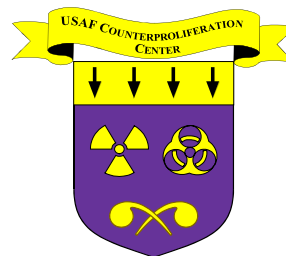


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November 13, 2001

Group: World Not Ready for Smallpox

LONDON (AP) - It is a nightmare that has gained the public's attention since Sept. 11: a terrorist walks into an airport and releases the smallpox virus, a scourge that killed millions of people before it was eradicated more than two decades ago.

Seventeen unsolved cases of anthrax in the United States have made the threat of a chemical or biological terrorist attack seem more real and have prompted the U.S. government to start stockpiling enough smallpox vaccine - 300 million doses by the end of 2002 - to protect every American citizen. Other Western countries are taking similar steps.

However, smallpox's potency and unpredictability could have a boomerang effect. Scientists say that once it is released, the disease would probably spread quickly throughout the world, infecting many of the same people in whose name the terrorists say they are fighting.

Would Osama bin Laden's al-Qaida network unleash a disease that could end up killing millions of Muslims? Scientists say the developing world will be least ready to deal with smallpox, which would entail paying for the production of millions of doses of new vaccine and then administering the drugs to the population.

"The industrialized countries are, and will be, much better equipped to contain it than are developing countries," said Dr. David Heymann, executive director for communicable diseases at the World Health Organization.

Smallpox was one of the most devastating diseases known to humanity. Repeated epidemics swept across continents, decimating populations and changing the course of history. It used to kill 3 to 4 million people a year and left millions more disfigured, blind or both.

Its demise in 1979, after a 12-year worldwide vaccination program headed by the World Health Organization, was considered one of the great achievements in medicine.

Poorer nations would need a lot more help from the industrialized world this time, health officials say. Industrialized countries were keen to help their poorer neighbors wipe out the disease in the 1970s largely because they knew eradication would be a good investment.

"It's not clear that we could muster up any will to do another eradication program. I think it would be hard to sell because if you do eradicate it again, you're in the same vulnerable situation we are in now," Heymann said.

As the only disease ever to have been wiped off the face of the earth, smallpox would have an almost clear run if it were released again because nobody has been vaccinated against it for 25 years.

Experts fear most, if not all, of that immunity has worn off by now and that the disease could spread rapidly from an isolated outbreak to the other side of the globe.

While it may seem unimaginable for al-Qaida or other terrorists to use a weapon that could kill those in their own backyards, terrorism experts say that risk would not deter some radical groups, especially those motivated by religious fervor, like al-Qaida.

"These terrorists believe that Muslims will rise up and strike down the secular governments of the West," said Michael Swetnam, chairman of the Potomac Institute for Policy Studies in Arlington, Va. "That kind of fundamentalist approach can easily support the belief that any tool was rational and usable because Allah is on your side. Allah will protect the faithful."

After the disease was eradicated, governments agreed to concentrate stocks of the live virus in two secure laboratories - one at the Centers for Disease Control in Atlanta and one in Russia's Siberia region.

There is no firm evidence of smallpox outside of those two centers. But former Soviet scientists have claimed that Russia intensified its biological weapons research after smallpox was eradicated, producing tons of the virus at least into the 1990s. Others worry that scientists who worked on Russia's smallpox bioweapons effort might have sold ampules of the virus to high-paying terrorists or rogue nations such as North Korea or Iraq.

President Bush said recently that the U.S. had evidence bin Laden was seeking to acquire chemical, biological and nuclear weapons, but it is unclear whether he has been successful.

Swetnam said the possibility of a smallpox attack should be taken seriously, but he added that other weapons - like a conventional bomb, chemical attack or other type of biological attack - are more likely to be used because smallpox is hard to get ahold of.

Still, exaggerating the risk of a smallpox attack might not be a bad thing, Swetnam said.

"If we blow it out of proportion and we make sure we stockpile enough vaccine for everybody, then there's no incentive for them to use it," Swetnam said. "It will cost us a lot of money ... but we'll probably prevent it from happening. You can call it overreacting, but it's buying insurance."

<http://www.lasvegassun.com/sunbin/stories/thrive/2001/nov/13/111302330.html>

Suspected Bio-War Site in 'Good Guy' Hands

Wednesday, November 14, 2001

By **Jim Angle**

Fox News

WASHINGTON — A senior U.S. official said Tuesday that at least one of Al Qaeda's suspected biological and chemical weapons production sites is now in the hands of "the good guys" and is being examined to determine the extent of the terror network's capabilities.

The site, near Mazar-e-Sharif, fell into the hands of the Northern Alliance when the anti-Taliban rebels took control of the city last weekend, the official said. The fate of one other site near Kabul is unknown at this point, the official said, and at least one more near Durunta is still in Taliban hands.

Over the weekend, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld said U.S. forces have bombed some of the sites in Afghanistan that could have been involved in producing weapons of mass destruction. Others, however, were left unscathed.

Officials opted not to bomb some, the official told Fox News, because of the contamination danger it might pose to surrounding areas and so forensics experts could examine the sites.

"If you're trying to find out what they're doing and what they have, it's better to inspect it than to destroy it," the official said. "You can do a lot more with a swab than with a 500-pound bomb."

U.S. officials have said they believe Al Qaeda has access to crude chemical weapons such as chlorine and phosgene poison gases.

But they said it is unlikely that Usama bin Laden's network has more complex weapons such as sarin or nuclear weapons. They have also expressed concern that the group may have radiological weapons — mixtures of conventional explosives and nuclear material designed to spread radiation without a nuclear detonation.

Rumsfeld has echoed the comments of President Bush, who has repeatedly stated that he believes Al Qaeda would use any chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear weapons it has. "They are not worried about loss of life," Rumsfeld said.

<http://www.foxnews.com/story/0,2933,38687,00.html>

Building the ultimate bioweapon Lifesaving genetic research may also lead to 'superbugs' that could be unstoppable

By Steve Sternberg

USA TODAY

Stealth viruses triggered from afar like remote-controlled bombs. Designer bugs packed with genes that simultaneously signal millions of human cells to commit suicide. Germs that wipe out the human immune system's ability to combat viruses.

Fanciful as these fearsome innovations may seem, they're edging closer to fact than science fiction. Today, 20 years into the genetic revolution, scientists say that the biotech tools used to make human insulin, interferon and other breakthrough medications could be put to more sinister use.

Military microbiologists equipped with the latest genetic technology, they say, could use it to turn ordinary germs into extra-virulent, drug-resistant superbugs.

Indeed, Australian scientists reported in January that they had created a superbug while trying to make a contraceptive vaccine for rodent control. By inserting a gene for an immune-system chemical into a relatively harmless mousepox virus, researchers turned the virus into a monster that kills 100% of its rodent victims by wiping out part of their immune system.

Although mousepox doesn't infect humans, it is a close cousin of smallpox, suggesting that smallpox would be receptive to the same lethal trick.

"Such 'tailoring' of biowarfare agents could make them harder to detect, diagnose and treat. It could, in short, make them more militarily useful and thus increase the temptation to pursue offensive programs," Claire Fraser of the Institute for Genomic Research and Michael Dando of the University of Bradford in the U.K. report in the Oct. 22 issue of *Nature Genetics*.

Some defense experts reportedly fear that the government may inadvertently increase the risk posed by mutant microbes by funding a major effort to sequence the genomes of more than 100 microbes and stipulating that all findings be posted on the Web. But other biologists argue that the genetic databases will catapult our understanding of biology into new realms.

"In the past, people could only study bacteria that they could single out and grow," says Mary Ann Henkart of the National Science Foundation. "By comparing microbial (gene) sequences, you can learn things we never dreamed we would know before we could do these genetic tricks."

Much of the work so far has focused on disease-causing germs and germs that can be used for environmental cleanup. But other researchers are focusing on germs that may shed light on the history of life on Earth, germs relevant to agriculture and germs that live in extreme environments.

Legitimate scientists have tinkered with microbial genes for decades. As early as 1973, scientists spliced a drug-resistance gene from an unrelated microbe into the DNA of the benign intestinal microbe *E. coli*. Although this pioneering gene-splicing experiment was done by civilians seeking insights into biology, it's exactly the kind of enhancement that might be made by a bioweaponer.

Bioweapon designers have achieved their own breakthroughs. Although much of their work has been cloaked in secrecy, hints of their accomplishments have surfaced.

Two years ago, a team of leading anthrax researchers led by Paul Jackson of Los Alamos National Laboratory reported that the former Soviet Union had apparently succeeded in combining at least four strains of anthrax into a single bioweapon.

The researchers obtained the bacteria from 11 people who died in a 1979 anthrax outbreak. The outbreak is believed to have resulted from an accidental release of anthrax from a military research facility in Sverdlovsk, though the Soviets insisted for years that the outbreak was triggered by anthrax-contaminated meat. The Jackson team helped dispel the lie, because an outbreak of intestinal anthrax caused by contaminated meat would be caused by one strain of anthrax, not four of them.

The biotechnology revolution has made altering microbes easier by turning gene splicing into an automated, industrial process. Posting the genetic sequences of microbes on the Web will by 2003 provide scientists with an unprecedented resource, the sequences of 250,000 microbial genes.

Comparing genes from other organisms or from humans with those in this library can supply clues to how the genes function and how important they are, pointing the way to new diagnostics, drugs and vaccines.

Scientists have already begun to identify genes in each microbe that are needed for infection and that govern the bug's virulence and resistance to antibiotics. Such information could be used, for example, to splice the genes for anthrax toxin from *Bacillus anthracis* into less dangerous members of the anthrax family, such as *B. cereus*, which causes food poisoning.

Such manipulations could create stealth bacteria that are as deadly as anthrax but harder to detect. "The similarity between (bacteria) in the *anthracis* family suggests you could shuffle their genes back and forth, creating Trojan horse biowarfare agents," Fraser says.

Advocates say easy access to genetic information will benefit scientists working on biowarfare defense.

The Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency, or Darpa, spent \$167 million on biological defense in the fiscal year that ended last month. Among other things, the agency contracted with civilian laboratories to sequence the genomes of the deadly germs that cause anthrax, Q fever and tularemia. One crucial focus of Darpa research is to develop ways to detect biological agents in time to counter their effects. By layering computer chips with genetic sequences from important human, animal and plant germs, scientists are trying to create biowarfare-detection devices.

Maj. Gen. John Parker, who heads biodefense research at Fort Detrick, Md., says, "As we look out 10 or 20 years, I see each of us wearing a microchip that we could look at periodically and see what we've been exposed to." He says it is just as crucial to use genetic research to find new treatments for infectious diseases. "We ought not to put detectors out, until we know what to do with those readings."

<http://cgi.usatoday.com/usatoday/2001/11/14/3622494s.htm>

Could decoded DNA information help bioterrorists?

By Steve Sternberg

USA TODAY

Scientists warn that deciphering DNA from scores of microbes and posting their genetic sequences on the Internet could arm bioterrorists with all the know-how they need to make deadly, drug-resistant superbugs.

The Sept. 11 attacks prove that terrorists will resort to whatever measures will achieve their goals, says Maj. Gen. John Parker, commander of the Medical Research and Materiel Command at Fort Detrick, Md., headquarters of the military anti-biowarfare research program. "I believe there are terrorists in the world whose values would not curtail them from going to the ultimate, to find new ways to scare us and hurt us."

