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FDA warns of 'food terrorism'

By Randy Fabi, Reuters, 10/11/2003

WASHINGTON—There is a “high likelihood” within the coming year of a deliberate attack or accidental outbreak in the US food supply that sickens a large number of people, the Food and Drug Administration said yesterday.

Although no specific threats were identified, the FDA said it came to the conclusion because of recent foodborne outbreaks and reports that the Al Qaeda terrorist network was plotting to poison the food supply.

“FDA has concluded that there is a high likelihood, over the course of a year, that a significant number of people will be affected by an act of food terrorism or by an incident of unintentional food contamination that results in serious foodborne illness,” the agency said in a declassified report.

The food supply is especially vulnerable to an attack because of the broad range of biological and chemical agents that can be used, the FDA said.

The agency said salmonella, E. coli 0157:H7, and ricin pose a significant threat because they can be disseminated easily to food. Anthrax and botulism are considered the most deadly.

“The relative centralization of food production in the US and the global distribution of food products give food a unique susceptibility,” the FDA said.

Last month, the FBI warned that “terrorists might use two naturally occurring toxins, nicotine and solanine, to poison US food or water supplies.” The FBI said “terrorist manuals and documents” recovered in Afghanistan referred to the use of these substances as poisons.

Contaminated food sickens 1 of 4 Americans annually, or about 76 million illnesses and 5,000 deaths, according to government data. Almost all of the cases are unintentional.

The FDA said there were “many points of vulnerability to sabotage” in food production and distribution that could sicken many people. Due in part to this, the agency said officials in some cases may not be able to determine whether a foodborne outbreak was intentional.

Several cases of food sabotage have occurred in the United States. In 1984, a cult contaminated salad bars with salmonella to disrupt a local election. The case caused 751 illnesses, including 45 hospitalizations.

In May, a supermarket employee pleaded guilty to poisoning 200 pounds of ground beef with an insecticide containing nicotine. Although the meat was sold in only one store, 111 people fell ill.

The FDA said the food supply also can be a target because of the potential for great economic

http://www.boston.com/news/nation/articles/2003/10/11/fda_warns_of_food_terrorism/

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New York Times

October 14, 2003

Intelligence Puzzle: North Korean Bombs

By David E. Sanger

WASHINGTON, Oct. 13 — New intelligence estimates that North Korea may have produced one or two nuclear weapons in recent months — or perhaps more — have immersed the administration in another internal debate about the quality of intelligence about illegal weapons.

With President Bush just days from embarking on his longest foray in Asia, some of his advisers say it is possible that North Korea is telling the truth about having turned 8,000 nuclear fuel rods into enough weapons-grade plutonium for several warheads.

Others, including more cautious intelligence analysts at the State Department, say there is still no proof, and plenty of incentive for the North Koreans to bluff.

The International Atomic Energy Agency, in a series of confidential briefings, has taken a middle view: It has told Asian governments that North Korea has probably produced enough plutonium to make two new nuclear weapons, according to officials who took notes on the briefings.

“When you add up the evidence, we have every reason to believe they’ve made two new weapons,” a senior Asian official said. That would be in addition to the one or two that the C.I.A. has said the North probably made in the early 1990’s.

American officials caution that the international agency reached its estimates by reinterpreting data from the United States, South Korea and other nations.

The international estimate concerned fuel and did not assess whether the North could convert it into a working bomb. North Korea has never tested a nuclear weapon. The C.I.A. assessment that North Korea built two bombs a decade ago appears to assume that the country had mastered the technology, but the basis for the conclusion is unclear.

Without fully embracing the international estimate, administration officials say American analysts have concluded that the North has turned at least an eighth of its nuclear fuel into weapons-grade plutonium, and maybe as much as a third.

What it all adds up to is that no one knows for certain how big the North’s arsenal is.

President Bush vowed earlier this year that he would never tolerate a nuclear North Korea. But he has left deliberately ambiguous how he defines “tolerate.”

Charles Pritchard, who resigned this summer as the State Department special envoy for North Korean nuclear issues, cast Mr. Bush’s political and strategic problem this way:

“We’ve gone, under his watch, from the possibility that North Korea has one or two weapons to a possibility — a distinct possibility — that it now has eight or more,” said Mr. Pritchard, who also worked on North Korean issues during the Clinton administration. “And it’s happened while we were deposing Saddam Hussein for fear he might get that same capability by the end of the decade.”

In June, evidence collected by American satellites and sensors that capture a gas, krypton 85, released during reprocessing offered up tantalizing hints that additional nuclear facilities exist. But intelligence officials were unable to reproduce those findings, leaving what one senior official called “a lot of suspicions, but zippo evidence.”

The facilities are thought to be in the mountains toward the Chinese border, and perhaps in underground tunnels, making them less vulnerable. "It's the hardest intelligence target we have," one senior American official said, "much harder than Iraq."

For Mr. Bush, that uncertainty greatly complicates his trip to Asia.

Mr. Bush's spokesman, Scott McClellan, said on Friday that Mr. Bush's strategy had already "achieved important success," because the North has "agreed to multilateral talks, six-country talks" on resolving the nuclear issues.

The administration's strategy relies heavily on pressure from China, which supplies the desperately poor North with most of its oil and much of its food.

Yet as Mr. Bush heads to Asia, administration officials are trying to put down a minor rebellion with a key ally over the strategy.

South Korea's foreign minister, Yoon Young Kwan, held a heated meeting with Secretary of State Colin L. Powell last month in New York, demanding that Mr. Bush respond to North Korea's call for security treaties and a plan for gradual improvement in economic relations in return for dismantling any nuclear facilities. In a twist that angered Mr. Powell, the South Korean said his new president, Roh Moo Hyun, would not consider sending any troops to aid in Iraq unless the United States gave ground on North Korea.

Mr. Powell, according to several officials familiar with the exchange, curtly told told him, "That is not how allies deal with each other."

In a telephone interview on Friday, Mr. Powell declined to discuss the meeting. But, he said, "we have some ideas, some interesting ideas, about how we can move forward on providing some security assurances to the North Koreans that might open up some new possibilities" during Mr. Bush's trip.

Mr. Bush meets President Roh next week at an Asian summit meeting in Bangkok, along with China's president, Hu Jintao, with whom the United States has shared a tremendous amount of highly classified intelligence in recent months about the progress of the North's program.

Unlike Iraq, North Korea is not denying its efforts, but rather boasting with an enthusiasm that makes many analysts suspicious. Earlier this month the North Korean government said it had solved "all of the technological matters" for making weapons.

The debate over what is actually going on in some ways mirrors the arguments that unfolded a year ago over how to interpret contradictory intelligence about Iraq.

Hawks in the administration, from the White House to the vice president's office to the Pentagon, argue that it is entirely possible that all 8,017 spent-fuel rods stored in North Korea since 1994 have been converted into bomb fuel. They note that when the North last turned fuel rods into bombs, in 1991, they went undetected by intelligence agencies for years.

Yet the Iraq experience has bred significant caution among intelligence agencies, now more careful than ever about overinterpreting the evidence. And, as in the case of the krypton gas, that evidence sometimes seems to appear, then disappear.

"There are lots of ways for the North Koreans to scrub their facilities and reduce the amount of krypton that gets out," said a former intelligence official with long experience with the technology. "So measuring the gas output is a crummy way of figuring out how much plutonium they have produced."

Satellites have detected other suspected facilities, but that technology is also not reliable.

