#57
30 Mar 2001

USAF COUNTERPROLIFERATION CENTER

CPC OUTREACH JOURNAL

Air University
Air War College
Maxwell AFB, Alabama

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Defense Week
March 26, 2001
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Sea-Based NMD Not Mature Yet: General

By Ann Roosevelt

The current land-based National Missile Defense, or NMD, system is the only strategic missile-defense option close to becoming reality, says the general who runs the Army missile-defense command.

Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld is said to be considering a range of NMD options. Republicans, as a rule, have shown fondness for sea-based technologies and, in the long term, space-based ideas. But Lt. Gen. John Costello, commander of Army Space and Missile Defense Command, says that a land-based system is the best near-term solution.

"From my personal perspective, should the decision be made to put the National Missile Defense system on the ground, I'm hard pressed to see what can be done quicker for any less cost that what [NMD Joint Program Manager Army Maj.] Gen. Bill Nance has already outlined," said Costello in an interview Friday.

The land-based system "is certainly the only NMD program that has launched missiles, engaged targets and done at least the nuts and bolts work of getting something together," he said. "I'm hard pressed to see how a sea-based

component can get there better, cheaper, faster. I just don't see it. That's not being derogatory about the need for a sea-based component."
While Costello is an advocate of a ground-based system for the near term, he believes sea and space based assets may play a role in the future.
"There is compelling evidence that suggests that you have to have land-based with a complementary sea-based component, and probably a space-based component," he said.
That space component should include at least the Space-Based Infrared System of satellites to provide warning of missile attack, track the missiles and determine their launch and aim points, he continued. It could also include the Strategic Defense Initiative idea of space-based interceptors and lasers. However, Costello warned, decisions on an NMD option should be grounded in a knowledge of how mature each program is.
"In my mind, the current NMD program is the most mature of all the programs," Costello said in his last interview before retiring March 28. The land-based program does have challenges, he admitted. Those concerns include problems with the booster rocket slated to carry the NMD interceptor into space. The rocket's first test launch has been delayed four months—from April until August.
Costello also said it's taking too long to field theater missile defense systems. In particular, he said, the Theater High Altitude Area Defense system, a longer range battlefield system, could be deployed at least a year earlier than its planned fielding, now slated for 2007.

Washington Times
March 26, 2001
Pg. 13

Canada Wavers Over Missile Defense

By David Ljunggren, Reuters News Agency
CHEYENNE MOUNTAIN, Colo. — When a top Canadian general urged his government over the weekend to endorse the proposed U.S. missile defense system, it deepened a dilemma for a nation that sees itself as a peacemaker and opponent of weapons proliferation.
Lt. Gen. George Macdonald, deputy head of the joint Canadian-U.S. NORAD air defense command, said in an interview it made no sense to stay on the sidelines if Washington pressed ahead with its National Missile Defense (NMD) system.
Canadian Defense Minister Art Eggleton, emerging from a tour of the North American Air Defense command bunker at Cheyenne Mountain, indicated the Cabinet would have to consider public opinion before deciding whether to join a program that some U.S. allies fear could trigger a nuclear arms race with Russia and China.
But his insistence that Canada would do nothing until asked to join NMD does not hide the fact Ottawa soon might have to choose whether to risk the wrath of its greatest ally.
"The Americans have bent over backward to accommodate us in the past, but if they are determined to go ahead with this program come hell or high water, then that puts the onus on us to decide where our supreme interests lie," said David Rudd, director of the Canadian Institute for Strategic Studies.
Canada's armed forces are desperate to maintain a close defense relationship with the United States, which gives Canada a far greater level of protection than it could ever hope to provide by itself.
Besides, they add, NMD is designed chiefly to knock down missiles launched by such maverick states as North Korea and Iraq rather than provide a shield against Russia's nuclear arsenal.
The Canadian foreign ministry, however, fears that signing up to NMD could compromise Canada's reputation as a country that has fought to limit the global spread of weapons of mass destruction and reduce international tensions.
"It's going to be very difficult to say no if the Americans invite us," acknowledged one senior Canadian official.
"But what should we do — join NMD and thereby risk spoiling all the work we've done over the last decades on nonproliferation? Or do we refuse and blow the one real card we have with the Americans?"
That winning card, described by Canada's military as "the jewel in the crown" of the U.S.-Canadian defense relationship, is the NORAD complex in Colorado.
Gen. Macdonald said NORAD enables Canada to enjoy the protection of an enormous defense operation that is financed mainly by the United States.
"Of course, just being a partner in a two-member alliance with the strongest military power in the world and our best trading partner and our closest ally has to be a positive thing," said Gen. Macdonald.
The armed forces' biggest nightmare is that a decision to stay out of NMD would effectively spell the end of NORAD.

Former Canadian Foreign Minister Lloyd Axworthy, who until he stepped down in October made no secret of his opposition to NMD and his determination that Canada should not always toe Washington's line, says this fear is exaggerated.
He recalled that Canadian Prime Minister Brian Mulroney turned down the chance to take part in Washington's much more ambitious anti-missile Strategic Defense Initiative in the 1980s without damaging bilateral relations.

Washington Post
March 26, 2001
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Mix Of Uses Tangles Sanctions

U.S. Blocks Items to Iraq That Other Nations See as Benign

By Colum Lynch, Special to The Washington Post
UNITED NATIONS -- As the Bush administration seeks to revamp the U.N. economic sanctions on Iraq, the predicament facing Siemens AG, the German electronics firm, underscores the challenge of untangling restrictions on military imports from those on more benign civilian products.
During the last year, Siemens has sought U.N. approval to sell Iraq more than $14 million in medical equipment to help modernize the country's hospitals. But the United States has placed a freeze on nearly $11 million of it, citing concerns that computers that operate cardiac machines, called angiographs, included in the deal could be used to run weapons systems, according to diplomats and confidential U.N. documents.
Much of the equipment that Iraq says it needs for upgrading its health, oil and other key industries can be converted to military uses. And Iraq has a long history of using civilian industrial programs to develop prohibited nuclear, chemical and biological weapons.
By the end of last month, the United States had placed "holds" on $280 million in medical supplies alone, including orders for vaccines, laboratory growth medium, incubators and a host of high-tech machines used to produce pills or to eliminate kidney stones without surgery, according to U.N. documents.
The items are among more than 1,500 contracts, amounting to about $3.3 billion, that Security Council members have frozen. The United States has blocked the vast majority of the proposed sales, about $3.1 billion worth, requesting further information on the products or citing their possible military applications.
"Many of these materials have a potential use in preparing chemical or biological weapons," said George Parshall, a chemical weapons expert. "But they are exactly the kinds of things you need to keep pharmaceutical, electrical and oil industries going."
An essential element of the Bush administration's plan to overhaul the 11-year-old sanctions is streamlining the U.N. approval process to minimize holds.
American officials recognize that holds have become a major irritant between the United States and other countries. Critics argue that the United States is withholding essential medical supplies with only marginal military applications and depriving ordinary Iraqis of vital humanitarian relief.
Yves Doutriaux, France's deputy U.N. ambassador, accused the United States of having no "concern for the safety of children" after Washington placed holds last month on two contracts from South Korean and Yugoslav companies for vaccines to treat infant hepatitis, tetanus and diphtheria. The United States, which fears that life-saving vaccines would be converted into deadly biological weapons, has since approved the two deals, according to U.N. diplomats.
The United States, on similar grounds, has objected to a range of products, including a chemical used to treat heart arrhythmia and equipment that produces shock waves to pulverize kidney stones. The former can be used in connection with military nerve agents, and the latter could contain an electronic switch useful in building detonators for a nuclear bomb, officials said.
Benon Sevan, head of the U.N.'s humanitarian program, meanwhile, said that restrictions on computer imports are ludicrous. The current list prohibits any computer that exceeds a speed of 12.5 million theoretical operations per second (MTOPS) -- the equivalent of an Intel 486 processor -- on grounds that it has military applications.