The microbial sequencing effort, funded by six federal agencies, began about two years ago on the heels of the Human Genome Project. Since then, the USA has spent roughly \$78 million on the project, mandating that researchers who obtain federal funding quickly post their findings on the Web.

Already, government-funded researchers at a variety of academic, commercial and non-profit research institutes have posted draft genetic sequences of about 40 microbes, including those that cause plague and cholera. Sequences of another 70 organisms will be finished in the next year or two, says Claire Fraser of The Institute for Genomic Research. Among those are germs that cause anthrax, brucellosis, Q fever, botulism and tularemia, all long-standing lethal favorites of bioweaponers.

Parker and other proponents of the ongoing sequencing project back unfettered research and scientific openness, asserting that the same advances that may put more people at risk of germ warfare attacks also promise to accelerate critical research into the detection, prevention and treatment of germ-warfare agents.

"We could be in a much stronger position to deal with this than we are currently," says Fraser, a leading advocate of the microbial sequencing project. "But it will require a multifaceted approach, involving better detection methods, better classes of antibiotics and new vaccines."

Ronald Atlas, who tracks bioterrorism for the American Society of Microbiology, says the debate on whether to post microbial sequences on the Internet or cloak them in secrecy has smoldered behind the scenes for years. "It's a question that still comes up," he says, raised by Department of Defense (DOD) scientists who worry that the information will find its way into the wrong hands.

He declined to name the scientists, and DOD officials have not made opponents of the program available for comment. As it stands, Atlas says, those who favor openness have so far prevailed because the information will enable "legitimate scientists" to find new medical treatments and vaccines to combat the resurgent infectious diseases, like TB and cholera, that have plagued mankind for centuries.

Moreover, he says, scientists will be able to develop such tools as DNA-based computer chips that can instantly detect and identify any biological warfare agent, in time to take countersteps that could save tens of thousands of lives.

<http://cgi.usatoday.com/usatoday/2001/11/14/3622495s.htm>

November 13, 2001

Bioterror Drugs Stall Over Rules and Logistics

By GINA KOLATA

Stephen G. Sudovar, the president and chief executive of EluSys, a fledgling biotechnology company in Pine Brook, N.J., has what he thinks is an immensely promising anthrax drug, which might save patients' lives by inactivating deadly bacterial toxins.

But in dealing with the federal government, Mr. Sudovar, like others in his field, says he that has butted up against regulatory obstacles and research bottlenecks that may significantly delay the development of drugs to fight anthrax and other bioterrorism agents, just when there is heightened interest in such treatments.

Mr. Sudovar needs to test his drug in monkeys, and one of the few places in the United States that can do those tests is the Army Medical Research Institute of Infectious Diseases, in Fort Detrick, Md..

Mr. Sudovar said his monkey tests at Fort Detrick were supposed to begin in June 2002. But that was before the anthrax attacks. Now, all bets are off.

Fort Detrick's scientists are overwhelmed by requests from the Federal Bureau of Investigation for testing for anthrax spores, said Chuck Dasey, a spokesman there, and have had to delay animal tests of drugs or vaccines indefinitely. Companies like EluSys have to wait in an increasingly long line.

And that, medical experts say, is just one of the frustrating problems they face as they cope with a newly urgent problem of finding drugs to treat diseases that may be spread by bioterrorists. Another problem is figuring out what evidence the Food and Drug Administration will require to approve the drugs. A third, which arose with anthrax, is the issue of whether to try treating anthrax with drugs that look promising but that have been studied or approved only for other diseases.

F.D.A. regulations are a real problem, said Dr. Frank Young, a member of the board of EluSys and a former commissioner of the drug agency. Human testing to show effectiveness is required for all drugs. But it would be unethical to give healthy volunteers anthrax in order to test a drug. And anthrax has been too rare for tests on people who got the disease naturally. So, in 1999, the F.D.A. solicited comments on a new rule that would accept animal studies as proof of a drug's effectiveness against bioterrorism agents. But the rule has not yet been made final.

"The comment period is closed, but it's just wallowing in the agency," Dr. Young said. "It's a barrier to everything, including the smallpox vaccine. Without that rule being promulgated, it makes it very difficult to go forward with confidence that the agency will approve your drug."

Dr. Andrea Myerhoff, director of bioterrorism programs at the drug agency, said the rule was "in the process of finalization" and should be final in a few months.

Of course, the animal tests and the new regulation will not help in the awful event that more people develop inhalation anthrax in the coming months, medical experts say. But what about trying drugs already on the market? Dr. Gerald Weissman of New York University School of Medicine notes that some drugs, including the high blood pressure drug captopril and the experimental rheumatoid arthritis drug anakinra, can block the anthrax toxin in the laboratory. Faced with an often lethal disease like inhalation anthrax, why not give the drugs to patients, he and others ask? The problem is that if drugs are given in an emergency, it can be impossible to know whether they helped or hurt.

For example, if an anthrax patient who was given captopril died of shock, it could be that captopril hastened death, or even caused it by lowering blood pressure. Or it could be that captopril and antibiotics were simply inadequate and the anthrax toxins killed the patient.

But, said Dr. Jonathan Moreno, an ethicist at the University of Virginia, he can understand why doctors may want to give anthrax patients approved drugs like captopril and or ask for emergency supplies of experimental drugs like anakinra, for this unapproved and untested use.

"It's a very tough call," Dr. Moreno said.

In the meantime, scientists who simply want to know if their experimental drugs work in animals say they are facing endless frustration.

Dr. John Collier at Harvard Medical School, for example, has found two promising drugs that may block the deadly toxin released by anthrax bacteria. But scientists at Fort Detrick can give him no date when they may be able test them in animals, even rodents.

Mr. Dasey, the spokesman at Fort Detrick, says his phone rings all day with calls from scientists wanting his help. He also gets e-mail messages, and letters. And many scientists call everyone they can find at Fort Detrick, all at once, Mr. Dasey said.

He tells the scientists that they can send in a proposal and wait to hear if the scientists at Fort Detrick are interested. Before the anthrax bioterrorism, it took a couple of months to get a reply, Mr. Dasey said. "There's no way to say how long it will take now," he added.

Mr. Sudovar says he is looking at other options, noting that there are a couple of other places that may be able to test his anthrax drug. But they, too, are overwhelmed with calls from scientists and companies seeking help.

Katy Delaney, a spokeswoman for the Battelle Memorial Institute, with headquarters in Columbus, Ohio, said her company did most of its research under contract for the Defense Department and preferred not to discuss its work. But she conceded that she had gotten quite a few calls from scientists and fledgling companies wanting to test drugs. Battelle, however, also is limited in what it can take on. "We were already busy before this started," Ms. Delaney said.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2001/11/13/health/policy/13DRUG.html?searchpv=past7days>

Washington Post
November 14, 2001
Pg. 6

Analysis

A Familiar Bush Strategy On Disarmament

By Peter Baker, Washington Post Foreign Service

Ten years ago this fall, President George Bush broke with military orthodoxy by announcing historic deep unilateral cuts in nuclear arms and was rewarded a week later when the Soviet Union agreed to match him.

Now the son has taken a page from the father's playbook. Abandoning the cumbersome construct of formal negotiations and treaties, President Bush has decided to head down the path to disarmament based on nothing more than a handshake. If Russian President Vladimir Putin reciprocates "in kind" as he promised yesterday, the world will be rid of 8,000 nuclear warheads.

Bush's decision to slash the U.S. strategic arsenal to between 1,700 and 2,200 warheads over the next 10 years, and the anticipated Russian response, reinvigorate a disarmament process that had largely stalled in the decade since the end of the Cold War. While no longer locked in a geopolitical death struggle, Washington and Moscow failed throughout the 1990s to transform their new relationship into a strategic balance reflecting the imperatives of the new era. President Bill Clinton left office without enacting a single strategic nuclear arms control agreement. "Bush finally came up with a formula to push us out of the dead end we'd gotten into at the end of the Clinton administration," said Rose Gottemoeller, a former Clinton administration official. "We're breaking what had been an effective sound barrier in the arms control world, which is the 2,000 number. That had always been the holy grail -- if you go below 2,000 [the theory went], you'll lose the strategic triad."

In doing so, Bush muscled past the objections of some of his top Pentagon commanders, just as Putin has brushed aside generals insistent on preserving the arsenal that is the last vestige of real Russian power. But as articulated yesterday, Bush's formula left many questions unanswered.

While Putin previously has endorsed cutting the Russian arsenal to 1,500 nuclear warheads, he and his advisers believe such cuts should be subject to a binding agreement in writing, with verification procedures such as those used in past arms control treaties. Bush opposes any such pact on the grounds that it would devolve into "endless hours" of negotiations over the fine print.

In fact, the dispute produced the only moment of discord at yesterday's joint news conference in the East Room of the White House. When Putin mentioned his preference for treaties, Bush twice tried to interrupt him.

"We for our part, for the Russian part, are prepared to present all our agreements in a treaty form, including the issues of verification and control," Putin said.

Bush insisted that was no longer necessary for two countries that have become strategic partners, especially since the terrorist acts of Sept. 11. But he signaled a willingness to craft a written agreement short of a treaty. "I looked the man in the eye and shook his hand, and if we need to write it down on a piece of paper, I'll be glad to do that," he said. "But that's what our government is going to do over the next 10 years. And we don't need . . . arms control negotiations to reduce our weaponry in a significant way."

Although Bush does not want to create a new treaty, the two sides have discussed an agreement in which the verification provisions of the first Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START I), such as on-site inspections, would

be kept in place to monitor each side's progress. Without such an agreement, several arms control specialists said the "unilateral, reciprocal" cuts would be less credible.

"Whatever happens, they really need to start talking about some new transparency -- it's an absolute must," said Nikolai Sokov, a former Soviet arms control negotiator. "It's very good that the Cold War is over and everyone is friends. But I don't see a foundation for a truly new long-term relationship between Russia and the United States. Afghanistan is not a serious foundation for that."

Other arms control advocates complained that Bush did not go far enough to seize the moment, noting that Clinton had proposed going as low as 2,500 warheads in 1997. The only reason to keep as many as 2,200 warheads, they said, is to wage war against Russia.

"What this represents in my view is a superficial trimming of the old Cold War nuclear targeting list," said Daryl G. Kimball, executive director of the Arms Control Association. "We have to be careful not to overestimate the significance, because if we look at the military plan it's still a Cold War plan."

In 1990, as the Cold War was ending, the United States and Russia each maintained about 10,000 strategic nuclear warheads. START I, signed in 1991, mandated that each side cut that to 6,000, and the deadline for meeting that ceiling is just a few weeks away, Dec. 5.

Russia has already reached that goal, cutting to 5,858 warheads as of July, according to the Arms Control Association. As part of an agreement following the breakup of the Soviet Union, Ukraine recently destroyed its final missile silo, and Putin announced yesterday that the last nuclear warhead brought to Russia from Ukraine had been destroyed last month. Ill equipped to maintain a superpower arsenal after a decade of economic decline, Russia eagerly wants to cut even deeper to save money, especially on costly missiles to deliver warheads.

The United States still had 7,013 warheads as of July, but policymakers expect to get down to the 6,000 treaty ceiling by next month.

A second treaty, START II, would have cut both arsenals to about 3,500. However, it never completed the ratification process. Clinton and then-Russian President Boris Yeltsin agreed in 1997 to begin pursuing a START III that would go to 2,500. However, that idea foundered because of the dispute over U.S. plans to build a missile defense system and because of Pentagon opposition.

In proposing a range below that, Bush overrode the objections of Adm. Richard Mies, head of the U.S. Strategic Command, who did not want to go below 2,300 and had the sympathy of Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld.

