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Perspectives

ENDING THE IRAQ WAR

by Richard Falk*

The American debate on the Iraq War has entered a dramatic new phase. For the first time, a prominent Democrat, Congressman John Murtha, has called for a withdrawal of American forces from the country. Murtha's words have had a major impact because he was a former supporter of the war, and has had a career distinguished by his consistently pro-military profile. His argument is based on the inability to complete the American military mission in Iraq, making inexcusable the continued killing and loss of life. He also refers to the adverse effects of the unpopular and flawed occupation of Iraq on the wider goals of opposing global terrorism and to the failure of American reconstruction efforts. Murtha's critique is widely shared by a majority of Americans at this point, and helps explain the declining popularity of the Bush presidency.

But there is no sign that these developments, even in the face of a rising crescendo of violent incidents and high casualties, will bring a rapid end to the Iraq War. President Bush keeps reiterating his resolve 'to stay the course,' to do whatever is necessary to prevail in Iraq. A Republican-controlled Congress, although increasingly restive about the war, is not yet likely to break with the president, and withhold appropriations or mandate an exit strategy that calls for a definite end to the war. Unlike Vietnam, which looks more and more like a precursor to Iraq, the strategic stakes are high. The efforts to pretend that the outcome of Vietnam was strategically important because of 'falling dominos' in the region was never convincing, and the only strong argument for American forces remaining was the alleged prospect of a bloodbath in the aftermath of an American departure, a nightmare scenario that never materialized. But in Iraq there are major strategic stakes: oil, non-proliferation, the impact on Turkey and Iran, the containment of radical Islam, anti-terrorism, the security of Israel, regional security politics.

To read the full article, visit: http://www.wagingpeace.org/articles/2005/11/00_falk_ending-the-iraq-war.html.

*Richard Falk, chair of the board of the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation, is the author of *Religion and Humane Global Governance* (Palgrave) and, most recently, *The Great Terror War* (Olive Branch). He is currently Distinguished Visiting Professor of Global Studies at UC Santa Barbara.

WHY NATIONS GO NUCLEAR

by David Krieger

Understanding the reasons why a country chooses to go nuclear are complex, variable and speculative, but I would offer as a hypothesis four principal, though often overlapping factors: fear, security, enhancing the country's bully potential or countering another country's bully potential, and prestige. North Korea seems to be pioneering a fifth reason: to use the weapons as a bargaining chip to gain security guarantees and financial concessions. Each country that chooses to go nuclear will certainly reflect some or all of these reasons in their decision, although they may be in different combinations or proportions for different states. The reasons that the current nuclear weapons states went nuclear provide insights into these dynamics.

To read the full article, visit: http://www.wagingpeace.org/articles/2005/11/00_krieger-why-nations-go-nuclear.htm.

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Take Action

ACT TO KEEP DRINKING WATER SAFE FROM PLUTONIUM CONTAMINATION

The Institute for Energy and Environmental Research (IEER) invites you to **send a letter to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)** asking it to **tighten the drinking water limit for plutonium and other alpha-emitting, transuranic long-lived radionuclides.**

Join other groups and individuals in telling the EPA that the drinking water limit for such contaminants must be strengthened to protect public health and to reflect the most recent scientific assessments of the radiation doses of these radionuclides.

The goal is to get the EPA to change the combined Maximum Contaminant Limit (MCL) for alpha-emitting, long-lived transuranic radionuclides from 15 picocuries per liter to 0.15 picocuries per liter.

The agency is expected to begin its legally-mandated review of drinking water limits for radionuclides in 2006, so now is a good time to send EPA this message.

If you are concerned about the potential impact of too much radiation in your family's drinking water, please send EPA a message. The more letters sent, the more pressure EPA will feel, and the better the chances that the agency will act to strengthen the drinking water standard.

This action remains valid until the EPA concludes its review, probably in late 2006. To take action, visit: <http://capwiz.com/wagingpeace/issues/alert/?alertid=8243821&type=CU>.

The scientific basis for strengthening the drinking water MCL for plutonium and similar radionuclides is described in the technical analysis by the Institute for Energy and Environmental Research (IEER), entitled "Bad to the Bone: Analysis of the Federal Maximum Contaminant Levels for Plutonium-239 and Other Alpha-Emitting Transuranic Radionuclides in Drinking Water." The report is available online at <http://www.ieer.org/reports/badtothebone/index.html>

Nonproliferation

SENATE APPROVES FEINSTEIN-HAGEL AMENDMENT REAFFIRMING US COMMITMENT TO NUCLEAR NON-PROLIFERATION TREATY

On 9 November 2005, the US Senate approved an amendment to the 2006 Department of Defense authorization bill, co-sponsored by US Senators Dianne Feinstein (D-CA) and Chuck Hagel (R-NE), which reaffirms support of the US Congress for the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and calls for all appropriate measures to strengthen the NPT and to attain its objectives.

According to Senator Feinstein, "The proliferation of nuclear weapons is one of the most perilous dangers we face as a nation. Yet North Korea has already taken the step of establishing a nuclear weapons regime, without penalty, before our very eyes. And Iran is on the cusp of following suit. We simply cannot afford to allow the continued spread of nuclear weapons, nor can we halt proliferation alone. And so today, the Senate expressed its desire to further strengthen our commitment to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and move us one step closer to making the world safer from the nuclear threat."

Senator Feinstein also said, "The Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty has played a critical role in protecting U.S. national security interests and promoting peace and stability in the international community. By bringing nuclear armed and non-nuclear armed states together to stop the proliferation of nuclear weapons, the Treaty has saved lives and prevented unthinkable catastrophe. Simply put, the fewer number of states with nuclear weapons, the less likely such weapons will be used or fall into the wrong hands."

