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22 Mar 2002

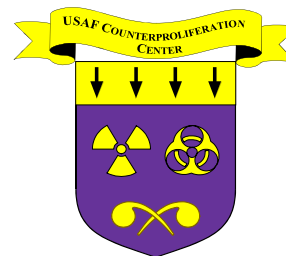
USAF COUNTERPROLIFERATION CENTER

CPC OUTREACH JOURNAL

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FBI Alerts Allies on Al Qaeda's Nuclear Plans

March 18, 2002 09:35 AM ET

MANILA (Reuters) - The United States has alerted its allies to watch out for attempts by Osama bin Laden's al Qaeda network to produce weapons of mass destruction, FBI chief Robert Mueller said Monday.

Mueller, in Manila, raised the concern in talks with Philippine officials before flying back to the United States at the end of a tour of Southeast Asia.

He has said the region is a potential sanctuary for members of al Qaeda, prime suspects in the September 11 attacks on New York and Washington.

Mueller said evidence gathered in Afghanistan showed without doubt that the Saudi-born bin Laden and al Qaeda were trying to obtain biological, chemical and nuclear weapons.

"We have not seen any definitive evidence that he was successful but there is enough there to cause us substantial concern and ... to say to countries around the world to be on the alert for any efforts or attempts by terrorist groups to obtain weapons of mass destruction," Mueller told a news conference.

He said it was clear al Qaeda had established a presence in Southeast Asia and that the United States and its allies in the region were on the alert against possible new attacks by the group.

Mueller singled out the militant Jemaah Islamiah group as linked to bin Laden's network and said it also had ties in several countries, including Singapore, Malaysia and Indonesia.

"We are working together to put all the pieces in the puzzle ... so that we can have a fuller portrait of al Qaeda's presence in the region."

Security forces in Singapore, Malaysia and the Philippines have detained dozens of Islamic militants in recent weeks on suspicion they might be linked to JI.

U.S. special forces are currently training Filipino troops in counter-terrorism to help defeat the Abu Sayyaf group in the southern Philippines, which Washington has also linked to al Qaeda.

The Abu Sayyaf has been holding a U.S. missionary couple hostage for nearly 10 months on southern Basilan island.

Mueller warned in Singapore last week that al Qaeda members fleeing from Afghanistan might seek new sanctuaries in other areas, including Southeast Asia and the Middle East.

Mueller voiced the same concern in talks with Philippine President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo before he left Manila.

"He emphasized that there is no evidence of any al Qaeda cell in the Philippines but we have to take all the necessary precautions to make sure that this continues this way," presidential national security adviser Roilo Golez said.

Golez said Mueller offered the FBI's technical assistance in tracking down funds of terror groups as well as information obtained from members of al Qaeda and the Taliban regime captured in the Afghanistan conflict.

Philippine police have detained at least four Indonesians in recent weeks for questioning on their possible links to al Qaeda.

"What has emerged from our investigation is that the Indonesians, while they may have no direct link to al Qaeda, appear to have a connection with Jemaah Islamiah," national police chief Leandro Mendoza said.

http://www.reuters.com/news_article.jhtml?type=topnews&StoryID=712051

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N. Korea Not Following Nuclear Pact, U.S. To Say

By Peter Slevin, Washington Post Staff Writer

The Bush administration will not certify that North Korea is abiding by a 1994 agreement designed to freeze its nuclear weapons program, the first time a U.S. administration has effectively declared Pyongyang out of compliance, officials said yesterday.

Despite its displeasure, the administration intends to permit \$95 million in fuel oil to go to North Korea this year, as called for in the 1994 Agreed Framework. The actions are designed to put pressure on North Korea while giving the Pyongyang government a chance to comply with the requirements of the accord.

"This lays down a clear marker and puts the North Koreans on notice that we are gravely concerned," said one administration official.

The Bush plan departs from the practice of the Clinton administration, which notified Congress annually that North Korea was fulfilling the essential conditions of the pact.

It appears to reflect a continuing administration strategy to confront North Korea, which the president has labeled as part of an "axis of evil" seeking weapons of mass destruction. But it also seems likely to disturb some members of Congress and foreign allies who believe that the agreement to prevent North Korea from producing nuclear material has been working.

Sen. Joseph R. Biden Jr. (D-Del.), chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, advised the administration last week that North Korea's performance should be certified unless there is current, credible evidence that the country has breached the terms of the agreement. Administration officials previously testified that North Korea was in compliance.

"We have no evidence they are in breach," said one Capitol Hill staffer. "We share the president's concern about their long-term intentions, but they remain in compliance with all of their central obligations under the Agreed Framework, according to what we have been told."

The State Department, after a lobbying effort pushed by arms control chief John Bolton and backed by key players in the Pentagon, has recommended that Bush not certify North Korea's performance, a senior State Department official said yesterday. While the president has not made a formal decision, one staff member said the president "has been briefed on the subject and is on board."

An official who opposes the move said the State Department is advising foreign allies and Congress about U.S. intentions, predicting that lawmakers will fall into line: "Frankly, I think we'll be able to explain it to them well."

The Agreed Framework froze North Korea's nuclear weapons program at a time of grave worry that the Stalinist regime was accumulating a potential arsenal of plutonium. The North Koreans received pledges of millions of tons of fuel oil and help in building safer, light-water nuclear reactors in return for shutting one reactor and halting work on two others that were under construction.

In addition, the North Koreans agreed to permit inspectors to monitor the closed reactor and the spent fuel rods, which are stored in locations monitored around the clock by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). The fuel oil has been flowing, with 500,000 metric tons scheduled to reach North Korea each year.

An official at the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization, the group created to develop the light-water reactors, said of the agreement: "As far as we can see, it has been fulfilled. We challenge anybody who wants to make us believe that the North Koreans didn't stick to the bargain."

Many leading Republicans disapproved of the agreement, believing that North Korea was essentially blackmailing the United States and its allies and could not be trusted with a light-water reactor, but the Bush administration pledged to honor the pact and called for improved implementation.

This year's certification process is the first for the Bush administration. An official involved in the current discussions said yesterday that North Korea almost certainly hid nuclear material from inspectors in the 1990s, leaving it out of compliance. The administration is also frustrated by the refusal of North Korea to allow IAEA inspectors to examine other sites as required before the light-water reactors can be turned on.

Excavation work for the reactors is underway, with foundations due to be poured in August. The IAEA believes there is too little time before the reactors are built to complete the inspections that the North Koreans are blocking, raising questions about the wisdom of spending billions of dollars to erect the reactors.