"Our knowledge of North Korea is so limited that you have to sympathize with the poor intelligence analysts who have to make sense of all this," said Joel S. Wit, a former State Department official who visited a site five years ago that the C.I.A. believed was a new reprocessor, only to find a huge hole in the ground. "The ramifications of a screw-up are pretty big: that you've missed a second facility, or that they have reprocessed and we haven't picked it up. Either one of those is a pretty terrifying thought."

<http://www.nytimes.com/2003/10/14/international/asia/14KORE.html>

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Los Angeles Times

October 14, 2003

Pressure Increases On Iran

A nuclear watchdog group will visit Tehran to push leaders to comply with an Oct. 31 deadline, and Russia delays start of a reactor.

By Douglas Frantz, Times Staff Writer

ISTANBUL, Turkey — International pressure on Iran to prove it is not developing nuclear weapons increased Monday as the chief of the U.N. atomic watchdog agency said he would visit Tehran this week and Russia postponed plans to start up a nuclear reactor in Iran.

Mohamed ElBaradei, director-general of the International Atomic Energy Agency, and senior officials of his organization would visit Tehran in an attempt to persuade Iran's leaders to meet an Oct. 31 deadline to suspend its nuclear enrichment program and permit intensive inspections of its nuclear sites.

"Time is indeed running out," ElBaradei said in a statement released Monday, adding that Iran had not provided a full accounting of its nuclear activities.

The IAEA imposed the deadline last month in response to suspicions that Iran's civilian nuclear program conceals efforts to build a weapon. Concerns have grown in recent weeks after inspectors found traces of weapons-grade uranium at two sites in Iran.

Officials in Tehran said the uranium came on contaminated equipment purchased abroad. They insisted that Iran's nuclear program was devoted solely to generating electricity and have resisted what they regard as U.S.-inspired pressure from the IAEA.

"We will not allow anyone to deprive us of our legitimate right to use the nuclear technology, particularly enrichment, for providing fuel for our plants," Kamal Kharrazi, Iran's foreign minister, was quoted as saying last week by the Islamic Republic News Agency.

Russia is building Iran's first nuclear reactor near the Persian Gulf port of Bushehr. U.S. officials fear the reactor could produce fissile material for an atomic weapon, and they have been pressuring the Russians to withdraw from the project.

On Monday, Russia's Atomic Energy Ministry said it was postponing plans to start the reactor for a year, which means it would go online in 2005. It said the delay was caused by technical problems, not by political reasons.

"We are putting off the start-up of the first reactor of the Bushehr plant because much of the technical equipment has not been supplied in time," a ministry official told Reuters.

While several installations are suspected of playing a role in Iran's alleged nuclear weapons program, U.S. officials said they were most concerned that Iran could divert low-enriched uranium from Bushehr to a weapons facility, where it could be further enriched to manufacture an atomic bomb.

"You could not stop the program entirely, but if Bushehr never came online, you would not get the low-enriched uranium to divert to weapons," said a senior Bush administration official.

The German magazine Der Spiegel reported this week that Israel had identified several hidden nuclear weapons installations in Iran and was making plans to destroy them if necessary.

An Iranian opposition group said Monday that it planned to release information today about secret nuclear facilities in Iran. The group, the National Council of Resistance of Iran, has provided accurate information in the past.

Iranian officials are debating whether to comply with the Oct. 31 deadline and whether to sign an agreement that would give IAEA inspectors the right to conduct more intrusive inspections of its nuclear installations.

If Iran fails to satisfy the agency, the issue could be referred to the U.N. Security Council, which could impose sanctions. The IAEA's board of governors from 35 countries is set to meet Nov. 20 to determine whether Iran has complied.

<http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/world/la-fg-iran14oct14001418,1,3349262.story>

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Los Angeles Times

October 12, 2003

Pg. 1

Israel's Arsenal Is Point Of Contention

The nation can now launch nuclear weapons from land, sea and air, officials say. The issue complicates efforts to rein in Iran's ambitions.

By Douglas Frantz, Times Staff Writer

TEL AVIV — Israel has modified American-supplied cruise missiles to carry nuclear warheads on submarines, giving the Middle East's only nuclear power the ability to launch atomic weapons from land, air and beneath the sea, according to senior Bush administration and Israeli officials.

The previously undisclosed submarine capability bolsters Israel's deterrence in the event that Iran — an avowed enemy — develops nuclear weapons. It also complicates efforts by the United States and the United Nations to persuade Iran to abandon its suspected nuclear weapons program.

Two Bush administration officials described the missile modification and an Israeli official confirmed it. All three spoke on condition their names not be used.

The Americans said they were disclosing the information to caution Israel's enemies at a time of heightened tensions in the region and concern over Iran's alleged ambitions.

Iran denies developing nuclear weapons and says its nuclear program is solely for generating electricity. Iranian leaders are resisting more intrusive inspections by the United Nations, setting the stage for a showdown in coming weeks.

The U.N.'s International Atomic Energy Agency has given Tehran an Oct. 31 deadline to accept full inspections and prove it has no nuclear arms program.

Arab diplomats and U.N. officials said Israel's steady enhancement of its secret nuclear arsenal, and U.S. silence about it, has increased the desire of Arab states for similar weapons.

"The presence of a nuclear program in the region that is not under international safeguards gives other countries the spur to develop weapons of mass destruction," said Nabil Fahmy, Egypt's ambassador to the United States. "Any future conflict becomes more dangerous."

Late last month, Egypt joined Saudi Arabia and Syria at the U.N. General Assembly in criticizing the U.S. and U.N. for ignoring Israel's weapons of mass destruction while pressuring Iran.

A senior Iranian official raised the same issue at a nonproliferation conference in Moscow in September.

"Stability cannot be achieved in a region where massive imbalances in military capabilities are maintained, particularly through the possession of nuclear weapons that allow one party to threaten its neighbors and the region," said Ali Asghar Soltanieh.

Israel will not confirm or deny that it possesses nuclear arms. Intelligence analysts and independent experts have long known that the country has 100 to 200 sophisticated nuclear weapons.

Israel, India and Pakistan are the only countries with nuclear facilities that have not signed the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, which was initiated in 1968 to stop the spread of nuclear weapons through inspections and sanctions. India and Pakistan also have nuclear bombs.

Iran and Arab states with civilian nuclear programs have signed the treaty. The Arab countries have refused to agree to tougher inspections because Israel will not sign it, U.N. officials said.

"A big source of contention is Israel," said a senior official trying to win acceptance of the additional inspections.

"This is a magnet for other countries to develop nuclear weapons."

Israel and its U.S. backers regard its nuclear weapons as a centerpiece of the country's security. The development of the arms over several decades, with tacit U.S. approval, has been rarely mentioned, but it is becoming an increasingly compelling component in discussions about lasting peace in the Middle East.

While not acknowledging the country's nuclear capability, Israeli officials have promised they would not "introduce" such weapons to the Middle East. Israeli and U.S. officials said that means Israel would not launch a first strike using the weapons. They argue that other countries have nothing to fear from Israel's nuclear arms, whereas Israel has everything to fear from its neighbors. Even so, Israel's nuclear stockpile confers military superiority that translates into a high degree of freedom of action, from bombing a suspected terrorist camp in Syria last week to the destruction of an Iraqi nuclear reactor in 1981.

"Nuclear capabilities give the owners enormous political maneuverability which otherwise they do not have," a senior Western security official said.

Since 1969, Washington has accepted Israel's status as a nuclear power and not pressured it to sign the nonproliferation treaty.

"We tolerate nuclear weapons in Israel for the same reason we tolerate them in Britain and France," a senior administration official said. "We don't regard Israel as a threat."

