

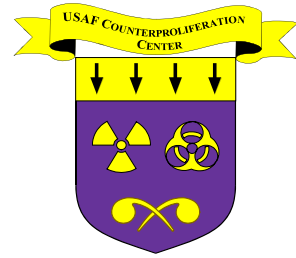
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23 Mar 2001

*USAF COUNTERPROLIFERATION CENTER*

# *CPC OUTREACH JOURNAL*

*Air University  
Air War College  
Maxwell AFB, Alabama*



*Welcome to the CPC Outreach Journal. As part of USAF Counterproliferation Center's mission to counter weapons of mass destruction through education and research, we're providing our government and civilian community a source for timely counterproliferation information. This information includes articles, papers and other documents addressing issues pertinent to US military response options for dealing with nuclear, biological and chemical threats and attacks. It's our hope this information resource will help enhance your counterproliferation issue awareness.*

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## **Canada faces cyber-threat, DND warns Forces must develop ability to counter new forms of attack**

### **Electronic warfare more likely than conventional battle, strategy paper says**

**Jim Bronskill**  
The Ottawa Citizen

The Canadian military should take on new roles that include the ability to launch cyber-attacks and better defend overseas troops against terrorist strikes, says an internal Defence Department strategy paper. The newly obtained report says the enhancements are needed to prepare the Armed Forces for episodes such as the release of biological weapons, a crippling attack on Canada's power grid or a psychological campaign aimed at swaying public opinion....

<http://www.ottawacitizen.com/national/010311/5079388.html>

## **Agency lacks funds to destroy weapons**

By Karen Iley, Reuters, 3/15/2001

**T** IAGUE - The independent body charged with destroying the world's arsenals of chemical weapons said today that it does not have the money to do the job.

"We are now going through a very difficult financial crisis, a critical one which may impact the future of our organization," said Jose Bustani, director general of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, or OPCW.

It has an annual budget of approximately \$55 million. But because of the way the budget is structured, member states have not provided much of that money....

[http://www.boston.com/dailyglobe2/074/nation/Agency\\_lacks\\_funds\\_to\\_destroy\\_weapons+.shtml](http://www.boston.com/dailyglobe2/074/nation/Agency_lacks_funds_to_destroy_weapons+.shtml)

## **Terrorism training center set for state National Guard, WVU to team up to create center**

Karin Fischer; [kfischer@dailymail.com](mailto:kfischer@dailymail.com)

Daily Mail Washington bureau

Thursday March 15, 2001; 01:40 PM

WASHINGTON -- The quiet hills of West Virginia appear to be a world away from terrorist attacks. But they'll be the epicenter of response to domestic and international terrorism, be it a cloud of poison gas, a bomb or a virulent bug.

West Virginia University and the West Virginia National Guard, along with global contractor EDS, are joining forces to create the National Training Center for Weapons of Mass Destruction.

The university and EDS Wednesday signed an agreement on a joint project to improve national readiness to terrorist attacks. The likely client? The federal government.

The pair already has \$1.7 million in federal funding, and West Virginia University program director Rusty Russell said participants are looking for other grant or contract money.

This isn't the state's only foray into the world of counter-terrorism. Besides the training facilities at Camp Dawson, the National Guard also has the West Virginia Memorial Tunnel National Counter-Terrorism Facility in Kanawha County.

The godfather of all this is Sen. Robert Byrd, D-W.Va., who has been interested in counter-terrorism issues for years. He helped secure funding for some of the facilities, and Russell said it was Byrd who brought the university and the National Guard together.

The university, which is home to the International Telemedicine Collaboratory, will work to develop a response plan to a range of terrorist attacks, Russell said. They will figure out who the first responders are, including medical and law enforcement personnel. They also will draft different responses to different types of attacks and design a training program.

The university also will concentrate on ways to get the information out, including online distribution, Russell said.

The National Guard, however, may deal with more of the hands-on training at Camp Dawson in Preston County. Police, fire and emergency room personnel could be sent to the facility to learn specific techniques or protocols. About 50 faculty members likely will work on the project, which cuts across disciplinary lines, Russell said. An initial prototype could be completed in roughly 15 months.

It's important that the groups begin now to prepare for an event most federal officials concede is inevitable, Russell said. Officials expect a terrorist attack sometime in the next 10 years, although they don't know what form it will take.

"It's like a flood or a tornado," Russell said. "You know it's going to happen, but not when it's going to come."

16 March 2001

## **Text: On 13th Anniversary of Halabja Massacre**

(Says massacre will not be forgotten)(330)

Following is the text of a statement March 16 by State Department spokesman Richard Boucher on the 13th anniversary of Saddam Hussein's poison gas attack on Iraqi Kurds at Halabja in northeastern Iraq:

(begin text)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE Office of the Spokesman

March 16, 2001 2001/204

STATEMENT BY RICHARD BOUCHER, SPOKESMAN

Anniversary of the Halabja Massacre

Today marks the thirteenth anniversary of Saddam Hussein's chemical weapons attack on Halabja, a predominantly Kurdish city in northeastern Iraq. On March 16, 1988, an estimated 5,000 civilians were killed and 10,000 injured when Iraqi air forces bombarded Halabja with mustard and other poison gases. Thirteen years after the massacre, the people of Halabja still suffer from very high rates of serious diseases such as cancer, neurological disorders, birth defects and miscarriages....

[http://usinfo.state.gov/cgi-](http://usinfo.state.gov/cgi-bin/washfile/display.pl?p=/products/washfile/topic/intrel&f=01031603.npo&t=/products/washfile/newsitem.shtml)

[bin/washfile/display.pl?p=/products/washfile/topic/intrel&f=01031603.npo&t=/products/washfile/newsitem.shtml](http://usinfo.state.gov/cgi-bin/washfile/display.pl?p=/products/washfile/topic/intrel&f=01031603.npo&t=/products/washfile/newsitem.shtml)

## **Condition of Every Chem Wpn Known-Munitions Agency Chief**

MOSCOW, Mar 19, 2001 (Itar-Tass via COMTEX) -- Zinovy Pak, Director-General of the Russian Munitions Agency (RMA) (or Rosboyepripsy), in an interview published in the 2nd issue of the "Yaderny Kontrol" (Nuclear Monitoring) journal, made available to Itar-Tass on Monday, said the RMA possesses the newest technologies to reprocess chemical weapons. He spoke in comment on the situation concerning the elimination of 40,000 tonnes of toxic agents available at Russian depots.

