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## **Expert offers plan to make federal biodefense program more coherent**

Robert Roos ■ Staff Writer

Oct 29, 2003 (CIDRAP News) – To bring coherence to a poorly coordinated national effort, the United States should focus its current bioterrorism preparedness program on four specific threat scenarios involving anthrax, smallpox, botulinum toxin, and foot-and-mouth disease (FMD), according to a report by defense consultant and former Navy Secretary Richard Danzig.

Danzig asserts that current biodefense efforts are muddled because the many agencies and groups involved lack a common understanding of the threat. To remedy that, he recommends that current planning focus on four specific hypothetical cases: an airborne anthrax attack, an airborne smallpox attack, dissemination of botulinum toxin in cold drinks, and dissemination of FMD among cattle, sheep, and pigs.

Danzig takes a stab at launching this planning strategy himself by analyzing the anthrax and smallpox scenarios and making several specific recommendations pertaining to warning systems and medical countermeasures. For example, he calls for the improvement of warning systems so that airborne anthrax spores could be detected and an alert issued within 8 to 10 hours after their release.

The report, titled “Catastrophic Bioterrorism—What Is to Be Done?” was published recently by the Center for Technology and National Security Policy at the National Defense University in Washington, DC.

A key reality that all biodefense efforts should recognize is that bioterrorists could rapidly “reload” and attack repeatedly within a short time, Danzig writes. “In this light, we must prepare for biological attacks repeated in different American cities rather rapidly after one another,” he says. “Plan to defend against a campaign, not just an attack.”

He writes that he chose the four threat scenarios on the basis of discussion with numerous experts. He calls them “broadly representative of the great majority of cases that should concern us” in the near term. “Build a portfolio of required capabilities from these cases,” he recommends.

But because biological threats are likely to change, Danzig also suggests setting up a committee of scientists and intelligence officers to continually watch for and warn of possible new threats and to change the planning scenarios as needed.

The anthrax attack scenario envisioned by Danzig involves the use of a small commercial sprayer, perhaps mounted on a building, to spread several kilograms of weaponized anthrax spores over a large city on a calm evening. The resulting anthrax plume is assumed to infect at least 200,000 people up to 40 miles away.

Such an attack would cause other parts of the country to go on alert and would create a need for national guidance and coordination, Danzig writes. Demands on the president and Cabinet would be “immense.” Accordingly, he recommends immediately setting up a team of leading experts—a “Biological Emergency Advisory Team”—to support senior decision makers in the event of bioterrorist attacks. The team should have 50 to 100 members so it wouldn’t be crippled by absences at any given time.

Danzig further asserts that development of an antibiotic-resistant strain of anthrax would be “quite easy.”

Consequently, the nation needs a “triad” of medical countermeasures: antibiotics, vaccines, and some other kind of treatment, such as an antitoxin, enzyme, or bacteriophage. He recommends expanding the stockpile of existing vaccine and speeding the development of a new vaccine.

Discussing systems to detect airborne anthrax, Danzig analyzes the problem of false alarms, which could cause “intolerable” economic and political damage and a reluctance to act on information. In view of this problem, detection systems should be subject to two sets of requirements concerning costs, false-positive rates, and sampling rates—one set for normal circumstances and another for use after an initial attack. After an attack, authorities would probably increase their sampling because of the danger of further attacks. This would lead to more false-positives, but because of the higher threat, false-positives would be more readily tolerated. Accordingly, detection systems should be designed so that they can quickly be adapted to meet increased post-attack demands.

Current detection systems, the report says, would take from 1 to 2 days to spot an airborne anthrax attack—too long to provide an “actionable warning” for an optimal response and only slightly less time than it would take for the first sick patients to start showing up in emergency rooms. The author recommends a goal of improving the detection systems—including nucleic acid tests—so that they could provide a reliable alert within 8 to 10 hours. That would be fast enough to trigger an early-morning alert after an attack at dusk, considered the most likely time because of weather factors.

For the smallpox scenario, Danzig envisions an attack that would infect 200,000 people in the main exposure area, just as in the anthrax case. In his view, this situation would necessitate both mass national vaccination and a local effort to identify and vaccinate exposed people. “If mass national vaccination had not already occurred, it would be required in the wake of an attack because it would quickly be realized (and perhaps demonstrated) that the attacker could attack again and again in different places,” he writes.

Available detection technology could identify a smallpox attack within 24 to 36 hours, he says. Theoretically, this would be soon enough to permit vaccination within 4 days after exposure, which could prevent disease or lessen its severity. But no federal, state, or local health authorities are capable of alerting and vaccinating civilians fast enough

to take advantage of this window of opportunity. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has asked metropolitan areas to make plans to vaccinate 118,000 people per day in case of an attack, and the agency has a long-term goal of being able to vaccinate a million people in an area within 5 days, according to the report. Danzig recommends setting the loftier goal of creating “an integrated federal system” capable of both detecting a smallpox attack and vaccinating the exposed population within 96 hours after the attack. Given adequate resources, such a system “should be feasible with existing technologies.” But he qualifies this recommendation with the phrase “if a smallpox threat is judged to be significant.”

If the goal of a 4-day alert and vaccination program can be achieved, it may not be necessary to offer smallpox vaccination to the public in the absence of any attack, according to Danzig. But alerting and vaccinating the public within 4 days will be difficult, he acknowledges. Therefore, he further recommends that if the threat of smallpox is considered significant, pre-event smallpox immunization should be offered to Americans whose health profiles indicate that they are not substantially at risk from the vaccine.

Danzig also recommends stepping up efforts to develop a safer smallpox vaccine and launching an effort to develop a test for diagnosing smallpox infection within 4 days after exposure. In the absence of an adequate detection system, such a test “could be an important means of reassurance or a trigger for immediate immunization.”

In other recommendations, the report calls for evaluating biodefense efforts by looking at 10 “critical capabilities,” such as detection, drugs and vaccines, decontamination, surveillance, civilian preparation, and consequence management.

**Danzig R.** Catastrophic bioterrorism—what is to be done? Washington, DC: Center for Technology and National Security Policy, National Defense University, Aug 2003

<http://www.cidrap.umn.edu/cidrap/content/bt/bioprep/news/oct2903danzig.html>

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Washington Post

October 31, 2003

Pg. 18

## **N. Korea Agrees To Resume Nuclear Talks**

*U.S. Reacts Coolly to Demand For ‘Simultaneous Actions’*

By Anthony Faiola, Washington Post Foreign Service

TOKYO, Oct. 30 -- In talks Thursday with a senior Chinese official, North Korea’s leader, Kim Jong Il, agreed in principle to restart international negotiations aimed at ending his country’s nuclear weapons program, according to official media dispatches from North Korea and China.

North Korea is willing to take part in future talks if they lead to a “package solution based on the principle of simultaneous actions,” the North’s official Korean Central News Agency said. The Chinese underscored the “need to simultaneously clear up the concerns” of North Korea and the United States, the agency added.

North Korea has previously stated that those actions must include economic and humanitarian aid, the establishment of diplomatic ties and other assistance. It has also demanded a bilateral nonaggression treaty with the United States, which the Bush administration opposes.

State Department spokesman Richard Boucher was cool to the notion of simultaneous steps. “I would just point out ‘simultaneity’ is not a word that we have used,” he said. “That may be the way they have described the proposals they made at an earlier round of talks. We have also got ideas and put proposals on the table.” He described the U.S. ideas as “a series of steps that would have to be taken in order to achieve a verifiable and irreversible end to North Korea’s nuclear weapons program.”

The agreement reached in Pyongyang, the North Korean capital, gave new momentum to efforts to end a yearlong standoff over North Korea’s bid to become the world’s newest nuclear power. It came less than two weeks after President Bush signaled a shift in U.S. policy, saying on his recent trip through Asia that he was willing to extend a written, multilateral security agreement to North Korea in exchange for a complete dismantling of its nuclear weapons program.

