

overall conclusions of the white paper. He added that Iraq, which declared several classes of mobile vehicles to the United Nations, never said anything about hydrogen factories.

Some doubters noted that the intelligence community was still scrambling to analyze the trailers, suggesting that the white paper may have been premature. They said laboratories in the Middle East and the United States were now analyzing more than 100 samples from the trailers to verify the intelligence findings. Allied forces, they noted, have so far failed to find any of the envisioned support vehicles that the trailers would need to produce biological weapons.

One skeptic questioned the practicality of some of the conjectural steps the Iraqis are envisioned as having taken to adapt the trailers to the job of making deadly germs.

"It's not built and designed as a standard fermenter," he said of the central tank. "Certainly, if you modify it enough you could use it. But that's true of any tin can."

The reporting for this article was carried out by Judith Miller in Iraq and Kuwait and by William Broad in New York. Her agreement with the Pentagon, for an "embedded" assignment, allowed the military to review her copy to prevent breaches of troop protection and security. No changes were made in the review.