North Korea "needs to allow IAEA inspectors to do their job," said one official, who asked to remain anonymous. This official predicted that North Korea's lack of cooperation with the IAEA will lead to the collapse of the Agreed Framework.

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New York Times
March 20, 2002

U.S. Concludes Al Qaeda Lacked A Chemical Or Biological Stockpile

By David Johnston and James Risen

WASHINGTON, March 19 — After months of searching the bomb-ravaged wreckage of terrorist training camps and other sites in Afghanistan, investigators have concluded that while Al Qaeda researched chemical and biological weapons there is no indication that it acquired or produced them, government officials say.

Soil samples, swabs and other chemical tests have so far turned up no evidence of anthrax or other materials that would make chemical or biological weapons, the officials said. Testing is continuing.

Although officials said prior to Sept. 11 the administration had collected surveillance and other information indicating that Al Qaeda had conducted experiments with small amounts of crude biological and chemical agents, like cyanide, Americans searching the camps since the collapse of the Taliban have not found physical proof of testing or production. If Qaeda members performed any experiments, analysts now conclude that they appear to have been small scale.

Last month, Gen. Tommy R. Franks, commander of American forces in the Afghan war zones, said that searches of about 60 sites had failed to turn up evidence of weapons of mass destruction.

Since then, other sites have been examined, and analysts in the United States have reviewed documents as well as on-site test results to arrive at a more comprehensive assessment.

"They haven't found anything," one American official said. "There are no traces showing production at any of the sites we thought might be involved."

Officials cautioned that a number of sites remained to be tested and that it was possible that chemical or biological weapons might still be discovered. It is also possible that Al Qaeda destroyed or moved chemical or biological agents to keep them secret. But as more sites are checked, investigators are increasingly certain of their findings.

The lack of evidence is somewhat at odds with the impression left by other senior administration officials in their public remarks. They have emphasized the continuing threat posed by Al Qaeda's intentions to obtain weapons of mass destruction.

Today, in testimony to the Senate Armed Services Committee, George J. Tenet, the director of central intelligence, said that terrorist groups have access to information on these weapons through open sources like the Internet.

Mr. Tenet added, "Documents recovered from Al Qaeda facilities in Afghanistan show that bin Laden was pursuing a sophisticated biological weapons research program. We also believe that bin Laden was seeking to acquire or develop a nuclear device. Al Qaeda may be pursuing a radioactive dispersal device, what some call a 'dirty bomb.'" He offered no details.

But analysts who have reviewed thousands of documents from Afghanistan said that Al Qaeda had not found chemical or biological weapons or evidence of the capability to manufacture them. They said that the group had accumulated a library of research about chemical and biological compounds.

Among the documents found in Qaeda sites were out-of-date American Army manuals on improvised explosives, scientific writings on poisons, diagrams of chemical agents and research on germ warfare vaccines.

American intelligence officials say the documents also show that Al Qaeda was interested in developing a chemical or biological weapons program, although the officials did not identify the nature of the information, or the type of weapons that were sought.

Moreover, there was also evidence that Al Qaeda was training some of its followers in basic science, including chemistry. Analysts who have studied translations of textbooks and papers found in Afghanistan indicate that the training had not advanced beyond the undergraduate college level, but that it did appear to reflect a desire by Al Qaeda to create a scientific team with knowledge of weapons of mass destruction.

Still, the lack of evidence that Al Qaeda had produced or stockpiled chemical or biological weapons in Afghanistan has frustrated American experts who previously believed that the network had developed at least some crude poisons, military and intelligence officials said.

Prior to the American military operation in Afghanistan, American analysts had concluded that Al Qaeda had tested toxic material like cyanide at the Abu Khabab training camp near Derunta dam in eastern Afghanistan.

They suspected that the terror network was attempting to develop more sophisticated weapons. American analysts were particularly concerned about reports suggesting that the mass production of cyanide might be under way at Derunta.

But a search of the complex after the collapse of the Taliban did not turn up stockpiles of any potential weapons of mass destruction.

At one point, analysts at the Central Intelligence Agency also became suspicious of a fertilizer plant in Mazar-i-Sharif, which was located near one of Osama bin Laden's compounds. The analysts feared that the plant's equipment could be used for chemical or biological weapons production.

But an inspection found no indication that the plant had been converted to weapons production. Other installations came under scrutiny, like an anthrax vaccine facility in Kabul, which had been financed by the International Committee of the Red Cross.

Analysts believed that the plant had been controlled by the Taliban after most of the humanitarian groups left Kabul, and that they might have allowed Al Qaeda to use the equipment. A search of the plant proved fruitless.

One analyst emphasized that the "absence of evidence is not necessarily evidence of absence," and that administration officials still believed that they might eventually find incriminating samples.

American officials have said for weeks that they have not discovered any evidence that Al Qaeda had been able to acquire or produce a nuclear bomb, although officials continue to express concern over the possibility that terrorists might be capable of developing a "dirty" nuclear weapon, with small amounts of fissile material spread by conventional explosives.

But officials said there was no proof that the group had obtained the material.

Officials stress that the remnants of Al Qaeda's leadership are almost certainly still trying to obtain chemical, biological or nuclear weapons, and note that in 1998 Osama bin Laden said that he considered it his religious duty to acquire them — even if his technical capabilities have been too limited to accomplish his objectives.

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New York Times

March 20, 2002

White House Wants Chief Of Chemical Arms Group To Resign

By Judith Miller

WASHINGTON, March 19 — After the failure of weeks of quiet diplomacy, the Bush administration called today for the resignation of the director of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, the international organization charged with stopping the spread of chemical weapons.

Richard A. Boucher, the State Department spokesman, said the administration had lost confidence in José Bustani, the organization's director general, a Brazilian, accusing him of "mismanagement" of the 145-member organization, "ill-considered initiatives" and the "demoralization" of its technical staff.

"The United States and others don't believe the organization can continue to fulfill its primary mission of eliminating chemical weapons under its current leadership," Mr. Boucher said. "We and others have urged the director general to resign for the good of the organization."

A senior administration official said today that the United States would propose a "no confidence" vote on Mr. Bustani's leadership later this week at a meeting of the organization's governing executive council at The Hague. The official said that a majority the council's 41 members were expected to support the American resolution or to abstain from voting. Mr. Bustani had succeeded in securing pledges of support from only a few member states, officials said, among them, Russia, Iran, Cuba, and his native Brazil.

