved in a long time. U.S. intelligence officials declined to tell TIME about Washington's postwar assessment of the site.

So, why all the hide and seek if suspect facilities did not contain incriminating evidence? The former Minister of Industry and Minerals, Muyassar Raja Shalah, cites national security: "The U.N.'s accusations about hiding things were true," he says, recalling charges that Iraqis hustled evidence out the back door even as U.N. inspectors entered through the front. "This was Iraq's right, because the U.N. was searching for WMD in a lot of military facilities, and of course we held a lot of military secrets relating to the national security of Iraq in these places. It was impossible to let a foreigner have a look at these secrets."

Some analysts suspect that Saddam's game was a sly form of deterrence: keep the U.S. and his neighbors guessing about the extent of his arsenal to prevent a pre-emptive attack. A bluff like that had worked for him before: in 1991, during an uprising among Iraqi Kurds in Kirkuk, soldiers inside helicopters dropped a harmless white powder onto the rebels below, terrifying them into thinking it was a chemical attack. The Kurds retreated, and the uprising collapsed. Hans Blix, head of the U.N. inspection team that entered Iraq last November and left just before the war, told Australian national radio two weeks ago that "you can put up a sign on your door, beware of the dog, without having a dog."

Pentagon officials were so certain before Gulf War II that the Iraqis had outfitted their forces with chemical weapons that U.S. soldiers storming toward Baghdad wore their hot, heavy chemical weapons gear, just in case. But a captain in Iraq's Special Security Organization, the agency that was responsible for, among other things, the security of weapons sites, says no such arms were available. "Trust me," he says, his eyes narrowed, as he sits in a back-alley teahouse in Tikrit, "if we had them, we would have used them, especially in the battle for the airport. We wanted them but didn't have any."

Colonel Ali Jaffar Hussan al-Duri, a Republican Guard armored-corps commander who fought in the Iran-Iraq war and in both Gulf Wars, remembers the time when Iraq's Chemical Corps was fear inspiring. "We were much better at it than the Iranians," he says, who are thought to have suffered as many as 80,000 casualties in chemical attacks. But after Gulf War I, Saddam's son-in-law Hussein Kamal, who headed the MIC, took the most talented Chemical Corps officers with him, according to Hussan. After that, he claims, the unit became a joke. "It should have been a sensitive unit—it once was—but in the end that's where we dumped our worst soldiers." Comments a Republican Guard major of the Corps: "It had nothing."

If that's true, what happened to the banned weapons Iraq once possessed? In the inspections regime that lasted from 1991 to 1998, the U.N. oversaw the destruction of large stores of illicit arms. Some documented inventories, however, were never satisfactorily accounted for; these included tons of chemical agents as well as stores of anthrax and VX poison. The Iraqis eventually owned up to producing these supplies but insisted that they had disposed of much of them in 1991 when no one was looking and had kept no records of the destruction. That made Blix wonder.

In an interview with TIME in February, he described Iraq as "one of the best-organized regimes in the Arab world" and noted "when they have had need of something to show, then they have been able to do so."

A former MIC official insists that this view is mistaken. "In Iraq we don't write everything," he says. The claim that Saddam would destroy his most dangerous weapons of his own accord and not retain the means to prove it seems a stretch. But a captain in the Mukhabarat, the main Iraqi intelligence service, says he was a witness to just such an exercise. In July 1991, he says, he traveled into the Nibai desert in a caravan of trucks carrying 25 missiles loaded with biological agents. First the bulldozers took a week to bury them. It took three more weeks to evacuate the area. Then the missiles were exploded. No one kept any kind of documentation, the captain says. "We just did it." This meant that when weapons inspectors came demanding verification, the Iraqis could not prove what or how much had been destroyed.

Sa'ad al-Rawi contends that the men who carried out such missions were junior level, sergeants and first sergeants. "They are not educated men," he says. "You order them to do something, they do it. When we had to try to account for this, we tried to recall them in 1997, but many had of course left the army and were hard to find. And the ones we did find certainly couldn't remember exactly how many missiles were buried, nor what was in each of them."