The White House included a top figure of 2,200 in deference to those concerns but prefers the lower number.

Bush's approach to the new strategic relationship has its roots in his father's actions a decade ago when the senior Bush announced he was unilaterally withdrawing almost all U.S. tactical weapons from Europe and Asia, halted development of two new strategic weapons and took off alert status Minuteman II ballistic missiles scheduled to be dismantled under START I.

Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev, who had been made aware of the move shortly before it was announced, followed soon thereafter with his own, comparable declaration about withdrawal of his tactical weapons from Eastern Europe.

"Things went a hell of a lot faster without [U.S.-Soviet] working groups and negotiations . . . and at the time we agreed we would do it without a treaty," said Robert Gates, a former CIA director who was serving as deputy national security adviser in the previous Bush White House.

What was not publicized at the time was that then-Defense Secretary Richard B. Cheney was an active player in the year-long push for the unilateral step, the details of which were handled by retired Lt. Gen. Brent Scowcroft, then Bush's national security adviser.

"President Bush kept pushing the Pentagon for more radical ideas, and Cheney pushed the services," Gates said.

"Cheney was not an obstacle to far-reaching change . . . [he] hated long arms control negotiations." The then-chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Gen. Colin L. Powell, was an active supporter of the plan.

Today, of course, Cheney is vice president and Powell is secretary of state.

Staff writers Walter Pincus and Bradley Graham contributed to this report.

New York Times
November 14, 2001

U.S. Arsenal: Treaties Vs. Nontreaties

By Michael R. Gordon

WASHINGTON, Nov. 13 — President Bush did not mention it, but the arms control approach he presented today would undo one of the signal accomplishments of his father's administration: the ban on multiple-warhead missiles based on land.

Throughout the cold war, it was widely assumed that such missiles were particularly destabilizing weapons. NATO was so worried about the Soviet Union's 10-warhead SS-18 that its code name for the missile was Satan, and Reagan administration hard-liners warned darkly that it would be useful for a surprise strike.

Start II, a treaty signed in 1993 by the first Bush administration, banned land-based Mirvs, as the multiple-warhead missiles are known, a move that arms control specialists agreed made the nuclear balance more stable.

But the new Bush administration does not see Russia as a nuclear adversary and, officials say, has no interest in rescuing Start II, which has never taken effect because of disputes about conditions attached by both the United States Congress and the Russian parliament.

By omitting any mention of Start II, the administration signaled that its strategy is to leapfrog over that agreement and move to a more streamlined arrangement in which the United States and Russia separately announce plans for deep cuts.

That means that Start II and its provisions, including the ban on land-based missiles with multiple warheads, becomes an artifact of history, one policymaker said.

Administration officials say there is no need to perpetuate a ban hammered out during the tense days of the cold war. Much of the new American deterrent will be based on submarines, making it almost invulnerable to surprise attack. But some arms control proponents are critical.

"It means abandoning one of the most hard fought gains for U.S. national security," said Joseph Cirincione, a senior associate at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. "Multiple warhead missiles are dangerous weapons and will remain in the Russian arsenal long after Putin is gone."

The new administration stance is part of a broad rethinking about arms control that has led the administration to announce reductions in its nuclear arsenal.

In considering how deeply to cut America's nuclear arsenal, President Bush faced a quandary.

The Russians, whose own nuclear force is shrinking by the day because of economic pressures, wanted the United States to reduce the number of warheads to 1,500. But the United States Strategic Command, which oversees American nuclear forces, had been actively resisting such a deep cut, hoping to keep the level at around 2,250 warheads.

Today, Mr. Bush gave them both what they were looking for.

With President Vladimir V. Putin by his side, Mr. Bush announced that the United States would cut the number of its warheads to between 1,700 and 2,200 over 10 years, from the current level of more than 6,000.

When Mr. Bush took office, he called for a fresh look at the United States' nuclear posture, taking full account of the end of the cold war competition with the Soviets. Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld began a review of the country's nuclear requirements.

Still, there was no consensus on how deep the nuclear cuts should go, particularly because of the hawkish views of Adm. Richard W. Mies, the commander of the Strategic Command, who also resisted the push for deep cuts during the Clinton administration.

While Bush administration officials insist that their review was driven by a hard-headed look at nuclear requirements, no one was oblivious to the foreign policy implications.

A public pledge to slash the number of nuclear arms, officials understood, would help make the case to the Russians, as well as to other Europeans, that the administration's plan to build a missile defense was not part of a drive for strategic dominance.

It might even make the Russians more willing to go along with the administration's plans to conduct antimissile tests. These were not permitted by the 1972 Antiballistic Missile Treaty, an accord that is still a bone of contention.

The results of this American promise to cut the arsenal to 1,700 to 2,200 warheads over the next decade are significant. It would bring about a two-thirds reduction in the current arsenal. It is also an important advance over Start II, which called for reductions to 3,000 to 3,500 warheads.

"The Bush team are on a positive trend line for the first time toward moving below 2,000 warheads," said Rose Gottemoeller, a senior Energy Department official from the Clinton administration.

Still, the cuts were not as deep as some arms control advocates would have liked. They are only a little lower than the goals President Clinton and President Boris N. Yeltsin set in 1997 — 2,000 to 2,500 warheads each. (The Pentagon assumed that American warheads would be on the high end of that range and Russian warheads would be on the low end.)

In outlining the cuts today, the administration also changed how nuclear weapons are counted, excluding those on submarines and bombers that are being overhauled. This will reduce the count by several hundred weapons without actually eliminating them.

Still, some of the most important shifts had nothing to do with numbers. In addition to quietly walking away from Start II's ban on land-based multiple warhead missiles, the Bush administration says there is no need for formal treaties on offensive nuclear arms.

Instead, the administration's approach is to spell out the reductions the United States is planning while the Russians do the same. The reductions would be verified by provisions for on-site monitoring carried over from Start I, signed in 1991.

Administration officials say that dispensing with treaties will enable them to avoid the lengthy process it takes to negotiate them. But critics say it will also leave the two sides without a solid legal undertaking on nuclear arms that would outlast the Bush and Putin administrations.

Mr. Putin was skeptical as well, saying he was prepared to codify all of the understandings between the United States and the Russians "in treaty form."

Mr. Bush signaled that he did not think that a formal treaty was necessary, but added he would be willing to make a less formal commitment.

"If we need to write it down on piece of paper," he said, "I'd be glad to do that."

Wednesday November 14 2:09 PM ET

Missile Defense Accord Unlikely

By SANDRA SOBIERAJ, Associated Press Writer

CRAWFORD, Texas (AP) - As talks between President Bush ([news](#) - [web sites](#)) and Russian President Vladimir Putin ([news](#) - [web sites](#)) shifted to Bush's Texas ranch, White House officials said Wednesday that an accord on anti-missile defenses is not in the cards for this summit.

"Don't look for anything of that nature," White House press secretary Ari Fleischer ([news](#) - [web sites](#)) told reporters on the second day of talks between Bush and Putin.

"This is one stop along the road. We'll make other stops after Crawford but each stop is built on the positive results of the earlier meetings."

On this stop, at the president's rural, 1,600-acre Prairie Chapel Ranch, Bush was focused on building his budding personal relationship with Putin.

After Putin's afternoon arrival, he and his wife were being treated to what one aide called "a finger-lickin' Texas dinner" of guacamole, peppered beef, smoked catfish and pecan pie.

Gray skies threatened to dampen the open-air picnic but Bush remained eager for "an informal chance to break bread and to cover new ground and to improve relations that are already good," Fleischer said.

Both leaders affirmed Tuesday they had too many nuclear weapons. Both spoke of slashing their arsenals of long-range warheads to about one-third the current size. Bush prefers an informal arrangement; Putin prefers a traditional arms control accord.

But both also are signaling they are flexible, giving every indication that procedure will not block their intent to do away with thousands of nuclear weapons.

Bush, who took the first step at a White House news conference after meeting with Putin for three hours in the Oval Office, said his proposal to set a new U.S. ceiling of 1,700 to 2,200 long-range warheads over the next decade was "fully consistent with American security."

"The current levels of our nuclear forces do not reflect today's strategic realities," he said before leaving for his home in Crawford, Texas.

Putin matched him in a speech later at the Russian Embassy.

"Security is created not by piles of metal or weapons," Putin said. "It is created by political will of people, nation-state and their leaders."

So, the Russian president said, in light of a new and warm U.S.-Russian relationship, Russia can afford to reduce its arsenal to one-third or less.

The United States now has about 7,000 intercontinental-range nuclear warheads and Russia about 5,800.

Still, Putin said, he preferred codifying the reductions in formal agreements. "The world is far from having international relations based solely on trust, unfortunately," he said.

And Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov said Russia would keep pushing for a formal agreement. "To make it more reliable, we need to put it down in a treaty," he said. "It doesn't mean we distrust anyone. Just the opposite. It would consolidate and boost our relations."

Bush, on the other hand, said he saw no need for "endless hours" of negotiations.

But both leaders signaled their willingness to compromise.

Swinging a deal on anti-missile defenses is likely to be more difficult.

Senior administration officials told The Associated Press they did not expect an agreement on missile defenses before the summit talks end Thursday in Texas.

Bush wants to go ahead with a testing program that inevitably will run up against the prohibitions of the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile treaty.

Putin, who considers the treaty a cornerstone of arms control, said "the position of Russia remains unchanged." Even so, there apparently is room for bargaining, if not this week then when Bush goes to Moscow, possibly in January.

"Let's look together at what tests you need," Ivanov said. "If such tests don't violate the treaty, why discard it? We don't think that the ABM treaty is outdated."

If they were at a dead end, Bush likely would assert the right to withdraw from the treaty. But a senior U.S. official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the president would not take that final step during the current talks.

Bush hopes to persuade Putin to allow the United States to proceed with research and development of a missile shield without declaring the work a violation of the 1972 pact. In exchange, Bush promised Putin to keep Russia informed of the tests. U.S. officials said the proposal would give both men what they want: Bush could begin developing a missile shield and Putin could tell his public that he kept the ABM intact.

Finding common ground in other areas, the two leaders formalized a series of agreements to combat bioterrorism, bolster the Russian economy, battle money laundering that finances terrorism and strengthen Russia's ties to NATO ([news - web sites](#)) - the 19-member military alliance formed to counter Moscow in the Cold War.

Meanwhile, the Council for a Livable World, a private group that advocates arms control, said Bush's decision to reduce the U.S. arsenal was "a good first step that has been a long time in coming."

But, the Council said, there needs to be verification, counting rules and a procedure for dismantling the retired weapons.

"President Bush may be able to see into President Putin's soul, but today's verbal agreement can become tomorrow's misunderstanding," the Council said in a statement.

http://dailynews.yahoo.com/h/ap/20011114/pl/us_russia_78.html

Wednesday November 14 3:08 PM ET

Israelis Train for Chemical Attack

By JON GREENBERG, Associated Press Writer

REUT, Israel (AP) - Dozens of high school students played the role of the injured Wednesday during a drill that reflected increased concern in Israel about the country becoming the target of bioterrorism.

Though Israelis have been aware of the potential for a chemical or biological attack for the last decade, concern has increased since the Sept. 11 attacks in the United States.

The drill was carried out at a high school in Reut, a small city in central Israel, and involved the hypothetical explosion of a gas canister, said police spokesman Gil Kleiman.

After receiving practice reports of students falling ill, police and emergency vehicles raced to the school.