A spokesman for the organization said that neither Mr. Bustani nor the organization would comment on the administration's highly unusual call for Mr. Bustani's resignation. But in a letter in February to Secretary of State

Colin L. Powell, Mr. Bustani appealed to Washington to stop its campaign for his resignation. "I have done no wrong and I have nothing to hide," Mr. Bustani wrote.

Administration officials said the White House had decided to go public with its appeal only after months of growing concern about Mr. Bustani's stewardship of the organization and the failure of weeks of quiet efforts to persuade him to resign. Officials said the pressure included a telephone call from Secretary Powell to his Brazilian counterpart, expressing displeasure with Mr. Bustani and urging Brazil to persuade him to resign so he could be replaced with another Brazilian candidate.

Brazil declined to request Mr. Bustani's resignation, which prompted the administration to begin pressing the executive council's members to support a call for his resignation.

State Department officials said the administration's campaign against Mr. Bustani had nothing to do with its more aggressive posture toward Iraq. "The problems with his management were evident for more than a year," a senior State Department official said. "He's a terrible manager whose judgment calls have undermined American and world confidence in a vital international institution that the United States strongly supports."

The organization was created in to verify the 1997 treaty that bans chemical weapons. The United States pays about 22 percent of the annual budget of the organization, which spends about \$60 million a year, employs about 500 people and ran a deficit of \$4 million in 2000. Since 1997, it has helped eliminate roughly 7 percent of the world's chemical agents and 15 percent of its chemical weapons.

The senior Bush administration official said that its dissatisfaction with Mr. Bustani's performance was cumulative, but that a last straw was his assertion after the Sept. 11 attacks that his organization should be given a more prominent role in combating terrorism and in responding to the use of chemical weapons anywhere in the world.

"Rather than seek new missions, the organization should do what it is supposed to do," the official said. He said that because of what he called inept management, the organization would conduct less than half of the inspections that were planned and budgeted for this year.

Officials also said that one of Mr. Bustani's early initiatives after his appointment to the post in May 1997 was to insist that his salary be increased to equal that of the director of the international agency that prevents the spread of nuclear weapons, an organization roughly three times the size of his. Despite that and other irritants, the Clinton administration supported his reappointment as director general in May 2000.

Amy E. Smithson, a chemical weapons expert at the Henry L. Stimson Center, a private group here, described the growing demoralization of the organization as early as 1998 in a lengthy report on the organization and the 1997 treaty. In an interview today, she said the stakes in the current dispute were "very high."

She called upon the Bush administration to support greater authority and power for the international chemical inspectors, but she also urged Mr. Bustani to "put the survival of the inspectorate ahead of his career."

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USA Today
March 20, 2002
Pg. 8D

Researchers Test Anti-Smallpox Weapon For Bioterrorism War

By Anita Manning, USA Today

An experimental drug compound that inactivates smallpox and other viruses in the test tube could one day lead to an oral treatment for one of the most dreaded bioterrorist threats, scientists report Wednesday.

A team of researchers at the Veterans Affairs San Diego Health Care System and University of California-San Diego says a derivative of the drug cidofovir is 100 times more effective than cidofovir alone at stopping replication of pox viruses, including smallpox.

Cidofovir is licensed to treat infections of the retina caused by cytomegalovirus in patients with HIV/AIDS.

In screening more than 500 drugs for anti-smallpox properties, federal scientists identified cidofovir as being effective, but the drug in its current form must be given intravenously to be effective. "The Army wants an oral treatment for the troops," says VA researcher Karl Hostetler, who is presenting the results at an international conference on antiviral research in Prague, the Czech Republic.

Hostetler and colleagues linked another chemical, hexadecyloxypropyl, to cidofovir, creating a combination, abbreviated HDP-CDV. Tests in mice found the compound can pass through the gastrointestinal tract into the blood, making it effective as an oral treatment, but further animal tests are needed before it can be tried in humans.

Scientists at the University of Alabama-Birmingham and at the U.S. Army Medical Research Institute of Infectious Diseases in Fort Detrick, Md., tested the compound and found it to be effective against several pox viruses, along with more common viruses, including herpes 1 and 2, and varicella zoster, which causes chickenpox.

"What does it mean for the ordinary person?" Hostetler asks. "Let's hope it means nothing, because we're all hoping smallpox doesn't reappear. If it does, it means we have a second line of defense besides vaccination."

Smallpox, which kills about a third of its victims, was declared eradicated worldwide in 1980, but stores of variola virus, the infectious agent that causes the airborne and highly contagious disease, remain in labs in Russia and Atlanta. It is believed that rogue scientists or governments have secret supplies that could be used by bioterrorists. To defend against such an attack, federal officials have begun to build up supplies of smallpox vaccine and have funded research into therapies.

Cidofovir has been found to be effective against monkeypox in primates, a close model to smallpox in humans, says Catherine Laughlin, chief of virology at the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases. But its disadvantages are that, until now, it could be given only intravenously, and it has the potential to cause kidney damage. Whether the modification of cidofovir will make it less toxic to kidneys is not yet known, she says.

"There's a lot more testing we need to do," Laughlin says. But "the results are very encouraging."

Hostetler's research was funded by the Department of Defense, National Institutes of Health and the VA San Diego Health Care System.

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London Daily Telegraph

March 21, 2002

Pg. 1

UK Warns Saddam Of Nuclear Retaliation

By George Jones, Political Editor and Anton La Guardia

BRITAIN would be ready to make a nuclear strike against states such as Iraq if they used weapons of mass destruction against British forces, Geoff Hoon, the Defence Secretary, told MPs yesterday.

He issued his warning as officials in Washington and London privately predicted that military action to try to topple Saddam Hussein was likely to be launched at the end of the year.

Mr Hoon was briefing the Commons defence select committee on the threat posed by four countries Britain had identified as "states of concern": Iraq, Iran, Libya and North Korea.

He said that Saddam had already used chemical weapons against his own people. The possibility that rogue states would be prepared to use such weapons again, possibly sacrificing their own population, could not be ruled out.

He said that dictators such as Saddam "can be absolutely confident that in the right conditions we would be willing to use our nuclear weapons.

"What I cannot be absolutely confident about is whether that would be sufficient to deter them from using a weapon of mass destruction in the first place."

Mr Hoon's willingness to confirm readiness to use nuclear weapons in such circumstances was seen at Westminster as a clear sign that the Government is becoming more alarmed that Saddam is developing chemical, biological and nuclear weapons.

