#178
14 June 2002

USAF COUNTERPROLIFERATION CENTER

CPC OUTREACH JOURNAL

Air University
Air War College
Maxwell AFB, Alabama

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11 June 2002

U.S. Is Working to Stop Proliferation of Unmanned Air Vehicles

State Dept. official outlines efforts at Senate hearing June 11

The United States has broadened and strengthened its efforts, over the past 15 years, to deal with threats stemming from the proliferation of unmanned air vehicles (UAVs), but "we will need to keep working hard to keep pace with the threat," a key State Department nonproliferation official says.

Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary for Nonproliferation Vann Van Diepen told a Senate subcommittee June 11 that UAVs are potential delivery systems for weapons of mass destruction, and "there is a potential for terrorist groups to produce or acquire small UAVs and use them for CBW (chemical and biological weapons) delivery."

He said the United States has attempted to use aggressively "a broad spectrum of measures" to affect various aspects of the UAV proliferation threat, including the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, U.S. and multilateral export controls, the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) guidelines, sanctions against foreign governments involved in proliferation activity, military and intelligence capabilities, and diplomacy.

"Energetic U.S. use of all of these tools, and intensive cooperation with our friends and allies, have had a positive impact in impeding the UAV proliferation threat," he said before the Senate Governmental Affairs subcommittee on international security, proliferation and federal services.

But Van Diepen warned that "our adversaries are determined," and the increasing reliance on UAVs worldwide (including in civilian roles) and the dual-use nature of much UAV technology "will make our job more difficult in the future."

Following is the prepared text of Van Diepen's testimony:

Testimony of Vann Van Diepen

Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Nonproliferation

Provided to the Senate Governmental Affairs Subcommittee on International Security, Proliferation and Federal Services

June 11, 2002

Mr. Chairman, Senator Cochran, and Members of the Committee:

It is my privilege to testify before you on behalf of the State Department on the important subject of the proliferation implications of cruise missiles and unmanned air vehicles (UAVs). These systems provide important capabilities to the U.S. and its friends and allies, and in the hands of our adversaries can pose substantial threats. I will discuss briefly the threat potential from the proliferation of cruise missiles and UAVs, and then describe the steps that the U.S. and our nonproliferation partners have been taking to impede that threat.

What are UAVs?

"Unmanned air vehicles" is the term used in the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) to refer to unmanned systems that fly within the atmosphere and are not rocket-propelled. Different terms may be used in other contexts, but for MTCR purposes this term includes cruise missiles, as well as target drones, reconnaissance drones, and other forms of UAVs, be they military or civilian, armed or unarmed. UAVs can be as large as a jetliner or as small as a model airplane, can be jet or propeller driven; there are even concepts for guided, unmanned blimps that would be UAVs.

Uses of UAVs

UAVs have been in military service since at least the use of the V-1 cruise missile and target drones in World War II. Since then, their use has grown dramatically in land-attack (in ground-, sea-, and air-launched modes), reconnaissance, as targets, and even in some civilian applications such as pipeline inspection and crop-dusting. The U.S. military is at the cutting edge, with nuclear-armed cruise missiles in the inventory for over 20 years, and extensive use of conventionally armed cruise missiles and of reconnaissance UAVs in the Gulf War and most of our subsequent military engagements. As UAVs become more capable (as in the recent use of armed UAVs in Afghanistan), they are taking on more missions that have been exclusively the province of manned aircraft; this is expected to grow in the future, with the further development of so called Unmanned Combat Air Vehicles (UCAVs).

The UAV proliferation threat

These same attributes of UAVs that are so useful for the U.S. military -- for example, the ability to strike targets with precision and substantial protection from interception and to collect real-time intelligence -- make UAVs in the hands of our adversaries a threat to us and to our friends and allies. Moreover, UAVs are potential delivery systems for weapons of mass destruction (WMD), and indeed are ideally suited for the delivery of chemical and biological weapons (CBW) given UAVs' ability to disseminate aerosols in the right places at the right altitudes. And while,

thus far, the primary concern for adversary use of WMD-armed UAVs has been with nation-states -- such as Iraq, which has been converting L-29 trainer aircraft to UAVs for probable CBW use -- there is a potential for terrorist groups to produce or acquire small UAVs and use them for CBW delivery.

Dealing with the UAV proliferation threat

U.S. efforts to impede threats stemming from the proliferation of UAVs and their technology encompass a broad spectrum of measures. As in other nonproliferation areas, the U.S. attempts to use aggressively all of these tools to affect various aspects of the UAV proliferation threat.

-- **Norms:** The Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty prohibits the acquisition of nuclear weapons by non-nuclear-weapon states, and the Biological Weapons Convention and Chemical Weapons Convention prohibit the acquisition of CBW. This helps dissuade new countries from getting into the WMD (and thus, WMD-delivery) business, impedes and de-legitimizes WMD proliferation, and supports the other measures the U.S. takes to fight proliferation. In addition, the MTCR Guidelines serve as a de facto norm against exports in support of delivery UAVs.

-- **Export controls:** U.S. and multilateral export controls help deny proliferators access to the Western technology (the best technology) that might be misused to develop WMD delivery systems, making adversary UAV programs slower, more costly, and less effective and reliable.

MTCR Category I. The MTCR from its inception in 1987 subjected exports of UAVs inherently capable of delivering a payload of at least 500 kg to a range of at least 300 km (so-called "Category I" or "MTCR-class" UAVs) and their directly associated technology to an unconditional "strong presumption of denial." Exports of complete guidance sets and warhead safing/arming/fuzing/firing subsystems useable in such UAVs, and their directly associated technology, also are subject to a "strong presumption of denial." Exports of the specially designed production facilities for Category I UAVs and their complete subsystems, and the technology directly associated with such facilities, are prohibited. (Of course, these strictures apply only to MTCR members and unilateral adherents.)

MTCR Category II. Key components and materials useable in producing MTCR-class UAVs -- such as small, fuel-efficient jet engines; structural composites and their production equipment; various types of avionics, guidance, and flight control systems; telemetry and ground support equipment; various test equipment; and stealth technology -- are controlled as MTCR Category II items. MTCR countries review exports of such items on a case-by-case basis against specified nonproliferation criteria, and such exports are subject to a "strong presumption of denial" if judged to be intended for use in WMD delivery. In 1994, additional UAVs -- those not captured under Category I, but inherently capable of a 300 km range regardless of payload -- were added Category II MTCR controls.

Wassenaar. In addition to being controlled under the MTCR, military UAVs and their components are controlled under the Wassenaar Arrangement -- the nonproliferation regime for conventional arms and associated dual-use items. Wassenaar also requires controls on the export of a wide range of materials and equipment useful in the production of UAVs, beyond those controlled by the MTCR.

Catch-all controls. Moreover, there are a large number of relevant items that are not controlled under the MTCR or Wassenaar, mostly because of their broad civil uses (e.g., in manned aircraft). On a national basis, the U.S. and most other members of the nonproliferation regimes have enacted "catch-all" controls to cover exports of such items when an exporter knows or is informed by his government that they are intended for use in WMD programs (including WMD delivery).

Non-regime suppliers. The MTCR Guidelines encourage all countries to unilaterally abide by ("adhere to") the Guidelines. To the extent non-MTCR countries apply similar export controls, proliferators' efforts to obtain items for their UAV programs are further complicated. (Israel and several Central and Eastern European countries have adhered to the MTCR Guidelines.) The U.S. has a worldwide program of export control assistance -- focused on Central and Eastern Europe and the Newly Independent States, but also operating in East Asia, the Middle East, and South Asia -- to help countries enact regime-compatible export control laws and regulations, to erect effective interagency export licensing systems, and to improve enforcement.

-- **Regimes:** In addition to its role as a de facto norm -- and its export controls covering UAVs down to a range/payload capability of 300 km/0 kg, as well as key items of equipment and technology -- the MTCR also serves as a forum where Partner (member) countries can share information and concerns, and coordinate their national missile nonproliferation efforts. UAVs have taken on increasing prominence in the MTCR over the past several years, including specific attention in the annual Information Exchanges during MTCR Plenary meetings.

-- **Interdiction:** The U.S. has a longstanding, day-to-day program of identifying potential exports of proliferation concern (including those related to UAVs) and working with other countries to investigate and, if warranted, stop such exports from proceeding. While the details of these activities are classified, they are an important contributor to achieving our nonproliferation objectives.

-- **Sanctions:** A variety of U.S. domestic laws require sanctions against foreign governments or (usually) entities involved in proliferation activities, including certain activities related to UAVs. The threat of sanctions can act as a deterrent to proliferation activity, and in some cases the diplomacy surrounding sanctions or waivers can result in positive nonproliferation progress.
The missile sanctions law (amendments to the Arms Export Control Act and Export Administration Act, codified in the National Defense Authorization Act for FY 1991) requires sanctions against foreign persons knowingly involved in the trade of MTCR-controlled items that contribute to MTCR-class missile programs (including UAV programs) in countries that are not "MTCR adherents" as defined in the law. As a result of one such sanctions case, China committed in October 1994 not to export ground-to-ground MTCR-class missiles (including UAVs of this type); as far as we are aware, China has abided by this pledge.
The Iran-Iraq Nonproliferation Act requires sanctions against foreign governments or persons that contribute knowingly and materially to efforts by Iran or Iraq to acquire destabilizing numbers and types of advanced conventional weapons (which include such cruise missiles as the President determines destabilize the military balance or enhance offensive capabilities in destabilizing ways).
Lethal Military Equipment (LME) sanctions (contained in annual Foreign Relations Authorization Acts and in the Foreign Assistance Act) require sanctions against governments that provide LME (which would include cruise missiles) to countries on the U.S. terrorist list (Cuba, Iran, Iraq, Libya, North Korea, Syria, Sudan).
The Iran Nonproliferation Act provides for possible sanctions against foreign persons that export to Iran items on multilateral export control lists (including the UAV-relevant items on the MTCR and Wassenaar lists).
-- **Military capabilities:** Our efforts and those of our friends and allies to defend against adversary UAVs and the WMD they might deliver, as well as to be able, if necessary, to destroy adversary UAV holdings and to retaliate against UAV and UAV-WMD use, help to deter use of UAVs against us and to make UAVs a less attractive option for our adversaries to pursue.
-- **Intelligence capabilities:** Good intelligence is central to all aspects of nonproliferation. The U.S. Intelligence Community has done a very good job in building awareness within the Policy Community of the UAV threat, and in supporting U.S. efforts to sensitize other countries. Intelligence liaison relationships also are important means of facilitating interdictions and of assisting other countries' export control enforcement.
-- **Diplomacy:** All of the above tools are enabled by active U.S. diplomacy. We are a leading member of the WMD treaties and the nonproliferation regimes and have worked actively to promote export controls and to obtain behavior changes in sanctions cases. Even military and intelligence capabilities require coalitions, access, overflights, etc., which are made possible by diplomacy. In addition, we can sometimes use diplomacy directly as a nonproliferation tool, independent of the others, to promote good behavior and dissuade irresponsible behavior.
Energetic U.S. use of all of these tools, and intensive cooperation with our friends and allies, have had a positive impact in impeding the UAV proliferation threat. Adversaries' efforts to acquire UAVs have been complicated, and made more time-consuming and expensive. To the extent they have been able to acquire UAVs, our adversaries have had to settle for systems that are less effective and less reliable than if our nonproliferation efforts had not existed.

