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U.S. MUST STOP IRAN'S NUKES: REPORT

May 19, 2005 Middle East Newslite reported: "The United States must halt Iran's nuclear weapons programs by any means necessary, a panel of leading Americans said. The Presidential Study Group, sponsored by the Washington Institute, said in a report that Iran's nuclear weapons program represents a major threat to the United States. The group said Iran marked the most difficult proliferation challenge in the Middle East and must be stopped.

"Stopping Iran short of achieving a nuclear weapons capability -- by diplomacy if possible; by other means, if necessary -- is a vital U.S. interest," the report said. The panel said an Iranian atomic bomb would spark nuclear weapons programs throughout the Middle East. The report cited Algeria, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Syria."

EU MINISTERS PLAN MEETING TO DISCUSS IRAN NUCLEAR PROGRAM

May 19, 2005 Voice of America reported: "European foreign ministers are expected to meet in Paris next week to look for ways to coax Iran to abandon its alleged nuclear weapons program. It is unclear whether the European Union will adopt a harder line in talks now that Tehran has vowed to resume suspended nuclear activities.

Foreign ministers from France, Britain and Germany spearheading talks with Iran on its nuclear program are faced with a difficult situation. Europe's strategy of pressuring Tehran through diplomatic channels to give up its suspected nuclear program has not worked. But whether the Europeans will discuss a "Plan B" when they meet next week is unclear.

Iran's top nuclear negotiator, Hasan Rowhani, is expected to represent his government in the negotiations. Senior fellow Bruno Tertrais, of the Paris-based Foundation for Strategic Research, believes a new phase in EU-Iranian negotiations is unlikely to begin until after Iran's June presidential elections. He predicts the Europeans will likely use the upcoming meeting to reassess their strategy.

"I guess the Europeans at this point of time are going to take stock of what has been achieved or not achieved and will decide on the next steps, whether the Europeans should change their strategy, whether they should offer more, or whether they should threaten more in case the negotiations fail. That sort of thing," he explained.

Regular talks between Iranian and European officials have been going on for 19 months. But they floundered after Tehran announced it would resume its nuclear-enrichment program, which it insists is being carried out for peaceful purposes.

The United States and Europe have threatened Iran with the possibility of having the matter referred by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to the United Nations, where Tehran could face sanctions. But Mr. Tertrais, for one, does not believe the Europeans will fundamentally change their tactics, which have consisted of mixing the sanctions threat with promises of economic and political benefits should Iran abandon nuclear enrichment altogether. Instead, he believes the position shift may come from Tehran, especially if the country faces a serious sanctions threat.

"One possibility is that Iran, if it sees that the situation is indeed transmitted to the UN Security Council, will back down," he said. "Which is very possible if we assume that Iran would not be happy to be isolated and have fingers pointed at the country [at the UN] in New York."

Experts say Europe is likely to lean toward recommending U.N. sanctions if diplomatic channels fail, a position supported by the United States."

OFFICIAL PA SERMON: MUSLIMS WILL RULE AMERICA

May 18, 2005 WorldNetDaily reported: "An Islamic preacher on the payroll of the Palestinian Authority gave a fiery sermon broadcast on PA television in which he vowed Muslims would rule America and called Jews an AIDS-like virus that will soon be finished off.

"Allah has tormented us with 'the people most hostile to the believers' -- the Jews," said Sheik Ibrahim Mudeiris in his Friday sermon. Mudeiris said that with the establishment of the state of Israel, "the entire Islamic nation was lost, because Israel is a cancer spreading through the body of the Islamic nation, and because the Jews are a virus resembling AIDS, from which the entire world suffers.

"You will find that the Jews were behind all the civil strife in this world. The Jews are behind the suffering of the nations."

Mudeiris then recounted how nations have tortured and driven out Jews over the centuries, insisting it was deserved in each case due to provocation. He referred to Britain in the sixth century, France at the time of Louis XIX, Portugal, Czarist Russia and finally Nazi Germany.