A joint Ministry of Defence and Foreign Office paper to the committee said it was a "serious cause for concern" that states were developing a ballistic missile capability at the same time as they were seeking to acquire weapons of mass destruction.

Mr Hoon said that Britain could come within range of missiles fired from the Middle East within the "next few years".

Although Mr Hoon later denied in the Commons that any decision had been taken on military action against Iraq, his comments about the nuclear deterrent will add to Labour MPs' concern that such preparations are being actively considered.

His forthrightness was unexpected, because many Labour MPs are opposed to retaining nuclear weapons.

In the 1980s Labour was unilateralist and Tony Blair was briefly a member of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, although as party leader he has backed the nuclear deterrent.

Mr Hoon's comments follow similar noises from America. Two weeks ago a leaked Pentagon policy document laid out the possibility of a "devastating response" to the use of biological or chemical weapons against American troops. The Prime Minister intends to use the large deployment of British fighting forces to Afghanistan as a political lever to push President Bush into seeking United Nations approval for any military action against Iraq.

He supports Mr Bush in his campaign to remove Iraq's weapons of mass destruction and topple Saddam, but wants to broaden the front.

Downing Street hopes the deployment to Afghanistan of 1,700 British troops, led by 45 Commando the Royal Marines, a unit specialising in Arctic warfare, will strengthen his position when he meets Mr Bush at his Texas ranch after Easter.

"The speed and size of the deployment to Afghanistan is a cheque that Blair will cash in," a source said. "He will tell Bush that he needs to carry the international community with him."

The Foreign Office, in particular, is deeply worried about the impact that a war in Iraq would have on the Middle East. But it appears to have been overruled by Mr Blair.

"The Prime Minister thinks Saddam poses a threat that has to be met with a strong response," a source said. "He is feeling gung-ho."

Whitehall officials said that America first made its request for commandos at the height of Operation Anaconda this month in a "panicky" response to the unexpectedly fierce resistance Taliban and al-Qa'eda fighters put up in the mountains south of Kabul.

The United States suffered its biggest casualties of the war on the opening day of Anaconda, when eight Americans and at least three Afghan allies were killed.

This week America said Anaconda had been successful, but British officials privately spoke of "a near disaster" and said many guerrillas appeared to have slipped away despite American claims to have killed hundreds of the enemy. Dick Cheney, the American vice-president, headed home yesterday after an 11-day tour of the Middle East in which he received little support for an attack on Iraq. Instead he was urged to do more to end the fighting between Israel and the Palestinians.

As Iraq gloated about Mr Cheney's "bitter disappointment", the Turkish prime minister, Bulent Ecevit, said he felt greatly relieved that Washington was not planning imminent action against Iraq.

"This does not mean an operation has been ruled out," he said. "But I do not think there could be military action in the coming few months."

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Washington Times

March 21, 2002

Pg. 1

White House Tells Web Sites To Delete Data

By Bill Sammon, The Washington Times

The White House yesterday ordered all federal agencies to scrub their Web sites of sensitive information on weapons of mass destruction and other data that might be useful to terrorists, The Washington Times has learned. The move alarmed scientists and open-records advocates because the government is withdrawing thousands of documents that have been available to the public for years.

Late yesterday afternoon, White House Chief of Staff Andrew Card sent a memo to the heads of all agencies and executive departments ordering an "immediate re-examination" of all public documents.

The officials were told to report their findings within 90 days to the Office of Homeland Security.

"You and your department or agency have an obligation to safeguard government records regarding weapons of mass destruction," Mr. Card wrote in the memo, a copy of which was obtained by The Times.

"Government information, regardless of its age, that could reasonably be expected to assist in the development or use of weapons of mass destruction, including information about the current locations of stockpiles of nuclear materials that could be exploited for use in such weapons, should not be disclosed inappropriately," he wrote.

But the review goes much further than withdrawing documents on weapons of mass destruction that should have been classified in the first place.

It also includes "sensitive but unclassified information," according to a second memo to agency heads, which was drafted by secrecy officials at the White House and Justice Department.

"The need to protect such sensitive information from inappropriate disclosure should be carefully considered, on a case-by-case basis," said the memo, which was also obtained by The Times.

The memo — which was written by Laura L.S. Kimberly, acting director of the Information Security Oversight Office, as well as Richard L. Huff and Daniel J. Metcalfe, co-directors of the Justice Department's Office of Information and Privacy — told agencies to also consider "the benefits that result from the open and efficient exchange of scientific, technical, and like information."

But some scientific groups were not satisfied by this caveat.

"A concern about terrorism can be used as a pretext for withdrawing all kinds of information that has little or no national security sensitivity," said Steven Aftergood of the Federation of American Scientists. "And that is something we see happening all over the place."

Senior White House officials insisted they have listened to the concerns of scientists and others. But they said that the terrorist attacks of September 11 have forced the administration to strike a more cautious balance between openness and secrecy.

"We're very mindful of not overstepping," said one official who spoke on the condition of anonymity. "All of us use the word 'balance,' and the point of the debate is how we define that. But we think we have hit it right."

Another White House official said the administration's review of sensitive information is based on the expectation "that good judgment be applied and that [information] not just be withdrawn wholesale."

The officials gave several hypothetical examples of information that would be withdrawn from public access. These include:

- Documents on "dual use" nuclear materials, such as spent fuel rods from electric power plants, that could be helpful in converting those materials to weapons.
- Information on heating and air conditioning systems that might help terrorists spread anthrax through public buildings.
- Computer maintenance data that might aid hackers in stopping the disbursement of Social Security checks.

"There was information that was on different Web sites that was actually being made available for sale that really shouldn't have been out there," one official said.

"For instance, there was a classified report that was generated in the '50s, and declassified in the '70s, that talked about how to build a biotoxin factory, and of course that was removed," the source added. "Information that points to specific vulnerabilities at nuclear power-plant reactors or subway stations, for instance, would also be removed."

Gary Bass, executive director of OMB Watch, which advocates greater access to government information, said there is nothing wrong with protecting national security. But he questioned the lockdown of "sensitive but unclassified" data.

"I'm overwhelmed," he said when told of the White House memos. "Nothing I'm familiar with in the law allows the executive branch to create a whole new category called 'sensitive but unclassified.'"

Mr. Bass said he was "troubled" by the administration's "precipitous" steps toward government secrecy in the wake of September 11.