The amendment introduced by Senators Feinstein and Hagel calls on parties to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty to:

-Insist on strict compliance with the non-proliferation obligations of the Treaty and to undertake effective enforcement measures against states that are in violation of their treaty obligations;

-Agree to establish more effective controls on enrichment and reprocessing technologies that can be used to produce materials for nuclear weapons;

-Expand the ability of the International Atomic Energy Agency to inspect and monitor compliance with safeguard agreements signed by the states party to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty;

-Demonstrate the international community's unified opposition to a nuclear weapons program in Iran by:

-Supporting the efforts of the United States and the European Union to prevent the Government of Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapons capability; and

-Using all appropriate diplomatic means at their disposal to convince the Government of Iran to abandon its uranium enrichment program;

-Strongly support the ongoing Six-Party talks that seek the verifiable and irreversible disarmament of North Korea's nuclear weapons program;

-Address underlying regional security problems in Northeast Asia, South Asia, and the Middle East;

-Accelerate programs to safeguard and eliminate nuclear-weapons usable material to the highest standards to prevent access by terrorists or other states;

-Halt the use of highly enriched uranium in civilian reactors;

-Strengthen national and international export controls as required by UN Security Resolution 1540;

-Agree that no state may withdraw from the Treaty and escape responsibility for prior violations of the treaty or retain access to controlled materials and equipment acquired for peaceful purposes;

-Accelerate implementation of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty-related disarmament obligations and commitments that would, in particular, reduce the world's stockpiles of nuclear weapons and weapons-grade material; and

-Strengthen and expand support for the Proliferation Security Initiative.

Source: Gantman, Howard, "Senate Approves Feinstein-Hagel Amendment Reaffirming US Commitment to Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty," Press Release, 9 November 2005.

Proliferation

IRAN ADMITS RECEIVING NUCLEAR INFORMATION FROM KHAN NUCLEAR BLACK MARKET

According to a report issued by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) on 18 November 2005, Iran has conceded for the first time receiving documents on nuclear weapon production from the nuclear black-market operated by former top Pakistani nuclear scientist Abdul Qadeer Khan.

The IAEA report said that papers obtained by Iran from the Khan network beginning in the late 1980s provided detailed instructions on shaping "enriched, natural and depleted uranium metal into hemispherical forms."

One European diplomat described the documents as a "cookbook" for producing a nuclear weapon's uranium core. However, Corey Hinderstein, Deputy Director of the Institute of Science and International Security disagreed. He said, "It's not a cookbook, it's not specific instructions. The information is general, it explains the process, but it does not give instructions on the process."

Iranian officials have denied seeking the uranium sphere designs, which they said were provided unilaterally by members of the nuclear network. Drawings provided to Iran by the Khan network also included instructions on how to connect uranium enrichment centrifuges in cascades and how to arrange 2,000 centrifuges in a small enrichment plant.

The IAEA report also said that the agency is "still awaiting additional visits," both to the Lavizan site, where former nuclear facilities have been razed, and to the military installation at Parchin.

Source: Malenic, Marina, "Iran Admits Receiving Nuclear Weapon Information," Global Security Newswire, 18 November 2005.

Nuclear Insanity

ENOLA GAY MAP AUCTIONED OFF AT CHRISTIES FOR \$72,000

A map used by the Enola Gay flight crew, who dropped the atomic bomb on Hiroshima, was purchased for \$72,000 at New York's Christie's auction house on 15 November 2005. The map, carried on the flight by co-pilot Robert A. Lewis, bears a number of arrows of the airplane's flight path to and from Hiroshima.

Source: "Enola Gay Map Auctioned Off at Christies for \$72,000," Kyodo News, 15 November 2005.

NUCLEAR WEAPONS SCIENTIST NAMED ONE OF TEN WORST SCIENCE JOBS

The magazine Popular Science ranked "Nuclear Weapons Scientist" fifth on a comical list of the ten worst jobs in science as part of its year-end edition. The article references a spate of embarrassments at Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) in recent years - the Wen Ho Lee "Chinese espionage" case in 1999, the "missing data tapes" investigated by the FBI in 2003 that never actually existed, and the intern whose eye was burned by a laser in 2004 - to support the ranking.

Kevin Roark, the main spokesperson for LANL during the scandals, told the Albuquerque Tribune: "Popular Science should just talk about science and not try to be funny - it's not funny. Everything about it is just insulting. That's not funny. We're talking nuclear weapons."

The Popular Science list also includes such notables as the "NASA ballerina, hired to dance with a robot for the press;" "extremophile excavator;" and "manure inspector," all of which were beat out by the top-ranking "Human lab rat."

Source: Vorenberg, Sue, "A Dirty Job? - 10 Worst Careers in Science," Albuquerque Tribune, 17 November 2005.

MICHIGAN TRUCKER TRANSPORTING RADIOACTIVE MATERIAL CHOKES ON BEEF JERKY, CRASHES

On 26 November 2005, a truck driver carrying low-level radioactive material choked on beef jerky and drove the truck into a ditch. The man was transporting the radioactive material from Ontario to Blanding, Utah on behalf of Cameco, an industrial uranium mining company. The crash did not release any hazardous materials, according to Michigan State Police.

Source: Damron, Gina, "Michigan Trucker Goes Off Road, But Hazardous Powder Stays Put," Detroit News, 26 November 2005.

MORDECHAI VANUNU ARRESTED AGAIN, RELEASED A DAY LATER

On 19 November 2005, Israeli nuclear whistleblower Mordechai Vanunu was released on bail a day after being arrested for entering the West Bank in breach of conditions imposed on him when he was released in April 2004 after serving an 18-year sentence for revealing Israel's nuclear program.

Vanunu was detained at the Al-Ram checkpoint north of Jerusalem as he returned from the West Bank. During his arrest, Vanunu said, "I wanted to protest against the apartheid wall that is shutting the Palestinians off in a ghetto."

Vanunu's restrictions are renewable every 12 months and include a ban on travel to the Palestinian territories. He is

also prohibited from going abroad and from speaking to foreign journalists without prior authorization. Attempts to overturn the restrictions have so far failed.

Source: "Israel releases nuclear whistleblower Vanunu," AFP, 19 November 2005.