Police called the Environment Ministry to deal the fictional gas, deemed to be chlorine, and the army was brought in to provide backup.

"Police are always in charge of internal affairs in Israel," Kleiman said. "But if we think it's out of our jurisdiction, like a missile attack, we pass the torch to the army."

Police officers in chemical suits stormed the school and led "injured" students to grassy areas in front of the school for treatment.

Kleiman said 120 of the students pretended to be injured and seven people "died" during the drill, including a police officer.

After the police cleared the school, Environment Ministry experts in bright yellow suits practiced removing the gas with vacuuming equipment.

Some students were not impressed.

"It took too long for them to take us out," said Shira Back, 17.

Dana Arazy, 17, said she and a friend waited in the basement for about an hour, but nothing happened. Then they went and found police, who put them on a stretcher and pronounced them "dead." She wasn't sure if they were planned fatalities or just overlooked.

Chemical attacks have been a fear in Israel since the 1991 Gulf War ([news](#) - [web sites](#)), when Iraq fired 39 Scud missiles at Israel. The government distributed gas masks, fearing Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein ([news](#) - [web sites](#)) might use chemical weapons, but all the missiles had conventional warheads.

http://dailynews.yahoo.com/h/ap/20011114/wl/israel_chemical_drill_2.html

London Times

November 15, 2001

Bin Laden's Nuclear Secrets Found

By Anthony Loyd in Kabul

Osama bin Laden's al-Qaeda network held detailed plans for nuclear devices and other terrorist bombs in one of its Kabul headquarters.

The Times discovered the partly burnt documents in a hastily abandoned safe house in the Karta Parwan quarter of the city. Written in Arabic, German, Urdu and English, the notes give detailed designs for missiles, bombs and nuclear weapons. There are descriptions of how the detonation of TNT compresses plutonium into a critical mass, sparking a chain reaction, and ultimately a thermonuclear reaction.

Both President Bush and British ministers are convinced that bin Laden has access to nuclear material and Mr Bush said earlier this month that al-Qaeda was "seeking chemical, biological and nuclear weapons".

The discovery of the detailed bomb-making instructions, along with studies into chemical and nuclear devices, confirms the West's worst fears and raises the spectre of plans for an attack that would far exceed the September 11 atrocities in scale and gravity.

Nuclear experts say the design suggests that bin Laden may be working on a fission device, similar to Fat Man, the bomb dropped on Nagasaki. However, they emphasised that it was extremely difficult to build a viable warhead.

While the terrorists may not yet have the capability to build such weapons, their hopes of doing so are clear. One set of notes, written on headed notepaper from the Hotel Grand in Peshawar and dated April 26, 1998, says: "Naturally the explosive liquid has a very high mechanical energy which is translated into destructive force. But it can be tamed, controlled and can be used as a useful propulsive fuel if certain methods are applied to it. A supersonic moving missile has a shock wave. That shock wave can be used to contain an external combustion behind the missile . . ."

The document was one of many found in two of four al-Qaeda houses which had been used by Arabs and Pakistanis and even reportedly by bin Laden himself. The houses — two in the Karta Parwan district and the others further to the east — were abandoned on Monday as Taleban units and their allies fled the city.

Attempts had been made to burn the evidence, but many documents still remained. They included studies into the development of a kinetic energy supergun capable of firing chemical or nuclear warheads, external propulsion missiles, preliminary research on the creation of a thermonuclear device, as well as a multitude of instructions for making smaller bombs.

There were also studies into Western special forces' hostage rescue techniques, phone numbers for industrial chemical and synthetic producers, flight manuals, aerodynamic research, and advanced physics and chemistry manuals.

The houses were identified by local people. Looters had concentrated on more appetising objects, ignoring foreign language documents that were of no use to them.

Bin Laden sees it as his "religious duty" to obtain a nuclear bomb. In an interview with a Pakistani journalist last week, he threatened: "If America used chemical or nuclear weapons against us then we may retort with chemical and nuclear weapons as deterrent."

Intelligence agencies already have indirect evidence from defectors, middlemen and scientists of bin Laden's obsession with obtaining or producing a nuclear device.

Al-Qaeda agents are known to have spent more than £1 million trying to obtain enough fissile material to make a "dirty bomb" that, if detonated with TNT in a populous area, could kill thousands and contaminate it for decades. Intelligence sources told The Times last month that bin Laden and al-Qaeda had acquired nuclear materials illegally from Pakistan. And at least ten Pakistani nuclear scientists have been contacted by agents for the Taliban and al-Qaeda in the past two years, according to reports.

Fears that bin Laden has components for a nuclear weapon is believed to lie behind the warnings from President Bush and Tony Blair that he would commit worse atrocities than the suicide assaults in America if he could. The Prime Minister's spokesman said: "Bin Laden would have killed 600,000 people on September 11 if he could have done. This underlines again why he has to be stopped. "

USA Today
November 15, 2001
Pg. 3B

Biotech Firms Put Focus On Military, Defense Efforts

By Julie Appleby and Edward Iwata, USA Today

The biotechnology industry is gearing up to fight bioterrorism, although it's too early to know how big a boost the industry may get from defense dollars.

Since the Sept. 11 attacks and the anthrax scares, biotech and biopharmaceutical firms are exploring ways to shift products toward military and defense uses. They're being besieged by federal agencies inquiring about their work. And they're whipping together proposals, hoping to land part of the billions of dollars in contracts and research grants expected to flow from the U.S. government in coming months.

"The Sept. 11 incident has shaken up the biotech infrastructure," says analyst Alan Louie of consulting firm Arthur D. Little. "Some companies are going to see significant increases in funding."

With the new focus on bioterrorism, research and development money in the biotech and pharmaceutical industries could grow to \$50 billion in 2005 from \$26 billion this year, predicts analyst Rinat Ariely of research firm Frost & Sullivan.

Says Ariely: "There aren't enough current treatments and therapies to treat a possible national attack, so government support should continue strongly through the decade."

It won't be slam-dunk, though. It's still unclear exactly how much federal money will filter to the biotech industry from the \$40 billion in emergency funds approved shortly after Sept. 11, the proposed Pentagon budget of \$300 billion-plus or the \$1.5 billion requested by the US Department of Health and Human Services to fight bioterrorism attacks.

The several years it takes to research and roll out a biopharmaceutical product also is a huge hurdle. In that time, new bioterrorist threats could emerge, or terrorists might develop new strains of biological organisms and agents resistant to current treatments.

"Which products will be in demand in the future, to deal with new threats?" says analyst Thomas Dietz at Pacific Growth Equities. "You can't build a whole business around that."

Still, many are betting there will be a biotech gold mine in the coming months.

Companies such as Cepheid, which makes \$30,000 biological-detection devices for the military and corporations, has seen its stock more than double to \$3.50 since Sept. 11.

And recently, the Biotechnology Industry Organization asked its 600 members for ideas on how to combat terrorism. The trade group will press Congress to spend more on bioterrorism research and speed the review of new vaccines.

Biotech firms that may mount defenses against bioterrorism:

*Avant Immunotherapeutics. Una Ryan, CEO of Avant in Needham, Mass., says government funding is necessary to help her company focus on bioterrorism.

"There are a lot of technologies we put in place for our core peacetime business, and some of these strides can be put toward our defense against bioterrorism," says Ryan, whose company is developing easy-to-administer, single-dose vaccines against illnesses commonly experienced by travelers.

One example is a cholera vaccine Avant is now in final-stage trials. That vaccine may also act as a "Trojan horse," delivering protection against anthrax, smallpox or other biowarfare agents.

"If government is able to come up with a stimulus package, I think the industry could make leaps and bounds," says Ryan.

*Novavax. The Columbia, Md., company says it is developing two types of smallpox vaccines. The biotech firm has high hopes for its so-called "killed-virus" vaccine, which would be safer to give to patients with compromised immune systems than the live-virus vaccine used until the early 1970s.

The company has successfully tested the vaccine on rabbits and plans to seek Food & Drug Administration approval later this year to begin human clinical trials. But a final product is still years off and must be proved to be as effective as the live-virus vaccine.

*PurePulse Technologies. Companies such as PurePulse in San Diego are taking it cautiously. Marketing director Roy Wallen's firm makes devices that use a very bright beam of light to kill bacteria and viruses — a perfect focus for the war on terrorism.

But while he's had lots of interest since Sept. 11 from companies concerned about anthrax and other biowarfare agents, PurePulse isn't planning to shift its focus away from its main clients — pharmaceutical manufacturers. Without financial incentives from the government or the private sector, it could be too risky to test and develop the product for bioterrorism uses: If the threat of bioterrorism appears to wane, so will the market, Wallen says. "There's probably too much business risk right now," says Wallen.

Nuclear Nonproliferation: Coordination of U.S. Programs Designed to Reduce the Threat Posed by Weapons of Mass Destruction,

by Gary L. Jones, director, natural resources and environment, before the Subcommittee on International Security, Proliferation, and Federal Services, Senate Committee on Governmental Affairs.

GAO-02-180T, November 14.

<http://www.gao.gov/cgi-bin/getrpt?GAO-02-180t>

Bioterrorism: The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Role in Public Health Protection,

statement for the record by Janet Heinrich, director, health care - public health issues, before the House Committee on Energy and Commerce.

GAO-02-235T, November 15.

<http://www.gao.gov/cgi-bin/getrpt?GAO-02-235t>

Lab Found in Old al-Qaida Compound

The Associated Press, Thu 15 Nov 2001

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP) — An abandoned compound in the heart of Kabul used by Osama bin Laden's al-Qaida network appears to have been a makeshift laboratory, complete with foul-smelling liquids in dirty brown jars and scattered papers covered in chemical formulas.

The materials found at the compound — deserted in haste as the Taliban fled the Afghan capital — suggest al-Qaida may have been trying to develop chemical arms and other unconventional weapons.

Also found at the abandoned compound: a booklet offering advice on how to survive a nuclear explosion.

The United States has said that bin Laden's network was attempting to develop nuclear and chemical weapons, and the two-story house in the Karte Parwan district pointed to a keen interest in such weapons.

Room after room were filled with papers, formulas and maps, some partially burned, some with handwritten Arabic notations. There was a yellowed page from an old issue of Plane and Pilot magazine — a story entitled, "A Flight to Remember."

The Times of London newspaper reported Thursday that designs for nuclear weapons and missiles were among the debris left behind in the house — but it was unclear whether the documents the newspaper said it found consisted only of knowledge already in the public domain.

"There are descriptions of how the detonation of TNT compresses plutonium into a critical mass, sparking a chain reaction, and ultimately a thermonuclear reaction," The Times reported.

Written in Arabic, German, Urdu and English, the notes give "designs for missiles, bombs and nuclear weapons," it said.

Last weekend, a Pakistani newspaper quoted bin Laden as claiming that his organization had nuclear and chemical weapons. However, U.S. officials have said that they had no information to suggest he has been successful in his attempt to acquire such weaponry.

The Kabul compound appeared to have taken a direct hit from what northern alliance soldiers said was a U.S. rocket.

An alliance soldier in camouflage dress, Mohammed Nisar, walked through the rooms in three houses, pointing out pieces of paper with formulas, handwritten diagrams, pictures of rockets and other weaponry. In the basement of one house was what looked to be a laboratory.

In another house, where the al-Qaida men resided, according to Nisar, four different types of land mines were found. Northern alliance troops had emptied two old railway cars parked in the yard that its soldiers said had been packed with arms and ammunition.