That still leaves unanswered why the Iraqis would have unilaterally destroyed their most potent arms. One theory, advanced by the U.N., is that the regime used these exercises as a cover for retaining a fraction of their stores. The idea is that they would destroy quantities of weapons (creating a disposal site and eyewitnesses, if not written records) and claim to have got rid of everything yet actually hold on to some of it. The Mukhabarat captain concedes that scientists kept small amounts of VX and mustard gas for future experiments. "I saw it myself, several times," he says.

Samir, a chemicals expert who worked for a branch of the MIC called the National Monitoring Directorate, says he knows of a case in which 14 artillery shells filled with mustard gas were preserved out of a batch of 250 slated for destruction. The main purpose of keeping them, he says, was to test their deterioration over time. The Iraqis handed over the shells to the U.N. in 1997, claiming that they had been mis-stored and recently discovered, an explanation Samir says was a ruse. When four of the shells were unsealed, tests found their contents to be 97% pure. "The gas was perfect," says Samir.

Even if the Iraqis did destroy most of their illegal weaponry in 1991, that does not mean they didn't build up new stores. The notion that the bioweapons program wound down in the 1990s is flatly rejected by Richard Spertzel, who led the U.N. hunt for biological weapons inside Iraq from 1994 to 1998. "We were developing pretty good evidence of a continuing program in '97 and '98," he says. Some U.N. inspectors, disagree, saying they believe that there was no further production after 1991. Spertzel says an Iraqi scientist phoned him just this past April and told him an "edict" went out from Saddam shortly before the war ordering his biological-weapons teams to destroy any remaining germ stockpiles.

That Saddam would have continued feverishly pursuing weapons of every kind seems more in keeping with his character than the idea that he gave up on them. The Iraqi dictator was crazy for weapons, fascinated by every new invention—and as a result was easily conned by salesmen and officials offering the latest device. Saddam apparently had high hopes for a bogus product called red mercury, touted as an ingredient for a handheld nuclear device. Large quantities of the gelatinous red liquid were looted from Iraqi stores after the war and are now being offered on the black market.

Saddam's underlings appear to have invented weapons programs and fabricated experiments to keep the funding coming. The Mukhabarat captain says the scamming went all the way to the top of the MIC to its director, Huweish, who would appease Saddam with every report, never telling him the truth about failures or production levels and meanwhile siphoning money from projects. "He would tell the President he had invented a new missile for Stealth bombers but hadn't. So Saddam would say, 'Make 20 missiles.' He would make one and put the rest in his pocket," says the captain. Colonel Hussan al-Duri, who spent several years in the 1990s as an air-defense inspector, saw similar cons. "Some projects were just stealing money," he says. A scientist or officer would say he needed \$10 million to build a special weapon. "They would produce great reports, but there was never anything behind them." If Saddam may not have known the true nature of his own arsenal, it is no wonder that Western intelligence services were picking up so many clues about so many weapons systems. But it helps answer one logical argument that the Administration has been making ever since the weapons failed to appear after the war ended: why, if Saddam had nothing to hide, did he endure billions of dollars in sanctions and ultimately prompt his own destruction? Perhaps because even he was mistaken about what was really at stake in this fight.

Whether the Iraqis had actual stores of unconventional weapons, Spertzel argues, is beside the point. He finds it credible that Iraq converted many of its weapons factories to civilian uses. Baghdad's official policy from 1995, he notes, was that facilities that were not building weapons had to be self-supporting. But, he adds, "they would be available when called upon" to return to armsmaking. Spertzel thinks the focus on finding a 55-gal. drum of poison is misplaced. "The concern that many of us always had was not that they were producing great quantities of stuff but

that the program was continuing—they were refining techniques and making a better product. That's all part of an offensive program." Absent a smoking gun, the Administration may have to fall back on means and motive. That's always, however, a tougher case to prove.