“We are encouraged by the reports we have seen that North Korea has agreed in principle to continue the six-party talks,” White House spokesman Scott McClellan told reporters, referring to talks that comprise North Korea, South Korea, China, Russia, Japan and the United States. “The President has made it very clear that the multilateral or the multi-party process provides the best hope for achieving our shared objective of getting North Korea to abandon its nuclear ambitions and end its nuclear weapons program.”

The move by North Korea underscored China’s increasing weight in the diplomatic effort to end the crisis. Kim’s promises came on the second day of a visit to Pyongyang by Wu Bangguo, head of China’s parliament and the No. 2

official in the Communist Party. Kim also accepted an invitation from President Hu Jintao to make a state visit to China.

“Both sides agreed in principle that the six-way talks should continue; China and North Korea support the idea of a peaceful resolution to the North Korean issue through dialogue,” China’s CCTV reported.

“We want to hold this round of six-party talks as soon as possible,” Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Zhang Qiyue said at a news briefing in Beijing.

The six-party talks began late last year after North Korea admitted to U.S. officials that it had restarted its nuclear program. The talks broke up in Beijing two months ago with no solid progress. Since then, North Korean officials have sent conflicting signals about their willingness to cooperate.

North Korea initially dismissed as “laughable” the Bush administration’s offer two weeks ago of a multilateral security agreement with Pyongyang signed by its neighbors as well as the United States. But last week, North Korea did an about-face, saying it would consider the proposal.

In exchange for economic and security assurances, North Korea has said it would declare its willingness to give up nuclear development, allow nuclear inspections, stop exporting missiles and dismantle its nuclear weapons facilities. North Korea claims to have reprocessed 8,000 spent fuel rods into the building blocks of nuclear weapons, and to have the technology to turn them into bombs. The CIA has said it believes North Korea already possesses one or two nuclear devices.

*Staff writer Glenn Kessler in Washington contributed to this report.*

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A39921-2003Oct30.html>

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Birmingham (AL) News

October 31, 2003

## **Congress: Weapons Destruction Inefficient**

By Mary Orndorff, News Washington correspondent

WASHINGTON - Congress on Thursday asked how it can help the over-budget and behind-schedule program to rid the United States of its chemical weapons go faster or cost less.

Army officials said they didn’t have any specific requests, but a recent reorganization of the program’s management is helping get it back on track.

“This is an exciting and successful time for the program,” said Claude Bolton, assistant secretary of the Army for acquisition, technology and logistics.

But members of the House Armed Services Committee were skeptical, noting that the 1986 estimate for destroying 31,000 tons of the outdated but still lethal weapons was \$1.7 billion. Today, the cost estimate is \$25 billion.

“This is a lot of money,” said Rep. Jim Saxton, R-N.J., chairman of the subcommittee that held a hearing on the topic Thursday.

Also, the original goal to destroy 45 percent of the stockpile was April 2004, a deadline that was recently extended in an international agreement to Dec. 31, 2007. The Army also plans to ask to extend the deadline for 100 percent destruction, possibly to 2012. It’s now 2007.

“If we don’t bring this all together, I’ll be up here next year or the year after, or my successor if I’m fired, explaining why we didn’t make it,” Bolton said.

Since incineration began at Johnston Atoll in the Pacific in 1990, about 26 percent of the stockpile has been destroyed. The figure does not include the sarin-filled rockets burned at the incinerator in Anniston over the last month.

Craig Conklin, a Department of Homeland Security official, testified that another \$145 million would have to be spent on emergency preparations in the Anniston community between now and when the incinerator closes. But Rep. Mike Rogers, R-Anniston, questioned the money spent so far, which Conklin said was \$177 million.

“I’ve just been real frustrated by the fact that in recent years we haven’t seen that program ready,” Rogers said.

<http://www.al.com/search/index.ssf?/base/news/1067595506298600.xml?birminghamnews?npol>

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## **Chemical Weapons: Better Management Tools Needed to Guide DOD’s Stockpile Destruction Program**

by Henry L. Hinton, Jr., before the

Subcommittee on Terrorism, Unconventional Threats, and Capabilities,  
House Committee on Armed Services. GAO-04-221T, October 30.

<http://www.gao.gov/cgi-bin/getrpt?GAO-04-221T>

Highlights - <http://www.gao.gov/highlights/d04221thigh.pdf>

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Jerusalem Post  
October 31, 2003

## Security Official: Palestinians Can Carry Out Chemical Attack

By Etgar Lefkovits

Palestinian terrorist organizations have the ability to carry out a chemical attack in Israel, but have refrained from doing so due to the repercussions of such an attack, a senior security official said this week.

“It is not a problem for terrorist organizations to obtain chemical materials, and they are aware of the advantages of such an attack; but on the other hand [they know] it would be considered breaking all the rules of the game,” the official said at a briefing.

He noted that such an attack could kill hundreds or thousands of people, as opposed to the dozen or so people killed in conventional Palestinian suicide bombings.

Chemical materials are readily available at scores of factories across the country, he said, even at the seemingly innocuous Tnuva dairy in Jerusalem.

The security official’s comments come just days before the Israel Police’s annual major security drill, scheduled for Tuesday at National Stadium in Ramat Gan, where this year’s scenario will be how to cope with a chemical attack on a school.

Traces of pesticides, rat poisoning, and other toxic chemicals have been found at the sites of more than five Palestinian bombings since the late 1990s, police spokesman Gil Kleiman said Thursday.

Such traces were found at the scene of the double suicide bombing in downtown Jerusalem in December 2001, in which 11 people were killed and 175 wounded. Nails and bolts packed into explosives used in the bombing had been dipped in rat poison.

No one was affected by the chemical, however, since the small amount of poison inside the bomb broke down as a result of the explosion.

Police said it appeared that the toxins used in that attack had been deliberately added to enhance the bombs’ lethality, but did not rule out the possibility that the explosives used had been transported in containers which had previously contained toxic chemical substances.

The police spokesman said the most immediate concern remains bombing wounds caused by shrapnel, but said security officials are preparing for far more deadly attacks.

“We know that terrorist organizations are constantly looking for more efficient ways to kill people,” he said.

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Baltimore Sun  
October 31, 2003

## U.N. Postpones Nuclear Deadline For Iran

*Agency needs to analyze recent Iranian dossier*

By Associated Press

VIENNA, Austria - The United Nations nuclear watchdog won’t take any immediate action today, the deadline for Iran to prove its atomic program is peaceful, because it is still analyzing documents handed over by Tehran, a spokeswoman said yesterday.

The Vienna-based International Atomic Energy Agency ordered Iran to prove by today that its nuclear activities are not aimed at building a weapons arsenal as the United States contends.

In response, Tehran last week handed over a dossier with information about the program. But the agency can’t yet judge whether the country has complied with its demands because it has not yet been able to fully verify the report, spokeswoman Melissa Fleming said.

“There’s not going to be any action” today when the deadline expires, Fleming said.

A complete analysis could take weeks, Fleming said, adding that it was “difficult” to say when it would be finished. The process will “not necessarily” be completed by Nov. 20, when the IAEA’s board meets to assess the situation, she said.

“The Iraqis have stated that they have already turned over a full and complete declaration of their past nuclear activities,” Fleming said.

“The IAEA is intensively working to scrutinize that declaration and verify the claims made. There was no expectation that that work would be done by” today.

IAEA Director-General Mohamed ElBaradei said in an interview for today’s editions of the German newspaper Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung that he hoped Iran’s claim that the report is complete would turn out to be true.

“But we’re still examining the report,” he was quoted as saying. “We’re not yet in a position to give a clear judgment.”

ElBaradei told the newspaper his agency would be able to answer some questions at the Nov. 20 meeting, but that it “would have to investigate other issues after November.”

Fleming said that the most difficult part of the analysis was the investigation of the origins of traces of highly enriched weapons-grade uranium found in Iran by agency experts.