"We shall convert lewisite into salts of arsenous acid, which will be then kept at depots as a State reserve stock of unique strategic raw material. As electronics develops, a market takes shape, and cheaper purification technologies emerge, the State would allow the use of this raw material on a commercial basis," Pak said.

"We keep every munition under control and know the current condition of everyone of them. Those munitions, which degenerate into a rosly condition, are subject to elimination by safe, environmentally-friendly methods or to re-packing into air-tight containers which make it possible to keep them for another 20 years without any damage to the environment," Pak pointed out.

By Anatoly Yurkin

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[http://my.cnn.com/jbcl/cnews/Go?template=otmDetStory&art\\_id=6618166&uid=](http://my.cnn.com/jbcl/cnews/Go?template=otmDetStory&art_id=6618166&uid=)

Washington Post  
March 20, 2001  
Pg. 17

## **Marine Loses Appeal Over Anthrax Vaccine**

A Marine court-martialed for refusing to take the mandatory anthrax vaccine lost a Supreme Court appeal. The high court, without comment, turned down the claim of Lance Cpl. Matthew D. Perry that the military prosecution violated his constitutional rights. Perry was convicted last month at Camp Pendleton in California.

The Pentagon ordered all 2.4 million active-duty and reserve troops to undergo a six-shot anthrax vaccination regimen as protection against biological warfare. More than 400,000 service members have been vaccinated since the program began in 1998. A few service members have refused, saying the shots are not safe. Those who refuse are first counseled by a superior. Continued refusal is treated as insubordination.

Christian Science Monitor  
March 20, 2001

## **Bush Misses The Point On North Korea**

By J. Peter Scoblic

WASHINGTON -- In putting missile talks with North Korea on hold, the Bush administration has won plaudits for taking a stronger and more realistic stand toward a dangerous regime.

But the reason the administration gave for its hesitance - concern that the North would cheat on any agreement - is based not on pragmatism but on a misunderstanding of the importance of verification. An agreement ending North Korea's missile development and exports would be a boon for US security, and the inability to fully guarantee North Korea's compliance does not make a deal imprudent or dangerous.

North Korea is an impoverished state with no hope of prevailing over the United States in a protracted conflict. But it does have a relatively advanced missile program that some fear could produce an intercontinental ballistic missile within a few years capable of reaching parts of the US - possibly delivering a chemical or biological weapon. North Korea has therefore become the rallying cry for supporters of a national missile defense, but it has also become the focus of diplomatic efforts aimed at easing the potential threat.

Avoiding treaties with a party that has proved untrustworthy is common sense. But by all accounts North Korea has adhered to the one real deal it has with the US: the 1994 Agreed Framework, which stopped the North's nuclear weapons program. North Korea also has kept its 1999 pledge not to flight-test missiles while involved in negotiations on a missile ban with Washington. Such a deal, if it proved to be as successful as the Agreed Framework, would dramatically reduce the "rogue state" threat to the US. Yet the Bush administration is hesitant to proceed.

There may be a number of reasons for this reluctance, including the fact that a stalled North Korean missile program would severely undercut the rationale for a national missile defense, a top White House priority. But the administration's professed concern is that a deal could not be perfectly verified. "We do not have a 100 percent ability to monitor these agreements," one senior administration official lamented. That objection is worth examining at face value.

While it may be smart to approach a North Korean agreement with caution, it is a mistake to make 100 percent verifiability a prerequisite. Not only is absolute verification impossible, it is unnecessary. Strong verification is an essential component of any arms-control treaty, but the fact that there may be some uncertainty about complete compliance needs to be balanced against the benefits of an agreement - even if it is not perfectly implemented. Verification has been an obstacle that opponents have thrown up in front of almost all arms-control agreements, including the chemical and biological weapons conventions, the treaty banning intermediate-range nuclear missiles, the START agreements to slash US and Russian nuclear weapons stockpiles, and most recently the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty.

But despite perennial fears of what would happen if others cheated - indeed, despite the fact that other states have cheated - no arms-control agreement has ever resulted in a loss of US security. There are two reasons for this. First, the type of cheating that can slip through a verification net is usually not the type that confers a significant advantage to the cheater. Second, in certain types of agreements, cheating - even gross cheating - may be unwanted, but its cost is no greater than that of not having signed the agreement. If an agreement does not require us to give up any capability or potential advantage, then we are no more vulnerable with it than without it.

This would be the case with a deal to get rid of North Korea's missiles. According to reports of the negotiations conducted by the Clinton administration, North Korea's leader, Kim Jong Il, was willing to give up all missiles with a range greater than 300 miles and discontinue all missile exports in exchange for \$1 billion of annual food and fuel aid. Such a deal could end the world's most advanced rogue- state missile program, but it does not have even the potential to make the US less secure.

The agreement's verification provisions - even if they were not perfect - would still give us inspection tools we do not currently have and therefore give us a greater chance of discovering proscribed behavior. Furthermore, an agreement would characterize missile development and export as "cheating," as opposed to simply unwanted conduct, thereby giving us a greater ability to leverage international pressure if needed. And if North Korea egregiously violated the terms of an agreement and we found ourselves facing an imminent threat, we could fall back on the significant military presence we have in the region.

Finally, it should be remembered that there would be nothing in a deal to stop development of a national missile defense. Consequently, proponents of missile defense need not be opponents of an agreement with North Korea. In pursuing an agreement with North Korea, we should expect and demand compliance, and we should work with all the tools at our disposal to verify it to the greatest degree possible. But the Bush administration should realize that the risk of North Korea not fully complying with a missile agreement is far less serious than that posed by an unconstrained North Korean missile program.

*J. Peter Scoblic is editor of Arms Control Today.*

Washington Times

March 20, 2001

Pg. 17

## **Critical Mass**

By Frank J. Gaffney Jr.

While the Bush administration's pending decisions about missile defense and the size and costs of its effort to rebuild the U.S. military have been the focus of considerable attention and debate, a no-less-epochal review is under way — one that has, to date, received little public consideration.

In the course of last year's campaign, Candidate George W. Bush expressed a willingness to consider radically and unilaterally reducing the quantity and the alert status of America's nuclear forces — contributing to a new post-Cold War posture featuring an increasing reliance on anti-missile capabilities. As president, Mr. Bush has asked his administration to assess the wisdom and desirability of such initiatives.

If this study is done in a dispassionate and rigorous way, these are the sorts of responses he will shortly be receiving: Extreme care should be exercised over further, deep reductions in U.S. nuclear weapons. The object of retaining a nuclear arsenal is, after all, not primarily to have sufficient means to fight an incalculably destructive war. Rather, it is to prevent one from happening. The greatest danger of all would be if the United States were to be seen to have so diminished its deterrent capabilities as to make the world "safe" for nuclear war.

