

thermonuclear weapons is produced. Vanunu claimed that he was one of the few people permitted to work in this area, but even foreign sources have never been able to confirm this.

Raw plutonium looks like a greenish, acidic powder. At the nuclear reactor, this powder is heated to a very high temperature that turns it into a liquid, which is then cooled and turned into tiny button-like shapes weighing 4.55 ounces (130 g) apiece. According to Vanunu, at the end of the production process, each piece eventually reaches the size of a ball.

The final production stage is carried out by employees of Rafael — Armament Development Authority Ltd.

In many places in the world, the plutonium is transferred from one location to another without much fuss, and in some places it is transferred in ordinary civilian vehicles accompanied by plainclothes security officers. This is not the case in Dimona, according to the *Sunday Times*.

Plutonium production, the *Times* said, is done deep underground in “Machon 2,” which is only accessible by concealed elevators. Only workers with extensive security clearance can descend into the earth’s belly, dressed in specially sealed suits to prevent exposure to dangerous radiation that can be found in these parts of the facility.

Nuclear Testing

According to foreign sources, Israel has developed several types of nuclear warheads. Some 10 years ago, it was reported that Israel had developed the Jericho 3 missile with a 1,550-mile (2,500-km) range. Some reports state that Israel may even have a ballistic missile with a range of almost 3,100 miles (5,000 km).

Israel is said to have carried out nuclear testing at various sites in the world. Some 30 years ago, an American spy satellite identified an unusual and very strong light that melted away immediately. Analysts concluded

ed that the light was the result of an Israeli nuclear test, which was scheduled for a very cloudy day to confuse the satellite cameras.

According to some reports, Israel began nuclear testing as early as the mid-1960s. A very small explosion is said to have occurred in an underground tunnel near the Israel-Egypt border and is said to have caused a tremor in the Negev and the Sinai Peninsula.

Twenty years ago, a large, heavy object landed in water near the Greek island of Crete. The missile had a 620-mile (1,000-km) range and was said to have been fired from the Palmachim beach on the Israeli coastline. Israel also manufactures nuclear bombs to be dispatched from aircraft, but most of its production lines are for building nuclear warheads for use in long-range missiles, the foreign sources say.

It seems unbelievable today, but Israel at some point began cooperating on missile development with other countries, among them ... Iran. Though a cooperation agreement with Iran was signed in 1977, it was never implemented because two years later the Shah’s regime fell, and Iran was taken over by the virulently anti-Israel Khomeini regime.

Israel’s Jericho 1, 2 and 3 missiles are strategically placed at various locations around the country. International nuclear experts have published maps of Israel that indicate these missile sites.

According to foreign reports, at certain sites, underground tunnels have been dug for missile storage. In these tunnels, the missiles are stored on one side, and the nuclear warheads on the other side. The sides of these tunnels are coated with metal and padded with special springs to protect against earth movements. In an emergency, there are procedures for attaching the warheads to the missiles and preparing them for launch in a very short time.

According to these reports, Israel’s missiles are aimed at dozens of targets around the world, including Baghdad, Cairo, Tehran, the

Gulf oil fields and Pakistan. Satellite photos have shown that nuclear missiles are also directed against Israel from various locations.

Who Will Give the Order?

In underground Israel Air Force bunkers, an aircraft with nuclear missile-loading capacity is permanently at the ready, prepared to take off and drop a nuclear bomb on Iran or Libya or any other potential, existential threat, according to foreign sources. Our Arab neighbors acknowledge this more readily than the Israeli public does.

Four people in Israel have the authority to order a nuclear strike: the prime minister, the defense minister, the chief of General Staff and the Air Force commander. According to rumors, the lead boxes containing the nuclear warheads can only be opened by a combination of three separate keys, which are carried by representatives of the four decision-makers.

There are two known instances when the order for a first strike was almost given.

Two days after the outbreak of the Yom Kippur War, the Security Cabinet headed by Golda Meir decided to ready the country’s missiles for a preemptive strike against Cairo and Damascus. The plan was shelved because of American intervention.

The second instance occurred when the first Scuds landed in Israel during the 1991 Gulf War. Then-Prime Minister Yitzchak Shamir ordered Jericho missile batteries and bombers put on alert. As far as is known, they remained on alert throughout the war.

Then-Chief of General Staff Dan Shomron warned that “Israel possesses the capability to deliver a hard blow.” Shamir warned Iraq that anyone who tries to attack Israel “is likely to inflict a heavy disaster on his own country,” and Defense Minister Moshe Arens declared that if Israel were attacked, “its reaction would not be low-profile.”

To this day, we do not know whether Iraq, which was strongly rumored to have chemi-



Lugol capsules, an antidote to radiation, were distributed in Dimona and surrounding towns two years ago. (DAVID SILVERMAN/GETTY IMAGES)

cal weapons, did not use them because it really didn’t have them or because Saddam Hussein was deterred by Israel’s veiled threats. We do know that the *nissim* that occurred during that war were evident to all and were a clear testimony that it is Hashem who is the true Guardian of Israel.

In truth, it doesn’t matter what the explanation is. We believe in Hashem and not in our military deterrence — nuclear, ambiguous or otherwise. We remember the *passuk* in *Tehillim*, “If Hashem doesn’t guard the city, then the watchman guards in vain.”

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with Asia, is recommending that all the ministry’s commercial attaches learn the language of the country they are set to serve in for a year prior to the appointment.

