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CUBA'S PURSUIT OF BIOLOGICAL WEAPONS: FACT OR FICTION?

HEARING

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON WESTERN HEMISPHERE, PEACE CORPS AND NARCOTICS AFFAIRS

OF THE

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UNITED STATES SENATE

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CUBA'S PURSUIT OF BIOLOGICAL WEAPONS: FACT OR FICTION?

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 5, 2002

U.S. SENATE,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON WESTERN HEMISPHERE,
PEACE CORPS, AND NARCOTICS AFFAIRS,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS,
Washington, DC.

The subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:05 a.m., in room SD–419, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Christopher J. Dodd (chairman of the subcommittee), presiding.

Present: Senators Dodd, Bill Nelson, Chafee, and Allen.

Also present: Senator Levin.

Senator DODD. The committee will come to order. Good morning. I want to welcome all of you here this morning to the Subcommittee on Western Hemisphere, Peace Corps, and Narcotics Affairs. We convene this morning in order to review certain public statements made by members of the Bush administration in recent months concerning the topic of Cuban biological weapons [BW] capabilities and the sale of dual-use technology to so-called rogue states.

The issue of biological weapons is obviously a very serious matter and we in the U.S. Senate would refrain from the temptation to play politics with it. So too should the Bush administration in my view.

John Bolton, the Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security, received a great deal of attention when he spoke on this topic on May 6 at the Heritage Foundation here in Washington. The Heritage Foundation, as I am sure everyone in this room knows, is a conservative think tank located in this city.

Secretary of State Powell attempted to downplay the significance of Mr. Bolton's statement when he was questioned about it during a subsequent television appearance. Secretary Powell at that time said, and I quote him: "As Under Secretary Bolton said recently, we do believe that Cuba has a biological offensive research capability. We did not say that it actually had such weapons, but it has the capacity and the capability to conduct such research. That is not a new statement. I think that is a statement that has been made previously. So Under Secretary Bolton's speech which got attention on this issue again was not breaking new ground as far as the United States position on this subject goes."

The "previous statement" to which Secretary Powell was referring was made by Carl Ford, our witness here this morning, who is the Assistant Secretary of State for Intelligence and Research,

who will be testifying briefly. It is true that Mr. Ford touched upon this subject in March of this year in the course of testimony before this committee on the subject of biological weapons. Mr. Ford spent a minute or two and 4 lines of his testimony on this matter. He said at that time, and I quote him: "The United States believes that Cuba has at least a limited developmental offensive biological warfare research and developmental effort. Cuba has provided dual-use biotechnology to rogue states. We are concerned that such technology could support BW programs in those states. We call on Cuba to cease all BW-applicable cooperation with rogue states and to fully comply with all of its obligations under the Biological Weapons Convention."

Mr. Ford's remarks received very little attention, either during the hearing or subsequently. No tribute at all to your eloquence, Carl. It just did not receive that much attention. In contrast, Mr. Bolton spent considerably more time on the subject in a very different setting. He also suggested in the course of those remarks that previous U.S. intelligence assessments on the subject of Cuba's potential threat to U.S. security were, and I quote him, "unbalanced and understated that threat."

It was in that context that he mentioned Cuba's "limited offensive biological warfare research and developmental effort." Unlike Mr. Ford, Mr. Bolton omitted Mr. Ford's characterization of the program as being only in the developmental stage.

So I would respectfully disagree with Secretary Powell when he said this was old news. Were Mr. Bolton present at this hearing this morning, as I hoped he would be, we would have asked him about the content, venue, and timing of his remarks. We might have inquired why Mr. Bolton never included Cuba in his remarks last November, only 6 months earlier, when he testified in Geneva at the Conference on Compliance with the 1972 Biological Weapons Convention, where he publicly named the states of concern on BW issues.

We would have also inquired whether President Carter's impending visit to Cuba about a week after the Heritage Foundation speech, the first by any American President or former President since Castro assumed power, had anything to do with the timing of the speech, or why no one in the State Department or elsewhere in the intelligence community sought to inform President Carter about this matter in the course of intelligence briefings of the former President in preparation of his trip to Cuba, if this was a matter of such deep concern to the Department.

Unfortunately, Secretary Powell has refused to allow Mr. Bolton to testify on this matter today because he did not believe he is the appropriate official to answer questions about this matter. That puzzles me as chairman of this subcommittee since he was clearly the appropriate official to attend the Heritage Foundation event on this subject. I believe that the Secretary's decision is the wrong decision. Moreover, I do not know how the Secretary can justify making Mr. Bolton available to a nongovernmental entity to speak publicly about a serious matter such as this, yet deny the U.S. Senate and this subcommittee of jurisdiction access to Mr. Bolton to discuss a terribly important subject matter.

I am extremely disappointed with the Department's unwillingness to cooperate on this matter and I intend to accord matters before the Senate of interest to the Department with an equivalent level of cooperation until this matter is resolved.

Having made these preliminary remarks, let me turn now to the witness that the Department has made available to the committee, Assistant Secretary of State for Intelligence and Research Carl Ford. Carl, I thank you for being here this morning. And for the record, let me state Carl Ford and I have known each other for more than 20 years. We have spent it seems like 8 months during 1 month traveling to China together back in 1983, I believe it was, almost 20 years ago.

Let me indicate how I intend to proceed this morning, if I could. Mr. Ford has a few opening remarks which we will hear in open session. I then have a number of questions which I will ask Mr. Ford which are not of a classified nature. I am sure my colleague from Virginia who has joined us here and other members who show up will have some additional questions of a nonclassified nature to address to you. Other members will be joining us as they can this morning.

We will proceed in open session as long as we can without getting into classified matters, at which point I will go into executive session.

So Mr. Ford, I would like you to stand, if you would, this morning, to raise your right hand so I can administer the oath. Do you swear to tell the whole truth and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

Mr. FORD. Yes, sir, I do.

Senator DODD. Welcome to the committee. Please be seated, and let me turn to my colleague Mr. Allen, to see if he has any opening comments he would like to make.

Senator ALLEN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to make some opening remarks. First, insofar as Mr. Ford being here, I am glad you are here and I look forward to questioning you. I do not know how much of this as far as your intelligence capabilities, which I know are extensive, can actually be on the open record. So we will try to cover as much as we can that is not classified. We did have a briefing yesterday prior to this hearing with the chairman.

As far as Secretary Powell and so forth, as I understand it Under Secretary Bolton is willing to appear at a separate hearing dealing with policy. Mr. Ford's capabilities are in intelligence and indeed I think that was the purpose of this, whether Cuba's pursuit of biological weapons, whether that is true or false or fact or fiction. And indeed, the statements of Mr. Bolton at the Heritage Foundation and the statement of Mr. Ford before this committee a few months earlier are, from what I can see or determine, identical.

We have Mr. Ford here so we can question him. I guess we could have another hearing with Mr. Bolton as far as what policy should be taken. I think the facts are important in determining our policy, but let us get the facts straight. I think that we are all too aware of how important the threat is of chemical or biological weapons in the hands of rogue states or terrorist organizations and what that could pose as a threat to the United States.

The anthrax attacks in these buildings right here last fall underscored the dangers of such weapons to our country. We do not know whether that is external or internal yet, but understand the impact it could have. Looking back on those events, it shows the need for us to be vigilant in uncovering and dismantling any facilities that could produce such weapons if mass destruction were the desire, or mass disruption were the desire of malicious states or terrorist organizations.

Now, that is why I stand behind Under Secretary Bolton's remarks, which are consistent with Mr. Ford's, which says that Cuba "has at least a limited offensive biological research and development effort," and furthermore "that Cuba has provided dual-use biotechnology to rogue states." So it is certainly a fact, not fiction, that Cuba has a capability to pursue biological weapons.

Now, Under Secretary Bolton is not the first government official to have spoken publicly on this issue. On March 19, 2002, in testimony before this very Foreign Relations Committee at a hearing addressing the threat of chemical and biological weapons, our witness here, Assistant Secretary Ford, stated the United States believed that Cuba has at least a limited developmental offensive biological warfare research and development effort.

In fact, it was Assistant Secretary Ford's words that Under Secretary Bolton precisely echoed verbatim 2 months later at the Heritage Foundation, and these statements are clearly supported by intelligence reporting that I have personally reviewed.

Now, throughout the past decade we have seen numerous reports addressing Cuba's bioweapons capability. It is a well known fact that Cuba has one of the most advanced biotechnology and pharmaceutical industries in the world, ranking near the top of the World Health Organization's list of countries with the most developed biological industries, lagging only behind the G–7.

The well-respected former Deputy Director of Biopreparat, Ken Alibek, the Soviet Union's biological weapons program, has acknowledged that his institute trained Cubans in developing biological weapons and agents. In his 1998 book "Biohazard," Alibek recounts how his boss Major General Yuri Kalinin, head of the Soviet bioweapons program, made several trips to Cuba to consult on various biotechnology programs.

That in itself does not prove it, but you see there is a cause for concern, and that is of public record. Moreover, in the October issue of "Nature Biotechnology Journal" Jose de la Fuente, the former Director of Research and Development at Cuba's premier Center for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology, reported that Cuba sold technology to Iran that could—could—be used to produce biological weapons.

Now, Fidel Castro has himself very recently proclaimed, for example, that Iran and Cuba, in cooperation with each other, could bring America to its knees in asserting that we had weak leadership in this country.

I am deeply troubled by the fact that several rogue states have received technical assistance from Cuba, potentially—again potentially—acquiring the technology and expertise to build biological weapons. Cuba must adhere to its commitment under the Biological Weapons Convention. Moreover, it must halt the transfer of

sensitive dual-use items and materials that might be flowing to many countries and potentially into the hands of terrorist groups that of course we consider as a direct threat to our allies or to our own national security.

And we must not attempt to whitewash Fidel Castro's record and the resulting impoverishment of opportunities for those who cannot leave Cuba. Whether it is human rights abuses on a national scale, whether it is violating international accords such as the Biological Weapons Convention, or developing weapons that could be used against the United States, national security and American values must prevail over partisan politics.

Mr. Carter, former President Carter, in his recent trip to Cuba, made several statements relating to the legitimacy of Cuba's biotechnology industry, dismissing verified concerns about Cuba's biotechnology efforts, capabilities, and transfers. The fact of the matter remains, Cuba possesses, and I quote, "at least a limited biological weapons research and development effort," and I believe that at a minimum we ought to work to prevent it from being proliferated either to rogue states or to terrorist groups.

I look forward to this hearing and thank you, Mr. Chairman, for calling it.

Senator DODD. Thank you.

Senator Chafee, any opening comments you would like to make?

Senator CHAFEE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for calling the hearing. I was fortunate enough to go to Havana in January and did get a tour of one of the pharmaceutical plants. So I do not think there is any doubt, as Senator Allen said, that Cuba is a leader in this area and probably has the capacity to produce these types of weapons.

I do think that since the dawn of time, when cavemen sharpened sticks, it has been human nature to pursue weapons. Whether that is good or bad, I just think it is true. The more important point is whether there is an intent and where the animosity might be directed if Cuba is following this path. I think really that is the more important point.

Certainly they have the capacity from what I saw. At that pharmaceutical plant, they were developing meningitis vaccines that we use in Rhode Island. We had an outbreak of meningitis and used the Cuban vaccine.

So I look forward to your testimony.

Mr. FORD. Thank you.

Senator DODD. Thank you very much.

Mr. Ford, thank you for being here.

STATEMENT OF HON. CARL W. FORD, JR., ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INTELLIGENCE AND RESEARCH, DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON, DC

Mr. FORD. Mr. Chairman, first let me simply state that my presence here alone is not to suggest to you or the committee that the Department is not prepared to answer any policy implications that might come from my presentation. The Secretary is planning to be here this afternoon, as I think you know. He will take any questions that you may have directly about his views on the subject or the Heritage speech or what Mr. Bolton said.

If that does not answer all the committee's questions, then he is prepared to have Mr. Bolton come up at a time of your convenience to answer any other questions that you may have. Or other officials from the Department.

Senator DODD. I appreciate that, Carl. I certainly am going to talk to the Secretary about it this afternoon. It is an awful long way to get around to it. Someone obviously gave him permission to testify before the Heritage Foundation. I am just very disappointed that a coequal branch of government, when the statements are made in a public forum as they were, provoking as much discussion as it did, that asking that official to appear before this committee to explain how it was that he managed to make those remarks, whether or not they were based on the kind of intelligence we have gathered, I find it disappointing that I have got to go through the Secretary of State, go through you, be turned down as not the right official, and then maybe down the road he can come and testify.

If he can show up at the Heritage Foundation, he can show up at the U.S. Senate.

Mr. FORD. Well, the only thing I can say is that it was certainly not the Department's intention to deny you or the committee access to our policy officials. What the Secretary feels strongly about, and I agree with, is that there should be a clear separation in our Department from intelligence and policymakers. I do not tell them what to say and they better not tell me what I say. That is the way we operate. That's the way we think it is best done. So that by having us both appear, the Secretary believes it puts the policy and intelligence too close together.

But on his part there is no intention not to come to you directly or send Secretary Bolton or anyone else that you might like to talk about this subject.

But when it is intelligence, you get me. When you want to talk policy, you get him or one of the other policy officials. That is simply the way that we have decided that we should operate when it comes to intelligence and policy.

But I have a brief statement if I might present. It is my pleasure to come before the subcommittee today to discuss the issue of what we in the Bureau of Intelligence and Research [INR] assess to be Cuba's efforts to date in the area of biological warfare. My remarks in this open forum will necessarily be limited owing to the need to protect sensitive intelligence information. But I would welcome the opportunity and am prepared to give classified remarks in a closed session.

On March 19, as you indicated, in my statement in front of the full committee, I stated INR's judgment that the United States believes that Cuba has at least a limited developmental offensive biological warfare research and development effort. Cuba has provided dual-use technology to rogue states. We are concerned that such technology could support BW programs in those states.

That assessment and our concerns have not changed in the intervening 2½ months. Among the various weapons of mass destruction [WMD], biological warfare is perhaps the most difficult to clearly identify, absent unambiguous, reliable intelligence information, owing to the dual-use nature of the technology and materials used to support a BW program. In today's world many nations, in-

cluding Cuba, have in place robust biotechnology infrastructures, as some of the world's best scientific talent has turned to this avenue of modern science to promote medical and agricultural advances in their countries.

Distinguishing legitimate biotech work from work that is pursued to support either offensive or defensive BW efforts or programs continues to be a difficult intelligence challenge. In a nutshell, since basic BW production does not require large, sophisticated programs or facilities, it makes the intelligence assessment function more complicated.

Cuba has several facilities involved in biologically related efforts in agriculture, medicine, and veterinary science which, as in any country, could be used for illicit purposes. This dual-use problem presents all who are committed to combating the BW threat with the dilemma of how best to assess the capabilities of any given facility against the intent to develop biological weapons.

What then can I say about the evidence for our assessment? The nature of biological weapons makes it difficult to procure clear, incontrovertible proof that a country is engaged in illicit biological weapons research, production, weaponization, and stockpiling. Cuba's sophisticated denial and deception practices make our task even more difficult.

That said, we have a sound basis for our judgment that Cuba has at least a limited developmental offensive biological warfare research and development effort. I am prepared to discuss the evidence we do have in a closed session or leave behind a classified statement for the record.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Ford follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. CARL W. FORD, JR., ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INTELLIGENCE AND RESEARCH

Thank you Mr. Chairman.

It is my pleasure to come before the Subcommittee today to discuss the issue of what we in the Bureau of Intelligence and Research assess to be Cuba's efforts to date in the area of biological warfare. My remarks in this open forum will necessarily be limited owing to the need to protect sensitive intelligence information, but I would welcome the opportunity and am prepared to give classified remarks in a closed session.

On March 19, in my statement in front of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, I stated INR's judgment that:

> *The United States believes that Cuba has at least a limited, developmental, offensive biological warfare research and development effort. Cuba has provided dual-use biotechnology to rogue states. We are concerned that such technology could support BW programs in those states.*

That assessment and our concerns have not changed in the intervening 2½ months.

Among the various weapons of mass destruction (WMD) disciplines, biological warfare (BW) is perhaps the most difficult to clearly identify, absent unambiguous reliable intelligence information, owing to the dual-use nature of the technology and materials used to support a BW program. In today's world, many nations, including Cuba, have in place robust biotechnology infrastructures, as some of the world's best scientific talent has turned to this avenue of modern science to promote medical and agricultural advances in their countries. Distinguishing legitimate biotech work from work that is pursued to support either offensive or defensive BW efforts or programs continues to be a difficult intelligence challenge. In a nutshell, since basic BW production does not require large, sophisticated programs or facilities it makes the intelligence assessment function more complicated.