U.S. News & World Report
April 2, 2001

Rethinking Missile Defenses

In a changed world, protection from 'rogues' makes more sense

By Dennis Ross

As an old arms control negotiator, I saw the 1972 antiballistic missile treaty as the linchpin of strategic stability. By limiting defenses, it reduced the incentive for either the United States or the former Soviet Union to continue the buildup of offensive missile forces. By introducing greater predictability into the Cold War equation, it diminished the risk of miscalculation. And, by reinforcing the reality of mutual vulnerability, it induced greater caution in crises.

The logic of enshrining mutual vulnerability in a formal treaty had its share of critics. For former President Reagan, such logic was perverse. He believed that strategic stability would result from mutual invulnerability to attack, not mutual vulnerability. And he was convinced that it was possible to achieve mutual invulnerability through Star Wars–his strategic defense initiative (SDI).

For me, the issue was not the desirability but the feasibility of his concept. I saw no impenetrable shield, and I feared offensive technology would always outstrip defenses. Moreover, the costs were prohibitive, and the envisioned benefits did not warrant scrapping a framework that circumscribed defenses and paved the way for reducing offensive missile forces.

While Star Wars did not materialize, it probably did contribute to the Soviet Union's demise. Even if I questioned the feasibility of SDI, the Mikhail Gorbachev leadership did not. Arms control took on a new meaning for the Soviets, and so did reforming their system. But the steps Gorbachev took to reform his country and its system inevitably led to its undoing.

New perils. The bipolarity of the Cold War disappeared, and with it the strategic world we had known. The ABM treaty helped to order that world and make it more predictable. But that world no longer exists, and in its place there are a small number of state actors motivated either by the megalomania of Saddam Hussein or by the revolutionary zeal and even the desire for martyrdom that exist in a part of the Iranian leadership. For them the use of weapons of mass destruction could serve a higher calling, even if it meant virtual destruction of their countries.

Defending ourselves against such threats is necessary, even if it requires the modification of the ABM treaty. Focusing on the limited yet real threats posed by the "rogues" is essential to making the case for missile defense. We clearly have problems with many of our European and Asian allies on missile defense. To bring our allies on board, we will have to show them the logic of it as well as a strategy for dealing with Russian and Chinese opposition to it. Our allies should be reminded of the relatively small but real threats we are all facing, the increasing feasibility of dealing with these threats, and the limited scope of missile defense we envision for ourselves and for them. They should see as well a good-faith effort to cooperate with the Russians and Chinese.

Neither Russia nor China has concerns that will be easy to accommodate. For the Russians, the ABM treaty stands as an emblem of their superpower status. Modifying it, in their eyes, sends a message that they are not the actors on the world stage that they once were. While we should not let the Russians prevent us from developing relevant missile defenses, we have a political interest in taking account of their concerns and in fostering their sense of inclusion in the development of these defenses.

There are several ways to do so. First, we should focus on promoting common assessments of possible threats from "rogue" states, something that should be of interest to the Russians given the proximity of these threats to Russia. Second, we should consider developing joint early-warning centers to deal with missile launches. Third, we should consider technological cooperation on theater missile defense, an area in which the Russians have done a lot of work and one that could be very important for our allies. If the Russians are prepared to cooperate, we should be prepared to broaden the scope of missile defense technology we share with them.

Such an approach might well diminish Russian opposition, but what about the Chinese? Their problem relates to Taiwan. They fear missile defenses will become a shield behind which those who favor Taiwan's independence can hide. Here we must be realistic, engaging the Chinese in a serious dialogue, emphasizing cooperation where possible, and reaffirming our "one China" policy. But they, too, must be realistic: There can be no solution to Taiwan that is based on coercion or the use of force.

In the end, it is in our interest to develop a limited missile defense. The pace of development should be set by the technology available and the emergence of real threats. Managing the politics of missile defense internationally requires working with our allies and providing a pathway for Russian involvement. While China may present a more formidable problem, missile defense is best handled as a part of our overall relationship–a relationship that is likely to be troubled for reasons other than our efforts to adjust the ABM treaty to a new strategic reality.

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March 26, 2001
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Russia Pushing Upgraded Scuds In Middle East

By Mohammed Ahmedullah

ABU DHABI—The only Iraqi weapon that posed a major threat to coalition forces during the Gulf War, the venerable Scud B ballistic missile now has a guided warhead which its Russian manufacturers claim can penetrate all existing Western missile defenses.

Building on the hype of the old-style Scud penetrating Israeli defenses during the 1990 Gulf War, the Russians say the new warhead can defeat Patriot missile defenses and is immune to signal jamming and other electronic tricks.

The upgraded Scud is now being offered for export in the Middle East, said Victor Solunin, director general of Russia's Central Scientific and Research Institute of Automatics and Hydraulics, in an interview here at the International Defense Exhibition (IDEX). He said countries already possessing Scud-B inventories would be prime customers of the system. These include Libya, Iraq, Egypt, Syria, Jordan and Morocco.

Russia, of course, could not export to Libya and Iraq due to international sanctions against them. It was also keen to tap the market within the oil-rich Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries for new Scuds, he added.

Solunin's institute has been manufacturing the Scud since 1968 and developed the optically-guided warhead upgrade in 1999, Solunin said.

New guidance

The key improvement: the optically guided warhead disengages itself in the terminal phase of the missile's flight to home in on the target, skirting around defensive missiles and other obstacles, he said.

"The new Scud, retrofitted with the optically guided weapon, becomes a precision-guided munition system with a miss distance not exceeding 10 to 20 meters, irrespective of the range," Solunin said.

The warhead comprises the optical homing head fitted with a matrix photo receiver, which enables it to scan terrain based on pre-fed target data. The warhead has a digital terrain mapping system which scans the target during its final approach and signals a mid-course correction device in case an obstacle is encountered. The technology is similar to the U.S. Tomahawk cruise missile.

The maximum range of the missile, at 300 km. (190 miles), is the same as that of the old Scud. However, there is a potential for increasing range by 50 percent by adding an additional rocket stage, he said. That would increase the range to 450 km. (285 miles).

"The new warhead can maneuver and is especially effective against targets defended by anti-missile systems, as well as under-ground targets like bunkers, silos, etc.," Solunin said.

"Comparative analysis of the Russian optically-guided warhead with comparable U.S. missiles showed the former had higher accuracy, anti-missile defenses penetration capability and lethality," Solunin said. "Owing to an increased weight of the explosive charge and steep approach angles, the Russian missile system is capable of destroying hardened targets. The number of Russian missiles required for guaranteed destruction of such targets is several times less than that of similar missiles made by other countries' manufacturers."