"There's an erosion that's occurring to our basic framework of openness," he said. "We are moving very rapidly to a shift from basic democratic principles of right-to-know to one that is based on a need to know."

"That will have major, major reverberations for our democratic processes," he said. "It will mean that the judgment is placed on the government to determine whether you do have a need to know. And you have to justify it each and every time."

Mr. Aftergood said the government has already pulled more than 6,000 documents from Web sites, including some that have no national security implications. For example, the Pentagon has withdrawn evaluation reports on procurement programs.

"This is not something that a terrorist could use in any way," he said. "But it is enormously useful for both congressional and public oversight of many large programs."

Mr. Aftergood called the "sensitive but unclassified" category "worrisome."

"It's potentially a catchall and it could be an invitation to abuse," he said.

"Because it is not defined, it could be used to justify the withholding of almost anything," he said. "If it is left to the discretion of the individual agencies, they will abuse that discretion."

The White House disagreed.

"We're asking for agencies to use a certain amount of judgment; we think that's what Americans would want," one official said. "All of these competing concerns have to be weighed very carefully."

"But there's a wholesale recognition that we need to take another look at how this kind of information's being handled, so it's done appropriately," the official added.

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DefenseNews.com

March 20, 2002

U.S. Military Leaders Get Blueprint For New Homeland Security Command

By Gail Kaufman, DefenseNews.com Staff Writer

WASHINGTON — The Pentagon's top military official has created the blueprint for the establishment of a Homeland Security command, which will begin operations by Oct. 1.

In a memo containing his so-called terms of reference that will guide creation of the command, Air Force Gen. Richard Myers, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, told the nation's top military leaders the new U.S. Northern Command headquarters should be in the Washington vicinity and maintain responsibility for military efforts related to homeland security throughout the continental United States, Canada, Mexico and surrounding waters.

Myers has ordered a U.S. Northern Command implementation team by the end of March to provide a draft implementation plan to each service chief and combatant commands for their review. The plan should identify a specific location for the command's headquarters. Myers and the service chiefs also will nominate a commander and deputy commander for the new command within the month, Myers said in the March 7 memo. DefenseNews.com obtained a copy of the memo March 20

The team, led by representatives from U.S. Joint Forces Command Norfolk, Va., and the North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD), Colorado Springs, Colo., also is responsible for identifying budget requirements, including potential 2003 defense supplemental funding, Myers said. The team also will include representatives from the military services, National Guard and Reserves, and combatant commands.

"In the near future, [President George W. Bush] is expected to sign the Unified Command Plan (UCP) creating a new combatant command responsible for homeland security," Myers said. The "terms of reference are intended to guide and facilitate implementation of the UCP changes and assist in the coordination of efforts."

The implementation team will identify missions and responsibilities, determine the nature of subordinate command elements, design the command architecture and develop force structure requirements, the memo said.

Under Myers' guidance, NORAD will transfer all command and functional responsibilities, including Operation Noble Eagle — the domestic war on terror — to Northern Command by Oct 1. The new command also will be tasked with defense planning and theater security cooperation responsibilities for nations in its area of responsibility. However, U.S. Southern Command, Miami, Fla., will continue to be responsible for contingency planning, operations, security and force protection for the islands of Cuba, Bahamas, British Virgin Islands, Turks and Caicos. In April, the planning team should provide its final plan to the Joint Staff and services for final coordination and recommend forces to the Joint Staff for assignment and apportionment, the memo said. The following month, the team should submit a coordinated implementation plan through the Joint Chiefs to Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld for approval.

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Washington Post

March 21, 2002

Pg. B3

Carderock Area Eyed As WWI Chemical Test Site

By Steve Vogel, Washington Post Staff Writer

Maryland environmental officials and the U.S. military are looking for a site along MacArthur Boulevard in Montgomery County where chemical weapons may have been tested during World War I, officials said yesterday. The Navy is investigating whether the grounds of what is now the Carderock Division of the Naval Surface Warfare Center in Bethesda were used for chemical weapons testing, installation officials said yesterday.

Officials said that information about the tests remains unverified and that it is too soon to say what environmental effects, if any, would still linger in the ground from open-air tests conducted more than 80 years ago. "We're talking about something that happened a long time ago," said John Verrico, spokesman for the Maryland Department of the Environment.

The testing was associated with the American University Experimental Station, an Army facility that conducted chemical weapons research in an effort to prepare U.S. troops for the poisonous gases used in World War I trench warfare.

While most of the testing took place on what is now American University and the surrounding Spring Valley neighborhood in Northwest Washington, records indicate that some testing took place at other sites in the region, including what was called the Conduit Road Field Test Site.

An old Army map indicates the site was somewhere along an east-west stretch of what is now MacArthur Boulevard, officials said. The investigation is focusing on Carderock, Verrico said. But another government official said the site could be anywhere along a roughly four-mile stretch of MacArthur Boulevard between Cabin John Parkway and Brickyard Road.

Howard A. Denis (R), a Montgomery County Council member who represents the area, said yesterday he is seeking more information on the matter from federal and county officials. "It's a matter of concern, and it has to be fully explored," said Denis.

Records show that in 1918, the Army tested diphenyl chloroarsine at the Conduit Road site, according to a government official. The toxic chemical had been used the previous year on the European battlefields by the German army. The tests created a plume that traveled 800 yards and caused physical distress for soldiers wearing protective gas masks, the records show.

The current inquiry came after the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency informed Maryland environmental officials last month about the records of the testing. The state agency, in turn, asked the Navy to conduct a site history review at Carderock.

Capt. Steven Petri, the commander of Carderock, said in a statement that he was concerned about the issue.

"I want to make sure we follow every reasonable lead determining if the Conduit Road Test Site was here or not; and keeping our employees and neighbors informed of our findings," Petri said.

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Washington Times

March 21, 2002

Pg. 13

U.S. Not To Certify N. Korea's Nuclear Record

By Nicholas Kravlev, The Washington Times

President Bush has decided not to certify North Korea's compliance with a 1994 nuclear agreement — a first for the United States, which had previously issued the certification each year before sending fuel oil to Pyongyang.

Mr. Bush will waive certification on national security grounds, a move that will still allow the United States to ship 500,000 tons of fuel this year to the energy-starved nation, White House officials said.

In the 1994 deal, known as the Agreed Framework, the United States agreed to provide North Korea with two modern atomic power plants and yearly shipments of fuel oil until the plants were operating. In exchange, North Korea froze its suspected nuclear weapons program.