Deterrence is not a science but an art. There is no objectively right or wrong answer as to the number of nuclear arms the United States "needs" to have; it is a question of risk. Contrary to the hoary theories of arms control, however, the risks appear greater when U.S. deterrent power is discounted than when it is overwhelming. It is, in short, infinitely better to err on the side of having too much nuclear capability than to have catalyzed, however unintentionally, circumstances in which nuclear weapons might wind up being used by having unduly diminished the credibility of one's deterrent.

This is especially true in an international environment that is as unpredictable as the present one. We cannot say for certain Russia's future course, but it seems unlikely that the former Soviet Union will become more benign in the years immediately ahead. For the moment, it is unable to afford large nuclear forces and would like us to agree to mirror-image the deep reductions economic considerations compel them to make. This would be a mistake; if the

Kremlin reverts to form and marshals the resources to rebuild its offensive weaponry, negotiated limits will — as usual — wind up binding us, but not them.

For its part, China is determined to acquire great power status and the nuclear arms that it believes are appropriate to such a state. What is more, virtually every one of Russia and China's allies — what we call "rogue states" they call "clients" — are bent on acquiring atomic, if not thermonuclear, capabilities and are receiving help toward that end from Moscow and/or Beijing.

While the deployment of effective American missile defenses can — and should — mitigate somewhat the dangers that such trends represent, it is unnecessary and would be unwise to make further "deep" reductions below the roughly 3,500 U.S. nuclear warheads America planned to retain under the START II Treaty until such time as the beneficial effects of such anti-missile deployments are demonstrated in the diminution of proliferation and related threats to this country, its allies and interests.

The folly of unduly cutting the United States' nuclear deterrent would be greatly exacerbated were the nation deliberately to reduce the readiness of whatever strategic forces it decides to retain. Proponents of "de-alerting" America's strategic missiles claim this is an appropriate and necessary response to the danger that Russian weapons might be launched accidentally or without proper authorization.

This sort of thinking is reckless in the extreme. Effectively eliminating the United States's capability to respond with nuclear arms in a credible and prompt manner is unlikely to eliminate the problem of the Kremlin's "loose nukes"; they are the result of systemic forces (for example, a decentralized command-and-control system, deteriorating conditions and morale in the Russian military, corruption, etc.), not inadequate technology.

To its credit, the Bush administration appears to be reconsidering the enormously expensive programs its predecessor established in the name of "securing" the Kremlin's nuclear wherewithal. Rose Gottemoeller, the highly controversial Energy Department appointee who sought to fund these programs to the tune of \$1.2 billion in fiscal 2002, has called the Bush team's reported plan to pare them back to "only" \$800 million "a shame." What is, in fact, truly shameful has been the lack of accountability for these initiatives that has, according to successive critical reports by the General Accounting Office, enabled the funds to be used for, among other things, subsidizing the ongoing Russian nuclear modernization program.

Finally, the Bush nuclear review must address not only the need for a credible nuclear deterrent today; it must also ensure the safety, reliability and effectiveness of America's deterrent for the foreseeable future. This will require several politically difficult but vital steps — including, a resumption of limited, underground nuclear testing required both to continue to certify the existing stockpile and to design, develop and field the next generation of nuclear weapons upon which the nation will depend in the decades to come. The latter could include deep penetrating warheads capable of holding at risk the underground command posts that even rogue state regimes are acquiring today and an anti-missile warhead in case hit-to-kill missile defense technologies prove unworkable. If President Bush receives and heeds such advice from his subordinates' nuclear review, chances are his legacy will be one of leaving the U.S. military not only better capable of fighting the nation's next war, but of preventing it from happening.

*Frank J. Gaffney Jr. is the president of the Center for Security Policy and a columnist for The Washington Times.*

Fort Worth Star-Telegram  
March 20, 2001

## **Russia Arming An Iran In Disputes With Almost All Its Neighbors**

By Anwar Faruqi, Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates -- Iran's latest arms deal with Russia, underpinned by a surge in its oil revenue, has troubling implications for its neighbors, almost all of whom are embroiled in quarrels with Tehran that could turn violent.

Moscow and Tehran insist the deal is for defensive purposes only, but the United States, itself a big weapons supplier to the region, has expressed alarm.

News of the latest agreement came during a four-day visit by Iranian President Mohammad Khatami last week. Russia agreed to supply \$7 billion worth of weapons over the next few years and to complete Iran's only nuclear reactor by 2003.

Iran covets Russia's missile technology and its Su-25 warplanes that could narrow the gap with its U.S.-supplied Gulf Arab neighbors. In a single deal last year, the tiny United Arab Emirates placed a \$6.4 billion deal with the United States for 80 F-16 fighter planes.

A Russian official visiting Washington last week didn't mention warplanes when asked about the Iran arms deal. "All defensive," insisted Sergei Ivanov, Russian President Vladimir Putin's national security adviser. "Personnel carriers, tanks, anti-air missiles, which are very legitimate."

But Russia already has helped Iran tip the regional naval balance by selling it three Kilo-class submarines, the only subs owned by a Gulf country, and between 1989 and 1999 it supplied a reported \$5 billion worth of weapons to Iran, the bulk of Tehran's recent purchases.

Iran's military ambitions are not new. They can now be realized, however, because of a windfall from oil revenues. Russia makes no secret of its need for big customers to prop up its flagging defense industries. By engaging with Iran, a major and influential player in the region, Moscow also retains powerful influence in the Gulf and beyond. But weapons sales to Iran at this time raise concern because the Islamic Republic is more unstable now than at any time since it rose out of the 1979 revolution.

Religious hard-liners who still believe in holy war and exporting the revolution are waging a power struggle with pro-Khatami reformists.

Despite a thaw with Iraq, neither country can forget their devastating 1980-88 war.

Across the Gulf, Iran is locked in a territorial dispute with the Emirates.

Ties with Turkey are strained over Tehran's support for rebel Kurds and Ankara's military ties with Israel, Iran's arch foe.

In 1998, Iran came close to war with Afghanistan's Taliban rulers following the killing of seven Iranian diplomats and an Iranian journalist by renegade Taliban troops.

And then there's the Mideast conflict. Iran's defense minister, Ali Shamkhani, said in December that his country would retaliate in an "astounding and unexpected" way if Israel attacked Syria or Lebanon.

