

PROPHETIC TIMES

WEEKLY WORLD NEWS UPDATE

OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA

DECEMBER 30 2006

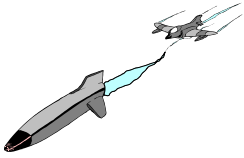
EIGHT NATIONS NOW BUILDING ICBM NUCLEAR MISSILES

December 28, 2006 SpaceWar.com reported: "Ballistic missile defense programs around the world are going to have their work cut out for them: At least eight nations went all out in developing their own offensive ballistic missile programs in 2006, a new survey says.

"According to a preliminary count, eight countries launched more than 26 ballistic missiles of 23 types in 24 different events," the Strategic Security Blog of the Federation of American Scientists reported Friday.

North Korea was not on the only ballistic missile-developing nation to experience test failures in its 2006 missile testing, the SSB report noted. Russia and India did too.

However, "the United States demonstrated a very reliable capability including the 117th consecutive successful launch of the Trident II D5 sea-launched ballistic missile," the SSB said.



The SSB noted the extensive ballistic missile testing activities of the United States, Russia, France and India, and dryly noted that they reflected "yet another double standard in international security." It recommended "that initiatives are needed to limit not only proliferating countries from developing ballistic missiles but also find ways to curtail the programs of the existing nuclear powers."

"The ballistic missile flight tests involved weapons ranging from 10-warhead intercontinental ballistic missiles down to single-warhead short-range ballistic missiles. Most of the flight tests, however, involved long-range ballistic missiles and the United States, Russia and France also launched sea-launched ballistic missiles," the report said.

Russia's sea-launched Bulava intercontinental ballistic missile failed in two consecutive test launches, suggesting significant problems with the program, the SSB noted. However, it cautioned that "tests of five other missile types shows that Russia still has effective missile forces."...

As previously documented in these columns, the report noted that China finally test fired its long-delayed DF-31 ICBM and India tried to test fire its ambitious new Agni III ICBM."..."

IRAN TO REDUCE NUCLEAR COOPERATION AFTER SANCTIONS

December 27, 2006 SpaceWar.com reported: "Iran's parliament on Wednesday approved a bill obliging the government to "revise its cooperation" with the UN nuclear watchdog in retaliation for Security Council sanctions imposed on Tehran. The text of the bill, which also tells the government to "accelerate" Iran's controversial nuclear programme, was approved by an overwhelming majority in the conservative-controlled parliament, with 161 in favour and 15 against.

The move is set to further inflame tensions over the Iranian nuclear programme, which the Islamic republic has vowed to expand in defiance of the sanctions agreed by the UN Security Council last week. Iran has refused to heed the council's demand to suspend uranium enrichment, a process that Western countries fear could be used to develop a nuclear weapon. Iran insists its atomic drive is entirely peaceful.

The formulation of the bill gives the government a free hand to limit cooperation with the Vienna-based International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) as it sees fit. This could involve limiting UN inspections of its atomic sites, a move urged by several lawmakers. "Officials from the foreign ministry and the supreme national security council should be left to interpret the text," said Deputy Foreign Minister Hamid Reza Asefi, who promoted the bill on behalf of the government.

Parliament speaker Gholam Ali Hadad Adel echoed comments from other top officials that Iran did not intend to quit the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty but emphasized the government could interpret the bill as it wanted.

"The government should react (to the bill) in a way appropriate to the international pressure," he added."..."

PALESTINIAN ROCKET ATTACKS TEST TRUCE WITH ISRAEL

December 27, 2006 The Voice of America News reported: "Palestinian militants in the Gaza Strip have fired at least four rockets at Israel, including one that hit a major city. As Robert Berger reports from VOA's Jerusalem bureau, the Israeli government is coming under growing pressure to strike back.

The Islamic Jihad group claimed responsibility for the latest rocket attacks on Israel, which violated a month-old cease-fire in Gaza. One of the rockets landed next to a strategic facility in the city of Ashkelon, close to where dangerous substances are stored.

Several other rockets landed in the hard hit Israeli town of Sderot, where residents are worn out. Resident Michelle Sendell told Israel Radio what it is like in Sderot.

"They're winning," she says. "I mean it may be just one battle out of a big war, but this battle they are winning. Hundreds of families have left Sderot already. People are afraid."

