

TEXT: CLARKE PREVIEWS NEW U.S. STEPS TO COUNTER TERRORISM
(Addresses counter-measures to chem-bio attacks)

October 8, 1998

Washington -- "We will not tolerate terrorist organizations acquiring or maintaining stockpiles of weapons of mass destruction, says the Clinton administration's National Coordinator for Security, Critical Infrastructure Protection and Counter-Terrorism.

Richard Clarke says the administration is reorganizing to improve its ability to respond to a terrorist attack involving such weapons.

Speaking October 7 at a conference on countering chemical and biological warfare, Clarke said Attorney General Janet Reno is completing the new organizational structure, which she will announce in mid-October.

While refusing to preview the specifics of the new plan, he did say it would provide what he called "one-stop shopping" for state and local officials seeking federal aid in training and buying equipment to protect citizens from biological or chemical weapons.

Clarke said the plan would require cities and states to produce their own emergency counter-terrorism plans before federal money is released. It would also authorize centralized federal purchasing of most of the equipment that states and localities now buy individually to detect a chemical or biological attack and much of the clothing they now buy to protect emergency service personnel.

"But before we spend a single dollar," Clarke added, "we'll figure out to whom local officials should turn" in the event of a biological or chemical emergency.

Clarke also warned terrorist groups seeking to acquire weapons of mass destruction that Washington is prepared to strike first in self-defense.

"The United States reserves for itself the right of self-defense, and if that means our taking the first step, we will do so," he said. "We will not tolerate terrorist organizations acquiring or maintaining stockpiles of weapons of mass destruction."

Clarke's remarks were made during a conference held in Washington October 6-7 which was sponsored by Jane's Information Group, a publisher of information on military topics.

Following is the text Clarke's remarks as delivered:

(begin text)

Thank you. And for those of you who are not from Washington, let me welcome you to Washington on this fine autumn day. Autumn always makes me feel reminiscent for going back to school. I feel as the air gets crisp, I should be getting out my book bag. And that always fills me with a little bit of dread. But I also remember that autumn means football season at the schools, and that makes me feel a little bit better about the whole thing.

Today, however, if you went to my high school's football field, which was in Franklin Park in Boston,

the suits the people would be suiting up in would not be those of the football team. For today, on the field at Franklin Park in Boston, we're having another urban chem-bio terrorist exercise. Today on that field, rather than tending to shin splints, we are tending to decontamination and diagnosis. And that sort of thing has been going on, as most of you know, across the country over the course of the last year.

Two weeks ago here in Washington, it occurred at Kennedy stadium. The week before that it occurred at Fairmount Park in Philadelphia. And emergency departments throughout the country are beginning to train seriously with the federal government for chem-bio attack. Why is that? Why is there this new federal/local effort?

The program, of course, has its origins in the Nunn-Lugar-Domenici Amendment from several years ago, but on May 22, President Clinton took some serious departures from past executive branch policy in this area. I want to talk today about why he made those departures, what they are, what we have done since his announcement, and what we're going to be doing.

First of all, he announced that he was taking back from the Congress \$300 million worth of appropriations that he had proposed in February of this year, taking away programs that he had proposed only a few months earlier, to take that \$300 million and reprogram it into chem-bio defense. That is the first time any president has done anything of that magnitude. Secondly, he announced his intention to create, for the first time in this country, a federal nationwide stockpile of specialized medicines for the protection of the civilian population against chem-bio attack.

Thirdly, he proposed a program at well over \$100 million a year to provide equipment, diagnostic equipment, detection equipment, protective equipment directly to state and local governments. That increased the previous effort by tenfold. And, finally, he announced a program of research into gene mapping so that if there are new designer biological agents, we will understand their recombinant DNA gene mapping and might be able to deal with them more effectively.

Why did President Clinton make that announcement in May? What is new? What is going on that justifies such a radical departure from past policy? To answer that question, I think we need to look at the historical context in which all of this is occurring. The United States is the world's only remaining superpower. That does not mean, however, that we no longer have or will have enemies. What it does probably mean is that our enemies will no longer engage in folly like lining up their main battle tanks in the desert sands for us to knock them out.

The United States can defeat in a conventional war any other military in the world. They know that. So we are unlikely in the next war to be engaged purely in a conventional war. Our enemies instead will use unconventional techniques, either exclusively or as a supplement to their attack. They will use terrorism. They will use cyber attack and information warfare. And they will use chem-bio attack. And they will go after our Achilles' heel, and where is that Achilles' heel? You're sitting in it. It is in Washington. It is in New York. It is throughout the country. For no longer can we count as a nation on the two great oceans defending us from foreign attack here at home.