Iran has built and tested a number of missiles. Its latest, the Shahab-3, has a range of 800 miles and can reach Israel or U.S. troops in Saudi Arabia.

Israeli leaders repeatedly warn that Iran is close to developing a nuclear weapon, despite denials by Tehran. Ignoring U.S. concerns, Russia is building Iran's only nuclear reactor at a power plant in the city of Bushehr.

Both countries insist the technology cannot be used to make bombs, and can point out that Israel too is reported to have nuclear warheads, plus the missiles to deliver them.

Russia has said Iran agreed to sign up for a second nuclear reactor during Khatami's visit.

Moscow disregarded a 1995 agreement with Washington that called for a ban on more arms sales to Iran.

"It is not wise to invest in regimes that do not follow international standards of behavior," Secretary of State Colin Powell said Wednesday, criticizing the latest arms deal with Iran. The Russians, he said, should not be "investing in weapons sales in countries such as Iran which have no future."

Washington Times

March 20, 2001

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## **Pyongyang Assails U.S. Over Nuke Deal Waffling**

From combined dispatches

TOKYO — North Korea fired the latest volley in an increasingly strident attack on the Bush administration yesterday, saying Washington risked war if it did not soften its stance.

The statement followed a series of anti-U.S. diatribes, couched in rhetoric reminiscent of the Cold War era, in which the Stalinist nation slammed President Bush's 2-month-old administration. In one commentary broadcast last week, Pyongyang called the United States "a cannibals' nation."

Washington risked seriously harming relations if it reconsidered a key 1994 agreement to help North Korea build nuclear reactors, Tokyo-based monitoring agency Radiopress quoted North Korean state-run broadcasters as saying Sunday.

Such a move would be "tantamount to a declaration of war," it quoted broadcasters Radio Pyongyang and Korean Central Radio as saying.

The broadcasts cited reports that conservative Sen. Jesse Helms, North Carolina Republican, was urging the abandonment of the agreement, under which Pyongyang agreed to freeze its nuclear program in return for two nuclear reactors and annual supplies of fuel oil.

"If this is the attitude of the United States, we will have to adopt an extreme hard-line stance," the broadcast said. "If the U.S. imperialists demand war, we will respond a thousandfold.

"If this is the will of the U.S., we feel no particular need to be bound by an agreement that may or may not be fulfilled."

North Korea for some months now has blamed its acute shortage of energy on delays in fulfilling the agreement. Under the terms of the pact, the United States, South Korea and Japan jointly lead the \$4.6 billion light-water reactor project. Washington provides the mandated fuel oil.

However, progress on the reactors has been hampered by disagreements on how to shoulder the costs.

This month, a spokesman for Pyongyang's Foreign Ministry said the resulting energy shortage was making it difficult for North Korea unilaterally to keep its moratorium on launching satellites and missiles in force.

South Korean officials said last month they did not expect the Bush administration to seek changes to the agreement.

Relations between North Korea and the United States had begun to warm toward the end of President Clinton's administration and Mr. Clinton nearly went to Pyongyang in his final days in office to seal a deal that would have mothballed the communist state's long-range missile program in exchange for better ties with Washington.

Seattle Times  
March 20, 2001  
Pg. 7

## **U.S. Nuclear Facilities Seen As Decrepit**

WASHINGTON--U.S. nuclear-weapons facilities have aged and deteriorated, and the United States currently is incapable of producing a nuclear weapon, James Schlesinger, former defense and energy secretary, testified yesterday before a Senate subcommittee. In February, the subcommittee expressed concern about the nuclear-weapons production complex and proposed a 10-year plan to restore missing production capabilities and refurbish facilities at an estimated cost of \$700 million to \$800 million.

## **U.S. Lags in Nuclear Infrastructure, Weapons Skills**

NewsMax Wires  
Tuesday, March 20, 2001

WASHINGTON (UPI) \* For all the talk about how the Russian nuclear weapons complex is falling to pieces, the United States should not be casting stones, two officials told a Senate committee Monday.

It will take between \$300 million and \$500 million a year for the next 10 years to rebuild the facilities where nuclear weapons are housed and monitored for safety and reliability and \$700 million to complete a backlog of maintenance, former Energy and Defense Secretary James Schlesinger told the Senate Armed Services Committee.

It is a \$5 billion bill that cannot be avoided, Schlesinger said.

The roof is crumbling on workers' heads at the Y-12 facility in Oak Ridge, Tenn., said Steven Guidice, a former Energy Department official who is serving with Schlesinger on a congressionally appointed panel to review the health and safety of the nuclear stockpile.

Workers have been issued hard hats to wear while working in one of the decaying buildings, Guidice said. There are more than 500 workers in the Y-12 complex, which was built in 1943 as part of the Manhattan Project.

The Energy Department stores almost 172 metric tons of enriched uranium.

"Irrespective of the size of the stockpile, we will have to revive the infrastructure," Schlesinger said.



The United States is helping Russia with almost \$900 million a year to disassemble nuclear weapons and store the missile material in safe places, under the Cooperative Threat Reduction program created by Congress. Some of that money goes to support scientists with experience in chemical and biological weapons manufacturing and to transform weapons industries into civilian businesses.

The United States has not produced a nuclear warhead for a decade, and it has not conducted a nuclear explosive test for almost eight years. These former manufacturing plants now are in the business of stockpile stewardship \* maintaining the safety and reliability of the weapons, the average age of which is now 20 years, according to Schlesinger.

President Bush has said he wants to reduce the number of U.S. nuclear weapons \* unilaterally if necessary \* to improve security. Russia is presumed to be in favor of the idea, as it has sought to arrange for further reduction to already agreed upon cuts to the arsenal, mostly for cost reasons.

But Schlesinger's panel advocates the United States building a modern facility capable of constructing plutonium cores that begin the reaction in nuclear warheads. That effort will take 10 years \* time enough, Schlesinger believes, for the aging stockpile to degrade enough for the United States to have to build replacements, or at least have the option.

"I do not think we need to worry about declining safety of the stockpile, but the question of reliability is a concern," he said. "In the decade that has passed, confidence in the weapons has declined. ... In the face of inevitably declining confidence, do we have a deterrent that will deter others?"

"As a simple caution, we must have the ability to produce primaries," he said. "Any deterioration in the nuclear heart of a weapon is of some considerable concern. We ought to have the ability to produce those primaries even if we don't have to use it."

Guidice warned that the generation of scientists with practical experience in building the weapons is retiring.

"If we continue to push that [date] out, we will not be able to transfer those skills to the new generation," he said.