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What then can I say about the evidence for our assessment? The nature of biological weapons makes it difficult to procure clear, incontrovertible proof that a country is engaged in illicit biological weapons research, production, weaponization and stockpiling. Cuba's sophisticated denial and deception practices make our task even more difficult. That said we have a sound basis for our judgment that Cuba has at least a limited, developmental, offensive biological warfare research and development effort. I am prepared to discuss the evidence we do have in a closed session or leave behind a classified statement for the record.

Thank you, Mr Chairman.

Senator DODD. Thank you. Let me just say regarding this, my concern and I think the concern of many of us is obviously, as a result of September 11 and events even before that, a high degree of interest in terrorism and the fact that we have now been victimized very directly by it here. How we allocate our resources, how we allocate our attention, is going to be critically important.

In fact, if Cuba poses a direct threat to the United States and our allies, then we need to respond to that. If they do not in that assessment—and that is why the intelligence assessment is so critically important, that if we are off chasing an issue here that is not substantiated by facts, then we are misallocating resources, time and attention where it could be spent in other places.

So the issue becomes very, very important and therefore the background of how this assessment is made is going to be also very worthwhile.

I am going to put a clock on each one of us here for 10 minutes in the first go-around and we will see how that works in terms of questions. Let me begin by a series of questions if I can, Mr. Ford, for you. One, has the Bureau of Intelligence and Research which you head recently changed its assessment with respect to Cuba's potential biological weapons capability and programs?

Mr. FORD. No.

Senator DODD. It's been the same assessment?

Mr. FORD. The last time that the intelligence community did a National Intelligence Estimate was in 1999 and we have refined and we know a little bit more than we did then, so that there has been some modification, improvement of our analysis, but no major radical or even minor change. It's basically the same judgment we made in 1999.

Senator DODD. So the assessment by Mr. Bolton that it's unbalanced, an unbalanced assessment, in his speech that he gave before the Heritage Foundation?

Mr. FORD. The history of the words on BW in that speech were, as I understand it, Secretary Bolton invited the intelligence community [IC] to provide him with some words that he could use in a speech on BW. He was very careful, I think, not to suggest words to the community for clearance. He asked them: What do you think, what do you say?

So that they came up with the lines in the speech and presented those to INR to take back to Secretary Bolton for his use. As I understand it, his speech was postponed. I wasn't aware of this. I had a requirement on short notice to come up and brief the committee

on chemical weapons [CW] and biological weapons worldwide. Apparently those words that had been approved for Mr. Bolton were picked by my staff to insert in my presentation to the full committee, and so that I then presented that information that had been cleared by the IC.

When it came time for Mr. Bolton to give his speech a month or two later, he then took the same language that had been approved earlier by the community and stuck it into his Heritage speech. But those words were our words, the intelligence community's words, not his. But the speech was his, not ours.

Senator DODD. Well, he characterized the 1998 report as unbalanced and underplaying the threat posed by Cuba. You tell me there was no change at all in the assessments, my first question to you. And his response in his speech was calling it unbalanced and underplaying the situation, the previous assessment. This is the same assessment.

Mr. FORD. Right. This is not to divert the question, but I think that what Secretary Bolton intended or meant in his speech would be best asked of Secretary Bolton. And as I said——

Senator DODD. I'm just asking you on the assessment as an intelligence assessment.

Mr. FORD. Our assessment from 1999 to 2002 has changed little. The only thing that we would say differently is that I don't think that we would have to footnote to emphasize that it was an effort, not a program, which INR did in 1999. I think the rest of the community now feels as strongly as we do that the evidence will support that there is a BW, limited BW offensive development program—an effort, but not a program. So that the community's view has been refined. We would no longer have to make a footnote to emphasize that all of us agree that it's not a program. They would say that themselves.

Senator DODD. I'm told by staff, your staff, that each word is selected very carefully and debated rather extensively.

Mr. FORD. True.

Senator DODD. Because each word is terribly important.

Mr. FORD. That's correct.

Senator DODD. You used the word "developmental" in your testimony. Mr. Bolton specifically left the word out, as well as other language. Now, is there some—do you consider that word important?

Mr. FORD. The word of course is important, but my understanding was that the words were identical. But I personally have not looked at the Heritage speech. I have just simply taken it on face value that the words that we had presented to Secretary Bolton were the ones used, and I've been told that's the case.

And if that's the case, I used exactly the same words because they were the words originally approved for Secretary Bolton to give in the speech. I just happened to give them first.

Senator DODD. Was the entire interagency intelligence community given an opportunity to review and clear your March 19 testimony?

Mr. FORD. The way we normally submit for intelligence community clearance, we send—for example, today we sent my testimony to the NIC, National Intelligence Council, and it's their responsi-

bility then to ship it around to various members of the community and to come back with a community-approved clearance.

But I was very careful in my testimony to say today I'm speaking for INR, and for Carl Ford. For CIA, for DIA, those are independent agencies, and on this important subject you should ask them directly. Now, my sense is that they not only cleared what I said, but they also agree with what I said. But that's something you should test for yourself by asking the various other members of the intelligence community their views.

Senator DODD. Well, was it at your initiative that the Cuba material be included in your March 19 testimony or did that come from some other bureau?

Mr. FORD. The requirement was to do a worldwide chemical-biological warfare presentation at the unclassified level to the full committee, that the chairman and others were interested in an initiative on that subject this year on the committee. So that we put together a worldwide brief. Cuba is one of the topics that is in—if you ask us for a worldwide brief on chemical-biological weapons, Cuba would routinely and naturally appear.

Senator DODD. Well, there was a speech given on November 19, 2001, at the Geneva meeting on specifically the subject of biological weapons, and at that speech Mr. Bolton specifically left Cuba out. Do you understand why, when he listed almost every other country that posed somewhat of a threat in this area, and yet Cuba was not mentioned at all in those comments, at an audience gathered specifically for that subject matter?

How do you explain 6 months, at an important meeting where one might assume that if the threat is as described that it would be mentioned, whereas in a speech before a think tank here in Washington we find an opposite disclosure?

Mr. FORD. Well, again, I'm not trying to evade your question. It's obviously a logical and an important question. But best to ask Mr. Bolton. He was the one that gave both speeches and both presentations and he will know and can give you right from the horse's mouth what his intentions were and what his thoughts were at the time.

Senator DODD. Did you or your staff at the INR have the opportunity to review and clear Mr. Bolton's May 6 speech before delivery?

Mr. FORD. I did not personally look at the speech. Let me check and see.

[Pause.]

Mr. FORD. My staff tells me that we only looked at the intel portions of the speech.

Senator DODD. Did your staff or you have any disagreements with the draft versions of the speech submitted for clearance by Mr. Bolton?

Mr. FORD. The portions that were shown us were ones that we had cleared through the intelligence community process earlier, so that to the best of my knowledge we didn't—since we didn't see the speech in its entirety, we only saw those portions that had to do with CW or BW——

Senator DODD. But you were given the draft speech, your staff was?

Mr. FORD. Not to my knowledge.

Senator DODD. They're saying yes behind you.

[Pause.]

Mr. FORD. Oh, OK. Clarification. I misunderstood. We received the whole speech, but we only commented on those portions that were from intelligence.

Senator DODD. Did you have any disagreements with the draft speech?

Mr. FORD. On the intelligence side we did not. We approved it. It was the language that we had provided. Again, it's—the intelligence—we don't make it a secret within our building what INR's views are. So that all of the members, Secretary Bolton, Secretary Powell and others, all know what INR's position on intelligence is.

But it's not our responsibility or our job to tell the policymakers what the implications of that intelligence are or what they should do about particular problems around the world.

Senator DODD. But if you're going to get into intelligence matters and make a public speech and you have things in there that the interagency task force would disagree with, I presume that point would be made?

Mr. FORD. That point would be made.

Senator DODD. Was the entire interagency intelligence community given the opportunity to review and clear the full content of Mr. Bolton's May 6 Heritage Foundation speech?

Mr. FORD. I don't know.

Senator DODD. You want to check with your people? Do you want to ask?

Mr. FORD. I'm sorry?

Senator DODD. Do you want to ask your people?

Mr. FORD. I don't think they would know, either. I'll take the question.

Senator DODD. Well, who would be responsible for ensuring that interagency clearance is requested and received?

Mr. FORD. The normal process is that if you have a speech that you want cleared with the intelligence community you bring that to INR. INR sends it to the National Intelligence Council. The National Intelligence Council then clears it through the rest of the community. When we get it back, it has the stamp of approval from the intelligence community.

In this particular case, the speech itself was not of a matter of intelligence community responsibility and so that the only things that were cleared or focused on were those parts that contained sources and methods and/or that purported to be the intelligence community's view.

Senator DODD. Let me ask you one additional question. My time is up, just to wrap up this line of questioning. It was not until March, obviously, until your testimony here on March 19, that the administration publicly commented on this specific issue. What factors influenced the decision to address this issue publicly? Did any administration officials in the State Department other than those in the Bureau of INR or in any other governmental agencies discuss with you the inclusion of the Cuba matter in your March 19 public testimony?

Mr. FORD. No, sir, they did not.

Senator DODD. Senator Chafee.

Senator CHAFEE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Is there any evidence in the past number of years or decades of the Cuban military using biological weapons in any of their adventures around the world, whether it is Angola or anywhere else?

Mr. FORD. Senator Chafee, I would prefer when we start talking about what I know beyond my unclassified statement, I would prefer to take that question in closed session, if you don't mind.

Senator CHAFEE. Very good. Can you answer how quickly and easily a biomedical project could be converted into a bioweapons project?

Mr. FORD. Senator, it's one of the great difficulties for intelligence analysts, is that most of the procedures for building an offensive biological warfare capability are—if you have the capability to do the civilian research on vaccines and various pathogens, that it is a simple matter to turn that into at least a limited offensive capability.

We have difficulty even trying to determine where all this work would be done. It doesn't require a large building. It doesn't require a lot of special facilities. If you have the facilities to do medical biotechnological research, you have the facilities to build a biological weapon, unfortunately.

Senator CHAFEE. I think one of the reasons for having this hearing is there is a perception that the speech to the Heritage Foundation was counter to the administration's policy, it went too far. And certainly there seems to be a lot of spin control going on. Even right after the speech, the Secretary of Defense is putting a different look on it. Major General Speer, Commander of the Southern Command, is putting another look on the words that Secretary Bolton used. And here we are even splitting hairs between whether it is an effort or a program. Is that accurate? It's an effort; not a program? I don't know the difference. They seem the same to me.

I guess the main point is that the State Department has the responsibility to have a unified position and to make sure that everybody is not saying things to one group that they are not saying to another. Do you agree with my assessment of the situation here this morning?

Mr. FORD. I would take some exception to the characterization of not much difference between a program and an effort. There really is a difference. We've never tried to suggest that we have the evidence, the smoking gun, to prove proof positive that they had a program. A program suggests to us something far more substantial than what we see in the evidence.

But we feel very confident about saying that they're working, working on an effort that would give them a BW, a limited BW offensive capability. That's serious enough for us to tell you about it. If we didn't think it was important, if we didn't think that that was a dangerous thing to occur, we would have looked at the evidence and said, well, this is all bogus and there's nothing here worth reporting.

I wouldn't have given it in my March 16 speech, I wouldn't be back here today telling you they had a limited offensive BW capability, if I didn't think that was a pretty important thing for you to know.

Senator CHAFEE. I guess my followup question would be then, why would the Secretary of Defense, of all people, not be concerned that there is an effort 90 miles away from our borders? He said "I haven't seen the intelligence" the day after Secretary Bolton's speech.

Mr. FORD. Again, as an alumni of the Foreign Relations Committee staff, one of the things I did learn—not a lot of things; I learned some things—is don't answer questions like that. The fact is that I'll let the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Defense and all those people speak for themselves and I'm not going to characterize or explain what the chairman meant by a certain comment.

I understand your question. I understand the concerns. But all I can give you is my best assessment. My only instruction from the Secretary is tell the truth, and that's what I'm doing. So that I can give you our best judgment on what we think is happening in Cuba on BW. I have a sense of where the community is on this issue and there's really no difference between us.

But if you want to test that, I would—rather than take my word for it, I would suggest that you have CIA and DIA and others come up and tell you directly in their testimony.

Senator CHAFEE. Thank you very much.

Senator DODD. Thank you, Senator.

We've been joined by Carl Levin of the Armed Services Committee. Carl, we will get to you in a minute, but I want to stick, if I can, with our committee members.

Senator Allen.

Senator ALLEN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Just to get a few facts straight here. The young woman had a chart that was up that shows your statement, Mr. Ford, on March 19, 2002, before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and then this supposedly controversial statement by Under Secretary of State John Bolton at the Heritage Foundation on May 6, 2002.

If you could, is that—on the top is your testimony. Is that an accurate transcription of your testimony?

Mr. FORD. Yes, sir, it appears to be.

Senator ALLEN. OK and under that is the May 6 statement at the Heritage Foundation by Mr. Bolton. I'm not going to ask you if that's how it's been reported.

Mr. FORD. But it was my understanding that this was correct. This is what I had been told, that both of our statements were identical.

Senator ALLEN. You both used the term—you both used the phrase that "Cuba has at least a limited developmental offensive biological warfare research and development effort," right?

Senator DODD. That's incorrect. I've got the text of the speech here. The direct line is: "The United States believes Cuba has a limited offensive biological warfare research and development effort." The "developmental" you got was not in the speech.

Senator ALLEN. All right, that's yours. So the evidence I have—I guess we ought to get a transcript if there's a court reporter at the Heritage Foundation.

All right. Well, it seems to be substantially the same. Now, let me ask you this. Did you both state that "Cuba has provided dual-use biotechnology to rogue states"?

Mr. FORD. Yes.

Senator ALLEN. And did you both state that "We are concerned that such technology could support BW or biological weapons programs in those states"?

Mr. FORD. I said that, yes.

Senator ALLEN. All right. Now, this is where I think the main concern, at least my main concern, is that according to the National Intelligence Council Iran maintains a significant chemical and biological weapons program and continues to develop and expand its CBW or chemical and biological weapons programs. Now, Iran is on the State Department's designated state sponsors of terrorism list; is that correct?

Mr. FORD. That's correct.

Senator ALLEN. And does the U.S. Government believe that Cuba's assistance to Iran is simply helping Teheran's public health program? Or do we know, if you can state in open hearing?

Mr. FORD. We don't know, but I would like to expand my answer in closed session if I might, Senator.

Senator ALLEN. Fair enough.

Should we—or can we assume that the transfer of sophisticated biotechnology which has a dual use from Cuba to rogue states is for a benign purpose? Can we make any assumption or can you answer that?

Mr. FORD. I certainly wouldn't make that assumption myself and I wouldn't see it only as a one-way street, that the sharing of chemical, biological, and even nuclear weapons technology is a concern of mine and I think the intelligence community. So that while I'm concerned about what Cuba and its biotechnological capability may be providing other countries like Iran, I'm also concerned about their associations with countries that also have a chemical and biological warfare capability and there can be an exchange of ideas, exchange of capabilities, again as part of the process of showing an interest and watching very carefully what they're up to in Iran and Iraq, Syria, Libya, wherever else they might be talking to people.

Senator ALLEN. Without getting into the names of countries, which we had in a top secret briefing yesterday afternoon, we do have different levels of concern or levels and understanding of the levels of capabilities of different countries in the world in their capacity, whether they're programs or efforts, to produce biological or chemical weapons; isn't that correct?

Mr. FORD. That's correct.

Senator ALLEN. And while Cuba may not be as high in their capabilities as other countries, there is clear evidence that they are transferring at least dual-use biotechnology that could be used, could potentially be used, in biological or chemical weapons to countries that do have a greater capacity than even Cuba does?

Mr. FORD. That is correct.

Senator ALLEN. That's kind of following yours, but I'm trying to be more specific.

Mr. FORD. That's correct, Senator. Just so that you understand, what I have said is that, although we make a distinction between

a program and an effort, it's not to suggest that an effort can't hurt you. A program in our minds is, really the standard that we're using to compare is the Soviet Union during the cold war, the Russians and what sort of program they had, which include test facilities, weapons development, weapons production, the weaponization process in its sort of entirety.

If you look at what we see going on in Cuba, we don't see that sort of thing. But the fact is that with BW you don't have to put it in a 130-millimeter howitzer shell and deliver it or deliver it by a rocket for it to be dangerous. Unfortunately, it's the sort of thing that can be carried by individuals and brought here in an unconventional way.

So an effort, no matter how small or how suspicious, how much evidence we have, is still something for us in the intelligence community to worry about and report to you as something you ought to know about.