To avoid triggering American economic and military sanctions, U.S. intelligence agencies routinely omit Israel from semiannual reports to Congress identifying countries developing weapons of mass destruction. The Clinton administration even barred the sale of the most detailed U.S. satellite photographs of Israel in an effort to protect that country's nuclear complex and other targets.

The Bush administration's determination to stop Iran from developing nuclear weapons means Israel's worst-kept secret is likely to loom large in negotiations with Tehran.

"You are never going to be able to address the Iranian nuclear ambitions or the issues of Egypt's chemical weapons and possible biological weapons program without bringing Israel's nuclear program into the mix," said Joseph Cirincione, director of the nonproliferation program at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, a Washington-based nonprofit organization promoting international cooperation.

Growing Vulnerability

Israel is smaller than New Jersey and its population of 6 million is within reach of missiles from Iran and other neighbors. As Iran and other countries in the region improved their long-range missiles in the 1990s, Israel's land-based nuclear weapons became vulnerable to attack.

The strategic alternative was to develop nuclear-armed submarines, which would be almost invulnerable, said Robert S. Norris, a nuclear historian at the Natural Resources Defense Council in Washington.

Israel ordered three specially designed submarines from Germany in the mid-1990s and they were delivered in 1999 and 2000. The diesel-powered vessels have a range of several thousand miles and can remain at sea for up to a month.

The attempt to arm them with nuclear missiles was first disclosed in a book published in June 2002 by the Carnegie Endowment. The Washington Post published an article about the effort a few days later.

Recent interviews with officials in Washington and Tel Aviv provided the first confirmation that Israel can now deliver nuclear weapons from beneath the sea.

The Israeli official refused to provide details, but the U.S. officials said the warheads were designed for American-supplied Harpoon missiles, which can be launched from the subs and have sea-skimming cruise guidance systems. Harpoons usually have conventional warheads and are common in the arsenals of the United States and other countries.

Norris said Israeli engineers would have had to reduce the size of a nuclear weapon to fit the warhead of a Harpoon and alter the missile guidance system to hit land-based targets, both relatively simple tasks with a sophisticated weapons program.

“They have been at it for more than 30 years, so this is something within the realm of capability for Israel’s scientists and engineers,” said Norris, who added that the normal range of the missiles — 80 miles — might have been extended as well.

The submerged submarines send missiles to the surface in capsules fired from torpedo tubes. When a capsule reaches the surface, its top blows off and the missile is launched.

An Israeli government spokesman, Daniel Seaman, confirmed that the three new submarines carried Harpoon missiles, but he declined to specify the type of warhead.

Israel has about 150 miles of coast on the Mediterranean Sea and its submarines are deployed so that at least one is in the water at all times, ensuring that Israel can retaliate if attacked.

The Israeli government rejected requests for interviews with officials from its atomic energy agency and refused to answer questions on nuclear-related matters.

The consensus in the U.S. intelligence community and among outside experts is that Israel, with possibly 200 nuclear weapons, has the fifth- or sixth-largest arsenal in the world.

Under the nonproliferation treaty, five countries are permitted nuclear weapons. Britain has 185, the smallest number among the five, according to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute. The group estimated that Russia has 8,232 weapons; the United States, 7,068; China, 402; and France, 348.

Israel has about double the number of India and Pakistan. North Korea claims to have nuclear weapons, but U.S. intelligence officials are uncertain whether that is true. Estimates of the number have ranged from one or two to six.

A Deal With France

Israel began building a nuclear bomb in the mid-1950s when hostile neighbors surrounded the young country and the Holocaust was fresh in the minds of its leaders.

A secret agreement with the French government in 1956 helped Israel build a plutonium nuclear reactor. France and Israel were natural partners then; they had been allies with Britain in a brief attempt to seize the Suez Canal after Egypt nationalized it and had shared concerns about the Soviets and unrest in North Africa.

The reactor site was in a remote corner of the Negev desert, outside the village of Dimona.

It was a massive project, with as many as 1,500 Israeli and French workers building the reactor and an extensive underground complex on 14 square miles. French military aircraft secretly flew heavy water, a key component of a plutonium reactor, from Norway to Israel, according to the Federation of American Scientists in Washington.

American U-2 spy planes spotted the construction soon after it began in 1958. Israel initially said it was a textile plant and later a metallurgical research facility. Two years later, U.S. intelligence identified the site as a nuclear reactor and the CIA said it was part of a weapons program, according to documents at the National Archives in Washington.

In December 1960, Israeli Prime Minister David Ben Gurion told the Israeli parliament that a nuclear reactor was under construction, but he said it was exclusively for peaceful purposes.

It was the first and last time that an Israeli prime minister made a public statement about Dimona, according to “Israel and the Bomb,” an authoritative book by Avner Cohen, an Israeli American scholar.

Soon after taking office in 1961, President Kennedy pressured Israel to allow an inspection. Ben Gurion agreed, and an American team visited the installation that May.

A post-visit U.S. memo said the scientists were “satisfied that nothing was concealed from them and that the reactor is of the scope and peaceful character previously described to the United States.”

American teams visited Dimona seven times during the 1960s and reported that they could find no evidence of a weapons program.

In June 1967, on the eve of the Middle East War, Israeli engineers assembled two improvised nuclear devices, according to published accounts and an interview with an Israeli with knowledge of the episode.

By early 1968, Carl Duckett, then deputy director of the CIA office of science and technology, had concluded that Israel had nuclear weapons, according to testimony he gave to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission in 1974.

Duckett said his assessment was based on conversations with Edward Teller, the father of the hydrogen bomb, who visited Israel several times and supported its nuclear program. Duckett said Richard Helms, CIA director, ordered him not to circulate his conclusions.

In 1969, President Nixon struck a deal with Israeli Prime Minister Golda Meir: As long as Israel did not go public with its program or test weapons openly, the United States would stop its inspections and turn a blind eye, according to Cohen's book.

The proof surfaced 17 years later. On Oct. 5, 1986, the Sunday Times of London published an article in which a former Dimona technician, Mordechai Vanunu, provided a detailed look at Israel's nuclear weapons program. His cache included diagrams and photographs from inside the complex, which he said had produced enough plutonium for 100 bombs since it went online in 1964.

To conceal the weapons work from U.S. inspectors, a false wall had been built to hide elevators that descended six stories beneath the desert floor to facilities where plutonium was refined and bomb parts were manufactured, Vanunu said.

Shortly before the article was published, a female agent from Israel's intelligence service lured Vanunu from London to Rome. He was kidnapped and smuggled back to Israel, where he was convicted of treason in a secret trial and sentenced to 18 years in prison.

Vanunu is scheduled to be released next year. He has been denied parole because prosecutors say he still has secrets to tell, according to his lawyer and supporters.

Meanwhile, Israel was enhancing its ability to launch its nuclear weapons.

The U.S. sold Israel F-15 and F-16 fighter jets, both of which can be used to deliver nuclear bombs or missiles. In the 1960s, the French helped Israel develop its first generation of Jericho missiles and the Israelis had built a longer-range Jericho II by the mid-1980s.

The Jericho I and II are equipped with nuclear warheads, and satellite photos indicate that many are hidden in limestone caves southeast of Tel Aviv, near the town of Zachariah, which is Hebrew for "God remembers with vengeance."

The Jericho II has a range of 930 miles, which means it could probably hit targets in Iran. The F-16 has a range of 1,000 miles, and the F-15 can hit targets more than 2,000 miles away.

