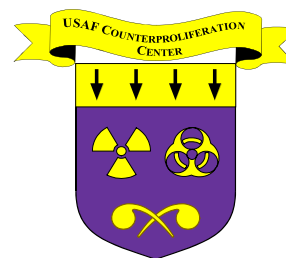


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USAF COUNTERPROLIFERATION CENTER

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Iraq To Allow Arms Inspectors

U.S. Skeptical, Says Disarmament Is Key

By Colum Lynch and Glenn Kessler, Washington Post Staff Writers

UNITED NATIONS, Sept. 16 -- Iraq's foreign minister pledged today to allow United Nations weapons inspectors to return to his country "without conditions" for the first time since U.N. arms experts left in 1998.

U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan hailed the pledge as "the indispensable first step towards an assurance that Iraq no longer possesses weapons of mass destruction." But the White House denounced the overture as a ruse and "a tactic that will fail."

"This is not a matter of inspections," the White House said in a statement, which urged the U.N. to continue with plans for a resolution demanding that Iraq disarm. "It is about disarmament of Iraq's weapons of mass destruction and the Iraqi regime's compliance with all other Security Council resolutions."

The Iraqi invitation, outlined in a letter to Annan from Foreign Minister Naji Sabri, appeared calculated to undermine the Bush administration's efforts to build a case at the U.N. for military action against Saddam Hussein if he fails to disarm. It came as Iraq faces mounting pressure from even its closest allies, including Russia and key Arab leaders, to submit to inspections.

U.S. officials are concerned that Iraq's gambit will complicate their efforts to strengthen the resolve in the international community for tough action against the Baghdad regime. Inspections alone are not enough, said the officials, who have portrayed inspections as a potentially time-consuming process that is a step removed from the administration's prime goals: dismantling Iraq's major weapons, improving human rights in the nation and, ultimately, removing Hussein from power.

Enforcement of earlier U.N. demands, tonight's White House statement said, "will require a new, effective U.N. Security Council resolution that will actually deal with the threat Saddam Hussein poses to the Iraqi people, to the region, and to the world."

In an interview, White House communications director Dan Bartlett said the administration hopes that past problems with Iraq will persuade Security Council nations not to have "a knee-jerk reaction" to today's letter.

"This doesn't change our posture one bit," Bartlett said. "The tired tactic of Saddam Hussein's overture on inspectors is something he's done in the past and is met with a healthy dose of skepticism."

Before Sabri's letter was made public tonight, the Bush administration moved on several fronts, diplomatic and military, to prepare for a confrontation with Iraq. Secretary of State Colin L. Powell met with a succession of foreign officials, including four members of the Security Council, to press the U.S. case for a tough resolution.

"I'm absolutely sure that we're going to continue to move forward within the Security Council on a new resolution," Powell told reporters before the Iraqi letter was announced. "The political dynamic has changed" in light of Bush's speech to the U.N. last week.

After announcing the Iraqi invitation, Annan credited Bush for "galvanizing" international support for the resumption of U.N. inspections in Iraq. He also singled out Amr Moussa, secretary general of the Arab League, for "convincing the Iraqis to accept the inspectors."

The United Nations and the Arab League have been engaged in confidential discussions with the Iraqi government in recent days, trying to broker a deal that would lead to the resumption of U.N. arms inspections for the first time since 1998, according to U.N. diplomats. The discussions followed a direct appeal by Annan to Sabri on Saturday at a meeting of Arab League foreign ministers in New York to let the inspectors return. Officials said that Arab ministers pressed Iraq to accept inspectors.

"What we have been urging the Iraqis to do is let the inspectors in, [telling them that] otherwise there will be serious consequences," said a senior Arab diplomat. He said Arab officials have told the Bush administration that Hussein would never give in on inspections unless he was confronted with a unified front at the United Nations.

Sabri said Iraq agreed to allow the return of inspectors to prove that it "no longer possesses weapons of mass destruction." He said Iraqi officials are prepared to begin discussing a series of "practical arrangements" with the U.N.'s chief weapons inspector, Hans Blix, required for the "immediate resumption of inspections."

But he also insisted the United Nations respect the "sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of Iraq."

A senior State Department official traveling with Powell tonight said that as rumors circulated around the U.N. of a new Iraqi letter, Powell emphasized to other foreign officials that the United States was still seeking a tough resolution.

"At best, it's an attempt to indicate that Iraq is willing to take a first step," the official said. "At worst, it's another false promise."

He said the United States is seeking a resolution that had three key elements: noting that Iraq is in violation of U.N. resolutions; specifying what Iraq must do; and making clear there are consequences if Iraq fails to respond.

For the United States, the issue is not inspections but Iraqi disarmament, the official said. He noted that while the Iraqi letter spoke of unconditional inspections, it did not promise to fulfill U.N. obligations or promise to disclose and destroy all weapons of mass destruction. The letter also did not mention other issues raised by Bush in his speech, such as the release of Baghdad's Gulf War prisoners.

"It is not for Iraq to pick and choose what parts of what resolutions it wants to comply with," he said.

French Foreign Minister Dominique de Villepin told U.S. reporters at a luncheon today that the United States and other Security Council members should focus on securing the return of U.N. inspectors to Iraq before contemplating military action.

But Britain's Foreign Secretary Jack Straw warned reporters after a meeting with Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov that Baghdad has made commitments before, only to renege on them.

He said Ivanov had agreed that Iraq was "in breach" of U.N. resolutions requiring the resumption of inspections, and that Iraq would face "serious consequences" if it failed to comply with its disarmament obligations.

Comments tonight praising Iraq's response by a number of foreign officials, such as the French and Egyptians, suggested the administration will face a tougher selling job on its U.N. resolution.

In Washington, Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld said U.S. pilots patrolling the skies over Iraq are taking a new approach to defending themselves against Iraqi gunners by striking at the command and communications links in Iraq's air defense system rather than its guns and radars. The switch is designed to do more long-lasting damage to Iraq's ability to shoot down the American and British pilots whose fighters jets have been patrolling "no-fly" zones over northern and southern Iraq for 11 years. President Bush, speaking in Iowa before Sabri's letter was released, issued a new challenge to the United Nations to take action against the Iraqi regime. Though the administration has not been able to link Iraq to al Qaeda, Bush again suggested the world should fear the possibility that Hussein would join forces with terrorist groups.

Senate Majority Leader Thomas A. Daschle (D-S.D.) called Bush today to make formal his earlier suggestion that the president and House and Senate leaders begin collaborating as soon as possible on a congressional resolution dealing with Iraq. Daschle did not reach Bush, but White House Chief of Staff Andrew Card Jr. returned the call and said told Daschle "they would get back to him," said a Daschle aide.

Staff writers Mike Allen, Karen DeYoung and Helen Dewar contributed to this report from Washington.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A26625-2002Sep16.html>

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New York Times
September 17, 2002
Pg. 1

U.N. Inspectors Can Return Unconditionally, Iraq Says

By Julia Preston and Todd S. Purdum

UNITED NATIONS, Sept. 16 — Iraq, responding to worldwide pressure after President Bush demanded that it comply with United Nations resolutions, said today that it would allow international weapons inspectors to return "without conditions."

Secretary General Kofi Annan announced Baghdad's decision here after receiving a letter this afternoon from the Iraqi foreign minister, Naji Sabri, and credited Mr. Bush and pressure from Arab leaders for Iraq's apparent change of heart.

"I believe the president's speech galvanized the international community," Mr. Annan said, referring to Mr. Bush's speech at the United Nations on Thursday. It prompted demands from a host of nations for Iraq to readmit the inspectors, who were withdrawn in December 1998, just before the United States and Britain began bombing Iraq for violation of Security Council resolutions.

Mr. Annan said Baghdad had agreed to "immediate discussions" to work out the logistics for weapons inspection teams to start work in Iraq. It was not clear when the inspectors could actually return.

The Bush administration and Britain voiced skepticism about the Iraqi offer. Administration officials said the United States was still determined to seek a strong resolution demanding Iraqi compliance with past resolutions and threatening to act if Baghdad failed to do so.

Iraq's offer followed signs of mounting military pressure. Administration officials said today that British and American warplanes were bombing major air defenses there while patrolling no-flight zones. In addition, there was continuing pressure on the Security Council from Secretary of State Colin L. Powell to demand Iraq's full cooperation with renewed weapons inspections.

"This is a tactical step by Iraq in hopes of avoiding strong U.N. Security Council action," said Scott McClellan, the deputy White House spokesman. "As such, it is a tactic that will fail." He added: "It is time for the Security Council to act."

A senior State Department official said Iraq's letter was "not a promise to disarm, not a promise to allow unfettered inspections, not a promise to disclose the state of its weapons program."

The Iraqi decision was announced here after President Saddam Hussein held a third closed meeting in as many days with top officials of his government in Baghdad. He appeared to be trying to undercut both the American campaign for strong United Nations action and a surge of international criticism of his government since Mr. Bush's speech. Secretary Powell, pressing ahead with the American proposals for swift action, met today with officials from Syria, Colombia and Mexico, all nations that sit on the Council this year, as well as with representatives of Turkey and Egypt.

The United States clashed today with France, one of its closest allies, over how the Security Council should proceed, as Paris insisted on a two-stage approach that would postpone any threat of military action for several weeks at least. France was calling for a first resolution by the Council demanding unfettered inspections, to be followed later by a measure backing the use of force, depending on Iraq's response.

Mr. Annan credited the Arab League, and particularly its secretary general, Amr Moussa of Egypt, with "strenuous efforts" that persuaded Mr. Hussein to relent on his ban of the inspectors.

Iraq's change of position was set in motion on Saturday morning, when Mr. Annan went to a closed meeting of Arab League ministers here to appeal for help in persuading Iraq to allow the inspectors to return. "Governments are discussing war and peace," Mr. Annan said, urging Arab nations to help prevent another military conflict in the Middle East.

Governments across the Arab world then began to call on Baghdad to yield on the inspectors.

The inspectors work in two teams. One, which investigates for evidence that Iraq has biological and chemical weapons and long-range missiles that are prohibited, is based in New York and headed by Hans Blix. The inspectors who will hunt for signs of a nuclear weapons program are based in Vienna in the Iraq action team of the International Atomic Energy Agency, headed by Jacques Baute. Both team leaders have said they are ready to begin work in Iraq as soon as the logistical arrangements for their communications, transportation, laboratories and lodging there can be arranged.