Senator ALLEN. Now, as you know, Cuba is a signatory—thank you for that comment and insight. Cuba is a signatory to the Biological Weapons Convention, and if you stand behind your statement of March 19, which you say you have, that Cuba has at least a limited developmental offensive biological warfare research and development effort, then wouldn't Cuba be in violation of the BWC?

Mr. FORD. Very good question, Senator. It was one of the reasons that, when I had a choice, I chose to be an intelligence officer rather than a policy official in this administration. I simply report to the policy people what I think is happening in Cuba or Iran or North Korea or wherever, and it's up to the people who are in the verification and monitoring and arms control business to determine whether or not it's a violation of an arms control agreement, international or multilateral, bilateral, whatever it might be.

While I have a superficial and general knowledge of these arms control agreements, I would be entirely the wrong person to make that judgment without further study. It's not normally my job, so I don't really look at it that closely. I won't have any more to say in closed session, either.

Senator DODD. Carl, you took a strong policy position on March 19. That wasn't just intelligence. To the Senator's question, you called on Cuba to cease all biological cooperation with rogue states and fully comply. Now, that implies you've got full awareness of what the treaty is. That's not intelligence; that's a policy statement.

Mr. FORD. It also suggests that I'm not perfect. If you've noticed that in my testimony today, that I looked at much more carefully than I did the Cuba part, the Cuba part on my 16th of March statement, which had to be done very quickly, I have been very careful to state what INR's position is on the intelligence and I've dropped off that last sentence.

I did say it on the 16th, you're right. If I had to say it again today, I wouldn't, because it is a policy issue and I simply was—what happened without my really knowing it—I should have known; I should have focused on it—was those words were approved for Secretary Bolton in his speech and I simply stole them from him in haste to put them in a broader speech, and I should

have caught it, didn't, and I uttered those policy statements as you correctly point out.

Senator ALLEN. All right. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, reclaiming whatever few moments I had.

You were not chastised by anyone for that last sentence, were you?

Mr. FORD. No.

Senator ALLEN. All right.

Mr. FORD. I chastised myself.

Senator ALLEN. OK, self-flagellation.

Mr. FORD. Because it was my rule that I broke, not yours.

Senator ALLEN. Fine. In all of this, I want to say to the chairman, I think your statement's accurate and I don't think you have any worry about it. I know people thrive on process around here and that's important, I suppose. The substance is what I care about and the truthfulness of the assertions is what's most important.

On Senator Dodd, you are correct and you stand corrected. The word "developmental" was not in Bolton's speech. But as far as all of the statements about concern for technology, supporting BW programs in other states and transferring it to the dual-use, it's all correct. But I just want to state for the record that word "developmental" in the first sentence wasn't there, but all the rest of the concerns are the same. I want to clarify that. I'm sorry for having the incorrect assertion.

Senator DODD. No, not at all.

Senator ALLEN. Let me ask you this, if you could answer, Secretary Ford. There are many states who have—many countries that have biotechnology and pharmaceutical industries that are sophisticated. Why would states such as Iran go to Cuba for biotechnology equipment and not purchase more advanced technologies from those available elsewhere? Despite the economic incentives to do so, isn't it true that European countries control the sales of dual-use biotechnologies to rogue states such as Iran because they recognize the nefarious intentions or potential intentions of such countries as Iran?

Mr. FORD. It's my understanding that countries in Europe and the United States, we all very carefully try to monitor the most egregious dual-use capable sorts of biomedical equipment and do put limits on it. To suggest that we're perfect at that or that it's effective, unless there is a total boycott, sanctions against a country, I'm sure that there are certainly ways for Iran to buy it in other parts of the world.

But it does suggest that, from a country like Cuba, they would have fewer restrictions, I would think, and it would be easier for countries like Iran to get some of the things that they want and may turn to Cuba to do that. Cuba has clearly decided that it's a very important money-maker for them and so they are prepared to sell this equipment to anybody who wants to buy it, including Iran, Syria, Libya, Iraq, and other states that we have concerns about.

Senator ALLEN. Well, that is my concern, Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, that even if Cuba were innocently thinking that they were just making money because they are a generally impoverished country and they're making money, what are those others going to do with it?

I would like to simply close by, if I could, ask that the following attached documents be entered into the record. One is a brief history of concerns and questions and suspicions about Cuba's biological weapons program. Second is excerpts from "Biohazard: The Chilling True Story of the Largest Covert Biological Weapons Program in the World," by Ken Alibek, who I referenced earlier; and then an article by Maria Werlau, "Does Cuba Have Biochemical Weapons?"

Senator DODD. Without objection, so ordered.

Senator ALLEN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[The material referred to follows:]

CUBA'S BIOLOGICAL WEAPONS PROGRAM: A BRIEF HISTORY OF CONCERNS, QUESTIONS AND SUSPICIONS

In a transmittal letter accompanying the Defense Department's May 1998 report, The Cuban Threat to U.S. National Security, Secretary of Defense William S. Cohen wrote to the chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee: "I remain concerned about Cuba's potential to develop and produce biological agents, given its biotechnology infrastructure.

In its public Executive Summary, the report stated, "Cuba's current scientific facilities and expertise could support an offensive BW [bioweapons] program in at least the research and development stage. Cuba's biotechnology industry is one of the most advanced in emerging countries and would be capable of producing BW agents."

In the October 2001 issue of the journal Nature Biotechnology, Jose de la Fuente, the former director of research and development at Cuba's premier Center for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology, wrote he was "profoundly disturbed" that Cuba was selling to Iran technology that could be used to produce biochemical weapons. He wrote, "No one believes that Iran is interested in these technologies for the purpose of protecting all the children in the Middle East from hepatitis, or treating their people with cheap streptokinase when they suffer sudden cardiac arrest . . .." During a May 2001 visit to Tehran, Castro proclaimed, "Iran and Cuba, in cooperation with each other, can bring America to its knees."

In October 2001, the Chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee, Bob Graham (D-FL) told the Miami Herald that Cuba "clearly has the capability of producing chemical and biological ingredients that could become weapons of mass destruction." He added that it was impossible to know what Cuba was up to because international inspection agencies have not been given access to facilities. He said, "Nobody, at least nobody that I'm aware of in the United States, feels that we know what Cuba's doing."

An October 2001 study by the University of Georgia's Center for International Trade and Security found that safeguards to prevent terrorists and rogue nations from acquiring the equipment and material necessary to make biological and chemical weapons are dangerously inadequate. Cuba, one of 19 countries examined, rated a C– in limiting exports of such equipment and material. (Atlanta Journal and Constitution, October 26, 2001.)

An October 10, 2001, report on MSNBC.com said, "With help from the Soviet Union's massive secret biological weapons program, Castro was able to build one of the world's most sophisticated biotechnology industries which can also be used to build weapons of mass destruction." Former Soviet scientist Ken Alibeck (see below) says he helped to train Cubans in this technology, which he now regrets. "This work would be used for developing biological weapons or biological agents. As a result of this, we helped Castro develop biological weapons. It was such a stupid decision."

Also reported: Gen. Charles Wilhelm, a former Southcom Commander said: "The indications we have is that they have the capability to produce those type of substances." The Canadian Security Intelligence Service, which investigates terrorist threats, said in a 1996 report, "Cuba has been a supply source [to terrorist groups] for toxin and chemical weapons."

At an October 11, 2001, hearing of the House Intelligence Terrorism and Homeland Security Subcommittee, Rep. Chris Shays (R-CT), noted that the Pentagon lists 15 countries believed to have biological weapons—among them, Cuba. (Associated Press, October 11, 2001)

In his 1999 book Biohazard: The Chilling True Story of the Largest Covert Biological Weapons Program in the World—Told from the Inside by the Man Who Ran

It (Random House), former KGB Colonel Ken Alibek, second in command of the Soviet offensive biological warfare program until his defection in 1992, wrote that his former boss, Maj. Gen. Yuri Kalinin, visited several Cuban biotechnology facilities in 1990 and told him he was convinced the Castro regime was deeply involved in a biological warfare research effort. Alibek, who is widely respected in the U.S. biological warfare community, told the Miami Herald (June 23, 1999), "Kalinin saw no weapons production, but with his experience in offensive biological warfare work, it was his opinion that they were doing offensive work also. They are using the same cover stories we had developed, about factories to produce single-cell bacteria as animal feed. Maybe we were over-suspicious, but we did not believe their stories . . . . In my personal opinion, I have no question Cuba is involved."

In an October 2, 2001, commentary in the Los Angeles Times, author Jeremy Rifkin (The Biotech Century, Tarcher Putnam, 1998) notes, "Iraq, long known as a threat for biological warfare, is not alone in its interest in developing biological weapons. In a 1995 study, the CIA reported that 16 other countries were suspected of researching and stockpiling germ warfare agents-ban, Libya, Syria, North Korea, Taiwan, Israel, Egypt, Vietnam, Laos, Cuba, Bulgaria, India, South Korea, South Africa, China and Russia."

In his 2001 book Scourge: The Once and Future Threat of Smallpox (Atlantic Monthly Press), Jonathan Tucker, a leading expert on biological and chemical weapons writes, "leaks and rumors of uncertain reliability suggested that several countries might have inadvertently or deliberately retained specimens of the virus from the time when smallpox was a common disease. Possible suspects included China, Cuba, India, Israel, Pakistan, and Yugoslavia."

In their 2000 book Living Terrors: What America Needs to Know to Survive the Coming Bioterrorist Catastrophe (Delta Publishing), experts Michael Osterholm and John Schwartz cited a 1999 report by the congressionally created Commission to Assess the Organization of the Federal Govemment to Combat Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction that said "most of the nations identified as sponsors of terrorism either have or are seeking weapons of mass destruction. (Those nations are Cuba, Iran, Iraq, Libya, North Korea, Sudan and Syria)."

In the July 12, 1999, issue of the New Yorker, Richard Preston, an expert on biological and chemical weapons, reported that the U.S. govemment "keeps a list of nations and groups that it suspects either have clandestine stocks of smallpox or seem to be trying to buy or steal the virus." The classified list is "said to include" Cuba along with nine other countries.

A March 31, 1998, article in the Washington Post said, "Cuba has one of the most sophisticated biotech and pharmaceutical industries in the hemisphere. Because lethal biological materials can be produced by countries with biotech industries, it is difficult to determine when a country moves from simply having the capability to produce deadly viruses, to the intent or plans to do so." It said, "while [Clinton] administration officials do not allege that Cuba has such weapons, 'You can't say there's no capability,' said one defense official."

According to Insight Magazine (July 20, 1998), "A classified annex to the Pentagon final report to Congress [in 1998] further warns: 'According to sources within Cuba, at least one research site is run and funded by the Cuban military to work on the development of offensive and defensive biological weapons.'"

A December 1993 Office of Technology Assessment report "Technologies Underlying Weapons of Mass Destruction" identified Cuba as one of 17 countries possessing a bioweapons capability.

In 1988, syndicated columnists Rowland Evans and Robert Novak revealed that Soviet-supplied Cuban troops fighting in Angola had used chemical weapons against the U.S.-backed forces of Jonas Savimbi's UNITA. They cited evidence "scrupulously documented" by the senior United Nations consultant on chemical warfare, Dr. Aubin Heyndrickx of Belguim. Toxicologists certified that residue from chemical weapons—including sarin—was found in areas of recent action. When questioned by then-Sen. Dennis DeConcini about the then-rumours, Heyndrickx replied, "There is no doubt anymore that the Cubans were using nerve gases against the troops of Mr. Jonas Savimbi." Also, the columnists noted that Heyndrickx had warned the United States that if Soviet-Cuban managers in Angola used gas in the past, they could use it in the future.

More evidence of Cuba's use of chemical agents in Africa surfaced in a July 28, 1998, Reuters report that Wouter Basson, former head of South Africa's covert chemical weapons program, had given a sworn statement implicating Cuba. He said that South Africa had been forced to begin its chemical weapons' program after Cuba had used chemical warfare on South African troops fighting in Angola. At the

time they had been unprepared and defenseless. (South African troops fought in Angola until 1990.)

DOES HAVANA HAVE A BIOLOGICAL WEAPONS PROGRAMS?

Excerpts from BIOHAZARD: The Chilling True Story of the Largest Covert Biological Weapons Program in the World by Ken Alibek [1] (Random House, 2000). Pages 273-277

When Yuri Ovchinnikov died in 1987, I joined a group of Biopreparat scientists at his funeral services in Moscow. The conversation eventually turned to Cuba's surprising achievements in genetic engineering. Someone mentioned that Cuban scientists had successfully altered strains of bacteria at a pharmaceutical facility just outside of Havana.

> "Where did such a poor country get all of that knowledge and equipment?" I asked.
>
> "From us, of course," he answered with a smile.

As I listened in astonishment, he told me that Castro had been taken during a visit to the Soviet Union in February 1981 to a laboratory where *E. coli* bacteria had been genetically altered to produce interferon, then thought a key to curing cancer and other diseases. Castro spoke so enthusiastically to Brezhnev about what he had seen that the Soviet leader magnanimously offered his help. A strain of *E. coli* containing the plasmid used to produce interferon was sent to Havana, along with equipment and working procedures. Within a few years, Cuba had one of the most sophisticated genetic engineering labs in the world—capable of the kind of advanced weapons research we were doing in our own.

General Lebedinsky visited Cuba the following year, at Castro's invitation, with a team of military scientists. He was set up in a ten room beach-front cottage near Havana and boasted of being received like a king. An epidemic of dengue fever had broken out a few months earlier, infecting 350,000 people. Castro was convinced that this was the result of an American biological attack. He asked Lebedinsky and his scientists to study the strain of the dengue virus in special labs set up near the cottage compound. All evidence pointed to a natural outbreak—the strain was Cuban, not American—but Castro was less interested in scientific process than in political expediency.

. . . Cuba has accused the United States twelve times since 1962 of staging biological attacks on Cuban soil with anti-livestock and anti-crop agents . . .

Kalinin was invited to Cuba in 1990 to discuss the creation of a new biotechnology plant ostensibly devoted to single-cell protein. He returned convinced that Cuba had an active biological weapons program.

The situation in Cuba illustrates the slippery interrelation between Soviet support of scientific programs among our allies and their ability to develop biological weapons.

. . . For many years, the Soviet Union organized courses in genetic engineering and molecular biology for scientists from Eastern Europe, Cuba, Libya, India, Iran and Iraq among others. Some forty foreign scientists were trained annually. Many of them now head biotechnology programs in their own countries. Some have recruited the services of their former classmates.

In July 1995, Russia opened negotiations with Iraq for the sale of large industrial fermentation vessels and related equipment. The model was one we had used to develop and manufacture bacterial biological weapons. Like Cuba, the Iraqis maintained the vessels were intended to grow single-cell protein for cattle feed . . .

A report submitted by the U.S. Office of Technological Assessment to hearings at the Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations in late 1995 identified seventeen counties believed to possess biological weapons "Libya, North Korea, South Korea, Iraq, Taiwan, Syria, Israel, Iran, China, Egypt, Vietnam, Laos, Cuba, Bulgaria, India, South Africa and Russia."

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[1] Mr. Alibek is a former deputy director of Biopreparat, the Soviet Union's biological weapons program.

DOES CUBA HAVE BIOCHEMICAL WEAPONS?*

(By Maria C. Werlau)

*This article was published as Chapter 6, pp. 99-128, of *Cuba: Assessing the Threat to U.S. Security* (Miami: The Endowment for Cuban American Studies, 2001), edited by Adolfo Leyva.

Today this country has more options than ever, is stronger than ever, and has more weapons than ever to wage the ideological battle—and let's not forget the other weapons we have stored away and the very clear idea on how we'd use them, so we are calm.

Fidel Castro, October 17, 2001.[1]

This lamb can never be devoured—not with planes nor smart bombs—because this lamb is smarter than you, and in its blood there is, and always will be, poison for you.

Fidel Castro, January 28, 1998.[2]

WHAT DOES THE U.S. GOVERNMENT KNOW?

In May of 1998, then Secretary of Defense William Cohen submitted a report to Congress titled "The Cuban Threat to U.S. National Security." Prepared by the Defense Intelligence Agency as a result of an inter-agency effort, the Executive Summary of its section "Biological Warfare Threat" read: 'Cuba's current scientific facilities and expertise could support an offensive BW program in at least the research and development stage. Cuba's biotechnology industry is one of the most advanced in emerging countries and would be capable of producing BW agents."[3]

At a congressional hearing held recently. Rep. Chris Shays, R-Connecticut. Chairman of the House Government Reform's Subcommittee on National Security, Veterans' Affairs and International Relations, asserted that the Defense Department openly lists the countries believed to have biological weapons, mentioning Cuba alongside fourteen others.[4] [5]

In 1995, the congressional Office of Technology Assessments[6] had submitted a report to Congress identifying seventeen countries believed to be in possession of biological weapons—the list included Cuba,[7] in fact, might well be among the countries alluded to in a Defense Department 2000 report to Congress: "Intelligence analysts believe that at least seven potential adversaries have an offensive BW capability to deliver anthrax."[8]

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[1] Castro compared the United States to a dragon and warned against the dragon eating the lamb, Cuba. ("Fidel inaugura nueva escuela de formacidn de trabajadores sociales." Granma Internacional Digital. 18 de Octubre de 2001. http://www.granma.cu/espanol/octu3/43escuela-e.html. Translation by the author.)