With reporting by Mark Thompson and Timothy J. Burger/Washington

<http://www.time.com/time/covers/1101031006/wwmd.html>

[\(Return to Articles and Documents List\)](#)

USA Today

September 29, 2003

Pg. 14

Iran Says It's Willing To Comply With U.N. Nuclear Precautions

By Barbara Slavin, USA Today

Iran said Sunday that it would accept new United Nations safeguards against the production of nuclear weapons provided it is allowed to continue enriching uranium to generate electricity.

Interviewed on ABC's *This Week*, Iranian Foreign Minister Kamal Kharrazi also warned Israel against a pre-emptive strike against an Iranian nuclear reactor being constructed by Russia. Israel destroyed a French-built Iraqi reactor in 1981.

"Israel knows that if it commits such an action...there will be a response," Kharrazi said.

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the U.N. nuclear watchdog, has set an Oct. 31 deadline for Iran to accept new inspection standards. Iran denies it is trying to build bombs.

"We are determined to cooperate with the IAEA, no question," Kharrazi said Sunday. "But if you are asking about the additional protocol which we had been asked to sign, we want to make sure that this is enough and is going to solve our problems and remove all suspicions."

The U.S. and European governments want Iran to agree not to enrich uranium, a program that could allow Iran to develop fuel for weapons despite U.N. safeguards.

The Bush administration is also urging Russia to curtail its nuclear cooperation with Iran. Russian President Vladimir Putin, who conferred with Bush at Camp David this weekend, said Saturday that he would stress "the necessity to continue and expand its cooperation with the IAEA."

Putin has vowed not to provide enriched uranium fuel for the reactor at Bushehr unless Iran agrees to new safeguards and returns used fuel to Russia for reprocessing. But the IAEA has since learned that Iran is building its own uranium enrichment facilities.

Last week, the IAEA detected traces of highly enriched weapons-grade uranium at a second site in Iran, an electric company on the outskirts of Tehran. The IAEA previously detected such uranium at an enrichment plant at Natanz. Iranian officials, who initially denied they were trying to produce their own uranium fuel, claim the contamination comes from equipment purchased from abroad.

The United States has questioned why Iran needs nuclear power, since it has the world's fifth-largest oil reserves.

Kharrazi says Iran uses more than 2 million of its 2.8 million barrels a day for domestic consumption.

<http://www.usatoday.com/usatoday/20030929/5541371s.htm>

[\(Return to Articles and Documents List\)](#)

Washington Times

September 30, 2003

Pg. 1

EU Issues Warning To Tehran On Nukes

By David R. Sands, The Washington Times

The European Union, echoing the Bush administration, warned Iran yesterday of severe consequences if it continues to seek nuclear weapons, as officials in Tehran admitted that traces of weapons-grade uranium had been found at a second site by international inspectors.

EU foreign ministers meeting in Brussels increased the pressure on Iran, saying lucrative new trade deals could be scrapped if Tehran did not "immediately comply" with demands by the United Nations' International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) for stricter oversight to prove Iran was not seeking to build a nuclear bomb.

"We want Iran to state unequivocally that there are no nuclear weapons possibilities that could be developed as a result of any nuclear program in Iran," British Minister for Europe Denis MacShane told reporters in Brussels. Added German Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer: "A nuclear arms race in the region is about the worst thing you can imagine."

Iran has been increasingly on the defensive since the IAEA board overwhelmingly passed a U.S.-backed resolution earlier this month setting an Oct. 31 deadline to agree to tougher inspections of a suspect nuclear site.

Revelations last week that IAEA monitors had found enriched uranium at a second site south of Tehran have heightened fears that Iran is secretly seeking a nuclear bomb.

State Department spokesman Richard Boucher said Washington would press the U.N. Security Council to take up the question directly if Iran fails to meet the Oct. 31 deadline, but he and other administration officials have refused to say what actions they would urge the council to take.