Nuclear Insecurity

IRAN SEEKING NEW NUCLEAR PLANT, MAY GET UN SANCTIONS

According to a state television report on 5 December 2005, Iran plans to construct a second nuclear power plant despite international concern over its nuclear program. The broadcast said President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad and Cabinet ministers decided on 4 December to build the reactor in Khuzistan province, southwestern Iran.

Previously Iran had said it would build a second power plant at Bushehr, where its first nuclear reactor is due to begin generating electricity in 2006. Khuzistan province was the site of a French-built power plant that began in the mid-1970s and was stopped after 1979 Islamic revolution. Iran is seeking to construct 20 nuclear power plants. Russia, which built the Bushehr reactor, has offered to build more nuclear plants in Iran.

Iran's nuclear program has been under intense scrutiny. The US claims that Iran's nuclear program is part of an effort to produce nuclear weapons. While Iran has temporarily frozen its enrichment program, it restarted uranium conversion in August 2005. The US and European Union want Iran to permanently halt uranium enrichment. However, Iran claims its right under the Non-Proliferation Treaty to pursue a nuclear program for peaceful purposes. It has said it will never give up the right to enrich uranium to produce nuclear fuel.

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has warned Iran that its nuclear program could be referred to the United Nations Security Council, which has the power to impose sanctions on the country. On 3 December, Iran approved a bill that would block international inspections of its nuclear sites if it were referred to the Security Council. The move further demonstrates the country's resistance to international pressure to permanently abandon uranium enrichment, a process that can produce fuel for either nuclear reactors or weapons.

In related news, on 2 December 2005, Israel conducted a test of its Arrow missile defense system. According to Israeli defense officials, the Arrow system successfully intercepted and destroyed a missile similar to Iran's long-range Shahab-3. After the test, Israel's defense minister declared the system an effective shield against a possible future Iranian nuclear threat.

Israeli Defense Minister Shaul Mofaz said, "The state of Israel, which is a clear target of each of these missiles and of the production stations of Iran's non-conventional

weapons, reserves the right to have other capabilities to prevent this threat."

Iran's Shahab-3 can be equipped with nuclear warheads and can reach Israel, as well as several US military installations in the Middle East. Israeli concerns were heightened after Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad said in October 2005 that Israel must be "wiped off the map." State-owned Israel Aircraft Industries and US-based Boeing began developing the Arrow system after Iraq fired 39 Scud missiles at Israel during the 1991 Persian Gulf War. The test on 2 December was the 14th test of the system, and the first trial since a failed test last year.

Meanwhile, Russian media sources reported on 2 December that the country has agreed to sell more than \$1 billion worth of missiles and other defense systems to Iran. The Interfax and Itar-Tass news agencies cited unidentified sources in the Russian military-industrial complex as saying Russian and Iranian officials had signed contracts in November that would send up to 30 Tor-M1 missile systems to Iran in the next two years. According to Interfax, the Tor-M1 system could identify up to 48 targets and fire at two targets simultaneously at an altitude of up to 20,000 feet.

Sources: Karimi, Nasser, "Iran Plans to Build Second Nuclear Plant," AP, 5 December 2005; Plushnick-Masti, Ramit, "Israel successfully tests missile-defense system, Russia to sell Iran \$1 billion in arms, intensifying threat." AP, 3 December 2005.

9/11 COMMISSION REPORT: NUCLEAR TERRORISM SHOULD BE TOP NATIONAL SECURITY PRIORITY

The most recent report of the September 11th Commission found that the Bush administration has made "insufficient progress" in efforts to prevent nuclear terrorism. According to the Commission, chaired by Thomas H. Kean and Lee H. Hamilton, President Bush must make nuclear terrorism prevention "his top national security priority and ride herd on the bureaucracy to maintain a sense of urgency."

The report found that "good progress" has been made in stopping the financing of terror organizations and in the promotion of economic improvement policies in Arab and Muslim countries. However, the commission reported "minimal" or "insufficient progress" in seven of the 13 areas it explored.

White House spokeswoman Dana Perino said the Bush administration had already taken action on 37 of the 39 recommendations made by the committee in summer 2004. According to Perino, "The administration holds prevention of a potential nuclear terrorism attack as an extremely high priority, and we are implementing an aggressive and comprehensive strategy against such a possibility." She also said that the president has asked for \$316 million for Fiscal Year 2006 for a new Domestic Nuclear Detection Office.

In the report, the commission expressed surprise that the White House had not made more of an effort to prevent terrorists from acquiring nuclear weapons. According to the commission, that is the case even considering an agreement reached this year to increase the number of Russian nuclear sites open for security improvements and inspections. Experts said that terrorists could easily obtain weapon-grade nuclear material from poorly secured Russian sites.

"The most striking thing to us is that the size of the problem still totally dwarfs the policy response," said commission Chairman Thomas Kean. "We have no greater fear than a terrorist who is inside the United States with a nuclear weapon. The consequences of such an attack would be catastrophic for our people, for our economy, for our liberties."

Kean said the Russian agreement was one of the "good steps" taken by the president, but warned, "they're not nearly enough." He also said that half of the nuclear materials in Russia have not had needed security upgrades.

The commission also found that little progress has been made on issues such as weapons proliferation. Commission member Timothy Roemer said, "This kind of grade - unfulfilled, insufficient, minimal progress - those grades are failing grades. ... That is an unacceptable response."

Source: "Report Finds US Not Doing Enough to Prevent Terrorists from Obtaining Nuclear Weapons," Global Security Newswire, 15 November 2005.

NIGER GETS NUCLEAR SMUGGLING TRAINING

According to the Niger government, customs and border guards are being trained to fight the smuggling of nuclear materials. International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) specialists, along with local experts, began a three-day course on 30 November 2005 on the risks of handling radioactive material and how to detect trafficking of nuclear substances.

Niger's Public Health Minister Ary Ibrahim said at the opening of the nuclear security course in Niamey that one of its aims was to improve cooperation to control illegal trafficking of nuclear materials like uranium. According to Ibrahim, "Their importance in the socio-economic development of our country should not make us lose sight of the risks which can derive from handling them."