## **Nonproliferation Programs Face Major Budget Cuts**

Tuesday, March 20, 2001

Bush administration plans to cut funding for most nonproliferation assistance projects in Russia have triggered concerns among members of Congress and proliferation experts. The cuts could cripple efforts to secure nuclear weapons materials and reduce the risk of nuclear, chemical and biological weapon and ballistic missile proliferation from Russia.

As of mid-March, the administration budget to be submitted to Congress in April slashes critical Department of Energy nonproliferation programs. Programs slated for reductions below their initial requests include: the Nuclear Cities Initiative, aimed at converting former Soviet nuclear weapons complexes into non-weapons businesses (cut from \$30 million request to \$6 million); the Material Protection, Control and Accounting Program, which improves physical security for weapons-usable plutonium and highly enriched uranium (cut from \$217 million to \$139 million); and the plutonium disposition program, designed to dispose of excess plutonium from dismantled nuclear weapons (cut from over \$400 million to \$217 million)....

<http://www.ceip.org/files/nonprolif/templates/article.asp?NewsID=403>

(Editor's Note: Hyperlink for report in next article.)

Inside Missile Defense

March 21, 2001

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## **Report Warns Of Continuing Proliferation In Middle East**

According to a new study by the Carnegie Endowment, ballistic missile arsenals in the Middle East, "where tensions are high but distances between capitals are short," continue to increase and create greater cause for concern.

The March 15 report, titled "Ballistic Missile Arsenals in the Middle East," summarizes proliferation and development in Egypt, Israel, Syria, Libya, Iran, Iraq, and Saudi Arabia. The report finds Israel the "most capable military power in the region," citing their solid propellant short-range Jericho I and medium-range Jericho II missiles. "Israel's successful satellite launches . . . directly suggest that Israel could quickly develop missile platforms with much longer ranges than the Jericho II," notes the report. Iran possesses one of the largest arsenals in the region, the report concludes, with "hundreds of deployed rockets and Scud short-range missiles." Iran also possesses the CSS-8 short-range missile, purchased from China. North Korean assistance has provided Iran with the ability to produce Scuds indigenously. Iran also produces a series of unguided rockets with ranges over 100km, including the solid-fueled Zelzal system. "Tehran is aggressively pursuing foreign technology in an attempt to develop the medium-range Shehab-III," the report states. Based on North Korea's No Dong missile and flight tested for the third time in September 2000, the United States alleges that the Shehab-III "benefits substantially" from Russian technology. Additionally, the report notes that official Iranian statements reference longer-range missiles called the Shehab-IV and -V. "Little is known about these projects, although the Shehab-IV is rumored to be based on the old Soviet SS-4 missile." Although many Iraqi missiles were destroyed under United Nations supervision, the report warns that several dozen missiles remain unaccounted for and may have escaped destruction. Furthermore, Iraq's solid-fueled Ababil 100 and liquid-fueled Al Samoud projects "allow it to maintain missile production lines that could quickly be upgraded for longer-range missile production if sanctions are dropped," the report states. Iraq also supports a modified variant of the Scud missile called the Al Hussein with a 650km range. Under U.N. Security Council Resolution 687, Iraq is prohibited from maintaining missiles with ranges greater than 150km. Libya fields Frog-7 rockets, Scud-B missiles, and the domestically developed Al Fatah missile with a range of about 200km. The report finds the Qadhafi regime has also sought to build or acquire medium-range missiles. While U.S. and United Nations sanctions have hampered Libya's efforts, the suspension of sanctions last year has allowed Libya to expand its procurement efforts, notes the report. Egypt also fields the Frog-7 and Scud-B. Additionally, it is believed that Egypt can also field the Scud-C missile, or a close variant, with a range of 500km. The study notes that Egypt obtained Scud-B missiles from the Soviet Union in the 1970s and transferred them to North Korea, where the missile was successfully reverse-engineered. Syria fields the Frog-7, SS-21, Scud-B, and Scud-C missiles. In September 2000, Syria flight-tested a longer-range Scud-D missile with a 700km range. The report also notes Syria is drawing on foreign sources in an attempt to develop a short-range, solid-fueled ballistic missile. The longest-range systems in the region are believed to be in Saudi Arabia's possession. Saudi Arabia purchased several dozen medium-range (2,600km) CSS-2 missiles from China in 1987, states the report. "The current condition and maintenance of these systems is not known, although some are believed to remain operational." The report also notes that Algeria, UAE and Yemen all possess short-range Scud-B missiles.

-- *Jeff Bennett*

Proliferation Brief, Vol. IV, No. 03, March 15, 2001

## **Ballistic Missile Arsenals in the Middle East**

Justin Anderson, Junior Fellow

In a region where tensions are high but distances between capitals are short, ballistic missile proliferation in the Middle East is cause for concern. This brief summarizes the detailed information on missile proliferation available at the Project's web site - [www.ceip.org/npp](http://www.ceip.org/npp).

### **Egypt**

Egypt has devoted considerable resources to missile development, collaborating over the years with a number of foreign countries to acquire missiles and associated technology. After obtaining Scud-B missiles from the Soviet Union in the 1970s, Egypt transferred Scuds to North Korea, where the system was successfully reverse-engineered. Today, Egypt fields Frog-7 rockets (70 km) and short-range Scud B missiles (300 km). It is believed that Egypt can also field the Scud-C (500 km) or a closely related variant, both of which may have benefited from North Korean assistance....

<http://www.ceip.org/files/publications/proliferationbrief403.asp>

Palm Beach Post  
March 21, 2001  
Pg. 3B

## **Cohen Warns Against Terrorism Threats**

By Ron Hayes, Palm Beach Post Staff Writer

PALM BEACH--Now that he's no longer the nation's secretary of defense, William Cohen apparently feels free to leak government secrets.

In his speech to The Society of the Four Arts on Tuesday, Cohen passed one along.

"If you really want to be on a congressional committee," the former congressman from Maine advised, "list it last on your five choices. That's how I got on judiciary when I arrived in Washington."

The quip was a rare lighthearted moment in a sober lecture during which Cohen called bio-terrorism and cyber-terrorism the nation's greatest threats.

Florida is at special risk for hoof-and-mouth disease, he noted, because it is an entry point for so many people and goods from foreign countries.

"But what if it were the ebola virus," he asked, "or anthrax? We've got to educate our major cities on how to cope with that sort of outbreak."

The Internet also provides new opportunities for terrorists, Cohen said. "What about countries shutting down our financial systems? What if suddenly all our planes' radar shut down?"