<http://www.sunspot.net/news/nationworld/bal-te.iran31oct31.1.2464155.story>

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Wall Street Journal

November 3, 2003

Pg. 1

## **Baghdad Records Show Hussein Sought Missiles, Other Aid Abroad**

By Frederick Kempe and David S. Cloud

U.S. investigators have unearthed Iraqi records of Saddam Hussein’s agents world-wide, a treasure trove of intelligence that U.S. officials expect will help to identify foreigners paid to serve the former dictator’s interests and to unravel international networks for procuring missiles and other banned weapons.

A senior U.S. official familiar with the records said the documents—along with interrogations of former regime officials—still haven’t turned up evidence that Iraq was actively producing chemical and biological weapons or had restarted its nuclear program, as Bush officials asserted prior to the war. But the documents, as described by the U.S. official, could lend credence to more recent assertions by the Bush administration that Mr. Hussein was seeking to develop long-range missiles as a preliminary step to renewing a program of chemical and biological weapons.

U.S. officials say archives of Iraq’s domestic security and foreign intelligence services, the broad reach of which hadn’t previously been disclosed, could provide a revealing look at Mr. Hussein’s efforts in the past decade to conduct intelligence activities and influence other countries’ political stances toward Iraq. Other Iraqi government documents show for the first time Baghdad’s efforts to purchase from North Korea missiles with longer ranges than allowed by United Nations sanctions. Previously, the Bush administration had disclosed that Iraq was seeking missile technology from North Korea, not actual missile purchases.

Information contained in the files could prove troublesome for individuals, companies and countries that may be implicated in aiding Mr. Hussein’s regime. U.S. officials say the documents could help establish tribunals in Iraq for people involved in crimes against the Iraqi people. Already, revelations from the files have prompted the Federal Bureau of Investigation to open new espionage and criminal probes in the U.S.

“We have the equivalent of the Stasi archives,” said the senior U.S. official, referring to the East German state security service files recovered after that Communist regime’s collapse. Those archives, which implicated both domestic and foreign informants and agents, sparked a series of political scandals and some legal prosecutions.

The Iraqi documents are among 25 tons of papers seized at the abandoned headquarters of the country’s intelligence services days after the fall of Baghdad in April, according to U.S. officials. The records include a “complete listing of the amount of money paid for political influence” to foreigners, including politicians, business people and others, said the U.S. official familiar with the files. Mr. Hussein’s overseas intelligence apparatus kept track of Iraqi exiles opposed to his regime, and Baghdad also kept lists of informants paid for their help in that regard.

“We’re busy vetting” all lists of people paid by Iraq, the official said. The official declined to disclose more details about which companies, individuals and countries may be implicated in the files.

From records and interrogations the U.S. has learned that two teams of Yugoslav missile experts went to Iraq in 2001 to develop plans for extending the 180-mile range of Iraq’s scuds by strapping several rocket motors together, the senior official said. The Yugoslav experts and experts from another country worked in Iraq on the project well

into 2003, said the official, who wouldn't identify the second country. The revelation, if true, is significant because U.N. sanctions barred Iraq from possessing missiles with ranges of more than 93 miles. Coalition forces haven't reported finding any scuds in Iraq. Yugoslavia earlier this year was renamed the Federation of Serbia and Montenegro.

Investigators also have uncovered evidence that Mr. Hussein's relationship with North Korea was deeper than previously thought. The official said "written evidence of a contractual negotiation" shows that North Korea offered to sell Baghdad Nodong missiles with a 1,300-mile range. Versions of the same missile based on North Korean technology appeared in Iran and Pakistan in 1998 and 1999, a European official said.

Iraqi government documents showed that Baghdad made a down payment to North Korea in late 2002 of \$10 million for delivery of a Nodong missile, the senior U.S. official said. But North Korean officials replied that they couldn't deliver the weapon because they were being watched too closely by the Bush administration. The Iraqi side asked for its money back, though there are apparently no documents to confirm they got it, the official said.

The disclosures about Iraq's missile programs come after David Kay, who heads coalition efforts to locate unconventional weapons inside Iraq, issued an interim report last month that was seen in Congress as casting doubt on the Bush administration's main rationale for the war. The report found that Iraq may have abandoned production of chemical weapons after 1991 and biological agents after 1996. There was no evidence that nuclear-weapons activity had been conducted after 1998.

Since then, Bush administration officials have tried to deflect criticism over the failure to find such weapons by pointing to evidence that Iraq had an active missile-development program. "The David Kay report already makes clear that Saddam Hussein was in flagrant violation" of U.N. missile restrictions, Deputy Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz said in a radio interview released Friday. "We can argue about how much he had and whether he moved his program, and whether he was waiting to rebuild it, but he was hiding something pretty important."

The U.S. official familiar with the Iraqi files said the documents and other evidence suggest that Mr. Hussein's strategy may have been to develop delivery systems first—a lengthy process—and then turn to developing chemical weapons. Mr. Kay's report said Mr. Hussein asked underlings involved in previous chemical-weapons programs how long it would take to develop new weapons. They told him they could produce mustard gas within two to three months and sarin within six months, the report said.

In interviews with American interrogators, Iraqi military commanders have said they believed strongly that their army had chemical weapons and that it would deploy them once U.S. troops reached the outskirts of Baghdad, the senior official said. Yet the Americans have been unable to find any commander who was in possession of chemical weapons stockpiles, the official said. Instead, each commander has pointed to another reputed to have had them. Former Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz has told investigators separately that Mr. Hussein wasn't ready for the American attack and so didn't respond aggressively because he was "repeatedly told" by French and Russian officials that it would never happen, the official said. Mr. Aziz has been unreliable in the past, but the U.S. official said he is cooperating now that the U.S. has removed his family from Iraq.

Even if America started an air war, Mr. Aziz said, the French and Russians assured Iraq that the U.N. Security Council would intervene to stop a ground invasion. Asked about the matter, the French and Russian foreign ministries declined to comment. "Saddam's high command couldn't execute the defense plan because Saddam didn't believe it once the invasion had started," the official said, summarizing Mr. Aziz's account.

Federal prosecutors in July charged Khaled Abdel-Latif Dumeisi, a 61-year-old, Iraqi-born Chicago man, with being an unregistered Iraqi government agent. They alleged that he gathered information on Iraqi exiles in the U.S. for the Iraqi intelligence service. The case grew out of a dossier on Mr. Dumeisi in Iraqi intelligence service files, prosecutors said. Mr. Dumeisi has pleaded not guilty.

The files also include evidence that Iraq was behind several small-scale terrorist attacks against the U.S. and other countries, officials said. In one case, the 1993 bombing of a U.S. facility in Asia now has been linked to Iraq; orders for the operation were found in the files, a law-enforcement official said. The attack caused no casualties, the official said, refusing to disclose its exact location.

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Washington Post  
November 1, 2003  
Pg. 1

## **Engineered Virus Related To Smallpox Evades Vaccine**

By Rick Weiss, Washington Post Staff Writer

Scientists in St. Louis have created a genetically altered strain of mousepox virus—a close relative of the smallpox virus—that is so potent it kills mice vaccinated against the mouse disease, rekindling concerns that some avenues of biotechnology research may be generating lethal knowledge useful to bioterrorists.

Health officials emphasized that the federally financed work posed no threat to people. Although the mousepox virus is highly contagious and lethal in mice, it does not cause illness in humans.

But given the similarities between the mousepox and smallpox viruses, scientists said, the same technique might be useful for making a beefed-up strain of smallpox virus that could kill people despite their having been vaccinated.

The lead researcher, virologist Mark Buller of Saint Louis University, said he has already heard from many people distressed about his work, details of which he presented at a scientific meeting in Geneva recently. “I’ve received all this hate mail,” he said.

He added, however, that others have done much the same thing in other labs. The big difference, Buller said, is that his effort was aimed not just at making bad viruses but also at finding a treatment that would work against them.

And happily, he reported, he was successful.

The research and its reverberations in recent days highlight an ongoing debate in the scientific community, the federal government and the public about the relative risks and benefits of microbiological research that might be adapted for bioterrorism purposes.