"Look, you can see the land mines," Nisar said, moving to pick one up. "It's safe now, we have disarmed it."

At the rear of the main house, one room contained mountains of papers, some from training manuals showing diagrams of different weapons. One book in English was about how to use a recoilless rifle. In another room the floor was littered with small anti-personnel mines.

Deep beneath the house were what seemed to be bunkers, with a roof of fresh cement. In one bunker were parts of weapons, with the barrels of anti-aircraft weapons propped up in one corner.

In the yard and in the rooms more paper and diagrams — some in Arabic, some in Persian, some in Urdu — and maps with large circles to mark locations. Computer manuals were among the books.

Earlier this year, The Associated Press acquired an 11-volume Encyclopedia of Holy War, written in Arabic and dedicated to bin Laden and the Taliban.

At another al-Qaida compound, this one on the eastern edge of the city in the hills that surround Kabul's ancient Darulaman Palace, there was a sprawling training ground for al-Qaida recruits.

The training camp was located on a large base where Scud missile had been based when the former Soviet Union occupied Afghanistan between 1979 and 1989. The compound stretched over 1.2 miles. It took in several hilltop positions.

"We found lots of books and papers and newspapers," said Haji Abdullah, a northern alliance commander at the base. "We threw most of them out."

Some of the material that one young alliance soldier, Jan Aga, retrieved from the rubble included a laminated certificate that identified the holder as a "military training instructor."

The northern alliance, which now controls the abandoned base, had one Pakistani in their custody, Naimad Ullah. Just 17, Ullah could only speak Urdu. He looked terrified.

"I am afraid to say anything, they will take my head off," he said in Urdu. The northern alliance soldiers said they had kept him safe for three days and had captured him on the front lines north of Kabul.

Ullah said he was a student at a madrassa, or religious school, in Pakistan and had come to fight with the Taliban during his school holidays. His captors promised to keep him safe.

In their haste to flee the area, one Pakistani, Mohammed Khaliq left behind an unmailed letter home to his brother in Peshawar, Pakistan.

In a letter written Oct. 28, 12 days into air campaign, Khaliq said: "Don't worry about me. Pray for me five times a day. Our enemy is not strong, we will win. If we die here there is no greater reward."

<http://www.worldnews.com/?action=display&article=10541325&template=worldnews/search.txt&index=recent>

FRIDAY NOVEMBER 16 2001

Bin Laden's poison manual

FROM ANTHONY LOYD IN KABUL AND MARTIN FLETCHER IN WASHINGTON

Times discovers formula to kill a child with 'seven seeds'

Safe house reveals more deadly secrets A FRESH horror emerged from the ruins of post-Taleban Kabul yesterday with the discovery of al-Qaeda plans for manufacturing the biological poison ricin.

Instructions for preparing the poison were found by *The Times* amid dummy bombs and propoganda documents littering the cellar of an abandoned house once used as a terrorist training centre.

Ricin is one of the most toxic biological agents and was notoriously used by the Bulgarian secret police when they killed Georgi Markov by stabbing him with a poison umbrella as he crossed Waterloo Bridge in 1978.

The documents uncovered in the al-Qaeda safe house reinforce the point, saying: "A dose equal to seven seeds will kill a child." The papers also spell out the agonies that a victim will go through before death, which follows within a fortnight of administration.

The Pentagon is already investigating the newspaper's discovery of al-Qaeda's plans for nuclear devices. Tom Ridge, America's Director of Homeland Security, said that while they did not prove that bin Laden had managed to build nuclear devices, the documents were "certainly consistent with his statements that he would like to acquire that capacity". Donald Rumsfeld, the Defence Secretary, said of the *Times* report: "We saw it, we are checking it."

General Tommy Franks, the commander of the US campaign in Afghanistan, said that US Intelligence had drawn up a list of potential al-Qaeda weapons sites. "Now we are about the business of checking those sites out, as they fall under our control."

The search was given added urgency after Mullah Muhammad Omar, the Taleban leader, issued a chilling threat of reprisal against American targets. He told the BBC World Service from Kandahar: "You, the BBC, and American public radios have created a sense of concern but the current situation of Afghanistan is related to a big cause — that is the destruction of America.

"The plan is going ahead and, God willing, it is being implemented, but it is a huge task that is beyond the comprehension of human beings. If God's help is with us this will happen within a short period of time.

"Keep in mind this prediction. The real matter is the extinction of America."

The gated al-Qaeda house in Saraq Panza, Kabul, had been looted after the Taleban fled, and the two Arab doctors who worked there were beaten and killed as they tried to escape on Monday night.

The Times found ampules, syringes and pills scattered by looters across the ground floor, but the instructions for making ricin were concealed amid a mass of scattered documents listing formulae for manufacturing explosives, fuses and detonation circuits.

The instructions make chilling reading. "A certain amount, equal to a strong dose, will be able to kill an adult, and a dose equal to seven seeds will kill a child," one page reads.

Another page says: "Gloves and face mask are essential for the preparation of ricin. Period of death varies from 3-5 days minimum, 4-14 days maximum."

The instructions listed the symptoms of ricin as vomiting, stomach cramps, extreme thirst, bloody diarrhoea, throat irritation, respiratory collapse and death.

Originally manufactured in Russia, ricin was used by British scientists to develop a "W bomb" during the Second World War, but it was never used. It was also found by UN weapons inspectors in Iraq in the 1990s.

<http://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/0,,2001390015-2001397104,00.html>

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 15, 2001

WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION-CIVIL SUPPORT TEAMS STATIONING PLAN ANNOUNCED

Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld announced today the stationing plan for five additional National Guard Weapons of Mass Destruction Civil Support Teams (WMD-CST) authorized in the National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal 2001. These teams, scheduled for establishment and certification in fiscal 2003, are a key element of

the Department of Defense's overall program to provide support to civil authorities in the event of an incident involving weapons of mass destruction in the United States.

The five teams will be stationed in Alabama, Kansas, Michigan, Tennessee, and West Virginia. This brings the total number of National Guard WMD-CSTs to 32 to date.

These National Guard teams will provide DoD's unique expertise and capabilities to assist state governors in preparing for and responding to chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear (CBRN) incidents as part of a state's emergency response structure. Each team consists of 22 highly skilled, full-time National Guard members who are federally resourced, trained and exercised, and employs federally approved CBRN response doctrine.

Stationing criteria used to identify the new locations included coverage of major metropolitan areas based on population density; minimizing overlap with existing WMD-CSTs and other DoD response elements; and availability of existing facilities and support capabilities.

http://www.defenselink.mil/news/Nov2001/b11152001_bt589-01.html

New York Times
November 16, 2001
Pg. 1

U.S. Set To Retain Smallpox Stocks

By Judith Miller

WASHINGTON, Nov. 15 — The Bush administration, reversing a course set two decades ago, has decided that the world's remaining stocks of smallpox should be retained until scientists develop new vaccines and treatments for the disease, a process that could take years if not decades.

The decision, disclosed by senior administration officials, is likely to provoke criticism from international health officials who have long favored the destruction of the microbe.

A succession of administrations have endorsed the goal of destroying the virus, which was eradicated as a disease in the 1970's. But some American scientists and Pentagon officials have argued for retaining smallpox stocks, and in 1999 President Bill Clinton declared that they should be maintained, at least temporarily, while more research was conducted.

The Clinton administration privately assured other nations that it would support a move to kill off smallpox in 2002 when the issue was considered by the World Health Organization, which has long advocated destruction of the virus. The Bush administration's new policy, which is now being described to America's allies, sets no such deadline and establishes some stringent conditions, reflecting a new assessment of the dangers posed by bioterrorism.

The United States stopped routine vaccinations for smallpox in 1972. How long vaccines continue to protect against the disease is not known but the immunity is believed to fade over time. Americans under 30 are completely vulnerable to the disease.

Administration officials said the remaining American smallpox samples, which are stored at a laboratory at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta, should not be destroyed until the nation develops at least two licensed antiviral drugs, a vaccine that can be taken by the entire population, and other defensive measures. Russia also has smallpox strains stored at a research laboratory in Siberia.

There is currently no treatment for smallpox and a new vaccine is under development. Experts said today that work on both would most likely take many years to complete.

The eradication of smallpox as a disease is considered one of medicine's greatest triumphs and experts said the Bush administration's decision is likely to anger many doctors and scientists, particularly those in developing nations ravaged by the disease only a quarter of a century ago.

But administration officials said that after the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11 and the spate of anthrax letters that have killed four, infected 13 others, and put 30,000 Americans on antibiotics, the administration had no choice but to abandon the nation's longstanding commitment to eradicating the officially declared stocks as soon as possible.

"The issue was straightforward," said a senior official. "Are we going to do what we can to be prepared for what is one of the most consequential threats we face, or are we going to engage in feel-good measures that mask the real danger?"

Officials said that an interagency group that has been considering bio- defense measures had unanimously endorsed the policy shift without reservation. The group is made up of representatives of the Defense Department, State Department, Department of Health and Human Services and other cabinet departments. But the officials said they

expected the decision might be criticized by individuals and groups long associated with the international campaign to destroy the virus to ensure that it does not re-emerge and to celebrate the world's triumph over the contagious disease, which killed one-third of those it infected.

Jonathan B. Tucker, a bioterrorism expert at the Washington office of the Monterey Institute of International Studies and the author of "Scourge: The Once and Future Threat of Smallpox," said the policy would create a certain amount of ill will internationally and arouse suspicions about American and Russian intentions.

In particular, he said, India and Brazil, which had lobbied hard for the virus's destruction, would resent the continued American and Russian monopoly on the stocks. The Clinton administration had assured their officials in 1999, he said, that the United States would support destruction after research on the virus was completed in 2002. It was that compromise that permitted the agreement two years ago, Mr. Tucker said.

The new policy, however, is likely to be received with relief by many countries, notably Russia. Russia has vigorously argued that there are clandestine stocks of smallpox virus throughout the world and that retaining the virus could speed the development of new drugs to fight a possible outbreak, whether because of terrorism or other factors.

Reached late tonight by phone in Moscow, Lev S. Sandakhchiev, the director of Russia's State Research Center of Virology and Biotechnology, the Siberian-based research laboratory where smallpox strains are stored, called the American shift wise not only for Russia and the United States, but also for the entire world.

In the Soviet era, Dr. Sandakhchiev's lab specialized in turning viruses like smallpox into weapons of war. American officials said that he had privately warned that North Korea, among other countries, was secretly keeping smallpox stocks.

It was intelligence from Soviet defectors and other sources about Moscow's vast germ warfare program that prompted the Clinton administration to question the immediate destruction of the virus. Western and foreign officials said at the time that fear of a possible epidemic in a now largely unvaccinated world helped shift Mr. Clinton's personal views against immediate destruction.

But the previous administration remained committed in principle to destroying the virus, a commitment that the Bush administration has now refused to make.

Those familiar with the conditions set by the Bush administration say destruction of the virus will not even be considered until a new vaccine is produced that can be given to all Americans. The vaccine available today cannot safely be administered to people with H.I.V. and others with immune deficiencies.

The conditions also include the development of reliable medical diagnostic tests and environmental detectors, which do not yet exist. And they include the ability to defeat genetically altered strains of smallpox.

It would take at least a decade to meet the administration's criteria, and that is a conservative estimate, Mr. Tucker said.

He called the position of the administration too open-ended and warned that it would have its work cut out in trying to persuade other nations to accept that the virus would not be destroyed by the time President Bush leaves office. A committee of scientific experts is scheduled to consider the issue of destroying the virus early next month. The new American position is expected to be unveiled formally at that session, if not before, officials said.