Conclusion

Just as they provide real opportunities for U.S. and allied militaries, UAVs also provide opportunities for our adversaries to threaten us. Dealing with that threat has been a part of U.S. nonproliferation efforts for over 15 years, and we have been strengthening our ability to impede and cope with it -- broadening MTCR export controls, adding "catch-all" controls, improving our military and intelligence capabilities. But we will need to keep working hard to keep pace with the threat, not only because our adversaries are determined, but because the increasing reliance on UAVs worldwide (including in civilian roles) and the dual-use nature of much UAV technology will make our job more difficult in the future.
http://www.usinfo.state.gov/topical/pol/arms/02061103.htm

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Monkeypox could be used as bioweapon

By Steve Mitchell
UPI Medical Correspondent
From the Science & Technology Desk

Published 6/9/2002 4:45 AM
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The Russians worked with monkeypox virus, a close cousin to smallpox, in their bioweapons program and it is possible terrorists could use it in a biological attack against the United States, scientists and former United Nations weapons inspectors told United Press International.

Although some biological weapons experts are concerned with the possibility of terrorists using another smallpox-related virus called camelpox, which Iraq has admitted to researching, Mark Buller, a biologist at Saint Louis University who conducts research on smallpox vaccines, said he is more concerned about monkeypox.

Buller's concern stems from the fact that monkeypox, unlike camelpox, causes mortality in humans and the incidence of human infection is on the rise in central and western Africa.

In addition, the Russian biowarfare experts are known to have worked with the virus in the Soviet Union's biological weapons program.

The Soviets decided they did not want to work with smallpox by the late 1980's "and there was significant discussion of the possible use of monkeypox as a biological weapon instead of smallpox," Ken Alibek, who was former deputy chief of the Soviet biological weapons program and now resides in the U.S., told UPI.

Monkeypox, which causes symptoms similar to smallpox, can be fatal, but only in the minority of cases, said James LeDuc, director of the division of viral and rickettsial diseases at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta. He said he is "not aware of any cases outside" Africa.

The World Health Organization attributes the increase in monkeypox cases in Africa to the fact that smallpox vaccines, which can protect against monkeypox, are no longer administered.

LeDuc said it is uncertain whether the disease is on the increase, but he noted there appears to have been an outbreak of the disease in Africa about 6 months ago.

The "real fear is that (monkeypox) might be engineered as a bioweapon," said Jonathan Tucker, a former weapons inspector for the United Nations Special Commission who is now with the think tank Monterey Institute in Washington.

Monkeypox is not as contagious as smallpox, but whether it could be or has been modified to be more virulent is unknown. The Soviets were not concerned with contagiousness, Alibek said, because they planned to produce "tons and tons" of the virus -- enough to infect "hundred of thousands of people or even more."

Tucker noted the smallpox vaccine will protect against both monkeypox and camelpox, but Americans do not have access to this vaccine. The CDC, which holds a stockpile of the smallpox vaccine, is currently reconsidering its vaccination strategy and whether to vaccinate everyone or wait until there is an outbreak and try to vaccinate only those exposed.

There are concerns that Russia's smallpox may have been leaked to terrorists, and whether something similar happened with monkeypox is uncertain. Another former U.N. weapons inspector, who requested anonymity, told UPI "There's no confirmation that (monkeypox) leaked out, but the potential exists."

Alibek said he had no idea whether monkeypox had ever been leaked out of the Soviet program. But he noted that from the 1970s until the 1990s, "it was not a problem to get any of the orthopox viruses (smallpox, camelpox and monkeypox)," and many countries had access to them if they wanted them.

Iraq is one of the rogue states that may have obtained access to monkeypox. "We've never ever gotten to the bottom of their involvement with camelpox, whether they were really trying to weaponize it or it was a façade for working with smallpox or monkeypox," said the former U.N. inspector, who was a member of the team that went into Iraq.

There is a lot of suspicion that Iraq had access to smallpox, but "there's no such indirect evidence for monkeypox," the inspector said. Asked if monkeypox was less of a concern than smallpox, the inspector replied, "I wouldn't say it's of less concern ... The fact that we haven't come across evidence from the United Nations doesn't mean it's not there."

No U.N. weapons inspectors have been in Iraq since 1998, so unless the government acknowledges working with a particular biological agent it is difficult to know for certain whether they ever worked with it. No one has any idea what types of agents they have worked with in the past three years, the inspector said.

Iraq is "likely to work with any nasty that comes along" and the government has shown an interest "in all the orthopox viruses," so "it's a strong possibility that they were" working with monkeypox, the inspector said.

The good news is that monkeypox does not appear to be transmissible from person to person and the smallpox vaccine protects against it. Asked whether monkeypox could be modified so that the vaccine is not effective against it, the former weapons inspector said, "I would say that verges on the impossible."

Alibek noted, "There was no such work in getting it resistant to vaccine. I cannot say anything for sure about what they are doing now." Alibek said he left the program more than 10 years ago.

"Making it elusive to the vaccine would be a challenge," CDC's LeDuc said. "The position that we've always held is that it would be very difficult to overcome the vaccine by genetic engineering."
However, Alibek added, "Existent vaccines are not 100 percent effective" against smallpox. They only offer approximately 70 percent protection. "Against monkeypox, the protection could be even lower," he said. "So even if everybody is vaccinated against smallpox, it doesn't mean everybody is protected."
http://www.upi.com/view.cfm?StoryID=07062002-064019-1942r

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USA Today
June 12, 2002
Pg. 1

Threat Of 'Dirty Bomb' Softened

Ashcroft's remarks annoy White House

By Kevin Johnson and Toni Locy, USA Today
WASHINGTON — Attorney General John Ashcroft on Monday overstated the potential threat posed by "dirty bomb" suspect Abdullah Al Muhajir, Bush administration and law enforcement officials said Tuesday. Ashcroft's remarks annoyed the White House and led the administration to soften the government's descriptions of the alleged plot. "I don't think there was actually a plot beyond some fairly loose talk and (Al Muhajir's) coming in here obviously to plan further deeds," Deputy Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz told CBS on Tuesday.
His comments echoed those Monday of FBI Director Robert Mueller and Deputy Attorney General Larry Thompson. They backed away from Ashcroft's descriptions of the alleged plot but emphasized that Al Muhajir was dangerous and that his arrest was a victory against terrorism.
When he announced Al Muhajir's May 8 arrest, Ashcroft said authorities had "disrupted an unfolding terrorist plot to attack the United States by exploding a radioactive 'dirty bomb.' " His 14-paragraph statement mentioned radiation or dirty bombs five times, and said Al Muhajir was being detained by the military "for the safety of all Americans."
Ashcroft's ominous tone surprised the White House and law enforcement officials here and abroad, including some who had tracked Al Muhajir to meetings with al-Qaeda officials in Pakistan. Authorities say the evidence against Al Muhajir, 31, indicates he was interested in many scenarios involving explosives, and radioactive materials was one possibility. They say that the former Chicago gang member once known as Jose Padilla was up to no good, but that any plans involving radiation were not as mature as Ashcroft suggested.
Administration sources say the White House emphatically told Ashcroft that it was dissatisfied with his description of the alleged plot.
Publicly the White House defended Ashcroft, saying he was technically correct. "There's always a tendency at times like this (that) the initial reports immediately lurch to the worst-case scenario," administration spokesman Ari Fleischer said. Justice Department spokesman Mark Corallo said Al Muhajir "was definitely planning an attack." Ashcroft was traveling in Hungary on Tuesday.
Despite their private concern that Ashcroft overstated the alleged plot, White House officials cited Al Muhajir's arrest as evidence that Congress should quickly pass President Bush's plan for a homeland security department.
Monday's announcement came a day before a New York judge heard a request by Al Muhajir's attorney, Donna Newman, to try to force officials to charge her client or release him. U.S. District Judge Michael Mukasey on Tuesday denied prosecutors' requests to hold the hearing in secret, citing Ashcroft's remarks about the arrest. Newman wants a civilian court to decide whether Al Muhajir is being held lawfully.
Contributing: Judy Keen in Washington; Jack Kelley in Islamabad, Pakistan

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Los Angeles Times
June 12, 2002
Pg. 1

'Dirty' Bomb Probe Widens

Terrorism: A suspect is interrogated in Pakistan. Officials say plot may have involved an effort to steal nuclear material from a university lab.

By Bob Drogin, Eric Lichtblau and Josh Meyer, Times Staff Writers

WASHINGTON -- U.S. authorities overseas have interrogated a second suspect in the alleged Al Qaeda plot to detonate a radioactive bomb in America, officials said Tuesday, as investigators scrambled to determine if other accomplices are in the United States, Switzerland, Egypt or elsewhere.

U.S. officials also said the so-called "dirty" bomb plan apparently called for stealing radioactive material from a U.S. university laboratory or other American facility. Low-level nuclear isotopes are widely used in medicine, research and industry.

The plot, which was in its early stages, was foiled when CIA, FBI, Customs and State Department agents identified and tracked Jose Padilla--a Brooklyn-born Muslim convert who adopted the name Abdullah al Muhajir--in Cairo and Zurich, authorities said. He was arrested May 8 when he flew from Switzerland to Chicago on what officials called a scouting mission for a terrorist attack. President Bush said Padilla was one of many "would-be killers" that the U.S. has captured, and that it is looking for many more.

"This guy Padilla's one of many who we've arrested," Bush said in a meeting in his Cabinet Room. "The coalition we've put together has hauled in 2,400 people. And you can call it 2,401 now. There's just a full-scale manhunt on.... We will run down every lead, every hint. This guy Padilla's a bad guy and he is where he needs to be: detained."