"These are the kinds of things we need to worry about," Cohen said, "and the question is when will it happen on American soil, not if it will happen."

Deterring that sort of futuristic terrorism will ultimately mean pitting the threat of someone like Timothy McVeigh against our nation's respect for individual privacy rights, Cohen said.

"The more intelligence we gather, the less privacy you have," he warned. "It's a debate we haven't started yet, but it's one we will have to face up to."

## **Russia: Plans To Import Spent Nuclear Fuel Prompt Safety Concerns -- Part 1**

By Sophie Lambroschini

Russia's lower house of parliament is scheduled to vote on March 22 on the second reading of a controversial plan to import spent nuclear fuel. The plan, which has the active support of the atomic energy ministry, proposes to lift Russia's 1992 ban on nuclear-waste imports. It swept easily through its first reading in December, outraging both domestic and international environmental groups. While the largely submissive Duma looks likely to pass the plan, many doubts remain about the feasibility, safety, and political import it. In this first of a three-part series, RFE/RL Moscow correspondent Sophie Lambroschini looks at the details of the ministry's proposal and whether it can actually work.

Moscow, 20 March 2001 (RFE/RL) -- One of the most worrisome after-effects of the industrial world's weakness for atomic power is spent nuclear fuel. Worldwide, nearly 200,000 tons of spent fuel from nuclear power plants are sitting in temporary containers as scientists and government leaders debate the best way of disposing of the radioactive and non-biodegradable waste....

<http://www.rferl.org/nca/features/2001/03/20032001115129.asp>

## **Russia: Defense Sector May Benefit Most From Nuclear Spent Fuel -- Part 2**

By Sophie Lambroschini

The Russian State Duma will give a second reading to a controversial plan to lift a ban on the import of spent nuclear fuel. The plan, which proposes to import and reprocess some 20,000 tons of the world's radioactive spent fuel -- and to earn state coffers an estimated \$20 billion in the process -- has been criticized by environmentalists and energy experts, who say Russia's poor nuclear safety record is reason enough to block the plan. Other opponents cite another major cause for concern: fear that the import plan will allow Russia to boost its production of weapons while exposing it to greater risk of accidents and terrorist theft. In this second of a three-part series, RFE/RL's Moscow correspondent Sophie Lambroschini looks at the dangers of possible proliferation. Moscow, 20 March 2001 (RFE/RL) -- Russia's Atomic Energy Ministry defends its plan to import and reprocess spent nuclear fuel by saying import revenues can be invested to make the country's nuclear sector safer. But nuclear and non-proliferation experts argue that safety concerns are not at the heart of the ministry plan. They and other critics say it is actually Russia's weapons producers who stand to benefit from the plan... <http://www.rferl.org/nca/features/2001/03/20032001120917.asp>

## **Russia: U.S. May Oppose Moscow's Plans To Import Spent Nuclear Fuel -- Part 3**

By Sophie Lambroschini

Even opponents of Russia's controversial plan to import spent nuclear fuel say the package of three bills is likely to pass its second reading Thursday (March 22) in the Duma. But some observers are questioning what role the United States, which controls the majority of the world's spent fuel, intends to play in Russia's ambitious plan to store -- and reprocess -- up to 20,000 tons of highly radioactive nuclear fuel. In this last of a three-part series, RFE/RL Moscow correspondent Sophie Lambroschini looks at the politics and policymaking behind the proposal. Moscow, 20 March 2001 (RFE/RL) -- In December a government proposal to import spent nuclear fuel sailed through its first reading in the Russian Duma with barely a murmur from the opposition. The proposal's second reading this week may not go so smoothly. The fate of the Atomic Energy Ministry's plan to import 20,000 tons of the world's spent nuclear fuel depends on Russia's internal politics... <http://www.rferl.org/nca/features/2001/03/20032001122041.asp>

New York Times  
March 21, 2001

## **Moscow Says Remarks By U.S. Resurrect 'Spirit Of Cold War'**

By Patrick E. Tyler

MOSCOW, March 20 — Russia today accused two senior officials of the Bush administration of making "openly confrontational" statements by labeling Moscow as an "active proliferator" of dangerous weapons technologies. The Russian Foreign Ministry issued its strongly worded response to an interview published in Britain's Sunday Telegraph in which Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld and his deputy, Paul D. Wolfowitz, used the most trenchant language to date among senior Bush aides to complain of Russia's role in providing ballistic missile technology to Iran and other nations.

The interview marked the second time in recent weeks that Mr. Rumsfeld openly criticized Russia's proliferation record. It comes at a time when the administration is said to be reviewing whether to continue a policy of high-level engagement and cooperation with Russia, or to downgrade the relationship to reflect Russia's diminished status and to show disapproval of Russia's opposition to American policy initiatives in missile defense and nonproliferation. "Russia is an active proliferator," Mr. Rumsfeld said in remarks to Winston S. Churchill, grandson of the wartime leader, who conducted the interview at the Pentagon. "It has been providing countries with assistance in these areas

in a way that complicates the problem for the United States and Western Europe." He added, "We all have to live with the results of that proliferation." Mr. Rumsfeld made a similar statement on Feb. 14.

Mr. Wolfowitz was more caustic, saying of the Russians, "these people seem to be willing to sell anything to anyone for money. It recalls Lenin's phrase that the capitalists will sell the very rope from which we will hang them."

He went on to say, "My view is that they have to be confronted with a choice." Moscow, he said, "can't expect to do billions of dollars worth of business and aid and all that with the United States and its allies" while at the same time selling "obnoxious stuff that threatens our people and our pilots and our sailors."

Russia, along with China and North Korea, has provided assistance to Iran's military and ballistic missile programs and is constructing a civilian nuclear power station in Iran, which Washington opposes.

After the demise of the Soviet Union, the Clinton administration carried out extensive programs of diplomatic exchanges, joint commissions and financial aid programs, one goal of which was to persuade Moscow to limit the sale of weapons and dangerous technologies to undependable states.

Though there were a number of successes, there were also conflicts, especially in the case of Iran, where Russia sees an important market for conventional arms and for its civilian nuclear power industry. Moscow also asserts that Iran is a strategically placed neighbor that Russia must cultivate in order to counter Islamic extremism in Central Asia.

Asked about the Russian Foreign Ministry's statement today, Rear Adm. Craig R. Quigley, a Pentagon spokesman, said: "The public record has shown just how many weapons Russia has sold for a very long time. Iran is just the latest customer." But the Foreign Ministry said, "We are once again, without proof, being labeled practically the main proliferator of weapons of mass destruction."