Since the anthrax attacks of 2001, the government has looked for ways to curb the dissemination of new and dangerous knowledge about disease-causing organisms. At the same time, experts have argued, the best way to prepare for a possible bioterrorism attack is to allow research to proceed as unimpeded as possible.

Earlier this month, the National Research Council, an independent congressionally chartered advisory group, recommended steering clear of major research restrictions and instead creating a new level of federal review for proposed experiments that pose particular biosecurity risks—including any research that aims to make microbes more virulent or resistant to vaccines. That system is not in place yet, though federal officials say they are working quickly to implement it. If it were, scientists agreed, Buller’s research clearly would have triggered an extra review. What Buller did was insert an extra gene into the mousepox virus—a gene that can suppress the immune system of the mouse that the virus is infecting, thus making it easier for the virus to overcome that animal’s defenses.

This was not the first time such work had been done. Indeed, it was the accomplishment of just such a feat by Australian researchers in 2001 -- by accident, it turned out, while they were trying to design a mouse contraceptive—that first drew many experts’ attention to the possibility that scientists might naively help terrorists as they went about their everyday work.

Concerns about that and a few similarly worrisome studies have already prompted editors of scientific journals to create a self-imposed review system in which potentially dangerous details may now be occasionally censored.

Those concerns also helped prompt the NRC to produce its report.

Buller said yesterday that he has “absolutely no biosafety issues” with his work. The mousepox virus does not infect humans, the gene involved is specific to mice, and the work had been done by others before.

“The things we did to make that virus more virulent is kindergarten stuff,” he said.

Although he acknowledged that someone could, in theory, apply similar techniques to smallpox, he said he had no qualms about presenting his data at the Geneva meeting because his team had found two different ways of countering the enhanced virulence with drugs and vaccines, and is close to perfecting a third way.

The meeting, “Smallpox Biosecurity: Preventing the Unthinkable,” took place Oct. 21 and 22 and was sponsored by a biotechnology company that is making a new version of the smallpox vaccine.

Lawrence Kerr, assistant director for homeland security in the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy, praised the work.

“This is the type of research we view as critically important to this nation’s biodefense research-and-development portfolio,” Kerr said. Buller “was developing countermeasures to a model of a very dangerous pathogen and doing everything in a completely safe mouse model,” he said.

Kerr applauded the new level of biosecurity awareness that he said biologists have shown in the past year or so and offered reassurance that the government has no intention of placing heavy-handed restrictions on research or the publication of results.

Anthony S. Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, the part of the National Institutes of Health that funded the work, said that even under the current system of grant review Buller would have had to clear extra hurdles if he wanted to use his techniques in viruses that can infect humans.

“If he wanted to go beyond this . . . he’d have to get further permission from us,” Fauci said.

“For goodness’ sake,” Fauci said. “We already know how to do this. Everybody knows how to do this. The hard part is figuring out how to counter it.”

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A49149-2003Oct31.html>



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New York Times  
November 3, 2003

## Religious Leader In Iran Praises Nuclear Pact

By Nazila Fathi

TEHRAN, Nov. 2 — Iran's supreme religious leader on Sunday lauded the agreement on the country's nuclear program that was reached with the foreign ministers of Germany, Britain and France on Oct. 21 and said it was the right decision.

Iran agreed to allow more extensive inspections of its nuclear sites and to suspend its uranium-enrichment program. Hard-liners have harshly criticized the decision. Militant students have held several demonstrations here in Tehran and in other big cities urging authorities to call off the agreement.

But Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, the country's supreme religious leader, in his first comments since the agreement was reached, said Iran needed to prove to the world that it was not seeking nuclear weapons.

"We have agreed so far for them to come and see for themselves," he said in a meeting with government, judicial and parliamentary officials. "This is a peaceful way for us to keep our nuclear technology."

Ayatollah Khamenei has the final word on all state matters, and his approval on Sunday is expected to end objections to the agreement.

He added, though, that Iran would cancel the agreement if its European partners, its enemies or world powers "start, step by step, to ask for more."

"If we realize at any stage that a decision we have made is undermining the interests of the Islamic Republic or our Islamic values, we will stop it," he said.

Iran was faced with a deadline of Oct. 31 from the International Atomic Energy Agency to open its sites to inspectors and stop its enrichment program. Had it failed to agree, the agency could have sent the case to the United Nations Security Council for possible action.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2003/11/03/international/middleeast/03IRAN.html>

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November 4, 2003  
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## N. Korean Reactor Project May Halt

By Glenn Kessler, Washington Post Staff Writer

The international consortium building two nuclear reactors to provide energy to North Korea today is likely to agree to suspend the project, effectively killing it, U.S. and Asian officials said yesterday.

Terminating the reactor project—centerpiece of a 1994 deal by Clinton administration to freeze North Korea's nuclear weapons capabilities—has long been a goal of key members of the Bush administration. But the move has been resisted by its partners in the project, particularly South Korea, who argued that ending or even suspending it would needlessly rile North Korea and escalate the crisis over its nuclear weapons ambitions.

Construction of the light-water reactors thus has continued even though Pyongyang disclosed last year it had violated the Clinton accord, quit the nuclear nonproliferation treaty and announced it was building nuclear weapons. More than \$1.4 billion has been spent pouring the concrete for the facilities and building housing and recreation facilities for hundreds of construction workers, although it never reached the stage where North Korea received sensitive equipment.

Officials from the United States, Japan, South Korea and the European Union, which form the executive board of the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Corp. (KEDO), have been meeting informally in New York since yesterday to discuss the suspension. The executive director of KEDO, Charles Kartman, will be directed to inform the North Koreans of the decision, which would be formally ratified at another meeting this year.

U.S. officials have agreed to settle for a "one-year" suspension to placate South Korean officials. But the Bush administration informed its partners that restarting the project a year from now would require the unanimous consent of the executive board—and the United States will not provide the necessary vote.

"This ought to kill it," said Henry Sokolski, director of the Nonproliferation Policy Education Center and a leading critic of the 1994 agreement. "The heart may still be beating but there is no brain function."

Under that agreement, which froze a plutonium facility at Yongbyon, the United States supplied heavy fuel oil to North Korea to ease its pressing electrical needs and assisted in the construction of the light-water reactors. South

Korea and Japan agreed to foot much of the bill for the reactors, which Clinton officials said were designed for peaceful use.

KEDO's Web site proclaims it is "promoting peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula and beyond. The site includes photos of the construction site at Kumho, on North Korea's coast, and the elaborate facilities for construction workers, which include a golf range, restaurants and gymnasiums.

The White House signaled its determination to kill the project last month when it announced \$3.7 million in administrative expenses for KEDO. Noting that no part of this money would be used for construction, the statement added, "The members of the KEDO Executive Board will convene soon and the United States believes it should then agree formally to stop work on the LWR [light-water reactor] project."

The move to suspend the project comes shortly after North Korea agreed to attend another session of multinational talks to settle the nuclear crisis. Nevertheless, U.S. and Japanese officials pressed South Korea hard to finally agree to a suspension, officials said.

The original deal, reached shortly before Republicans took control of Congress, was fiercely attacked by conservatives, who argued the reactors could be diverted for military purposes. Some Clinton officials believed North Korea would collapse before the reactors were completed, and numerous deadlines were missed as the work proceeded slowly. When it came into power, the Bush administration was even less inclined to support the project. Last October, after North Korea admitted having a secret nuclear project in violation of the 1994 agreement, the United States pressed allies to join it in suspending the fuel oil shipments. The United States also briefly seized a ship carrying North Korean missiles to Yemen. In response, North Korea evicted international weapons inspectors, restarted the Yongbyon reactor and pledged to build a nuclear arsenal.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A59783-2003Nov3.html>

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Washington Post  
November 4, 2003  
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## **Iran's Leader Backs Deal On Inspections**

By Karl Vick, Washington Post Foreign Service

TEHRAN, Nov. 3 -- Iran's supreme leader has publicly endorsed the agreement opening the Iranian nuclear program to tougher inspections but threatened "a slap in the mouth" for anyone who challenges the country's right to develop a peaceful atomic program.