Officials said Padilla has refused to cooperate since his arrest. After President Bush decided Sunday that Padilla should be held as an "enemy combatant" against the United States, rather than as a criminal defendant, he was flown in a military C-130 to a high-security Navy brig outside Charleston, S.C., where he has been isolated from other inmates and is under heavy military guard.

On Tuesday, Padilla's lawyer said at a federal court hearing in New York that Padilla's continued detention is a violation of the Constitution because he has not been charged and is being denied access to legal counsel. "My client is a citizen," attorney Donna R. Newman told reporters. "He still has constitutional rights."

Members of the Senate Intelligence Committee were given a closed-door briefing on the case Tuesday as part of their wide-ranging review into Sept. 11 intelligence failures. But some members came away with more questions than answers, a congressional source said.

"The concern we'd like to pursue is, what's the substance of this? Not many people were satisfied that we had a whole hell of a lot" on Padilla in terms of hard evidence, the source said. "We're all for sticking bad guys in the hole, but you've got to have evidence."

A senior U.S. intelligence official said Pakistan had detained a second suspect in the plot last month. The official said the man, who has not been publicly identified but is from an Arab country, is being interrogated by U.S. authorities at an undisclosed location. There were conflicting reports as to whether Pakistan had handed the suspect over to U.S. authorities.

The second suspect traveled with Padilla to eastern Afghanistan last fall to meet Abu Zubeida, Al Qaeda's operations chief, and later accompanied Padilla to secret meetings with other senior Al Qaeda leaders inside Pakistan to discuss the dirty-bomb proposal as well as potential attacks against hotels, gas stations and other targets, the official said.

Search for Accomplices

One of the most urgent aspects of the investigation is whether Padilla had other accomplices, particularly in the United States.

U.S. authorities do not believe Padilla acted alone or planned to carry out a major attack in the United States without help from others.

"He clearly had associates, and one of the things we want to ask him about is who those associates were and how we can track them down," Deputy Defense Secretary Paul D. Wolfowitz said on CBS' "Early Show."

With evidence indicating that the FBI and CIA missed early clues to the Sept. 11 attacks, members of Congress also pressed for assurances that Padilla had no other U.S. accomplices.

"That's one of the big questions," a congressional investigator said.

An FBI official, who spoke on the condition of anonymity, said an aggressive investigation had yet to find any American accomplices but that the probe is continuing. Investigators also are checking to see if possible accomplices may have entered and left the country.

"That's how they operate, so there is good reason to assume that may be the case here," the FBI official said.
But a senior government official said investigators have found no co-conspirators despite pursuing a number of investigative leads. "I'm not picking up any sense that [investigators] believe anyone's out there," the official said. "They're satisfied that there was no one else here."

A Pattern Emerges

In other Al Qaeda plots, those actually carrying out the attacks often are met in a target city by other Al Qaeda operatives. They may provide safe houses, money, transportation, false documents and other logistical help, said the FBI official.
That was the case with Ahmed Ressam, who was convicted of plotting a millennium bombing with Al Qaeda. Ressam was supposed to drive a car laden with explosives from Canada into Washington state in December 1999 and ultimately plant a bomb at Los Angeles International Airport.
According to wiretaps and other evidence introduced at his trial last year, Ressam was to be met by another operative who had flown in from New York, as well as perhaps other co-conspirators in the Seattle area. After Ressam testified that several accomplices had helped him, two men were convicted in the case.
U.S. intelligence officials said they had not determined if Padilla was a seasoned Al Qaeda operative who had escaped detection until recently or a vagabond freelance agent who somehow made contact with senior Al Qaeda leaders last fall and was embraced by the group.
Padilla got his new passport in March, but the local consular official was concerned that Padilla might be involved in a case of identity theft.
"It was after the passport was issued [in March] that the consular officer just felt there was something odd about the case and raised it to the attention of the regional security officer, who looked into it and then reported to the other elements of the consulate, including the FBI," State Department spokesman Richard Boucher said Tuesday.
The discovery that Padilla had a long criminal record in Florida and Illinois led to questions about why he was in Pakistan. The information was forwarded to joint terrorism task forces, led by the FBI, in Miami and Chicago.
The investigation picked up steam after FBI and CIA agents, working with Pakistani authorities, captured Zubeida, the alleged operations chief for Al Qaeda, in a raid in the Pakistani city of Faisalabad on March 28.
During an interrogation in late April, Zubeida told U.S. authorities he was approached late last year at his hide-out in Khowst, in eastern Afghanistan, by an American and another man who proposed building a dirty bomb for use in the United States, according to intelligence officials.
"He didn't identify him, or give a name, just a generic description of him," one official said. "It was fairly sketchy information."
It remains unclear how Padilla was able to find and meet Zubeida, a fugitive who was the focus of an intense manhunt by U.S. and allied forces at the height of the Afghan war last winter.
Zubeida may have escaped Afghanistan with Padilla at that point, the official said. Padilla is known to have traveled with Zubeida inside Pakistan early this year and spent time at an Al Qaeda site in Lahore, in eastern Pakistan, to learn how to wire explosives and to study radiological dispersal devices on the Internet. In March, Padilla met with other Al Qaeda leaders in Karachi to further discuss his plan.

Interrogations Pay Off

After interrogating other Al Qaeda prisoners detained at the U.S. Navy base at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, and checking immigration and other documents, the CIA and other agencies quickly identified Padilla and the second suspect.
Agents then took passport photos of the two men back to Zubeida for confirmation. "He was surprised, but he said, 'Yes, that's them,' " an intelligence official said.
By then, however, Padilla was gone. Pakistan had briefly detained him and his accomplice for using false travel documents this spring. But he was released after several days and left Karachi for Zurich in early April.
"He wasn't known as Al Qaeda," the intelligence official said. "He was just allowed to go."
Padilla subsequently flew to Egypt, where authorities believe he has a wife and several children. U.S. intelligence caught up with him there and are still seeking to determine if he had contacts with Egyptian supporters of Al Qaeda.
"At some point, in the middle of this process, we pick him up in Cairo," the intelligence official said. "After that he was under constant surveillance."
FBI and other agents trailed him in Cairo and then back to Zurich, where they made sure Swiss authorities closely checked his baggage and shoes--in case he sought to emulate accused "shoe bomber" Richard C. Reid--before he boarded a Swissair flight from Zurich to Chicago on May 8.
About six FBI agents, and an equal number of Swiss law enforcement officers, secretly watched Padilla on the flight home, monitoring his every move.

"There were an awful lot of people on that flight who could have prevented" anything from going wrong, said a U.S. law enforcement official. "We knew everything about the guy on that flight--where he was going to sit and everything else. I don't think there was ever anybody in danger on that flight."
Padilla told the FBI agents who arrested him at O'Hare that he had come to "see his son," a source said.

Taking No More Risks

A senior government official said the FBI considered letting Padilla leave the airport and trailing him to see who he met, but decided it was not worth the chance of losing him.
Authorities believe that on one of his Switzerland trips, Padilla received some $10,000 in cash. The money was confiscated in Chicago, but authorities are trying to determine who gave it to him and where the money came from.
U.S. officials had faced months of resistance from Swiss officials who rejected the idea that terrorists were using their financial institutions. But they quickly came on board in the Padilla operation, officials said.
A senior U.S. official said the arrest, which involved the combined efforts of at least four U.S. agencies, reflects the "convergence of investigative strengths" developed since Sept. 11. Padilla's life remains a focus of intense scrutiny.
Now 31, he and his family moved to Chicago when he was 4. His first arrest, for the brutal stabbing death of a local man, came when he was 14. At least four other arrests and two convictions for armed robbery and battery followed. He worked at restaurants and hotels when he wasn't in jail.
In the fall of 1991, he jumped bail on a weapon charge and moved to South Florida.
He soon found himself in trouble again, charged with aggravated assault and carrying a concealed weapon. It was after serving 10 months in the Broward County Jail that the man raised as a Roman Catholic converted to radical Islam along with his future wife, Cherie Maria Stultz.
They both worked at a Taco Bell restaurant in Davie, near Fort Lauderdale, close to about 20 Islamic centers or mosques. Padilla disappeared after two years and the couple later divorced.
U.S. officials now say Padilla had moved to Egypt by 1998. His goal, they said, was to further explore Muslim teachings and traditions. He stayed about two years, taking up with illegal underground mosques that preach extremist forms of Islam, officials said.
Authorities now are keen to find out who he met in Egypt, which has battled Islamic extremists for years, and how he ultimately gravitated toward a terrorist faction that vows to kill millions of Americans.
A Justice Department official said Padilla "definitely seemed to be seeking out over time a more radical view." Ultimately, even the underground mosques did not satisfy him, and teachers he met in Egypt pointed him to still more extreme factions in Pakistan and Afghanistan, the official said.
"Once he was there [in Egypt], he didn't feel like it was going far enough, so he went to Pakistan and Afghanistan," the official said. "There was this progression with his growing radical extremism."
Eric Slater in Chicago, John-Thor Dahlburg in Fort Lauderdale, Anna M. Virtue in Miami and Robin Wright in Washington also contributed to this report.

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Washington Post
June 12, 2002
Pg. 29

Lawmakers Sue Over ABM Pact Withdrawal

Lawsuit Seeks to Assert Congress's Role in Treaties

By Neely Tucker, Washington Post Staff Writer

Thirty-one members of Congress sued the Bush administration in federal court yesterday, charging that President Bush violated the Constitution when he decided earlier this year to drop a 30-year-old nuclear weapons pact with Russia.
The 12-page lawsuit asks a federal judge to order President Bush to stop plans for the U.S. withdrawal from the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty with Russia, which is scheduled to take effect tomorrow.
The suit follows last week's unsuccessful attempt by Democrats in Congress who wanted to challenge the Bush decision through legislation. That plan failed in the House, 254-169.
In December, Bush gave Russia notice that he wanted to pull out of the treaty, saying he wanted the United States to be free to respond to nuclear threats from terrorists or rogue nations. The treaty requires six months' notice for any party to withdraw.

Rep. Dennis J. Kucinich (D-Ohio), who led the House attempt to overturn Bush's decision, said yesterday the Constitution requires the president to obtain congressional approval before ending international treaties.
"The president can't pick and choose the laws he wants to repeal," Kucinich said yesterday. "We are taking this step to protect the right of Congress to take part in the lawmaking process."
Anne Womack, a White House spokeswoman, said administration officials had yet to see the suit and declined comment.
There is little constitutional case law on the role of the House or Senate in concluding treaties, but a 1979 U.S. Supreme Court case might provide the administration with precedent.
Sen. Barry Goldwater (R-Ariz.) sued President Jimmy Carter for his unilateral decision to end the Mutual Defense Treaty with Taiwan. A divided Supreme Court ruled that the president had the constitutional power to end a treaty, and Carter's decision was upheld.
"Given the Goldwater decision, I wouldn't expect that suit to get very far," said Mark Tushnet, a professor of constitutional law at Georgetown University Law Center.