Niger exports around 3,000 tons of uranium a year, mostly to France, Japan and Spain.

In his 2003 State of the Union Address, citing intelligence reports that have since been widely discredited, US President George W. Bush referred to alleged Iraqi attempts to buy uranium from Niger. This speech, which Bush's critics say was deliberately misleading, made the case for war against Iraq.

The so-called Niger dossier is now a centerpiece in the high-profile investigation over the leak of a covert CIA

agent's identity to the media. Bush's 2003 speech mentioning Niger led to public criticism by a former US career diplomat, Joseph Wilson, who accused the administration of twisting intelligence to bolster the case for war on Iraq. Wilson based his criticism in part on a CIA-sponsored mission he made to Africa in 2002 to check reports that Iraq sought uranium from Niger. Wilson said the reports were unsubstantiated and later accused the White House of leaking the identity of his covert CIA agent wife in retaliation.

The IAEA has also said the documents the United States cited to back its allegations that Iraq tried to buy uranium from Niger were false.

Source: "Niger guards get nuclear training," Reuters, 1 December 2005.

Missiles and Missile Defense

US MISSILE TECHNOLOGY PROLIFERATORS SENTENCED IN FEDERAL COURT

On 18 November 2005, US District Judge Douglas Woodlock sentenced two New England high-technology companies and their top executives for exporting advanced missile technologies to India. The sensitive technologies improved the accuracy of India's strategic ballistic missiles, including missiles armed with nuclear warheads.

Walter Lachman and Maurice Subilia, both top officials with Fiber Materials Inc., and its subsidiary Materials International, were sentenced to three years' probation for violating the Export Administration Act and for conspiracy. Lachman and Subilia did not receive an export license from the US Department of Commerce before exporting technology which allowed India to develop a very lightweight, heat-absorbing material used for thermal protection in missile nosecones, rocket nozzles and re-entry heat shields. The material was transferred to India in 1991 and 1992.

Sources: "Two High-Tech Firms & Their Executives Sentenced for Illegally Exporting Missile Technology to India," US Immigration and Customs Enforcement, 21 November 2005; "Defense executives get probation in export case," MetroWest Daily News, 22 November 2005.

RUSSIA CONDUCTS SECRETIVE MISSILE LAUNCH, POSSIBLY MANEUVERABLE WARHEAD TEST

On 1 November 2005, a Topol-M intercontinental ballistic missile was test fired from the Kapustin Yar facility in Russia and traveled to the Balkhash testing range in Kazakhstan. The test is unique in two respects. First: missile tests are normally conducted at the Kura testing ground at Plesetsk, Kamchatka. Some analysts speculate the test was conducted from Kapustin Yar because Russian officials want to conceal the unique nature of the missile's trajectory from US radar facilities that can monitor tests at the Kura range. Second: the Topol-M tested on 1 November is thought to have carried a unique warhead capable of maneuvering at very high speeds during the warhead's midcourse and terminal phase. Such a warhead would be capable of thwarting missile defense systems.

Russian officials have repeatedly claimed over the last two years that its new ballistic missiles, the Topol-M and the Bulava, are armed with maneuverable warheads. Though definitive proof has not been made public, some US defense officials have reported that Russia does in fact possess warheads capable of changing course at very high speeds.

Although the Cold War ended more than fifteen years ago and war between the US and Russia does not seem likely, there is concern that maneuverable warhead technology will spread to other nations, which promises to upset regional and global security. Undoubtedly, the development and proliferation of maneuverable warhead technology has been and will be stimulated by the proliferation of US missile defense systems. In order to defend against maneuverable warheads, should they be developed and fielded by potential adversaries, US defense officials will likely develop space-based missile defenses since space-based systems theoretically would be capable of defeating missiles during the boost phase. To stem the proliferation of maneuverable missile technology, US defense officials could opt to phase out missile defenses in agreement with Russian authorities who would likewise abandon their advanced warhead programs.

Sources: "Hackett on Topol-M Tests, Space Defenses," MissileThreat.com, 14 November 2005; "Russian warhead capable of changing course," United Press International, 21 November 2005.

US, ITALY TO DEVELOP OFFENSIVE AIR-TO-GROUND MISSILE SYSTEM

On 16 November 2005, US and Italian defense contractors announced their partnership to develop the Advanced Anti-Radiation Guided Missile (AARGM). The AARGM is a medium range, air-launched, supersonic missile capable of destroying an enemy's air defenses. The AARGM will replace the High-Speed Anti-Radiation Missile (HARM), which uses the enemy's

radar signals as its tracking device. What makes the AARGM noteworthy is its capability to strike an air defense installation even if the enemy shuts off its radar.

The AARGM, considered an offensive weapon useful when invading another nation's airspace, will be the most advanced such weapon when it enters service. The Italian government has agreed to provide \$20 million for development, and will purchase approximately 250 missiles once in production. The US Navy is expected to procure about 1,700 missiles. Other allied nations are expected to purchase the missile to replace their HARM systems.

Sources: Depass, Dee, "Italians join effort on Alliant missile," Star Tribune, 16 November 2005; "Italy Joining ATK and the US Navy in the Advanced Anti-Radiation Guided Missile Development Program," ATK Press Release, 16 November 2005.

AEGIS MISSILE INTERCEPTOR TEST SUCCESSFUL

On 17 November 2005, a Standard Missile Three (SM-3) successfully intercepted a separating ballistic missile target launched from the Pacific Missile Range Facility in Kauai, Hawaii. The SM-3 was launched from the USS Lake Erie during a joint Missile Defense Agency, US Navy ballistic missile flight test. The successful missile interceptor test is the first to successfully intercept a medium range missile target warhead that had separated from its launcher. All previous Aegis interceptor tests were against non-separating targets. Six of the last seven Aegis tests have been successful.