"Iran made a correct and wise decision, and it does not mean surrender," Ayatollah Ali Khamenei told senior clerics here on Sunday. "It neutralized the American and Zionist plot."

Khamenei's endorsement, his first public statement on the agreement, served to answer hard-liners who have mounted street protests against it. But he also repeatedly warned that Iran would "definitely stop this process" if it detected threats to its "national interest and the values of the system."

"If those who have entered debates with us or our enemies or the global power centers ever try to exercise caprice toward us . . . everything will be ruined," Khamenei said.

Khamenei, a senior Islamic cleric who succeeded the late Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini as supreme leader, holds ultimate power in Iran's theocratic government, and the Oct. 21 pact with three European foreign ministers was widely understood to have his blessing. The deal averted a crisis just days before a deadline for Iran to fully disclose its nuclear program.

The Oct. 31 deadline was set by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the U.N. office responsible for enforcing the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, which Iran has been accused of violating. Those accusations stem from a series of discoveries and conflicting explanations about secret facilities in Iran that could eventually produce weapons-grade uranium.

The last-minute agreement prevented the matter from being referred to the U.N. Security Council, where the United States was preparing to insist on a resolution imposing sanctions on Iran, which President Bush has dubbed part of the "axis of evil."

The European envoys shared Washington's concerns but brought less historical baggage to Tehran. Tuesday marks 24 years to the day since militant students took over the U.S. Embassy here, an anniversary that hard-liners are expected to mark with a march and chants of "Death to America." Iran and the United States severed diplomatic relations and have routinely cast one another as villains.

The European Union, however, has in recent years pursued a policy of engagement leading toward a trade agreement much desired by Iran. Negotiating its nuclear future with the foreign ministers of France, Great Britain

and Germany offered Iran “a great bonus, in terms of heading off some U.S. pack-leading,” said a Western diplomat here.

The Europeans continued to insist on the conditions Iran eventually accepted: suspension of all uranium enrichment activities, a full accounting of Iran’s nuclear program and acceptance of IAEA inspections on short notice.

“I think they realized at the eleventh hour that this was going to lead down a very unpleasant road,” the diplomat said.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A59815-2003Nov3.html>

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Washington Post  
November 4, 2003  
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## **Classified U.S. Report On Iraq Sought By U.N.**

### ***Inspector Urges Paper’s Release***

By Colum Lynch, Washington Post Staff Writer

UNITED NATIONS, Nov. 3 -- The U.N.’s top nuclear weapons inspector Monday called on the United States to provide his agency with a copy of a classified American report on Iraq’s banned weapons and to allow his inspectors to return to Iraq.

“If there are weapons, we would like to find [them]; if there are no weapons, we would like to conclude the issue,” Mohamed ElBaradei, director general of the International Atomic Energy Agency, said in an interview. “They owe us the classified version.”

ElBaradei said the United States, like all U.N. member states, is obliged under the terms of Security Council resolutions to provide his agency with information that advances its knowledge of Iraq’s past nuclear ambitions. But he said the United States has yet to respond to a request he made last month for a copy of the classified version of a report by David Kay, the head of the Iraq Survey Group, that indicated there was no new evidence Iraq had reconstituted its nuclear weapons program before the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq.

U.N. weapons inspectors—who have a mandate to verify the elimination of Iraq’s weapons of mass destruction—left Iraq before the invasion. The United States has not permitted them to return, except for a brief June visit by IAEA inspectors to the uranium storage facility at Tuwaitha.

ElBaradei, who was visiting New York for his annual address to the U.N. General Assembly, also said he would need more time to assess whether Iran has provided international inspectors with an adequate account of its nuclear power program.

Iran announced last week that it would temporarily stop enriching and reprocessing uranium and submit to more aggressive inspections by the nuclear agency. The IAEA board of directors is set to evaluate Iranian cooperation at a meeting Nov. 21.

ElBaradei said Monday that although there are serious gaps in Iran’s accounting on its nuclear program, he welcomed Iran’s decision to present his inspectors with more documentation on the program’s origins.

“We can’t reach a final assessment by the 21st,” he said. “This will take time, but that is the nature of the verification process. As long as [we] are moving forward, as long as we are unearthing new facts and as long as we see cooperation, I am satisfied.”

In his address, ElBaradei made a proposal aimed at tightening controls on Iran and other suspected nuclear weapons proliferators: He said all production of weapons-grade materials, including highly enriched uranium and plutonium, should be placed under the control of an international organization.

“In light of the increasing threat of proliferation, both by states and by terrorists,” he said, the United Nations should consider restricting the production of weapons-grade fuel to “facilities under multinational control.”

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A59675-2003Nov3.html>

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New York Times  
November 4, 2003

## **Atomic Agency Chief Urges Global Controls On Nuclear Fuel**

By Kirk Semple

UNITED NATIONS, Nov. 3 — The director of the International Atomic Energy Agency, citing the growing threat of nuclear terrorism, urged the United Nations on Monday to consider imposing multinational control over the production of nuclear material that could be used in weapons.

“Information and expertise on how to produce nuclear weapons has become much more accessible,” the official, Mohamed ElBaradei, said in an address to the General Assembly. “This places extra emphasis on the importance of controlling access to weapon-usable nuclear material.”

The proposal, if adopted, would amount to a major overhaul of the current nuclear regime, established by the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, which permits signers to handle their nuclear fuel under international inspection. The treaty, which entered into force in 1970, was intended to limit the spread of nuclear technology and material. Nations that were not already nuclear powers agreed to refrain from developing nuclear weapons in return for help with their nuclear energy or nuclear medicine programs. At the time the treaty was negotiated, there was less concern that rogue states, terrorists groups and individuals might be able to obtain highly enriched uranium and plutonium, the crucial ingredients for nuclear weapons.

“Recent events have made it clear that the nonproliferation regime is under growing stress,” Mr. ElBaradei warned. He pointed to the “serious and immediate challenge” posed by North Korea, which has pulled out of the nonproliferation treaty, and to the uncertainties about nuclear programs in Iran and Iraq.

One idea that may now be worth serious consideration is the advisability of limiting the processing of weapon-usable material by restricting it exclusively to facilities under multinational control, he said.

This new approach could also apply to “the management and disposal of spent fuel and radioactive waste,” he said, adding that spent fuel is stockpiled and awaiting reprocessing in more than 50 countries.

The proposal could well rankle countries like Japan that have nuclear programs but insist they will not develop nuclear weapons and are not suspected of conducting secret programs. Japan has a nuclear fuel program and says it will not use it to make weapons.

It is not clear how Mr. ElBaradei’s proposal would affect the five nations — the United States, Britain, France, Russia and China — with nuclear weapons programs that predated the treaty.

On the threat posed by North Korea, Mr. ElBaradei said that in the absence of inspections there, the agency cannot “provide any level of assurance about the nondiversion of nuclear material.”

As for Iran, Mr. ElBaradei said he planned to report to the agency this month following current inspections there. Iran is under international pressure to prove that it is not building nuclear weapons.

At the General Assembly meeting on Monday, Iran’s ambassador here, Javad Zarif, said Tehran would accept the terms of an additional protocol to the nonproliferation treaty that would permit surprise inspections.

Mr. ElBaradei, in his speech on Monday, also insisted that inspectors from his agency and the United Nations be permitted to return to Iraq “to provide ongoing assurance that activities related to weapons of mass destruction have not been resumed.” Renewed inspections would “bring the weapons file to a closure,” he said.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2003/11/04/international/asia/04NATI.html>

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USA Today

November 5, 2003

Pg. 18

## **N. Korean Nuclear Efforts Looking Less Threatening**

By Barbara Slavin and John Diamond, USA Today

WASHINGTON — A year after North Korea provoked a crisis with the United States by admitting a secret effort to make weapons-grade uranium, U.S. officials say the program appears to be far less advanced than diplomats had feared.