[2] Armando Correa, "'Veneno' de Castro abre sospechas que Cuba oculta armas bacteriológicas." *El Nuevo Herald,* May 4, 1997, Sec. A. p.6. (Translation by the author.)

[3] *The Cuban Threat to U.S. National Security,* Report Submitted to Congress by Secretary of Defense, William Cohen, 1998. The *Transmittal Letter* of May 6, 1998 from the Secretary of Defense to The Honorable Strom Thurmond, Chairman, Senate Armed Services Committee, states that the review and assessment was conducted by the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) in coordination with the National Intelligence Council; the Central Intelligence Agency, the National Security Agency and the Intelligence and Research Bureau at the State Department. The Joint Staff, the United States Southern Command, the National Security Council, and the Bureau of Inter-American Affairs at the Department of State were also consulted. http://www.defenselink.mil/pubs/cuparpt.htm

[4] Hearing of the House Intelligence Terrorism and Homeland Security Subcommittee, October 11, 2001. At the hearing, Col. Edward Eitzen, who heads the Army's lead biological defense lab at Fort Detrick, Maryland (Medical Research Institute of Infectious Diseases) refused to say which countries are thought to have experimented with bioterrorism weapons.

[5] Remaining countries listed are: Bulgaria, China, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Laos, Libya, North Korea, Russia, South Africa, Syria, Taiwan, and Vietnam. (Carolyn Skorneck, "Anthrax Dangerous, Difficult Weapon," Washington, *Associated Press,* October 11, 2001.)

[6] The Office of Technology Assessments was established by Congress in 1972 to provide congressional committees analysis of emerging, difficult and often highly technical issues.

[7] Others on the list were Libya, North Korea, South Korea, Iraq, Taiwan, Syria, Israel, China, Egypt, Vietnam, Laos, Bulgaria, India, South Africa, and Russia. (Congressional Hearing of the Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations.)

[8] DOD response to the staff report of the House Government Reforms' Subcommittee on National Security, Veterans' Affairs and International Relations entitled 'The Department of Defense Anthrax Vaccine Immunization Program: Unproven Force Protection," February 29, 2000.

In 2000, Michael Osterholm and John Schwartz—recognized experts on biochemical weapons,[9] cited a 1999 report by the congressionally created *Commission to Assess the Organization of the Federal Government to Combat Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction:* "most of the nations identified as sponsors of terrorism either have or are seeking weapons of mass destruction. (Those nations are Cuba, Iran, Iraq, Libya, North Korea, Sudan and Syria). According to the commission . . . more than a dozen states have offensive and/or chemical weapons programs." [10]

In addition to intelligence reports, albeit imprecise, leading experts and journalists, relying on diverse sources, have included Cuba in the short list of countries suspected or said to have biological weapons. In 1998, for example, Richard Preston, a journalist who's written extensively on biological and chemical weapons, reported that the U.S. government "keeps a list of nations and groups that it suspects either have clandestine stocks of smallpox or seem to be trying to buy or steal the virus." The classified list is "said to include" Cuba along with nine other countries." [11]

In his authoritative book on smallpox, *Scourge,* published in 2001, Jonathan Tucker [12] sustains: ". . . leaks and rumors of uncertain reliability suggested that several countries might have inadvertedly or deliberately retained specimens of the virus from the time when smallpox was a common disease. Possible suspects included China, Cuba, India, Israel, Pakistan, and Yugoslavia." [13] Tucker also cites a 1994 Defense Intelligence Agency report on the work of an Interagency Working Group that determined the former Soviet Union had transferred smallpox virus to Iraq in the 1980's or 1990's. Although he does not explore the Castro regimes' close ties with Saddam Husseins' Iraq, these purportedly include cooperation in biochemical weapons' development." [14]

The most compelling indication of a Cuban bioweapons program, however, comes from a high-ranking Soviet defector. In 1998, Ken Alibek,[15] former Deputy Director of Research and Production of the former Soviet Unions' biological weapons program, gave a first-hand account of the Cuban operation. In his book *Biohazard,*[16] Alibek recounts how his boss—Major General Yury Kalinin, head of the Soviet bioweapons program—had returned from a 1990 visit to Cuba "convinced that Cuba had an active biological weapons program." Kalinin had been invited by Cuba to discuss the creation of a new biotechnology plant, ostensibly devoted to single-cell protein. Alibek also recalls how, in July 1995, Russia had opened negotiations with Iraq for the sale of large industrial fermentation vessels and related equipment—the very model "we had used to develop and manufacture bacterial biological weapons.

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[9] Mr. Osterholm is the Director of the Center for Infectious Disease Research and Policy as well as Professor of Public Health at the University of Minnesota. Mr. Schwartz is a journalist for *The New York Times.*

[10] Michael T. Osterholm and John Schwartz, *Living Terrors* (New York: Delta Publishing, 2000), p. 37.

[11] Also listed are Russia, China, India, Pakistan, Israel, North Korea, Iraq, Iran, Cuba, and Serbia. (Richard Preston, "The demon in the freezer," *The New Yorker,* July 12, 1999, pp. 44-61.)

[12] Jonathan Tucker, a leading expert on biological and chemical armament, is currently Director of the Chemical and Biological Weapons Nonproliferation Project of the Center for Nonproliferation Studies of the Monterey Institute of International Affairs in Washington, D.C. and has worked for the U.S. State Department, the congressional Office of Technology Assessments and the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency.

[13] Jonathan B. Tucker, *Scourge: The once and future threat of smallpox* (New York: Atlantic Monthly Press, 2001), p. 205.

[14] For more on the Iraq-Cuba relation, see Briefing Paper by Manuel Cereijo, *Cuba-Iraq,* October 2001. (Cereijo, former professor at Florida International University, claims he has interviewed many scientists and defectors from Cuba over a period of years. He reports that by the early 1990s Iraq had given Cuba anthrax virus for its development. See his papers at http://www.amirospais-guaracabuya.org/index cereijo.html). Also see Marcelo Fernández-Zayas, *Intelligence Report* of October 25, 2001. (Fernández-Zayas has written has interviewed numerous defectors and has contacts with diplomats and government sources worldwide. His articles are available at http://www.amigospais-guaracabuya.org/index.mfz.html.)

[15] Formerly Dr. Kanatjan Alibekov, from 1987 to 1992 he was first deputy chief of research and production of *Biopreparat,* known as "The System," the Soviet Union's clandestine biological weapons program. Its top scientist, he had thirty-two thousand scientists and staff people working under him. After an inspection trip to the U.S. in December 1991, Alibek became convinced it had no active biowarfare program. Confirming his already growing doubts, he realized the Soviet leadership had used propaganda lies to justify its huge offensive biological program. He resigned and left the Russian Federation for the U.S. several months later, in October 1992. (Ken Alibek, "Behind the Mask: Biological Warfare," *Perspective,* Volume IX, No. 1, September-October 1998 (*Perspective* is a publication of Boston University's Institute for the Study of Conflict, Ideology and Policy); Richard Preston, "The bioweaponeers," *The New Yorker,* March 9, 1998, pp. 52-65; J. Tucker, *Scourge,* pp. 138-162.)

[16] Ken Alibek with Stephen Hendelman, *Biohazard* (Random House, 1998).

Like Cuba, the Iraqis maintained the vessels were intended to grow single-cell protein for cattle feed . . ."[17]

In a June 1999 interview, Alibek explained that the Cubans had, since 1988, been after them (the Soviets) for help in building the microbiology plant with a huge reactor. His boss, Kalinin, was aware that Cuba's investment in biotechnology was beyond the means of the country's economy and suspected the plant was actually intended for developing biological weapons in industrial volumes. In a previous trip to Havana, Kalinin had reported encountering severe security measures and secret, closed off, areas—just as in the Soviet offensive biological program. And, in his 1990 visit to Cuba, Kalinin saw the sophisticated equipment Cubans had purchased, a requirement for the development of military biological material. Alibek claimed that their suspicions of a Cuban biowarfare program had began in 1987; by 1991 they were seeing "irrefutable signs of biowarfare production."[18]

According to Alibek, the Soviet Union had helped Cuba develop its biotechnology program after a February 1981 trip by Castro to the Soviet Union, then under Brezhnev. He writes: "Within a few years, Cuba had one of the most sophisticated genetic engineering labs in the world—capable of the kind of advanced weapons research we were doing in our own."[19] In *Biohazard* he revealed how, for many years, the Soviets had organized courses in genetic engineering and molecular biology for scientists from Eastern Europe, Cuba, Libya, India, Iran and Iraq among others. Some forty foreign scientists were trained annually.[20] He later elaborated that Cuba had sent dozens of students to Moscow's State University for studies in macrobiology and biotechnology.[21] Most recently, he's regretted having helped train Cubans in this technology, which helped "Castro develop biological weapons."[22]

Already in 1988, the United Nations Security Council has been informed of use of toxic weapons by Soviet-supported Cuba in Angola.[23] Belgian toxicologists[24] had certified that residue of chemical weapons—including sarin and VX gas—had been found in plants, water and soil where Cuban troops were alleged to have used chemicals against Savimbi's troops. Additional tests had provide evidence that other substances—such as napalm and sarin—were used against civilian populations supporting Savimbi;[25][26] Allegations had been made previously that Cuba had used chemical weapons in Angola in 1984 and 1986.[27]

In the United States, an Evans & Novak column of mid-1988 had criticized the Reagan Administration for turning away from evidence that Soviet-sponsored Cuban troops were using poison gas against the U.S.-backed freedom fighters. It argued that the very serious charges were being ignored to avoid compromising "the cozy new relationship" with Gorbachev and, perhaps, to also keep from stirring the pot after the recent agreement between South Africa and Angola.[28] Evans & Novak asserted that the charges had been "scrupulously documented" by Dr. Aubin Heyndrickx, the senior United Nations consultant on chemical warfare, and cited his recent response to an inquiry from Democratic Senator DeConcini about the rumors: "There is no doubt anymore that the Cubans were using nerve gases against

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[17] Ibid, p. 275.

[18] Roberto Fabricio, "Las instalaciones cubanas de biotecnologia 'están llenas de zonas cerradas y secretas,'" *El Nuevo Herald,* June 20, 1999.

[19] Ken Alibek, *The Chilling True Story of the Largest Covert Biological Weapons Program in the World* (Random House, 2000), pp. 273-277.

[20] "Many of them now head biotechnology programs in their own countries. Some have recruited the services of their former classmates." (Ibid.)

[21] R. Fabricio, op.cit.

[22] Ike Seamans Report: *Cuba's Biological Weapons Industry, NBC 6. October 10, 2001. http://www.msnbc.com/local/wtvi/nbc6e201fsc.asp*

[23] The use of chemical and bacteriological agents in war is forbidden by the 1925 Geneva Protocol (Protocol for the Prohibition of the use in war of asphyxiating, poisonous or other gases, and bacteriological methods of warfare) which entered into force on February 8. 1928.

[24] The team was led by Dr. Aubin Heyndrickx, chief United Nations consultant on chemical warfare, a world-renowned Belgian toxicologist and professor at the State University of Ghent, Belgium. (Rowland Evans and Robert Novak, "Cuban troops in Angola said to use poison gas," Syndicated Column Mid-January 1988, *FortFreedom.com,* February 6, 1989, http://www.fortfreedom.org/y19.htm; Ariel Remos, "Las armas bacteriológicas colocan a Castro en el Biocerrorismo," *Diario Las Americas,* July 13, 1999.)

[25] A. Remos, op.cit.

[26] The now defunct *Voix d'Afrique* is said to have published (2/6/90) photos of people allegedly deformed by chemical weapons used by Cuba against men, women and children in Angola in the 1980's. (Jonathan T. Stride, "Who will check out Fidel Castro's new chemical/biological weapons plant in East Havana." Miami. www.fiu.edu/-fcf/bio.chem.plnat91097.html)

[27] Rafael Fermoselle, "El terrorismo y la conexión cubana," *El Nuevo Herald,* October 8, 2001. (Mr. Fermoselle is retired from the U.S. Foreign Service and the author of several books.)

[28] Ibid. (The pact called for a staged Cuban withdrawal of its troops and an end to South African aid for Savimbi.)

the troops of Mr. Jonas Savimbi." Heyndrikcx was also reported to have warned the United States that "if Soviet-Cuban managers in Angola used gas in the past, they could use it in the future."[29]

Evidence of an offensive chemical program re-surfaced in 1998.[30] In July it was reported that Wouter Basson, former head of South Africa's covert chemical weapons program,[31] had given a sworn statement with serious allegations against Cuba. He declared that South Africa had been forced to begin its chemical weapons' program after Cuba had used chemical warfare on South African troops fighting in Angola. At the time they had been caught unprepared and defenseless. (South African troops fought in Angola until 1990.)[32] In fact, the highest ranking military officer to ever defect from Cuba, Air Force Brigadier General Rafael del Pino, has reported that since the 1970's war in Angola, the Cuban Armed Forces, he explained, had been bent on developing and possessing chemical weapons. Cuba's top brass had approached the Soviets to request these weapons, but the Soviets had refused.[33]

Despite all of the above, it is unknown what exactly U.S. intelligence has uncovered regarding Cuba's biochemical programs. Meanwhile, U.S. government officials outside the intelligence community, while confirming that Cuba's highly advanced biotechnology industry is capable of producing biological warfare agents, have publicly discredited allegations that Cuba is manufacturing biological weapons. In 1997, for example, the U.S. State Department responded to a report of secret documents smuggled out of the island with details of Cuba's bioweapons program: "The U.S. government follows the matter of weapons of mass destruction very closely, and we can assure you that we know of no reason to be alarmed."[34]

In 1999 there was another official response. *The Miami Herald* published a story on U.S. government reactions to Alibek's account in *Biohazard,* which had received prominent coverage in Spanish-language media in Miami, home of a large Cuban American community. State Department sources were quoted: "Cuba certainly has the know-how and capability to brew terrorism-sized batches of deadly agents," but "there has been no proof that it has methodically produced military-grade agents or munitions." Moreover it elaborated, there was "no evidence that Cuba is stockpiling or has mass-produced any BW [biological warfare] agents," plus there was not "any sign of production facilities." Another U.S. official was cited: "We don't see any special facilities with eight-foot fences and stuff like that . . ." And, yet another government representative reported that intelligence from defectors and other means hadn't produced any verifiable evidence of bio-chemical weapons production.[35] U.S. officials, however, also acknowledged that the possibility could not be ruled out of Cuba manufacturing small quantities of biological warfare agents and containers for terrorist and sabotage actions.

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[29] Evans & Novak, op.cit. (Heyndrickx told an African publication that in Angola chemical gases supplied by the Russians had been used by dos Santos against the Unita movement of Jonas Savimbi at least between 1986 and 1991. Idrissa Fofana, "Menaces pour la paix," *Dentain.* L'UNITA, *Afrique Golfe Magazine,* Janvier-Février 1998. http://www.afard-unita.asso.fr/html/revuepress/revue15.htm).

[30] Actually, documents allegedly smuggled out of Cuba in 1997 indicated that Castro initiated a chemical-weapons program in 1981, when Soviet technicians built a plant to produce tricothecen, the main component of "yellow rain," in an underground tunnel complex at Quimonor in Matanzas province. The program was expanded some years later with the construction of another chemical-weapons facility in Pinar del Rio, where Cuban and Soviet technicians began experimenting with mixtures of germs and toxins to produce anthrax. (See M. Arostegui and J. Stride, op.cit.).

[31] Basso, a doctor and toxicologist, headed South Africa's 7th Medical Division. "SA's poison gas secrets sold to Libya," *Electronic Mail & Guardian,* February 7, 1997, http://www.mg.co.za/mg/news/97feb1/7feb-poisongas.html

[32] "Cuba usó arias químicas en contra de Sudáfrica," *Reuters* (Capetown)/*El Nuevo Herald,* July 28, 1998. (Soviet-sponsored Cuban troops fought against Jonas Savimbi's anti-Communist guerrillas. When negotiations began in 1988 for a staged withdrawal, an estimated 55,000 Cuban troops were deployed in Angola.)

[33] A. Correa, *El Nuevo Herald,* 5/4/97, ibid. (Brigadier General del Pino defected in 1987. He also reported that the Cubans had attempted an experiment in a helicopter, using a chemical weapon, but it had failed.)