Mr. Hussein's move seemed likely to deepen the dispute over tactics between the United States and France. Foreign Minister Dominique de Villepin, forcefully arguing France's position at a midday news conference, outlined a plan for an initial Council resolution that would only require Iraq to allow the weapons inspections without spelling out any consequences if Baghdad does not comply.

France, one of the five permanent, veto-bearing members of the Council, wants to hold off until later a resolution to authorize the use of military force, depending on how the weapons inspections proceed.

The French plan runs counter to the proposal that Secretary Powell advocated in a day of continual meetings and intense lobbying here. Administration officials said they were seeking one resolution that would both require Iraq's complete cooperation for the inspections and also refer to the consequences of noncompliance, leaving Washington wide leeway to decide if and when to begin a military assault on Iraq.

"We cannot go for two hares at the same time," Mr. de Villepin said, referring to the two proposed resolution elements that are in dispute. "We should look for one, and we get one. If we look for two, we won't catch any one." He argued that the resolution should focus tightly on stopping Iraq's violations of Security Council measures to curb weapons proliferation, and not range into suggestions of overthrowing Mr. Hussein.

Referring to the war to oust the Taliban from Afghanistan, he warned that Iraq "is not as easy as other targets" for a military operation. He also said an attack on Mr. Hussein could inflame public opinion in the Arab world if it is not seen as having the support of the full Security Council.

France said it could persuade the Council to adopt unanimously the first resolution it is proposing.

An administration official argued that the two resolutions would give Mr. Hussein "two opportunities to further embarrass the United Nations."

Before word of the Iraqi offer arrived, American officials said they hoped to begin detailed talks in the Security Council by Wednesday, with the goal of circulating draft language of a resolution by week's end.

Britain's Foreign Secretary, Jack Straw, said today after a meeting with Russia's Foreign Minister, Igor S. Ivanov, that they were in agreement about Iraq's violations of Council edicts and also on the need to warn Baghdad of "serious consequences" for those breaches. His comments suggested that both permanent members of the Council would support the single, strong resolution that Washington is proposing.

However, late today Mr. Ivanov welcomed Iraq's agreement for the unconditional return of the arms inspectors, saying that the possibility of military action had been avoided, the Interfax news agency reported Tuesday.

Diplomats said Iraq's gesture to receive the weapons inspectors could slow the pace of events more than Washington has intended. Once they are on the ground, the inspectors will be governed by a specific timetable set out in Council resolution 1284, which reorganized the inspections program in 1999.

Under the terms of that resolution, the inspectors, once on the ground, would have to report back to the Security Council within 60 days to lay out a work plan, identifying lines of investigation they want to pursue. The resolution then gives them six months to reach preliminary conclusions about whether Iraq is developing prohibited weapons. Administration officials have said they would like to get authorization from both the United Nations and from Congress to begin a military operation before the end of the year absent proof that Iraq is not developing weapons of mass destruction. Iraq agreed under the terms that ended the Persian Gulf war in 1991 that it would destroy any such weapons and submit to international inspections to ensure compliance.

The biological and chemical weapons team based in New York has a staff of 63 experts of 27 nationalities. All are fully trained and briefed about Iraq's past weapons programs, based on information gathered by earlier teams.

About 200 more trained experts are on call so they can be put to work within a matter of weeks. The program is generously financed, receiving eight-tenths of 1 percent of the revenues from Iraq's oil sales, which are monitored by the United Nations.

The Iraq action team for nuclear inspections in Vienna now includes about 16 members, Mr. Baute said recently, adding that he planned to expand it by about five experts when it came time to return to Iraq.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2002/09/17/international/middleeast/17DIPL.html>

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Washington Times
September 17, 2002
Pg. 1

North Korea Amasses Chemical Weapons

By Jong-Heon Lee, United Press International

SEOUL — North Korea has a stockpile of 2,500 to 5,000 tons of chemical weapons and is believed to be capable of producing 1 ton of biological weapons annually, South Korea's Defense Ministry said yesterday.

The communist state's stockpile of chemical weapons consists of 17 different types that can be used to dispense nerve gases, the ministry said in a report presented to the National Assembly. North Korea can produce about 4,500 tons of chemical weapons every year, it said.

Pyongyang's army also has biological weapons involving 13 different lethal germs and viruses, the ministry said.

Mike Moody, president of the Chemical and Biological Arms Control Institute in Washington, said the South Korean estimates represented "a significant amount" of chemical weapons.

By comparison, Russia had 40,000 tons of chemical weapons when it was forced to declare the numbers by the Chemical Weapons Convention Treaty. The United States had 30,000 tons before it began to dismantle its reserves.

Mr. Moody noted that the production of an agent does not always translate into an effective chemical or biological weapon. Its effectiveness depends on several factors, including the quality of production, means of dispersal and intended target.

North Korea signed the Biological Weapons Convention in 1987 but has been called a leading violator of the international treaty that bans germ warfare.

Under its ruling principle of "army-first politics," North Korea has produced and deployed long-range ballistic missiles capable of reaching the United States and has sold some missiles to Iran and Syria. Experts say the missiles can be fitted with biochemical warheads.

To cope with attacks from the North, South Korean military authorities have bought vaccines capable of inoculating 10,000 soldiers against anthrax, officials said.

Last month, South Korea renounced the use of biological weapons "under any circumstances," despite criticism that the decision was "premature" as long as North Korea poses a military threat.

"The decision was aimed at putting pressure on North Korea to take a reciprocal measure against biochemical weapons," a senior official said on the condition of anonymity. But South Korea has retained the right to use chemical weapons as a deterrent against the North, the official said.

John Bolton, the U.S. undersecretary of state for arms control and international security, echoed the concerns about North Korea's biological and chemical warfare capabilities during a recent visit to Seoul.

"In regard to chemical weapons, there is little doubt that North Korea has an active program," he said in a speech last month. "The U.S. government believes that North Korea has one of the most robust offensive bioweapons programs on Earth."

The United States believes North Korea has also diverted enough plutonium to make one or two nuclear bombs before agreeing to freeze production in 1994. Pyongyang has rejected international calls for inspectors to be allowed into its nuclear facilities to verify that weapons development has halted.

South Korean Foreign Minister Choi Sung-hong urged North Korea last week to allow inspections of its nuclear facilities, saying "the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction" was a key challenge in the peace process between the two Koreas.

"It is now essential that the full cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency begin without further delay for the implementation of safeguards requirements" of the 1994 nuclear accord, he said in an address on Friday to the U.N. General Assembly.

Staff writer Maria Tsigas contributed to this report in Washington.

<http://www.washtimes.com/world/20020917-84317288.htm>

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London Sunday Telegraph

September 15, 2002

Pg. 1

Blair's Iraq Dossier Will Show How Saddam Trained Al-Qaeda Fighters

PM will use evidence in Cabinet showdown with dissenting ministers

By David Bamber and Francis Elliott

The government's long-awaited dossier on Iraq is to reveal the first definitive evidence that Saddam Hussein trained some of Osama bin Laden's key lieutenants as terrorists.

A draft version contains detailed information about how two leading al-Qaeda members, Abu Zubair and Rafid Fatah, underwent training in Iraq and are still linked to the Baghdad regime.

It is also expected to disclose that Saddam has reconstructed three plants to manufacture biological and chemical weapons. According to security officials involved in compiling the dossier, evidence of "worrying activity" at the sites was captured by American satellite photographs within the past few weeks. No decision has been taken on whether the actual pictures of the sites - at Daura, on the outskirts of Baghdad, Taji, 10 miles north west of the capital, and Faluja, 30 miles north west - will be released in the dossier.

One security official said: "The satellite photographs clearly show very worrying activity of rebuilding work at these plants, which we already know were being used for developing chemical and biological weapons. That is what Saddam is doing again."

The dossier is also understood to contain details of Iraq's nuclear weapons programme, including secret activities at a uranium production facility at Al-Qaim, 160 miles west of Baghdad.

Tony Blair intends to present the dossier to the public and Parliament next week when MPs are recalled to discuss invasion plans. Intelligence officers believe that it will provide him with the crucial evidence he needs to convince sceptics about the need for action against Iraq.

The Prime Minister will also use the document at a Cabinet meeting, a week tomorrow, at which he intends to force a showdown with ministers who have expressed disquiet about the prospect of military intervention.

Mr Blair will demand that each minister spells out his or her position on Iraq, so that he can isolate the "doves".

According to US and British intelligence officials, the dossier will set out details of the two al-Qaeda operatives trained in Iraq. Abu Zubair, also known as Fowzi Saad al-Obeidi, was an Iraqi intelligence officer who was trained by Saddam's regime in terrorism techniques against the Kurds in northern Iraq.

Zubair's Supporters of Islam organisation was sent by Saddam into northern Iraq, which is part of the US and British no-fly zone, to assassinate leading Kurds and to build chemical warfare facilities, during the 1990s.

He supposedly defected from Saddam to join al-Qaeda, but his family continues to enjoy privileges in Baghdad.

Senior intelligence officers believe that Saddam covertly encouraged Zubair to join ranks with bin Laden, whom Saddam distrusted and wanted watched.

Zubair, who weighs 22st and is nicknamed "The Bear", ran training camps in Afghanistan for bin Laden before September 11 last year. But he vanished shortly before the US and British invasion.

He is believed to have planned an abortive attempt to blow up Nato ships in the Mediterranean from a base in Morocco last March. The US authorities confirmed in June that he had been arrested in Morocco in May. It is understood that he is still in custody, possibly in America.

Rafid Fatah, also known as Abu Omer al-Kurdi, was also trained by Saddam and worked with Zubair against the Kurds. It is not known when he left Iraq, but he too became a leading member of al-Qaeda. His whereabouts are not known.

The finishing touches to the dossier are still being carried out. Officials said yesterday that some information could be added or some details currently in it could be omitted for security and operational reasons. Mr Blair hopes that the publication of the dossier will further help him to quell resistance in the Labour Party and, in particular, among senior ministers.

Robin Cook, the Leader of the House, Clare Short, the International Development Secretary, and Margaret Beckett, the Environment Secretary, have all voiced disquiet over Mr Blair's handling of the Iraq crisis. A number of other senior ministers have avoided answering questions on the issue.

Pressure on critics has intensified sharply in recent days as both Gordon Brown, the Chancellor, and John Prescott, the Deputy Prime Minister, gave their public backing to Mr Blair.