"It's one step at a time," said Mr. Boucher. "It's time for Iran to answer the questions it's been asked and to comply with the obligations that many other countries have accepted."

Iran denies it is seeking nuclear weapons, but its divided government has given mixed signals on whether it will comply with international demands. Tehran says its nuclear facilities, including a major Russian-built nuclear plant under construction in the southern port city of Bushehr, are for civilian purposes only.

Iranian Foreign Minister Kamal Kharrazi, in New York for the U.N. General Assembly gathering, said yesterday his country was not opposed "in principle" to a tougher inspection program, but added he was wary that program could be an excuse for further pressure from Washington.

"The question is, if something is not enough, why should we sign it?" he said in an interview published yesterday in the Financial Times.

In Tehran, the official Islamic Republic News Agency quoted government spokesman Abdollah Ramezanzadeh as saying Iran "will not accept any restrictions on peaceful application of nuclear energy."

Ali Akbar Salehi, Iran's representative to the IAEA, acknowledged for the first time yesterday that small amounts of enriched uranium needed for nuclear arms had been found during an August IAEA inspection of the Kalaye Electric Co. facility just outside Tehran.

But Mr. Salehi said the uranium — as well as a similar finding this spring at a sophisticated plant in the city of Natanz — was the leftover residue from equipment and materials Iran bought from foreign suppliers long ago.

U.S. officials have been skeptical of the Iranian story. IAEA officials were barred from the Kalaye site for more than two months before being allowed to visit in August.

Militant hard-liners in Iran's Islamic regime have challenged the moderate line adopted by the foreign ministry and reformist President Mohammed Khatami.

Ayatollah Mahmoud Hashemi, head of the country's judiciary, said yesterday Iran should stand up to U.S. and European pressure and slammed the accommodating stance of some in the government.

"God's tradition is that any tribe and nation showing weakness against the enemy and not defending logic and justice would be humiliated," he said, according to IRNA.

Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, contradicting Iranian nuclear officials, said in a Sept. 17 speech that Iran had enriched the uranium itself.

The European Union, Iran's largest trading partner with \$15.4 billion in two-way trade in 2001, called in July for Iran to dispel doubts about its nuclear programs.

But yesterday it went further, saying Tehran must "refrain from fuel-cycle activities which can also be used to produce fissile material for nuclear weapons."

A senior EU diplomat told Reuters news service, "We are demanding more than in July because we now know more about what is happening in Iran."

The EU statement listed four areas where Iran must show progress before any expanded trade deals can be struck: nuclear proliferation; human rights; Iran's attitude toward the Middle East peace process; and cooperation in the global war on terror.

This article is based in part on wire service reports.

<http://www.washtimes.com/world/20030930-120015-2122r.htm>

[\(Return to Articles and Documents List\)](#)

Baltimore Sun
September 30, 2003

Iran Acknowledges More Arms-Grade Uranium

Tehran says traces came into country, like others, on secondhand equipment

By Associated Press

VIENNA, Austria - Iran acknowledged yesterday that additional traces of weapons-grade uranium have been found on its soil but argued they came from abroad - a claim United Nations and other experts said cannot be discounted. The United States and its allies accuse Tehran of secretly developing nuclear arms.

Over the weekend, President Bush and Russian President Vladimir V. Putin urged Iran to abandon its suspected nuclear-weapons programs.

Iran is facing an Oct. 31 deadline to bare its nuclear secrets, set by the U.N. International Atomic Energy Agency board of governors. If the board rules at its Nov. 20 meeting that Tehran has violated the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty banning the spread of nuclear arms, the Security Council could impose diplomatic or economic sanctions. The IAEA is sending a team to Iran for negotiations Thursday ahead of what the agency hopes will be a new round of inspections starting Friday.

Iran insists it will not stop uranium enrichment and says it has a right to a peaceful nuclear program, as allowed under the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty.