The statement asserted that the remarks by the Pentagon officials "run counter to the public position of the new American president, namely that Russia and the United States are not adversaries and do not threaten each other." Last week, President Bush told another British interviewer: "Russia is not an enemy. They may be a threat, if they decide to be, but they're not an enemy." He said he would make this point "very clear" to Russian President Vladimir V. Putin when he met him.

Russia accused Mr. Rumsfeld of hurling "these accusations in the spirit of the cold war" as a means to explain his intention to build an antimissile shield over the United States.

Mr. Rumsfeld could not have disagreed with that, and indicated that the Pentagon was now considering a much broader missile system that could attack "rogue" missiles shortly after they were launched, in midflight, and as they re-entered the atmosphere.

The defense secretary told Mr. Churchill that Pentagon planners were studying these new missile defense projects "unconstrained" by the 1972 treaty that banned them. "Eventually, one would anticipate that you would have something that would not be a single system, but a layered system with flexibility and some redundancy."

And when the time comes for President Bush to decide whether to pull out of the 1972 treaty, "you have to start consultations," Mr. Rumsfeld said, "with your friends, allies, and ultimately, with Russia."

Mr. Rumsfeld's vocal skirmishing with Moscow is also connected with a broader trans-Atlantic debate — and diplomatic rivalry — over a number of pressing security questions ranging from NATO's role in the Balkans, to how to maintain sanctions on Iraq and how to shape a new European defense force outside the NATO alliance.

In each of these matters, Russia has stated its opposition to Washington's views and has tried to galvanize support in Europe to alter or reverse American policy initiatives. Today, for instance, Russia's foreign minister, Igor S. Ivanov, visited Yugoslavia, suggesting that the United States and its allies had been wrong to intervene in the Balkans to protect "national minorities" from Serbian repression and ethnic cleansing. He said that those same minorities were now fomenting terrorism in Macedonia.

Korea Times  
March 22, 2001

## **Korea To Join Missile Control Regime In March**

Seoul will join an international missile technology control regime at a conference set for late this month in Paris, a Foreign Affairs-Trade Ministry official said yesterday.

The 32 member states of the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) expressed their consent on Korea's accession, he said, adding that it will open the way for Korea to take part in international efforts to curb the proliferation of missiles.

The regime aims to restrict the export of delivery systems and related technology for those systems capable of carrying 500 kilogram payloads at least 300 kilometers.

“Korea will dispatch a delegation to MTCR's special meeting in Paris on March 26-27,” the official said.

Korea's entry into the regime came after it adopted new missile guidelines after 20 rounds of formal and informal negotiations since 1995 with the United States.

Under the new guidelines, Korea is also allowed to launch a peaceful space program without any limits on its rocket ranges.

The MTCR came into being in 1987. Originally, the purpose of this regime was to reduce the risk of nuclear proliferation by controlling the transfer of equipment and technology that contribute to the development of unmanned nuclear weapon delivery systems. The scope was later expanded to also cover development of delivery systems for chemical and biological weapons.

Although all MTCR decisions are made by consensus, the United States holds an effective veto over membership decisions. Therefore, all countries wishing to join it should launch prior negotiations with Washington.

Inside The Pentagon

March 22, 2001

Pg. 2

## **Defense Department Assessing Possible Vaccine Production Facility**

Deputy Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz is reviewing a recently completed life-cycle cost estimate report for a government-owned, contractor-operated biological defense vaccine production facility, according to a Pentagon spokesman.

According to a program official, the Joint Vaccine Acquisition Program office at Ft. Detrick, MD, contracted with industry to put together the report, which includes an assessment of facility and operational requirements as well as life-cycle costs over 26 years. The estimate used a generic site model meeting basic criteria because the site selection process has not begun, this source said.

The report is intended as a starting point to prepare a GOCO facility budget estimate and includes "estimates for the design, construction and qualification in accordance with U.S. Food and Drug Administration standards, and operation of a GOCO vaccine production facility for Department of Defense biological defense vaccines," the spokesman said.

The report will not be released due to "procurement-sensitive" information, but some of its details will be addressed in a forthcoming report to Congress on DOD's overall biological warfare defense vaccine research and development programs, required by the fiscal year 2001 Defense Authorization Act, the spokesman said. The report will be submitted with budget justification materials after President Bush submits his complete budget request for FY-02.

Assuming the facility is approved and funding provided, DOD will begin a "fair and open" site-selection process.

In a Jan. 26 letter to Rumsfeld, Senate Armed Services personnel subcommittee Chairman Tim Hutchison (R-AR) expressed concern that the site-selection process is already favoring a site in Maryland. Hutchison referred to a DOD study conducted in the early 1990s that found a site in Pine Bluff, AR, most suitable for a GOCO facility.

"Despite a body of evidence from the early [1990s] indicating that the Pine Bluff Arsenal in my home state of Arkansas would be the most cost-effective location to build such a facility, I have always supported what I believed was the department's intention to conduct a new, fair and open site-selection process," Hutchison wrote. "However, I am now concerned that there are those within the department who have sought to take advantage of the confusion surrounding the transition between administrations, by attempting to steer site-selection process towards facilities in Maryland."

He asks that Rumsfeld review the site-selection process to ensure fairness and promises to get the committee involved if the secretary fails to do so.

The Pentagon began considering the move last summer in light of concerns about anthrax vaccine shortages and the fact that Lansing, MI-based BioPort, the sole manufacturer of the vaccine, is still awaiting approval from the FDA to resume production following the renovation of its facility (Inside the Pentagon, July 13, p2). Last fall, Vicky Armbruster, joint program manager for biological defense, said funding had been added to the FY-02 to FY-07

future years defense plan to examine the feasibility of building a GOCO vaccine production facility (ITP, Nov. 2, 2000, p7).

-- *Catherine MacRae*

Stars and Stripes Omnimedia

March 22, 2001

## **BMDO Report To Congress Highlights Benefits Of Sea-Based NMD**

By Gail Kaufman, Stars and Stripes Pentagon Correspondent

*(Stars and Stripes Omnimedia is a privately owned news source and is in no way affiliated with the U.S. government.)*

The Pentagon says only a sea-based National Missile Defense (NMD) system offers the ability to tailor US forces to meet specific threats, something a multiple-site, land-only system cannot do, although the latter could be cheaper. According to a recent report to Congress from the Ballistic Missile Defense Organization (BMDO), both a sea-based and multiple-site land arrangement would provide a more robust NMD system, as each would allow more knock-out attempts against incoming missiles than the current single-site land system. Both also offer the ability to protect US territories and allies.