White House officials insisted that the decision doesn't mean the United States has evidence that North Korea is violating the agreement — only that America does not have enough information to make a judgement.

"It's a strong message to North Korea that they need to comply with their international obligations and agreements," White House Press Secretary Ari Fleischer told reporters.

The North has been allowing International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) inspectors to monitor the construction site.

But Washington is concerned that Pyongyang hasn't provided a record of plutonium it had previously extracted from a now-mothballed reactor, and that it may be hiding nuclear bomb-making materials. Plutonium is the primary fuel needed to make atom bombs.

"There is no question the president has concerns," Mr. Fleischer said. "We have not been provided with sufficient information by the North Koreans and concerns remain about their compliance with the Agreed Framework."

At the State Department, spokesman Richard Boucher said the fact that the United States will send \$95 million worth of fuel oil to North Korea and will continue to support the reactors' construction is "an indication of our intention to go ahead with the program this year ... and to abide by the Agreed Framework as long as North Korea does so as well."

Mr. Boucher said that Secretary of State Colin L. Powell had recommended that Mr. Bush opt for a national-security waiver instead of formally certifying compliance.

"We have looked at the various areas of certification in the agreement, and we have found that we could not certify them," he told reporters.

The president's decision comes less than two months after he branded North Korea, along with Iran and Iraq, as part of an "axis of evil" in his State of the Union address.

Since then, the administration has repeatedly said it is ready to talk to the Stalinist state "anytime, any place, without preconditions." However, except for routine meetings with North Korean officials at the United Nations in New York, no substantive dialogue has taken place.

Current and former U.S. officials said yesterday that Mr. Bush was in a difficult political position, trying to negotiate a compromise among those lawmakers who generally favor cooperation with Pyongyang and those who are suspicious of the deal.

The agreement was adopted after a crisis propelled by the North's withdrawal from the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

Wendy Sherman, the Clinton administration's top official on North Korea, praised Mr. Bush yesterday for allowing the fuel oil shipments to continue, but questioned the effectiveness of the signal he was sending Pyongyang.

"This is not the best way to send a message," she said. "The North Koreans are not likely to hear it in nuances and subtleties."

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New York Times

March 21, 2002

Chemical Arms Official Rejects A U.S. Call To Resign

By The Associated Press

THE HAGUE, March 20 — The director of the international organization that monitors chemical weapons stocks rejected an American demand for his resignation today and accused Washington of threatening his organization's independence.

The State Department spokesman, Richard A. Boucher, said on Tuesday that the 145-nation Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons was "beset by a number of problems that have resulted in a loss of confidence in the current director."

He accused the director, José Bustani, of "ill-considered initiatives" at the organization, which is based in the Netherlands.

Mr. Bustani said the United States had never approached him directly with complaints, but had circulated them to other nations in a campaign to oust him. "The very principle which is at the foundation of the work of every international organization, its independence and that of its chief executive officer, is being jeopardized," he said.

The American criticism of Mr. Bustani came less than a year after Secretary of State Colin L. Powell praised him for his leadership in a personal letter.

Describing the criticism as "lean on specifics," Mr. Bustani's special assistant, Gordon Vachon, said there were no plans for a resignation.

"The director general is very surprised by the charges leveled at him by the United States, which came pretty much without warning," Mr. Vachon said.

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U.S. Air Force Eyes Billions In Homeland Initiatives

Improved Domestic Base Security, More Transport Planes on Task List

By Gail Kaufman, Washington

The U.S. Air Force's new Homeland Security Directorate has compiled a preliminary list of two dozen domestic security initiatives that are likely to cost billions of dollars.

Among the most costly steps on the list are improving security at more than 100 domestic Air Force installations and possibly purchasing more transport planes, Air Force officials said.

"Most of our money will be spent on defense of installations," a senior Air Force official told Defense News Mar. 12.

For example, some bases are protected only by chainlink fencing, and the bases that are located near major thoroughfares must have stronger barriers to prevent terrorists from driving a truck bomb onto the flight line, the official said. The list must still be reviewed by major Air Force commands and a Homeland Security task force, which was created in February by Gen. John Jumper, Air Force chief of staff.

The commands will use the list to plan the 2004-09 budgets. The Homeland Security task force is one of seven Air Staff groups compiling lists of what the service will need to fulfill its future operational responsibilities, both foreign and domestic. Air Force officials are reluctant to discuss details or related costs of the Homeland Security Directorate's list until a final version is available.

The list is currently being edited by 15 general officers from the Air and Space operation directorates who met Mar. 14 to complete the preliminary list, which will be distributed to other Air Force organizations. Air Force Maj. Gen. Jeffrey Musfeldt, acting director of the new Homeland Security directorate, led the steering group. The group will submit the list to the service's major commands April 1.

Musfeldt serves as the mobilization assistant to the deputy chief of staff for Air and Space Operations.

Air Force Brig. Gen. David Clary becomes head of the Homeland Security directorate April 1. The directorate was established to work with the Pentagon's new Homeland Security organization, which will begin operating June 30. Army Secretary Thomas White is currently interim executive agent for such matters.

New Priorities, New Costs New homeland security requirements that stem from the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11 present the Air Force with new priorities and related costs.

Considerable public attention has been directed on the service's \$100,000-a-month Combat Air Patrol missions, which send fighters aloft to be ready to shoot down hijacked commercial airliners over domestic soil.

The service long has been involved in response to natural disasters like hurricanes or floods. But the Air Force is improving measures to deal with, for example, the possibility of a nuclear, chemical or biological attack.

"God never introduced radiation or infectious disease following a tornado," the senior Air Force official said. The number of transport planes the service needs for natural disasters "is fairly minimal," the official said.

But preparing for a nuclear or biological attack involves "scenarios of tens of thousands of casualties. Are we prepared to do that on the larger scale?" the official asked. Service officials want to avoid taking on new missions that don't relate to combat roles.

"In this business [of domestic disaster response] we've always been in a supporting role," another Air Force official said. But there are ways the Air Force can help respond to terrorist attacks.

The service's medical evacuation teams, trained to extract patients from combat environments and provide emergency care aboard flying ambulances. Most evacuation planes are C-9As, but the Air Force can also transport patients on C-17, C-130s and C-141, an Air Force aeromedical official at Scott Air Force Base, Ill. said.

They were not created for domestic missions, but that could change. In the aftermath of terrorist attacks, they "could be very important," the official said.