Israel has never openly tested nuclear weapons. Experts said the Israelis have used supercomputers, some supplied by the U.S., to conduct simulations for designing weapons. Components also can be tested using conventional explosives.

"Nonnuclear tests would not be picked up by satellites and other monitoring systems," said Gary Milhollin, director of the Wisconsin Project on Nuclear Arms Control in Washington. "You can do a lot in secret and without a nuclear explosion."

An Open Secret

Israel's nuclear program remains shrouded by a policy it calls "nuclear ambiguity." The phrase means Israel does not acknowledge its nuclear capability and suffer the accompanying political and economic fallout, yet it gains the benefit of deterrence because other nations know the weapons exist.

Though Israel is a democracy, debating the nuclear program is taboo. The Israeli Atomic Energy Commission is one of the country's most secretive organizations. Its budget is secret, its facilities are off limits, and employees face harsh sanctions if they talk about its operations. Even the name of the chief of nuclear security was a secret until three years ago.

A military censor guards Israel's nuclear secrets. Journalists writing about any security or defense matters must submit articles or broadcast scripts for pre-publication review. The censor, an army general, can block publication or broadcast. Decisions can be appealed to the Israeli Supreme Court, but journalists said the government usually prevails.

Foreign journalists in Israel are subject to the censorship law, though foreigners rarely submit material to the censor and enforcement is less strict. This article, for example, was not submitted to Israeli censors.

However, some foreigners have run afoul of the authorities.

In late June, the British Broadcasting Corp. aired a documentary examining the Israeli nuclear establishment's history, Vanunu's imprisonment and illnesses among former workers at the Dimona complex.

The Israeli government retaliated within days. It stopped providing spokesmen for BBC stories and prohibited BBC reporters from attending government news conferences. "They are trying to demonize the state of Israel," Seaman, the head of the press office, said of BBC in an interview in August. "We are not cooperating with them."

Tim English, a BBC spokesman, said the broadcaster stood by the accuracy and fairness of its program. Censorship extends to academics too. Cohen, the Israeli American scholar, has written a second book that criticizes Israel's nuclear secrecy as "anachronistic."

In July, his Israeli publisher submitted the manuscript to the censor in hopes of publishing it in Hebrew. Cohen said a decision was expected soon.

"This will show how far the Israeli government is willing to go to allow serious discussion of the issue," he said.

Uproar in Parliament

Israel's parliament was dragged into the nuclear debate briefly on Feb. 2, 2000. Issam Makhoul, one of 10 Israeli Arabs in parliament, got the item on the agenda by petitioning the Supreme Court after being rebuffed seven times. "The entire world knows that Israel is a huge warehouse of nuclear, biological and chemical weapons that serves as a cornerstone of the nuclear arms race in the Middle East," said Makhoul, whose speech was protected by parliamentary immunity.

Several members of parliament walked out. Others responded with angry shouts. "This is putting lives in danger," said one member, Moshe Gafni.

Haim Ramon, a Cabinet minister, said no democratic country invites its enemies to listen in on discussions of nuclear arms policy. "Do you want us to announce to Iran and Iraq exactly what we have?" he asked.

Sitting in his cluttered office in Haifa recently, Makhoul defended his attempt to spark a debate and argued that the issue was more pressing now.

"The American administration decided to destroy weapons of mass destruction in Iraq and they are threatening Iran," he said. "They cannot continue giving a blind eye to what is going on in Israel."

Some experts contend Israel no longer needs nuclear weapons because Iraq is no longer a threat and Israel's conventional forces are superior to any combination of Arab armies. Israel's problems with Palestinian extremists, they argue, cannot be remedied by nuclear strikes.

"Israel has a direct interest in making sure no Muslim state acquires the one weapon that could offset its conventional superiority, a nuclear bomb," said Cirincione, the nonproliferation director at the Carnegie Endowment. "One way to do that is by putting its own nuclear weapons on the table."

Some Arab leaders advocate declaring the Middle East a zone free of weapons of mass destruction. The process would be long, starting with mutual pledges to give up weapons and the creation of a mechanism to verify compliance.

Few Israelis think this is the right time to discuss it, because of the level of violence with the Palestinians.

"Israel could accept the idea after two years of comprehensive peace in the Middle East," said Ephraim Kam, deputy director of the Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies in Tel Aviv. "Only then could we consider changing our nuclear position."

Israel's nuclear defense history

1949--France and Israel set up a joint nuclear research project. Israel begins a geological survey of the Negev desert in search of uranium. Recoverable amounts are found.

1952--Israel creates an atomic energy commission.

1953--Israeli researchers perfect a process for extracting uranium and a new method of producing heavy water, providing the home-grown capability to produce key nuclear materials.

1956--France and Israel agree in secret to build a nuclear reactor in the Negev desert.

1960--U.S. intelligence determines that Israel has a secret nuclear facility.

1965--Israel performs its first plutonium extraction; France helps Israel develop its Jericho missiles.

1975--Israel receives nuclear-capable Lance missiles from the U.S.

1986--The Sunday Times of London exposes Israel's nuclear weapons program, using information from a former Israeli nuclear technician, Mordechai Vanunu, above. He is convicted of treason and sentenced to 18 years in prison.

1987--Israel test-fires the Jericho II missile.

2000--First test of submarine-launched missiles is reportedly made in the Indian Ocean.

--*Researched by Times graphics reporter Tom Reinken*

<http://www.latimes.com/news/printedition/la-fg-iznukes12oct12001430,1,1095748.story>

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Chicago Tribune
October 13, 2003

Israel, Arms Experts Dispute Report Of Nuclear Warheads

By Associated Press

Israeli and foreign military experts Sunday dismissed a report that Israel had modified submarine-based missiles to carry nuclear warheads, saying such an alteration was technically impossible.

The Los Angeles Times reported in Sunday editions that Israel had modified some of its nuclear warheads to fit U.S.-made Harpoon cruise missiles and upgraded the missiles so they could hit targets on land. The article quoted two U.S. officials and one Israeli official, all speaking on condition of anonymity.

Former Israeli Deputy Defense Minister Efraim Sneh called the assertion that Israel had made the Harpoon nuclear impossible.

“Anyone with even the slightest understanding of missiles knows that the Harpoon can never be used to carry nuclear warheads,” Sneh told Army Radio.

Ted Hooton, editor of Jane’s Naval Weapon Systems in London, echoed Sneh’s assessment, saying problems with payload weight would put the Harpoon out of balance, limiting its range and accuracy.

Israel has never acknowledged having nuclear weapons of its own, but Israeli and foreign experts believe it possesses 100 to 200 nuclear devices.

<http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/nationworld/chi-0310130201oct13.1.341365.story>

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Inside The Navy

October 13, 2003

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DSB Study On Homeland Security Provides Road Map For Pentagon

VIRGINIA BEACH, VA—An extensive review completed by the Defense Science Board calls on the Defense Department to increase its ability to respond to simultaneous weapons of mass destruction attacks and to ensure Northern Command coordinates contingency plans with civilian authorities, among other recommendations, according to the Pentagon’s top homeland defense official, Paul McHale.

The Defense Science Board—a federal advisory committee established to provide independent advice to the secretary of defense—completed a comprehensive review this summer of DOD missions related to homeland defense. In a brief interview with *Inside the Navy*, McHale expressed nothing but praise for the panel’s report, calling it “the single best overview of current DOD capabilities and potential missions.”