Intensive international monitoring and North Korean ineptitude have significantly slowed efforts to build a plant to produce highly enriched uranium, says a State Department official involved in U.S. attempts to stop the spread of nuclear weapons.

A U.S. intelligence official says the CIA, which has conducted extensive surveillance of North Korea, is “not certain there even is” a uranium-enrichment plant. He says North Korea may have overstated its capability as part of a strategy of “bluff and bluster to extract concessions from the United States.”

If it turns out that North Korea’s uranium production is not advanced, it could be much easier to work out a new deal to end the North’s bombmaking efforts. Though North Korea is believed to have enough fuel for two to eight nuclear weapons, those weapons would use plutonium derived from a long-acknowledged nuclear complex at Yongbyon. The reason it’s still unclear whether there is a uranium program is that such efforts are difficult to monitor. Plutonium programs, however, emit krypton gas that can be measured from the atmosphere.

“I would find this report encouraging” because it would indicate the North’s nuclear threat is less grave than portrayed, says Sen. Evan Bayh, D-Ind., a member of the Senate Intelligence Committee. Experts say it is possible some U.S. officials exaggerated the extent of the uranium program to torpedo a 1994 U.S. agreement with North Korea that traded energy aid for a freeze on nuclear development. Bush administration hard-liners had been trying to end the agreement in hopes of overturning the isolated, totalitarian regime. Following North Korea’s admission that it was trying to develop a uranium-enrichment capability, the administration stopped shipping fuel oil to North Korea. The regime responded by kicking out United Nations inspectors from the Yongbyon complex, where work had been frozen under the agreement. North Korea reactivated the complex after the inspectors left. But that effort, too, appears less advanced than some had feared. “Whatever they are doing appears constrained,” says David Albright, president of the Institute for Science and International Security, a think tank focused on nuclear issues. He says North Korea has not even tried to finish a reactor near Yongbyon that could produce 10 bombs’ worth of plutonium a year. Hopes for a new agreement rose last week after North Korea tentatively agreed to attend new talks in China on the nuclear issue. The United States and North Korea’s neighbors are pressuring the regime to end its weapons program. U.S. officials caution that it is impossible to know for sure what the North Koreans have been up to since they withdrew from the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty this year. The regime is notoriously opaque, and it’s hard to detect uranium enrichment without having spies inside the country. But some efforts to stymie the program have been successful. Last April, Germany blocked North Korea’s purchase of 200 tons of aluminum tubing suitable for vacuum casings for centrifuges. Twenty-two tons made it on board a French ship in Hamburg but was seized in the Suez Canal. “Our attempts to heighten awareness have had an impact,” the State Department official says. Kenneth Quinones, a former Korea intelligence analyst at the State Department, says North Korea has obtained components but has not built a plant housing the thousands of centrifuges required to enrich large amounts of uranium. “They have pieces of the puzzle,” he says. Others say North Korea could have obtained only a “starter kit” for uranium enrichment from Pakistan, but not technical expertise.

<http://www.usatoday.com/usatoday/20031105/5651087s.htm>

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New York Times  
November 5, 2003

## **U.S. Persuades Allies To Halt North Korean Atom Project**

By David E. Sanger

WASHINGTON, Nov. 4 — The Bush administration persuaded its Asian and European allies on Tuesday to suspend a multibillion-dollar project to build two nuclear power reactors in North Korea, in what appeared to be the last step in the dissolution of the 1994 accord that temporarily froze North Korea’s nuclear weapons program. After a meeting in New York on Tuesday, representatives from the international energy consortium set up under the agreement said that by Nov. 21, Japan, South Korea, the United States and the European Union would announce the fate of the project. “The executive board decided to refer this to the capitals,” the Korean Energy Development Organization said.

But officials who attended the meeting said that the announcement was a formality, and that the decision to suspend the project had been reached. That will probably kill it because, according to senior officials in Washington, Mr. Bush has no intention of ever reviving a nuclear energy program in North Korea, even if an agreement is reached on controlling its nuclear weapons program. The United States has raised the possibility of helping with non-nuclear energy efforts as part of a North Korean accord to disarm.

The State Department made clear on Tuesday that whatever the diplomatic wording about suspension, the project is dead. “Our view is that we want an end to the program,” said Adam Early, the department’s deputy spokesman. The announcement would effectively be the death knell for the 1994 accord, the so-called Agreed Framework, which was reached after the Clinton administration and North Korea appeared headed toward a confrontation over the North’s nuclear weapons program.

The accord has long been a target of hawks inside the Bush administration, who insist that North Korea began cheating on the agreement almost as soon as the ink was dry. They also were critical of provisions that had American taxpayers financing the supply of fuel oil for North Korea in return for its agreement to freeze, but not dismantle, the program. Still, about 550 workers — about 100 North Koreans and several hundred workers from Uzbekistan and engineers from South Korea — have been busy preparing the ground for the first nuclear reactor.

The South Korean government had argued in favor of keeping the construction going — even at a slower pace — to keep the North talking about dismantling its nuclear programs. Mr. Bush refused, saying that the North abrogated its rights to the reactors when it secretly started a second weapons program, based on uranium-enrichment technology it obtained from Pakistan.

[The South Korean foreign minister, Yoon Young Kwan, said at a press briefing on Wednesday: “The position was based on the premise that the project could resume a year later. It is no more or no less than that. It was not an official decision, which is expected before Nov. 21.

]”With no response from North Korea so far, it would be inappropriate to make predictions,” he said. “It would be inappropriate to predict what impact this would have on future six-way talks.”]

Mr. Bush began the squeeze on North Korea by cutting off the American-supplied fuel oil. North Korea responded by restarting the plant that fabricates weapons fuel. Nevertheless, construction workers kept digging and building at the huge nuclear site in Kumho, on the North Korean coast, because that project, worth \$4.6 billion, was largely financed by South Korea and Japan. It is the largest, most expensive construction project in North Korea, a desperately poor country, and it is unclear how the North Korean government will react to its suspension.

While Secretary of State Colin L. Powell has frequently said the Agreed Framework may have prevented North Korea from building scores of nuclear weapons over the past decade, others have criticized it harshly. President Bush’s national security adviser, Condoleezza Rice, has often argued that Mr. Clinton erred by not insisting that all nuclear material be shipped out of North Korea, and by offering energy aid before the North had fully disarmed. The man who negotiated the treaty, Robert L. Gallucci, now dean of the Georgetown School of Foreign Service, said in an interview on Tuesday that the program probably should have been suspended a year ago, when North Korea admitted to violating the nuclear freeze. But he argued that announcing its complete demise was a mistake. “There is no reason to bury it, and to project a posture of no interest in regenerating the deal,” Mr. Gallucci said. “We need every carrot we have with the North Koreans — and saying that it is dead is gratuitous, an appeal to a domestic audience.”

A senior Asian official said tonight that while the final announcement later this month will refer to the suspension of the agreement, the United States and its allies understand that if no substitute agreement is reached in six-nation negotiations with the North, “there is no chance this program will be revived.”

<http://www.nytimes.com/2003/11/05/international/asia/05KORE.html>

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Washington Post  
November 5, 2003  
Pg. 8

## **WHO Assails Wealthy Nations On Bioterror**

*Coordination of Defenses Poor in Simulation; U.S. Support for Agency Questioned*

By Shankar Vedantam, Washington Post Staff Writer

GENEVA—A severe lack of funding for surveillance and front-line defenses has left the World Health Organization unprepared to deal with a global bioterrorist attack involving an agent such as smallpox, according to a senior official who monitors disease outbreaks for the agency.

The concerns were underscored by a recent exercise involving a simulated bioterrorist attack in which WHO observers unexpectedly had to be called in to broker breakdowns in coordination among the eight nations taking part.

Several WHO officials also said they believe that U.S. bioterrorism defenses that mainly focus on domestic preparations could be ineffective against an attack involving a pathogen that emerges, or is released, in a remote part of the world and spreads internationally.