He said briefings about the missile's capabilities had been made to several armies of the Gulf region but declined to name the potential customers. However a Russian source said Egyptian and Syrian officials had been given presentations of the new system last month.

No nukes

The older Scud came with three warhead types—nuclear, high explosive and cluster munitions. Asked if the nuclear option was being offered to customers, Solunin said: "The export version of the new warhead (designated R-17E) was a conventional warhead on which it was not possible to install a nuclear warhead."

He said improved launch preparation time of the new Scud missile meant it was possible to deploy the systems in an anti-missile-defense configuration. If deployed in conjunction with the Russian S-300V anti-missile system, the Scud could become the main strike weapon offering near-realtime response to a missile threat, he argued. While the S-300V could target incoming missiles, the new Scud could be launched at the source of the enemy missile.

The Russians are offering a retrofit package which includes fitting the warhead, replacing the missiles' liquid fuel with solid fuel and training of personnel.

The Russians have not had much success peddling arms in the region, the world's biggest buyer of weapons after the NATO partners.

"To correct this situation, we are offering to set up service and maintenance depots for some of our hardware in use in the region like artillery guns, aircraft, missiles and other weapons," said Solunin. "We are talking to countries with substantial Russian hardware for this purpose."

Defense News
March 26, 2001
Pg. 1

Russian Seeker Sale May Undermine MTCR

System Would Improve Accuracy Of Indian Missiles

By Douglas Barrie and Simon Sardzhyan, Defense News Staff Writers

ABU DHABI — India and Russia are negotiating a highly sensitive sale of an advanced ballistic missile guidance technology, which would radically improve the accuracy of Indian weapons. The release of such technology could raise serious issues regarding the international Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) to which Russia is a signatory, say defense experts.

The system on offer is an electro-optical guided missile warhead, developed originally for Russia's 8K14 tactical ballistic missile, also known as the Scud-B, and later versions. The so-called optical seeker warhead also is being marketed in the Middle East to countries using the Scud-B family and derivative missiles, according to Russian industry sources.

Such a move is potentially highly destabilizing to the regions involved, Western officials here said.

The electro-optical seeker would substantially improve the accuracy of Indian ballistic missiles or for countries acquiring the system to fit to their Scud-Bs. The same type of seeker is used on Russia's Iskander E short range ballistic missile, which also is being offered for export.

One Russian industry source told Defense News March 20 that the design institute responsible for developing the seeker, Moscow-based Central Scientific and Research Institute of Automatics and Hydraulics (TsNIIAG), is negotiating the sale of a variant of the seeker to India.

The Russian industrialist admitted that the electro-optical seeker warhead could be fitted to a ballistic missile in ways that would breach the MTCR guidelines. He insisted, however, that the seeker itself did not violate this regime.

The MTCR guidelines, which are non-binding, are intended to limit the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction capable of carrying a 500-kilogram warhead a minimum of 300 kilometers.

Within MTCR there are two categories. Category I covers items such as ballistic missile systems, space launch vehicles, cruise missiles and some complete subsystems, such as propulsion systems, re-entry vehicles and guidance sets. Category II items include components and subsystems such as propellants and flight instruments.

Items that fall into the second category can be exported at the discretion of the signatory government on a case-by-case basis. Items within this category also may be sold if there are government-to-government assurances that the technology released will not be used on a system with a payload range capability exceeding the MTCR ceiling.

"If the Russians sold an MTCR-annex item, like an electro-optical seeker for Prithvi, they would certainly have the ultimate sovereign authority to make such an export," a senior U.S. government official in Washington told Defense News March 22. "However, we would not regard it as a good thing to do, because it means promoting missile proliferation."

Likewise, Russian plans to share technical know-how with India to develop its own electro-optical seeker for the Agni might fall beyond the parameters of the MTCR, the official said. Depending on the type of technical advice the Russians offer India, the information would likely be treated as a Category II MTCR technology that should be licensed prior to export.

"It would depend on what advice is being given, but that information could very easily be annex-controlled technology that would have to be treated like a physical annexed item under the MTCR," the official said, adding that the MTCR was established voluntarily to prevent the spread of ballistic missiles and other unmanned air delivery systems.

"In a way, the MTCR is a victim of its own success," the official said. "Today, the membership is well beyond the original seven countries, and it was never developed as an arrangement to try and trap people in violation, or to prevent countries from exercising their sovereign rights to export." A senior Indian official from its Defence Research and Development Organisation confirmed to Defense News March 21 that India has formally requested technical assistance from Russia in terms of electro-optical guidance systems suitable for ballistic missiles.

An Indian defense official also confirmed March 21 that India seeks Russian assistance in improving the guidance capabilities of its ballistic missiles. He added that, as of yet, no assistance has been provided by Russia. He further added that Indian officials would discuss this issue during the next round of the Indo-Russian Joint Commission on Military Co-operation, scheduled for April in New Delhi.

The optical seeker warhead utilizes a previously photographed target image stored in its guidance computer, against which it compares imagery from the on-board target seeker.
The terminal vehicle also is fitted with lattice fins, allowing the warhead to maneuver during the final phase of the warhead's engagement. The initial target imagery to be fed into the warhead's guidance computer can be provided by reconnaissance aircraft or from satellite imagery.
The Russian official said that TsNIIAG and Russia's state-owned arms export agency, Rosoboronexport, would aim to avoid breaching MTCR through the use of guarantees written into any sales contract. A potential customer would have to agree that the seeker would not be installed on a missile that has a range in excess of 300 kilometers, capable of carrying a 500-kilogram payload. Exactly how such an agreement would be verified or enforced, once the seeker had been delivered, remains to be seen.
This approach was confirmed by a TsNIIAG official attending the IDEX 2001 defense exhibition here, where a mock-up of the seeker was on display. He told Defense News March 21 that the seeker would only "be permitted for export for Scud-type missiles."
He added that development of the original variant of the seeker took place in the 1980s, with its development completed by 1988.
The official said he anticipated that the negotiations with India over the seeker technology would take some time to be concluded, despite the Indians having already sent their technical requirements for the desired seeker variant to Russia.
The Russian industrialist told Defense News that negotiations between the Indian military and Russia for the seeker's sale have been under way for some time. He added that the draft contract bans the Indian military from installing the seeker on what he described as long-range missiles.
In addition to the Prithvi — which has a shorter range than the Scud-B — Indian officials also identified the medium-range Agni ballistic missile as a candidate for an electro-optic guidance package. The Agni has a maximum range of 2,500 kilometers, which clearly exceeds the MTCR agreement.
The Russian industrialist said an export version of the seeker was approved by then-President Boris Yeltsin in 1998. He said the export version has an accuracy of some 30 meters to 40 meters from the target, rather than the 20-meter accuracy of the variant developed for Russian forces.
Correspondents Simon Saradzhyan in Moscow and Vivek Raghuvashi in New Delhi, and Staff Writer Amy Svitak in Washington contributed to this report.