Administration officials said that they had already discussed the new stance with Britain, America's closest ally in the war against international terrorism, and that other allies were now being notified. Over the weekend, officials said, Tommy G. Thompson, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, discussed the policy by phone with the head of the World Health Organization.

Its officials, in Geneva, could not be reached late tonight for comment.

Washington Post
November 16, 2001
Pg. 43

Nuclear Differences Remain As Summit Ends

Bush, Putin Vow To Maintain Ties

By Dana Milbank, Washington Post Staff Writer

CRAWFORD, Tex., Nov. 15 -- President Bush and Russian President Vladimir Putin closed two rain-drenched days of talks here without agreement on how to reduce nuclear stockpiles or the future of missile defenses and the Anti-

Ballistic Missile Treaty. But both leaders made clear they would not allow differences over nuclear policy to cause a rift in a relationship that has become far broader.

The Russian president flew to New York this afternoon to tour the destroyed World Trade Center site, completing a trip that began Tuesday at the White House and included a speech in Houston, a barbecue and tour at Bush's ranch here, and a joint appearance before Crawford High School students this morning.

After their fourth set of meetings this year, the two leaders, backslapping, first-name-using and laughing at each other's jokes, said their relationship, along with relations between their countries, had been transformed. They played down their most significant disagreement: the future of the 1972 ABM Treaty, which forbids the sort of missile defense tests Bush plans.

Putin, who earlier called the treaty a cornerstone of international stability, presented a more flexible position today.

"We share the concerns of the president of the United States . . . that we must think of future threats," Putin said.

"We differ in the ways and means we perceive that are suitable for reaching the same objective. And given the nature of the relationship between the United States and Russia, one can rest assured that whatever final solution is found, it will not threaten . . . the interests of both our countries and of the world."

Bush aides pointed to Putin's remarks as evidence that they would be able eventually to proceed with missile defense without a standoff with Russia. "What President Putin said here is extremely important," national security adviser Condoleezza Rice said this afternoon. "This is now a very broad relationship in which the nature of our nuclear relationship is a small part. This is 180 degrees from where we were with the Soviet Union, which was where it was the only issue, really, in our relationship."

Bush aides indicated the president, too, had become more flexible about his missile defense plan, a core element of his presidential campaign. "We'll see how long we can go before we have to actually begin the testing and development program," Rice said. She added that the United States still wants to extricate itself from the treaty's constraints but emphasized that "we're still in the one-way-or-another phase."

Bush, like Putin, minimized the disagreements. "We have a difference of opinion," he said. "But, nevertheless, our disagreements will not divide us, as nations that need to combine to make the world more peaceful and more prosperous."

Though both men earlier this week vowed to trim nuclear arsenals by two-thirds, they did not agree on whether the weapons would be destroyed and whether the reductions would be permanent.

In his remarks this morning, Bush appeared to commit himself to destroying the nuclear warheads eliminated when he reduces the American arsenal. "We are talking about reducing and destroying the number of warheads to get down to specific levels, from significant higher levels today to significantly lower levels tomorrow," he said.

But Rice said later that only "a number of them" will be destroyed and suggested others would be stored. "What the president was referring to is, we will not have these warheads near the places at which they could be deployed," she said.

Arms control advocates have criticized Bush's plan because it does not commit to the destruction of the decommissioned warheads. Putin, who has been wary of the American position, said the fate of dismantled warheads "is subject to negotiations."

Aides said the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11 and subsequent war in Afghanistan have made clear to both leaders that other matters are of urgent concern, and those topics dominated the private talks. The two men shared intelligence from Afghanistan and held detailed discussions about how to build a new government, a requirement made more urgent by the Taliban's rapid retreat.

Both presidents pledged to pressure the Northern Alliance to show restraint as a broad-based government is introduced. As part of their talks about nuclear proliferation, Putin and Bush also discussed Osama bin Laden's efforts to obtain such weapons, allegations bolstered by reports from Kabul that nuclear construction manuals had been found.

Putin, normally a cool, even dour personality, warmed to Bush's style of banter. After Bush said the two men would take questions from the students, an uncharacteristically impish Putin interjected: "No math questions."

"Good idea," Bush replied, then recalled an old campaign line. "Particularly no fuzzy math questions."

The high-spirited presidents offered some fuzzy math of their own, however. Bush explained how they had learned to move beyond the zero-sum relations of the Cold War. "We now understand one plus one can equal three," he said. Putin also displayed his arithmetic skills in a bid to get Bush to commit to a Russia visit. "On the count of three, those of you who want your president to come to Russia, say yes," Putin said through an interpreter, then added in English: "One! Two!" But he never said three. After a pause, the students shouted "yes" anyway.

It was obvious that the two presidents, who liked each other to begin with, grew closer during their talks in Washington and Texas. Bush called Putin "Vladimir." He said he had had further opportunity to inspect the Russian premier's "heart and soul."

Putin called the barbecue he ate at Bush's Prairie Chapel ranch a "masterpiece of cooking." When Bush suggested Putin visit the ranch in August, the Russian gave a noncommittal wave of his hand. Bush said Putin's response amounted to: "Fine -- and maybe you'd like to go to Siberia in the winter?"

All in all, Putin professed affection for Texas, despite two days of rain and thunder. "We in Russia somehow tend to know about Texas rather better than about the rest of the United States," he said. "Except maybe for Alaska, which we sold to you."

Washington Times
November 16, 2001
Pg. 9

Inside The Ring

By Bill Gertz and Rowan Scarborough

Strategic missile test

The growing friendship between Russian President Vladimir Putin and President Bush, who spent time together in Crawford, Texas, this week, apparently has not altered Moscow's drive to develop new and potentially revolutionary strategic weapons.

U.S. intelligence officials tell us the Nov. 1 flight test of a Russian SS-27 strategic missile had unique characteristics. It was the second time Moscow had carried out what appeared to be a test firing of a new low-trajectory missile. The SS-27 was fired from the Plesetsk Cosmodrome and landed at the Kura test range on Kamchatka Peninsula.

In July, Russian military developers fired the first long-range strategic missile that left the atmosphere and then dropped down to an altitude of about 100,000 feet before impacting at a target range on the far eastern peninsula. The missile is believed to have a "scramjet"-powered last stage that travels at speeds around five times the speed of sound.

U.S. intelligence agencies believe the Russians are developing the new missile stage to defeat U.S. strategic defenses, which are currently focused on hitting warheads in space.

Russia remains opposed to U.S. plans for a nationwide strategic defense network. Mr. Bush and Mr. Putin were unable to agree on changes to the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty that would allow the legal deployment of such a system. In response, the United States could pull out of the treaty next month.

New York Times
November 16, 2001

U.S. Testing Goes Ahead; Could Violate ABM Treaty

By James Dao

WASHINGTON, Nov. 15 — With the failure of President Bush and President Vladimir V. Putin of Russia to reach an agreement on replacing or amending the Antiballistic Missile Treaty, the Pentagon is moving ahead with plans for missile defense testing and construction work that could violate the treaty sometime next year, officials said today.

Pentagon officials said today they have not scheduled any tests for the rest of this year that were likely to conflict with the treaty's strictures. But the Pentagon has also been developing plans to conduct missile-tracking tests and build a communications system in Alaska sometime next spring or summer that could be interpreted as violating the treaty, senior military officials have said.

Asked in an interview on Wednesday whether preparations for those activities were continuing, Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld replied, "You bet."

Pentagon officials said their plans did not mean that the Bush administration was prepared to unilaterally abandon the treaty at this point, noting that they could voluntarily constrain testing and construction activities before they violated the treaty next year.

Mr. Rumsfeld said that the military officials who run the missile defense program could live within the pact "for a period," even though it had "inhibited" their work.

Three weeks ago the Bush administration announced that it had postponed three antimissile tracking tests that Mr. Rumsfeld said might be interpreted as violating the treaty. The pact was signed with the Soviet Union in 1972 to prevent development of systems capable of defending the nation against long-range missile attacks. At the time those tests were postponed, President Bush and President Putin were beginning talks on amending or replacing the treaty to allow the United States to build missile defenses. But today, the two presidents emerged from a meeting in Crawford, Tex., to say that they had failed to reach agreement on how to move beyond the treaty. Though he said the administration would abide by the ABM Treaty for now, Mr. Rumsfeld left open the possibility that the United States would withdraw from the treaty after giving six months' notice, as is required, if talks with Russia remained stalled. He said that talks with Russia could continue even after a decision to pull out of the treaty, suggesting that such a move might be viewed by some in the administration as a way of pressuring the Russians to reach an agreement.

"It's purpose," Mr. Rumsfeld said of the treaty, "is to keep you from doing what we would like to do. Therefore it's a problem."

Mr. Rumsfeld has been among the administration's strongest advocates of eliminating the treaty and building defenses against what he considers to be the growing threat of missile attacks from terrorists and nations like North Korea or Iraq. But his views have often clashed with others inside the administration who worry that abolishing the treaty would raise nuclear tensions around the world.

Today, advocates of missile defense in Congress said the Pentagon should move ahead briskly with its testing and construction plans regardless of whether they might violate the treaty.

"I urge the president to move ahead with all deliberate speed on missile defense development and testing," said Senator James M. Inhofe, Republican of Oklahoma. "We should not hesitate to formally withdraw from a treaty which no longer serves our national security interests."

Senator Carl Levin, Democrat of Michigan and chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, said he did not object to the Pentagon's planning for activities that might violate the treaty, so long as it did not carry them out.

"It will make us less secure to proceed in a unilateral way," he said.

Missile defense critics have argued that under their interpretation the ABM Treaty will not hamper missile testing for years to come. They contend that the postponed missile-tracking tests were scientifically pointless and were concocted by the Pentagon mainly to bolster its complaint that the treaty is constraining.

The Pentagon has denied that and is now moving ahead with plans to conduct similar, though more complex, tests early next year. It also plans to try to shoot down an intercontinental ballistic missile with a prototype interceptor rocket next month. That test, however, is not expected to violate the treaty, senior Pentagon officials said.

Washington Post
November 16, 2001
Pg. 18

Analysts Debate Next Weapon In Al Qaeda Arsenal

Panel Finds Terrorists More Likely to Possess Radioactive 'Dirty Bombs' Than Nuclear Weapons

By Michael Dobbs and Peter Behr, Washington Post Staff Writers

With Osama bin Laden on the run in Afghanistan and the Taliban regime in full retreat, one of the most pressing questions for experts studying bin Laden's terrorist career is whether the Saudi-born dissident has some final cataclysm to unleash on America as an ultimate act of revenge.

Probably not, say U.S. officials and most independent analysts, who are skeptical of claims by bin Laden that he has nuclear weapons or other sophisticated devices capable of causing much greater numbers of casualties than on Sept. 11. They caution, however, that his supporters have dabbled in chemical experiments and shown an interest in acquiring nuclear materials that could be used in conjunction with conventional explosives for a "dirty bomb." In fact, the nation has more to fear from an attack by terrorists armed with dirty bombs containing radioactive materials packed around an explosive core than from nuclear weapons, a committee of leading radiation scientists has concluded in a report being sent to Congress today. The National Council on Radiation Protection and

Measurements said that contamination from such an attack would likely extend to several city blocks and that radiation would be "catastrophic but manageable."

The council's findings, which were the result of a three-year study, are in line with informal assessments by government counterterrorism officials and many independent experts. But there is a dissenting view, expressed most forcefully by Graham Allison of Harvard University, who said it is quite "probable" that bin Laden's al Qaeda network has acquired sufficient quantities of fissile material to create a crude nuclear device.