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Army: No Chemical Hazard At McClellan

By Nathan Solheim, Star Staff Writer

The Army has found no chemical agent at 33 sites throughout Fort McClellan once used as chemical training sites, an internal investigation has concluded.

Based on the findings, the Army is recommending no further action at McClellan with regard to chemical warfare materials, or chemical agents.

Results of the investigation were presented to the public at a meeting Tuesday night at the Anniston City Meeting Center. Officials from the Army's transition force, the Base Re-Alignment and Closure Commission and the Army Corps of Engineers participated in the meeting.

"Based on looking at the places that were most likely to have (chemical agents), I would say with a high level of confidence that there are not chemical agents on the post," said Ronald Levy, environmental coordinator for the Base Re-Alignment and Closure Commission.

Army contractors chose the sites based on historical records from the installation and interviews with military personnel who served there.

They eliminated some sites based on their review of installation records, but tested 19 sites around the former fort for chemical agents including mustard gas, Sarin gas, nerve agent, blister agent and psychoactive compound.

Some sites that were tested are near such landmarks as Buckner Circle, the Auburn Canine Detection Training Center and Anniston's Youth Sports Complex.

Workers found no contamination from chemical agents in any of the 19 sites.

However, a complete sweep of the fort for chemical agents was not performed, because the technology is not available to detect chemical agents buried beneath the surface.

"We do feel from all of our studies, we captured all the sites that were used for chemical training," Levy said.

The Army isn't totally free of cleaning up the fort yet.

Should Army officials find a chemical agent that could be traced to the Army, the Army would be responsible for cleaning it up, officials said.

"If there was something found subsequent to transfer, our deed says the Army will come back and address the issue," Levy said. "It's always our responsibility to clean up contaminants associated with Army activity."

The Army's findings were met with a degree of skepticism from Charles Oxley, an Anniston resident who served seven years at Fort McClellan.

"They're looking at it as spills," Oxley said. "I'm looking at it as wars. Do you know how much stuff the Army gets rid of after a war? I'm not overly impressed. These are 33 sites out of 50 years of the Army."

Oxley said Army records are lacking because there's no accounting for the illegal dumping of chemical agents or materials by soldiers, or chemical agent sites from years ago.

The Army will continue studying the former fort's property and other public hearings will be held as part of upcoming Engineering Evaluation/Cost Analysis investigations.

Anniston Mayor Chip Howell said he saw nothing at the public hearing that made him uncomfortable.

"I think they've identified those sites and were methodical in their testing," Howell said. "It doesn't mean they're walking away; it just means no further action on the chemical sites. There's still unexploded ordnance and other metals that are still on the table."

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Oral Drug Is Developed To Fight Smallpox Virus

By David Brown

Washington Post Staff Writer

Wednesday, March 20, 2002; Page A02

A researcher has developed an oral drug that appears to be active against smallpox virus, the most dreaded potential agent of biological terrorism.

The drug is an altered form of an antiviral medicine that now must be given intravenously. A pill would make large-scale treatment possible in the event smallpox, which was eradicated in 1977, reappears.

"We're very excited about the findings," said James Le Duc, acting director of viral diseases at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, which is helping to coordinate research against bioterror agents. "We can start to strategize about how we might use an oral drug."

The new compound, hexadecyloxypropyl-cidofovir (HDP-CDV), appears to be more effective than the intravenous form, cidofovir, because cells absorb it more readily. It inhibits smallpox virus replication at concentrations one-hundredth of what is required when the intravenous form is used.

The new formulation was developed by Karl Y. Hostetler, a physician and pharmacology researcher at the Veterans Affairs Medical Center in San Diego. He is to present his research today at the 15th International Conference on Antiviral Research in Prague.

HDP-CDV has also been tested in mice suffering from a disease similar to smallpox, and appears to be highly effective, according to animal studies being presented at the conference.

In that work, John W. Huggins of the Army's medical laboratories at Fort Detrick, Md., infected mice with cowpox virus. The animals were then given HDP-CDV for five days. All survived.

He and his collaborators also tried delaying regular intravenous cidofovir treatment after infection, and found that if the drug was started in the first four days, all animals could be saved. Untreated, mice die of the infection eight or nine days after inhaling the virus.

No species other than human beings gets smallpox, so it is difficult to test drugs against the virus in living organisms. The course of smallpox in people, however, is longer than the course of cowpox in mice, with rash appearing about two weeks after infection, and death, when it occurs, a week or two after that.

This suggests that HDP-CDV, theoretically at least, would have time to abort the infection if given soon after exposure. The compound will have to be tested against other pox viruses in other species, and go through the usual steps for approval by the Food and Drug Administration, before it could be available as a human drug.

"We are very, very early in a very long process," Le Duc said.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A52959-2002Mar19.html>

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InsideDefense.com

March 21, 2002

In Shrinking Nuclear Arsenal, DoD's Major Changes Will Come First

The Defense Department plans to retire about 2,000 nuclear warheads between fiscal years 2007 and 2012 without making major force structure changes like those coming in the next five years, according to DOD officials and documents. By FY-07, major segments of the ICBM, submarine, and bomber fleets will be retired from nuclear service, but no further delivery system cuts are planned.

The most dramatic changes to the U.S. nuclear inventory are slated to occur over the next five years through Peacekeeper (MX) ICBM retirements and by converting four of the Navy's 18 Trident missile submarines to conventional-weapons platforms. Further, to meet the goal of 2,200 fewer warheads by FY-07, B-1 bombers will no longer be maintained for possible nuclear re-certification and Minuteman III ICBMs will continue to "download" from three warheads per missile to one.

Through these moves, U.S. nuclear totals will shrink from 6,000 warheads today to 3,800 by fiscal year 2007, Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Policy J.D. Crouch said when announcing the unclassified findings of the Nuclear Posture review at a Pentagon briefing earlier this year.

But how the Pentagon plans to get from 3,800 warheads to as few as 1,700 warheads by FY-12 remains undefined. The review calls for nuclear forces in 2012 to be hosted by 14 Ohio-class Trident missile submarines (with two in overhaul at all times); 500 Minuteman III ICBMs; and 76 B-52 and 21 B-2 bombers. Few other details are available. Cuts to warhead inventories will be identified through periodic reviews, Crouch said, with final decisions coming in later years.

The second set of reductions is possible through two means, according to excerpts of the classified review obtained by the defense information Web site Globalsecurity.org.

First, the number of weapons carried by individual Trident missiles, which currently hold five nuclear warheads apiece, could be reduced.