More than 100 nations have no surveillance capabilities to detect such an outbreak, several WHO officials said. In an attack, they added, a welter of conflicting national protocols could undermine a swift global response.

Although the United States has sought to vaccinate domestic health workers against smallpox, for instance, no comparable program has been offered to WHO employees who may be the first to respond, said Patrick Drury, project manager of WHO’s Global Outbreak Alert and Response Network.

A spokesman for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services defended the level of support for WHO and said the United States is aiming for an optimal balance among unilateral, bilateral and multilateral biodefense strategies.

The recently concluded global bioterrorism exercise, called Global Mercury, was based on a scenario involving a group of terrorists who deliberately infect themselves with smallpox and then travel to various countries, using their

bodies to spread the infection on public transportation systems and at car shows and by distributing contaminated business cards.

The exercise underscored the drawbacks of defending against bioterrorism threats on a nation-by-nation basis, said Drury and other WHO officials. Results of the exercise will be discussed this week by officials of the United States and several other industrialized countries at a meeting in Berlin.

"We'd like to see the United States engage in this as a multilateral effort," Drury said. "They seem to be unilateral or bilateral in what they are doing."

WHO, which was supposed to play only an observer role in the exercise, had to be called in to negotiate coordination among the players, Drury said. The countries participating were the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Canada, Italy, Japan and Mexico.

By the end of the exercise, Drury said, victims had been infected with smallpox in Chicago and the West Coast.

"If you have problems between democratic countries, you can imagine what will happen if you put Iran and North Korea in the picture," said Diego Buriot, director of WHO's Department of Communicable Disease Surveillance and Response in Lyon, France.

Bill Pierce, spokesman for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, said that the United States played a key role in conducting Global Mercury, which he described as only the first step in developing multinational protocols to deal with bioweapons.

Some WHO officials said they were satisfied with the level of U.S. involvement. David Heymann, an American infectious diseases expert working on polio eradication, said that U.S. surveillance systems would complement WHO's multilateral efforts. "The U.S. has been a strong supporter of WHO," he said.

But other U.S. experts said America needs to do more.

"The U.S. has not made an investment in global public health and the World Health Organization that anywhere matches the magnitude of the global health need," said Margaret Hamburg, a physician who is vice president at the nonprofit Nuclear Threat Initiative in Washington, which studies biological, chemical and nuclear security threats. "We cannot address this problem by going it alone or by developing relationships on a one-on-one and ad-hoc basis."

Several officials at WHO pointed out that the recent outbreak of the new respiratory infection called severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) began in rural China but rapidly spread to industrialized countries. More than 100 countries do not have the laboratory expertise to spot even common diseases, making it unlikely they would detect a new agent until it had claimed many lives or spread to other countries, said Bradford Kay, an American who is helping WHO build laboratory capabilities in developing countries.

WHO officials readily acknowledged that the United States is already a top funder and that American specialists often provide the backbone for international investigations of disease outbreaks. But they said \$10 million promised to WHO this year to boost surveillance has not yet been forthcoming, leaving the agency with too few resources to thoroughly investigate the outbreak reports that pour in every day.

"It's understandable for them to say we'll do it ourselves instead of relying on a bunch of U.N. pinkos," Drury said of U.S. biodefense planners. But instead of trying to build a "Great Wall" around the United States, he said, it would be cheaper and more effective to build global networks that could spot and contain outbreaks where they begin, instead of reacting after they had spread.

Pierce rejected that criticism. He said that the United States wants funds set aside for WHO once details of programs have been worked out.

"This is a hollow complaint," he said. "I don't know why they are complaining. Maybe they are covering up for some of their shortcomings."

The Global Mercury bioterrorism exercise, described by Drury and another official, laid out this hypothetical scenario:

A couple arrived in Vancouver on a plane from Tokyo at 4 p.m. on Monday, Sept. 8. The man was deathly sick and collapsed at the airport. A quarantine officer summoned health authorities, who quickly deduced that he had smallpox. Police arrested the woman and interrogated her. A search of her luggage found references to a global bioterrorism attack, and authorities eventually concluded that members of a terrorist cell had deliberately infected themselves and were flying to various countries to start an epidemic of hemorrhagic smallpox, an unusual—and especially lethal—form of the disease.

As the game played out, Drury and Buriot said, WHO had to be called in as a neutral broker.

"The practicality of ongoing teleconferences with eight different countries and different cultural backgrounds and different languages and different priorities" were enormous, Drury said. "One talks politics; one talks science."

Missing in the exercise, but certain to complicate matters in a real crisis, was the public panic that such an outbreak would trigger.

There is not a cordon sanitaire that one country can mount to “keep out” infections, said Ann Marie Kimball, professor of epidemiology at the school of public health at the University of Washington. “If wealthy countries are truly interested in the biosecurity of their populations, they would be wise to work with the larger global community to assure that all countries are secure.”

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A496-2003Nov4.html>

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Los Angeles Times  
November 6, 2003

## **Agreement To Fund Nuclear Weapons Research Is OKd**

*Conferees back bill to give the administration \$7.5 million, half what it sought to study the use of ‘bunker-buster’ bombs.*

By Nick Anderson, Times Staff Writer

WASHINGTON — Congressional negotiators agreed Wednesday to spend millions of dollars — but less than the amount sought by the Bush administration — to research a new generation of nuclear weapons and otherwise bolster the nation’s capacity to produce and test atomic bombs.

The bill, expected to win final House and Senate approval within days, would give the Bush administration \$7.5 million, half of what it requested to study nuclear bombs capable of burrowing deeply into the ground before detonating. The Pentagon conceives of these “bunker-buster” weapons, also called “robust nuclear earth penetrators,” as a possible response to enemies who hide and harden key targets underground.

The bill would restrict or trim, but not eliminate, other nuclear weapon initiatives for the 2004 fiscal year, which began Oct. 1. Advocates said the funding would enable scientists to pursue research important to national security without actually committing the U.S. to build or test new bombs. “It’s a pretty fair compromise,” said Sen. Pete V. Domenici (R-N.M.), whose state is a center of weapons research.

But critics said the bill would allow the president to proceed with a unilateralist nuclear policy that could spur a new global arms race, possibly leading such nations as North Korea, Pakistan and India to expand their atomic weapon programs.

“The message that is sent to the rest of the world is that we need additional nuclear weapons, we need ‘designer’ nuclear weapons,” said Sen. Byron L. Dorgan (D-N.D.). “That is a horrible message.”

Sen. Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.), another critic, said the bill would lead the U.S. government toward “reopening the nuclear door.”

The deal on the \$27.3-billion energy and water appropriations bill for fiscal 2004 gave lawmakers momentum in their effort to break deadlocks on spending controversies as they sought to adjourn before Thanksgiving. The disputes include an administration proposal to cut overtime pay for some workers, a congressional effort to ease restrictions on travel to Cuba, new Federal Communications Commission rules on media ownership, and funding levels for international AIDS relief, modernized voting equipment and veterans’ health benefits.

So far, four of 13 annual appropriations bills have cleared Congress, funding defense, homeland security, the Interior Department and the legislative branch. A final military construction bill is moving through the House and the Senate. The energy and water bill would be the sixth to head toward enactment. Lawmakers are funding the rest of the government through stopgap spending resolutions.

The energy and water bill is important to lawmakers for two reasons: The money it provides for local water projects and other civil works can help members of Congress win reelection, and the nuclear programs it funds are central to national security and energy policy.

For instance, the bill includes \$580 million for the development of a national nuclear-waste burial site at Yucca Mountain in southern Nevada — \$11 million less than the Bush administration sought but \$123 million more than was spent in the previous year. The project, authorized after Bush took office in 2001, is highly controversial both in Nevada and along transportation routes for the radioactive waste.

On nuclear weapons, the bill would allocate \$10.8 million for development of a new plant to produce plutonium pits, which are key trigger-like devices for new bombs. Although that amount is \$12 million less than Bush wanted, it is still a significant investment in weapon-making.