In related US missile defense news, the Missile Defense Agency successfully test launched and evaluated a Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) missile. The test launch occurred on 22 November 2005 at the White Sands Missile Range in New Mexico. The test did not include an attempted intercept, only an evaluation of the missile's launch, kill vehicle separation and maneuverability, and control systems. A spokesman from Lockheed Martin, the prime contractor for THAAD, said all the test objectives were achieved in the test.

The THAAD interceptor missile is designed to destroy short and medium range ballistic missiles during their terminal phase of flight. The THAAD program has been on hold since the 1990s after six of 11 flight-tests failed. Budget cuts and manufacturing accidents mothballed the program until its recent resurrection. Fifteen flight tests are planned through 2009 at a cost of \$4.5 billion.

Sources: "Sea-based missile defense test called a success," Agence France Presse, 17 November 2005; "SM-3 Launch," StrategyPage.com, 17 November 2005; Selinger, Marc, "THAAD Program Kicks Off New Flight-Test Effort," AviationNow.com, 23 November 2005.

Nuclear Energy & Waste

AUSTRALIAN NUCLEAR REACTOR TARGETED BY TERRORISTS, PLOT FOILED

Australian Federal Police arrested three men near Sydney's Lucas Heights nuclear reactor in December 2004. A lengthy police report released 14 November 2005 made public for the first time that the arrested men, with support of a larger Australian network of terrorists, were plotting an attack on the Lucas Heights reactor complex. A large counterterrorism exercise conducted by Australian police in early November 2005 swept up nearly 20 others who are suspected of aiding in the plot to attack the nuclear complex and other potential attacks in Australia. The Lucas Heights reactor is used for research and medical purposes, not for generating electricity.

The 14 November police report outlines how the Australian terror network purchased the same chemicals used in the 7 July 2005 bombings in London, possessed bomb-making instructions, extremist Islamic literature, as well as instructional videos tied to Al-Qaeda. According to police the men purchased hundreds of liters of chemical ingredients for peroxide-based explosives, and stockpiled steel drums, batteries, plastic piping, circuit kits, stopwatches, and ammunition. The report says the three men arrested near Lucas Heights are part of an extremist subgroup of the Ahel al Sunna wal Jammah Association, a Sunni Islamic group that follows a jihadist ideology.

The men are being held under various charges at a maximum security facility. The defense lawyers representing the men say there isn't any evidence their clients were planning an attack and claim the arrests are a political stunt orchestrated to display the power of new anti-terror laws recently passed by the Australian government. The defense attorney's argument appears weak since members of the arrested group are on record urging martyrdom, and inflicting maximum damage on Western interests.

Sources: Perry, Michael, "Sydney nuclear reactor terror plot target," Reuters, 14 November 2005; "Australia: Nuclear Reactor Believed Target," adnkronosinternational, 14 November 2005; King, David, "Nuclear attack in jihad plot," The Australian, 15 November 2005.

FIRE AT BRAZILIAN ANGRA NUCLEAR POWER STATION

Early in the morning on 25 November 2005, fire broke out in an electrical transformer at the Angra II nuclear generating station, which is located between Sao Paulo and Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Both the Angra I and Angra II reactors were immediately shut down. Officials estimate the Angra I reactor will be brought back online soon, whereas the Angra II reactor might not be restarted until January 2006. Ricardo Santos, manager of the Angra II plant, says Brazilian engineers are waiting for specialists from Siemens, the faulty transformer's manufacturer, to make repairs. Officials added that the fire did not damage the nuclear reactors and there have been no abnormalities recorded inside the reactor buildings.

The Angra nuclear generating station provides 60% of power supplies to the states of Rio de Janeiro and Espirito Santo. Although the reactors were shut down in the emergency, consumers did not experience any outages.

Angra I generating station, Brazil's first nuclear power reactor, was constructed by the US company Westinghouse Electric Corp. The 626-Megawatt Angra I reactor began producing commercially available electricity on 1 December 1984. The Angra II reactor, built by Siemens-Kraftwerk Union, came online 1 February 2001.

Sources: "Fire shuts down Brazilian nuclear plant," Agence France Presse, 25 November 2005; "Brazil Angra power plants stop ops due to fire in a transformer," AFX News, 25 November 2005.

NUCLEAR POWER DEBATE SURGES IN UK

On 29 November 2005, UK Prime Minister Tony Blair launched a national energy review that may pave the way for the construction of a new generation of nuclear power plants. Blair announced that Britain would decide by mid-2006 whether or not to "facilitate the development of a new generation of nuclear power stations." Blair has not openly expressed his position on the issue but is thought to favor a new generation of nuclear plants.

Only two years ago British officials decided to phase out nuclear and coal power stations by the year 2023. Also two years ago, the British pledged to increase the use of renewable energy sources to 10% of the country's energy mix by 2010, and 20% by 2020. Although officials decided to phase out existing nuclear power stations, it left open the possibility of building new nuclear power plants to make up for lost generating capacity. Nuclear power currently meets about 30% of Britain's energy needs. If ageing reactors are decommissioned, as currently planned, nuclear power will account for 4% of Britain's energy mix by 2015.

British Environment Secretary Margaret Beckett joined the national debate on nuclear power and signaled that she might endorse a new generation of reactors. Beckett explained the nuclear debate as choosing the lesser of two evils. "I don't think you can argue that (nuclear power) meets the definition of sustainability because it means not leaving a legacy for future generations at all under any circumstances...But that's a separate issue from saying, however, despite those enormous problems, you're driven to it by other considerations such as climate change and I've always accepted that that could happen," Beckett said.

In related news, the Geological Society of London convened 150 experts last month for a two-day conference on energy issues. A report issued as a result of a multidisciplinary consensus concludes there will be a 20% shortfall in generating capacity by the year 2015 under the current energy trend. The 150 experts agreed that fossil fuels will remain the mainstay of supply while renewables can produce as much as 40% of demand by 2050. The experts also agreed that nuclear power can bridge the shortfall in generating capacity, but only if a decision to construct new plants is made very soon.