Stars and Stripes Omnimedia
March 26, 2001

Ruling Could Derail Air Force Doctor's Argument For Refusing Anthrax Vaccine

By Dave Eberhart, Stars and Stripes Veterans Affairs Editor
(Stars and Stripes Omnimedia is a privately owned news source and is in no way affiliated with the U.S. government.)
Air Force Capt. John Buck, the first military doctor to receive a general court-martial for refusing the controversial anthrax vaccine, is scheduled to be arraigned April 18 at Keesler Air Force Base, Miss., on a charge of disobeying a lawful order.
Buck and his attorneys say they want to show that the order to take the allegedly experimental and unsafe vaccine was unlawful. But a recent decision by the U.S. Supreme Court could derail that strategy.
On March 19, the high court denied the appeal of Marine Lance Cpl. Matthew D. Perry, who in February was convicted at Camp Pendleton, Calif., of the same offense with which Buck has been charged--violating an order to take the six-shot series of anthrax inoculations.
In his appeal to the Supreme Court, Perry claimed that military prosecutors violated his constitutional right to access to the legal system and to a jury trial. Perry had challenged a court-martial judge's pre-trial ruling that the order requiring him to take the anthrax shots was lawful.
"The trial judge barred even a hint of a rebuttal of the legality of the order because she declared the order lawful and excluded any evidence to the contrary as a result," Perry's lawyers wrote in a brief to the high court.

Testimony Precluded

The trial judge's ruling made it impossible for Perry's military jury to hear potentially volatile testimony about the anthrax vaccine's history of causing reactions in servicemembers who have undergone the six-shot series.

Such testimony might have included the opinion of such experts as Jeffery P. Kahn, Ph.D., M.P.H., director of the Center for Bioethics at the University of Minnesota, who wrote last year:
"Usually, a vaccine isn't allowed to be used by the general public until the FDA has ruled that there is evidence that it is both safe and that it works. Such evidence usually comes from using the vaccine on people who are likely to be exposed to the disease in question. In the case of anthrax the initial tests and only real experience with exposed individuals come from its use on farmers and veterinarians who are in close contact with cattle--which are the reservoir of the form of the disease that infects humans.
"But that doesn't mean that the vaccine would work against anthrax used as a weapon. With little data about its effectiveness, but no other available protection for our soldiers, should the vaccine be used without more testing?"
The Pentagon maintains that the vaccine is safe, although serious side effects occur about once per 200,000 doses. Severe allergic reactions occur less than once per 100,000 doses, the Pentagon says.
Perry was charged with disobeying his superior officer as well as the Pentagon's general order that all troops be vaccinated. He claimed that the vaccine was unproven or experimental and that he and other service members should have the right to refuse it.
Typically in such cases, a superior first counsels servicemembers who refuse the vaccine. Continued refusal can be construed as insubordination.
The Pentagon has 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 have been vaccinated since the program began in 1998.
Anthrax is a naturally occurring virus that typically affects sheep and cattle. Dry anthrax spores, when inhaled, can be deadly to humans. The Pentagon has maintained that anthrax exposure is 99 percent lethal.
Facing a shortfall of the vaccine, the Pentagon scaled back its vaccination program last summer and now requires it only for troops going to the Persian Gulf region. The full program will resume when more vaccine is available, Pentagon officials say.

Canadian Case

The Supreme Court ruling follows a similar case in Canada last year when a Canadian military judge ruled that a former sergeant did not have to take the anthrax vaccine.
In the spring of 1998, about 400 Canadian soldiers were vaccinated against anthrax. The Canadian case started when Mike Kipling, now retired, refused an anthrax vaccination while stationed in Kuwait. Col. Guy Brais, the military judge, determined that the lot of anthrax vaccine that Kipling had refused was "unsafe and hazardous" and halted the court-martial last May. The Canadian military is appealing the ruling.
In the Kipling case, an American medical expert testified that many U.S. serviceman have suffered side effects from the anthrax vaccine, including chronic fatigue, headaches, muscle and joint pain and recurring rashes.

Stars and Stripes Omnimedia
March 23, 2001

Stop Anthrax Vaccinations, Urges Connecticut Attorney General

By Dave Eberhart, Stars and Stripes Veterans Affairs Editor
(Stars and Stripes Omnimedia is a privately owned news source and is in no way affiliated with the U.S. government.)
Connecticut Attorney General Richard Blumenthal March 21 urged Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld and Acting Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Deputy Commissioner Dr. Bernard Schwetz to end the military's controversial anthrax vaccination program.
"It is the civilian government, not the military, which has ultimate responsibility for the safety of U.S. troops," Blumenthal said.
In letters to Rumsfeld and Schwetz, Blumenthal argued that the compulsory vaccination program is compelling military personnel, including members of the Connecticut Air National Guard, to "put either their health or their careers at risk."

Absensce of Assurance

Blumenthal referred to the absence "of any specific assurance that the federal government would care for and compensate members of the [Connecticut] National Guard who suffered adverse effects from the anthrax vaccine."

Blumenthal has been critical of the DoD program for about a year following the resignation of Guard pilots who refused to be vaccinated. They include Maj. Russell Dingle and Maj. Thomas Rempfer, who resigned 1999. Blumenthal also cited frustration with the FDA, saying the agency declined to answer certain questions about the vaccine's safety because of "regulations concerning the confidentiality of information for an unapproved biological process."

"The United States Government so far has refused to recognize or appreciate the danger and the personal dilemma it is imposing on its military personnel, despite repeated concerns expressed about administering an unlicensed drug never proved safe or effective for humans," Blumenthal told Rumsfeld and Schwetz.

"Unfortunately, and directly contrary to law, the [vaccine] is being administered to military personnel under threat of imprisonment, loss of pay and discharge. In effect, the military is forcing its personnel to serve as human guinea pigs for an unlicensed drug that has not been proven to be safe or effective."

The only license for the production of anthrax vaccine, granted in 1970 to MBPI/Bioport Corp., was intended for protection against skin-contact anthrax, not the inhalation of anthrax spores, Blumenthal said.

Inconsistent Use

The vaccine's use by the military is inconsistent with its licensing, making it, under FDA regulations, an investigational new drug (IND) that cannot not be used on humans without their consent, he argued. The vaccination of troops with a product not licensed for its current use violates the Federal Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act, he added. Blumenthal cited congressional testimony indicating that the FDA and the military has known for years that the vaccine's use was questionable.

"Suddenly in 1997, DoD and the FDA, with no change in the facts or the law, reversed themselves and with the stroke of a pen wiped out the protections afforded our members of the Armed Services by clearing the way for DoD's mandatory mass inoculations," Blumenthal said.

He called on the Pentagon and the FDA to "cease and desist from their illegal conduct and to abandon plans for anthrax vaccine inoculation of the armed forces" and to at least make the inoculations voluntary.

"Additionally, the FDA should block the manufacture and sale of [the vaccine] by BioPort and renounce the 1997 action which illegally cleared the way for the DoD's mass inoculations."