The ministry’s Foreign Trade Administration also wants to launch a pilot Chinese language and Asian cultures program at three to six high schools as a second foreign language or as part of history or other curricula.

The recommendations are included in a position paper by attachés who have returned from service in Asia. The recommendations are designed to tighten Israel’s commercial relations with Asia by 2010.

Public Cares About Unpaid Public Workers

The public is behind the Histadrut labor federation in its battle to make sure that long-

unpaid public sector workers get paid.

According to a Dahaf survey released last week, 73% of the public believes that another strike is justified if the government fails to resolve the issue of paying salaries to local authority employees once and for all.

“The public now understands that a strike is the last option available for banishing this scourge from the Earth,” said Histadrut Chairman Ofer Eini. “It has also internalized the fact that the government only gets moving on serious issues under the threat of a strike.”

Namibia Unfreezes Alexander’s Accounts

The Namibian High Court has freed up the bank accounts of former Comverse Technologies Inc. chairman and CEO Kobi Alexander, which had been frozen in October, freeing up some \$17m.

Alexander fled to Namibia in the wake of the stock options backdating affair at Com-

verse, and is wanted by the U.S. authorities for securities fraud. The United States subsequently applied for Alexander’s extradition to face charges of stock options backdating, conspiracy, securities fraud, filing false documents, money laundering and bribery.

Alexander’s fortune is estimated at \$250m.-\$300m. U.S. prosecutors claim, among other things, that he transferred \$57m. to accounts in Israel after the backdating affair was discovered.

Meanwhile, Comverse Technologies, the U.S. parent holding company of Israeli Comverse, passed completely into American hands on Friday when the chairman, Ron Hiram, quit all his positions at the company.

He was the last Israeli executive left after ex-CEO Raz Alon’s post was eliminated a month ago, although Alon is still a director.

Comverse also announced on Friday that it had received notice from the Nasdaq stock exchange that the delayed filing of its financial report for the fiscal third quarter serves as “an additional basis” for the possible delisting of its shares.

Comverse shares have lost 21% of their value since the beginning of 2006.

Wisconsin Plan to Be Revised

The Wisconsin employment program will undergo changes and will be extended by a year, to July 31, 2008, Industry, Trade and Labor Minister Rabbi Eli Yishai announced last week.

The companies offering employment services to those enrolled in the program will no longer profit from savings in government allotments for wage supplements, but will instead be evaluated based on their job-placement rates.

In addition, the program will become more flexible, will offer candidates work options with fewer work hours and will provide professional training.

The program will be expanded by April 1 to include an additional 9,000 people who are currently receiving wage supplements and who reside in Jerusalem, Ashkelon, Upper Nazareth, Ein Mahal and Netanya.

The changes to the Wisconsin program are the result of discussions held in recent months at the Finance Ministry and the work of two Industry, Trade and Labor Ministry committees.

“The aim was to move from a concept that focuses on limiting the number of those receiving wage supplements to a view that places the individual at the center, through personal empowerment that results in job placement,” Yishai said, explaining the impetus for change.

About 9,000 participants have been successfully placed in jobs. To date the state has saved NIS 122m. that had previously been paid as wage supplements.

Protest Against UPS Brewing?

The United Parcel Service (UPS) package delivery company says Jews in Judea and Samaria who don’t receive their services shouldn’t take it personally.

The company services Ramallah and Jenin, but not Efrat, Kiryat Arba or Beit El.

Asked to explain this policy, company complaints director Ilan Nagar said that the considerations are not political, but rather economic, noting that the company does not deliver to the southern Negev or much of the Golan Heights, either.

UPS, moreover, does service some communities in Judea and Samaria, such as Maaleh Adumim, Ariel, Karnei Shomron and Elkanah.

Nevertheless, it refuses to deliver packages to areas like Gush Etzion, Beit El, Kiryat Arba, Tapuach, Ofrah and the Hebron Hills communities. Residents of these areas who receive packages are told to go to the nearest branch office, usually Jerusalem or Beersheva, to pick up the package.

Those who refuse to accept UPS’ explanations note that other international delivery firms, like DHL and Fedex, deliver to all points in Israel, and are calling on shippers here and abroad to avoid using UPS if possible.

(Compiled from reports by Hamodia staff, Haaretz service and news agencies)

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If your income is less than your expenditures, you are running at a deficit. Governments have the luxury of operating with deficits; you do not. Even a small monthly deficit, when accumulated, can easily spiral into out-of-control debt. You have no choice but to find additional sources of income or think of ways to cut down your expenditures.

If your income and expenditures are equal, then your budget is balanced. Although this is an acceptable situation, it means that: (1) you do not have much leeway for unanticipated expenses; (2) you do not have much to put away for the future; and (3) if you incur any additional debts, you will be unable to repay them. We therefore advise you to try to earn a little more or cut back a bit on your expenditures.

When you have at least a small monthly surplus, you can congratulate yourself on having successfully created a workable budget.

Step 5: Follow Your Budget

Living within a budget requires discipline, but it should not make you feel deprived. If you have indeed created a realistic budget, you should be able to buy all of the things you need — but only some of the things you want.

Step 6: Review Your Budget

Now that you have created a workable budget, you and your wife should schedule monthly or bimonthly meetings to assess whether you have stayed within your budget and, if necessary, adjust your budget to reflect your family’s changing needs.

We welcome any further questions or comments.