

SHOE

by Jeff MacNelly



U.S. plans against terrorists' acquisition of atomic bomb

Associated Press
 WASHINGTON — The State Department, searching for a formula to free the 40 American hostages in Beirut, is quietly grappling with a long-range threat even more horrifying: the possibility that terrorists may someday get their hands on an atomic bomb.

David Mabry, deputy director of the State Department's anti-terrorism office, said Monday that the department is very much involved in planning to prevent violent groups from using atomic bombs or installations as weapons or targets.

Mabry would not give details of the department's classified program, which he mentioned to reporters after he and other experts attended a

closed-door symposium on nuclear terrorism.

The conference, sponsored by the Nuclear Control Institute and the State University of New York's terrorism studies program, brought together a group of scientists, arms control specialists and terrorism experts convinced that killers could steal fissionable materials, make an atomic bomb and use it to blackmail nations.

Rep. Richard A. Gephardt, D-Mo., said, "Anybody who thinks terrorists can't acquire the technical knowledge to build an atom bomb hasn't picked up your average encyclopedia or talked to a college physics major."

Later he said, "The president

wants to spend hundreds of billions of dollars on 'Star Wars' to defend against Soviet missiles, but that won't give us a dime's worth of security against a terrorist's nuclear bomb."

Retired Adm. Thomas Davies, former chief of development for the Navy, said terrorists might be able to steal a nuclear bomb. There are nearly 50,000 nuclear weapons in the world spread throughout hundreds of storage sights protected "in theory" by high quality systems and personnel, Davies said.

He noted recent reports that it might be possible to build a backpack nuclear weapon with the power of 250 tons of TNT deliverable by a two-man commando team.

Crash

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 bomb threat. Police searched the plane for more than six hours, but found no explosives.

The International Air Transport Association, based in Montreal, said airline security experts would meet there Friday to review airline security.

Sean Brady, spokesman for the Canadian Foreign Office in Ottawa, said investigators were looking for possible links between the Air-India

crash and an explosion about an hour earlier Sunday in a baggage container that had been taken off a Canadian Pacific airliner in Tokyo.

Organizations of India's Sikh minority have denied involvement in the Air-India crash.

The Toronto Globe and Mail said Indian officials suspected the Air-India crash and the Canadian Pacific bomb were the work of two Sikh fugitives wanted by the FBI in connection with an alleged plot to kill Rajiv Gandhi, India's prime minister,

when he visited the United States earlier this month.

It quoted unidentified Indian government officials as saying one of the fugitives, Lal Singh, had a ticket for the Tokyo-bound Canadian Pacific flight and his baggage apparently was loaded, but he did not board.

Experts have said the apparent suddenness of the crash and the absence of a distress signal point to an explosion aboard.

Simpson

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 because the 'Old Army' never existed."

The "Old Army" exists only in the minds of former students, Simpson said.

"The former students of this institution have the most convenient memory of any group of people I've ever seen," he said. "By convenient I mean they have a screen that lets them remember only the good things that happened during their time here and they conveniently forget that there were a lot of terrible things that happened to them here."

Simpson said it will take time for the changes to be accepted, but change is nothing new to the Corps.

"It takes time to change," he said. "For example, it has taken 10 years

but the young ladies in the Corps are finally being accepted. They are being accepted on their own merit, not because some court says so."

The 1979 laws against the University by Melanie Zentgraf actually hurt the women in the Corps, Simpson said.

"If it had not been for the Zentgraf case, women would be where they are right now, five years ago," he said.

Simpson said women were starting to be accepted by the male members of the Corps when Zentgraf filed the suit.

"After Zentgraf filed the suit and her mother wrote a letter to Jack Anderson which he printed in his column, the people who were just about to accept women in the Corps had their opinions frozen," he said. "The

opposition to women was crystallized, and if a guy said it was all right to have women in the Corps, people looked at him and said he was crazy. The Zentgraf case set the cause of women in the Corps back five years."

But the death of cadet Bruce Goodrich last August accelerated the anti-hazing changes made by the University and the Corps, Simpson said.

"If it can be said that anything good can come out of anyone's tragic death, then the good thing to come out of that tragedy is that it made people more aware of the problems of hazing," he said. "Out of that came the realization that this type of thing can't be tolerated and it won't be. The Corps was heading that way anyway, and that tragedy sped up the process."

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