The measure also would spend \$24.9 million to help the government prepare for the possible resumption of underground nuclear weapon testing at the Nevada Test Site with two years of notice. That’s faster than the current lead time of three years but slower than the 18 months sought by Bush. The U.S. stopped nuclear weapon tests in 1992, during the presidency of Bush’s father.

The bill also would provide \$6 million for “advanced” weapon concepts, although \$4 million would be blocked until the administration issues a report on reductions in the nuclear weapon stockpile. Some of the \$6 million could be



used to research "low-yield" nuclear weapons with an explosive force of five or fewer kilotons, a major departure from current policy prohibiting such research. Administration officials, however, say decisions on "low-yield" weapon research are pending.

Rep. David L. Hobson (R-Ohio), chairman of the House Appropriations subcommittee on energy and water development, told reporters that he was sympathetic to critics of the nuclear weapon initiatives.

"I don't like a lot of this stuff," Hobson said. "I agreed with a lot of what Sen. Feinstein said about sending the wrong message to the rest of the world."

Anson Franklin, a spokesman for the National Nuclear Security Administration, which oversees the nation's nuclear weapon complexes, said the Bush administration was pleased that its initiatives were included in the bill. He added: "I gather some of the budget requests were trimmed. We'll have to take a look at that."

John Isaacs, a liberal defense analyst in Washington, said the bill appeared to place "a political check on the Bush administration's plans to produce nuclear weapons" by reducing the administration's spending request.

<http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/nation/la-na-nukes6nov06.1.6328665.story>

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Philadelphia Inquirer

November 6, 2003

## **Iran Offers Nuclear Reassurance**

By Associated Press

VIENNA, Austria - A senior Iranian envoy acknowledged yesterday that his country made mistakes in reporting past nuclear activities, but insisted that suspicions Iran was trying to make atomic arms were unfounded.

In an interview, Ali Akbar Salehi, Iran's chief delegate to the International Atomic Energy Agency, also said an agreement opening Iran's nuclear programs to full scrutiny by the agency would be ready for signing in two weeks.

The IAEA board is to meet Nov. 20 to review a report by its top official, Mohamed ElBaradei, to clarify whether Iran has been trying to make such weapons. If the meeting finds Iran in violation of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, it could pass the issue to the U.N. Security Council, which could impose sanctions.

Salehi said his government was planning to send ElBaradei a letter stating Iran's intention to sign a protocol opening all of its nuclear activities to IAEA inspection "within the few coming days."

Iran recently handed over what it said was a complete declaration of its nuclear activities just days ahead of an Oct. 31 deadline.

Salehi acknowledged some "mistakes," saying Iranian nuclear officials "did not follow the regularities of reporting" all aspects of the program to the agency.

He said the reporting lapses involved only "the past peaceful nuclear activities of Iran."

<http://www.philly.com/mld/inquirer/news/nation/7193412.htm>

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USA Today

November 6, 2003

Pg. 12

## **U.S. Rejects Return Of U.N. Arms Inspectors To Iraq**

The United States rejected calls by the United Nations and Russia to allow international inspectors to return to Iraq to look for weapons of mass destruction. State Department spokesman Adam Ereli said there's no need for the inspectors to return because the U.S.-led invasion had made their mission irrelevant. "The U.N. inspectors were there to inspect compliance with U.N. resolutions concerning Iraqi disarmament. Events have overtaken those resolutions," he said.

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Moscow Times

November 6, 2003

Pg. 3

## **U.S. Warms To Russian Pressure On Iran Over WMD**

By Barry Schweid, Associated Press

WASHINGTON -- Russia is pressuring Iran to make good on promises to open its nuclear facilities to international inspection and may halt the \$800 million deal to build a reactor for the Bushehr nuclear power plant if Iran backtracks, a senior U.S. State Department official said.

Russia is viewed as very supportive on the issue, said the official, who spoke Tuesday on condition of anonymity. Moscow is applying the pressure through diplomatic channels, in tandem with a similar effort by the European Union, the official said.

The United States has been complaining for a decade that Russian technology was helping Iran to develop a nuclear weapons program.

U.S. President George W. Bush renewed U.S. concerns at a meeting at Camp David in September with President Vladimir Putin, but the Russian leader refused to halt plans to build the power plant in Iran.

Putin said Russia would "give a clear but respectful signal to Iran about the necessity to continue and expand its cooperation" with international inspectors. He said his country "has no desire and no plans to contribute in any way to the development of weapons of mass destruction, either in Iran or any other country in the world."

Since then, Iran has promised to open its facilities to the IAEA. Under pressure from the agency's board, Iran has handed over what it said was a complete declaration of its nuclear activities.

IAEA director Mohamed ElBaradei has said inspectors were in the process of verifying Iran's submission. The U.S. official said Russia may use delaying tactics as part of its pressure campaign. He said the reactor project would not be completed at least until 2005.

Meanwhile, Atomic Energy Minister Alexander Rumyantsev met for several hours Tuesday with U.S. Energy Secretary Spencer Abraham. Rumyantsev is to meet Thursday with Condoleezza Rice, Bush's national security adviser.

Abraham, in an interview Monday, said "progress has been extensive" in working with the Russians to improve security at Russian nuclear sites, and a program to safeguard Russia's nuclear material was being accelerated.

<http://www.themoscowtimes.com/stories/2003/11/06/013.html>

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Thu, Nov 06, 2003

**World – Reuters**

## **N.Korea Envoy Says Nuclear Deterrent Ready to Use**

LONDON (Reuters) - North Korea ([news](#) - [web sites](#))'s envoy in Britain said Thursday that Pyongyang had a nuclear deterrent that was ready to use and powerful enough to deter any U.S. attack.

Ambassador Ri Yong Ho told Reuters in an interview that North Korea would only use its capability in self-defense. Asked if North Korea had a nuclear bomb, he said: "What we are saying is, a nuclear deterrent capability."

North Korea has long hinted that it had a nuclear bomb. It said last month it was prepared to demonstrate the existence of its nuclear deterrent "when an appropriate time comes."

But Thursday's comments appear to be the first time it has explicitly stated that it has a nuclear weapon ready to use. The ambassador said the deterrent was made with plutonium, most of which was recently reprocessed, and was now ready to use should the United States attack.

The latest crisis in North Korea-U.S. relations erupted in October 2002 when U.S. officials said Pyongyang was pursuing a clandestine nuclear weapons program that violated its international commitments.

The crisis showed signs of deepening Thursday when the United States proposed suspending a project to build nuclear power stations in the communist country.

Ri said the suspension, if it went ahead, would have a "very negative impact on the dialogue process" aimed at defusing the standoff.

The reactor project is based on a 1994 agreement under which the North Koreans froze their nuclear arms program in return for two light-water reactors.

The United States has insisted on a multilateral approach in the nuclear crisis, offering Pyongyang security guarantees short of a formal non-aggression treaty in exchange for a complete, verifiable and irreversible end to the suspected weapons program.

Ri said North Korea was now ready to make concessions on its initial demands for a formal treaty so as to break the logjam.

"We are prepared to consider written assurances on non-aggression," he said, stressing that Pyongyang would only accept such a deal if Washington itself made genuine assurances.

He said Washington must commit itself to a peaceful coexistence and show a willingness for "simultaneous action," shorthand for both sides taking steps at the same time to answer conflicting concerns and resolve the crisis.

If North Korea deemed Washington's offer to be genuine, it would continue taking part in six-way talks to end the impasse, he said. He would not be drawn on a possible date for new talks.

[http://story.news.yahoo.com/news?tmpl=story&cid=574&ncid=721&e=1&u=/nm/20031106/wl\\_nm/korea\\_north\\_nu\\_clear\\_dc](http://story.news.yahoo.com/news?tmpl=story&cid=574&ncid=721&e=1&u=/nm/20031106/wl_nm/korea_north_nu_clear_dc)

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