Reacting to leaked reports last week, Ali Akbar Salehi, Iran's representative to the IAEA, told state-run Tehran television yesterday that traces of highly enriched uranium had been found at the Kalay-e Electric Co., just west of Tehran.

But he ruled out that what was found there, and at another facility at Natanz, was locally produced, saying the traces came in on contaminated equipment that was bought abroad.

That argument first surfaced in a report presented to the board meeting that set the October deadline, detailing the Natanz find and other activities feeding suspicions about Iran's nuclear intentions.

While expressing concern, IAEA Director-General Mohamed ElBaradei, the author of the report, indicated he could not dismiss Iran's explanation, suggesting it was one of "a number of possible scenarios."

Others concurred yesterday.

"It is certainly not being dismissed by [IAEA] experts," said a diplomat familiar with the Iran issue, who spoke on condition of anonymity.

Iran has refused to say where it bought the contaminated equipment, but diplomats have said the most likely country of origin was Pakistan. Former IAEA inspector David Albright said that could mean Iran was telling the truth.

The isotopes found in the traces of weapons-grade uranium on centrifuges at Natanz this year do "not have the signature of Europe," he said by telephone from Washington. "The finger points at Pakistan."

"There is not enough information to discount what Iran says," said Albright, now president of the Institute for Science and International Security.

Still, he said, it was also possible that Iran clandestinely enriched small quantities of uranium to weapons grade, indicating attempts to develop a military nuclear program.

Christopher Paine, a nonproliferation expert at the Washington-based National Resources Defense Council, said Iran's argument was "plausible."

But Thomas Cochran, with the same think-tank, said it was unlikely that Iran would not have checked any used equipment for contamination.

He said establishing the source of the equipment was key to checking on Iran's assertion.

"Then, you should be able to go back to those countries, and you should be able to go to the facilities and confirm" whether isotope traces there matched those found in Iran, he said.

<http://www.sunspot.net/news/nationworld/bal-te.iran30sep30.story>

[\(Return to Articles and Documents List\)](#)

Birmingham (AL) News

September 29, 2003

Basic Missile Defense Planned For Deadline

By Kent Faulk, News staff writer

HUNTSVILLE, Ala. – The quest to shoot down ballistic missiles began Sept. 8, 1944. That was the day the first German long-range V-2 missiles fell on Paris and London during World War II.

Since then, the United States has spent billions of dollars looking for ways to bring down enemy missiles, but a shield to protect all 50 states has been elusive. The only defense is still a prayer and a deep bomb shelter.

That may be about to change. Facing a presidential deadline, the military plans just about one year from now to flip the switch on a missile interceptor system designed to protect the United States from attack.

Military officials admit their ground-based midcourse defense program will be based on early technology and won't be a Cadillac. But they say the initial system will do the job against simple missiles, then it will be expanded and made more robust and reliable over the years.

"I have high confidence it will work, and yes, we will be ready," said Maj. Gen. John Holly, program director for the project in Huntsville.

But some critics, citing numerous technical and logistical obstacles, say they see no way the system that the military is building will protect the public.

"They shouldn't feel one iota safer than they do now," said Lisbeth Gronlund, co-director of the global security program at the Union of Concerned Scientists.

The ground-based system to be in place by next October is the beginning of a broader missile shield. It is designed to intercept enemy missiles during the approximately 20 minutes they are in space after launch. The military also is testing interceptors that could be launched from ships and is preparing to test an airplane-based laser that could shoot down a missile just after it is launched.

The overall goal of the military is to provide layered missile defense. Patriot missiles already in the hands of soldiers provide protection against short-range missiles. The Theater High Altitude Area Defense missile is being developed to protect a region against short- and medium-range missiles. Patriot and THAAD, however, aren't designed to shoot down the long-range and faster intercontinental ballistic missiles. That's the job for the new missile shield.