He now intends to drive home his advantage at next week's meeting. "It's time for some of the members of the Cabinet to nail their colours to the mast," a senior aide said last night.

One Cabinet rebel, however, indicated that they would not be intimidated. "I remain uneasy," said the minister. "I think it is going to be very difficult for Tony to take the party with him. If I am asked what I think, I shall tell him."

Nevertheless, President Bush's efforts to secure UN backing for military action in Iraq has presented Mr Blair with a significant advantage in his tussle with internal critics now robbed of their key objection. There were signs last night that he may even allow a vote on a substantive motion when Parliament is recalled.

Such a move would disarm Mr Cook, who has embarrassed the Prime Minister by pressing for MPs to be given a vote. "Robin has shot his bolt," said a senior minister.

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Christian Science Monitor

September 17, 2002

How Close Is Iraq To The Bomb?

Hussein could be just months away from having nuclear weapons.

By Faye Bowers, Staff writer of The Christian Science Monitor

WASHINGTON - A little over 20 years ago, the US strongly condemned Israel for bombing a nuclear reactor in Iraq that Israel claimed could have been used to produce nuclear weapons.

Now, the US is making the case – at home, at the UN, and abroad – to remove Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein because he may be close to obtaining a nuclear bomb.

The about-face, of course, has been two decades in the making as the Iraqi regime has committed a multitude of transgressions, including the invasion of Kuwait and the discovery after the Gulf War that Iraq had been only six months away from producing a crude nuclear bomb. Then there were the ups and downs of the UN-mandated weapons inspections, and their abrupt end in 1998.

Although experts and intelligence officials say they can't tell for sure without examining the country's facilities, they say Iraq isn't likely to have a bomb at this point. Moreover, they say the Iraqi regime would be at least months away from getting one, even if the fissile material necessary to explode a nuclear device could be smuggled in.

Still, no one seems to doubt that the Iraqi leader is pursuing a nuclear bomb. "The reality here is that the pursuit of weapons of mass destruction has been cumulative and unrelenting on the part of Iraq," says Anthony Cordesman, an Iraq specialist at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington.

In President Bush's speech at the UN last week, he laid out some of President Hussein's efforts to acquire either the fissile material or the parts needed to produce it.

*Iraq has the nuclear scientists and technicians necessary to build a weapon.

*It has the facilities necessary to complete the task, and recent satellite photos show increased activity around them.

*It has attempted to smuggle in aluminum tubes for a centrifuge – a machine used to enrich uranium.

The administration doesn't have a smoking gun at this point, but they are most certainly looking for one.

At the same time, there have been increased US and British airstrikes over Iraq – the largest number, in fact, in the past four years. This might be part of an attempt to open up facilities or underground installations so it can be learned what's going on there.

In addition, international authorities have conducted more searches of Iraqi imports. "My personal view is I suspect the administration will come out with some evidence," says Judith Yaphe, a former intelligence analyst and an Iraq expert at the National Defense University. "Either in terms of smuggling things in, or a discovery of a clandestine acquisition abroad through either front companies or private individuals."

She goes on to say that such activity formed a pattern before the Gulf War, as well as during the UN-mandated inspections, and she could only assume that it continues.

She and other experts, including those at the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) in London who just completed an assessment of Iraq's weapons of mass destruction, say they're sure Iraq has continued to pursue these weapons. But they say there's no way to tell how close Iraq is without surveying the situation firsthand.

Still, the concerns are gaining urgency. "If Iraq were somehow able to acquire nuclear-weapons useable material," the IISS report says, "it could probably produce nuclear weapons in a relatively short time."

One growing concern is that changing technology may have made it easier for Iraq to hide its efforts. "The equipment is smaller," says Jay Davis, a national-security fellow at the Lawrence Livermore National Lab and a former UNSCOM inspector. "It's easier to hide."

With that in mind, and the fact that inspectors have not been permitted to visit any Iraqi nuclear facilities since 1998, the IISS report concludes that the country has likely been pursuing a nuclear bomb. It goes on to quote the most recent public assessment by the CIA: "We believe that Iraq has probably continued at least low-level theoretical R&D associated with its nuclear program."

Senior lawmakers, who will begin holding hearings on endorsing Mr. Bush's plans for Iraq this week, have asked intelligence officials to come up with an updated National Intelligence Estimate – a document that would combine the best and latest intelligence analyses from the CIA, the Pentagon, State Department, and others.

"We owe it to America's parents and our country's troops," says Sen. John Kerry (D) of Massachusetts, "to have [our decision on going to war with Iraq] informed by the latest threat assessment that cross-analyzes agency intelligence about Saddam Hussein's arsenal of weapons of mass destruction."

Gulf War assessments

A report by the International Institute for Strategic Studies in London has chronicled the impact of the 1991 Gulf War on Iraq's nuclear weapons sites:

*The Al-Tuwaitha research reactors and related nuclear installations were damaged or destroyed.

*The uranium separation plants Al-Qaim and Al-Jesira were destroyed.

*Two facilities used to produce highly enriched uranium, Al-Tarmiya and Al-Sharqat, were heavily bombed.

*The headquarters for nuclear weapons design, Al-Altheer, was only slightly damaged.

*The center for centrifuge research, Rashida, and the facility for centrifuge production, Al-Furat, were not hit.

<http://www.csmonitor.com/2002/0917/p02s01-uspo.html>

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USA Today
September 17, 2002
Pg. 11D

Laser 'Breakdown' Technique Focuses On Terrorist Weapons

System that 'makes the invisible visible' could detect chemical, biological agents

By Dan Vergano, USA Today

A laser technique being tested by Army scientists might be able to instantly detect explosives, chemicals and biological agents.

In this era of bioterrorism and post-9/11 fears, researchers envision small, portable, \$20,000 laser systems monitoring the air for danger in train stations, airports and subways. In the field, laser systems may allow soldiers to detect chemical weapons from a football field away.

Called laser-induced breakdown spectroscopy, the technique uses laser pulses to heat a few billionths of a gram's worth of suspicious material, whether airborne or in solid form, to temperatures near 43,000 degrees. After such a roasting, the material radiates its chemical signature, which is read by sensors.

In experimental laser-breakdown tests, U.S. Army Research Laboratory scientists working at the Aberdeen Proving Ground in Maryland detected chemical signatures of TNT and three strains of bacteria related to anthrax. At Los Alamos National Laboratory in New Mexico, the technique has detected airborne pesticides, uranium in liquid solutions and chromium pollution in the soil.

"Inherently it's a rugged and versatile technology," says Andrzej Miziolek, a scientist with the research laboratory. Working with a Florida firm, Miziolek's team has produced a new "broadband" spectroscope to examine any material's chemical signature, whether chemical or biological. Samples don't require any preparation and can be identified at computer speeds.

Progress in harnessing laser sensors will be the focus of an Optics Society of America meeting next week in Orlando.

"We tell people it makes the invisible visible," says Elizabeth Rogan, who heads the society. "The groundwork now underway is pretty essential to the whole protection of the country."

Lasers could analyze targets hundreds of feet away, helping arms inspectors, or be threaded into concealed spaces via fiber optics, Miziolek says.

Laser element tracer systems now on the market serve in applications such as analyzing mining ore and sorting recycled materials. A Los Alamos team at last year's Salt Lake City Winter Olympics used laser breakdown to examine the metal content of bobsled runners to ensure that no one was cheating.

Despite its promise, the technology still needs some development, says physicist Dave Cremer of Los Alamos. Anthrax can cause harm in very low concentrations, which laser techniques have yet to prove able to detect, he says. On the plus side, Miziolek says, if a laser does detect microbes in air ducts, it could then start frying particles, turning from detector to defender. His lab hopes to field-test prototypes next year.

http://www.usatoday.com/tech/news/techinnovations/2002-09-16-army-laser_x.htm

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New York Times

September 17, 2002

Recipes For Death

By Nicholas D. Kristof

On my desk is a set of self-help books that I've been buying at gun shows and on the Internet. If you want to kill a few thousand people, these are the books to consult.

And if we want to reduce the risk of terrorist attacks using bio- or chemical weapons, we have a target closer to home than Iraq: these books and the presses that publish them. If these presses were in Baghdad, the Pentagon would be itching to blow them up.

Right now I'm leafing through "Assorted Nasties," which has detailed instructions on how to make sarin, VX gas and even mustard gas.

Then there's "Silent Death," with 30 pages about manufacturing nerve gases like sarin, tabun and soman. The book also contains a helpful description of the best ways to disseminate gases so as "to lay waste to a metropolitan area." "For those who have whole armies to conquer singlehandedly," the introduction suggests, "I'm sure the section on the production and use of nerve gases will interest you."

Then there's a three-volume set of books, "Scientific Principles of Improvised Warfare," which offers details on where to find anthrax spores and how to cultivate them and turn them into an aerosol.

"If you can make Jell-O," the book promises, "you can wipe out cities. Enjoy!"

Fortunately, it's not that easy. But still, do we as a nation really want to permit books that facilitate terrorism and mass murder? As Justice Arthur Goldberg declared in a 1963 Supreme Court case, the Constitution "is not a suicide pact."

A main barrier to the use of chemical or biological weapons has been knowledge. It's hard to weaponize sarin or anthrax, and so the I.R.A., the Basque separatist group E.T.A., the Tamil Tigers and even Al Qaeda (not to mention people like the Unabomber) have relied on conventional weapons and explosives.

But the information needed to produce lethal cocktails is beginning to spread, partly because these books are getting better. For example, the Japanese group Aum Shinrikyo tried to kill people with anthrax but never got hold of the proper spores. If it were trying today, it could consult one of these books and learn where to obtain deadly spores. "I do think that there is forbidden knowledge, and for me the 'cookbooks' fall into that class of information," said Dr. Ronald M. Atlas, the president of the American Society for Microbiology. "I do not want to see them out there for potential use by terrorists."

In fairness, much of the information in the gun-show books is "garbage," notes Milton Leitenberg, an expert on weapons of mass destruction at the University of Maryland. Another bio-warfare specialist, Raymond Zilinskas of the Monterey Institute of International Studies, also notes that bio- and chemical weapons are very hard to get right — although he adds that the "cookbook" recipes are getting better.

All three experts reluctantly favor curbs on information about bio-, chemical and nuclear weapons.