Sources: "Beckett: 'Reluctant' nuclear U-turn," Scotsman, 27 November 2005; "Blair reignites nuclear arguments," BBC News, 29 November 2005; Cowell, Alan, "Blair to Decide on Nuclear Plants by Next Summer," New York Times, 29 November 2005.

PROTESTORS REPEATEDLY STOP CONTROVERSIAL SHIPMENT OF HIGHLY RADIOACTIVE NUCLEAR WASTE

In mid-November, anti-nuclear protestors repeatedly stopped a controversial shipment of highly radioactive nuclear waste from France bound for a temporary storage facility in northern Germany.

The activists said the train, which holds 12 containers carrying 174.7 tons of treated nuclear power plant waste, was stopped in the city of Goettingen for about 30 minutes and then later in the village of Bienenbuettel en route to the Gorleben site. Eighteen demonstrators were briefly detained in Goettingen.

Police also cleared a blockade of 160 tractors near the town of Klein Gusborn on the last leg of the 600-kilometer (370-mile)

odyssey, where more than 600 people joined the protest. According to authorities, they had to forcibly clear the blockade, with more than 70 of the tractors seized and taken to a nearby field.

Some 15,000 officers had been mobilized on the German side to secure the passage of the train. The coalition of activists, which calls itself "X-tausenmal quer," argued that the shipments are dangerous and that their lengthy storage could allow radioactive material to seep into the water supply in the region.

According to Greenpeace nuclear expert Thomas Breuer, "The radioactivity of these 12 containers is two and a half times higher than that of Chernobyl."

The demonstrators are also trying to put pressure on Angela Merkel's incoming left-right coalition government to maintain the previous administration's timetable for phasing out all of Germany's nuclear power plants over the next two decades and to find another permanent dump for the nuclear waste.

There are already 56 containers of radioactive waste stored at the Gorleben site. This shipment is the eighth since 1996. The transports were interrupted in 1998 following a scandal over radioactive contamination on the surface of the containers. They resumed in 2001. During the last such shipment to Germany in November 2004, a French anti-nuclear activist was killed when he was run over by a train in the eastern French city of Nancy.

The nuclear waste is produced in power plants in Germany, but sent to France because the country has no nuclear reprocessing plants. France insists that the high-level waste be returned to the countries that produced it.

Source: "Protestors halt nuclear convoy en route to German storage site," AFP, 21 November 2005.

Nuclear Laboratories

DOE IGNORES COMMUNITY AND CONGRESS, APPROVES PLUTONIUM INCREASE AT LIVERMORE LAB

In a Record of Decision (RoD) issued on 29 November 2005, the Department of Energy (DOE) approved doubling the maximum amount of allowable plutonium on-site at the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory (LLNL), despite the vigorous objections of local community members. Among other controversial decisions, the RoD also doubles a highly enriched uranium storage limit, increases tritium (radioactive hydrogen) storage, boosts the tritium "at risk" limit nearly 10-fold, alters the National Ignition Facility (NIF) to include plutonium and other new weapons experiments, and names LLNL as the location to manufacture NIF's fusion and new plutonium fission targets.

The DOE had received 9,000 public comments opposing these new weapons activities and the increased plutonium storage limit. "There are currently 7 million people living within a 50-mile radius of Livermore Lab, and the nearest earthquake fault is less than 200 feet from the site boundary," said Marylia Kelly, Executive Director of Tri-Valley Communities Against a Radioactive Environment (CAREs). "Instead of doubling, all plutonium activities at Livermore Lab should be terminated and DOE should prepare and circulate a plan for removing the Lab's nuclear materials."

The DOE claimed in an environmental review that the added plutonium can be kept safely and out of the local environment, despite a history of leaks, spills, and toxic clean-up in the area surrounding the lab. Livermore is currently a Congressional Superfund site, meaning it is recognized as one of the most contaminated areas in the country.

Congress recently called for plutonium to be shifted away from LLNL and other densely-populated DOE sites, so they can be consolidated at a single site for security reasons.

Sources: Herbert, Josef H., "DOE Gives Go-Ahead to Increase Amount of Plutonium Allowed at Livermore Lab," Associated Press, 29 November 2005; "Energy Department Disregards Community, Congress with Decision to Double Plutonium, Dramatically Increase Nuclear Weapons Programs at Livermore Lab," Tri-Valley CAREs press release, 29 November 2005.

DOE DELAYS LANL CONTRACT ANNOUNCEMENT, STUDENTS TELL UNIVERSITIES TO GET OUT OF BED WITH BOMBS

The Department of Energy (DOE) failed to meet its 1 December 2005 deadline to announce the winner of the new contract to manage the Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL). According to the National Nuclear Security Administration's website, the leader of the contract selection board asked for more time before making the decision.

The official "does not anticipate a significant delay in the selection decision," according to the NNSA, a semi-autonomous agency under the DOE.

The two remaining consortiums vying to win the contract are the University of California-Bechtel Corporation and University of Texas-Lockheed Martin.

Students have recently conducted a number of protests against their universities' current or prospective management of the lab, including a speak-out at the 17 November 2005 UC Regents meeting, a teach-in and subsequent rally at UC Santa Barbara on 21 and 22 November, respectively.

Tara Dorabji of Tri-Valley CAREs and the Coalition to Demilitarize Education was quoted by the Associated Press as saying during the public comment period at the Regents' meeting, "The University of California is bidding to win Armageddon. It is clear that no matter who wins this bid, the only winner will be nuclear weapons."

On 30 November 2005, students and community organizations in four states conducted a national day of action called, "Universities Out of Bed with Bombs," to call for all universities to retract their bids to manage LANL.

The demonstrators issued several other demands on the day as well, including "Obey International Law," "Help Clean Up the Mess in New Mexico," and "Promote Science for Human Good, Not Destruction."

Students at UC Santa Cruz held a rally featuring a giant papier-mache bomb as a prop, as well as a wedding ceremony between the University of California and Bechtel Corporation. Students at UC Berkeley conducted a "renewal of the vows" between UC and Bechtel.