The report has not yet been released to the public, nor has the DSB briefed Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld of its findings. McHale anticipates Rumsfeld will have the opportunity to meet with leaders of the study in the “very near future” to review their findings. McHale, a former Marine and retired congressman who is now DOD’s assistant secretary for homeland defense, spoke to *ITN* Oct. 9 following his remarks here at the U.S. Naval Institute’s symposium.

One of the panel’s key recommendations is that DOD enhance the nation’s capability to respond to multiple simultaneous weapons of mass destruction attacks, said McHale. Specifically, the board is recommending DOD rely more heavily on the National Guard to perform WMD response.

Though McHale did not directly comment on whether he would support such a recommendation, he told *ITN*, “Whether it’s the National Guard, or perhaps an enhanced capability within the Department of Homeland Security, there is no question but that we need to focus detailed planning and substantial resources in order to ensure that our country will be able to respond to multiple simultaneous attacks because regrettably that is the pattern of activity displayed by terrorists, most notably al Qaeda, in the past.”

The report, which McHale said fills 80 PowerPoint slides, also recommends DOD place an increased emphasis on “maritime defense in depth,” so that Northern Command would “not only have the mission requirement, but adequate resources to execute the mission as well,” McHale explained.

Another primary recommendation—and one that DOD “fully supports”—is the need to “ensure that NORTHCOM will have a robust opportunity to coordinate contingency plans with civilian authorities in order to guarantee that all of our planning efforts, both civilian and military, will support one another,” he said.

“We cannot piecemeal our nation’s capabilities into a response to an enemy attack,” McHale said. “Those capabilities have to be carefully coordinated, they have to be fully understood by all of the participants, both civilian and military, and most importantly, they need to be tested in a rigorous exercise schedule that anticipates to the greatest degree possible the kind of attacks that terrorists might launch within our own nation.”

McHale did not describe any of the recommendations as a surprise, noting his office worked closely with the panel in shaping the study’s parameters, so he had an expectation of the kinds of issues the board would review. Asked

how his office would incorporate the study's recommendations, McHale said the DSB's work could provide a road map for homeland defense activities.

"I believe that the DSB has performed a great service in stitching together the mission requirements and capabilities so that we have an overarching concept of operations for homeland defense," said McHale. "Although it will not be a formal game plan for homeland defense activities, it provides a better road map than any other single source that I have seen so far."

On the issue of coordination, McHale noted he has already been working closely with leaders from DHS to ensure that senior officials from both departments have a "thorough understanding of the capabilities that are available to the nation in the form of Joint Task Force Civil Support." The task force, which falls under NORTHCOM's command, plans and integrates DOD support to the designated lead federal agency for domestic chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear and high-yield explosive (CBRNE) consequence management operations. To ensure DHS is aware of the capabilities the Pentagon has available, McHale was scheduled to visit JTF Civil Support headquarters in Virginia last month with Frank Libutti, DHS under secretary for information analysis and infrastructure protection; Charles McQueary, DHS under secretary for science and technology; and Mike Brown, DHS undersecretary for emergency preparedness and response. The meeting was postponed due to Hurricane Isabel, but will be rescheduled, he said.

McHale noted he has previously met with all three under secretaries and that their staffs have worked together routinely throughout the past six months. He also mentioned that there are employees on his staff who work full time in the operations center at DHS. Pointing to this as evidence that DHS and DOD are already developing a close working relationship, McHale emphasized, "We coordinate with DHS on a daily basis."

"One of the things we hope to achieve is interoperability of communications so that senior officials in the Department of Homeland Security, to include [Homeland Security Secretary Tom Ridge] and his under secretaries, will have access to the same information regarding critical infrastructure that we in DOD possess," he said. "So if we know it, we want them to know it, and we want to make sure we have the [communications] links to make that happen—particularly in a crisis environment."

Navy Secretary Gordon England, the former No. 2 official at DHS, has spoken publicly about increasing ties between the two departments since his return to the Navy post. England told *ITN* following his Sept. 23 confirmation hearing that he believes it is "very important" that the Pentagon and DHS work together closely, (*ITN*, Sept. 29, p1). He also said he would recommend to Rumsfeld "that we continue on this path of working closely between the two departments."

England participated in the debriefing of the DSB study on DOD roles and missions in homeland security, according to answers he prepared for the Senate Armed Services Committee in advance of his confirmation hearing.

Ridge has also publicly taken up the theme of DHS-DOD cooperation, recently speaking to the issue before a crowd of senior government leaders at the Pentagon's Worldwide Combating Terrorism Conference on Sept. 9. "One of the most important partnerships is between the Department of Defense and the Department of Homeland Security," said Ridge, according to a copy of his prepared remarks. It was less than a year ago that the Pentagon created the post now occupied by McHale, Ridge also noted during his remarks.

-- **Malina Brown**

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Al-Qaeda agents reveal their hunt for anthrax

WASHINGTON

AL-QAEDA operatives were trying to acquire anthrax and make other biological arms in South-east Asia for use in terrorist attacks, said a US official.

US intelligence had indications of secret efforts by the terrorists to develop biowarfare weapons in the region, he said on Friday.

He would not disclose how advanced their preparations were.

But according to two recent news reports, there were plans to continue an anthrax weapons programme in Indonesia after earlier efforts failed in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

The plans were disclosed during the interrogation of two senior Al-Qaeda members: Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, the architect of the Sept 11 attacks, and Riduan Isamuddin alias Hambali, the terrorist network's linkman in South-east Asia.

According to reports by CBS and CNN, their key associate, former Malaysian army captain Yazid Sufaat, had tried to acquire anthrax in Afghanistan but could not get the right strain.

After the United States launched its military campaign on Afghanistan in October 2001, Yazid and Hambali fled to Pakistan.

There, the two men discussed 'continuing the anthrax programme in Indonesia'.

Both men returned to South-east Asia, but Yazid was arrested in late 2001 by the Malaysian authorities.

His arrest disrupted yet again Al-Qaeda's bioweapons plans, but the reports said the group's other associates could still be trying.

These revelations come as American and Indonesian officials warned about the possibility of more strikes by the militant Jemaah Islamiyah (JI).

US military officials said JI is now believed to have about 750 operatives in the region, more than double the initial estimate of 300.

Indonesian police said yesterday that while Bali was safe on the eve of the first anniversary of the nightclub bombings, the militants still had significant amounts of explosives and two bombs for strikes in other parts of the country.

Australian Premier John Howard flew in yesterday for today's commemorative service. The Bali attack left 88 Australians dead.—International Herald Tribune, AP, Reuters

<http://straitstimes.asia1.com.sg/news/story/0,4386,214270,00.html>

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Experts Worry Terrorists Could Get Nuke Bomb

Sun October 12, 2003 10:25 AM ET

By Louis Charbonneau

STOCKHOLM (Reuters) - International nuclear experts are quietly confronting the most terrifying scenario of all—what to do if terrorists manage to build and detonate a nuclear fission bomb, a diplomat and senior nuclear scientist said.

The diplomat, who is also close to the International Commission on Radiological Protection (ICRP), told reporters a team of ICRP experts from around the world had met this weekend in Stockholm to discuss emergency responses should this scenario become a reality.

Asked what was the worst-case realistic scenario for an act of nuclear terror, the diplomat said: "A very badly done, but done nuclear weapon."

After the Sept. 11 attacks on the United States, the Vienna-based International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) warned states must tighten up security of radioactive sources to prevent terrorists getting hold of them to make a "dirty bomb"—when a conventional explosive like dynamite is used to disperse radioactive material.

The IAEA has always said the possibility of terrorists making nuclear fission devices was very low because of the difficulty of acquiring bomb-grade uranium or plutonium and the technical sophistication needed to construct a fission bomb.