The initial system calls for four interceptors to be located in California and six in Alaska. In case of a missile attack, space-based sensors are to detect the enemy launch and tell an Alaska-based radar where to look to begin tracking the missile. One or more interceptor missiles are to be fired at the in-coming missile in an attempt to knock it down.

"We will have all the facilities in place," Holly said. "We will have interceptors able to engage a target. We will have trained operators. And we'll have the communications infrastructure (and sensors) in place."

Time is the biggest obstacle to overcome in the next year, Holly said.

The second challenge is integration. While the program doesn't require a technological breakthrough, it does require integrating a lot of different pieces to work as one system – including installing thousands of miles of fiber optic cable, creating software and developing communications systems between sites.

Critics don't doubt there will be hardware in the ground next year. But among the problems they see is that the initial system hasn't been fully tested and some important pieces won't be available when it's ready to start.

X-band radar

One of the biggest elements that won't be in place is the X-band radar, said Philip Coyle, who from 1994 to 2001 was assistant secretary of defense in charge of operational testing and evaluation of weapons systems for the Department of Defense. That radar is designed to track enemy missiles and pick out the warhead from among debris and decoys.

The radar is being built in Texas atop a modified oil rig that will be moved to the coast of Alaska. The Missile Defense Agency says the X-band radar won't be ready until 2005.

"Without that, they lose a lot of the tracking and virtually all the discrimination ability," said Matt Martin, associate director of the missile defense project at the Center for Arms Control and Non-Proliferation.

In the meantime, the military will be using a Cold War-era radar called Cobra Dane, and it is upgrading two other radar systems to help track missiles. None of those radar, however, can distinguish between decoys and a nuclear warhead amid the clutter.

Gronlund also says that Cobra Dane was developed to track Russian missile tests and is pointed in the wrong direction. It wouldn't detect launches from some areas, including parts of North Korea, she said.

Rick Lehner, spokesman for the Missile Defense Agency, said that while Cobra Dane doesn't have the discrimination ability of the X-band, there are other things that can help an interceptor missile identify a warhead among decoys. The interceptor has a built-in sensor, and the SPY-1 radar on Aegis cruisers can help interceptors pick out a warhead to some extent.

Lehner said the United States spent nearly \$60 million last year and this year to upgrade Cobra Dane. It will be effective against the types of missiles it's designed to go up against, he said when asked about North Korea.

The military also is developing two satellite systems to detect and track enemy missile launches and help discriminate between decoys and warheads. The first satellite won't be launched for several years. But the military does have one older satellite system that can detect launches and provide some tracking. It does not help discriminate between decoys and warheads, however.

Another element that concerns some critics, including Gronlund, is the missile interceptor booster rocket – the part of the interceptor that puts the kill vehicle into orbit. The kill vehicle maneuvers to directly hit and destroy an enemy warhead.

So far, testing of the missile interceptors has been with a two-stage booster. Two contractors – Orbital Sciences Corp. and Lockheed Martin – are building three-stage boosters that are faster.

A year away from the military's deadline, there have been no tests using either of those boosters to try to intercept targets, said Victoria Samson, senior policy associate at the Center for Defense Information, a group that monitors defense programs.

Lehner said there will be tests of the boosters next year, so the military will know exactly how the new boosters affect missile performance.

Critics also point out that the missile interceptors haven't proven in real-life situations that they can hit a target. In eight tests, missile interceptors have knocked down five targets.

But the tests have been conducted in unrealistically controlled circumstances; those firing the interceptors knew exactly what was coming and the decoy balloons have been easy to spot.

The military traditionally has had to prove a weapon could perform in life-like tests before getting the money and the authorization to build it. But in the case of the ground-based missile defense system, that hasn't been the case.

Holly said plans to build the system will go forward, though testing will continue through construction and for years to come. Part of the plan is to create a realistic missile testing area – or test bed – off the Alaskan coast so the military can perfect the system while being on alert for attack.