National Review
April 2, 2001

Missile Defense: The Time Is Now

Stop talking and start building

By Richard Lowry

Genuflect first, ask questions later. Or so goes the reasoning at the State Department, the part of government most likely to keep missile defense-finally on the cusp of reality--from ever happening. A February 2 "secret" memorandum from assistant secretary of state Avis T. Bohlen--a Clinton holdover--to Secretary Colin Powell nicely captures the institutional mindset at State. Bohlen recommends doing nothing precipitous on missile defense--in fact recommends doing nothing at all, at least not until the completion of another, endless round of consultations, discussions, and general reassurances and temperature-takings with almost any foreign power willing to consult and discuss.

"We should not withdraw from the [Anti-Ballistic Missile] treaty," Bohlen warns Powell, "until we know what will replace it as part of a strategic stability framework." That could take a long time. "We should look for ways to make NMD [national missile defense] and its evolution appear less threatening to the Russians and, if possible, the Chinese." "The allies want real consultations before decisions are made, not briefings on what we have decided." "Early discussions with the Russians could be a valuable input to the Administration's policy deliberations." What Bohlen recommends, in short, is a policy of logorrhea. And early indications are that Powell is eager to gab. He wanted to continue the Clinton administration's talks with the North Koreans (the president himself put the brakes on that idea), and reportedly wanted to continue the Clinton administration's "experts level" talks with the Russians on missile defense. (Powell now denies this.) Well, what are diplomats for, if not talking?

But this is the now-or-never moment for missile defense. The Bush administration may be at the apex of its power, and the allies--convinced, for now, that the administration is serious about missile defense--are at their most cooperative. If the administration doesn't immediately begin building a ground-based system--as a first step toward a larger, more capable defense--and announce our imminent withdrawal from the ABM Treaty, the status quo will quickly settle back in again. The schedule for fielding a system would be delayed beyond 2005, pushing it ever further into the mists of the future, and heightening its political vulnerability to the charge that it will never be a

reality (despite all the billions spent on it). Meanwhile, the ABM Treaty will remain an archaic and irrational, but unmovable, obstacle to missile defense. More talk--more diplomatic business-as-usual--could keep the U.S. from ever defending itself against ballistic-missile attack.

Talk has never served missile defense well. In 1993, the Clinton administration slashed funding for the project, denying that the U.S. faced a missile threat at all. When the Rumsfeld Commission in 1998 exposed that position as wishful thinking, the administration resorted to the next best way to kill missile defense--consulting with the Russians. From early 1999 to the bitter end, the administration talked to the Russians about modifying the ABM Treaty to allow for a limited defense system. The talks never actually rose to the level of full-blown "negotiations" because the Russians insisted they would only "discuss" the treaty, not negotiate changes.

So, this process was born in appeasement and sustained by niggling legal hairsplitting. The Clinton administration proposed a missile system with Russian sensitivities (such as they are) in mind. The U.S. would ignore the threat coming from Iran or Iraq because defenses stationed in the American Northeast--with radars located in England and Greenland--might seem capable of defending against Russian missiles as well. Instead, then, the U.S. would focus in the other direction, on the threat from the Far East. One antimissile site would be built in Alaska as a first step that would assuage Russian fears and allow the U.S. eventually to convince Putin & Co. to accept a more advanced system.

The Clinton administration initially tried--in a burst of obfuscation of the sort usually reserved for its jousting with Kenneth Starr--to maintain that the Alaska site wouldn't violate the ABM Treaty, even though Article I of the treaty states that a signatory is "not to deploy ABM systems for a defense of the territory of its country." Eventually, the administration dropped this argument. It instead asked the Russians for a special protocol to the treaty that would permit the Alaska site. In effect, national missile defense would still be banned, except for this particular national missile defense. The strategy was to get the Russians to go along with the smaller changes to the treaty first, then to tackle the really hard question of whether anything like the ABM Treaty should exist at all. This, of course, gave Russia an incentive never to agree to the initial changes, which is exactly what it did, stiffing the U.S. and keeping the treaty--signed in 1972--intact.

How to get out of this trap? Simply begin work on the Alaska system right away. Though the Clinton administration's rationale for the Alaska plan was suspect, the system makes sense as a starting point. It would have two parts: the X-band radar on Shemya (an Alaskan island), and 100 interceptors in the center of the state. The radar will be necessary to any comprehensive defense of the U.S., whether this defense eventually depends on sea-, land-, air-, or space-based components (or, best, some combination of all in a "layered" system). And the radar is the element of the Alaska project that will take the longest to build--work on the forbidding Shemya is possible only three or four months out of the year; hence the urgency in getting started this summer. Meanwhile, the 100 interceptors would have advantages as well. Alaska is closer to North Korea than to parts of the United States, so the system there would protect against threats from the Far East. But it also could provide some coverage for the East Coast, thanks to its location near the top of the world. (Since there is less longitude at the top, the distances the interceptors would have to cover are much shorter--a look at a globe tells the story.)

But Alaska has critics among both liberal and conservative partisans of a sea-based system. They support converting a tactical missile defense, the Navy Theater Wide (NTW) system, into one capable of intercepting strategic missiles. This idea has its attractions: Such a system would intercept a missile when it is "hot and slow" in its boost phase--presenting an easier target--rather than try to destroy it when it is "cold and hard," descending toward earth at maximum speed. But NTW is behind the ground-based system in its development--it has never attempted an intercept, even against a tactical-range target. It is also dependent on the positioning of ships close to enemy launch sites, which means that it might not be able to defend against launches far inland or ones that catch the U.S. unawares. So, it makes sense to build--again, as a first step toward a more comprehensive, layered system--a ground-based defense that will be in place to take shots at all incoming missiles.

More important, breaking ground at Shemya would represent a crucial break with the ABM Treaty and, by extension, the parchment gods of arms control. A decision to go ahead--which this year would involve mostly just digging--would mean that the U.S. is constructing a system that directly violates the treaty. The only honest thing for Washington to do in such circumstances would be to announce that it is exercising its right under the ABM Treaty to withdraw (after giving six months' notice). Anything short of this would leave the treaty's web of prohibitions in place to hamper the research, development, and deployment of defenses. Even if the Russians were, in theory, to agree to changes in the ABM Treaty immediately, those changes wouldn't go into force until ratified by the Duma, creating an irresistible opportunity to string the U.S. along.

By now, the ABM Treaty should be a dusty embarrassment to proponents of arms control. When it was signed, only the Soviet Union deployed Scud technology. Now, 22 nations do. Missile know-how today spreads like a social disease. For instance, Russia and then China helped North Korea develop its own Scuds. North Korea, in turn,

marketed its Scuds to Egypt, Iran, Syria, Vietnam, and the United Arab Emirates. Meanwhile, its more ambitious No Dong missile--with a range of 1,300 kilometers--has gone to Pakistan, Iran, and Libya. And because North Korea's Taepo Dong-1--capable of reaching Alaska and, with smaller payloads, even the Lower 48--is a boot-strap creation combining Scud and No Dong boosters, these other nations are presumably within reach of having intercontinental ballistic missiles of their own. While academic theory may have justified the "balance of terror" with the Soviet Union, by what theory should the U.S. remain vulnerable to any third-rate power sold missile technology by Russia or China?