"The biggest hurdle in making nuclear weapons is getting weapons-grade material," IAEA spokeswoman Melissa Fleming said.

But the diplomat who is also a nuclear scientist, suggested that it was not so hard: "Do you really believe it's difficult?"

As for the technical difficulties, he said: "I know that to do a bad nuclear weapon, not one that would destroy a whole city but just to make an explosion, is not so difficult."

JUST A FEW KILOS

Although it would take 55 to 80 pounds of highly enriched uranium (HEU) to make a conventional nuclear bomb, the diplomat said in Stockholm that it would be possible to make a less efficient bomb with "just a few kilos."

"The efficiency of the explosion will be bad (but) you will get a chain reaction," he said, but there would probably be no mushroom cloud, the trademark of a sophisticated fission bomb.

In the simplest terms, the chain reaction in a classic atomic bomb is triggered when a high explosive like TNT is detonated and compresses the highly unstable bomb-grade material into such a dense mass that it sparks a fission explosion.

Without giving details, the diplomat said a crude fission device could cause significant damage—in contrast to the kind of dirty bomb that has been widely discussed in the media, aimed more at causing panic than physical harm and destruction.

In December 1994, Czech police seized 2.72 kg of HEU from the back seat of a parked car in Prague, the largest ever seizure of bomb-grade nuclear material.

Shifting to the topic of dirty bombs, the diplomat said underground railway systems could be targets. He said highly-radioactive caesium-137 powder, found in many hospitals, would be the likely material of choice.

"When the train is coming it is like a piston. You just open the canister and...after two or three hours you'll have cesium all over the tube," the diplomat said.

“Nothing will (probably) happen from the health point of view but people will be so afraid that no one will use it,” he said. “I know the London Underground has a working party looking at this.”

Several dirty bomb simulation studies have concluded that an attack with cesium would result in diluted, low-level exposure.

But in 1987, a single canister of it was found in a Brazil junkyard and caused a serious radiation contamination disaster. A total of 249 people were exposed, 10 were seriously injured and four died due to heavy exposure.

There has never been a dirty bomb attack, but the diplomat said he assumed it was only a matter of time before it happened.

<http://www.reuters.com/newsArticle.jhtml?type=worldNews&storyID=3599528>

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Bioterrorism: Public Health Response to Anthrax Incidents of 2001.

GAO-04-152, October 15.

<http://www.gao.gov/cgi-bin/getrpt?GAO-04-152> (Actual Report)

<http://www.gao.gov/highlights/d04152high.pdf> Highlights

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(Editor’s Note: The Military Balance (referenced publication) Press Conference, Remarks by Dr. John Chipman Director, The International Institute for Strategic Studies, follows article.)

London Financial Times

October 16, 2003

Insecurity In Iraq 'May Help Al-Qaeda To Rearm'

By Peter Spiegel

Continued instability inside Iraq has given terrorist groups easier access to shoulder-launched anti-aircraft missiles and, potentially, chemical or biological weapons, a leading think-tank reported yesterday in its annual evaluation of global security issues.

The London-based International Institute for Strategic Studies said in its newly published Military Balance survey that while the invasion of Iraq might have isolated al-Qaeda from potential state sponsors, it was also likely to have had the effect of "swelling its ranks and galvanising its will".

"War in Iraq has probably inflamed radical passions among Muslims and thus increased al-Qaeda's recruiting power and morale and, at least marginally, its operational capability," the report states.

John Chipman, the IISS director, noted that David Kay, the US's chief weapons inspector, had recently reported that more than 100 sprawling Iraqi ammunition storage sites remain unexamined. The inference made by Mr Kay was that evidence of unconventional weapons could still be uncovered by coalition teams inside Iraq.

But Mr Chipman said the unexamined depots also raised grave concerns about what arms might be available to terrorist groups, said by US intelligence officials to be moving into Iraq in greater numbers.

"While the number of uninspected sites may be interesting in terms of the struggle to find evidence of weapons of mass destruction, it is even more interesting as a comment on the ammunition that may be available to terrorists who can get access to unguarded or poorly guarded depots," Mr Chipman said.

He added that shoulder-launched missiles were of particular concern, noting that Soviet-era SA-7s and US Stinger systems could fetch Dollars 5,000 (Euros 4,250, Pounds 3,000) on the black market, while coalition forces in Iraq were offering only Dollars 500 for those handed in to authorities.

"This proliferation problem is exacerbated by the porosity of Iraq's borders in the post-conflict stage, making it easy for weapons to flow outside the country and into the Middle East in general," Mr Chipman said.

The IISS also argued that while it was unlikely that al-Qaeda still had the capability of a "mass-casualty attack" on US soil, its members might see a large-scale attack on US forces inside Iraq as a "feasible substitute" while they worked to reconstitute the network.

"It is worth recalling that the operational cycle for large and complex al-Qaeda operations can exceed the 25 months that have passed since 9/11," Mr Chipman said.

The Military Balance study found that global defence spending increased 7 per cent last year in dollar terms, from Dollars 786.6bn to Dollars 842.7bn, largely because of the huge military build-up in the US and a stronger euro.

The authors predicted another 7 per cent increase this year, again citing huge Pentagon spending increases for the bulk of the rise. Still, such spending levels account for only 2.6 per cent of global GDP, as compared with 6.2 per cent in 1985.

http://search.ft.com/search/article.html?id=031016000840&query=Insecurity+In+Iraq&vsc_appId=totalSearch&state=Form

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The Military Balance Press Conference

15 October 2003

10:30 a.m.

Remarks by

Dr John Chipman

Director, The International Institute for Strategic Studies

1 *The Military Balance 2003•2004* Press Launch

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the launch of *The Military Balance 2003-2004*.

Joining me today to answer your questions are: **Christopher Langton, Editor of The Military Balance; Gary Samore, Director of Studies and Senior Fellow for Non-Proliferation; Alex Nicoll, Assistant Director, Dana Allin, Senior Fellow for Transatlantic Affairs and Editor of Survival; Oksana Antonenko, Senior Fellow for Russia and Eurasia; Adam Ward, Senior Fellow for Asia and Editor of Strategic Comments; Tim Huxley, Senior Fellow for Asia and Editor of the Adelphi Papers and Jonathan Stevenson, Senior Fellow for Counterterrorism and Editor of Strategic Survey and Nomi Bar-Yaacov, Research Fellow for Conflict Management.**

The defence statistics and analysis presented in *The Military Balance* again provide vital information for those in government and the media who require reliable open source data as the basis for their own assessments.

Again this year we publish our **Chart of Armed Conflict** that details the world's active conflicts, those now subject to a ceasefire, and those halted by a peace accord. While recording the armed forces of every country in the world, *The Military Balance* again has a very detailed accounting of the main non state armed groups around the world. This is a feature still sadly relevant because of the intensity of international terrorist activity.

Let me make a few remarks that set the statistics contained in this year's volume in their wider strategic context.

GENERAL

This year's *The Military Balance* is published against the background of very considerable uncertainty in Iraq, and heated debate over the pace at which the security situation can be improved and political sovereignty handed over to a government in Iraq. There is great controversy over how much WMD Iraq had on the eve of the War. There is equally great concern about the security of Iraqi arms depots at a time when terrorism and asymmetric insurgency tactics are the principal barriers to a more stable Iraq. **The Campaign against Terrorism has a new front in Iraq, but the global intelligence and counterterrorism challenge remains great precisely because of the lack of a territorial base for most international networked terrorism.**

Alongside the conflict in Iraq and the campaign against terrorism, the proliferation challenges posed by North Korea and Iran will continue to dominate the international security agenda. And **as we approach a US election year, there will be the added uncertainty surrounding growing instability across the Israeli-Palestinian divide combined with diminishing commitment to an intensive peace process.** Generally, outside of the Euro-Atlantic theatre, most countries still struggle with regional insecurity of all kinds and must gauge their response to these partly as a function of local strategic realities, and partly on the basis of their calculation of the American attitude to their actions.