"That's the beauty of the capabilities-based program is that we continue to improve all of the system over time," Holly said.

Critics counter that building the system before it has been perfected could cause problems.

"It's like building a house before you know what the whole house is going to look like," Coyle said.

Instead of pouring about \$14.4 billion during the next six years into a missile shield, critics believe the government could spend the money protecting the nation against more likely scenarios such as preventing a terrorist from carrying a nuclear bomb into the United States.

But Baker Spring, a research fellow at the Heritage Foundation, a conservative think-tank said building a missile shield is the right thing to do.

"Right now, we have no defense," he said.

<http://www.al.com/search/index.ssf?/base/news/1064827323235661.xml?birminghamnews?nmet>

[\(Return to Articles and Documents List\)](#)

Washington Post

October 1, 2003

Pg. 14

Hussein's Weapons May Have Been Bluff

Official Is Prepared To Address Issue Of Iraqi Deception

By Walter Pincus and Dana Priest, Washington Post Staff Writers

With no chemical or biological weapons yet found in Iraq, the U.S. official in charge of the search for Saddam Hussein's weapons of mass destruction is pursuing the possibility that the Iraqi leader was bluffing, pretending he had distributed them to his most loyal commanders to deter the United States from invading.

Such a possibility is one element in the interim report that David Kay, who heads the 1,200-person, CIA-lead team in Iraq, will describe before the House and Senate intelligence committees on Thursday, according to people familiar with his planned testimony.

In particular, Kay has examined prewar Iraqi communications collected by U.S. intelligence agencies indicating that Iraqi commanders -- including Ali Hassan Majeed, also known as "Chemical Ali" -- were given the authority to launch weapons of mass destruction against U.S. troops as they advanced north from Kuwait.

The intelligence prompted President Bush to say shortly before the war began last March, "We have sources that tell us that Saddam Hussein recently authorized Iraqi field commanders to use chemical weapons, the very weapons the dictator tells the world he does not have."

David Albright, president of the Institute for Science and International Security and a former United Nations weapons inspector who has been in contact with Iraqi scientists since the war, said: "The idea of deployment and the authority to launch was very solid. But it's now being looked at as possibly misinformation or that they were playing with us," he added.

This week, the officials expect Kay to say that Hussein never abandoned his ability to develop chemical and biological weapons, and remained prepared to reconstitute his nuclear program once U.N. sanctions were lifted. Data now being collected will confirm that after U.N. inspectors left Iraq in 1998, the Iraqi leader continued to buy commercial equipment that could also be used to develop the prohibited weapons.

"It is risky to say that he was doing nothing," Albright said. "Saddam was scheming once we took the boot of economic sanctions and monitoring of his facilities off his neck."

Officials said they expect Kay to document what the U.S. intelligence community has long reported about Iraq's significant efforts to deceive inspectors, including the hiding of documents and materials related to weapons programs. In a CIA white paper issued in October 2002, for example, CIA Director George J. Tenet said,

"Baghdad's vigorous concealment efforts have meant that specific information on many aspects of Iraq's WMD programs is yet to be uncovered."

At least one Iraqi scientist cooperating with the CIA has said that he and others were ordered by Hussein to record all interviews with U.N. inspectors, despite a Security Council resolution calling for inspectors to have unmonitored meetings. In addition, no technicians or scientists involved with the weapons programs were allowed to leave the country, although the resolution called for them to be permitted to go abroad with their families. None ever went. The Kay group has also obtained what it believes to be new confirmation that the Iraqis were violating the U.N. resolution that prohibited Hussein from extending the range of his missiles and developing fuels to power them. Kay has focused on gathering the most extensive information to date on the long-held belief that Iraq had developed sophisticated means for hiding weapons, their technical components and chemical and biological ingredients for deadly weapons.

But Hussein may have put in place a double-deception program aimed at convincing the world and his own people that he was more of a threat than he actually was. This included moving equipment and personnel, and making public statements all designed to make the world and his own people believe that they had weapons of mass destruction.