University of Colorado students, whose university has partnered with the University of Texas and Lockheed Martin in their bid to manage Los Alamos, conducted what they described as "Buffalo Theater." Students at four other UC campuses, the University of Texas, and Indiana State University made phone calls and sent e-mails and faxes to university administrators.

For more information on the 30 November day of action and other recent student actions for nuclear disarmament, please visit <http://www.uncnuclearfree.org>.

Sources: Talhem, Jennifer, "DOE Won't Meet Deadline to Announce Los Alamos Contract Winner," Associated Press, 23 November 2005; Locke, Michelle, "Decision Approaching on Los Alamos," Associated Press, 17 November 2005.

PLUTONIUM CONSOLIDATION IN IDAHO AIDS NUCLEAR WEAPONS PRODUCTION

Language included in the US Development Appropriations bill, passed by Congress on 7 November 2005, confirms that an increase in plutonium pit production at Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) is the real motivation for relocating US plutonium-238 activities from LANL to Idaho National Laboratory (INL).

The report reads: "The conferees recognize the need to free up floor space in [Technical Area 55 at Los Alamos] for pit production, and direct the Department [of Energy] to develop a strategy to relocate expeditiously the mission for Pu-238 processing from Los Alamos to INL." The report also requires the DOE "to undertake a review of the pit program to focus on improving the manufacturing capability of TA-55."

The Department of Energy (DOE) has favored a resumption of Pu-238 production at INL for several years. The Pu-238 produced at INL would be used to create space batteries, ostensibly for "national security" purposes and to power NASA space crafts.

"DOE has known about this scenario for years, but when we asked about connections between plutonium consolidation and nuclear weapons production, the DOE said there was none," said Jeremy Maxand, Executive Director of the Idaho-based Snake River Alliance. "The next worst thing to actually producing a nuclear weapon is enabling the production of nuclear weapons, and this is one more reason the people of Idaho should reject this project."

The core mission of LANL has been quietly evolving in recent years. Once primarily a research and design lab, the facility is expected to begin producing as many as 40 plutonium pits annually within the next few years.

Sources: "Plutonium Consolidation in Idaho Directly Aids Nuclear Weapons Production," Snake River Alliance & Nuclear Watch New Mexico Press Release, 9 November 2005; US House of Representatives, "Conference Report on HR 2419, Energy and Water Development Appropriations Act, 2006," 7 November 2005.

CONGRESS APPROVES NEW CHEMISTRY AND METALLURGY RESEARCH FACILITY AT LANL

A new Chemistry and Metallurgy Research Facility was approved for construction at the Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) as part of the Fiscal Year 2006 Energy and Water Appropriations bill. The bill includes \$55 million in funding for the facility.

The existing 550,000-square foot facility, located in the lab's Technical Area-3, is used to test and analyze plutonium and other nuclear materials. Lab officials claim a replacement facility is needed for safety reasons. However, it appears that the construction of the new facility is actually closely connected to LANL's emerging plutonium pit production capability.

"We shouldn't build more plutonium space," said Greg Mello of the Los Alamos Study Group. "The additional floor space is only needed because of the desire to design new weapons, to manufacture new weapons and probably also to do research and development of novel nuclear fuels (for civilian nuclear power)... If you take away those missions, you take away the need for the facility."

Source: Arnold, John & Fleck, John, "Lab Expected to Get New Plutonium Unit," Albuquerque Journal, 9 November 2005.

PLUTONIUM COULD BE MISSING FROM LANL

The Institute for Energy and Environmental Research (IEER) has revealed that enough plutonium to create dozens of nuclear bombs is currently unaccounted for at Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL). While it is unclear what has become of the missing plutonium, the 600 pounds of missing plutonium represents "a vast security issue," according to a new IEER report released on 30 November 2005.

The report's findings are based on five publicly available reports and documents issued by the Department of Energy (DOE) and LANL from 1996 to 2004, which fail to make clear what the lab did with the missing plutonium.

According to Arjun Makhijani, Director of IEER, he and his associates notified LANL officials of the problem last year, then decided to release the report publicly to dramatize federal officials' failure to explain the matter. "If it has left the site, then it obviously has the most grievous security implications," Dr. Makhijani said. "I cannot say that it has left the site, but the government has the responsibility to ensure it has not."

The full report can be downloaded as a pdf document from IEER's website at: <http://www.ieer.org/reports/lanl/weaponspureport.pdf>.

Source: Davidson, Keay, "Plutonium May Be Missing from Lab - 600-Plus Pounds Unaccounted for, Activist Group Says," San Francisco Chronicle, 30 November 2005.

LEAK AND FIRE AT IDAHO NATIONAL LAB

November was a regrettable month for safety managers at the Idaho National Laboratory (INL). On 9 November 2005, over 600 lab employees had to evacuate the facility after a propane leak sprung at the INL Radioactive Waste Management Complex. On 21 November, a 55-gallon drum of toxic waste exploded and started a small fire at the Accelerated Retrieval Project facility.

According to INL officials, nobody was injured or exposed to contamination during either incident. Employees at each facility were evacuated and sent home for the day.

The Accelerated Retrieval Project is a site for buried hazardous and low-level nuclear waste. After the first drum exploded, the fire apparently spread to a second drum, before being contained by site personnel and extinguished by the INL fire department.

Sources: Boyd, Dan, "Gas Leak Sends INL Workers Scrambling: No Injuries Reported During Incident, Idaho State Journal, 9 November 2005; "INL Investigating Fire in Waste Drum," Associated Press, 22 November 2005; "INL Fire Department Responds to Drum Incident," CH2M-WG Idaho, LLN News Release, 22 November 2005.

Foundation Activities

FOUNDATION PARTICIPATES IN THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF THE INTERNATIONAL NETWORK OF ENGINEERS AND SCIENTISTS FOR GLOBAL RESPONSIBILITY

Foundation President David Krieger participated in the international conference of the International Network of Engineers and Scientists for Global Responsibility (INES) in early November. The conference, held in Cordoba, Argentina, was entitled "Einstein: A Human Face for Science." David provided one of the keynote addresses on "Abolition of Nuclear Weapons and War: The Responsibility of Scientists." This was the first INES conference to take place in Latin America and coincided with the inauguration of a new South American Peace Research Institute at Cordoba University. David stayed on to participate in the INES Council and Executive Committee meetings. The Foundation helped to found INES and continues to provide leadership for this network.