For its part, **the transatlantic relationship has been severely charred by European complaints over US unilateralism in Iraq and American concerns over the true meaning of the multipolar world some Europeans trumpet.**

Much of 2004 will be taken up by efforts to develop broader effective international policies to deal with international threats. In this regard, *ad hoc* and trans-regional efforts, like the Proliferation Security Initiative, represent imaginative attempts to develop both a strategic consensus and proper response to agreed threats.

THE IRAQ WAR AND ITS AFTERMATH

In the run-up to the Iraq War of 2003 the Pentagon leadership warned the outside world that it would witness a war fought in a style and at a tempo never before seen. **There was certainly tremendous dynamism, flexibility and doctrinal innovation in the month-long campaign to throw Saddam Hussein out of office. These three factors have been less evident in the management of the post-war occupation.** The Iraqi regime essentially planned to be thrashed, and it is clear that when the enemy dispersed as the coalition descended on Baghdad, some of its members were able to transform themselves from regular to irregular forces. **The adoption of asymmetric tactics by Iraqi regime loyalists working closely with *ihadists* who**

2 *The Military Balance 2003•2004* Press Launch

have infiltrated the country has challenged occupying forces who are still struggling with the right techniques to counter this insurgency.

The US-led invasion of Iraq brought about a collapse in the security structures of the country including the structures for guarding arms dumps, and the state's border regime. **The coalition was unprepared for the scale of the problem, and had no way of securing the quantity of ammunition and weapons storage sites.** Some five months on the situation has hardly improved and small arms and light weapons are readily available to criminals and insurgents alike. Alarming, the report produced by David Kay of the Iraq Survey Group earlier this month noted that 'there are approximately 130 known Iraqi Ammunition Storage Points (ASP) many of which exceed 50 square miles and hold an estimated 600,000 tons of ordinance.... Of these approximately 120 still remain unexamined.' **While the number of un-inspected sites may be interesting in terms of the struggle to find evidence of WMD, it is even more interesting as a comment on the ammunition that may be available to terrorists who can get access to unguarded or poorly guarded depots.**

A particular issue concerns man-portable air defence systems (MANPADS) which exist in large quantities. Soviet SA-7 and US Stinger systems can fetch up to \$5,000 on the black market, but the US authorities in Iraq are reported to be offering \$500 for MANPADS which are handed in. This proliferation problem is exacerbated by the porosity of Iraq's borders in the post-conflict stage making it easy for weapons to flow outside the country and into the Middle East in general.

THE CAMPAIGN AGAINST TERRORISM

Since the US-led Afghanistan intervention deprived al-Qaeda of a central base, the military dimension of counter-terrorism has diminished. Transnational terrorists are now clandestinely dispersed among perhaps 100 countries, and present few concentrated targets amenable to military measures. Law-enforcement and intelligence cooperation is now paramount. While the opportunity for a *Predator*-style strike may occasionally arise, **military counter-terrorism is generally limited to technical intelligence gathering; precautionary special-operations deployments; first response and civil defence; and, exceptionally, counterinsurgency in Iraq.** The enlarged US military and political footprint there, while intimidating potential state sponsors of terrorism, in the short term has heightened the Islamic terrorist impulse and enhanced recruitment – more than offsetting any calming effect of the US military withdrawal from Saudi Arabia. Nevertheless, the United States remains al-Qaeda's prime enemy. Although superior American and European counter-terrorism institutions – improved and re-oriented after 9/11 – make those places difficult operating environments for al-Qaeda, it is actively trying to penetrate Western countries. It is known that the group intends to develop weapons of mass destruction as well as those of 'mass disruption' such as 'dirty bombs'. Though most terrorist operations and uncovered plots since 9/11 have involved traditional terrorist means, **some al-Qaeda-linked operatives are prepared to use weapons not conventionally employed by terrorists. These include toxins like ricin, and man-portable air-defence systems so easily available in Iraq.**

Al-Qaeda may lack the capacity to stage a mass-casualty attack on US soil comparable to 9/11, but it is worth recalling that the operational cycle for large and complex al-Qaeda operations can exceed the 25 months that have passed since 9/11. In any case, **ihadists could regard a spectacular attack on US personnel in Iraq – like Hizballah's 1983 suicide-bombing of the Marine barracks in Lebanon, which killed 241 – as a feasible substitute until it is ready to attempt another mass-casualty attack on American soil.**

NON-PROLIFERATION POLICY

There remains scope both for international discord and co-operation on WMD non-proliferation policy. In the next six to nine months key discussions will take place on North Korea and Iran the results of which will have a huge impact on regional threat perceptions.

North Korea

After months of artless haggling over the shape of the table, Six Party Talks (US, PRC, Russia, ROK, Japan, DPRK) finally convened in Beijing in August to seek a negotiated resolution of the North Korea nuclear issue. Although the parties have agreed in principle to meet again, **there seems little enthusiasm in Washington and Pyongyang for another round of multilateral talks and no prospects for dramatic progress in the coming months.** Now that Washington has agreed to talk, Pyongyang is playing hard to get, disingenuously demanding that Japan be excluded from the next round of Six Party talks. The Bush Administration still seems deeply divided between those prepared to negotiate a sequenced agreement with North Korea to freeze and dismantle its nuclear weapons programme in exchange for security assurances, political normalization, and economic assistance, and those who demand that North Korea disarm 'completely, verifiably, and irreversibly' before the US offers any serious incentives. At the same time, burdened with Iraq and facing a potentially tough re-election campaign, **the White House is in no mood to pick a fight with Pyongyang, provided that North Korea continues to observe informal 'red lines' of nuclear and missile restraint, such as no reprocessing or testing.**

3 The Military Balance 2003•2004 Press Launch

The key question is how North Korea will react to this continuing diplomatic stalemate. On one hand, unless Washington can put a serious proposal on the table, Pyongyang may be inclined to stall and play for time, waiting to see if the US Presidential elections produce a more accommodating negotiating partner. As long as Beijing and Seoul continue to funnel vital foreign assistance, Pyongyang can afford a leisurely pace of

negotiations. On the other hand, Pyongyang may not be able to resist the temptation to advance its nuclear capabilities while Washington is distracted by other matters, although it must tread carefully to avoid alienating China and South Korea if it acts too provocatively and causes a crisis on the peninsula. The greatest danger is probably reprocessing. **Publicly, North Korea already claims that it has completed reprocessing its spent fuel, recovering enough plutonium to 'increase its nuclear deterrent force', but most analysts think the North only conducted some limited trial runs this summer, stopping short of finishing the job.** As the US Presidential elections loom next year, Pyongyang may decide to bring its plutonium reality into line with its rhetoric, calculating that Washington will not be willing or able to persuade the other parties to abandon negotiations and impose effective sanctions against Pyongyang. To head off this fait accompli, Washington will appeal to Beijing to warn North Korea not to take any fateful steps, while Beijing will advise Washington that it cannot restrain the North forever if the US does not offer a credible proposal. **Washington may well have to muster the will to engage in serious negotiations, if only to deny Pyongyang a pretext to resume reprocessing.**

Iran

In contrast to Iraq, which badly fragmented the Atlantic Alliance, **the US and its European partners have worked together effectively in response to the exposure of Iran's nuclear enrichment programme, which could give Iran a nuclear weapons breakout option within a few years.** On both sides of the Atlantic, there is no disagreement that Tehran is seeking a nuclear weapons capability under cover of its NPT-protected civilian nuclear power programme or on the need to mobilize international efforts to pressure Iran to safeguard its enrichment programme immediately and without condition. In September, the IAEA Board of Governors passed an ultimatum giving Iran until the end of October to correct past safeguards violations, accept the enhanced international monitoring of the Additional Protocol, and freeze its enrichment programme pending resolution of these safeguards issues.