Whether such curbs are constitutional is uncharted legal territory. But in 1979 a U.S. District Court temporarily blocked The Progressive from publishing an article about the hydrogen bomb because of the risks to national security.

In the 1990's the Senate several times passed measures that would have banned weapons cookbooks. But because of concerns about constitutionality, the final version that became law in 1999 was neutered. It allows prosecution only if the publisher intends for the information to be used to break federal laws. That is usually an impossible test to meet.

We rightly complain about weapons proliferation by China and Russia. But we also need to confront the consequences of our own information proliferation. Our small presses could end up helping terrorists much more than Saddam ever has.

I'm a journalist, steeped in First Amendment absolutism, and book-burning grates on my soul. But then again, so does war. As we prepare to go to battle to reduce our vulnerability to weapons of mass destruction, it seems appropriate for us in addition to consider other distasteful steps that can also make us safer.

We have a window now, while terrorists still have difficulty obtaining reliable recipes for bio- and chemical weapons. If we continue to allow these cookbooks to improve, buttressed by helpful articles in professional journals, then over the next 10 years we may empower terrorists to kill us on an unimaginable scale.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2002/09/17/opinion/17KRIS.html>

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Washington Post
September 18, 2002
Pg. 20

Inspections In Iraq Would Take Months

U.S. Says Tougher Resolution Needed

By Karen DeYoung and Walter Pincus, Washington Post Staff Writers

Under existing U.N. Security Council resolutions, returning weapons inspectors would take at least five months to fully commence operations in Iraq and report on Baghdad's initial cooperation, and up to a year to preliminarily assess whether Iraq still possesses weapons of mass destruction or the capability to produce them.

That extended timeframe could lead to both Iraqi deception and a loss of international and congressional momentum for stepped-up pressure against Baghdad, according to U.S. and British officials. It also helps account for the skepticism with which Washington and London greeted Iraq's promise this week to allow the return of weapons inspectors for the first time in four years.

In continuing to press for a new U.N. inspections resolution, despite Iraq's apparent agreement to those already on the books, sources said the Bush administration wants an accelerated timetable and much tougher and more definitive standards for judging Iraqi cooperation, in addition to U.N.-authorized consequences for noncompliance.

"We want clear criteria and benchmarks in a new resolution that enables us all to agree without any equivocation that either [Iraqi President] Saddam Hussein is behaving, or he is not cooperating," said one source. Administration officials are also concerned that a lengthy inspection timetable, under what they consider vague guidelines, would leave U.S. military planning for an invasion of Iraq in limbo. The military is poised to launch operations against Iraq within six to eight weeks after being told to do so by Bush, according to one well-placed officer.

The Bush administration has repeatedly insisted it has no confidence in any offer from Hussein. Yesterday U.S. officials released a report detailing "the Iraqi regime's repeated pattern of accepting inspections 'without conditions' and then demanding conditions, often at gunpoint" since the U.N. first ordered its disarmament in 1991. U.N. inspectors withdrew from Iraq in 1998, and Iraq has barred them from returning ever since.

Officials in the U.N. Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC) have said there are ways to speed up the timetable or adjust their efforts to arrive at an early assessment. But it appears highly unlikely they could achieve any meaningful results in the "days and weeks" being discussed by the administration.

"We will not drag our feet," said one UNMOVIC official. "But we can't snap our fingers and have it all there tomorrow."

Under the most recent U.N. inspection outline, Security Council Resolution 1284, adopted in 1999, the UNMOVIC team has 60 days after commencing operations in Iraq to draw up a detailed "work program" for inspection of suspected biological and chemical weapons-related sites and other activities. That program, along with a similar document compiled by a separate inspection team from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), must then be approved by the Security Council.

UNMOVIC has a list of 700 potential biological and chemical sites that were either already inspected by its predecessor agency, the U.N. Special Commission on Iraq (UNSCOM), and must be rechecked; were on the list to be checked when inspectors departed in 1998; or have been added on the basis of intelligence and other information gathered over the past four years.

But there are many steps to be taken before even that initial process can begin, including what IAEA spokeswoman Melissa Fleming called "practical issues" such as "where can a plane land? Can inspectors go in without visas?" The building left by UNSCOM in Baghdad has to be reopened. Telephones, computers, office equipment and a testing laboratory left there four years ago have to be replaced or upgraded. Vehicles, including fixed-wing aircraft, have to be procured. Purchases of about 100 cameras and satellite telephones have been arranged, but delivery will take time. Medical personnel and interpreters have to be hired. Provisions for inspector security must be made. As for the IAEA, which has its own list of potential inspection sites, "we don't have anything on the ground," Fleming said. "There is the facility we occupied when we were there before. We have no idea what shape it is in after four years. . . . We need cars, we need to reestablish our detection capabilities." Fleming noted, however, that nuclear detection is slightly less complicated than finding biological or chemical weapons because "nuclear leaves a footprint" that can be located by radiation detectors and other devices.

"We say a year . . . to allow for adequate time" to determine whether Iraq has restarted the nuclear program the IAEA certified had been completely destroyed by inspectors before their departure, Fleming said. Any shorter timeframe "depends on what the Security Council would want us to report on," she said.

After the work plan is adopted, UNMOVIC and IAEA have 120 days within which to make an initial report on whether Iraq is cooperating, not only in allowing complete and unfettered access to any and all locations, but also in handing over all requested documents and allowing interviews with any Iraqi officials.

Under the terms of Resolution 1284, after an additional 120 days, assuming cooperation, certain sanctions against Iraq could be suspended.

But cooperation with inspections does not necessarily mean compliance with disarmament demands, a conclusion inspectors cannot begin to draw until the process is well underway.

"We could report within a year," the UNMOVIC official said, "though some think that is far too long. . . . But if you want an effective system, you can't be too hasty."

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A31441-2002Sep17.html>

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Verification Is Difficult At Best, Say Experts, And Maybe Impossible

By Judith Miller

Although United Nations inspectors say they may be prepared to resume their work within three weeks of a green light from the United Nations Security Council, verifying Iraq's assertions that it has abandoned weapons of mass destruction, or finding evidence that it has not done so, may not be feasible, according to officials and former weapons inspectors.

"I don't want to knock the new inspection regime or my successors' efforts or abilities," said David Kay, a former inspector who led the initial nuclear inspections in Iraq in the early 1990's, "but their task is damn near a mission impossible."

In interviews with weapons experts, all but a small minority echoed such skepticism. While Scott Ritter, a former inspector invited to address the Iraqi Parliament last week, said he doubted that Iraq was still hiding chemical, biological, and nuclear or radiological weapons, most inspectors said they thought Saddam Hussein was continuing his quest for such arms, but that inspectors stood little chance of proving it.

Mr. Kay, a senior vice president with Science Applications International Corporation in Virginia, said it was still unclear whether Mr. Hussein would even permit unfettered inspections of "anything, anytime, anywhere and anyone" in his country — although the United States is demanding such access as a sine qua non of the inspectors' return.

While the United Nations Secretary General, Kofi Annan, emphasized Iraq's willingness to permit unconditional inspections, Mr. Kay said, Iraq's letter of acceptance also spoke of the "practical arrangements" needed to resume visits and the "commitment" that United Nations member states had made "to respect the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of Iraq."

Such language, he argued, was reminiscent of Iraq's earlier refusal to permit inspectors to visit Mr. Hussein's palaces and other symbols of Iraqi sovereignty and independence.

On nuclear inspections, experts disagreed about the ease with which the International Atomic Energy Agency, the United Nations' nuclear monitor, would be able to spot Iraqi cheating. Such inspections are critical, since a key element of the Bush administration's argument for attacking Iraq would be to stop it from upsetting the balance of world power by acquiring nuclear arms.

But on biological and chemical weapons, there was broader agreement that the new inspection organization, the United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission, known by the acronym Unmovic, is in many ways weaker than the group it has replaced at Iraq's insistence: the United Nations Special Commission, which was known as Unsc.

"They are weaker in many respects than we were," said Richard Spertzel, a former Army germ scientist who was an Unsc inspector until the group was withdrawn from Iraq in 1998. "It is optimistic to assume that in one year, which is the time they are likely to have, they will be able to account for the lack of inspections for the past four years."

The new inspection organization has about 300 inspectors — more than Dr. Spertzel's group had, he said — but "we were authorized to call in anybody we needed; Unmovic is not." Several inspectors also mentioned that Hans Blix, the Swedish diplomat who heads the new inspection group, had eliminated many of the more aggressive inspectors from his organization.

Today, Ewen Buchanan, the Unmovic spokesman, expressed confidence in the organization's ability to carry out its mandate. He said about a third of the 220 people on its roster of trained and available inspectors had worked for Unsc, in addition to the 63 full-time Unmovic staff members.

But, Dr. Spertzel noted, since the new inspectors cannot have an affiliation with any government, the talent pool from which they are drawn is far narrower than it was with Unsc. "You must retire from your job, not take a leave, to serve with Unmovic," he said.

Mr. Buchanan countered that although Mr. Blix wanted the "vast proportion" of inspectors to be on long-term United Nations contracts, he had sometimes hired analysts provided by member states for specific missions. Several former inspectors also complained that because the new teams would be permitted to receive intelligence from United Nations member states but not provide it, they would be hampered.

"Unmovic's emphasis on one-way sharing of intelligence information is self defeating," said David Albright, a nuclear expert who has called for intrusive inspections that Iraq is almost certain to oppose.

"The essence of any intelligence sharing is the sharing," Mr. Kay agreed. "It's a circle. Tips must be checked out, expanded and improved upon."

Mr. Buchanan said, however, that Council resolutions permitted inspectors to have a "dialogue" with member states' intelligence agencies.

Several inspectors said Washington would be particularly wary of sharing sensitive intelligence information with Mr. Blix's organization. Mr. Blix, a seasoned expert in weapons assessment, served for 16 years as chief of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

Addressing nuclear inspections, Mr. Kay said he thought that it would be easier for the atomic energy agency to spot cheating than it would be for Unmovic inspectors to detect signs of unconventional germ warfare or chemical weapons programs. "Nuclear facilities, once they are operational, are harder to move," he said.

But Khidhir Hamza, who led part of Iraq's nuclear bomb program until he defected in 1994, disagreed. Estimating that Iraq was now at the "pilot plant" stage of nuclear production and within two to three years of mass producing centrifuges to enrich uranium for a bomb, Dr. Hamza said that such centrifuges were "small, easily hidden, and emit very little radiation that can be detected." Moreover, he said, such centrifuges do not require much power to operate, compounding the difficulty of finding them.