[34] Juan O. Tamayo, "U.S. downplays rumors of Cuban germ missiles," *The Miami Herald,* February 4, 1997. (News of the existence of the documents was released by a former high-ranking Air Force General, Alvaro Prendes, exiled in 1994.)

[35] Juan O. Tamayo, "U.S. skeptical of report on Cuban biological weapons," *The Miami Herald,* June 23, 1999.

After revisiting the denials issued in 1999, the Coordinator for Cuban Affairs at the State Department has recently reaffirmed: "We are not aware of anything different" that would be at odds with those statements.[36]

Public contradictions point to a seeming discrepancy between U.S. policy and defense officials on the matter of Cuba's offensive biochemical capability. *El Nuevo Herald*—the Spanish version of *The Miami Herald*—reported in June of 1999: "Official Pentagon sources declare they are aware that Cuba has bacteriological weapons," but "we cannot discuss what we know because there's a political decision to not rock the boat, yet we are concerned."[37] Further, it cites a former high-ranking government official with access to classified reports claiming that already in 1988 the CIA had produced a long document that concluded that Cuba had biological weapons and described the island's biotechnology facilities.[38]

The strong indication of an offensive biochemical weapons program in Cuba has, until now, received surprisingly scant media attention despite the island's highly developed biotechnology industry, its geographic proximity and the open hostility of the Castro regime towards the United States.[39] Tragically, since recent events have made the threat of biological and chemical terrorist attacks a reality, there seems to be a gradual—albeit faint—turn of attention to Cuba as a potential source of biological weapons. An October 15, 2001 *Reuters* report read: "According to the U.S. Department of Defense and the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, China, Cuba, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Libya, North Korea, Russia, Syria and Taiwan all have developed potential biological weapons, including with anthrax. Such governments could sponsor an attack, or sell an anthrax weapon to the right bidder."[40]

In mid-October 2001, *The Miami Herald* featured a story on a visit by Senator Bob Graham, D-Florida to its Editorial Board, focused on his comments that Cuba "clearly has the capability of producing chemical and biological ingredients that could become weapons of mass destruction. (. . .) "Nobody, at least nobody that I'm aware of in the United States, feels that we know what Cuba's doing." Graham, however, reported it was not known if Cuban scientists are actually facilitating such efforts, partly because international inspection agencies have not been given access to facilities.[41] Two days later, the Herald followed up with an editorial favoring keeping Cuba on the State Department's list of state sponsors of terrorism and citing, among other reasons, the lack of access to inspect for bio-chemical weapons.[42]

Also in mid-October, an *NBC/MSNBC* story raised concerns over Cuba's alleged sales of biotechnology to the Iranians, claiming the Soviets had helped Castro build one of the world's most sophisticated biotechnology industries, which could "also be used to build weapons of mass destruction."[43] General Charles Wilhelm, a former Southcom Commander affirms: "The indications we have is that they have the capability to produce those type of substances." The report also cites a 1996 Canadian Security Intelligence Service report that "Cuba has been a supply source (to terrorist groups) for toxin and chemical weapons" and a 1995 U.S. Senate report which included Cuba as one of 17 countries believed to have biological weapons. In addition, it recounted Cuba's use of biological weapons to kill rebels opposed to the Marxist government during the Angolan Civil War.[44]

How an offensive program of this nature might be kept secret is not difficult to imagine. The 1999 *Herald* story included Mr. Alibek's reaction to refutations by U.S.

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[36] James Carragher, recently appointed Coordinator for Cuban Affairs, U.S. Department of State, in telephone conversation, October 23, 2001. (The author read Mr. Carragher quotes from the Herald article of 1998 attributed to U.S. government officials.)

[37] Roberto Fabricio, "Agencias del gobierno pugnan sobre armas bacteriológicas," *El Nuevo Herald,* June 23, 1999.

[38] Ibid.

[39] 0ne notable exception of media coverage was a 1998 story in *The Washington Times* of documents smuggled out of Cuba on the island's biological weapons facilities. (Martin Arostegui, "Fidel Castro's Deadly Secret—Five BioChem Warfare Labs," *Insight Magazine/The Washington Times,* Vol. 14, No. 26 July 20, 1998.) Aside from this, the little coverage has been, up to now, almost exclusively limited to the *El Nuevo Herald,* the Spanish daily counterpart of *The Miami Herald,* which is published in South Florida, home to a large Cuban American and Cuban exile community. (Refer to bibliography for some examples.)

[40] Maggie Fox, "Anthrax available from many sources," *Reuters* (Washington), October 15, 2001.

[41] Nancy San Martin, "Cuba forced to sell technology," *The Miami Herald,* October 10, 2001.

[42] "Terror's Servant," Editorial, *The Miami Herald,* October 12, 2001.

[43] In May of 2001 Castro went on a tour of Iran, Syria, Algeria and Malaysia. In Tehran he declared that Cuba and Iran could together "bring the United States to its knees." Stating that the United States was weaker than ever, he called for Iran-Cuba cooperation to contribute to the downfall of the "imperialist king." ("Castro pronostica en Irán el hundimiento de EU," *Associated Press,* Tehran, May 13, 2001.)

[44] Ike Seaman's Report, NBC 6, 10/10/01.

government officials: "You have to understand that bio-weapons is one of the most sensitive topics in the world. No one shares this type of information, even with best friends. But in my personal opinion, I have no question Cuba is involved."[45]

Despite the involvement of many thousands of people, only a few top scientists and a small circle of the Kremlin leadership understood the full scope of the Soviet Union's huge biowarfare program *Biopreparat.* Over forty facilities dispersed over the country and a vast amount of acreage were used in the program, yet it was kept under wraps thanks to tight security, elaborate cover operations and legitimate civilian work (which, according to Alibek, actually never accounted for more than 15% of the research and development activities).[46] Its former top scientist has stated: "To the outside world, *Biopreparat* was a state-owned pharmaceutical complex that developed drugs and vaccines for the civilian market. In reality, it was an elaborate front for a military-funded program code-named *Fermenty* (the Russian word for enzymes) which aimed to develop a new generation of super-lethal biological weapons."[47]

A high-ranking Cuban sociologist, former member of Cuba's Communist Party and head of an important Sociological Research Center in Cuba, has explained that, although she had no knowledge of biochemical weapons programs in Cuba, she did have the suspicion. According to Dr. Maida Donate-Armada,[48] the biotechnology center was under the strictest military control despite the appearance of civilian activity. "Civilian scientists and other professionals are the face to the world, but their military counterparts, who come and go as they please within the structure, have access to all the scientific work produced by civilians. In turn, they don't have an institutional identification, nobody knows what they are working on and they do not share the results of their work."[49]

José de la Fuente, who from 1990-98 was Director of Research and Development at the Center for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology (CIGB) in Havana, has attested to the frustration of witnessing "institutional paralysis" as a result of the impossibility for the biotechnology centers to decide on internal policy "even for small things." "All decisions," he reports, "were made by the Secretary of the State Council, José M. Miyar Barrueco ('Chomi') at Castro's personal insistence." What's worse, Miyar—known to be a very close protégé of Raúl Castro—was, according to de la Fuente, "incapable of deciding scientific matters, because of his background."[50]

Mr. Alibek has provided detailed accounts of the lengths to which the Soviet Union went to keep its huge bioweapons program secret and the West's scientific and intelligence communities under the impression that it was honoring the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention, which it had signed in 1972. These efforts were entirely successful. "There was a comnonly held belief among many American scientists, supported by the strong, even passionate views of a handful of experts in biological weapons, that the Soviet Union was not violating the treaty."[51] In fact, the public was kept in the dark until early 1998. After his defection to the United States in 1992, Alibek had briefed U.S. intelligence and scientific experts for almost a year, but until 1998 only the national security community had access to the information he brought.[52]

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[45] J.O. Tamayo, "U.S. skeptical," op.cit.

[46] *Biopreparar* consisted of forty research-and-production facilities, some of them enormous; around half of its employees are said to have worked developing weapons while the other half made medicines. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, over 60,000 people were involved in the research, development, and production of biological weapons. The total production capacity of all of the facilities involved was many hundreds of tons of various agents annually—including anthrax, smallpox, and plague. (Sources as in footnote 15.)

[47] J. Tucker, *Scourge,* p. 145.

[48] Dr. Donate-Armanda, a historian-psychologist-sociologist trained in Cuba, was a specialist in living conditions with the Cuban Institute of Internal Demand Management (Instituto Cubano deinvestigaciones y Orientación de la Demanda Interna (ICIODI)). She defected in Spain in 1993 while attending a conference.

[49] Maida Donate-Armada, e-mail to the author, September 3, 1998.

[50] José de la Fuente, "Wine into vinegar—the fall of Cuba's biotechnology," *Nature Biotechnology,* October 2001. (De la Fuente fled Cuba by boat in 1999 and is now on the faculty of Oklahoma State University.)

[51] R. Preston, "The bioweaponeers," op.cit. On this issue, also see J. Tucker, *Scourge,* op.cit.

[52] In October 1989, a *Biopreparat* scientist, Dr. Vladimir Pasechnik, had defected to Great Britain while on an official visit to France. His briefings stunned the British and U.S. governments, which delivered a formal diplomatic protest to Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev. Gorbachev denied the allegations and invited inspection teams. The Soviets, under Alibek's direction, prepared their cover for months; the inspection team, however, left with strong suspicions that the Soviets were hiding the truth. Mr. Alibek, then, led the Soviet team that reciprocated with visits to U.S. facitilities they had requested to inspect. This visit was what prompted Mr. Alibek's reckoning and later defection. (J. Tucker, op.cit. pp. 159-162.)

THE ACCOUNTS OF CUBAN DEFECTORS

For several years now, a number of top Cuban defectors and exiles—scientists and former high-ranking Cuban officials and members of the military—have been reporting of first hand or circumstantial knowledge of Cuba's biological and chemical weapons programs.

In 1997, former Cuban Air Force Commander Alvaro Prendes,[53] exiled in 1994, appeared on Spanish-language radio stations in Miami reading from documents he claimed had been prepared by dissident Cuban military officers and scientists and smuggled out of Cuba. They described in great detail biotechnology facilities serving as fronts for military operations producing bioweapons such as anthrax and bubonic plague.[54]

In mid-1998 *The Washington Times' Insight* magazine featured an investigative report citing the Prendes documents and other underground sources from Cuba.[55] It provided extensive description of five chemical and biological weapons facilities said to be operating throughout the island, and details such as how some of the plants were constructed, security arrangements, the purchase overseas and shipping of sophisticated lab equipment, and names of the scientists and engineers from military establishment who ran the operations.[56] The *Times* further reported that "the credibility of the smuggled documents is enhanced by a recent classified Pentagon analysis." In addition, it cited from a classified annex to a Pentagon report to Congress: "According to sources within Cuba, at least one research site is run and funded by the Cuban military to work on the development of offensive and defensive biological weapons."

According to Ernesto Betancourt, a former Radio Marti Director who had security clearance, classified CIA reports dating back to 1989 already described Cuban efforts to acquire technology and equipment to manufacture biological weapons.[57] The Prendes documents, in fact, related how a biochemist and Politburo member of Castro's presidential staff made, in the early 1990s, numerous trips to Europe, the Middle East and the former Soviet Union to arrange purchases for a new macrobiology plant. A centrifugal reactor capable of 10,000 revolutions per minute—to separate biological microorganisms from solid and liquid substances—was acquired through Comicondor, an Italian company near Milan which also supplies technology to Libya for Qaddafi's biological-weapons experiments. After arrival of the lab equipment, the plant was slowly equipped and finally inaugurated on December 2, 1993—Armed Forces Day. The centrifugal reactor is said to be crucial to the development of other biological microorganisms for use in warfare.[58]

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[53] Prendes had trained as a fighter pilot in the U.S. Fidel Castro, upon assuming power, asked him to head Cuba's Air Force, later promoting him to Commandant (highest rank in Cuba's Armed Forces, equivalent to full General). During his long career, he faced numerous setbacks and demotions, including three court martials, for "political discrepancies" with superiors, but was sent for special air force training at the Soviet Union and received assignments such as Commanding Officer of the San Antonio de los Baños Air Base, home of the Central Air Command (where he received orders directly from Fidel Castro), Commander and Tactical Operations Chief of all MIG squadrons and Second in Command of the International Directorade of Cuba's Armed Forces. He became an increasingly vocal opponent to the Castro government, calling for a national dialogue, free speech and economic reform in the presence of the foreign media (1992) and writing a letter calling on Fidel Castro to resign. Facing a Court Martial and severe persecution, he was granted political asylum by the U.S. govemment and left for the U.S. via Spain in 1994. Prendes is now the Miami-based spokesman for the *Union of Free Soldiers and Officers,* composed of former Cuban military in exile and clandestine pro-democracy acquaintances within Cuba's military and security services. (Telephone conversations, e-mail exchanges and documents sent by Col. Prendes to the author, October 2001.)

[54] Juan O. Tamayo, "U.S. downplays . . .," *The Miami Herald,* 2/4/97, op.cit.

[55] Martin Arostegui, "Fidel Castro's Deadly Secret—Five BioChem Warfare Labs," *The Washington Times, Insight* Magazine, Vol. 14, No. 26 July 20, 1998. (Prendes also made part of the documents available to the author.)

[56] For details on these biochemical facilities, see M. Arostegui, ibid, and Jonathan T. Stride, "Who Will Check Out Fidel Castro's New Chemical/Biological Weapons Plant in East Havana," Miami. Mr. Stride also held lengthy interviews with Prendes and had access to the documents sent from Cuba (as related by Mr. Prendes to the author). In 1999 Miami media also reported of another defector, Ernesto Prida, who worked at the Bureau of Scientific Research of the Cuban Armed Forces, essentially confirming some of the information in the Prendes documents. (A. Remos, *Diario Las Américas,* 7/13/99.)

[57] Radio Marti is a Voice of America project. Dr. Betancourt is cited in *The Washington Times* article (M. Arostegui, op.cit.) and has confirmed this and other related information in conversations with the author over several years.

[58] The report also provides details of the ship that transported the reactor to Cuba, leased by front companies operated by Cuban military intelligence and with a crew carefully selected or employed by the Office of State Security, MININT. Accounting records for the lab's construction were said to have been meticulously covered up through authorized funding for extensions to

The documents also provide details of the work being conducted at several biochemical facilities. At the Luis Díaz Soto Naval Hospital, for example, military biotechnicians are said to experiment on cadavers, hospital patients and live animals with anthrax, brucellosis, equine encephalitis, and a variety of other bacterial agents. Experiments are reported on insects, rats and even house pets to be used as vectors. An extensive report is also given of a facility established in 1994, known as "The Little Factory." Despite its public description as a cattle feed producer (Fábrica de Pienso Animal), entry to the facility is controlled by the Cuban Armed Forces and said to be restricted to personnel with top-secret clearance. The plant is reported to cover an area of 120 by 90 meters, bigger than a couple football fields[59]

In 1992, Carlos Wotzkow, a leading Cuban ornithologist, had been forced to leave Cuba for Switzerland for his critical work on the demise of Cuba's ecology. In 1998, he published *Natumaleza Cubana,*[60] a detailed account of the destruction of the Cuban environment and a damning exposé of his professional experiences in Cuba. In it was a brief account of the beginnings of a biological warfare program within the Institute of Zoology, where he worked at the time, and how the scientific purposes of the institution had been militarized; its scientists purged for political purposes.

Wotzkow related how, in 1981, Fidel Castro gave orders to create within the Institute of Zoology the "Frente Biológico del Instituto"—a "biological front" to develop bioweapons against the United States by spreading infectious diseases through implantation in migratory birds. This was a joint project with the Instituto de Medicina Tropical Pedro Kourí and many scientists were involved—often indirectly or without cognizance of the purpose of the work they were instructed to conduct. Fidel Castro personally supervised many of the activities and paid personal visits to the facilities.[81]

During Wotzkow's tenure at the Institute of Zoology, which ended in 1982, the preferred patogen for experimenting with migratory birds was the leptospirosis (bacteria). Later, he has been told of the development of the anthrax bacteria, but doubts "that Castro would spend too much money on bacteria when he has native virus within the island's bat population . . . which would cause devastating damage without the possibility of treatment with antibiotics."[62] Wotzkow's work and his many scientific trips over Cuba in military aircraft put him in contact with the highest leadership of the Cuban government, including Fidel Castro.[63]

Woztkow also claims that in the 1970s Cuba had also experimented with chemicals, testing the effectiveness of certain powders and gases exposed to the oxygen of caves. It was thought that if the caves' entomofauna (insects) died—as resistant as it was to sudden environmental changes—no man would be able to survive them.[64]

Professor Luis Roberto Hernández,[65] who defected from Cuba while attending a conference in London in 1995,[66] confirmed Wokztkow's claims in late 1998. *El Nuevo*

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existing medical facilities and the remodeling of Havana's historical El Morro Fortress. (In M. Arostegui and J. Stride, op.cit.)