It has become almost trite to say that after the orgy of chemical weapons use in the Iran-Iraq war and after the Aum Shinrikyo use of sarin nerve gas in the Tokyo subway. The threshold, the barrier, to chem-bio use has been lowered in the minds of some terrorists and some rogue states. Is it really likely that anyone will use chemical or biological weapons here in the United States?

I frequently get accused of wasting the taxpayers' money on an extravagant program of chem-bio defense that is unnecessary, that is a pork barrel, that is an overreaction to one incident by a religious cult in Japan. Let me try to tell those who say that, why they are wrong. There are two lists that I want to talk about. One is the list of state sponsors of terrorism that the Secretary of State issues every year, by law. You know who is on that list. It is a public document.

There is another list that the Director of Central Intelligence issues on a classified basis every year, and

that is the list of states that have chemical or biological weapons. There is almost a one-for-one copy of the terrorist state sponsors list resident within the list of states that have chemical and biological weapons. What does it mean to be a state sponsor of terrorism? It means that you have trained, equipped, financed, provided sanctuary to, provided leadership for, provided intelligence to, and armed terrorist groups.

Now if these state sponsors of terrorism have done all of that, do we want to bet the security of our people here at home that those state sponsors will not go the additional step of providing terrorist groups with the chemical and biological weapons that are already in the inventory of the state sponsors of terrorism? I don't want to. The president doesn't want to. And I'm glad to see that the majority of the U.S. Congress does not want to because they have been voting consistently since the president made his proposal in May for the funds that the president has asked for.

So what have we done? What have we done since that May announcement, and what are we going to do? As I said, the Congress has in the various subcommittees largely appropriated the funding that we have asked for. There is, however, one glaring exception, and it is a serious exception. The president asked for funds in the Department of Health and Human Services to resurrect, nationwide, the public health detection and diagnostic system, which regrettably in most parts of this country, does not work today. We need to resurrect that system because of emerging infectious diseases, and we need to resurrect that system in order that local governments can know when they have been hit with biological weapons in time to do something about it.

Now all too often, those who talk to their congressmen have talked very narrowly and parochially about their needs in this effort. And we need a systematic approach. It does us no good to have stockpiled medicines. It does us no good to have trained fire departments. It does us no good to have put people in suits if a biological weapon is released and people don't know it. If the health providers and the HMOs (Health Maintenance Organizations) and the emergency rooms cannot diagnose a biological weapons release, then we have wasted the entire rest of the program.

So those who advocate spending to deal with the chemical and biological threat in this country must not merely advocate for fire departments or police departments. They must advocate for the public health system, because, without it, we will not know when we have been hit. And I hope that although, frankly, it looks like the Congress will not appropriate that money this year, I hope they will appropriate it next year because the president will ask for it again next year.

What have we done? We have developed a four-tier strategy for dealing with chemical and biological weapons attack. The first layer is the local response. The president has directed that in 120 metropolitan areas throughout the country there be trained and equipped response capabilities. But we have found, looking at past federal activity in this area, that it has been woefully fragmented. And before we spend any of that money that the Congress is appropriating this week, we're going to fix that.

Right now fire departments, police departments, emergency response staffs throughout the country don't know to whom to turn in the federal government. Is it the Pentagon? Is it the Justice Department? There are programs in Justice, FBI (Federal Bureau of Investigation), EPA (Environmental Protection Agency), PHS (Public Health Service), DOE (Department of Energy), FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency), and within those agencies, there are many offices engaged in the effort. I had one local fire chief in a midwestern large city tell me that he had been bounced around to five different offices trying to find out how he could participate in the program. That has got to end, and that will end.

Under the leadership of the Attorney General and the Secretary of Defense, we have conducted a review of the structure. The Attorney General will be announcing next week a new federal government structure that will create one-stop shopping and a centralized unitary program to aid state and local governments. As part of that effort, she will create an Advisory Committee of state and local first-responders to help design and implement the program. Without that kind of centralization, state and local governments will be victimized. They will be victimized by those who sell them equipment that doesn't work. They will be

victimized by buying non-standard equipment so that they cannot interact with federal responders. They will be victimized by duplication within a metropolitan area.

What we need is a metropolitan approach, not to take one city or one county, not to take the suburbs or the urban center, but to take the entire metropolitan core -- 120 metropolitan areas throughout the country -- to survey all of the assets that can be brought to bear to share the burden throughout the metropolitan area, to put aside bureaucratic rivalries between suburbs and cities, between counties and state governments, and to have a single unitary response plan for each metropolitan area that brings all the players in that area to the table so that everybody knows who is going to do what when there is an emergency, and who is in charge of what, when there is an emergency.