Dr. Hamza, whose book, "Saddam's Bombmaker," describes the Iraqi nuclear program and its concealment efforts in detail, also said Iraq now excelled in hiding nuclear and other unconventional weapons programs.

"There are very few reliable scientists and technical experts coming out of Iraq these days," he asserted. "So unless Unmovic can interview scientists in a neutral place — with their families protected — outside of Iraq, without Iraqi minders present, inspectors will not know where to look for hidden centrifuges and other parts of the program," he said.

Milton Leitenberg, a scientist and biological weapons expert, said the inspectors' success would depend "entirely on the conditions that Unmovic operates in." If no sites were off-limits, if Iraqi "minders" were not permitted to monitor interviews of scientists and technicians, if there were no preset time limits, and if the Security Council backed the inspectors and would not tolerate Iraqi stonewalling, prospects would improve considerably, he said. But he added the experiences of the past 10 years suggested that "Iraq will do anything but comply," and that there was no reason to believe that its intention had changed.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2002/09/18/international/middleeast/18INSP.html>

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Washington Times
September 18, 2002
Pg. 10

Latest Weapons Commission Will Inspect Iraq

By Rowan Scarborough, The Washington Times

It will have a new name and new faces, but the task remains the same for the United Nation's team that will try to find and destroy Saddam Hussein's arsenal of prohibited weapons.

The new name is the U.N. Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission, whose staff of 63 at its New York headquarters has been taking classes on weapons of mass destruction and assembling a database of 30,000 documents.

The inspection commission was created in December 1999 and replaced the U.N. Special Commission, which left Iraq in 1998 after Saddam's security forces blocked its access to various suspected weapons sites.

President Clinton then ordered four days of air strikes, known as Operation Desert Fox. Since then, Iraq has been relatively free to reconstitute and hide its chemical, nuclear and biological weapons programs. Bush administration officials believe that Iraq moved much of its nuclear work underground to escape satellite surveillance and U.S. air strikes. Baghdad shifted work on biological agents to mobile laboratories.

With President Bush threatening military action, Baghdad announced Monday that it will allow weapons monitors back inside the country.

Iraq is believed to harbor thousands of chemical munitions, gallons of biological weapons agents and Scud ballistic missiles. All are prohibited under the 1991 cease-fire agreement by which Iraq agreed "unconditionally" to destroy them.

All the secrecy will make the job for the commission; its chairman, Hans Blix; its staff; and 220 expert consultants all the more difficult.

Mr. Blix filed a report earlier this month with the U.N. Security Council that gives some clue as to how he plans to conduct inspections.

His staff told Iraqi representatives in Vienna, Austria, that the United Nations wants to reopen the Ongoing Monitoring and Verification Center in Baghdad, and open regional offices in Basra and Mosul.

The special commission relied on U.S. intelligence, overhead photographs and surprise visits to document Iraq's arsenal and destroy some of it. Defectors from Iraq's various weapons programs also provided information in the mid-1990s.

Key Bush administration officials, including Vice President Richard B. Cheney and Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld, have said that another round of inspections will not work. They predict Iraq will revert to deception and defiance.

As inspectors bored in on more sites in the late 1990s, special commission teams were repeatedly harassed and blocked by Iraqi agents.

Inspection commission inspectors, if admitted, will seek to find Iraq's prohibited weapons of mass destruction and missiles:

- Chemical — Iraq has not accounted for 6,000 chemical munitions not used in its war against Iran. The special commission found evidence Iraq had loaded VX nerve agent onto missile warheads and has converted a training aircraft, the L-29, into an unmanned vehicle capable of spraying chemical weapons.

"Since the Gulf war, Baghdad has rebuilt key portions of its industrial and chemical production infrastructure," said Anthony Cordesman, a military analyst at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington.

"Previously, Iraq was known to have produced and stockpiled mustard, tabun, sarin and VX, some of which likely remain hidden."

- Biological — Iraq admitted in 1996 that it produced offensive biological weapons and owned 30,000 liters of biological weapons agents. The United Nations believes that the stocks are much larger. Iraq admitted that it produced anthrax, botulinum toxins and aflatoxins. It developed bombs and missile warheads to carry those agents. It deployed, but did not use, the weapons in 1991.

- Missiles — Iraq had 200 to 300 Scud ballistic missiles in 1991. It fired some at Israel and Saudi Arabia. The special commission destroyed others. Iraq says it no longer has Scuds, but the United Nations believes that it has 50 or more.

- Nuclear program — Iraq has nuclear engineers and weapons designs and lacks only fissile material to make weapons. Experts believe that the country was less than a year from producing atomic bombs before allied air strikes destroyed most of Iraq's above-ground facilities.

The International Atomic Energy Agency, based in Vienna, Austria, will hunt for nuclear components.

<http://www.washtimes.com/national/20020918-20266316.htm>

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New York Times
September 18, 2002

Inspectors: 63 Experts From 27 Countries

By Daniel B. Schneider

The United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission, better known by the acronym Unmovic, was created in December 1999. It inherited the mandate of the United Nations Special Commission, known as Unscm, which the Security Council inaugurated at the close of the Persian Gulf war in 1991 to disarm Iraq of chemical and biological weapons and missiles with a range of more than about 100 miles, and to ensure that Iraq not reacquire such weapons.

A separate 15-member group from the Vienna-based International Atomic Energy Agency is authorized to carry out nuclear inspections. Like Unmovic, the team handles monitoring and verification duties in addition to on-site inspections. But it reports to the director of the energy agency, not to the United Nations secretary general.

Unmovic inspectors include weapons specialists drawn from the military; scientists like biochemists; and engineers and operational planners.

At a minimum, inspectors must undergo a monthlong training course, covering topics like the legal framework for inspections, operational procedures, inspection history, health and safety issues, and the social, religious and cultural ramifications of inspection work.

In January 2000, soon after Unmovic's creation, Hans Blix of Sweden, the former director general of the International Atomic Energy Agency, was selected to lead it. The United Nations secretary general also appointed 16 people to serve on a college of commissioners to advise and guide Mr. Blix.

Unmovic, based in New York, draws its inspectors from a staff of 63 experts from 27 countries..

The group gets its staff from the United Nations, and inspectors are not allowed to seek or receive instructions from any United Nations member government. They are required to respect strict confidentiality rules..

Unmovic is amply financed from a small percentage of the money from the export of oil from Iraq, under the United Nations oil-for-food program. It hopes eventually to have about 80 arms inspectors in Iraq at any given time, from a roster of 300 experts worldwide and a staff of 80 in New York.

As for the nuclear inspection team, about half are experts in the production of fissile material, and half in the weaponization process. A group of outside experts, assembled during earlier years of inspections, is available for specialized expertise in areas like analysis of air, water and soil samples for radiation; import and export of goods and materials; and imagery analysis. An inspection group in the field might consist of five or six members of the inspection team and four or five outside specialists, the spokesman said.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2002/09/18/international/18XTEA.html>

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London Daily Telegraph
September 18, 2002

Weapons Are Secret Of Saddam's Survival

By Anton La Guardia, Diplomatic Editor

In the strange world of Saddam Hussein, the weapons of mass destruction he has hidden away are the secret of his survival.

Whatever he may be telling the United Nations about "unconditional" access for weapons inspectors, those who have come closest to understanding his mind believe he will never give up the quest for nuclear, biological and chemical weapons. To give them up would, he believes, amount to suicide.

This attitude begins to explain the baffling behaviour of Saddam, who has been willing to subject his country to extraordinary punishment for the sake of his keeping his non-conventional weapons.

In the past 11 years since the end of the Gulf War, Iraq has suffered the most stringent system of economic sanctions in the world, the pauperisation of its people, diplomatic isolation, repeated military attacks and, now, the threat of an all-out war by America. And yet Saddam is unreformed.

Charles Duelfer, the former deputy head of Unscm, said it was only during a late-night meeting with Iraqi ministers in Baghdad in 1995 that he suddenly realised his work as an arms inspector was ultimately hopeless. In Saddam's view, "possession of weapons of mass destruction had saved the regime on two occasions", Mr Duelfer told a US Senate hearing earlier this year.

The first time was during the bitter war with Iran in the 1980s, when Iraq was able to stop Iranian "human wave" assaults by firing shells filled with chemical agents. The Iraqis told Unscm they had used about 100,000 chemical shells during the 10-year-war. The second time was during the 1991 Gulf War. Saddam distributed chemical and biological shells to units with orders to use them should the Allies try to enter Baghdad.

America believes the US threat of a nuclear response deterred Iraq from using non-conventional weapons. But, according to Mr Duelfer, Iraqi officials told him Saddam is convinced the Americans did not press on to Baghdad because they feared Iraq would resort to chemical and biological weapons as a last resort.

In this analysis, Iraq will always try to wriggle out of its commitments to give up its weapons programmes and UN inspections can never entirely dismantle them.

Mr Duelfer recalled Tariq Aziz telling him bluntly: "You are not [Gen Douglas] MacArthur. You did not occupy Iraq. Therefore there are limits to what you can do."

More than a decade after the end of the Gulf War, the hawks in Washington have reached a similar conclusion. If Iraq cannot be disarmed by the UN then Iraq's regime must be swept away by force, by military occupation if necessary, just as the rulers of Japan and Germany were swept away at the end of the Second World War.

Iraq is often described as the "Prussia of the Arab world". It is, in many ways, too large, wealthy and educated a country to be disarmed completely against its will.

Whatever the UN inspectors do, Iraq retains the industrial capacity to make chemical and biological agents within a matter of weeks.

It knows how to assemble a nuclear bomb. It only lacks the fissile material to make a nuclear weapon, and experts believe it is only a matter of time before it becomes the first nuclear power in the Arab world.

The uncomfortable truth for the West is that any successor of Saddam will be able to develop weapons of mass destruction.

Indeed, a future Iraqi ruler could develop such arms faster than Saddam because sanctions would be lifted and Iraq's large oil revenues would no longer be subject to UN supervision.

Saddam is a megalomaniac with ambitions to dominate the region and his successor may not have the same single-minded motivation to seek weapons of mass destruction. Even so, in today's Middle East any Iraqi government - whether ruled by Saddam or someone else - would be surrounded by hostile neighbours, many of them armed with or seeking nuclear, chemical and biological weapons.