[59] J. Stride, op.cit.

[60] Carlos, Wotzkow, *Natumaleza Cabana* (Miami: Ediciones Universal, 1998). Wotzkow fell in disfavor for presenting papers overseas on the destruction of Cuba's environment. He was allowed out of the country after Germany tiled a protest. He was granted political asylum in Switzerland, where he still lives and works for a Swiss-U.S. joint venture. (Related by e-mail to the author, October 21, 2001.)

[61] Ibid. p.58. (Also see "Fidel Castro: decano del bioterrorismo," an interview of Carlos Woztkow by Eduardo Prida, *Bienne,* Noviembre 1999.)

[62] Carlos Woztkow, e-mail to the author, October 19, 2001. (Of course, Wotzkow, like most people, could not imagine then that rapidly unfolding events in the United States have already proven the effectiveness of bioterrorism with bacteria (anthrax).)

[63] During his tenure at the Institute of Zoology, Wotzkow made over a thousand scientific trips all over Cuba, including 72 trips to Cayo Largo in military airplanes that left from the Ciudad Libertad military base (formerly Columbia). (Carlos Wotzkow, e-mail to the author, October 21, 2001.)

[64] General Tomasevich related this to Wotzkow in 1980 during a flight they took together to Cayo Largo. (C. Woztkow, e-mail of 10/19/01.)

[65] Hernández, an entomologist, has a long and distinguished career of teaching, field work, and research in Cuba and with the foremost scientific institutions of the United States, England, Puerto Rico, Nicaragua, the Dominican Republic and others.

[66] Hernández was not planning to defect, but was called by a colleague that, due to political unreliability, a plan was underway to accuse him of spying and arrest him upon his return to Cuba. He stayed in London with his wife, but they left behind a son, who was unable to leave Cuba for years. Fear for the son in Cuba delayed Hernández from coming forth with his account.

Continued

Herald published a story of Wotzkow's allegations in *Natumaleza,* which included Dr. Hernández' first public account of his own experiences.[67] He related how the laboratories for the "biological front" were established within the Institute of Zoology, where he too had worked, and sought to identify and produce host viruses for migratory birds. There, only two top scientists had full access to all the "top secret" labs.

Cuba, Hernández claimed, continued the project at a farm outside Havana, where a vast nesting program had been established to study the routes and habits of migratory birds. U.S. scientists, he said, had naively collaborated in these studies with their own work on nesting. In addition, he knew that Cuba had conducted studies on the Culex mosquito, main vector for the encephalitis virus that is particularly resistant to certain insecticides. In fact, he reported, a Cuban scientific journal had described how, in 1998, the CDC (Centers for Disease Control) in Atlanta had donated a standard strain to Cuba of the St. Louis encephalitis virus, which is similar to, but more potent than, the West Nile virus.[68]

Dr. Hernández explains how the secrecy of the program was maintained: "Everything is very compartimentalized. If you work in one area or field, you don't know who's work you're complementing. But, naturally, you can infer things." In all the centers working in the biotechnology field, he elaborates, there is very tight security; for example, "if you work on one floor, you don't have access to other floors—yet this is supposedly scientific work for which this is not required or expected. There's electric fencing surrounding the facilities, codes to get into different areas, a lot of secrecy. At the Pedro Kouri Institute, even the scientists couldn't walk around. This didn't make sense."[69]

As an entomologist, Hernández became involved in the migratory birds' project and had colleagues working on it who also wondered what ultimate purpose was pursued. For example, he says, "we were instructed to look into virosis, such as parvovirus and others. I had another colleague who was asked to collect blood samples from birds. In the meantime, the Department of Ornithology was instructed to trap birds from routes that go through the United States." In conclusion, "one puts it together." Finally, he adds: "Fidel Castro, we know, called for a 'biological front' to develop a biological weapons program. I cannot be 100% sure, but I'm almost sure, that Cuba has worked on developing biological weapons. There are others who feel this way, but are afraid to speak out. I'm also troubled that men I know are Cuban agents are currently working with birds in farms in Puerto Rico. What for?"[70]

Both Wotzkow[71] and Hernández have said that Castro believed the United States was waging biological war against Cuba and was looking for ways to respond. Hernández has recently published an article detailing how there was no scientific basis for certain allegations with which he had direct involvement due to his work.[72] In *Biohazard,* Alibek relates how Cuba had accused the United States twelve times since 1962 of staging biological attacks on Cuban soil with anti-livestock and anti-crop agents, yet a high-level Soviet investigation found these allegations to be all "probably false." Zilinska, the Soviet in charge, had further reported that none of the Cuban scientists supported the government position on U.S. germ warfare. He had said: "They are keeping quiet. So it makes me believe that these allegations are a pure propaganda exercise by Cuba." Furthermore. he "was worried about whether Castro could be using the charges to justify his own germ warfare program."[73]

(Dr. Hernández in telephone conversation of October 19, 2001, and in previous conversations with the author, who's known Hernández for several years.)

[67] Pablo Alfonso, "Cuba experimenta con ayes con fines de guerra bacteriológica," *El Nuevo Herald,* October 18, 1998.

[68] *Revista Cabana de Medicina Tropical,* Vol. II/1996. Ibid. (Ken Alibek also reported that Soviet intelligence services obtained numerous strains of virus for the biowarfare program through covert operations—including ordering them through undercover agents posing as legtimate researchers. J. Tucker, op.cit, p. 140.)

[69] L. Hernández, telephone interview, 2/19/01.

[70] Ibid. Currently, Dr. Hernández is professor of entomology at a university in Puerto Rico.

[71] C. Wotzkow, *Natumaleza. op.cit., p. 179.*

[72] Dr. Hernández debunks specific allegations of biological attacks from the U.S. (Luis Roberto Hernández, "El bumerang maldito," Encuentro en la Red, Año 2, Edición 216, 18 de octubre 2001. www.cubaencuentro.com/ecologia/2001/10/18/3952.html.)

[73] Alibek tells of an invitation Soviet General Lebedinsky had received from Castro. Together with a team of military scientists, they went to Cuba to study an epidemic of dengue fever that had broken out a few months earlier, infesting 350,000 people. Castro had been convinced it was the result of an American biological attack. The Soviet team concluded that "all the evidence pointed to a natural outbreak—the strain was Cuban, not American—but Castro was less interested in scientific process than in political expediency." (Alibek, *Biohazard,* ibid.)

Most recently, José de la Fuente—who was Director of Research and Development at the Center for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology (CIGB) in Havana from 1990 to '98—confirms Cuba's huge investment in biotechnology and expresses concern that Cuba has placed "the prized fruits of the CIGB" in Iran's hands.[74] He discloses how, in an effort to seek hard currency after the end of massive Soviet support, between 1995 and 1998 Cuba sold to Iran biotechnology which could be used to produce biochemical weapons.[75] (Iran is, like Cuba, one of seven nations on the State Department's list of states that sponsor terrorism.[76]) He concludes: "There is no one who . . . believes that Iran is interested in these technologies for the purpose of protecting all the children in the Middle East . . ." A representative of the Cuban Interest Section, in turn, acknowledged that Cuba has sold pharmaceutical products to a number of countries.[77]

Indeed, Cuba's massive investment in biotechnology cannot be explained in rational economic terms. De la Fuente, for example, reports that in 1996 the CIGB alone had 1,100 employees with more than 200 scientists in R&D working on a pipeline of 112 products, the result of an investment of more than one billion U.S. dollars since the Center's inception in 1986.[78] Yet, the data available[79] indicates that the entire Cuban pharmaceutical-biotechnology industry was reportedly exporting a mere US$50 million per year for the period 1995-99.[80]

RECOMMENDATIONS

Cuba is a signatory of both the Biological Weapons[81] and the Chemical Weapons Conventions[82]—together they outlaw the possession of chemical and biological weapons of mass destruction. Yet, given the first hand accounts and strong circumstantial evidence indicative of non-compliance, Cuba should submit to independent verification.

The Biological Weapons Convention does not incorporate compliance and verification mechanisms, but the Cuban government is on the record denying the production of biological weapons.[83] Cuba should, thus, have no objection to inspection. It should also be taken into account that Cuba's alleged biowarfare program is said to have been set up during its alliance with the Soviet Union. The Soviets initiated their biowarfare program a year after the USSR had signed the Convention

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[74] J. de la Fuente, ibid; Nancy San Martin. "Cuba forced to sell technology," *The Miami Herald,* October 10, 2001.

[75] De la Fuente describes a strengthening of Cuban-Iranian cooperation beginning with Cuban aid shortly after the Iranian earthquake of 1990. He writes that Cuba sold Iran recombinant protein production technologies in yeast and *Escherichzia coli,* as well as the large-scale purification protocols for both soluble and insoluble proteins synthesized in or excreted by them. This technology was allegedly for civilian/medical uses, but is reportedly the same technology that could be used to produce lethal agents in biochemical weapons—like anthrax bacteria or smallpox virus. (J. de la Fuente, op.cit. and N. San Martin, op.cit.) De la Fuente discussed this with the author in a telephone conversation of October 9, 2001, but said he does not believe Cuba had malicious intent.

[76] The State Department's Report, Patterns of Global Terrorism 2000 asserts: "Iran remained the most active state sponsor of terrorism in 2000." (www.state.gov/s/ct/rls/pgtrpt/2000).

[77] N. San Martin, op.cit.

[78] He describes the inauguration of the CIGB in 1986 as the beginning of the maturation of biotechnology in Cuba and puts the initial investment at approximately US $100 million (used to fully equip modern research in areas covering pharmaceuticals and immunodiagnostics, vaccines, animal, plant, and industrial biotechnology).

[79] The Latest CEPAL (ECLA—the United Nations Economic Commission on Latin America) economic report for Cuba—a foremost tool on Cuba's economy—fails to present export data on the medical-pharmaceutical sector despite providing this information for other sectors. (See *Cuba: Evolución Económica: 2000,* Comisión Económica para América Latina y el Caribe, Naciones Unidas (CEPAL), LC/MEX/L.465 21, May 21, 2001.)

[80] *The Economic Impact of U.S. Sanctions with Respect to Cuba,* International Trade Commission, USITC publication 3398, February 2001. ftp://ftp.usitc.gov/pub/reports/studies/pub3398.pdf (The ITC report states that Cuba's trade data precludes separating the pharmaceutical and biotechnology industries. It also states that Cuba is reported to have developed a number of original vaccines and generic pharmaceutical products. A CIGB brochure is cited as reporting that in 1996 it had 128 product registrations in 34 countries.)

[81] The Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Biological and Toxin Weapons and on their Destruction, open for signature in Washington, London, and Moscow on April 10, 1972. Cuba was among the original signatories (1/13/93) and ratified it on April 4, 1997. (www.umn.edu/humanrts/instree/1972a.htm)

[82] The Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on their Destruction, signed in Paris on January 13-15, 1993. (See the Convention at www.opcw.org)

[83] 1n 1998, a spokesman for the Cuban Interests Section in Washington told *The Washington Times:* "We are producing medicines, not weapons. (. . .) We deny the Pentagon's charges of offensive potential in our biogenetic industry." (M. Arostegui, *TWT/Insight,* op.cit.)

banning the development, production and stockpiling of all offensive biological agents. Despite forceful and official denials, it was only after irrefutable testimony provided by top defectors and the actual breakdown of the USSR that the Russian Federation acknowledged its violation of the Biological Weapons Convention.[84]

The Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) has detailed provisions on compliance and verification. In fact, it established the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), headquartered in The Hague, which provides mechanisms of implementation and international verification of compliance.[85] The United States should submit an immediate inspection challenge to the OPCW's Executive Committee. [86] [87]

Verification of Cuba's compliance with both Conventions should be conducted through inspections characterized by the "any time, any place" concept incorporated in the CWC (they are to be launched at very short notice and can be directed at declared or undeclared facilities and locations). The inspections should also take place over an indefinite period of time.

The United States government should, regardless of international efforts and without further delay, form an interagency Task Force on Cuba to study this specific issue exclusively, gathering all intellirnce reports from different agencies and reassessing the potential threat to U.S. security.[88] The Task Force should also conduct a serious and thorough review of the allegations of scientists and other defectors from Cuba that, up to now, have been mostly ignored.[89]

Senator DODD. Thank you, Senator.

Before I turn to Senator Levin, I just want to come back, because in reading the speech Mr. Bolton gave, because he goes on in some paragraphs, this one paragraph is yours, but your staff said they read the whole speech and had the whole speech and looked at it. So he asked the question here, "Why was the 1998 report on Cuba so unbalanced?" I'm quoting the speech here.

My first question to you was has there been any change in the assessment on Cuba? Your answer was "no, substantially not."

Mr. FORD. No, there has not.

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[84] In April 1992, Boris Yeltsin admitted to the Soviet Union's violation of the Convention and issued an edict banning further offensive research and development. The Soviet program, *Biopreparat* was set up in 1973, just a year after the Soviet Union signed the Convention banning the development, use, and stockpiling of biological weapons. The October 1989 defection to Great Britain of a *Biopreparat* scientist, Dr. Vladimir Pasechnik, prompted the British and U.S. governments to deliver a formal diplomatic protest to Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev. Gorbachev denied the allegations and invited inspection teams in. The Soviets prepared their cover for months, but the inspection team left with strong suspicions that the Soviets were hiding the truth. (J. Tucker, ibid. pp. 159-162, 168 and other sources as per footnote 14.)

[85] See the Convention, namely Art. VIII, and Leonard Cole. "The Specter of Biological Weapons," *Scientific American,* December 1999, pp. 60-65.

[86] Cuba is a member of the Executive Committee of the OPCW for the 2000-2002 period. The Executive Council consists of 41 members, including seven states parties from Latin America and the Caribbean, designated by states located in that region. Each state party has the right, in accordance with the principle of rotation, to serve on the Executive Council; members are elected for a term of two years.

[87] Under Article IX of the CWC any State Party can request the Secretariat to conduct an on-site challenge inspection anywhere in the territory of any other State Party. States Parties are not granted the right to refuse a challenge inspection, regardless of the nature of the location at which it is to take place.

[88] This is particularly important in the wake of the September 21st, 2001 arrest of Ana Montes, the Defense Intelligence Agency's top Cuba specialist, for spying for Cuba. Reportedly, she could have had a very influential role in downplaying the threat posed by Cuba to the United States. (See John J. Miller, "Under In Castro's Service: The undertold story of Cuba's spying, and terror," *National Review,* Vol. LIII, No. 21, November 5, 2001 and Christopher Marquis, "Labels of analyst vary, but spy came as a surprise," *The New York Times,* September 30, 2001.)

[89] The author understands that all of the Cuban defectors interviewed for this paper have not been debriefed by U.S. intelligence or government representatives.

[14] For more on the Iraq-Cuba relation, see Briefing Paper by Manuel Cereijo, *Cuba-Iraq,* October 2001. (Cereijo, former professor at Florida International University, claims he has interviewed many scientists and defectors from Cuba over a period of years. He reports that by the early 1990s Iraq had given Cuba anthrax virus for its development. See his papers at http://www.amirospais-guaracabuya.org/index cereijo.html). Also see Marcelo Fernández-Zayas, *Intelligence Report* of October 25, 2001. (Fernández-Zayas has written has interviewed numerous defectors and has contacts with diplomats and government sources worldwide. His articles are

Senator DODD. So is that statement "unbalanced," is that an inaccurate statement based on the INR's assessment?

Mr. FORD. INR's position is that, that—as I was stating and that I will elaborate on later, but how people characterize that is not my call. They can—we're just intelligence——

Senator DODD. When you're given a speech to look at and you see that someone's about to make, in the administration, make a characterization that the work of your agency only 3 years earlier was unbalanced——

Mr. FORD. It would not be the first time that someone took a shot at the intelligence community. It's not our responsibility to put words in the mouths of policymakers.

Senator DODD. Did you raise, did anyone raise, any objections to that word being used, even though I understand it's policy? I mean, if I saw someone was going to say something about my office, I'd say, well, that's incorrect—if you feel that's incorrect. I presume you feel that's incorrect; is that right?

Mr. FORD. It certainly is not INR's position.

Senator DODD. OK. Well, you look at the whole speech, it seems to me when you've got paragraph after paragraph here—you know, we went through a period back in the eighties when we had a lot of assessments about the Soviet Union that turned out to be terribly wrong in terms of their capabilities, economically and otherwise.