But only the sea system brings with it the inherent mobility resident in Navy ships, which could bring the benefit of parking a missile defense capability off the shores of adversaries as needed. "The inherent tactical flexibility of Naval NMD ships would permit tailoring and adjusting the NMD posture to fit the threat environment and changing national defense priorities," says an unclassified executive summary of the report, obtained by The Stars and Stripes. The report takes as its baseline the single-site land system favored by the Clinton administration and looks at what contributions a sea-based system would add to the mix when juxtaposed with a multiple-site land-based system. Its release, unknown to some on Capitol Hill yesterday, comes as an extensive review of missile defense options is ongoing in the Pentagon. At issue is what architecture the Bush administration believes is best. Possibilities range from a single-site, land-only system to a multiple-site land and sea-based system.

"Sea-based national missile defense will be a part of the on-going review by the secretary of defense," said Air Force Lt. Col. Rick Lehner, BMDO spokesman.

All the architectures are planned to include satellites as data relays.

The report said the Navy could play three possible roles in augmenting the land-based system: first, a "Strategic Radar Picket" role where ships with NMD-capable radars would deploy to forward locations and provide earlier detection, tracking and discrimination of enemy missiles; second, a "Strategic Missile Trap" role where ships with NMD-capable interceptor missiles would knock down enemy missiles by linking up with sensors from the land-based system; and, lastly, a "Strategic Defense" role, where ships with both NMD missiles and sensors could be deployed wherever needed.

Details of the roles are as follows:

\*Strategic Radar Picket – would be equipped with NMD-capable radars and used to cue land-based systems and would be the least costly of the three.

\*Strategic Missile Trap – could be deployed as a crisis response "surge" force to complement the land-based architecture for an acquisition cost of about \$4 billion to \$7 billion. This would equip six existing AEGIS cruisers with 100 NMD-capable interceptor missiles.

\*Strategic Defense – a squadron of six AEGIS cruisers with back fitted NMD-capable radars and 100 defensive interceptor missiles could be equipped to complement the land-based architecture for an estimated acquisition cost of \$8 billion to \$12 billion. If six new ships were purchased to perform this role, the total cost for their construction and NMD systems would be about \$14 billion to \$18 billion.

The report also illustrates an apparent difference of opinion between the Navy and BMDO over the time needed to develop a sea-based system. The BMDO report looks at "post-2010" sea-based systems, while some in the Navy have said the service can develop something useful within five years.

A March 7 article in Defense Daily quotes Rear Adm. Rodney Rempt, the assistant chief of naval operations for missile defense, as saying the Navy can contribute to NMD in the near-term: "We know we can do some things and could deploy in five years something that could be useful."

The Pentagon's office of the Director of Operational Testing and Evaluation agreed with BMDO in a February report that a naval contribution to NMD would take years.

Theodore A. Postol, an arms expert at M.I.T. and vociferous critic of a land-based system, recently expressed his support for a sea-based NMD system in an editorial published in a defense industry publication.

The report suggests choosing between a multiple-site land system or a single-site land and sea system could be difficult, and makes clear that whatever NMD option is implemented will have to be decided upon at the highest levels. "The kind of Naval NMD force the nation would build and how it would be employed depends strongly upon a considered examination of national policy goals and strategy," it states.

The report did not examine options of a sea-based only NMD system.

The Pentagon has previously, in 1998, sent a separate report to Congress that said a sea-based system could provide an effective complement to the planned ground-based system.

The most recent report, requested by Congress in legislation, is part one of a two-part study on sea-based NMD. Part two of the study is expected to be completed late this summer. "A detailed, thorough, cost and performance comparison of potential extension to the land-based architecture versus developing and deploying a naval NMD component has been initiated by the Department, but is not yet complete," the report states.

A sea-based system, due to its mobility, is more survivable than a land system, adds the report.

The Bush administration is widely expected to either abrogate from or make changes to the Anti-Ballistic Missile treaty, which prohibits sea-based national missile defenses.

Aerospace Daily

March 23, 2001

## **Rep. Thornberry Proposes New Homeland Security Agency**

House Armed Services Committee member Mac Thornberry (R-Texas) introduced a bill Wednesday to create a new agency for coordinating homeland security.

The bill would turn the Federal Emergency Management Agency into the National Homeland Security Agency, which would continue to respond to natural disasters but would also be the federal government's lead agency for responding to and preventing terrorist attacks. The Coast Guard, Customs Service and Border Patrol would become independent entities within the new agency.

The Commerce Dept.'s Critical Infrastructure Assurance Office and Institute of Information Infrastructure Protection and the Justice Dept.'s National Infrastructure Protection Center and National Domestic Preparedness Office also would be transferred to the new agency, which would have directorates for border security, infrastructure and cybersecurity, and emergency preparedness and response.

Thornberry said that coordination for homeland security is now fragmented among dozens of federal agencies and the 50 states.

Jerusalem Post

March 23, 2001

## **Israel, US Pioneer Treatment For Mustard-Gas Burns**

By Judy Siegel

JERUSALEM - The first effective treatment for mustard-gas burns - a development that has been sought since tens of thousands of soldiers were incapacitated by the gas during World War I - has been developed by researchers at Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, and the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences of the US National Institutes of Health.



The inexpensive iodine treatment for burns from the gas, still believed stockpiled by Iraq, Syria and other Middle East states, was documented in the journal Toxicology and Applied Pharmacology by Dr. Uri Wormser (HU), Dr. Amnon Sintov (BGU), Dr. Berta Brodsky (HU) and Dr. Abraham Nyska (NIH).

The research team also found that the iodine formula is useful in preventing blistering and skin damage resulting from scalding water, hot metal, or burns from open flames.

The findings will be reported next week at the 40th Annual Meeting of the Society of Toxicology in San Francisco. Given the threat of mustard gas being used in a regional conflict, Israel has been a leader into research of this type with backing from the US Army.

The Israeli therapy entails administering povidone iodine in a base of glycofurol, a water-soluble polymer already approved for use in chemical and cosmetic preparations.

In tests on guinea pigs, the researchers found that tissue damage from mustard gas was reduced by about half when treatment was applied 15 minutes following exposure. Even after 30 minutes there was still a significant therapeutic effect.

Exactly how the treatment works is yet to be explained.

What may be happening, researchers believe, is that the iodine formula hampers the process of skin cell death, normally triggered by mustard gas. It also appears that the new preparation has more potent antiseptic activity than hitherto available iodine treatments.