The other route to cuts is to lower "the number of operationally deployed weapons . . . available for loading at operational bomber bases," the review reads. Minuteman missiles, once they reach the level of one warhead apiece, would not be touched.

The Pentagon plans to meet all START I arms control requirements, but will count warheads and not delivery systems in the future, officials said. Further cuts will not be by treaty-imposed restrictions, Crouch said at the Jan. 9 briefing. This leaves the option open in the future to modify the nuclear force as the United States sees fit.

DOD expressly retains this option in the nuclear review. "A need may arise to modify, upgrade or replace portions of the extant nuclear force or develop concepts for follow-on nuclear weapons better suited [to] the nation's needs," the review reads.

"It is unlikely that a reduced version of the Cold War nuclear arsenal will be precisely the nuclear force the [United States] will require in 2012 and beyond," it adds.

While a road map to future force levels is not laid out, details about nuclear delivery systems are outlined in the review. Planning is going on now for next-generation missiles, bombers and submarines that will not enter service for as much as 40 years, the review shows.

President Bush first announced his intent to cut nuclear forces last May. "I'm committed to achieving a credible deterrent with the lowest possible number of nuclear weapons consistent with our national security needs, including our obligations to our allies," he said then. "My goal is to move quickly to reduce nuclear forces. The United States will lead by example to achieve our interests and the interests for peace in the world."

-- **Adam J. Hebert**

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Moscow Times

March 22, 2002

Pg. 3

Anthrax Laboratory Fighting For Power

By Oksana Yablokova, Staff Writer

Moscow utility Mosenergo is threatening to cut electricity to a scientific research center that has not paid its bill in more than three years.

The problem for Mosenergo, and the research center's trump card, is that it stores strains of the most deadly diseases known to mankind.

Located in Obolensk some 90 kilometers to the south of Moscow, the State Center for Applied Microbiology has not paid the utility since October 1998 and now owes 43.5 million rubles (\$1.4 million), Mosenergo spokeswoman Yulia Shagelman said Thursday.

But the center's head, Nikolai Urakov, said he cannot pay the energy bill because the funding he gets from the state budget is only 4 percent of what he needs and is only enough to maintain the main building where the laboratories are located.

The center has a "museum of strains" of anthrax, small pox and other diseases, which must be stored at certain temperatures. If the center is left without electricity, some rare strains could be lost and years of research could be wasted, Urakov said Thursday by telephone.

The research his center does is too important to pull the plug on, Urakov said. "We work to protect the country from a biological threat that has become real as never before. Nevertheless, we are being put in a position in which we can become the source of this threat," he said.

Uraikov declined to elaborate on the potential dangers, but in interviews to local newspapers he has said the effects of losing electricity in the laboratories were unpredictable.

The two sides have been involved in a bitter dispute for two years.

Mosenergo has been gradually reducing electricity supplies to the center, but has never cut off power completely, Shagelman said.

But Mosenergo's patience seems to have run out. It is threatening to cut off power on Tuesday if the debt problem is not resolved.

"We have been sending warnings to them regularly, while they have repeatedly refused to let our inspectors in," Shagelman said.

"They constantly appeal to the fact that they are important and invaluable, but it does not change anything.

Mosenergo has no choice but to claim the debt."

To cut power to the research center, Mosenergo's technicians need to be given access to the complex, Shagelman said. They have been blocked on previous attempts.

Utilities are often the last to be paid by poorly funded state institutions, which use their limited funds to run basic operations and pay staff, believing they are too important to be left without power.

The research center, which has 1,120 employees, receives some funding from U.S. grants, but this money cannot be used for paying utility bills, Urakov said.

He said the center plans to sell some of its property within the next month and pay the debt, but Mosenergo refuses to wait.

Shagelman, however, said that Mosenergo has repeatedly proposed discussing possible ways to restructure the debt, but the center has been unresponsive.

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Moscow Times

March 22, 2002

Pg. 3

Nuclear Weapons Pact Nears Approval

By The Associated Press

GENEVA -- Top Russian and U.S. arms negotiators began a two-day round of talks Thursday aimed at agreeing on a new reduction in the two countries' nuclear arsenals, officials said.

Deputy Foreign Minister Grigory Mamedov and U.S. Undersecretary of State John Bolton could wrap up the formal agreement in the two days of talks so it is ready for the U.S.-Russian summit meeting in May, officials said.

The talks in Geneva are to flesh out an agreement reached between Presidents George W. Bush and Vladimir Putin in December.

Bush has agreed to cut U.S. long-range nuclear warheads to between 1,700 to 2,200 from the current 6,000 allowed each country under START I. Putin has said Russia could go as low as 1,500 warheads.

Powell said last week that the agreement would be about three pages long and would be legally binding.

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Washington Post

March 22, 2002

Pg. 3

U.S. Imposes New Curbs On Weapons Data

Secrecy Watchdogs Warn Of Rule's Broader Uses

By Associated Press

The White House has placed new controls on government information about weapons of mass destruction and is telling agencies to clear Web sites of even unclassified data that could help terrorists.

"The wonder of the Web is that it makes it so easy to access information from remote areas of the world," said Ari Fleischer, White House press secretary. "If you're sitting in Afghanistan, you can access this. Our enemies are those who would use our technology against us. Look at September 11."

Advocates of government openness agree that information about nuclear, biological, radiological and chemical weapons should be kept out of the hands of would-be attackers. They worry, however, that the guidelines released yesterday could be used to withhold an array of other material.

Steven Aftergood, who directs the Federation of American Scientists' government secrecy project, said cookbook-type material about weapons of mass destruction should be classified, or reclassified if it has been released before.

But the technology used in weapons of mass destruction also can be used to advance medical treatment, develop vaccines, facilitate cleanups and aid other emergency preparedness, he said.

"It's important to distinguish carefully," he said.

In a memo, White House Chief of Staff Andrew H. Card Jr. ordered federal agencies and departments to review their record management procedures and public documents and report within 90 days to the Office of Homeland Security.

An accompanying memo from the Information Security Oversight Office directed agencies to classify or reclassify information that could help someone develop or use weapons of mass destruction. The memo also told agencies to control data that is not classified but contains sensitive information.

It is this loosely written category -- sensitive but unclassified information -- that raises concerns among advocates for government openness.

"It's going to prompt a far-reaching review, a scrubbing, of not just Web sites, but public reading rooms, as well as place a new layer of scrutiny on the Freedom of Information Act," Aftergood said.

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