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Washington Times
June 12, 2002
Pg. 1

'Dirty Bomb' Suspect Linked To Al Qaeda

U.S. says attack plans began in December 2001

By Jerry Seper, The Washington Times
The American held in a plot to detonate a "dirty bomb" in the United States, probably in the nation's capital, met frequently with top al Qaeda leaders in the weeks after September 11 to discuss further U.S. attacks.
Federal authorities said Abdullah al Muhajir, who was born Jose Padilla and became a Chicago gang member, went to Pakistan and Afghanistan several times after the suicide strikes on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, meeting with Abu Zubaydah, a top lieutenant to Osama bin Laden.
The high-level meetings, authorities said, began in December 2001, when al Muhajir first met with Zubaydah, a major al Qaeda recruiter and a suspect in the September 11 attacks. Zubaydah was captured March 28 during raids by Pakistani police at a "safe house" in Faisalabad.
"There is absolutely no doubt al Muhajir talked extensively with Zubaydah concerning al Qaeda's plans to carry out a variety of attacks in the United States, including the use of so-called dirty bombs," one U.S. official said.
Al Muhajir, a New York native and convicted felon whose Arabic name translates to "the emigrant," was taken into custody May 8 by the FBI at O'Hare International Airport in Chicago after his arrival on a flight from Pakistan. He is being held by the U.S. military as an "enemy combatant."
The intended attacks included the detonation of a radiological dispersion device, or dirty bomb, against a number of targets, including government buildings in Washington, and separate explosions aimed at hotels and gas stations, authorities said.
Authorities said it was Zubaydah who sent al Muhajir to Lahore, Pakistan, after a meeting in Afghanistan, where he was trained in constructing and detonating dirty bombs. They said Zubaydah then arranged for al Muhajir to meet with several top al Qaeda leaders in Pakistan to talk about attacking U.S. targets.
His trip to Chicago on May 8, authorities said, was to begin reconnaissance for a bombing site and seek a source for the radioactive material for a dirty bomb.
The conspiracy was pieced together by the FBI and other federal law-enforcement agencies from information obtained from Zubaydah, who has undergone extensive interrogation by U.S. officials since his March capture. Authorities said that he did not give up al Muhajir's name but discussed enough of the plan to lead FBI agents to him.
It was Zubaydah who told U.S. interrogators earlier this year that al Qaeda was close to building a dirty bomb and might try to smuggle one into the United States.
Deputy Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz said yesterday that al Muhajir is not cooperating with U.S. authorities. He is being held at a U.S. Navy facility in South Carolina.
FBI Director Robert S. Mueller III said the conspiracy, at the time of al Muhajir's detention in Chicago, had not extended past the planning stages, although al Muhajir is reported to have been carrying plans for an attack when he was taken into custody.

Authorities believe that other al Qaeda operatives are working on separate plans, although there has been no specific information on which targets may be involved.
President Bush ordered a "full-scale" manhunt yesterday for other terrorists, saying al Muhajir was only one of many "would-be killers" federal authorities have in custody. He promised that more would be arrested.
"The coalition we've put together has hauled in 2,400 people. And you can call it 2,401 now. We will run down every lead, every hint. We're in for a long struggle in this war on terror. And there are people that still want to harm America," he said.
In Budapest, where he is visiting with Hungarian government officials, Attorney General John Ashcroft said al Muhajir's capture by the FBI had "significantly disrupted" the dirty-bomb plot. He said the FBI obtained "very significant information" about al Muhajir's involvement with al Qaeda "in very serious terrorist plots."
At the time of al Muhajir's meetings with al Qaeda, authorities said Zubaydah — a member of bin Laden's inner circle and the organization's operational planner — was organizing attacks on the United States. He served as al Qaeda's primary contact for recruits.
Zubaydah, shot three times during his capture, is the highest-ranking al Qaeda member in U.S. custody. His capture was an intelligence and public relations coup for an administration that promised to bring to justice bin Laden and others responsible for the September 11 attacks.
Zubaydah is a Palestinian who was born in 1973 in Saudi Arabia, and he has traveled extensively under assumed names on forged passports and has been connected to other terrorist attacks, including the bombing of the USS Cole in Yemen.
His suspected ties to al Qaeda were first documented by Ahmed Ressam, an Algerian convicted in a foiled terrorist attack in Los Angeles, which had been intended to coincide with the millennium celebrations in December 1999.
In court testimony, Ressam described Zubaydah as the "person in charge" of terrorist training camps in Afghanistan. He said that after he graduated from the Khalden training camp in Afghanistan in 1998, Zubaydah asked him to acquire passports for other terrorists to enable them "to carry out operations in the U.S."
The State Department said al Muhajir applied for a new passport in Karachi, Pakistan, in March, raising the suspicions of a consular officer who notified other U.S. officials, including the FBI.
Mr. Ashcroft said authorities determined from "multiple, independent and corroborating sources" that al Muhajir was closely aligned with al Qaeda. He said al Qaeda knew that as a U.S. citizen holding a valid passport, he could travel freely in the United States without drawing attention to himself.

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Wall Street Journal
June 12, 2002

The Dirty Secret Of 'Dirty Bombs'

By Khidhir Hamza

The arrest of a "dirty bomb" suspect in Chicago has focused attention once again on al Qaeda. But it would be a mistake to ignore possible state links, especially with Saddam Hussein.
During Iraq's long war with Iran it became clear that terrorizing the Iranian troops by using chemical weapons was much more effective than all the artillery and aerial bombardment that we could muster. Newly transferred to the Military Industrialization Corp. headed by Lt. Gen. Hussein Kamel, Saddam's son-in-law, I discovered that a team from the Atomic Energy Commission was already working on radiation weapons on the theory that they could achieve the same effect.
It was 1987 and Iran's troops were entrenched in Iraq's only seaport, Fao. No amount of bombardment could dislodge them. The trick was to cut off their supply lines by contaminating the border region with Iran.
Recognizing that this was wartime, and thousands were dying in battles daily, I could not immediately dismiss the idea. Not having a powerful enough reactor, the Atomic Energy team resorted to using reactor materials that had already been irradiated, such as the Zirconium in the reactor channels. They could not use the spent reactor fuel since it was checked regularly by the international inspectors. But a test was made in a desert region after enough radioactive material was assembled. As expected, the radioactive materials dispersed too fast and the lethal zone was almost nonexistent outside the blast area. Within a few days there was no more than background radiation outside a very small area. Another test gave the same results and the project was dropped.

But it was recognized at the time that while a dirty bomb is not an effective weapon of war, it remains an effective weapon of terror. A contaminated building is a different story than an explosion in the desert sands. Sure enough, I started hearing reports that Iraqi intelligence was inviting some of our nuclear chemists to inquire about how much is a lethal dose and what are the best sources of radiation. They soon realized that the best way to kill someone with radiation was not to spread it widely over a big area; a person could wander through a radiated area for years without noticeable effects. But if someone inhales radioactive materials such as plutonium dust even in tiny quantities, he will most probably be doomed to disease and death. Thus it's much more effective to release radioactive materials, not in the desert, but in a confined environment such as a building where it's more likely to poison people.

Too busy at the time pursuing the nuclear weapons option, Atomic Energy personnel were stopped from meeting intelligence experts. However, I am sure the intelligence agency pursued the subject more diligently by creating its own research team. Thus I was not surprised at the recent news that a defector from the Mukhabarat, Iraq's intelligence organization, was part of a team buying Russian radioactive material routed through an African country.

Nuclear materials were handled in a very cavalier fashion in Iraq. Radioactive materials were carried in personal cars without much protection most of the time. Neutron sources for oil well logging (a method of studying the composition of potential bore holes) were dispersed without much training, leading to some accidents that resulted in large contaminated areas. My guess is that if the U.S. nuclear industry is missing some materials, the story is much worse in countries like Iraq, Iran, Libya, Pakistan and the former Soviet republics. This creates an environment in which countries can claim lack of discipline of their workers as a cover for many missing radiation sources.

The only serious controls over the smuggling of radioactive materials out of Russia now are the many sting operations by the Russian intelligence services rather than the actual control over the materials themselves. However, such operations are much less in evidence in the other former Soviet republics. Thus, according to one Russian expert, there are more sellers than buyers of nuclear materials in these countries.

This environment is ideal for countries like Iraq to train and support a terrorist operation using radiation weapons with complete deniability. If anthrax spores were used to terrorize the U.S., plutonium particles are more effective. No high technology is needed to create plutonium dust and once tiny quantities of plutonium are lodged in the lungs, there is no known cure. Most probably the victim will not even know that he is afflicted till it is too late. There will be no measurable radiation emanating from his body since the emitted radiation from plutonium is short-range. His lung tissues will absorb the radiation, blocking it from being detected by outside detectors. Thus, unlike anthrax, detection is much harder. And plutonium is much more available in spent reactor fuel.

Restricting the lookout for this source of terrorism to al Qaeda is taking the easy way out. No matter how much their caves and former dwellings were searched, all that was found were some primitive documents about nuclear radiation. The real expertise -- and the real stockpiles of nuclear material -- remain in countries like Iraq and Iran. With Afghanistan removed as a safe haven, terrorist training grounds and sources of expertise have to come from these countries. It is time to face the real problem and deal with it.

Mr. Hamza, former director of Iraq's nuclear program, is president of the Council on Middle Eastern Affairs.

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Wall Street Journal
June 12, 2002

Customs Trains Old Soviet Ports In Thwarting Nuclear Smugglers

By Gary Fields and Sharon Begley, Staff Reporters of The Wall Street Journal

WASHINGTON -- The first line of defense in the government's fight to keep terrorists from smuggling a dirty bomb into the U.S. isn't at the nation's borders -- it's at ports thousands of miles away in the former Soviet Union.

Since Sept. 11, the Bush administration has dispatched neutron flux detectors and gamma ray detectors that can detect nuclear materials to points of entry around Washington, New York and other major cities. At the same time, the U.S. Customs Service has outfitted its inspectors with some 4,000 personal radiation detectors -- souped-up Geiger counters -- with plans to provide another 4,500 in the coming months. Customs also has been installing radiation detectors large enough for cars and trucks to pass through, at some border crossings.