The ABM Treaty is increasingly the international equivalent of the McCain-Feingold campaign-finance bill, a regulatory nightmare built on flimsy legalisms. The treaty created an artificial distinction between theater missile defenses against shorter-range missiles (acceptable) and national missile defense against longer-range missiles (unacceptable). So the Clinton administration agonized over whether America's THAAD theater-defense system violated the treaty. The uncertainty was understandable, since THAAD was meant to counter China's CSS-2, a theater-range missile with a range of about 3,000 kilometers. The least capable strategic missile in the early 1970s was the Soviet SSN-6, a submarine-launched missile with a range of about 3,000 kilometers. Thus, theater defenses have blended with strategic-missile defenses. Who's to know what's forbidden and what's not?

Defenders of the ABM Treaty argue that one parchment irrelevancy justifies another. If the United States withdraws from the treaty, they contend, it will lose the START II agreement with the Russians and never be able to negotiate START III. Yeah, so? The START II accord, with its emphasis on Cold War arcana such as the "de-MIRVing" of missiles, already seems an artifact from a bygone era. In any case, it will never go into force, because the Russian Duma has made its ratification dependent on the U.S. Senate's swallowing extensions of the ABM Treaty, which the American body has found unacceptable. As for a proposed START III agreement, circumstances have made it a risible redundancy. The Russians built their missiles with short lifespans, planning to modernize them constantly. The Russian economy now makes that impossible. The number of Russian strategic warheads is expected to drop from 6,000 or so to fewer than 1,500 in 2010, well below the START III target level of 2,000-2,500 warheads. But this doesn't stop the Russians from dangling a START III agreement as an incentive for the U.S. to preserve the ABM Treaty, in what would amount to arms-control inanity in the service of arms-control folly.

Russia is joined in its braying against missile defense by China, because the countries have a confluence of interests. To the extent that the U.S. is vulnerable to missile threats--including to the clients of Russia and China--its ability to act in the world is circumscribed. So it's in the interest of both an ex-superpower and a rising Asian power to see the United States remain naked unto the world. As for the idea that a missile-defense system would prompt an arms race with China, the Clinton administration assiduously avoided building a system for eight years, and the Chinese still amassed an arsenal of intercontinental missiles. At the moment, of course, the United States is vulnerable to 100 percent of Chinese missiles. How could it be worse off with a missile defense that can protect against a Chinese launch, even if China doubles or triples its force? Only an arms-control expert could explain that, and his world may be becoming to an end--provided the Bush administration digs at Shemya and lets the Russians know that, at least when it comes to more missile-defense negotiations, silence is golden.

San Antonio Express-News
March 28, 2001

Possible Nerve Gas Exposure Cited

By Pauline Jelinek, Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Several dozen U.S. Special Forces soldiers may have been exposed to nerve gas when they went into Iraq ahead of the Gulf War ground campaign, the Pentagon said Tuesday.

The Defense Department released a report on airstrikes between Jan. 19 and Feb. 24, 1991, as coalition forces hit an Iraqi weapons storage site at Muhammadiyat.

Among Iraqi munitions in the depot were bombs filled with mustard agents and the nerve agents sarin and cyclosarin.

"With the possible exception of a few forward-deployed Special Operations Forces in Iraq, U.S. forces were definitely not exposed to chemical warfare agents as a result of the bombing," the department said in a statement. For those few, it said, "exposure is characterized as indeterminate from the facts available."

An analysis of data on the weapons, weather at the time and other factors indicated that U.S. forces in Saudi Arabia were 35 miles away from nerve gas that might have been released in the attacks.

American troops were 125 miles away from a "possible mustard hazard area" believed caused by airstrikes Feb. 10, Feb. 12 or Feb. 16.

The Muhammadiyat ammunition site was about 95 miles west of Baghdad, officials said.
An international coalition launched a six-week bombing campaign Jan. 17, 1991, followed by a four-day ground war to drive Iraqi troops from Kuwait.
"There were some Special Ops guys in Iraq during the time of those bombings — for security reasons, no one can talk about exactly what they were doing or exactly where they were," said Austin Camacho, spokesman for the Pentagon's special office on Gulf War illnesses.
"But it's possible that a small number of them may have been exposed to a small amount of sarin or cyclosarin," he added.
He said the number of people was "less than 76" and that they will be notified of their possible exposure in coming weeks.
In a separate statement released Tuesday, officials said U.S. service members "definitely were not exposed" to chemical warfare agents during bombing to destroy another weapons site, at a place called Al Muthanna.
In that bombing, on Feb. 8, 1991, "most of the possible 9 tons of sarin" in the Iraqi rockets "was destroyed by a very hot fire that ensued," the statement said.
It said about 22 pounds of the gas was estimated to have escaped into the atmosphere, but U.S. forces in Saudi Arabia were hundreds of miles away and no Special Forces units were in the area.

Aerospace Daily
March 28, 2001

NMD, Live-Launch Booster Tests Continue To Slip

The first live-fire test of the new three-stage, Boeing-built national missile defense (NMD) booster has been delayed by almost a year and a half due to developmental challenges, causing the Ballistic Missile Defense Organization (BMDO) to revise live testing of the technology planned for the NMD program.
The first full test of the Boeing booster, originally scheduled for March, 2000, will now take place late this summer, and will be preceded by a "pathfinder" training operation within the next two or three months that includes everything up to an actual launch.
The pathfinder operation - a risk-reduction effort to work the bugs out, according to one Pentagon source - will be followed by two live-fire booster tests, both of which are planned for this year. BMDO hopes to see the second live-fire booster test sometime this fall.
Previous integrated flight tests (IFT) have been conducted using a two-stage Minuteman booster made by Lockheed Martin, but the long-term goal has been to go to Boeing's three-stage booster because of its advantage of speed and range in trying to shoot down a missile with a missile before it re-enters the atmosphere.
Defense Dept. spokesman Rear Adm. Craig Quigley told reporters yesterday that the Pentagon is "always concerned" when a test is delayed because of the "downstream effects," that tend to lead to yet more delays. The NMD program has been plagued with technological glitches and developmental setbacks that have pushed the tests further and further to the right.
The pathfinder and two booster tests are independent of the next IFT tests, two of which are also planned for this year, according to BMDO sources. IFT-6, to take place in May or June, will use the Minuteman booster and is a duplicate of last July's test, which was deemed a failure when the kill vehicle failed to separate from the second stage of Lockheed Martin's payload launch vehicle (DAILY, July 11).
"We're going to make sure that we check and double-check everything," Quigley said, to avoid costly failures such as those in July and January of last year. So far, BMDO has had two out of three failures in testing its national missile defense technology. In January, 2000, the failure was attributed to a malfunction in a Raytheon-built infrared seeker just seconds before an intercept was to take place (DAILY, Jan. 20). BMDO scored its first intercept of a target in the program in October, 1999 (DAILY, Oct. 5).
"These are expensive," said Quigley of the tests. At $100 million an attempt, "We want to make sure we get it right," he said.
BMDO had planned to use the Boeing booster during IFT-7, now slated to take place in late fall of this year. But, "much will depend on how the live-fire booster tests perform," a BMDO spokesperson told The Daily.
Boeing, which is developing its new booster in Sunnyvale, Calif., declined comment on why the technology has been delayed. The company is also the prime contractor for the entire NMD program. In August, 2000, Boeing removed its head executive from the helm of its NMD Lead System Integrator (LSI) program in the wake of perpetual booster problems and schedule delays (DAILY, Aug. 11).
-- Linda de France

New York Times
March 29, 2001
Pg. 1

U.S. Reviewing Aid Meant To Contain Russia's Arsenal

By Judith Miller

The White House is starting a comprehensive review of all American aid programs to Russia set up to stop the spread of nuclear, biological and chemical weapons, a senior administration official said yesterday.