To the east, the historical Persian foes in Iran are believed to be pursuing the whole range of weapons of mass destruction and the ballistic missiles to carry them.

To the north, Turkey is a powerful member of Nato. To the west, Syria has chemical weapons and may have experimented with biological agents.

Then there is Israel, armed with something like 200 nuclear warheads, as well as chemical and biological weapons and a host of indigenous missiles.

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(Editor's Note: Hyperlink for referenced analysis follows article.)

InsideDefense.com

September 17, 2002

CSBA: U.S. Homeland Could Become Battleground In New War With Iraq

The U.S. homeland has a greater chance than it did during the 1991 Persian Gulf War of becoming a battleground if the United States goes to war to oust Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein, a new independent analysis warns.

"While there is much uncertainty over the state of Iraq's offensive capabilities, there is sufficient information to suggest potential threats to American soil," a Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments analysis released today states.

In the 1991 Gulf War, administration officials used the nuclear deterrent to warn Iraq against using chemical or biological weapons against U.S. troops fighting to liberate Kuwait.

Nowadays, however, "Americans cannot be confident that the U.S. nuclear deterrent will be sufficient to dissuade Saddam from attempting to strike at the United States," states the analysis. At the same time, while Saddam Hussein either has or may soon have the means to strike at the United States, Iraq "faces enormous strategic and operational obstacles in conducting a major attack," the report reads.

Further, the fact that Iraq did not use chemical or biological weapons during the Gulf War is "cold comfort," according to CSBA. "Iraqi actions during the conflict and the results of the United Nations Special Commission (UNSCOM) inspections demonstrated: 1) Iraq was willing to expend tremendous resources to develop nuclear, chemical and biological weapons; 2) the Iraqis were adept at concealing the extent of their weapons programs; and 3) they considered virtually any means of offensive action justified to protect the continued existence of the regime," the report states.

U.S. officials readily admit that the CBW development situation in Iraq "has only gotten worse since 1998, when the UNSCOM inspectors left," a senior defense official said last week.

"We continue to see suspicious activities at sites that we believe are related to their CW and BW programs," the official told reporters at the Pentagon. "We believe that Iraq continues clandestinely to store chemical agents and has the ability to produce more. Iraq maintains an active and capable BW program. Not all of the BW agents known to be produced before the Gulf War are accounted for. And UNSCOM assessed that Iraq maintains a knowledge base and industrial infrastructure that could be used quickly to produce large amounts of BW agents."

Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld said yesterday at a Pentagon press conference that Iraq does have the ability to deliver a ballistic missile to the U.S. mainland. Responding to a reporter's assertion that Iraq does not have a delivery system capable of carrying a WMD to the continental United States, Rumsfeld said "Sept. 11th suggested lots of ways to deliver lethal damage to the United States.

"In addition, countries have placed ballistic missiles in ships -- cargo ships, commercial ships, dime a dozen -- all over the world," he continued. "Any given time, there's any number off our coast, coming, going, on transporter-erector-launchers, and they simply erect it, fire off a ballistic missile, put it down, cover it up. Their radar signature's

not any different than other 50 others in close proximity. So your comment that they don't have the ability to deliver a ballistic missile to this country is flat wrong."

-- **John Liang**

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(Editor's Note: To access analysis, go to CSBA hyperlink provided, click on "Latest from CSBA" (left side of web page), click on first article.)

Iraq vs the United States: Potential Terrorist Threats to the Homeland

James Carafano

Published 09/17/2002

Backgrounder

If a military confrontation erupts between Iraq and the United States, the US homeland could be part of the battleground. While there is much uncertainty over the state of Iraq's offensive capabilities, there is sufficient information to suggest potential threats to American soil. . . .

<http://www.csbaonline.org/>

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Korea Times

September 18, 2002

NK Possesses, Develops More Nuclear Weapons: Rumsfeld

WASHINGTON (Yonhap) -- North Korea already has nuclear weapons and is developing more, U.S. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld said Monday.

However, the Stalinist government of Pyongyang is different from that of Iraq, chiefly in that it is a danger to its own people, he added.

"We know they (North Korea) are a country that has been aggressively developing nuclear weapons and have nuclear weapons," the defense secretary told a news briefing at the department.

"I don't know what's going to happen in North Korea, except that we do know that they are one of the world's worst proliferators, particularly with ballistic missile technologies," he added.

Rumsfeld's comments are in line with U.S. intelligence reports last December that North Korea had produced one, possibly two, nuclear weapons, in the mid-1990s.

As to North Korea's missile threat, a top U.S. military official said the question is not about capability but intent.

"When we assess threats to this country from a military standpoint, we look at two things. One is capability and the other is intent," Gen. Peter Pace, vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said at the same news briefing.

"Clearly many of our friends have weapons, which, if used against us, would be destructive. But they have zero intent to do that. Our potential enemies are the ones who have the capability and the potential intent," said Pace.

Intelligence sources at the Pentagon say Pyongyang will own, by 2004, missiles capable of striking Alaska and the west coast of the United States.

North Korea's situation, however, is different from Iraq despite its nuclear and missile proliferation, according to Rumsfeld.

"All one has to do is look at it compared to South Korea and it just wrings your heart out to see what's happening to those people," he said.

"And we know they (North Korea) are a danger first and foremost to their own people, and second, they are a threat principally because of their proliferating activities, as opposed to being a threat to South Korea. So I see a different situation, and I think the president is approaching it properly," he concluded.

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Federal Computer Week
September 16, 2002

Defense Office Brings Together Intell Experts

By Dan Caterinicchia

As part of a new command that will manage homeland security initiatives, the Defense Department is setting up a joint intelligence center to improve information sharing among civilian, intelligence and defense agencies.

The Northern Command will house "resident liaisons" from the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the FBI, the CIA, the National Security Agency, the Defense Intelligence Agency and other organizations that will form a "joint intelligence and information fusion center or cell," according to Army National Guard Maj. Gen. H. Steven Blum, the command's chief of staff.

The Northern Command, which includes representatives from all the armed services, is charged with ensuring homeland defense capabilities and supporting civil authorities when directed by the president or secretary of Defense.

Northern Command officials, along with representatives from the Justice Department and other agencies, are working through details of the joint intelligence cell with a special focus on ensuring that it does not violate the Constitution or hinder future prosecutions, Blum said during last week's Homeland Security and National Defense Symposium in Atlantic City, N.J.

"It's a unique command because the things we can do anywhere else in the world, we can't do here in the" United States, Blum told Federal Computer Week, adding that the joint intelligence center would be operational by Oct. 1 when the Northern Command is officially established at Peterson Air Force Base, Colorado Springs, Colo.

But bringing everyone together is just the first step. Brig. Gen. Michael Ennis, director of intelligence at Marine Corps headquarters, said that having representatives from the different organizations all in one place is a great idea, "but without the actual free interchange of data, you have not achieved true interoperability."

Ennis said that policy changes are only part of the solution, because when and if those are taken care of, the "technical problems with the free flow of the data" will remain. He added that common standards, namely data authored and tagged in Extensible Markup Language, would enable the different DOD agencies and the government organizations to truly interoperate.

"Interoperability begins at the data level, not the systems level," Ennis said. "The difference between a database and knowledge base is that a knowledge base is written in XML and tagged so the user can create the knowledge they want."

Lt. Gen. Peter Cuvillo, the Army's chief information officer, agreed.

"We're so fixated with systems, programs and products, and then we talk about data, information and knowledge, but we attack it through system interoperability," Cuvillo said. "We'll never get there with all interoperable systems," because that would require everyone to use the same products, which will likely never happen.

<http://www.fcw.com/fcw/articles/2002/0916/news-intell-09-16-02.asp>

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San Antonio Express-News
September 17, 2002

Exercise In Mask Use Has A Tear-Jerking Conclusion

By Sig Christenson, Express-News Military Writer

Talk of a new Persian Gulf war and Saddam Hussein's push for chemical, biological and nuclear weapons offered the perfect milieu Monday as recruits at Lackland AFB learned the ABCs of "NBC" — nuclear, biological and chemical warfare.

They were the first recruits to enter the base's Nuclear, Biological, Chemical, Conventional Training Facility, unveiled in an 11-minute ceremony featuring Lackland's boss, Brig. Gen. Frederick D. Van Valkenburg, and a half-dozen other commanders.

After donning their masks, Van Valkenburg and the recruits marched into a pair of "confidence chambers," where they were exposed to tear gas.

"I was thinking, I hope my equipment works out fine and that I go through the procedures right," said Airman Basic Derek Farmer, 18, of Danville, Va.

Like most everyone else, Farmer left the 7,575-square-foot complex wiping tears from his eyes and coughing after briefly removing his gas mask at the end of the training session. He also emerged a tad wiser.

The aim of the center is to provide a safe, controlled environment for trainees to learn the fundamentals of protecting themselves from nerve agents. It's a leap forward for Lackland, which had relied on recruits to tell trainers whether they detected a smoky or banana smell while wearing their gas mask in an outside-ventilated area.

The NBC "confidence chambers" and observation rooms can handle up to 50 trainees every 15 to 20 minutes.

Thousands of recruits will go through it during their "Warrior Week" training, a lengthy exercise that forces the young boots to cope with rugged field conditions.

"The experience that they go through today should convey to them the realities of the world and the importance of being prepared for worst-case scenarios," said Col. Sharon Dunbar, Lackland's basic training chief.

"I don't think they should look at this and suddenly think that just because of the timing with all of the current political sensitivities associated with Iraq — and I'm not going to approach that — that this automatically means we're going to war," Van Valkenburg said when asked what message people should get from images of Monday's NBC training.

"But we have to be able to prepare for that possibility, because the threat is out there, the environment is out there and we need to be able to keep the health and welfare of our people uppermost so that we can go forward."

On a rainy Monday, recruit Brandon Barnes experienced a strange, tickling feeling in the back of his throat but left feeling "a large sense of confidence" that he could survive an attack.

"I could tell how well the gear actually protected us," he said.

"I wasn't too nervous, but you know there's still a concern that maybe, just maybe, there's that little leak," said Airman Basic Rachel Murphy, 18, of St. Louis.

While recruits don't get much news during their six weeks of basic training, Murphy and others have heard the ongoing debate about a new war in Iraq.

They know the Iraqis have used chemical weapons in the past, and that American troops could face them in the future. But the recruits also agree they'd be far more nervous about going to the Persian Gulf without the NBC training.