FOUNDATION PARTICIPATES IN NATIONAL DISCUSSION OF NUCLEAR TERRORISM

Carah Ong, the Foundation's Advocacy & Research Director and Director of its Washington, DC office, took part in a high-level panel discussion on nuclear terrorism in late November at the Sam Nunn School of International Affairs at Georgia Tech. The panel, entitled "Nuclear Terror: The US, The UN, and Nuclear Proliferation" also included Dr. John Endicott, Director, Center for International Strategy, Technology and Policy and a Professor at the Sam Nunn School. The event was part of The People Speak series, a national discussion about foreign policy issues.

LECTURE BY PROF. ROBERT JAY LIFTON PUBLISHED BY FOUNDATION

The Nuclear Age Peace Foundation is pleased to announce the publication of Prof. Robert Jay Lifton's lecture entitled "America and the Human Future: Surviving Vietnam, 9/11, and Iraq." Prof. Lifton presented the Foundation's 4th Annual Frank K. Kelly on Humanity's Future at the University of California, Santa Barbara earlier this year. Prof. Lifton is Lecturer in Psychiatry at the Harvard Medical School and Distinguished Professor Emeritus of Psychiatry and Psychology, CUNY. His lifetime of research has focused on holocaust and transformation, and he has played an important role in the development of the field of psychohistory. The Kelly Lecture is named for Frank Kelly, a founder and Senior Vice President of the Foundation.

PEACE STORE

The Foundation has added a number of compelling and interesting books to its online Peace Store just in time for the holidays. If you are looking for unique and intellectually stimulating gifts this year, look no further. Offerings include books on Hope, Peace Poetry, Einstein, Security and Nuclear Issues and more. All books are in stock and available, along with Foundation T-shirts and Sunflower Seeds of Peace.

Resources

TANGLED WEB 2005: A PROFILE OF THE MISSILE DEFENSE AND SPACE WEAPONS LOBBIES

Tangled Web 2005: A Profile of the Missile Defense and Space Weapons Lobbies by William D. Hartung is the latest in a series of reports by the World Policy Institute's Arms Trade Resource Center on the economic and political factors influencing United States policies on nuclear weapons, missile defense, and space weapons. The report explores the question: should missile defense be a priority? The complete report is available online at:

<http://worldpolicy.org/projects/arms/reports/tangledweb.html>

GETTING READY FOR A NUCLEAR-READY IRAN

Getting Ready for a Nuclear-Ready Iran, published by the US Army War College, recommends among a number of ways to curb the spread of nuclear weapons in the Middle East, that Israel mothball its Dimona nuclear complex and place its nuclear materials under international monitoring. This recommendation coincides with similar agreements among other Middle Eastern nations with nuclear technologies as a means to support counterproliferation and counterterrorism efforts in the region. The entire book is available online as a PDF document at:

<http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pdffiles/PUB629.pdf>

NATIONAL STRATEGY FOR VICTORY IN IRAQ

National Strategy for Victory in Iraq, issued by the US National Security Council, is the self-acclaimed strategy that President Bush set forth in 2003, which provides an update on progress as well as the challenges remaining in the Iraq war. The report actually provides very little in the way of strategy and acts more as a public relations document, falsely describing the US campaign in Iraq as a success. The complete report is available online at: http://www.white-house.gov/infocus/iraq/iraq_strategy_nov2005.html

Quotable

"The President should request the personnel and resources, and provide the domestic and international leadership, to secure all weapons grade nuclear material as soon as possible. There is simply no higher priority on the national security agenda."

Remarks by Chairman Thomas H. Kean
and Vice Chair Lee H. Hamilton
Final Report of the 9/11 Public Discourse Project
5 December 2005

"IAEA verification today operates on an annual budget of about \$120 million - a budget comparable to that of the Chelsea football (soccer) club (in England)."

International Atomic Energy Agency
Director Dr. Mohamed ElBaradei
Speaking in London on the need to protect nuclear materials
6 December 2005

"The UK could be a world leader in developing a low-carbon nuclear-free economy."

Tony Juniper of Friends of the Earth
Remarks made in response to UK Prime Minister Tony Blair's national energy inquiry
29 November 2005

"I am leaning towards the nuclear agreement."

US Congressman Dan Burton (R-IN), a senior member of the Foreign Relations Committee in the US House of Representatives
Speaking on the controversial US and Indian nuclear deal
28 November 2005

"This is about tinkering at the margins of the existing weapons systems, nothing more."

US Representative Ellen Tauscher (D-CA), a member of the House Appropriations Committee's Energy and Water subcommittee
Remarks made on the Reliable Replacement Warhead
28 November 2005

"Negotiating with the United States is not on our agenda."

Manouchehr Mottaki, Iranian Foreign Minister
Remarks made during questioning with reporters about an upcoming round of talks with the EU
30 November 2005

"We are sure that the Russian president's assignment to export 5.1 billion U.S. dollars worth of armaments and materiel will be fulfilled with only a few slight amendments."

Alexander Denisov, Russia's First Deputy Director of the Federal Committee on Technical and Military Cooperation
Speaking with reporters about the growing international market for Russian military hardware
30 November 2005

"We have finished testing the Topol-M mobile system. As far as the future is concerned, since the START-II treaty is no longer valid, we can freely plan programs to provide our future nuclear forces with a variety of weapons, including those fitted with multiple re-entry vehicles. There are no longer any restrictions in this area."

Russian Defense Minister Sergei Ivanov
Speaking on the upgrade of Russia's nuclear deterrence capabilities on Channel One in Russia
13 November 2005

Editorial Team

Luke Brothers
David Krieger
Carah Ong
Will Parrish

