

Chem-Bio News

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CB Daily Report

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CABINET OFFICE ORDERED TO RELEASE SECRET MEMOS ON IRAQ DOSSIER

By James Macintyre
The Independent [UK]
September 4, 2008

"Secret emails and memos showing how the Iraq war dossier was "sexed-up" must be released by the Cabinet Office, The Independent has learnt.

Richard Thomas, the information commissioner, has told civil servants to release undisclosed material which could provide "evidence that the dossier was deliberately manipulated in order to present an exaggerated case for military action".

After repeated freedom of information requests, Mr Thomas says in a 20-page ruling given to The Independent that there is a clear public interest in seeing comments about drafts of the dossier between 11 and 16 September 2002, in the days before Alastair Campbell suggested changes. Mr Thomas adds that there is no national security justification for keeping these comments from politicians secret.

The Government's case for the war was set out in the dossier about Saddam Hussein's weapons capabilities, published on 24 September 2002 and overseen by the head of the Joint Intelligence Committee, Sir John Scarlett.

Mr Campbell suggested 11 changes to the draft, which were all adopted in the final week before publication, included changing how biological weapons "could be used" to "are capable of being used", and changing "may have" to "have", regarding the authority of Saddam's sons' to launch chemical or biological weapons. Tony Blair famously claimed in the document that Saddam could deploy weapons of mass destruction "within 45 minutes of an order to use them".

The full article can be found at: <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/cabinet-office-ordered-to-release-secret-memos-on-iraq-dossier-918050.html>

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RADIATION DETECTOR PLAN FALLS SHORT, AUDIT SHOWS

By Robert O'Harrow, Jr.
The Washington Post
September 4, 2008

"An ambitious Bush administration program to use new technology to stop radioactive materials from being smuggled into the country has fallen far short of its aims and will likely be sharply curtailed, according to an audit report obtained by The Washington Post.

The project, involving three contractors, has been embroiled in allegations that the department's Domestic Nuclear

Detection Office misled Congress about the testing, cost and effectiveness of the machines. Budget documents this year showed the cost to put the monitors at borders and ports would be far higher than the detection office originally estimated.

An audit report by the federal Government Accountability Office shows that officials in the detection office plan to deploy the machines, known as advanced spectroscopic portal monitors or ASPs, on a far more limited basis than originally planned. The new plan will focus on using the machines to monitor cargo containers, the report said. The detection office is not sure what method it will use to screen "rail cars, privately owned vehicles, airport cargo and cargo at seaport terminals" in the near future, the report said.

The report said "senior DNDO officials acknowledge a deployment program that is dramatically different in scope than the one presented to and approved by Congress. Program officials now state the program includes only the standard cargo ASP -- a significant reduction in planned ASP equipment."

The full article can be found at: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/09/03/AR2008090303326.html>

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REMOTE SATELLITE IMAGING USED TO TRACK CHOLERA

R&D

September 3, 2008

"Scientists in the U.S. have established a way to predict outbreaks of cholera, making it easier to control. This finding could provide a model to predict and potentially control outbreaks of other important infectious diseases."

"The bacterium that causes cholera, *Vibrio cholerae*, has a known association with a crustacean (called a copepod) which lives on zooplankton, a type of plankton. Cholera outbreaks have been linked with environmental factors, including sea surface temperature, ocean height, and biomass (this is estimated by measuring chlorophyll produced by plankton). Professor Rita R. Colwell and her team at the Univ. of Maryland, College Park, have used remote satellite imaging to track this climatologically important information and the data collected now can be used to predict outbreaks of cholera before they occur."

The full article can be found at: <http://www.rdmag.com/ShowPR.aspx?PUBCODE=014&ACCT=1400000101&ISSUE=0809&RELTYPE=MIC&PRODCODE=00000000&PRODLETT=U&CommonCount=0>

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VIRGINIA FUNDS \$23.4 MILLION IN LOCAL HOMELAND SECURITY PROJECTS

Govtech.com

September 3, 2008

"Enhanced Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear and Explosive Devices Capabilities (\$1,700,000) - Funds new equipment and vehicles to detect and monitor weapons of mass destruction and to respond to building collapses. This funding will also replenish, replace and upgrade existing equipment as needed for the state's nine Hazardous Materials Officers, 24 hazardous materials/WMD teams and seven Heavy Technical Rescue Teams, which are locally based and work together at the regional level. The Virginia Department of Emergency Management and Virginia Department of Fire Programs will distribute the funding for these initiatives."

The full article can be found at: http://www.govtech.com/gt/print_article.php?id=404356

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CDC CHIEF STATES FLU PANDEMIC IS COMING

By Terry Rindfleisch

LaCrosseTribune.com

September 5, 2008

"Ready or not, a flu pandemic is coming, says Dr. Julie Gerberding, director of the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention."

"She said politicians are not talking about a flu pandemic or the bird flu virus, which may or may not be the virus that causes the next pandemic.

"No one is talking about it, and it's not on their radar screen," Gerberding said."

"Gerberding said organizations and corporations need to come up with preparedness plans and confront the impact of a flu pandemic. Some people believe a pandemic won't happen, while others feel too overwhelmed to do anything, she said.

"Complacency is the enemy of health protection," she said.

"The CDC is building 18 global disease detection and response centers around the world, Gerberding said.

Despite all the planning so far, epidemiologist Michael Osterholm, who helped lead the CDC before Gerberding was appointed director, said everyone needs to be more prepared due to our global economy.

Osterholm, director of the infectious disease center at the University of Minnesota, said the death rate from the next pandemic could exceed 300 million."

The full article can be found at: <http://www.lacrossetribune.com/articles/2008/09/05/news/00lead.txt>

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