"Now I know what to check for if and when I have to put on that equipment," Farmer said.

"I wouldn't know what to expect," Barnes, 18, of Tallahassee, Fla., explained. "I wouldn't be as trustworthy toward the gear, not ever testing it out or not ever knowing how to use it."

Even if a chemical or biological attack isn't likely, the training makes sense because it's impossible to know what's next, said Airman Basic Valerio Mendoza, 18, of Madera, Calif.

"They brought down the Twin Towers and nobody expected it," he said. "I mean, they could try to do it again with chemical warfare."

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Los Angeles Times
September 17, 2002

Nuclear Test Site Far From Ready, U.S. Audit Finds

By Associated Press

LAS VEGAS -- With equipment mothballed and experts retired, the Nevada Test Site is not ready to meet an Energy Department goal of resuming underground nuclear weapons experiments within three years, a new report said.

Energy Department Inspector General Gregory Friedman said it would take funding and a presidential order similar to that needed to develop a new type of weapon to quickly resume nuclear testing at the vast federal reservation 65 miles north of Las Vegas.

Replying to a Bush administration order to review nuclear testing readiness, the Energy Department had said this year that it would take 18 to 36 months to prepare the site.

Nevada's lawmakers in Congress say they support renewed testing, if there is compelling evidence that deems it absolutely necessary for national security.

However, the inspector general released a report last week saying that federal investigators found equipment unused for a decade wrapped in plastic and mothballed.

Investigators said almost half of the department's nuclear testing experts have left, and that almost half of the remaining employees can retire in five years.

Basic equipment is not ready, such as a processing plant used for preparing material to plug holes above buried nuclear weapons. Investigators found that the plant has been dismantled since 1992. The report said it would take an additional \$5 million a year for two or three years to ready the site for experiments. Current funding is about \$10 million a year. The report urged the department to hire and train experts, develop a plan to test and replace equipment, and update its testing readiness and computer programs. Officials of the National Nuclear Security Administration, which operates the test site, agreed with many findings, but they disagreed with the investigators' assessment, saying the test site could conduct experiments if necessary.

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Christian Science Monitor
September 18, 2002

West Nile Virus: Part Of Hussein's Plan – Via Cuba?

By John Hughes

SALT LAKE CITY - Senator Patrick J. Leahy, the Vermont Democrat who has a special familiarity with intelligence matters, last week urged the government to explore the possibility of a terrorist link to the US outbreak of West Nile virus.

Last year, 66 people contracted the disease. This year about 1,400 have, and 66 of them have died.

While there is so far no evidence that the virus, or something similar, is being used as a biological weapon against the US, Mr. Leahy's concern has renewed speculation among some Cuba-watchers about Fidel Castro's dabbling with germ warfare, and his close relationship with Saddam Hussein of Iraq and other rogue nations such as Iran. Last month, Havana's official newspaper, Granma, carried a curious story about the West Nile virus, revealing substantial familiarity with its transmission by mosquitoes and migratory birds. Then it offered Cuba's "fullest cooperation" with US authorities in confronting the threat.

Does this offer by a regime expert in deception, in fact, mask a long-suspected Cuban biological warfare program? Assistant Secretary of State for Intelligence and Research Carl Ford Jr. testified to US Senators in June that Cuba "has at least a limited ... offensive biological warfare research and development effort." While US intelligence is perfectly capable of detecting weapons like rockets and missiles for delivery of biological warfare products, is it possible that Cuba could be conducting experiments with delivery by such unconventional means as migratory birds?

Mr. Ford claimed that Cuba has provided dual-use biotechnology (technology that can be used for both constructive medical, or destructive military, use) to rogue states. Does this mean Iraq? Cuba has had friendly relations with Iraq for years and consistently supported it at the UN against the US. Rumors of financial scandal in 1999 at Cuba's Center for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology suggested some kind of funding support from Iraq. As recently as July, Castro confidant Rodrigo Alvarez Cambra – an orthopedic surgeon who reportedly performed back surgery on Mr. Hussein, and who is president of the Cuban-Arab Friendship Society – was dispatched to Baghdad to meet with Hussein and proclaim Cuba's ongoing support.

West Nile virus first appeared in New York in 1999. In the same year, a book written by Michael Ramadan, a purported former bodyguard and look-alike for Hussein, related an alleged conversation with the Iraqi leader in which he speculated about an "ultimate weapon, developed in secret laboratories outside Iraq, free of UN inspection," to "develop the SV1417 strain of the West Nile virus." The story gained further circulation in an October 1999 article in New York magazine by Richard Preston, the author of "The Cobra Event," a novel whose plot involves a terrorist attack on New York using a lethal virus.

The problem with much of this rumor and speculation about Cuba's biological warfare program – and who might be subsidizing it – is that it is unsubstantiated and in many cases comes from defectors whose reports cannot be corroborated.

It also comes amid heightened debate in Congress over the future of the US–Cuban relationship, and whether US sanctions against Cuba should be modified or lifted. Thus pro- and anti-Castro factions have a vested interest in proving or disproving Mr. Castro's dabbling with dangerous offensive viruses. This is especially so at a time when President Bush is threatening war against Iraq, and any evidence of links between Hussein and Castro involving biological warfare experiments would be political dynamite.

The problem, as Ford testified, is that "the nature of biological weapons makes it difficult to procure clear incontrovertible proof that a country is engaged in illicit biological weapons research, production, weaponization, and stockpiling. Cuba's sophisticated denial and deception practices make our task even more difficult."

In a column four months ago, I suggested that if Castro wanted an early lifting of the US embargo, there were two things he should do. First, he could hold the national referendum called for by 11,000 Cubans who courageously signed a petition to institute human rights and free political prisoners. He has already contemptuously dismissed this appeal by his fellow Cubans. My second suggestion was that he permit serious international inspection of the Cuban laboratories suspected of biological warfare development. In the light of recent developments with Iraq, and a suggestion by an influential US senator that the West Nile virus and terrorism may not be unrelated, that inspection assumes new urgency.

John Hughes, editor and chief operating officer of the Deseret News, is a former editor of the Monitor.

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Washington Post
September 19, 2002
Pg. 1

U.S. Drops Bid To Strengthen Germ Warfare Accord

By Peter Slevin, Washington Post Staff Writer

The Bush administration has abandoned an international effort to strengthen the Biological Weapons Convention against germ warfare, advising its allies that the United States wants to delay further discussions until 2006. A review conference on new verification measures for the treaty had been scheduled for November.

Less than a year after a State Department envoy abruptly pulled out of biowarfare negotiations in Geneva, promising that the United States would return with new proposals, the administration has concluded that treaty revisions favored by the European Union and scores of other countries will not work and should not be salvaged, administration officials said yesterday.

The decision, which has been conveyed to allies in recent weeks, has been greeted with warnings that the move will weaken attempts to curb germ warfare programs at a time when biological weapons are a focus of concern because of the war on terrorism and the administration's threats to launch a military campaign against Iraq. It also comes as the administration, which has angered allies by rejecting a series of multilateral agreements, is appealing to the international community to work with it in forging a new U.N. Security Council resolution on Iraq's programs to develop weapons of mass destruction.

The 1972 Biological Weapons Convention, which has been ratified by the United States and 143 other countries, bans the development, stockpiling and production of germ warfare agents, but has no enforcement mechanism. Negotiations on legally binding measures to enforce compliance have been underway in Geneva for seven years. The administration stunned its allies last December by proposing to end the negotiators' mandate, saying that while the treaty needed strengthening, the enforcement protocol under discussion would not deter enemy nations from acquiring or developing biological weapons if they were determined to do so. Negotiators suspended the discussions, saying they would meet again in November when U.S. officials said they would return with creative solutions to address the impasse.

Instead, U.S. envoys are now telling allies that the administration's position is so different from the views of the leading supporters of the enforcement protocol that a meeting would dissolve into public squabbling and should be avoided, administration officials said. Better, they said, to halt discussions altogether.

"It's based on an incorrect approach. Our concern is that it would be fundamentally ineffective," a State Department official said. Another administration official said the "best and least contentious" approach would be to hold a very brief meeting in November -- or even no meeting at all -- and talk again when the next review is scheduled four years from now.

Amy Smithson, a biological and chemical weapons specialist, said the administration is making a mistake by halting collaborative work to strengthen the convention. "It sounds to me as though they've thrown the baby out with the bath water," said Smithson, an analyst at the Henry L. Stimson Center. "The contradiction between the rhetoric and what the administration is actually doing -- the gulf is huge. Not a day goes by when they don't mention the Iraq threat."

The Stimson Center is releasing a report today that criticizes the U.S. approach to the convention. Drawn from a review by 10 pharmaceutical companies and biotechnology experts, the document argues that bioweapons

inspections can be effective with the right amount of time and the right science and urges the administration to develop stronger measures.

"To argue that this wouldn't be a useful remedy would just be a mistake. I think it's because they're looking through the wrong end of the telescope," said Matthew Meselson, a Harvard biologist who helped draft a treaty to criminalize biological weapons violations. "We're denying ourselves useful tools."

The administration has focused publicly on a half-dozen countries identified by the State Department as pursuing germ warfare programs. Undersecretary of State John R. Bolton said the existence of Iraq's bioweapons project is "beyond dispute." The U.S. government also believes Iran, North Korea, Sudan, Libya and Syria are developing such weapons, he said.

Meselson concurred with the administration's position that a limited enforcement provision for the bioweapons treaty could not provide confidence that countries are staying clean. But he said that a pact establishing standards and verification measures would deter some countries while also helping to build norms of international behavior. Bolton, on the other hand, told delegates to last year's review conference that "the time for 'better-than-nothing' protocols is over. We will continue to reject flawed texts like the BWC draft protocol, recommended to us simply because they are the product of lengthy negotiations or arbitrary deadlines, if such texts are not in the best interests of the United States."

With only hours to go at the meeting, Bolton stopped U.S. participation in the final negotiations. He said of the resulting one-year delay, "This gives us time to think creatively on alternatives."

In Bolton's view, each country should develop criminal laws against germ warfare activities, develop export controls for dangerous pathogens, establish codes of conduct for scientists and install strict biosafety procedures. The administration has proposed that governments resolve disputes over biowarfare violations among themselves, perhaps through voluntary inspections or by referring the case to the United Nations secretary general. Such an approach is "at best ineffectual," said the specialists gathered by the Stimson Center. At worst, they concluded, the approach could damage U.S. interests because it would not be structured to deliver "meaningful monitoring."