Beyond that, customs has been using State Department andPentagon funds and working jointly with the Energy Departmentto boost training for its agents and those of foreign agents from theformer Soviet Union. In recent years,

the agency has shippedmore than 600 radiation detectors to those countries to helpauthorities there stop smugglers. While no smuggling has beendetected since the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, agents have been onhighest alert since then.

Obtaining Nuclear Materials

Monday's announcement that an American citizen had beenworking with al Qaeda to detonate a dirty bomb in the U.S. hasrenewed concerns about al Qaeda's abilities to obtain nuclearmaterials. The alleged al Qaeda scout, Jose Padilla, now beingheld at a Navy brig in Charleston, S.C., was on a mission to pinpoint either bomb sites or potential places to find nuclear materials, law-enforcement officials said.

Unlike the military's nuclear arsenal, a dirty bomb is made with radioactive material that is wrapped around explosives. Rather than setting off a nuclear reaction, the bomb disperses relatively low-level radiation in a limited area.

"We have improved our training and detection capabilities and we are pushing our zone of security out further," said Customs Commissioner Robert Bonner. The agency is focusing on Eastern Europe from Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, in the north to Turkey, Cyprus and Malta in the south.

One customs official said the agency fears that "a lot of unsecured [radioactive] material in the former Soviet Union" is being smuggled into Uzbekistan, which abuts Afghanistan and is near Iran, Iraq and Pakistan. "We don't want this stuff going there," he said. Much of the material comes from weapons programs and power-generating plants.

Radioactive Lead Containers

One smuggled shipment nearly ended up in Pakistan in March 2000, customs officials said. The hand-held radiation detectors provided by the U.S. started beeping wildly when a truck filled with scrap metal tried to cross the Uzbekistan border. Inside, agents found 10 radioactive lead containers, and an Iranian driver intent on delivering his load to Quetta, Pakistan, a border town known as a smuggling center to Afghanistan.

Detection is a matter of the training and equipment that needs to be close by to pick up radioactive materials as opposed to satellites, which are too far away, scientists say.

"To detect a suitcase bomb you have to get very close," said senior scientist Thomas B. Cochran at the Natural Resources Defense Council in Washington, D.C. "If the radioactive source is plutonium, a neutron detector can see it up to a few tens of meters away." Gamma detectors, which sense the radiation signature of cobalt-60 and cesium-137 need fairly sophisticated instrumentation to sort out the energy spectra of the radiation; that spectrum determines whether the source is plutonium or uranium-235, or some innocuous background source, Dr. Cochran said. These work from a few meters away -- with one obvious caveat: "If it's shielded, you'll never see it."

'Thousands of Facilities'

"Radioactive materials that could be used for such attacks are stored in thousands of facilities around the U.S., many of which may not be adequately protected against theft by determined terrorists," said Henry Kelly, a physicist with the Federation of American Scientists. Radioactive materials are used in laboratories, food-irradiation plants, oil-drilling facilities and medical centers, among other places.

The agency also is getting permission from foreign countries to station inspectors in their ports, looking at ship containers that come in, rather than waiting for them to arrive in the U.S. and be inspected. Canada is already allowing it and Singapore, the world's second largest port in terms of shipping containers, recently agreed to let U.S. inspectors come there. Customs also is in discussions with Tokyo, Rotterdam, Netherlands and Antwerp, Belgium.

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New York Daily News
June 11, 2002

Radiation Device Could Cripple City

By Bob Port, Daily News Staff Writer

Terrorists could easily make a dirty bomb that would lay waste to several city blocks and cause thousands of cancer deaths years later, experts say.

In fact, radiation bombs could render whole sections of New York City as uninhabitable as the area around Russia's Chernobyl nuclear power plant, scene of a deadly meltdown in 1986.

The world is awash in radioactive material that could be made into highly efficient poison when added to a bomb. The theory is simple: Mix radioactive powder or pellets with an explosive — in a suitcase or truck bomb — and blast fallout into the wind.

Radioactive elements such as cobalt 60, strontium 90 and cesium 137 are used with little or no security in medical devices, oil-drilling test gear and food irradiation equipment, experts said. Americium 241 is found in smoke detectors.
Stockpiles of plutonium, one of the deadliest substances, grow by hundreds of tons per year in Europe, Britain, Japan and India, where processed plutonium oxide is used for reactor fuel.
"It's crazy," said Paul Leventhal, president emeritus of the Nuclear Control Institute, a nonproliferation group.
An assault on a nuclear power plant is a far bigger radiation risk than a dirty bomb, he said, because so much more material could be released.
Only those splattered by a dirty bomb's detonation would risk immediate death. The numbers irradiated later are unclear.
"In terms of killing people, it may not be effective," Leventhal said. "But in terms of spreading fear and panic, it would be highly effective."
The Nuclear Regulatory Commission licenses radioactive material, but it has no central database and recordkeeping is largely left to the states.

Radiation Devices Sought

In 1998, Los Alamos National Laboratory began a long-planned effort to collect and secure scrapped U.S. radiation devices, so-called orphan sources, which turn up at metal recycling plants or dumped along roadsides.
Los Alamos officials estimated there are 6,000 unwanted devices to collect. They expect another 12,000 to be scrapped within this decade. Overseas, secure disposal of such radiation devices can be nonexistent.
In March, the Federation of American Scientists stunned members of the Senate with maps estimating the potential lethal range of a dirty bomb in New York or Washington. Scattered deaths from leukemia would occur several years later. Other cancers would prove deadly decades later.
"Areas as large as tens of square miles could be contaminated at levels that exceed civilian exposure limits," said Henry Kelly, a Harvard physicist who heads the group. "Since there are often no effective ways to decontaminate buildings that have been exposed at these levels, demolition would be the only practical solution."
Radioactive elements combine chemically with concrete, asphalt or soil, said Michael Levi, a physicist who managed the study. "You could find yourself hauling off Central Park, in essence," he said.
Protecting yourself from a dirty bomb is straightforward. Go indoors, shower, and avoid breathing the open air or eating contaminated food, Levi said. "It's really a matter of closing your windows and waiting for instructions," he said.
Sen. Chuck Schumer (D-N.Y.) said the foiled dirty bomb plot revealed yesterday is more reason for Congress to pass his $250 million measure funding new technologies to better detect nuclear materials coming through ports and borders.
"If a terrorist wants to smuggle in uranium or plutonium, odds of it going through are relatively high," Schumer said. "That's not a risk we can afford to take."
With Tamer El-Ghobashy

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Inside The Pentagon
June 13, 2002
Pg. 1

Army Wants More Cash To Speed Destruction Of Chemical Weapons

The Army plans to ask Deputy Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz next week for more money to accelerate the chemical demilitarization program, according to Mario Fiori, the Army's assistant secretary for installations and environment.
Fiori said the program needs a $1 billion plus-up in fiscal year 2003 and an additional $1 billion in FY-04. The pitch will come in a June 17 meeting with Wolfowitz, Fiori said June 7.
The Army last year conceded it would not meet the April 7, 2007, deadline set by an international treaty to destroy the nation's chemical weapons stockpile. During a "chem-bio" breakfast last week in Arlington, VA, Fiori said the program could be completed by 2012 if more money is allocated to the effort.

Thus far, about 25 percent of the original stockpile has been destroyed.
In the post-Sept. 11 security climate, the Army has been negotiating deals with state regulators to speed its work around the country. Eight states in the continental United States host chemical weapons stockpiles: Maryland, Indiana, Oregon, Utah, Arkansas, Kentucky, Colorado and Alabama.
"Our biggest goal, as a result of 9-11, is to get rid of these weapons as soon as possible," Fiori said. "Funding is everything." With "sufficient" funding from the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the program schedule could be significantly expedited in the next two years, he said, adding that Wolfowitz and Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld agreed during a February briefing that the program needs to be accelerated in light of concerns that terrorists might view the stockpiles as a target for attack or even a source of materiel.
"We're ready . . . to [show] them that we can do this," he said. "We've demonstrated it in two places."
Even if extra money is not forthcoming, the program will save about $400 million on life-cycle costs for destroying the stockpiles at Aberdeen Proving Ground, MD, and Newport, IN, under a new destruction plan that will also result in wrapping work up there about two to three years early, according to Fiori.
The solution involves neutralizing agent drained from bulk containers and shipping secondary waste to commercial processing plants (Inside the Pentagon, Jan. 17, p9). These plants already possess the permits required to process hazardous waste, saving time and money by not requiring a secondary waste treatment facility, according to program officials. Acquiring permits from environmental regulators has been troublesome for the program, contributing to routine schedule delays.
No law requires all the material to be destroyed by the program, Fiori said, noting that Wilmington, DE-based DuPont has been contracted to process secondary waste. "We'll save a lot of money and a lot of time by doing that," he added.
Program management had hoped to complete destruction of bulk agent at Aberdeen by Dec. 20, 2002, but will not meet that goal because of an FY-02 funding shortfall, Fiori said.
Fiori's request for more funding could find favor among lawmakers. In a May 23 letter to Pentagon acquisition chief Pete Aldridge, Sens. Mary Landrieu (D-LA) and Jeff Bingaman (R-NM) urged DOD to find funds beginning in FY-02 to accelerate the program. Landrieu chairs the Senate Armed Services emerging threats and capabilities subcommittee. Meanwhile, the full committee, in a report on its version of the FY-03 defense authorization bill, said accelerated destruction could reduce the schedule for chemical agent disposal by as much as three to five years and produce life-cycle cost savings of as much as $3 billion.
Since Sept. 11, about 120 National Guard troops have been providing security at each of the eight stockpile sites, which are considered obvious targets for terrorists. Airspace surrounding the facilities is also restricted.
While keeping terrorists at bay, program officials say the accelerated schedule will ease another of the program's major concerns: reducing the possibility of hazardous leaks. A slide in Fiori's presentation declared: "Each day a chemical weapons destruction facility operates, risk posed to the public by [continued] storage is reduced."
-- Catherine MacRae

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Baltimore Sun
June 13, 2002

FBI Looks Into Possibility Anthrax Was Grown Secretly At Fort Detrick

Scientists who worked there are questioned; individual singled out

By Dave Altimari and Jack Dolan, Special To The Sun
The FBI is investigating whether the anthrax used in last fall's attacks could have been grown secretly inside an Army lab and taken elsewhere to be converted into a weapon, according to three sources familiar with the investigation.
A former government microbiologist, who was interviewed in recent days by the FBI, said agents focused their questioning on the logistics of how someone with access to the U.S. Army's biodefense labs at Fort Detrick, in Frederick County, might carry out the scheme. The microbiologist, who once worked at Fort Detrick, said the agents did not indicate whether they had evidence that such an incident had occurred.