My concern here is, look, if Cuba's got this stuff I want to know it, and I want to deal with it immediately, and if they don't we don't want to raise specters here that divert attention, resources, and the like when they ought to be going elsewhere. That's my concern. So when you get a speech like this, when I have INR disagreeing—I understand you agree with certain pieces here, but there's a lot of rhetoric around this, made by a very high-ranking administration official, that had to be corrected, as Senator Chafee has pointed out, by various people trying to spin this correctly. That worries me and concerns me, as we're trying to make decisions both in the administration and in the Congress about how to allocate resources, time and attention.

So that's the reason I raised it.

Senator Levin.

Senator LEVIN. Thank you. And thank you, Mr. Chairman and our colleagues, for allowing me to join you for a few minutes here just to ask a few questions.

Senator DODD. Not at all.

Senator LEVIN. Your prepared remarks indicate the difficulty in differentiating between legitimate biomedical technology and illicit offensive biological warfare technology because the technologies are essentially identical; is that correct?

Mr. FORD. That's correct, Senator.

Senator LEVIN. So that's where we get into the dual-use issue. How many countries other than Cuba are supplying dual-use biomedical technology to these states such as Iran? Do we have some pretty good allies that are doing the same thing?

Mr. FORD. I don't know, Senator, and I'll have to take the question and get back to you. I don't normally—I just don't have that in my notes.

Senator LEVIN. Can you find out how many of our NATO allies are supplying technology to Iran of the same type?

Mr. FORD. Yes, sir.

Senator LEVIN. Would it surprise you to find out that some are?

Mr. FORD. No.

Senator LEVIN. Have we protested that to them?

Mr. FORD. I don't know.

Senator LEVIN. Can you find that out for us?

Mr. FORD. Yes.

Senator LEVIN. The use of the words "has an effort" is an unusual construction of the English language. You said this morning that there's a distinction between effort and program.

Mr. FORD. That's correct.

Senator LEVIN. Usually when you are making an effort you are "making an effort," you don't "have an effort." It suggests that there was a different construction when this was first drafted and then the word "program" was changed to "effort"; is that correct?

Mr. FORD. No, sir.

Senator LEVIN. So this was always structured as "has an effort"? It was never "making an effort"?

Mr. FORD. Well, the history has been told to me. I didn't live it, so I can only give you my version of it. But my understanding is that the issue of whether it was a program or an effort goes back at least to the 1999 National Intelligence Estimate, and that at least a distinction that we make is that a program has certain classic signatures that we developed in the intelligence community from looking at the Soviet Union and the Russian CW/BW program. And it has certain components. And that those—that's called a program, because it has a multifaceted, many components to it that are all designed to create military weapons that can be delivered by military forces, conventional military forces—artillery units, air forces, et cetera.

An effort in our minds is the research and development necessary to create BW weapons in the laboratory that can be delivered in conventional means, by putting into a weapon that may have already been built and you bought from Russia for conventional purposes, or, more likely, delivered in some unconventional way; and that it stops short of being a full-fledged 100 percent major program to develop a stockpile of hundreds, thousands of biological weapons.

Senator LEVIN. I think you may have been asked earlier, but if so, forgive me for asking this again. There was a newspaper account in the Washington Times on May 7 that stated that a senior administration official said "Washington has gathered broad and deep evidence of Cuba's pursuit of biological weapons." Have we?

Mr. FORD. I've characterized the INR's position, which I think also reflects the community, that we believe that the evidence—our judgment is that the evidence supports a limited development, a development offensive BW capability.

Senator LEVIN. Is it broad and deep evidence of the pursuit of biological weapons, the focus on "weapons"?

Mr. FORD. Clearly we're suggesting that Cuba is working on biological weapons.

Senator LEVIN. And that we have broad and deep evidence of their pursuit of weapons? I just want to know, is that a fair characterization of that finding?

Mr. FORD. I was not the senior administration official that the Times is talking about.

Senator LEVIN. In your judgment is that a fair characterization?

Mr. FORD. There's no one on my staff—I would not have characterized it as broad and deep. I would say that there is substantial information about Cuba's BW program.

Senator LEVIN. All right. Do you know who issued that statement?

Mr. FORD. No.

Senator LEVIN. It does not reflect, however, in your judgment, your finding, your characterization?

Mr. FORD. I didn't say it. I would characterize it slightly differently.

Senator LEVIN. Have you attempted to find out who mischaracterized it?

Mr. FORD. No. I have asked the question myself, I wonder who that was, but I haven't—no one has admitted it to me.

Senator LEVIN. But you have sought to find out, is that it?

Mr. FORD. Well, like anybody who has followed this, I have asked the question, I wonder who said that?

Senator LEVIN. Why?

Mr. FORD. Well, I just thought it was interesting. Clearly the committee here thought it was interesting, and I've certainly gotten more questions about Cuba and Cuba BW in the last month or so than I ever realized that you could ask, quite frankly.

Senator LEVIN. You will submit to the committee, I believe, if I'm allowed to ask that—Mr. Chairman, I think I can't ask that, so I have to ask you whether or not it would be all right if we ask our witness to submit those two lists to the committee that I suggested.

Senator DODD. Yes, we will make that request.

Mr. FORD. I'd be happy to, Senator. I'm not sure how long it will take us. It may already be prepared and I'll just go ask somebody to give it to me, or it may be we'll have to do a little bit of work. But we'll put it together for you.

[The information requested is classified.]

Mr. FORD. [DELETED].

Senator LEVIN. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator DODD. That Miami Herald story, which I think was the same article in which the words of "broad and deep"—it may not have been, maybe. Well, it's not the Miami Herald. That was the Washington Times. The Miami Herald in October of last year contained a story claiming that Cuba has sold to Iran production technology for recombinant hepatitis B vaccine, interferon used for treatment of viral diseases and some forms of cancer, and a variety of other things used for heart attacks, stroke.

The story was based on a 1999—now, this is a public story, so I'm not asking about any classified information—a 1999 Cuban defector, Dr. Jose de la Fuente, who formerly directed Cuba's Center for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology. He oversaw the work

of 350 scientists at what would be their major, I gather, research facility in the area of biotechnology.

Are you familiar with this individual?

Mr. FORD. Yes.

Senator DODD. Dr. De la Fuente, a defector, told the Miami Herald that he had: "No reason to believe that Cuba's sale of technology to Iran was malicious, although the outcome could be."

Isn't it virtually impossible to deny a country access to dual-use technology in the BW area?

Mr. FORD. Extremely, extraordinarily difficult.

Senator DODD. In other words, are almost all commercial technologies in the pharmaceutical area adaptable to BW purposes as well?

Mr. FORD. Yes.

Senator DODD. Is Cuba—well, I've asked is it the only country. You have answered you don't know that, but you're not going to be surprised if—in fact, we'll state as a matter of record there are other countries, allies of ours, who do sell dual-use technology in the pharmaceutical area to Iran and other rogue states.

Mr. FORD. It certainly wouldn't surprise me. I just don't know it for a fact.

Senator DODD. What dual-use technology has Cuba sold or otherwise made available to rogue states? Which ones? What other countries have made—we don't bother with that question. Would anything they sell in this area be automatically classified as dual-use?

Mr. FORD. What I can say about this, I do touch on this subject briefly in my classified presentation. If you don't mind, I'm not trying to avoid the question, but it would really be better for me to answer this in the closed session.

Senator DODD. Again, I don't want to draw you into policy, but it seems to me if in fact what you said is true, and I believe it to be the case, it is very difficult in the pharmaceutical area, in dual-use technology, to be able to characterize it as strictly BW or not BW because of the potential use of it, the capability.

It seems to me if that's the case then it would make more sense for the United States to deny Iran, Syria, and other rogue states access to vaccine production technology, whether it's from Cuba, France, or any other country. That to me ought to seem to be where the effort ought to be if in fact they're getting it from so many sources. Do you agree with that?

Mr. FORD. Again, as you suggest, that's—I obviously have a personal view and a sense for policy, but that's really not my field. Of course, I think that we should try to do what we can to ensure that rogue states like Iran don't get nuclear, chemical, or biological technologies, dual-use or otherwise, not only from Cuba but from any of our friends, allies, other rogue states.

But I admitted up front that that's very, very difficult. It's in fact—in measuring things, it's much easier to deal with the nuclear problem than it is the biological weapons problem because there's a difference in scale, difference in evidence, difference in requirements. So that BW is probably the most difficult for us to deal with.

Senator DODD. Dealing with the Carter visit, were you aware that President Carter was going to be making a visit to Cuba?

Mr. FORD. I was aware that he was going to Cuba. I had read it in the newspapers or heard it on TV.

Senator DODD. Were you aware about the time that the Bolton speech was cleared by your agency, or your department, rather?

Mr. FORD. Frankly, I didn't know that Secretary Bolton's speech was scheduled or when it was going to be.

Senator DODD. That didn't raise any concerns in your mind that this may have been a speech given in response to the upcoming visit of the former President to Cuba?

Mr. FORD. I didn't make the connection. I could understand why others might, but I simply was focused on another problem during that period of time and I really didn't pay much attention to either the speech or, unfortunately, President Carter's trip to Cuba.

Senator DODD. Did you participate in President Carter's intelligence briefings prior to his recent visit to Cuba?

Mr. FORD. No, Mr. Chairman, I did not. I understand he received one, but it was from CIA or somebody. It wasn't from myself or my staff.

Senator DODD. So you're not aware whether or not he was briefed about BW programs in Cuba?

Mr. FORD. I don't know.

Senator DODD. Is any of our information about Cuba's BW capability or its programs based on Cuban scientists who actually worked in the programs?

Mr. FORD. All of our information is indirect.

Senator DODD. The answer is no?

Mr. FORD. No.

Senator DODD. There have been a number of defectors who've come out of Cuba from the scientific community.

Mr. FORD. That's correct.

Senator DODD. But none of the information on which we base this conclusion is drawn from those sources?

Mr. FORD. Of course, we look at all the information available to us—scientists, intelligence officers, emigres of various sorts from Cuba. And these people have talked at various times and in various levels of detail about a limited offensive BW capability. We didn't just pull it out of the air.

Senator DODD. But none of them had any direct——

Mr. FORD. None of them had direct evidence.

Senator DODD. Except Dr. De la Fuente.

Mr. FORD. Again, we're getting to areas where for me to explain my reasoning and rationale I really need to talk about the whole range of information.

Senator DODD. I understand. But my point is he directed the biotechnology program in Cuba, oversaw 350 scientists. He's asked whether or not there's any information that there was a malicious intent behind the export of dual technology to Iran and he said none. Now, the capability is there, he quickly added. But there's one person who did have a direct knowledge because of his role, a defector, and says no.

But we have no one else from the scientific community who will give us direct evidence, direct evidence to contradict his statement; is that correct?

Mr. FORD. Again, let me talk about the whole subject more in closed session. But I'm not suggesting that your characterization is incorrect or that you are not making a valid point.

Senator DODD. On the treaty violations—again, I won't get into that because that statement you've already said we'll bring that up with others along the way. It gets a little complicated. There's an Australian group and other things that make this a little more difficult.

Mr. FORD. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator DODD. Yes, I thought you might appreciate that.

Secretary Powell has stated that—and I'm quoting—"Cuba has a biological offensive research capability," although the Secretary also stated, and I quote him, "We didn't say that it actually had such weapons, but it has the capacity and the capability to conduct such research."

Under Secretary Bolton and yourself have both stated that Cuba has "limited offensive biological research developmental effort." I wonder if you could help us understand what constitutes capability here. We're getting down to words and I don't want to get so bogged down in the minutiae, but this is a pretty important conclusion and obviously you're going to hear a lot about it, we have heard a lot about it here.

For example, what kinds of laboratories, reagents, agent cultures, equipment, biocontainment facilities, et cetera, must a country possess in order to have such a capability, but not necessarily a program? How would these facilities differ from those needed to support a pharmaceutical R&D company, a university medical school specializing in tropical diseases, for example?

Mr. FORD. Cuba has in our judgment the trained personnel, medical and scientific, the knowledge as supported by their research into various diseases, both human and animal. They have the research facilities, including biocontainment facilities. They have everything you need to build a offensive biological weapon. They don't need anything else.

The difference between that and a program is an arbitrary intelligence community judgment, that to have a program, you need to be able to have a factory that tests the weapon, that puts the weapon in a bomb or a shell and/or does research and development on that sort of weapons program, and has a unit within the military specifically designated for a weapons capability. That whole process of BW warfare is called a program.

One, we don't see that in Cuba. We don't identify it having a program. But it has everything else in order to build the bug that could be used against persons, livestock, or crops.

Senator DODD. Well, I've got a major production facility in my state, Pfizer Corporation in Groton, Connecticut. And 800 scientists are there, a research facility, a fantastic one. Are you suggesting to me that what exists there, because it is a great laboratory and research facility and production facility as well, that that's a capability? Because they're able to produce Viagra, picking a drug out of the air here, that they may be—that capability——

Mr. FORD. As long as it's not personal.

Senator DODD. That capability—no one is suggesting, Carl. You don't need to defend yourself.

Mr. FORD. One, I clearly don't think that——

Senator DODD. You know what I'm getting at here?

Mr. FORD. I understand.

Senator DODD. What my point is is that capability—that's a capability. Does that capability to produce one pharmaceutical product, with all the scientists and so forth, is that the analogy we're making here? And is there evidence that the Cuban pharmaceutical industry, biotechnology industry, is aggressively pursuing production of products that are non-BW in areas to deal with animal husbandry issues, crop issues, human illness? Or is there an absence of that, that would then heighten the degree of concern about a capability that doesn't seem to be doing anything else? Unlike Pfizer's?

Mr. FORD. I always suspected that the people in Connecticut probably didn't like me very much. But beyond that, I assume that—you're right, we're really talking about that there is the capability at medical, biological research facilities in the United States. They have a capability for BW.

I would point to the fact that we're not quite sure—in fact, as I read the newspapers and talk to my colleagues, we all suspect that the anthrax that was used here in the United States, even against the Senate, could very well have been produced right here in the United States. So clearly that capability is there.

The difference between what goes on here in the United States and what we see in Cuba is that they clearly have a capability, and we have seen them working with bad things that could make biological weapons, and they don't like us. They may have good reason for that. That's a different call. But the fact is that they are worried about the United States. They're afraid that we are going to use a weapon of mass destruction, biological, they've argued, or more likely in their minds, probably some sort of nuclear weapon, and that that gives them cause, that gives them a reason why they might want to use this capability to build a weapon.

Senator DODD. Do they have any justification for that? Have we ever had any plans to use——

Mr. FORD. I think they—you know, obviously, I see it from American eyes. I don't think they have any justification at all.

Senator DODD. Have we ever had any plans?

Mr. FORD. I think it's a terrible mistake if that's what they in fact believe.

Senator DODD. Have we ever had any plans to use biological weapons against Cuba?

Mr. FORD. I personally don't know. I hope to God we didn't. But you know, I can't speak for what happened back in the fifties and the sixties. I don't know.

Senator DODD. Well, the fact is they don't like us. We don't like them. That's a major factor in the conclusion?

Mr. FORD. Certainly in my conclusion that I'm not particularly worried about the medical facilities and capability for BW in Connecticut or London or even Paris.

Senator DODD. Unless there's someone there who doesn't like us.

Mr. FORD. But I am worried about it in Iran and Iraq, North Korea, and Cuba. But to say that it wasn't a factor in my thinking,

that the position between or the feelings between Cuba and the United States would be—obviously it is a factor in my assessment.

Senator DODD. Senator Chafee.

Senator CHAFEE. Thank you.

I would like to just followup on "they don't like us." I guess that's the root of my dispute over this whole issue. And it's no different from saying that the Russians didn't like us, but look at what we have accomplished in detente and conciliation. You can say the North Vietnamese didn't like us, but look at what's happening between these two countries now. The Chinese didn't like us back in the Korean War, but look at what is happening.

Why isn't there more of an effort here with Cuba? Just 90 miles away, to bridge across and to maybe assume that they do like us, instead of assuming they're aggressive. It's no different as to whether Canada is capable of having a biological weapon. They're our allies. And I do think—maybe you can dispute this—that the signals coming from that island 90 miles south of us are positive, and that things are changing.

Their ally the Soviet Union is now our ally. Visitors are pouring in, whether Canadians, Swiss, Swedes, Americans, and the olive branch is being extended. Why isn't the rhetoric from the State Department reflecting that?

Mr. FORD. Well, as I suggested earlier, those questions are legitimate, important questions, but those should be directed at Secretary Powell or others at State Department who are responsible for developing our policy on Cuba.

What I can say is that we in INR are telling the Secretary, and we believe, that Cuba has a limited development offensive BW effort.

Senator DODD. We've been joined by Senator Nelson. I apologize, I didn't see him walk into the room. Bill, welcome.