The broad review, initiated by National Security Council officials who have previously been critical of some of these programs, is likely to change significantly how Washington spends more than $760 million a year trying to dismantle former Soviet nuclear, biological and chemical complexes and prevent unconventional weapons and hazardous materials from being either sold to rogue states and terrorist groups or stolen by them.

The senior official said that several of the programs, such as the Department of Energy's $173 million program to strengthen the security and accounting for fissile material at nuclear weapons storage sites, appeared to be "very effective." Others, several administration officials said, may not be money well spent, like the more than $6 billion long- term effort to help Russia and the United States dispose of 34 metric tons of weapons-grade plutonium each. Programs deemed ineffective could be sharply reduced, or even scuttled, officials said.

The review comes at a time of growing tension between Russia and the United States fueled by the administration's discovery of a suspected Russian spy in the top ranks of the F.B.I., its determination to build a shield against nuclear missiles, and its criticism of Russia for selling nuclear technology to Iran.

The administration's adoption of what it calls a "realistic" or "unsentimental" approach to Russia has prompted Russian officials to accuse Washington of being out of step with the times, intent on reviving cold war policies, and abandoning the previous administration's effort to treat Russia as a partner.

Hence, the administration's review of nonproliferation policies risks heightening tensions with Russia at a time of great internal change in that country.

It could also fuel concerns among Democrats and other critics of President Bush's more conservative stance toward Russia that the administration might use the review to punish Russia for selling technology to Iran or to justify deep cuts in nonproliferation programs. The senior administration official stressed yesterday that the review was aimed at improving the quality, effectiveness and transparency of the nonproliferation programs.

Its goal is not to punish Russia or undermine American commitment to helping Russia safeguard dangerous weapons material and prevent the theft, diversion or sale of unconventional weapons and expertise.

"This is not a challenge to Russia or an effort to dismantle nonproliferation programs," the official said. "This is about enabling the progress we've made to continue and making nonproliferation programs even more effective. We want to strengthen nonproliferation."

The review is examining dozens of programs run mainly by the State Department, Pentagon and Department of Energy that have poured millions of dollars into Russia and the former Soviet republics since the cold war. Most were created by the Clinton administration, but a few began as Congressional initiatives backed by former President George Bush.

The wide-ranging programs have tried to help Russia dismantle its vast unconventional weapons complexes, safeguard nuclear and other hazardous materials and prevent the former Soviet scientists who produced them from selling their products and skills to rogue states and terrorist groups.

The review is parallel to a broad review of Russia policy by the White House recently but separate from it. The nonproliferation review will be conducted by senior officials at the National Security Council and is expected to last six to eight weeks, officials said. In the meantime, the official said, the programs will continue.

Officials said it was also separate from the across-the-board cuts in fiscal 2002 budgets that the Office of Management and Budget has asked agencies to make to accommodate President Bush's proposed tax cuts.

According to the review's "terms of reference," portions of which were read to a New York Times reporter, it will explore, among other things, the "cost-benefit ratio" of each major program and how well it serves America's national interest, whether Russia and other countries should shoulder a larger share of its cost, and whether the program should have a "sunset" provision to ensure it does not continue after its objectives have been met. It will also evaluate whether Russia has been sufficiently supportive of the program and examine whether there are other programs that might better serve nonproliferation goals or better ways of coordinating the programs.

While the official was reluctant to discuss the administration's attitudes towards specific programs in advance of the review, he said that the "scorecard" of the Department of Defense's Cooperative Threat Reduction programs, which

received $458 million from Congress in this fiscal year, was "pretty impressive." By the end of 2000, an administration official said, those programs, among other things, had deactivated 5,288 missile warheads, destroyed 419 long-range nuclear missiles and 367 silos, eliminated 81 bombers, 292 submarine missile launchers and 174 submarine missiles, and sealed 194 nuclear test holes and sites in Russia and other former Soviet republics.

The official also praised the Department of Energy's program that permits the United States to buy and convert 500 metric tons of highly enriched uranium, the equivalent of 25,000 warheads, to low-enriched uranium that can be used as commercial fuel in nuclear reactors. Administration officials said that since the agreement was reached in 1994, about 110 metric tons of such uranium has been purchased and converteded.

Administration officials and other experts criticized two programs — the Department of Energy's $6 billion effort to dispose of Russian and American plutonium, to which Congress has appropriated $280 million to date, and its Nuclear Cities Initiative. Established in September, 1998 to stop the brain drain from Russia's vast, closed nuclear cities and reduce the size of the massive complexes, the program has been pummeled on Capitol Hill. In fiscal 2000, Congress halved the initiative's budget and placed other conditions on spending.

The impending review received a strong endorsement yesterday from an influential Democrat who helped pioneer nonproliferation programs with post-Communist Russia. Former Senator Sam Nunn of Georgia said that any new administration "should take a comprehensive look at programs to reduce the threat of weapons, materiel, and know-how coming out of the Soviet Union." The programs, he added, "need better cooperation and to fit into a broader strategic picture."

Mr. Nunn, who now chairs the Nuclear Threat Initiative, a private group financed by Ted Turner to reduce the threat of nuclear and other unconventional weapons, presided this week over a conference in Atlanta on nonproliferation challenges in Russia. He said that both Russian and American participants would "favor strengthening those programs," despite some frank discussion of their weaknesses.

Senator Nunn said that he hoped the review would give such programs a higher priority in the new administration.

Howard Baker, the former Senate majority leader from Tennessee whom President Bush has nominated as ambassador to Japan, urged the administration not to cut money for nonproliferation programs in testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee yesterday.

Senator Baker was co-chairman of an Energy Department-backed task force that recommended that $30 billion be spent over 8 to 10 years to help secure or neutralize Russia's nuclear weapons-usable material and keep its scientists conducting legitimate work.

Ronald F. Lehman II, a former director of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency in the Reagan and Bush administrations and a champion of cooperation with Russia in nonproliferation, told the committee that all of the programs would benefit greatly from a "bold review" and a "clearer vision of goals, strategy, and priorities."

A concern among Democrats was articulated by Kenneth N. Luongo, a former Clinton administration official who is executive director of the Russian American Nuclear Security Advisory Council, which promotes American-Russian cooperative security initiatives. He said that while he welcomed a review in principle, he feared that it might not be fair and might reflect the administration's biases. "A prejudiced review that looks at what can be eliminated, and not what can be improved, is missing an enormous opportunity and is likely to further rile relations with Russia," he said.

InsideDefense.com
March 28, 2001

White House Said To Oppose New Homeland Security Agency Bill

The White House opposes legislation introduced in the House last week by Rep. Mac Thornberry (R-TX) that would create a new federal agency tasked with preventing and reacting to terrorist attacks, a White House source told Inside the Navy this week.