"If a challenge inspection system is not geared to pursue violators aggressively, then it does not serve U.S. security interests," the 65-page report states. The participants strongly favored establishing mandatory standards backed by penalties and "robust" inspections, which goes significantly further than the proposed protocol backed by the EU and other nations.

The State Department Web site has not yet been changed to reflect the change in policy. It says, "The United States is committed to strengthening the BWC as part of a comprehensive and multidisciplinary strategy for combating the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and international terrorism. . . . We would like to share these ideas with our international partners."

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A36677-2002Sep18.html>

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Washington Times
September 19, 2002
Pg. 1

U.S. Works To Assemble Inspectors Quickly

By Betsy Pisik, The Washington Times

NEW YORK — The Bush administration, while still expecting Iraq to break its promise to cooperate with the United Nations, has begun work on a new Security Council resolution that will accelerate the timetable for getting weapons inspectors in place.

Under existing resolutions, drafted with U.S. participation, it could take many months before the extent of Baghdad's cooperation becomes clear, pushing any military action against Iraq well into the latter part of next year.

But U.S. officials hope for a new resolution to replace the time frame laid out in a key 1999 Security Council resolution and to eliminate old language that essentially has allowed Iraq to declare so-called presidential sites off limits.

A resolution being drafted with British cooperation also will speak of consequences if Iraq does not comply. U.S. and British officials said the draft could be circulated to other council members next week.

"Our view is that unconditional inspections, inspections without conditions, means that the inspectors can go anywhere anytime, see anyone, inspect anything at the time and place of the inspectors' choosing," said State Department spokesman Richard Boucher.

"We made clear [the new resolution] has to be different. And it's for the Security Council to specify how it should be different."

Administration officials have not specified a timeline but warned yesterday that Baghdad's first test could come in the next two weeks.

Senior Iraqi officials are to meet with chief U.N. weapons inspector Hans Blix in Vienna, Austria, at the end of the month to hash out basic logistical and operational issues before the inspectors can begin their work.

Mr. Blix has met with senior Iraqis three times in the past year to try to negotiate matters as mundane as long-term lodging, secure communications systems and the scheduling of government ministers, but each time the talks have ended without agreement.

"We believe there does not need to be extended discussion on practical arrangements," an administration official said. "We believe the Iraqis will continue to stall."

Asked whether a failure to agree on practical matters in Vienna would constitute intransigence, the official said, "We have no reason to believe that this time they're going to comply."

The Bush administration is skeptical about the usefulness of renewed inspections, citing Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein's long history of "deception and defiance."

Senior officials for months have been preparing Americans and foreign allies for a war with Iraq.

"No terrorist state poses a greater and more immediate threat to the security of our people and the stability of the world than the regime of Saddam Hussein in Iraq," Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld told the House Armed Services Committee yesterday.

In a speech to the U.N. General Assembly last week, Mr. Bush characterized Saddam as "a grave and gathering danger."

In the following days, nearly every government publicly urged Iraq to cooperate with the new weapons inspection team. In the Security Council, this turned into nearly unanimous support for a new, tougher resolution.

But much of the support for a new Security Council resolution dissolved after Iraqi officials agreed Tuesday to inspections "without conditions."

Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov bluntly rejected the need for a new resolution, joined in more diplomatic language by the French.

Mr. Blix is scheduled to brief the council today on his discussions with the Iraqis and to update it on the prospects for the meeting in Vienna.

U.N. officials said the talks were likely to last a day or two but could not rule out additional meetings if necessary.

Those talks will include the U.N. Monitoring, Observation and Verification Commission, or Unmovic — which is to look into chemical and biological weapons — and the International Atomic Energy Agency, which handles the nuclear files.

Even if the Vienna talks are productive, under the existing U.N. resolutions, substantive inspections could be months away.

Once the ground rules are clear, Unmovic will send technicians to reclaim their offices and labs from four years of disuse.

Computers, satellite phones and monitoring equipment must be ordered and installed. Contracts must be negotiated for vehicles, helicopters and outside laboratories.

Only then will the first groups of specialists go to Iraq. These scientists, interpreters, chemists and others will start piecing together a summary of the results of previous inspections for comparison, and repairing the delicate remote-sensing network presumed to have been destroyed since the last group of inspectors left in December 1998.

The inspectors will have 60 days to determine what more Iraq must do before it can be certified free of proscribed chemical, biological and nuclear weapons, as well as long-range missiles.

Unmovic spokesman Ewen Buchanan said yesterday that he wouldn't hazard a guess as to how long it would take to get to the invasive inspections of new sites.

"But we will not drag our feet," he said.

<http://www.washtimes.com/world/20020919-27547332.htm>

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New York Times
September 19, 2002

Annan Tells Iraq It Must Allow Unfettered Weapons Inspections

By Julia Preston

UNITED NATIONS, Sept. 18 — Secretary General Kofi Annan told Iraq today that he expected "full and unconditional cooperation" with United Nations weapons inspectors when they return to the country, as American officials charged that Iraq was seeking to limit the sites that inspectors could examine.

In a meeting this evening with the Iraqi foreign minister, Naji Sabri, Mr. Annan made clear that he has no doubts about the skills of Hans Blix, the Swedish weapons expert who heads the inspection team based here. Iraqi officials have dismissed Mr. Blix as a "spy."

As the United Nations prepared for renewed inspections, American diplomats worked to regain the initiative for a Security Council resolution threatening military action to force Baghdad to rid itself of any weapons of mass destruction.

Bush administration officials said they understood that Iraqi officials told Mr. Blix in a meeting here on Tuesday that some sites would be off limits. Mr. Blix is to report on the meeting to the full Security Council on Thursday. "We expect Blix to share with the Council his frustration that the Iraqis were not able to offer up unfettered access," one administration official said.

American officials sought to build a case in the Council that Iraq was already trying to subvert the inspections. They hoped to convince doubting Council nations that the inspections would not work to make Iraq abandon its weapons programs.

Secretary of State Colin L. Powell made phone calls over the past two days to his counterparts in France, Russia and Britain as well as to Mr. Annan in an attempt to mend rifts that emerged Tuesday over the Iraqi offer to renew the inspections, suspended since 1998.

The United States and Britain began crafting the language of a tough draft resolution, and the British ambassador, Sir Jeremy Greenstock, scheduled a meeting Friday with the 10 nonpermanent Council members to discuss it. The text would require the inspections to lead to Iraqi disarmament and authorize a military attack if Iraq does not comply.

Although France, a permanent veto-bearing Council member, appeared to shift toward the United States today, saying it would consider a new resolution, Syria and Mauritius, nonpermanent members, said they thought the inspectors' return was enough to ensure that Iraq was getting rid of its weapons.

Germany's chancellor, Gerhard Schröder, said in an interview to be published on Thursday in a German daily, General-Anzeiger, that the world should work to subvert the government of Saddam Hussein "from within," without a military assault. The American ambassador to Germany, Daniel R. Coats, told a business audience in Frankfurt that the dispute over Iraq "makes the job more difficult" of the alliance between Germany and the United States, Reuters reported.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2002/09/19/international/middleeast/19NATI.html>

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Washington Post
September 19, 2002
Pg. 18

Evidence On Iraq Challenged

Experts Question if Tubes Were Meant for Weapons Program

By Joby Warrick, Washington Post Staff Writer

A key piece of evidence in the Bush administration's case against Iraq is being challenged in a report by independent experts who question whether thousands of high-strength aluminum tubes recently sought by Iraq were intended for a secret nuclear weapons program.

The White House last week said attempts by Iraq to acquire the tubes point to a clandestine program to make enriched uranium for nuclear bombs. But the experts say in a new report that the evidence is ambiguous, and in some ways contradicts what is known about Iraq's past nuclear efforts.

The report, from the Institute for Science and International Security, also contends that the Bush administration is trying to quiet dissent among its own analysts over how to interpret the evidence. The report, a draft of which was obtained by The Washington Post, was authored by David Albright, a physicist who investigated Iraq's nuclear weapons program following the 1991 Persian Gulf War as a member of the International Atomic Energy Agency's inspection team. The institute, headquartered in Washington, is an independent group that studies nuclear and other security issues.

"By themselves, these attempted procurements are not evidence that Iraq is in possession of, or close to possessing, nuclear weapons," the report said. "They do not provide evidence that Iraq has an operating centrifuge plant or when such a plant could be operational."

The controversy stems from shipments to Iraq of specialized aluminum metal that were seized en route by governments allied with the United States. A U.S. intelligence official confirmed that at least two such shipments were seized within the past 14 months, although he declined to give details. The Associated Press, citing sources familiar with the shipments, reported that one originated in China and was intercepted in Jordan.

The shipments sparked concern among U.S. intelligence analysts because of the potential use of such tubes in centrifuges, fast-spinning machines used in making enriched uranium for nuclear bombs. High-strength, heat-resistant metals are needed for centrifuge casings as well as for the rotors, which turn at up to 1,000 rotations per minute.

There is no evidence that any of the tubes reached Iraq. But in its white paper on Iraq released to the United Nations last week, the Bush administration cited the seized shipments as evidence that Iraq is actively seeking to develop nuclear weapons. Bush's national security adviser, Condoleezza Rice, said in a televised interview that the tubes "are only really suited for nuclear weapons programs, centrifuge programs."

Since then, U.S. officials have acknowledged differing opinions within the U.S. intelligence community about possible uses for the tubes -- with some experts contending that a more plausible explanation was that the aluminum was meant to build launch tubes for Iraq's artillery rockets.

"But the majority view, held by senior officials here, is that they were most likely intended for gas centrifuges," one U.S. intelligence official said in an interview.

The new report questions that conclusion on several grounds, most of them technical. It says the seized tubes were made of a kind of aluminum that is ill-suited for welding. Other specifications of the imported metal are at odds with what is known about Iraq's previous attempts to build centrifuges. In fact, the report said, Iraq had largely abandoned aluminum for other materials, such as specialized steel and carbon fiber, in its centrifuges at the time its nuclear program was destroyed by allied bombers in the Gulf War.

According to Albright, government experts on nuclear technology who dissented from the Bush administration's view told him they were expected to remain silent. Several Energy Department officials familiar with the aluminum shipments declined to comment.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A36348-2002Sep18.html>

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