Israeli medics say one of the rockets that hit Sderot wounded two people, including a teenage boy. Israel has opted for restraint, even

though more than 50 Palestinian-made Kassam rockets have been fired across the Gaza border since the truce began. Israeli spokesman Mark Regev.”...”

KING ABDULLAH: ISRAEL NOT AS STRONG AS WE THOUGHT

December 26, 2006 YnetNews.com reported: “Jordan’s King Abdullah said during an interview with Tokyo-based newspaper The Daily Yomiuri that “The Lebanon war last summer showed that Israel is not as strong as we had previously thought, and, justifiably or not, the perception in the Middle East is that Israel lost.”

Abdullah, who is currently visiting Japan, added that “More and more countries in the region will now believe that the only way to get Israel to listen is through force and not negotiations. Israel will have to significant step in the right direction that will lead to calm in the region.”

The Jordanian king stressed that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict remains the main source of Mideast tension. “Until we deal with this issue, which can be easily resolved, the Middle East will be forever cursed, as will the entire Muslim world,” he said. Abdallah said that in light of the current situation Israel must decide whether or not it wishes to remain isolated.

“The Arab countries are very interested in moving the peace process along, and this conveys a message to the Israelis: If we advance the peace process and implement a two-state solution, all the Arab and Muslim countries will agree to establish (diplomatic) relations with Israel,” he said.”...”

NORTH KOREA WARNS US AGAINST INCREASING SANCTIONS

December 23, 2006 The VOA News reported: “North Korea has warned the United States against increasing sanctions, after no progress was made at the latest round of six-party nuclear disarmament talks. The North Korean army's chief of staff, Kim Yong Chun, said Saturday his country will respond with tougher measures if the U.S. imposes more sanctions. He did not specify what North Korea might do.

This latest round of six-party talks on North Korea's nuclear program ended in Beijing without a breakthrough earlier this week. They were the first held by the six nations in more than a year, and the first since Pyongyang conducted a nuclear test in October.

North Korea promised in principle to disarm in 2005. But it has refused to negotiate implementation until the U.S. lifts financial sanctions imposed last year in response to North Korea's alleged counterfeiting and money laundering.

U.S. envoy Christopher Hill said he is disappointed that this week's nuclear talks made no tangible progress.”...”

U.S. CONTINUES TO MOVE WARSHIPS INTO GULF

December 23, 2006 The Middle East Newline reported: “The U.S. Navy continues to move warships into the Gulf in an effort to counter Iran's growing military might. Officials said the Bush administration has approved deployment of a range of warships to the Gulf over the next few months. They said the effort was meant to assuage fears by Gulf Cooperation Council states of Iran's nuclear program and military buildup.

“The ships are coming from the Indian Ocean and the Red Sea,” an official said. “It's a show of force and will be conducted in a steady and calm manner.”

On Dec. 11, the U.S. Navy moved the Eisenhower Strike Group into the Gulf. The group contains three escort ships and an attack submarine.”...”



SADDAM HUSSEIN'S BAAATH PARTY THREATENS TO RETALIATE IF THEIR LEADER IS EXECUTED

December 27, 2005 The International Herald Tribune reported: “Saddam Hussein's Baath Party threatened Wednesday to retaliate if the ousted Iraqi leader is executed, warning in an Internet posting it would target U.S. interests anywhere. The statement appeared on a Web site known to represent the Baath, which was disbanded after U.S.-led forces overthrew Saddam in 2003. The site is believed to be run from Yemen, where a number of exiled members of the party are based.

On Tuesday, Iraq's highest court rejected Saddam's appeal against a conviction and death sentence for the killing of 148 people who were detained after an attempt to assassinate in Dujail, northern Iraq, in 1982. The court said the former president should be hanged within 30 days.

“Our party warns again of the consequences of executing Mr. President and his comrades,” the statement said. “The Baath and the resistance are determined to retaliate, with all means and everywhere, to harm America and its interests if it commits this crime,” the statement added, referring to Baath fighters as “the resistance.”...”

*Compiled by L. Jim Tuck, Pastor
UCGIA Oakland, San Jose, Stockton, and Santa Rosa
ljt5053@sbcglobal.net*