The source told ITN in a March 26 interview that, in addition to concerns over the bill’s "narrow" focus on domestic issues, the White House needs more time to decide on an approach to domestic terrorism.

"The administration is working very hard to develop what it expects its [preparedness] organization to look like and would very much like to work with Congress on this," the White House source said, "but they have to be working together, not [Congress] imposing a structure on a new administration."

However, a Pentagon source said not everyone in the White House agrees with that assessment.

"It is my understanding that the White House does not oppose the bill, but it is true that the administration wants more time to study this complex issue and develop their own views," the Pentagon source said.

The bill is based on recommendations made by the Commission on National Security/21st Century, a panel led by former Sens. Gary Hart (D-CO) and Warren Rudman (R-NH). The panel was chartered by then-Defense Secretary William Cohen in 1998 to conduct what he called the most sweeping national security review since the start of the Cold War.

Thornberry told ITN last week that his legislation, the "National Homeland Security Agency Act," would help the government adapt to threats in a post-Cold War era. "In the past we had to worry about the Soviet Union," he said, "but now we have all sorts of different threats -- some of those threats are missile-related threats [and] a number of others are related to terrorists, information warfare and all sorts of other things."

Specifically, the legislation would rename the Federal Emergency Management Agency as the National Homeland Security Agency. The new agency would respond to natural disasters and take responsibility for preventing and responding to terrorist attacks by, in part, folding the Coast Guard, the Customs Service and Boarder Patrol into the NHSA.

But the White House source said the National Security Council believes the bill's focus on domestic preparedness could create a sense of confusion, because "terrorism transcends whether it's a domestic or an international issue and having an organization that just focuses narrowly on domestic terrorism preparedness precludes any other element of terrorism."

Organizations such as the CIA or State Department that have an international focus and a "vitally important support role in crisis management" may not fall under the bill's scope, said the administration source. The legislation, the source said, "pretty much drives you to splitting out domestic from international, and therefore now you're going to develop, what, two policy councils, one for domestic terrorism preparedness and one for international?"

Two separate agencies dealing with homeland attacks may force you to "compete against yourself," according to the White House source.

Further, Thornberry's bill touches on themes covered by congressional committees, including the Senate Armed Services Committee, and therefore runs the risk of taking away some of their areas of responsibility, said the administration source.

Because of these concerns, coupled with the bill's similarity to former Rep. Tillie Fowler's (R-FL) legislation, "Preparedness Against Terrorism Act of 2000," which died in the Senate, the source said any opposition should not surprise Thornberry.

The administration does agree, however, with Thornberry's desire to transfer the National Domestic Preparedness Office into the new agency because it has been "all but a failure," the White House source said. The White House is working to deal with the troubled office "immediately," the source added.

Proponents of the new homeland defense agency dispute the criticisms of Thornberry's bill, including the comparison to Fowler's proposal. The Hart-Rudman commission still hopes President Bush will support the legislation.

"No bureaucracy is ever excited about change, the demons of myopia and parochialism abound, and as a result, American citizens are often less safe today because of it," said Frank Hoffman, a staff member at the commission.

-- Randy Woods

London Times
March 29, 2001

Nerve Gas Deaths

Moscow: Some 215 people have died and thousands are ill from alleged exposure to a deadly nerve gas, VX, made in a Soviet Union chemical weapons plant east of Moscow. Former workers at the plant, which closed in 1987, say they have been denied compensation.

Washington Post
March 30, 2001
Pg. 29

Engage North Korea

By John F. Kerry

One of the major questions facing the United States and its allies is how to deal with the ballistic missile threat posed by North Korea. Pyongyang has already demonstrated its capacity to launch a 500-kilogram warhead to a range of at least 1,000 kilometers, and it is known to be interested in developing a longer-range missile capability. North Korea's proliferation of missiles, missile components, technology and training to Pakistan and Iran further magnifies the need to end Pyongyang's missile program.

We have no hope of reducing the missile threat -- or dealing with a number of critical issues -- unless we constructively engage North Korea. A reversal by the Bush administration puts that policy of engagement at risk and is troubling news for all those concerned with our interests on the Korean peninsula. Two days before President Bush met with South Korean President Kim Dae Jung, Secretary of State Colin Powell stated that the Bush administration would "pick up" where the Clinton administration left off. Two days later Bush directly told President Kim the opposite, and announced publicly that we would not resume missile talks with North Korea any time soon. Many of us were left wondering what had changed in the space of two days.

America's foreign policy interests in the region remain a high priority -- as they have been from the time we lost nearly 60,000 lives there a half-century ago ago.

The Clinton administration left a bargaining framework on the table that could, if pursued aggressively by the Bush administration, go a long way toward reducing the threat posed by North Korean missiles and missile exports.

Our South Korean allies -- on the front lines and under no illusions about the regime in North Korea or its leader, Kim Jong Il -- want us to move quickly to resume the missile talks. President Kim firmly believes that Washington and Seoul must continue their efforts to open up North Korea. We should listen to him carefully.

Secretary Powell has asserted that some of the things put on the table by the Clinton administration are "promising," but that monitoring and verification "are not there." He says the news administration plans to do a comprehensive policy review before deciding when and how to engage North Korea.

We can all be sympathetic to the Bush administration's desire to study the proposals left on the table by the previous administration. But even while analyzing new proposals, what better way to test the possibilities than by maintaining an open dialogue? That way we avoid losing a window of opportunity -- and even sending the wrong signal to Pyongyang -- by delaying too long.

Over the past eight years, North Korea has taken previously unimaginable steps. It has agreed to freeze its existing nuclear energy program under supervision and permit inspection to determine the past operating history of its reactor program just prior to the delivery of key components of light-water reactors. When the United States suspected North Korea was violating the agreed framework by building a new reactor in an underground site, North Korea agreed to allow American inspections -- proof that monitoring and verification agreements can be negotiated with North Korea. By the eleventh hour of the Clinton administration, we were discussing proposals to prevent North Korea from developing missiles capable of striking the United States and to bring a halt to North Korea's lucrative missile exports.

We should be encouraging Pyongyang to continue on this path. Delaying missile talks is a mistake. In fact, delay -- and Secretary Powell's lukewarm endorsement of the agreed framework -- could send a negative signal about the nature and direction of our policy.

While the Clinton administration moved faster in the missile talks than some believe prudent, nothing has been agreed to that ties the hands of the Bush administration. Negotiations have simply begun, and proposals are on the table. Nothing precludes this administration from making new proposals on monitoring and verification -- indeed, it should. But that cannot happen if discussions are in limbo.

North Korea's missile capability is an important question not only with regard to security on the Korean peninsula but also to our own debate on national missile defense. The Bush administration points to the North Korean missile threat as a major reason why we need to proceed with such a defensive system. This makes its hesitant approach on missile talks with Pyongyang all the more puzzling. If we can reduce or eliminate the threat posed by North Korea's missile program, why wouldn't we push ahead? Not only would we have greater security but we'd be able to examine national missile defense options that may be less costly and damaging to the arms control regime established by the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty.

There is little to lose and much to gain by returning to the bargaining table. There is considerable risk in leaving the North Korea missile threat to chance.

The writer is a Democratic senator from Massachusetts and a member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.