"They asked me, if I wanted to grow something I wasn't supposed to, would there be somebody asking me about it and could I have taken it out of the lab," said the scientist, who did not want to be identified. "I told them no one checked, and it was far easier to get something out of Fort Detrick than into it."
A second bioterrorism scientist who also has been questioned by the FBI said the agents' "operating theory" appeared to be that the Fort Detrick labs were the source of the anthrax and that spores were somehow removed covertly. This scientist also did not want to be identified.
The scientists' accounts are among several developments that suggest the FBI is seriously exploring the possibility that a Fort Detrick insider could have clandestinely produced and removed anthrax spores to a private location, where they could be refined into the lethal powder sent through the mail last fall.
That premise also is at the center of a new assessment of the investigation by a prominent bioweapons expert, who says five biodefense experts have given the FBI the name of a former Fort Detrick scientist who had access to "a remote location" that could have been used to refine anthrax spores into a weapons form.
In her assessment - scheduled to be posted today on the Federation of American Scientists' Web site - Barbara Hatch Rosenberg all but names the scientist and provides details about his background. The Hartford, Conn., Courant obtained an advance copy of the six-page paper written by Rosenberg, who is chairwoman of the federation's working group on biological weapons.
She says, in her assessment, that the unidentified scientist suffered a career setback last summer that "left him angry and depressed" and that the FBI, with his consent, searched his home and computer.
The unidentified scientist has declined interview requests, but in a voice-mail message left for a Courant reporter last month he denied that he was a suspect.
Dave Altimari and Jack Dolan are reporters with The Courant, a Tribune Publishing newspaper.

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Philadelphia Inquirer
June 13, 2002

Pentagon Moves Ahead With Missile Defense

By Drew Brown, Inquirer Washington Bureau
WASHINGTON - The Pentagon is wasting no time consigning the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Defense Treaty to the dustbin of history, pushing ahead with plans to test and deploy a multibillion-dollar missile-defense system that the treaty prohibited.
The United States is set to pull out of the treaty today, and on Saturday, workers will break ground on a test site at Fort Greely, Alaska. The site could not have gone forward under the treaty.
Also today, in Hawaii, the Pentagon's Missile Defense Agency plans to test a sea-launched interceptor designed to destroy incoming missiles midway through their flight and 100 miles above Earth.
The test would have been allowed under the ABM Treaty, and its timing is coincidental, officials said.
Still, today's test is important, because interceptors fired from ships will play a significant role in the limited missile-defense system the Bush administration hopes to put into place by 2008.
The developments come after a Pentagon decision to keep secret some information about the targets and decoys used in future tests of ground-based interceptors.
Defense officials say the secrecy is necessary to prevent adversaries from learning how to defeat these interceptors, which are further along in their testing than a ship-based defense system. Critics in the scientific community and in Congress say the secrecy will make it harder to conduct outside review and oversight.
The missile-defense program has been plagued by questions about its effectiveness and feasibility. Some experts contend that the system President Bush envisions will cost more than $200 billion.
The 1972 ABM treaty served as a centerpiece of nuclear-arms control between the United States and the former Soviet Union for 30 years. It is the first major arms-control agreement the United States has pulled out of.
The treaty banned the adversaries from building a system to defend against nuclear-tipped intercontinental ballistic missiles. It aimed to reduce the danger of nuclear war by denying each side the ability to launch a preemptive nuclear strike without risking massive retaliation.
Bush wants to build a layered missile-defense system capable of protecting the United States, its troops in the field, and U.S. allies from missile attacks by states such as North Korea, Iran and Iraq. Critics say that such an attack is unlikely and that deployment of an effective system is years, if not decades, away.

Sea-based interceptors, as envisioned, would be placed off the coast of an adversary. The idea of a national ballistic missile shield has been around since the 1960s. It was part of what President Ronald Reagan envisioned with the Strategic Defense Initiative, known as "Star Wars." Testing for the system now being developed began under President Bill Clinton.
But Bush has pursued the idea more aggressively.
Unlike a simple ground-based system that would intercept missiles in midcourse, the Bush administration wants a defense designed to shoot down missiles in all phases of flight.
The plan would use a variety of weapons to accomplish this goal, including short-range land- and sea-based missiles designed to shoot down incoming missiles as they reenter the atmosphere, and an airborne laser that would intercept missiles in the boost and midcourse phases of flight.
The administration hopes to have the five test interceptors at Fort Greely operational by the end of 2004, and Pentagon officials say the test site could be used to intercept missiles during an emergency.
Critics say the plan to keep some information about the tests secret will prevent outside assessment of the program.
"As the years go by, it will become more and more difficult for the Congress and the American public to know what's really going on in missile defense if this kind of basic information is not forthcoming," Phillip E. Coyle, a senior adviser at the Center for Defense Information, told the House Government Reform Committee on Tuesday.
Critics also say technical problems with missile defense could delay deployment of the kind of shield Bush wants for many years.

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Washington Post
June 13, 2002
Pg. 10

U.S. Faulted On Chemical Plants' Security

Government Inaction Leaves Industry Vulnerable Target to Terrorists, Critics Say

By Eric Pianin, Washington Post Staff Writer

Despite repeated warnings that terrorists could turn hazardous materials in chemical plants into weapons of mass destruction, the Bush administration and Congress have yet to agree on ways to reduce industry vulnerabilities nine months after the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks.
Although government officials and lawmakers moved swiftly after the attacks on New York and Washington to address security lapses at airports, municipal water facilities and nuclear power plants, the government has done little to shore up security at thousands of chemical plants and has left it up to industry leaders to make changes as they see fit. Efforts by the Environmental Protection Agency and a homeland security interagency task force to devise security ground rules for the chemical industry have been frustrated by divisions within the administration and strong opposition from the industry, according to administration sources and environmental activists.
Moreover, congressional Democrats and the Natural Resources Defense Council say the Justice Department is far behind schedule in preparing a detailed assessment of vulnerabilities in the operation of chemical plants and the transportation of hazardous chemicals. Justice officials sent Congress a sketchy, top-secret interim report last week affirming widespread security problems, according to sources, but the department won't be able to meet an August deadline set by Congress for the final report.
"I find it very worrisome that the administration will not meet the August deadline," Rep. John D. Dingell (Mich.), the ranking Democrat on the House Energy and Commerce Committee, said this week. Administration officials said that, despite delays, they were confident the government would act this year. "This is a matter of concern and we expect to address it in a timely and appropriate fashion," a senior EPA official said.
Experts and lawmakers say there is little doubt that the chemical industry remains a large target of opportunity for terrorists.
At least 123 plants keep amounts of toxic chemicals that, if released through explosions or other mishaps, could form deadly vapor clouds that would put more than 1 million people in danger, an EPA analysis found. More than 700 plants could put at least 100,000 people at risk.
The chemical industry has beefed up security -- mostly building new fences, hiring more guards and eliminating stockpiles of deadly chlorine gas and other hazardous materials. Recently, industry officials adopted guidelines for

assessing and correcting vulnerabilities at about 1,000 plants, a fraction of the facilities with potential security problems. Yet there is no federal counterterrorism security standard for chemical plants or refineries, and there is no way to assure citizens that chemical and oil companies are taking adequate precautions, according to environmental and community groups. "We need a vigorous federal program to reduce chemical hazards and improve site security," said Paul Orum, director of the Working Group on Community Right to Know.

Chris VandenHeuvel, a spokesman for the American Chemistry Council, an Arlington-based trade group that represents firms such as Dow Chemical Co. and ExxonMobil Corp., said new legislation or government mandates would merely "slow down our efforts."

Initially, the administration was inclined to leave security matters to the chemical industry, but subsequently an interagency group chaired by the Office of Homeland Security and EPA Administrator Christine Todd Whitman began developing a set of security principles.

The principles are similar to those mapped out by industry officials, but they would cover a much larger universe -- the 15,000 chemical, water and waste-treatment plants that handle large quantities of dangerous chemicals. The plants would be required to conduct vulnerability assessments and then develop and implement steps for tightening security and reducing hazards, all subject to EPA certification. Homeland Security Director Tom Ridge was so pleased with the proposals that two weeks ago he suggested an immediate media "rollout," saying the industry should support them because "we're not asking them to do anything they're not already claiming to do," according to an administration source. But the announcement was temporarily delayed in the face of resistance from the Justice Department and the chemical industry.

So far, the only measure the Justice Department has been willing to support is a bill drafted by Sen. Christopher S. Bond (R-Mo.) that would strictly curtail future public access to detailed information about the risks posed to people living near chemical plants. Bond, an industry ally, contends that the community-right-to-know law, requiring chemical plants to disclose their worst-case scenarios for accidents, would enable terrorists to obtain "a virtual blueprint for their attacks."

But environmentalists say Bond has exaggerated the sensitivity of information now made public. They also say Bond and Justice Department officials are working together to kill Corzine's bill, which would mandate vulnerability assessments and industry action.

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Washington Post
June 13, 2002
Pg. C1

How Bad Would A Dirty Blast Be? Here's What The Experts Say.

By Don Oldenburg, Washington Post Staff Writer

Another day, another "credible" terrorist threat. The disaster scenario du jour is now the so-called dirty bomb, so called because this is a conventional bomb that plays dirty. Experts say a dirty bomb could range in size from a small "suitcase" device to a truck bomb, and maybe larger. Its explosive may be as ordinary as dynamite, but it's packaged with radioactive material that, detonated, is scattered in fragments and airborne dust -- or "dirt." Hence the name.

You have probably heard public officials and terrorist experts say a dirty bomb's real threat is psychological. And that it is a weapon of terror, fear, panic and disruption rather than one of mass destruction. But what else does the public need to know about dirty bombs? How bad are they, really? Here's the dirt:

What could happen if a dirty bomb went off in downtown Washington?

Experts envision scenarios that could be on the scale of Timothy McVeigh's 1995 truck bombing in Oklahoma City, which killed 168 people -- with the added dimension of radiation contamination. But it could be much less if it involved a small device, such as one set off by a backpack bomber.

"But even a big one would do much less damage than Hurricane Andrew did in Florida," says Randy Larsen, director of the ANSER Institute for Homeland Security, a nonprofit research organization in Alexandria.

