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## Trends. Anthrax Vaccinations: Saddam Wins Again

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The Iraqi Government continues to extract pounds of flesh from the United States Government (USG). There are the human, financial, and strategic costs borne by the USG through its deployed personnel and materiel increment reactive to the recent inspection crisis. There are the political benefits garnered by Saddam throughout the Mideast through his continued defiance of the USG. There is the gradual weakening of any semblance of agreement among the permanent members of the United Nations Security Council concerning sanctions towards Iraq. Now there are--in addition--the financial and human costs of the vaccination program to protect all USG military personnel on active duty status--beginning with those deployed to the Persian Gulf region--from anthrax.

Aside from the money allocated and some base rate of adverse reactions, there are more troubling aspects to the program. Publicly announcing and administering the vaccination regimen assures that adversaries of the USG know about the program. Will they employ the very biological warfare (BW) agent against which USG personnel are protected? Hardly. USG authorities might counter that the vaccination program mitigates against one specific BW threat--but not all variants of anthrax, anthrax engineered with another BW agent, and other BW agents. The ease of black market purchases of scientists and materiel along with the small spaces in which BW agents can be developed should not leave a warm feeling in troops, their leaders, and their families.

And speaking of families, the BW terrorist threat to civilians remains--in areas much easier to penetrate than a guarded military perimeter. If Saddam wants to employ BW as terrorism, he can much more simply, effectively, and anonymously engage elsewhere. The USG's vaccination program seems to be no more than an attempt to show that something, anything is being done. The pictures of Secretary of Defense Cohen and Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, Shelton receiving their vaccinations are too close for comfort to pictures of ex-President Ford receiving his flu shot and wearing his WIN (Whip Inflation Now) button. (See Christopher, G.W., et al. (1997). Biological warfare: An historical perspective. *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 278(5); Comments on Iraq, the United Nations (UN), and the inspection crisis: What Iraqi error in judgment? (November 14, 1997). *IBPP*, 3(16); Fullerton, C.S., Ursano, R.J., et al. (1992). The chemical and biological warfare environment: Psychological responses and social supports in a high stress environment. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 22, 1608-1624; Lebeda, F.J. (1997). Deterrence of biological and chemical warfare: A review of policy options. *Military Medicine*, 162(3); Miscalculating miscalculations: Why Iraqi threats against the United States (US) make sense. (November 7, 1997). *IBPP*, 3(15); Porteus, H. (1995). Grappling with the biological warfare genie. *International Defense Review*, 28(3); Singer, M.T. (1992). Field research in high to maximal stress situations: A commentary. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 22, 1625-1630; The inspection crisis: The Iraqi-US scorecard. (November 21, 1997). *IBPP*, 3(17).) (Keywords: Anthrax, Bioweapons, Biological Warfare, Iraq, Security, United States, Vaccine.)