It is a theory that House intelligence committee staff and members are also exploring as they finish 19 volumes of data underlying the National Intelligence Estimate, the main intelligence document used by policymakers to decide whether to invade Iraq.

Among the possibilities the committee is exploring is whether Iraq destroyed many of its weapons and equipment before the 1991 Persian Gulf War. After the war, thousands of other weapons were collected and destroyed along with equipment and facilities under the direction of the first group of U.N. inspectors.

In 1998, after those inspectors were withdrawn, the U.S. and British attacked for four days in December, hitting more than 100 targets associated with Hussein's missiles and weapons of mass destruction programs.

"He might have been bluffing to his own people," said a senior administration official with access to the underlying data on Iraq.

One of the most popular scenarios, barring the discovery of stockpiled weapons and equipment by U.S. teams, is that Hussein kept what amounted to "starter kits," precursor chemicals for biological weapons, for example, that could be developed in a matter of days.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A25416-2003Sep30.html>

[\(Return to Articles and Documents List\)](#)

USA Today
October 1, 2003
Pg. 8

Think Tank Study Warns That Iran Is Close To Having Nuclear Arsenal

By Barbara Slavin, USA Today

WASHINGTON — Iran could be two years away from building nuclear bombs and should be offered sweeping concessions if it gives up its nuclear program and ties to terrorism, according to the draft of a new report by a think tank close to Bush administration conservatives.

The report by the Nonproliferation Policy Education Center, a group based in Washington, was obtained Tuesday by USA TODAY as the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the United Nations nuclear watchdog, complained about Iran's lack of cooperation.

The IAEA has set an Oct. 31 deadline for Iran to accept tough new safeguards or face possible U.N. Security Council action.

"The next few weeks are key to gauge the level of cooperation and transparency displayed by Iran," IAEA director Mohamed ElBaradei told reporters in Vienna on Tuesday. An IAEA inspection team is due to leave for Iran today. The Bush administration has demanded that Iran accept new inspection standards and give up efforts to enrich uranium, which Iran insists are meant to make fuel for electricity. It has offered no concessions in return. European countries have offered technical aid if Iran meets U.N. demands.

The new report goes further, recommending that Iran scrap its nuclear program — including a reactor under construction by Russians at the southern port of Bushehr — and end its support for terrorist groups. In return, Iran would be offered "security guarantees, economic assistance and normalized diplomatic relations."

"The Iranians have a bomb-making option as long as they have a reactor," said Henry Sokolski, executive director of the think tank that produced the study. "You are whistling past the graveyard of political and technical reality if you leave any fissile production capability in that country."

The report warns that if the Bushehr reactor is completed as anticipated in the next six months, Iran "could make its first plutonium bomb in about two years from now." The study urges the United Nations to immediately find Iran in violation of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty and ban sales of nuclear-related technology to Iran.

"Identifying and sanctioning Iran ... would increase U.S and allied leverage in getting Iran to terminate its nuclear program as part of a diplomatic settlement," the draft report says.

Worries about Iran's intentions have risen since the discovery of traces of highly enriched, weapons-grade uranium at two Iranian facilities in the past few months. Iranian leaders have insisted that they have a right and a need to develop nuclear power because they use most of their oil for domestic consumption.

Iran is considered unlikely to give up the Bushehr project, which has already cost the country nearly \$1 billion and has become a matter of national pride.

Sokolski's report urges steps to influence Iranian public opinion, including increased assistance to deal with natural disasters, drug addiction and HIV/AIDS, as well as free Internet instruction leading to degrees in U.S and Western educational institutions.

A former deputy assistant secretary of Defense in the first Bush administration, Sokolski is close to Bush administration conservatives including John Bolton, the undersecretary of State for Arms Control and International Security.

<http://www.usatoday.com/usatoday/20031001/5548787s.htm>

[\(Return to Articles and Documents List\)](#)