At this point, however, it does not appear that the IAEA ultimatum – and the implicit threat to report Iranian non-compliance to the UN Security Council – has been sufficient to dramatically alter Tehran's behaviour. **Tehran has apparently provided some additional information to the IAEA on past activities, but not enough to resolve IAEA questions; it has hinted that it may sign, but not immediately implement, the Additional Protocol, and it flatly refuses to freeze its enrichment programme.** Unless there is a dramatic last minute change, the Board of Governors appears likely to pass a referral to the Security Council at the next Board meeting in late November.

What happens in New York, however, is anyone's guess. In the face of a finding of Iranian non-compliance, Moscow may be prepared to suspend nuclear cooperation with Iran, but the Council does not appear ready to pass tougher measures, such as broader economic or political sanctions, unless Tehran withdraws from the NPT. If the Council cannot act effectively or if pressure fails to halt Iran's progress, **there will inevitably be consideration of other options, which could range from military attacks on Iranian nuclear facilities to negotiation of a deal in which Tehran agrees to abandon its fuel cycle programme in exchange for political and economic benefits.** Indeed, several European governments have already proposed such a bargain, but Tehran has not responded, preferring to wait in hopes that the US will agree to join the negotiations. For the time being, however, Washington is focused on building pressure not beginning negotiations. Nor, given its vulnerabilities in Iraq, is Washington likely to view an attack on Iran as an attractive option at present. In short, there does not appear to be good prospects for a near term resolution one way or the other, while Iran continues to march steadily towards achieving a nuclear weapons option.

EUROPEAN SECURITY POLICY

As the situation in Iran evolves, observers will be looking closely at the manner in which the EU puts its new security doctrine into place. In a very conscious response to the debacle of European disunity over Iraq, the EU made an effort to instil a more coherent and robust security culture in Brussels and national capitals. The paper put forward by foreign-policy High Representative Javier Solana – while not called a 'security strategy' per se – was clearly interpreted as such, and its analysis of WMD proliferation, terrorism and failed states was very similar to mainstream US views. **The document clearly endorsed the American concern about the potentially disastrous nexus of terrorism and WMD and it stated that Europeans 'need to develop a strategic culture that fosters early, rapid and when necessary, robust intervention.'**

While the EU worked on its theory, it made some progress also in developing the institutions and capacity for European force projection. **The EU's replacement of NATO's small force in Macedonia was more symbolic than anything else, since it came in the context of – and was largely sustained by – the large NATO presence in the region.** More significant will be the EU's takeover next year of peacekeeping responsibilities in Bosnia. The transatlantic model for guaranteeing peace in the Balkans has worked well, and it is not yet clear that an EU rather than NATO command structure constitutes a net improvement.

In some ways the more significant European deployment was the small French-led mission to Bunia in the Democratic Republic of Congo. This, the first explicitly EU-mandated projection of military forces outside of Europe, followed a French deployment to the Ivory Coast and an earlier British mission in Sierra Leone. These missions, however limited, suggests that **a European defence capability may have a useful role in Africa, where US forces are unlikely to be deployed on a large scale, where NATO would not 'naturally' be involved and where the scale of war-driven suffering fits with the developing 'humanitarian' European**

ethos of military power.

Moving further east in Europe, Russia's progress towards military reform remains slow and is complicating Putin's general policy of modernisation and integration with the West. No radical steps are likely before Putin's re-election in 2005. In the meantime, Russia's own security policy remains centred on developments in Chechnya and countering the increasing risk of suicide terrorism in Russian cities including Moscow. If there is an area where Russia will concentrate more it is Central Asia. Here, **while Putin acquiesced to the increasing US military presence in the region following 9/11 there is now more concern about the semi-permanent nature of US basing arrangement in Central Asia.** Moscow has countered by increasing its own military bases in the region, and moving to give more meaning to the CIS collective security arrangements.

SOUTH EAST ASIA AND AUSTRALASIA

Internal security and counter-terrorism have loomed large for governments and armed forces in Southeast Asia and Australia. In May, the Indonesian government launched a major 'integrated military operation' in the province of Aceh aimed at eradicating the armed separatist movement, GAM. Only days later, the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) began *Operation Enduring Peace*, a new offensive against the Moro Islamic Liberation Front on the southern island of Mindanao. The AFP offensive followed a series of bombings and other terrorist attacks blamed on the MILF's Special Operations Group, allegedly a joint enterprise with Jemaah Islamiah.

In many cases, national counter-terrorism responses in the region have included substantial military components. Singapore's army, for example, has set up a Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Explosive Defence Group. The Australian Defence Force has established an Incident Response Regiment with a similar role. Meanwhile, **Australia's armed forces have been deployed overseas this year more extensively than at any time since the Vietnam war.** *Operation Falconer*, Canberra's contribution to the US-led coalition during the Iraq war involved roughly 2000 personnel. In July, a 2300-strong, Australian-led regional intervention force, including both troops and police, was deployed to the Solomon Islands, responding to fears that law and order there was about to collapse. **Against a background of continuing, and in some cases intensifying, tensions between certain Southeast Asian governments, regional states have ordered major new military equipment, particularly for their air forces.** Notably, Indonesia and Malaysia have both purchased top-of-the-line Sukhoi combat aircraft. Singapore is seeking a 'new generation fighter' and last week announced a shortlist of three types.

CONCLUSION

Despite the background of a weak global economy, real global defence spending, when measured in US dollars, increased by around 7% in 2002 from 2001 mainly as a result of higher spending by the United States and the stronger Euro, the latter giving the illusion of significantly increased spending by European members of NATO. Indications are that, as the global economy shows tentative signs of recovery in 2003, **global defence spending this year will probably again increase by about 7%, in US dollars although, as for last year, the increase will largely be driven by rising US expenditure and the effects of movements in exchange rates.** The degree of investment in so-called 'transformational' capacities by the Pentagon is partly a matter of definition. While 25 billion dollars was set aside in the fiscal year 2004 request for transformational capabilities, some of this expenditure is going towards traditional priorities that have been reclassified. In any case, as acknowledged by the Pentagon itself, **the true transformation of the US military is not just a question of obtaining more advanced weapon systems, but also changing the culture of the armed forces, the way they think and their battlefield operations.** In making some of those changes, the US military will have to learn lessons not just from the war in Iraq, but from the difficulties of managing the occupation against the asymmetric tactics used.

More broadly, the Iraq crisis has placed limits on the wholesale transformation of US foreign policy that the more entrepreneurial approach of 2002 and early 2003 seemed to foreshadow. Getting Iraq right will consume most of the available energies of the administration over the next year, during which the emphasis will be on containing other potential crises, and building a firmer international consensus on the right responses to today's many security challenges.

<http://www.iiss.org/showdocument.php?docID=270>

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