"I find it well within the realm of the probable that they have fissile material from Russia, which they could fashion into a device that they could put into a minivan," said Allison, who served as assistant secretary of defense in the Clinton administration. Another scenario, he said, was to smuggle a nuclear device into the United States through one of the millions of containers that enter the country every year.

In public statements over the last few years, bin Laden has described the acquisition of weapons of mass destruction as "a religious duty" for Muslims waging jihad, or holy war, against the West. "If I have indeed acquired these weapons, then I thank God for enabling me to do so," he told Time magazine in December 1998, shortly after issuing a statement calling for America's destruction under the title "The Nuclear Bomb of Islam."

In his most recent interview, with a Pakistani journalist in a mountain hideout near Kabul this month, bin Laden, 44, said his supporters possessed chemical and nuclear weapons as "a deterrent" against the use of such weapons by the United States. But he refused to say how he had acquired his arsenal.

The Taliban's supreme religious leader, Mohammad Omar, was similarly vague yesterday when he was asked a question about bin Laden's possession of weapons of mass destruction in a rare interview with the British Broadcasting Corp. conducted over satellite phone. "The real matter is the extinction of America and, God willing, it will fall to the ground," predicting that this would happen within "a short period of time."

U.S. officials yesterday dismissed such threats as largely bluff, while not doubting that bin Laden is ruthless enough to use weapons of mass destruction against the United States should he ever acquire them.

"What these statements do is merely to reinforce the need to wipe these guys out," said a U.S. official involved in counterterrorism efforts. "When you have got a group that is clearly going after weapons of mass destruction, you have to assume that they will succeed at some point."

The official described the likelihood of bin Laden possessing a full-scale nuclear weapon as "not credible," given the huge difficulties in acquiring sufficient quantities of plutonium or highly enriched uranium needed to initiate a chain reaction. He said that a crude radiological bomb was much more likely, noting that there are 10,000 sites in the world where nuclear materials of one kind or another are stored.

Regardless of the amount of radiation released, any significant attack with a radioactive weapon would cause "chaos," according to the new report to Congress. Public panic caused by the fear of invisible radiation would be a key weapon for terrorists, the report states.

"It's a great psychological warfare weapon," said council member and Texas A&M University professor Ian Scott Hamilton. "It's great for spreading fear."

Council President Charles R. Meinhold said rescue workers would not necessarily be put at risk by radiation from a "dirty bomb," which might be less than levels acceptable for nuclear plant workers. He said the report's most important finding was that government agencies and medical facilities needed more training and equipment to cope with such attacks.

There is evidence that bin Laden has been trying to acquire nuclear materials since at least 1994. Testifying earlier this year in a trial of al Qaeda members accused of bombing U.S. embassies in East Africa in 1998, former bin Laden associate Jamal al-Fadal said he had tried to acquire uranium from a Sudanese source in late 1993 or early 1994. He did not know whether the acquisition attempts continued after he left the organization.

U.S. officials have also expressed concern at reports that bin Laden supporters have experimented with various poisonous substances at terrorist training camps in Afghanistan. Ahmed Ressam, a former member of the al Qaeda terrorist network arrested by U.S. border guards in December 1999, has said his training at the Khalden camp included instruction in how to place cyanide gas near the air intake vents of a building.

In one experiment, Ressam told a New York court in July, an instructor put a dog in a box and poured in some cyanide and sulfuric acid. It took the dog about four minutes to die. "We wanted to know what is the effect of the gas," said Ressam, who is now cooperating with American prosecutors.

Reporters entering Kabul this week in the wake of the headlong Taliban retreat have found some evidence that al Qaeda dabbled in chemical experiments and studied widely known techniques for making nuclear devices. In a front-page report in the Times of London, the paper's correspondent in Kabul, Anthony Lloyd, said he found instructions on how to manufacture the deadly poison ricin in the cellar of an abandoned house used by al Qaeda members.

"A strong dose will be able to kill an adult and a dose equal to seven seeds will kill a child," the instructions said. It was not clear whether al Qaeda members had tried to produce ricin, which was used by the Bulgarian secret police to kill a dissident writer, Georgi Markov, in London in 1978.

Stephen Cohen, a South Asia expert at the Brookings Institution, said he would like to see much more evidence before concluding that bin Laden has weapons of mass destruction. "People who claim he has such devices are very skimpy about the evidence," he said. "If he had them, he would probably have used them by now. The goal of his movement is not to bargain and negotiate, but to punish."

London Times
November 16, 2001

Doctors Prescribed Painful Death

By Anthony Loyd in Kabul

It was only in the cellar's dim light that the doctors' true vocation became apparent.

Their ampules, syringes and pills had been crunched underfoot, torn from cabinets on the ground floor by the looters, and there was little at first to indicate that the men were anything other than Arab doctors who had been killed by civilians as they tried to escape from Kabul late on Monday night.

"Two of them were killed, both Arabs, one with a German passport, one with Saudi Arabian papers," Sadaq, 21, a shopkeeper who owns a stall opposite the house in Saraq Panza, Kabul, said. "They were trying to escape, but were caught, beaten and shot."

Yet on descending the stairs to the basement rooms a very different image appeared through the gloom.

Five supermarket-size cardboard boxes stood among a scatter of papers. Each had combinations of string appearing through the top. The cord was marked and joined centrally by black masking tape. Electrical circuits were scrawled on the faces. "Current", "Time", "Detonation", the three Arabic words read.

The doctors' cellar was a bomb training centre for al-Qaeda trainees.

But there was worse.

Most of the jumbled papers on the floor contained chemical formulas on the making of explosives. A single English word caught my attention among the Arabic: ricin. The men of science had been doing more than just teach fledgeling terrorists how to make and use explosive devices: they were familiarising them with a deadly chemical poison.

In 1978 ricin killed the Bulgarian exile Georgi Markov as he walked across Waterloo Bridge. He was stabbed in the thigh by a member of the Bulgarian secret police with a poisoned umbrella, injecting him with a tiny metal capsule containing ricin.

The capsule was perforated, and the holes sealed with wax. As Markov walked on, oblivious of what had happened, his blood temperature melted the wax, releasing the poison into his bloodstream. He died, painfully, a few days later. Ricin was among Saddam Hussein's chemical weapon stocks destroyed in British and American air raids on an industrial complex in Falluja, west of Baghdad, in December 1998 to punish Saddam for refusing to co-operate with United Nations weapons inspectors. Originally a Russian-manufactured poison, it can be distributed in several ways. Death is painful, prolonged and certain.

If I had any doubt as to what the process involved, it was dispelled later when the doctors' documents were translated. "Gloves and face mask are essential for the preparation of ricin," the instructions began. "Period of death varies from three to five days minimum, four to 14 days maximum."

Symptoms of ricin poisoning were listed as vomiting, stomach cramps, extreme thirst, bloody diarrhoea, throat irritation, respiratory collapse and death.

Back in the sunlight of the street, after I had rummaged through less interesting papers, including Osama bin Laden's 1998 Proclamation of Jihad Against the American Occupiers of Islamic Places, lists of PETN and C4 explosive stocks, maps of Chechnya and, most incongruous of all, a Valentine's Day card containing an erotic poem sent from a woman to a man, I asked the shopkeeper Sadaq more about the house's former occupants.

"The Arabs first moved into the house two years ago," he said. "They kept to themselves, but often came to my shop to buy fruit. The owner of the house lives in Pakistan."

"I don't really know how many Arabs lived there as, apart from the doctors — they used it as a type of guesthouse. I do know that among them were Libyans, Yemenis and Saudi Arabians because I would ask them where they were

from when they bought things from me. Sometimes a few Chechens came to visit too, but not many. All of the Arabs wore civilian clothes, but some were armed."

In the afternoon an Afghan professor of Arabic was translating the documents. The man, 32, is an Islamic scholar. After an elementary education in Afghanistan's pre-Taliban madrasas, or Islamic schools, he studied theology in Egypt for five years at al-Azhar university.

After about three hours of wading stoically through the explosive charts, fuse assemblies, chemical properties and propaganda leaflets he sat back. "The minds who have produced these instructions, worked on these experiments and written the ricin directions are doctors and professors," he said.

"They are intelligent, educated men. But they are devoid or have lost their morality and their God."

London Times

November 16, 2001

Ricin, An Evil Poison Easily Made

By Helen Rumbelow

Ricin is one of the most deadly of biological weapons, ideal for assassinations, but harder to spread on a wide scale. It was used most famously in the killing of the Bulgarian dissident Georgi Markov in London in 1978, when he was stabbed in the thigh by an umbrella with a ricin pellet hidden inside the engineered tip. Markov suffered ricin's trademark death: within hours he was feverish, days later he was in hospital, vomiting blood, and he died after his internal organs collapsed.

Ricin comes from the seeds of the castor oil plant, *Ricinus communis*, a member of the pumpkin family. Plants are found in temperate climates and are grown in northern US states for ornamental purposes, although the main producers are India and Brazil.

Ricin is left behind when castor seeds are pressed to make castor oil and is normally destroyed by being placed in boiling water, but the poisonous protein can be isolated from the seeds by a simple chemical process.

Scientists discovered that castor oil contained a toxic protein in the late 19th century. It was most dangerous when injected into the skin, but could also kill when inhaled.

It attracted the attention of the American Government near the end of the First World War. By the Second World War, ricin — code-named Compound W — had been engineered by British scientists into a "W Bomb" to scatter droplets of the poison. It was tested but never used.

It is difficult to treat victims because the poison acts quickly and irreversibly, but doctors have recently developed a vaccine that can help if given after exposure.

Difficulties with delivery means that ricin has never been used successfully on a mass scale, but it remains a favourite of extremist groups.

New York Times

November 16, 2001

Senators Seek \$3.2 Billion To Fight Germ Threats, Doubling Bush Plan

By Sheryl Gay Stolberg

WASHINGTON, Nov. 15 — A bipartisan group of senators introduced legislation today calling for \$3.2 billion to fight bioterrorism and said it believed President Bush, who has proposed spending half that much, would support the bill. But the White House said its support was not assured.

At issue, said Tommy G. Thompson, the secretary of health and human services, is how well the Senate's bioterrorism measure will mesh with the president's plan for spending the \$40 billion Congress has appropriated to improve defenses against terrorism of all types.

Mr. Thompson said the administration was not opposed to spending \$3.2 billion but the expenditure "may have to be phased in over a couple of years."

Scott McClellan, a spokesman for the president, said Mr. Bush viewed the bill as "an important step toward reaching bipartisan consensus." He said the administration would continue to work with the bill's co-sponsors, Senators Bill Frist, Republican of Tennessee, and Edward M. Kennedy, Democrat of Massachusetts, on a bioterrorism package they could agree on.

A central difference between the proposals is how much they devote to state and local preparedness. The administration's \$1.5 billion proposal would give the states \$300 million and spend the rest largely on drugs and vaccines.

Mr. Thompson is negotiating with pharmaceutical companies to buy 300 million doses of smallpox vaccine, one for every American. Testifying before the House Energy and Commerce Committee today, he said that "with all probability," contracts with the companies would be signed next week.

The smallpox vaccine alone is estimated to cost more than \$509 million, and the administration wants to spend another \$643 million to expand the National Pharmaceutical Stockpile, a cache of medicines and supplies to be used after a germ attack.