But they must also know when federal help will arrive, how quickly it will arrive, and what will arrive in what order. And so there must be for every city a tailor-made emergency response plan for weapons of mass destruction incidents. There must be in every city a systematic approach, not merely training one fire department, not merely providing, toys to another, but an integrated, systematic approach.

When cities and metropolitan areas get together, when they demonstrate that they have gotten together, when they work with the federal government on creation of a plan tailored to their needs, then there will be funding for equipment. Then there will be funding for training. But we will not write checks and say go and buy whatever turns you on. Rather, the Defense Department will have a list of certified equipment which it will procure and make available at the request of state and local governments so that we achieve economies of scale, and so that we have equipment which works and which is standardized.

The second layer of our four-tier strategy is national response capability. The Secretary of Defense has announced the creation of 10 national guard units in the 10 regions of this country. They will be the second responders. They will bring chemical and biological diagnostic equipment and expertise to the scene faster than if we relied purely on national assets. They are going to be regional assets. Behind them, however, will be a flow plan for bringing in military and civilian units in a prioritized manner to assist state and local governments.

The Defense Department has done a complete review over the course of the summer of its needs to accomplish that goal, and of the needs for additional research and development. All of those needs have been incorporated in their submission to the White House for the year 2000 budget, which President Clinton will submit to the Congress in February.

The third layer of this national strategy is detection and interception of the flow of chem-bio precursor weapons and equipment, travel to states, rogue states, and traveling to terrorist groups. Some of that activity on our part is done in secrecy and is done in quiet cooperation with friendly governments. Other activity is overt. Next week in Paris, the Australia Group of chemical and biological weapons manufacturing states -- states that have the capability of making the precursor equipment and the precursor chemicals -- will get together to review the last year's progress in the efforts to interdict such illegal traffic in precursor materials.

They are now joined by a new organization that was created as a result of the ratification of the Chemical Weapons Treaty. There is now going to be an organization similar to the International Atomic Energy Agency, which has done such a good job in preventing nuclear proliferation and nuclear transit, nuclear weapons from getting into the hands of terrorists. Now there will be a similar organization for chemical weapons. It, under the terms of the Treaty, will have on-site inspection capability throughout the world.

What President Clinton has said is that this is not enough. What we need is a similar, on-site inspection capability for biological weapons. Now I know how painful it was to get the Chemical Weapons Treaty, but we did it with the help of the Chemical Manufacturers Association of the United States. We sat down early with them and said, what is it that you need to protect if foreign inspectors come into your facility? What proprietary information? What corporate information do you need to protect, and how can we protect it in a way that does not block the verification requirements of the international regime?

And working with the Chemical Manufacturers Association of the United States, we achieved that balance and the Treaty reflects it. Now we must work with the biological manufacturers, the medicine manufacturers of the United States and the world to create a similar system that allows for on-site inspection of biological laboratories throughout the world.

The fourth layer of our strategy is deterrence and disruption. Rogue states and terrorist groups should know that those who engage in terrorist acts, including terrorist acts involving chemical and biological weapons, can be assured that they will pay a high price. We have repeatedly made this promise to them. The president has. The Secretary of State has. The Attorney General and the Secretary of Defense has. And that promise is this -- attack us and you will unleash a relentless and methodical machine against you. We will find you no matter where you hide, no matter how long it takes, and no matter how much money it costs us. We will find you and we will bring you to justice.

That is not an empty promise. And if you think it is an empty promise, there are some people I'd like you to talk to. The people who did the World Trade Center bombing, the people who tried to do the bombing of the United Nations and the Holland Tunnel, the man who attacked the CIA employees at their gate house in Virginia, and some of those people who attacked our embassies in Africa in August. Except to talk to those people I have just mentioned -- you're going to have to visit them in their jail cells.

Terrorists cannot be assured that they can hide behind secrecy, that we will not find out who they were or who their sponsors were. We found out within two weeks of the embassy bombings in Africa. We have the capability, and we are using it and we will continue to use it. Nor can terrorists believe that they will always take the first step. The United States reserves for itself the right of self-defense, and if that means our taking the first step, we will do so. We will not tolerate terrorist organizations acquiring or maintaining stockpiles of weapons of mass destruction.

So as you go about your conference today, you are engaged in the discussion of important work, work which I believe is very serious, is very real, is not a silly idea, but is something that could, in fact, happen. And if it happens, we have to be ready. So let me suggest that your goal and your motto for today, and for the rest of your work, should be the motto of the United States Coast Guard. Semper Paratus. Always be ready. Thank you very much.

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