"It was the Jews who provoked Nazism to wage war against the entire world, when the Jews, using the Zionist movement, got other

countries to wage an economic war on Germany and to boycott German merchandise," he said. "They provoked Russia, Britain, France and Italy. This enraged the Germans toward the Jews, leading to the events of those days, which the Jews commemorate today."

The sheik said Jews are committing "worse deeds than those done to them in the Nazi war." They have inflated their suffering, he said, "in order to win over the media and gain the world's sympathy."

Mudeiris said Allah has made all of the great superpowers in the past disappear, and "he who made them disappear will make America disappear too, God willing. He who made Russia disappear overnight is capable of making America disappear and fall, Allah willing."

U.S. CONGRESS MOVES AGAINST IRAN

May 17, 2005 Middle East Newsline: "The U.S. Congress has decided to support efforts to overthrow the Islamic regime in Iran. A bill has been introduced in the Senate that would support the opposition in Iran. The legislation, termed the Iran Freedom and Support Act, would require that the United States work to ensure a referendum in Iran on the type of regime sought by the people.

The legislation was introduced by Sen. Rick Santorum, a Pennsylvania Republican and a member of the GOP leadership in the Senate. Santorum has served as chairman of the Republican Conference and the third-ranking member of the Senate Republican leadership.

In a statement, Santorum said Iran has been linked to strikes against U.S. military personnel in Saudi Arabia in 1996 and Al Qaida attacks against civilians in Saudi Arabia in 2004. The United States has never blamed Iran for Al Qaida's campaign in Saudi Arabia..."

WHO TO WARN ON CHANGING AVIAN FLU

May 18, 2005 BBC News reported: "The WHO is to announce new research showing that the pattern of avian flu in northern Vietnam is consistent with human-to-human infection. BBC News has obtained an advance copy of the study, which urges governments to bolster public health measures. The new methods will be needed to protect against a new influenza pandemic, the WHO paper says.

It is thought that at least 92 people have caught the avian influenza virus from handling poultry since late 2003. But in a handful of cases, there is the suspicion that the virus has mutated and spread from person to person. Scientists fear this new infection could form the basis of a new world-wide flu pandemic. In the first detailed assessment of this possibility, a WHO team says that the infection pattern in northern Vietnam may indicate that the infection is passing from one person to another..."

SELF-CLONING ROBOTS ARE A CHIP OFF THE OLD BLOCK

May 11, 2005 NewScientist.com reported: BIRDS and bees do it - now machines can reproduce too. The first scalable robot to have built an exact copy of itself could herald a fundamental rethink of how robots may be used to explore other planets. Hod Lipson and colleagues at Cornell University in Ithaca, New York, built their self-replicating device using small mechanical building blocks that can swivel, and also attach themselves to one another using electromagnets.

Each 10 centimetre cube contains a microprocessor, and they are all equipped with an identical set of instructions that tell the block how to connect and swivel, depending on the way it is linked to other blocks. The instructions are designed to make the blocks work together to self-replicate.

For example, three or four blocks piled on top of each other to form a tower can create an identical tower by swivelling round like a crane to pick up other nearby blocks and pile them on top of each other. "The instructions aren't complex. In fact, they turn out to be surprisingly simple," Lipson says.

Because the blocks are identical, larger structures can be made by adding more blocks. This scalability is important, Lipson says. Previous work on self-replication has involved only simulations and specially designed machines. "But ours is not a one-off. It proves that there is a whole family of self-replicating machines that can do this."

"It's a neat piece of work. If you could miniaturise these blocks and manufacture them cheaply in large numbers, you could build some interesting structures," says Adrian Bowyer from the University of Bath, UK, who specialises in self-replication. Lipson hopes to do just that by reducing the size of his blocks.

Self-replication could have major implications for how robots are used in remote environments where repairing them is difficult..." "Self-replication is the ultimate form of repair," Lipson says. "You can imagine robotic systems on Mars or at the ocean bottom