The Frist-Kennedy package includes \$509 million for smallpox vaccine and \$643 million for the drug stockpile. But it would also offer nearly \$1.1 billion to states, including \$670 million to create grants for bioterrorism preparedness.

At a news conference announcing the legislation today, Senator Frist said 80 percent of city and county health departments lacked comprehensive bioterror plans and more than half lacked the equipment to send faxes to multiple recipients.

Senator Frist, a heart surgeon, said state and local health departments were "the first line of defense."

Senator Kennedy said the recent anthrax attacks, which have killed four Americans and sickened more than a dozen, amply demonstrated the need to be better prepared.

"The clock is ticking on America's preparedness for a future attack," Mr. Kennedy said at the news conference, which was attended by seven Democrats and three Republicans. "We've had the clearest possible warning, and we can't afford to ignore it."

In the House hearing, Representative Greg Ganske, Republican of Iowa and a reconstructive surgeon, said he would introduce legislation identical to the Frist-Kennedy bill. Several lawmakers said the administration's plan did not go far enough.

"We need to focus our spending on systems and people, not just things," said Representative Henry A. Waxman, Democrat of California. He called for more money to train public health professionals and laboratory workers.

Lawmakers in both parties agreed that the physical plant at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta sorely needed upgrading. Scientists at the centers, who have been working around the clock to investigate the anthrax attacks, occupy laboratories that date to World War II, and the buildings are so badly deteriorated that expensive equipment must be covered in plastic sheeting to protect against rain, which seeps through the roof.

Mr. Thompson, who attended the hearing accompanied by Dr. Jeffrey P. Koplan, the agency's director, said plans to spend money to improve the facility were "like music to my ears."

New York Times
November 16, 2001

Ridge Agrees Taliban Losses May Lead To New Terrorism

By Alison Mitchell

WASHINGTON, Nov. 15 — Taliban defeats in Afghanistan could lead Al Qaeda to strike back with another terrorist attack, Tom Ridge, the director of homeland security, suggested today.

Asked whether Osama bin Laden might be more likely to attack because of Taliban losses in Afghanistan, Mr. Ridge said "common sense" dictated that "if you are putting pressure on your enemy in one area or one venue, they may choose to act out in a separate area, in a different venue."

He said the nation's "state of readiness and wariness" was as high as it had ever been.

Mr. Ridge said the country would remain on high alert until Mr. bin Laden was caught and his network dismantled.

As the war in Afghanistan reached a critical stage, Mr. Ridge toured an Energy Department exhibition of counterterrorism devices, addressed a conference on national security, held a town hall meeting at Hofstra University on Long Island and was interviewed tonight by Larry King on CNN. He said technological advances would be at the heart of government strategy for making the nation safer.

Mr. Ridge confirmed reports that designs for missiles, bombs and nuclear weapons were found in a Qaeda safe house in Kabul, but played down their significance. He said he was told that much of the information was widely available.

Mr. Ridge said a report in The Times of London that the information was found half-burned in Kabul was "certainly consistent" with other signs that Mr. bin Laden wanted to obtain nuclear weapons.

"It does not confirm that he has the capacity," he said. "It just shows that whether it's bin Laden or some other potential foe of this country, we have to be prepared for all eventualities, including a nuclear threat."

Several other government officials said today that all they knew about the documents was what they had read in news accounts and that they had no reason to change their assessment that Al Qaeda did not have nuclear capabilities.

Fleshing out his mission to develop a comprehensive plan for security, Mr. Ridge opened the door to a wide-ranging reorganization of the federal government.

"We will prepare not to fight the wars of the past," he said. "We must create a blueprint to win the wars of the future."

He said that the government needed to "rethink traditional missions and traditional relationships" and that the Bush administration was looking at how to realign agencies.

He cited as an example the federal agencies that handle food safety, noting that one group of inspectors looks at vegetables, another at livestock.

"Wherever you have multiple organizations that seem to be tasked to the same general area," Mr. Ridge said, "for functional improvement, for economic improvement, for security enhancement, we ought to at least take a look at whether or not we need to merge functions, merge agencies."

Food safety responsibilities are scattered among agencies, including the Agriculture Department, the Commerce Department, the Food and Drug Administration, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Customs Service and the Environmental Protection Agency.

In Congress there is also pressure to merge the Border Patrol, the Customs Service and the Coast Guard, a consolidation Mr. Ridge has said he will consider. He said the administration would look at whether the National Guard needed to be reconfigured for homeland security. Thousands of National Guard troops are protecting airports, and they will be sent this week to guard the Capitol.

But Mr. Ridge said the Bush administration would deploy the regular military to handle domestic terrorist attacks only as a last resort.

Mr. Ridge said priority had to be given to standardizing training and equipment for firefighters, the police and emergency personnel across the country and creating a "seamless" communication system.

He expressed interest in more use of "biometric" cards that contain such information as fingerprints or iris scans for such things as visas or airport security. He did not speak of a national identification card.

Mr. Ridge said he was looking at the cost of homeland defense and that President Bush's next budget would "reflect the priorities of this office." He said the president had also told him that if he saw immediate needs he could propose an emergency spending package for early next year.

While many in Congress say Mr. Ridge needs more power and an independent agency, he insisted that his responsibilities were too diffuse to be put in one cabinet department.

"If they choose to create another agency, if they choose to create a cabinet position, that's fine," he said, "but I'm not applying. I already have a job, and I like it."

At the town hall meeting this evening, Mr. Ridge offered assurances that extensive security measures were in place. "America will prevail," Mr. Ridge said. "I believe you'd have to be living in a cave not to know that."

Far Eastern Economic Review
November 22, 2001

A Buyer For The Bomb

Bin Laden claims he has access to nuclear weapons. The Americans reckon it's a bluff but are sure he's actively seeking nuclear material and know-how

By David Lague, Hong Kong

IT IS AS IF THE NEW benchmark for terrorist violence, a pair of hijacked airliners plunging into packed office towers, has stripped a protective layer from the imagination. Terrorists who could do that could do anything and what could be a more horrific new standard in indiscriminate killing than a mushroom cloud over a flattened, irradiated city.

That fear has been heightened since Saudi-born Osama bin Laden, the suspected mastermind behind the September 11 terrorist attacks in the United States, boasted to a Pakistani journalist last week that he had access to nuclear weapons, claiming that agents in Central Asia were ready to sell fully-assembled nuclear devices for \$10 million-\$20 million.

Senior U.S. officials doubt this claim but, ominously, they are convinced that bin Laden and his Taliban hosts in Afghanistan have been actively seeking nuclear materials and know-how. "I think it is unlikely that he has a nuclear weapon," Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld told CBS News on November 11. "He certainly wants them, there's no question."

As the Taliban army is forced into headlong flight by its enemies, evidence is emerging that bin Laden and his cohorts have been actively seeking expertise in Pakistan and Russia as part of their quest for the ultimate weapon of mass destruction.

Some in Washington fear bin Laden may have even succeeded in either building or buying a bomb or obtaining enough radioactive material to combine with conventional explosives to create a "dirty bomb." This crude weapon would not have the effect of a nuclear explosion but it could render a big area uninhabitable for decades.

"It is not improbable that Al Qaeda has access to nuclear weapons or at least a dirty bomb," says chairman of the U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Democrat Senator Joseph Biden. "The only thing I can say is that we know that there are attempts to purchase it."

If bin Laden is still looking to get his hands on nuclear material and the knowledge to build a bomb, where would he be most likely to get it? Much speculation has dwelt on the danger of one or more of Pakistan's estimated stockpile of up to 30 nuclear warheads falling into the wrong hands.

These fears have given rise to suggestions that India, the U.S. or even Israel would be under pressure to intervene in Pakistan, possibly with special forces, if there was any doubt about the custody of Islamabad's nuclear arsenal.

However, Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf has firmly rebutted suggestions that his country's nuclear weapons were insecure. Independent analysts tend to agree. "There is little public evidence to suggest that the safety of Pakistan's nuclear installations or the command and control of its strategic forces are in jeopardy," wrote analyst Gaurav Kampani of the Centre for Nonproliferation Studies in a recent report.

Doubts about the security of Pakistan's weapons focus on the stability of the military regime at a time when it is supporting the U.S.-led war on terrorism in the face of considerable domestic opposition. So far the pro-Taliban demonstrations have not posed a serious threat to the regime.

According to analysts in Pakistan, Musharraf's biggest fear is not a popular uprising or the growing clout of Islamic fundamentalist parties, but his own army and the intelligence services, particularly the Interservices Intelligence. For the past decade officers' promotion was heavily dependent on their willingness to support Islamic groups fighting against Indian rule in Kashmir or for the Taliban. But on October 7, Musharraf signalled a major shift in policy by carrying out a reshuffle of his top generals. The about-face has been bitterly resented by mid-level and junior ISI officers who were told to cut contacts with the Taliban.

Scientists working in Pakistan's nuclear programme were also rewarded for their religious devoutness. But, Musharraf last month ordered that three nuclear experts be questioned about their contacts with the Taliban and bin Laden. They included Sultan Bashiruddin Mahmood and Abdul Majid, who helped enormously to develop Pakistan's atom bomb.

"The scientists only passed stringent security clearance to work for the nuclear programme if they held strong Islamic views. The majority of our scientists are Islamic fundamentalists who see no contradiction in reconciling their extreme beliefs with nuclear science," says a senior academic.

As the U.S.-led campaign enters the decisive stage of defeating the Taliban in their southern Afghan heartland, the loyalties of many ISI officers and some scientists will be severely tested. There is every likelihood that faced with a massive assault on their bases in Kandahar and Jalalabad, the Taliban and their Arab co-fighters will seek refuge within Pakistan's North West Frontier Province. Thus, in an ironic reversal of roles, northern Pakistan could provide the strategic depth that the Taliban need in their war against the U.S.

Vote Of Confidence

The open involvement of Pakistani nationals on the Taliban's side will inevitably draw retaliation from the U.S. and in a matter of days, the war zone could extend to include Pakistan too. In these circumstances, these officers or scientists could try to justify smuggling nuclear material to the Taliban.

However, for that to happen, the security of Pakistan's nuclear facilities would have to be breached. Washington appears publicly satisfied that Islamabad's security measures are up to scratch despite reports that Musharraf recently ordered urgent redeployment of warheads to secret new locations with stepped-up security.

One vote of confidence in Pakistan's ability to safeguard its nuclear weapons comes from an unexpected quarter: India. "As long as the Pakistani military is in charge, these things must be safe," says P.K. Iyengar, a former chairman of India's Atomic Energy Commission. That view is echoed by most security experts in India, who also believe that it would be very difficult for a group of rogue officers to obtain a weapon.

That doesn't mean there isn't cause for concern. While extremists might not be able to steal a weapon from Pakistan's arsenal, its nuclear expertise could be tapped, says Kanwal Hazari, a retired Indian general. If Pakistani scientists were to get the backing of a rogue state, says Hazari, the chance of a nuclear weapon coming into unfriendly hands grows.

There is also the possibility that nuclear material from the vast network of nuclear-weapons production and storage sites spread across the former Soviet Union could fall into terrorist hands. Many of these facilities are poorly guarded and there have been numerous violations of security.

For now, some experts seek hope from the fact that terrorists have yet to use nuclear arms. "The reason there wasn't a nuclear attack on September 11 is that they don't have nuclear material yet," says Jon Wolfsthal, a researcher at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace in Washington.

However, the danger is this could change. "If they got the bomb, they'd use it," says analyst Kampani. "It wouldn't be difficult to smuggle one into Europe or the U.S."