Senator NELSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I'm curious about your statement, BW capability with regard to crops. Could you expand on that?

Mr. FORD. I will try. I would be the first to admit that I am not a biotechnical expert. I wouldn't know a biological weapon if I stumbled over one. So within those restrictions, I will say that as I have been told, that the research capabilities of Cuba include work on various biological agents, pathogens, that could be effective against both people, livestock, and crops.

I had taken that as a pretty fundamental basis of biological weapons, so I didn't question it. I didn't ask them which crops. I'm assuming they're talking about those close by, that you know well, that both the cattle industry and the fruits and vegetables in Florida would be clearly at least on my list of things to be worried about.

Now, I think that I don't want to give you the impression that we are suggesting to the Secretary or anybody else that there is a person with a satchel on his way to Dade County or to Saint Pete with a bag of biological weapons. Indeed, we think that if you want to talk about intentions, that it has to do with their fear of the United States and wanting to have a deterrent, wanting to have something in their capability that they could strike back at us.

I certainly see no indications that there is a first strike capability or effort to attack the United States. It's simply an effort that would give them a capability if at some point in the future they thought it important to attack using a biological weapon. I think that would be a huge mistake for any country, to attack the United States with such a weapon. But that's the future and I can't read all of the—I don't have a crystal ball.

Senator NELSON. So you see their weapons capability as more defensive in their planning, as opposed to offensive?

Mr. FORD. They have an offensive capability, but I think that they see, the Cubans see it, as a deterrent, not as something that they have decided in a back room in Havana that they're going to use against the United States tomorrow, next week, next year, 5 years from now.

Senator NELSON. That being your conclusion—perhaps, Mr. Chairman, you might have already asked this. Perhaps in detail you went into this or perhaps this is for the closed session, about the potential of exporting those particular BW agents to other countries. Have you gotten into that?

Senator DODD. We talked a little about it. Senator Allen has talked a lot about it. We have as well. But it's a big subject, so don't hesitate. I'm sure Carl won't mind your asking.

Senator NELSON. Given the nature of your last answer, that in your opinion that you seem to be of the opinion that their BW elements are more constructed in a defensive nature than offensive nature, well, how does that work into whether or not they would be exporting? And do we have any evidence of exports to other countries?

Mr. FORD. We are concerned about the pattern of trade activities that Cuba has maintained in their biomedical, biotechnical use, equipment use. So that many of the things that they sell and trade with other countries have a dual-use capability. Many or a number of the countries that Cuba deals with are considered adversaries or potential adversaries of the United States, and obviously we're concerned about that technology, whether it's dual-use or not, being transferred to those countries.

Senator NELSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator DODD. I think it's time to go into closed session. Do you have something else, Senator, you want to raise?

Senator ALLEN. Yes, if I may, just a few points.

As far as Cuba, a few questions here, and also Cuba's past use, potentially, or just to get your views on the possible past use of chemical or biological weapons by Cubans, and get clear what former President Jimmy Carter's assertion was, whether you agree or disagree with it.

Back in 1998 columnists Robert Novak and Roland Evans revealed that the Soviet Union was, of course, back in 1988, still in existence, they were supplying Cuban troops who were fighting in Angola. The United States and South Africa were supporting Jonas Savimbi, the UNITA group. They cited evidence scrupulously documented by the senior United Nations consultant on chemical warfare, Dr. Aubin Heyndrickx of Belgium, toxicologists certified that residue from chemical weapons, including sarin, was found in the areas of recent action. When questioned then by Senator Dennis

DeConcini about the rumors, Dr. Heyndrickx, replied: "There is no doubt any more that the Cubans were using nerve gases against troops of Mr. Jonas Savimbi."

The columnists also went on and said how Heyndrickx had warned the United States that if Soviet Cuban managers in Angola used gas in the past, they could in the future.

More evidence also was in 1998 from South Africa, where Wuter Bassin, former head of South Africa's covert chemical weapons program, had given a sworn statement implicating Cuba. He said South Africa was forced to begin its chemical weapons program after Cuba had used chemical warfare on South African troops fighting in Angola. South Africa—this is before they became a free country for all people, but nevertheless—were fighting on the side of the United States with Savimbi, and they felt that their troops were defenseless and unprepared for it.

Can you confirm or deny those assertions as far as the Cubans' efforts in the Angola war back in the late eighties?

Mr. FORD. I don't have any personal knowledge of those events. It doesn't mean that they are true, false. Don't know. If you don't mind, Senator, I will—it's an important enough question that I will take it and find out and report back to you what the INR, what the intelligence community, thinks about those reports.

I'd point out that—but they are talking about chemical weapons, not biological weapons, and our judgments are slightly different. Chemical weapons are somewhat easier to deal with in terms of knowing whether or not they're there or not. Biological weapons are just much more difficult to deal with.

Senator DODD. Well, do we have any evidence that there are chemical weapons in Cuba?

Mr. FORD. No.

Senator ALLEN. Well, some of the concerns as far as the transfers, say, to Iran are chemical and biological weapons. Granted, they may be different, obviously, in their properties, but many times are associated together for logical reasons. And they have—well, we'd like to see what——

Mr. FORD. Particularly since I'm on an unclassified level, before I misspeak let me just make sure and doublecheck both your question and my response to Senator Dodd to make sure that I'm accurate and complete on their chemical, as well as on what happened in Africa and what we think happened in Africa.

[The information referred to is classified.]

Mr. FORD. [DELETED].

Senator ALLEN. I appreciate that.

Finally, and since we're unclear whether Under Secretary Bolton used the word "development" twice in one sentence or "developmental," let me quote from WashingtonPost.com May 14, 2002, on President Carter, former President Carter's statements in Cuba. This is what it says: "I asked them"—regarding State Department people. "I asked them specifically, is there any evidence that Cuba has been involved in sharing any information to any other country on Earth that could be used for terrorist purposes," Carter said. "And the answer"—this is President Carter's comments: "And the answer from our experts on intelligence was no."

Now, is that an accurate statement on the part of former President Carter, that our experts on intelligence say no, there is—that there is no evidence about the Cubans sharing information with any other country on Earth that could be used for terrorist purposes?

Mr. FORD. As I indicated earlier, Senator, I don't have any personal knowledge of what CIA or someone else may have briefed President Carter on. So I can't speak to that.

Senator ALLEN. Well, regardless, let's assume—let's stipulate you were not in the room. You did not brief him. He was not asked—he did not ask you questions or anyone else.

Mr. FORD. If he had asked me the question, I would, one, make the clear distinction between terrorism and any questions he may have about Cuban BW effort, capabilities. There are a number of—on terrorism, there are a number of groups and individuals that are terrorists that are resident in and/or travel frequently to Cuba. That's a fact. They are sort of the Who's Who of various terrorist groups in Latin America and also other parts of the world. Do I have extensive knowledge that the Cuban Government is directly supporting terrorist activities against the United States or in other parts of the world? I can't go that far.

Senator ALLEN. Well, former President Carter said that it is no, in fact states that the United States—this was at their biotechnology facility—the United States had no proof that Cuba shared bioweapons data.

Mr. FORD. Well, but see, I would make—I would make the distinction between the questions about terrorism and the questions about BW. My sense is that I am worried, and my statement suggests my worry, that Cuba, with what I believe to be a limited offensive BW effort, has had biomedical contact with a number of countries in the world that worry and bother me. And so that the connection with biological weapons with Iran and other places is based on simply the fact that they are involved in economic, commercial relations with Iran on biomedical devices, capabilities, and research.

So that's why we're worried.

Senator ALLEN. Have you read former President Carter's statements, to the extent you can believe what you read in WashingtonPost.com or elsewhere? I think WashingtonPost.com's accurate. I want to say that they do a very good job.

Senator DODD. That's your local paper. I'd be careful there.

Senator ALLEN. Well, WashingtonPost.com is a great Website.

Mr. FORD. In preparation for this hearing, I did not go back and review either a transcript or the press reports of President Carter's comments. I recall at the time reading in both the Washington Post and the Washington Times——

Senator ALLEN. Both fine newspapers in their own respects.

Mr. FORD [continuing]. That's right—and listening to the radio and television remarks he made and the general thrust of the issues that were discussed.

Senator ALLEN. Since you have your general views of all of that, and if you have any recollection, do you think that his statements of lack of concern on the part of the United States as far as Cuba were an accurate description of our actual policy and the actual

concerns of our country insofar as Cuba's biological weapons capabilities, and also the dissemination or proliferation thereof elsewhere to rogue states?

Mr. FORD. I don't question—at least that sounds, as I recall, what President Carter asserted, and I don't question that.

Senator ALLEN. Right. Was that an accurate description of our position and concerns?

Mr. FORD. INR's position, which is the only one I can talk directly to——

Senator ALLEN. Right.

Mr. FORD [continuing]. Is that we clearly—I wouldn't have mentioned it to you before in March. I wouldn't be here today if I didn't believe that we had good evidence to suggest that there was something to be concerned and worried about. Is it the No. 1 danger posed to the United States? Do you go home and worry about it every night and can't sleep? No, it's not at the top of my priority list in terms of the greatest threats posed to the United States, but that's my intelligence judgment.

I've got a number of other things you want to worry about that I'd like to add to the list. It's on my list. It's something that I think that the committee and certainly my bosses in the executive branch need to know about, and I certainly don't quarrel with them saying that they are concerned about it in their public statements. But that's about as best I can do in terms of Carl Ford and INR's view.

Senator ALLEN. You've been very diplomatic in many respects here and I will just state my impression is that the President, former President Carter's, statements are inconsistent with your testimony on March 19 before this committee. But I'll not make you have to——

Mr. FORD. He probably would say that, too.

Senator ALLEN. OK. Well, good, fine.

Thank you.

Senator DODD. Thank you.

Senator ALLEN. No further questions.

Senator NELSON. Mr. President—"Mr. President." Mr. Chairman——

Senator DODD. That has a nice ring to it.

Senator NELSON. That does have a nice ring to it, doesn't it.

May I divert here just a little bit because of the credentials of our witness. We just passed a resolution sponsored by me out of this committee a week and a half ago commending those brave soldiers in Cuba who have signed the petition on the Varela Project. The question that often comes regarding those 11,000 brave souls that put their name on a petition to Castro's government is, is the Castro government going to clamp down on them? One of the reasons for us passing the Senate resolution was to try to draw all the more attention, world attention, to their very courageous action.

Do you have any information with regard to any plans or any actions that the Castro government has taken or would be taking against those citizens who signed the petition in Cuba?

Mr. FORD. Senator, I share your concern. We are watching closely. At this point I don't know of any evidence that suggests that there has actually been a specific case of retaliation or punishment

or any impact. That doesn't mean there hasn't been or that there won't be. I just haven't seen it yet.

Senator NELSON. What is it, as you observe the changing conditions internally in Cuba, that would suddenly allow this seed to germinate and sprout where people would suddenly stand up and defy the Cuban Government by, according to the Cuban constitution, coming forth and signing a petition, of which 10,000 names were required, to put an issue in front of the National Assembly? What is changing there that suddenly allowed that seed to germinate and sprout?

Mr. FORD. Well, I suspect that you know more, have forgotten more, than I know about Cuba. So I'm not——

Senator NELSON. I'm interested in your observations from your world.

Mr. FORD. But I don't find that all that surprising. One, it isn't the first time that people have taken great risk to speak out or make a choice about what they thought was going on in Cuba. They've been coming here, risking their lives, for as long as I can remember. So that that was always a signal to me. When a person will get on a boat that doesn't float and set out across from Cuba to the United States, risking their and their family's lives, it suggests to me that they really want to get here.

Senator NELSON. I'll tell you what's different about that and this, though, is that this, they put their name on the line and they're staying in Cuba. In the situations you just described, people are trying to flee.

Mr. FORD. I accept that, Senator. But I would make the argument that the courage involved and the process, the thought process, is not at all that different, because there's no guarantee that you can get out. You might be picked up by Cuban police or Cuban Coast Guard and, if caught trying to escape, you're going to be punished.

I think the other part of it, though, is that I think that it's very difficult over an extended period of time to keep people from expressing their political, social views; and that it's not just Cuba. We've seen changes that we never would have imagined and the intelligence community didn't pick up on in former Soviet Union, now Russia. But we've also seen changes throughout Eastern Europe, China, a lot of places that we've seen changes.

So the notion that people in Cuba would be any different or be any less willing to take and state their desire for democracy and greater freedom doesn't surprise me. But I'm not a Cuban expert. There may be a very good reason that an expert up here would say: Oh, yeah, I've got this piece of evidence that says this is why this is happening now.

I frankly did not react as it being something new and different. I was a little surprised, but pleased, that this sort of approach had emerged in Cuba.

Senator NELSON. Well, I too was surprised, very pleased. If you see any evidence either that you can share publicly or privately that in fact there is any retribution against these 11,000-plus courageous souls, I want you to share that with me.

Mr. FORD. Yes, sir, will do.

Senator NELSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator DODD. Thank you, Senator Nelson.

Now let me make a couple of closing observations if I can. First of all, we appreciate your being here, Mr. Ford. Your statement at the outset that obviously you deal with intelligence matters, Mr. Bolton deals with policy—I presume the two of you have met from time to time with the Secretary simultaneously.

Mr. FORD. That's not—in this case, I have met with the Secretary on this issue. I have met with Secretary Bolton on this issue, but not together. The only time that Secretary Bolton and I were together was we met once briefly with Secretary Armitage, Secretary Bolton and myself, a week, 10 days ago.

Senator DODD. Well, the point I make is the one I did at the outset, and that is I want to express again my disappointment here. I appreciate your being here, but Mr. Bolton is the Under Secretary. This is a—it's not about the personalities on this committee. It's this committee, the Foreign Relations Committee of the U.S. Senate, and when an Under Secretary makes a speech to a "political" organization here in town and then refuses or is told he cannot come to testify before a standing committee of the Congress on the subject matter of that speech, it is terribly disappointing.

That's unhealthy in this country. There is a responsibility that the executive branch owes to the legislative branch, with our oversight responsibilities, to appear before us and to respond to questions that are raised. If it was comfortable enough for him to submit his remarks to the intelligence group department at the State Department and then give a speech that received wide publicity, and then not be allowed to come before this subcommittee, that is deeply disturbing to me. Beyond the specifics here, that is deeply disturbing.

I understand the Secretary is prepared to testify and, if necessary, have Mr. Bolton come up. That's a rather long, circuitous route. It would have been just as easy for him to be here this morning to go over this, to respond to the questions. So I wanted to make that point again to you.

Second, I think it is—I am sorry my colleague from Virginia has left because I wanted to make this statement in his presence as well. I happen to believe that most people admire immensely what President Carter did by going down to Cuba and giving a very blunt and frank talk in the presence of Fidel Castro and the Cuban people, given a unique opportunity not allowed to any Cuban, by the way, to express their views on national television and radio, when he called for democracy in that country, when he specifically referred to the Valera group that my colleague from Florida has mentioned, and their rights.

That is the first time that a person of that level and rank has gone down and used the opportunity in a public forum that he was given to really be of a very honest and frank expression, I think, of the views of many Americans. Whatever else we may disagree about here, none of us harbor anything but a fervent desire and hope that the Cuban people be free, and they are not free. They live under a dictator. That's the long and the short of it.

Your characterization I think is accurate in the sense that this is a far lower priority for all the obvious reasons we don't need to go into, than other places around the world that pose a threat to

us. And I think Senator Nelson is correct, there are some interesting signs here. The question is whether or not we're going to be clever enough to pick up on those signs, to listen carefully to the dissident community within Cuba.

I have great admiration for those who have fled and placed their lives on the line to come to this country. I have even a heightened degree of admiration for those who are dissidents who decided to stay. I say that with all due respect to those who have made the decision to leave. But for those who've stayed and done the 20 and 25 and 30 years in prison, we ought to listen carefully to their advice and counsel as to how to proceed.

President Carter I think did a wonderful, wonderful job, and all Americans, whether you agree with everything he said or every comment made, I think he's opened up some new opportunities for us here regarding change in Cuba that weren't present otherwise.

And I wasn't going to say this, but since the characterization that he may have misspoke—he was given information. He specifically asked about whether or not there were particular problems in this area. He was told there were not. I don't for a second question the veracity of President Jimmy Carter, and I don't know many Americans who ever would. So when he had a briefing and he was asked about concerns, he was told this matter did not come up, and I take him at his word, and I believe that most Americans would as well.

We're grateful for your testimony. And I'd like to spend a few minutes with you in closed session to go over some of the issues you could not, and rightfully could not, raise in a public forum, and I'd invite my colleague Senator Nelson to join us for that purpose. The public session of this committee will stand adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 11:42 a.m., the subcommittee was adjourned, to reconvene subject to the call of the Chair.]

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