Almost all deaths and serious injuries would be confined to the immediate vicinity of the explosion. The downtown area would shake from the blast. Anyone nearby would know a bomb had exploded but would have no clue it was a dirty bomb -- you can't smell, taste, feel or see radiation -- until authorities announce they have detected it.

How widespread the damage?

In March, the Washington-based Center for Strategic and International Studies simulated what would happen if terrorists detonated a 4,000-pound dirty bomb in a school bus parked outside the National Air and Space Museum. In the simulation, the museum ended up almost destroyed and nearby buildings damaged. An estimated 10,000 people were in the immediate vicinity; how many would have died isn't known, but the acute threat was confined to a radius of a few city blocks.

Although in the simulation, prevailing winds carried contamination into southern Pennsylvania, the amounts were very small because radiation dissipates quickly.

The highest contamination would occur in the blocks surrounding the blast -- or about 10 percent of the District, says Philip Anderson, senior fellow for homeland security initiatives at CSIS, who specializes in anti-terrorism strategies. People there would get about a 5-rem-per-hour dose of radiation. That's the amount the Environmental Protection Agency says is the maximum safe dose to absorb in one year, a standard that is considered very cautious; even absorbed in hours, the amount is not likely to make you sick.

Another 10 percent of the District -- people a half-mile to a mile from the blast -- would be in contaminated areas, but not seriously contaminated. The dose would be so small, says Anderson, that it would probably take days or weeks to exceed the EPA maximum yearly safe dose. "The key point," he says, "is that nobody is going to become sick or die from radiation."

John Zielinski, professor of military strategy and operations at the National War College in Washington, estimates that, generally, someone a mile from the blast is likely to walk away unscathed. And "you could be within a couple hundred yards of it, and if you are upwind, you might not have a problem at all," he says. "If they set it off in a street and you are one block over and behind a building, there might be no risk."

What casualties?

Beyond those inflicted by the blast itself, the number of deaths and injuries is likely to be minimal -- depending on the radioactive material used, the size of the explosive, wind conditions and the effectiveness of the evacuation response.

Most experts play down any probability of radiation-related deaths. "Threat to life? Not worried about it other than the explosive device itself," says Larsen. "The main thing is, people should not lose much sleep over this.

"Just imagine if Timothy McVeigh had put five pounds of radioactive material and blew that up in Oklahoma. . . . No more people would have probably died than did."

Long-term effects of radiation exposure? Most experts say that except for people in the immediate area of the blast who survive, the odds are against anyone absorbing enough radiation to suffer long-term effects, such as radiation poisoning or cancer.

And the history of radiation exposure is on our side. In a nuclear disaster second only to Chernobyl that occurred in Brazil in 1987, junkyard workers pried open a metal canister from a cancer clinic. Inside was glowing blue radioactive cesium-137 dust. By the next day, dozens of locals had been exposed. "Several ingested it," says Anderson.

Of the 20 seriously exposed victims, "four died. But 100,000 plus people had to be medically evaluated. Most of those -- 47,000 people -- had to take a shower and be monitored down the road."

Although the devastation was unimaginable and an estimated 200,000 people died from the atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki -- from the explosion and radiation poisoning in the first year -- the long-term health-related problems for survivors hasn't been as horrific. Charles B. Meinhold, president emeritus of the National Council on Radiation Protection, a nonprofit international clearinghouse for research on radiation safety, says studies of those survivors since 1950 show that of 86,572 people exposed to levels of radiation thousands of times greater than a dirty bomb could produce, cancer deaths exceeded the expected numbers for that population by 335.

What should I do if I'm in the vicinity of the explosion?

The basic rule is to stay inside or get inside, then listen to the radio or television for further information.

The amount of radioactive dust that could seep inside or enter a building through its air-filtering system isn't likely to be significant. "If you are inside of a building, your chances are like getting several X-rays' worth of exposure," Zielinski says.

If you're outside, determine whether the wind is coming your way. "You don't want to be running down the street," Zelinski says. "Get into a building and reduce the amount of dust that gets on you."

Close to the explosion? Covered with residue? Stay put. "If the response is good, they are going to try to decontaminate folks closer in as opposed to those fleeing," says Zielinski. "Even if it takes an hour for authorities to respond, you are going to get better treatment there than going to a hospital."

Worst reaction? Racing for mass transit or trying to drive home. Not only could you contaminate your car, but you could also spread radiation to your family. And experts are concerned that people trying to flee the city would jam traffic routes and delay emergency teams from getting to the scene.

Experts say what the public needs to remember most about dirty bombs is that if you survive the explosion, the amounts of radiation are most likely so low that a few hours of exposure isn't going to be harmful.

"The public health people would be there within three hours or sooner," says Meinhold. "Let them worry about evacuation, decontamination, etc."

How about washing?

"Most or a large portion of the decontamination effort is going to involve a soapy shower and a change of clothes," says the CSIS's Anderson, who recommends that if you think you are near a potential terrorist target, it may make sense to keep extra clothes, shoes, soap and shampoo on hand.

Says Zielinski: "The first thing [is] to try to get as much off as you can, get the clothes off of you and put them in a trash bag. Then take a shower."

Can you drink the water?

There may be some contamination of water and food in some areas. "You can drink it, but there are definite issues there," warns Anderson, explaining that although a good rain would help clear contamination, the runoff might affect the groundwater supply.

Bottled water might be the safe way to go until authorities have tested drinking water, he says.

Would a gas mask help any?

Gas masks, experts say, may help in protecting against "particulate matter," since radiation attaches to particles in the air. But when you get much beyond the area of the blast, the dust is going to dissipate quickly anyway. "I'm not not sure it would make a difference," says Anderson.

Should we stock up on potassium iodide?

Again, the solution and the problem may not match well in a dirty-bomb attack, experts say. Potassium iodide protects the thyroid gland from absorbing radioactive isotope of iodine -- a component of radioactive fallout that causes radiation sickness.

"I'm not sure we're going to get to the point where we will have many people, if any, suffering from radiation sickness," says Anderson.

How likely is an attack?

Many experts believe that terrorists already have the crude radioactive materials needed and that a dirty bomb attack is one of the more likely terrorist scenarios -- some even say "inevitable." But Anderson cautions that "it's a simple plan that is still reasonably difficult and complicated to coordinate."

But the biggest problem in making a dirty bomb is that even if you find all the parts, assembling them can kill you. True, some terrorists are already suicidal. Still, "first you've got to find it, then you've got to carry it around," says Zielinski. "By the time I get it, move it to a site that is secure and grind it, I've probably already lost several people."

To make and transport a dirty bomb safely would require a lead container or shielding that makes it nearly impossible to move. Handling the material can cause burns on the hands and body, even through a backpack. And making a bomb without a shield means almost certain death from the concentrated radiation levels of a radioactive rod or "clump."

What do we have to fear?

Experts say the answer is fear itself. Dirty bombs can be as devastating as any conventional bomb. People will die in a dirty-bomb attack. But they believe very few people will die or get sick from its radiation. And the radiation is the terrorist wild card for causing panic and psychological trauma.

Experts are concerned that public panic is the biggest risk. "It stems from our society's inherent fear of radiation," says Anderson, explaining that he's not discounting the tremendous social and economic implications of a contaminated area in an urban center.

The blast area, he says, could be off-limits for several months during intense cleanup efforts, and that could disrupt the local economy.

Still, "a lot of this stuff, you just take a big fire hose out and you wash it down," says Larsen. "It's a heavy metal, so it goes to the bottom of the river. It shouldn't be too much problem. So then we have low levels of radiation. That's not as bad as smoking cigarettes. I'd rather be a half-mile from a dirty bomb site than smoke cigarettes."

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Washington Post
June 13, 2002
Pg. 16

Bioterror Defense Bill Signed

Bush Says Goal Is to Counter 'Most Dangerous Weapons'

By Bill Miller, Washington Post Staff Writer

President Bush, saying that "biological weapons are potentially the most dangerous weapons in the world," signed legislation yesterday that provides $4.3 billion for drugs, vaccines, training and other initiatives to deal with a bioterror attack.

The legislation, crafted in the wake of the terrorist attacks Sept. 11 and the subsequent anthrax outbreak, calls for tightening security at water plants, improving food inspections, and increasing stockpiles of vaccines against smallpox and other diseases. It also provides $1.6 billion for states to aid with emergency preparedness.

"Last fall's anthrax attacks were an incredible tragedy to a lot of people in America, and it sent a warning that we needed and heeded," Bush said in a Rose Garden ceremony. "We must be better prepared to prevent, identify and respond."

The FBI has made no arrests in the anthrax attacks, which killed five people and made 13 others ill in the first fatal instance of biological terrorism on U.S. soil.

The legislation includes spending for the current fiscal year and fiscal 2003. It requires community water systems serving more than 3,300 people to conduct vulnerability assessments and prepare emergency response plans, and it gives the Food and Drug Administration new authority to bar unsafe foods from entering the country.

The package had overwhelming backing on Capitol Hill, and Bush is hoping to replicate that consensus with his proposal to create a Department of Homeland Security that would combine all or parts of 22 federal agencies. The new department would be the lead agency in dealing with bioterrorism, managing the National Pharmaceutical Stockpile and promoting research for new vaccines and antidotes.

Bush promoted the reorganization plan at the signing ceremony, saying it would "align authority and responsibility." Afterward, he joined Tom Ridge, his adviser on homeland security, in the first meeting of a group of 16 business, academic and government leaders recruited by the White House for a new anti-terror advisory council.

The Homeland Security Advisory Council will recommend ways to get the new department rolling. It is headed by Joseph J. Grano Jr., chairman of UBS PaineWebber.

"You all can play a very useful role in this process," Bush said in convening the panel. "You bring a lot of heft and a lot of experience and a lot of know-how."

With Ridge planning to present Bush with a national anti-terror strategy in July, the members will have little time to have input on the drafting of any proposals that emerge. But Ridge said the council will have a critical role in following up with more ideas and in helping with the mechanics of setting up a new department.

The council's members include William H. Webster, former head of the FBI and CIA; James R. Schlesinger, who helped create the Energy Department in the late 1970s; Kathleen M. Bader, a vice president with Dow Chemical Co.; Jared L. Cohon, president of Carnegie Mellon University; Utah Gov. Mike Leavitt (R); Sidney Taurel, chairman of Eli Lilly and Co.; and D.C. Mayor Anthony A. Williams (D).

Schlesinger had these words of caution: "It is easier to develop a plan and a strategy than to see it is executed, particularly in the federal government."

Ridge said the council will help with putting the strategy into action because the members "are all very successful leaders. They've all delivered on ideas. . . . They've been involved in merger and acquisition work. They know the pitfalls."

Ridge spent an hour with the council, then dashed to Capitol Hill, where he briefed House members on the new department in a closed session. A similar meeting is scheduled for today with the Senate. Ridge said that he was encouraged by House leaders who want to take action by Sept. 11 but that the process might prove to be more time-consuming than that, with the end of the year a more achievable target.

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Los Angeles Times
June 13, 2002

Base Digging For Possible Chemical Agents

Edwards: Air Force to excavate WWII-era trenches near airmen's dorms and move any hazardous materials to a safer area of the facility.

By Richard Fausset, Times Staff Writer

Concerned that World War II-era trenches at Edwards Air Force Base could contain mustard gas and other chemical warfare agents, the military will begin a $4.5-million cleanup effort next week near a group of airmen's dormitories, officials said Wednesday.

The four buried trenches--part of a chemical storage yard that closed in 1946 on the sprawling base north of Lancaster--were discovered a few years ago as the Air Force made plans to build the dorms about 25 feet away, Edwards spokesman Gary Hatch said.

Scientists found no evidence of hazardous materials in the soil around the trenches at that time, Hatch said, but the Air Force now wants the trenches excavated. The cleanup will take about five months, he said, with crews working inside a specially constructed mobile tent equipped with air filtration systems. The soil will be placed in a lined dump on the base's testing ground and any hazardous materials will be placed in metal bins and stored in a warehouse on the base, far from regular activities.

"We're proceeding like there might be some materials in there," said Hatch, who added that no personnel would be relocated during the process. Money for the cleanup will come from a U.S. Department of Defense fund for environmental cleanups, he said.

Lyle Talbot, a member of the local environmental group Desert Citizens Against Pollution, said he believes the chances of finding chemical warfare agents are pretty high. Air Force records indicate that the yard may have contained the blistering agents mustard gas, lewisite and phosgene, as well as the choking agent chloropicrin.

Talbot, a former member of the base's Restoration Advisory Board, said no records have been uncovered that prove the chemicals were destroyed: "They just apparently disposed of them in the trenches."

Edwards officials said military records from the 1940s show that the base didn't have the personnel on hand to close the chemical yard properly, but they are not certain what actually happened.

Though the U.S. Armed Forces have not produced chemical warfare agents since 1991, authorities and communities across the country are still dealing with their complicated legacy, said Craig Williams of the Chemical Weapons Working Group, a Kentucky-based organization that advocates cleanups of stockpiles.

The Army is working on plans to dismantle its eight chemical weapons stockpiles in the United States, said Larry McCaskill, spokesman for the Army's Aberdeen Proving Ground in Maryland, where 1,600 tons of mustard agent have been stored since World War II and are soon to be neutralized.

On the campus of American University in Washington, D.C., the Army is removing chemical warfare agents left from tests conducted there during World War I, Hatch said.

Steve Kornguth, director of the University of Texas' Biological and Chemical Countermeasures Program, said it is possible that the 50-year-old chemicals at Edwards or elsewhere may no longer be a health hazard. But Talbot, who said he has been fighting for the cleanup since the mid-1990s, said it's important for the Air Force to do the right thing at Edwards.

"There are a number of offices within a quarter-mile of the site," he said. "Now, it's a chapter we can close."

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Washington Post
June 14, 2002
Pg. 28

U.S. Withdraws From Missile Treaty

Bush Presses Congress for $7.8 Billion for Defense System

By Dana Milbank, Washington Post Staff Writer

The Bush administration formally withdrew yesterday from the 30-year-old Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty with Russia, but skirmishing continued between the administration and congressional Democrats over Bush's missile defense proposal.
The withdrawal from the treaty was set on Dec. 13, when President Bush gave Russia, as the successor to the Soviet Union, six months' notice that the United States would withdraw to pursue a missile defense system.
Even as the treaty expired, the administration warned it would veto the defense spending bill for next year unless Congress restores $814 million cut from the missile defense program by the Senate Armed Services Committee.
Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld wrote to the committee warning that he would recommend that Bush veto the $393 billion spending bill if the full Senate, which takes up the measure soon, does not restore the funding removed by the committee. Bush seeks $7.8 billion next year for missile defenses. The Democratic-controlled committee objected to plans by the administration to increase the secrecy of the testing program.
On Wednesday, 30 Democrats filed suit against Bush, Rumsfeld and Secretary of State Colin L. Powell seeking to block the withdrawal from the treaty. The lawmakers argued that the president cannot pull out of a treaty without the approval of Congress.
Ari Fleischer, the president's press secretary, said the lawsuit was "highly likely heading toward dismissal," based on precedents.
Fleischer also said it was typical that less information about the project would be made public as it develops. "These programs are going to receive classifications to prevent the information from going to people who would want to use that information against us," he said.
The Defense Department plans to break ground Saturday in Alaska on six underground silos for missile interceptors. Such construction was prohibited under the treaty, which prohibited nationwide missile defense systems.
Bush, in a statement formally announcing the withdrawal yesterday, said he would move "as soon as possible" to deploy a missile defense system. "With the treaty now behind us, our task is to develop and deploy effective defenses against limited missile attacks," Bush said. "As the events of September 11 made clear, we no longer live in the Cold War world for which the ABM Treaty was designed."
Meanwhile, a Navy ship in the Pacific was the planned launching pad last night for an interceptor rocket aimed at a dummy warhead in the latest test of one troubled element of the missile defense program.

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New York Times
June 14, 2002

With A Shrug, A Monument To Cold War Fades Away

By David E. Sanger with Michael Wines
WASHINGTON, June 13 — When the Antiballistic Missile Treaty was signed in 1972, Richard Nixon and Leonid Brezhnev sat side-by-side in Moscow, in an elaborate ceremony meant to show that even cold war enemies could come to an agreement.
When it died today at age 30 years and 18 days, the White House issued a four-paragraph statement and the Kremlin shrugged, the absence of ceremony meant to show that the American-Russian partnership could survive a disagreement.
For President Bush, it was the fulfillment of a campaign promise, and it was a victory for conservatives who have long argued that the restrictions against missile defenses were making it impossible to test and ultimately build a system designed to counter a different threat: limited-scale missile attacks by rogue states or terrorist groups.
Proponents of the treaty — including the Russians, the Europeans and advocates of traditional arms control — often called it a cornerstone of the strategic relationship between the world's two largest nuclear powers, and warned that its breach would set off an arms race.
Now both sides in that debate face new challenges. As one senior administration official said, noting that the issue was now technological rather than political, "missile defense rises and falls on whether it works. It's not an ideological fight any more."
Meanwhile, Mr. Bush and his aides have repeatedly noted that the abandonment of the treaty was immediately followed by a negotiation to reduce both sides' nuclear arsenals by roughly two-thirds, to between 1,700 and 2,200 warheads, within 10 years. "There was no arms race, no breach of relations," Condoleezza Rice, the national security adviser, told reporters last month. "There was a new treaty, codifying major arms reductions."

That agreement, called the Treaty of Moscow and signed by Mr. Bush and President Vladimir V. Putin at the Kremlin last month, expires in 2012, when both sides will be free to build up their forces again, unless the accord is extended or amended.
Mr. Bush acted last December after lawyers at the State Department concluded he was within his rights to withdraw from the treaty, under its termination clause, without Senate approval. A small group of Democrats filed suit earlier this week challenging Mr. Bush's right to terminate a treaty that the Senate had to ratify in 1972, but the White House said it expected the courts to dismiss the case.
Mr. Bush never talked about the formal withdrawal from the treaty in public today, issuing a statement saying simply that its demise was well-deserved, and that both countries should look forward to a new era of missile defense.
"Last month, President Vladimir Putin and I agreed that Russia and the United States would look for ways to cooperate on missile defenses, including expanding military exercises, sharing early warning data, and exploring potential joint research and development of missile defense technologies," Mr. Bush said, dangling anew the possibility that Russia could end up supplying some technology for the new system.
The Pentagon, meanwhile, is wasting no time.
It is expected to break ground this week on the construction of six underground silos for missile interceptors in Alaska, which would have been prohibited under the terms of the treaty.
On Thursday, the Lake Erie, an Aegis guided missile cruiser, will try to shoot down a missile launched from the Pacific Missile Range Facility on Kauai, Hawaii.
Pentagon officials say they are on the way to setting up a rudimentary system called a test bed in the fall of 2004. That system is intended as a protection against a North Korean missile launching, though if it works it could also counter a launching from China or other parts of Asia.
Russian politicians and military experts greeted the treaty's demise with a mixture of shrugs and bravado, saying they could — and would — make the nation impervious to nuclear attack no matter what defense or offense Washington might contemplate.
The Russian Parliament's leading expert on military issues, Aleksei Arbatov of the West-leaning Yabloko faction, said Russia should respond by speeding development of a new nuclear missile, the Topol-M, which can be used in silos and on moveable launchers.
Setting up the Topol-M, he said, would force the United States to consider accepting restrictions on its planned missile defense, which he called "an extremely negative event of historical scale."

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All soldiers at U.S. base in Uzbekistan surveyed for exposure to chemical weapons traces

Fri Jun 14, 2:45 AM ET

BAGRAM, Afghanistan - Health officials have surveyed all U.S. troops at a base in Uzbekistan and found no one with symptoms of exposure to nerve gas and other chemical weapons contamination at the base, a military spokesman said Friday.
Some 1,200 personnel at Khanabad air base were questioned whether they showed any symptoms since traces of nerve gas and mustard gas were detected there a week ago, U.S. Col. Roger King said.
Officials will now survey the records of at least 1,800 more servicemen who passed through the base since American forces first deployed there in October to support the campaign in neighboring Afghanistan (news - web sites), King said.
Khanabad, located near the southern Uzbek city of Karshi, was once a major hub for the campaign and continues to give logistics support for U.S.-led forces in Afghanistan.
Inspectors found vapors from nerve and mustard gas at three sites on the base, including in hangars where a headquarters was set up and where the Air Force was conducting maintenance. Traces of a possible "blood agent" — cyanide, for example — were also detected, though it could have been a mistaken reading caused by fuel vapors, officials said.
Officials believe the traces were left by chemical weapons once stored by the Soviet military, which controlled the base until Uzbekistan became independent in 1991. All U.S. troops have been moved away from the contaminated sites.

http://story.news.yahoo.com/news?tmpl=story&u=/ap/20020614/ap_wo_en_po/afghan_nerve_gas_1

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