

Two of the leading researchers in Iraq's biological programme studied in Britain. Rihab al-Taha, educated at the University of East Anglia, is the head of Iraq's military research and development institute. Another scientist, who received a doctorate in molecular biology from the University of Edinburgh, is said by Israeli sources to have specialized in anthrax although her precise role, if any, in human experiments is unknown.

The evidence compiled by the Israelis could not be independently corroborated. But it appeared consistent with information about Iraq's chemical and biological programmes in documents recovered by UN inspectors after the 1995 defection of Hussein Kamel, Saddam's son-in-law, who had been in charge of Iraq's military procurement programme.

Apparently afraid of what Kamel would reveal after he fled to Jordan, Iraqi officials led the inspectors to a cache of papers they said they had discovered in a shed on his chicken farm in the hope that he would be blamed for the programme. Inspectors raised eyebrows at the fact that the boxes were shiny new while their surroundings were filthy. Kamel was killed on his return to Iraq in 1996.

Among the "chicken farm" documents on biological warfare was a photograph of a human arm with lesions. The inspectors also found video footage of dogs that had died after being exposed to unidentified agents.

Iraqi opposition sources said last week they had received reports of prisoners disappearing from their cells, only to return with mysterious illnesses that proved fatal.

The prisoners, they said, were usually released out of fear of contamination and died afterwards at home.

#### EDUCATION IN AMERICA

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I note the presence on the floor of the chairman of our committee that handles education matters, Senator JEFFORDS. You have talked to me a lot of times about the reforms necessary in education. I look forward to your committee doing some real reform work.

I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD something I read today with great embarrassment and chagrin on the front page of the Washington Post: "U.S. High School Seniors Rank Near Bottom" when it comes to math and science. They are not at the bottom of the free world when they finish the first grade and the fourth grade. They are in good shape. However, when they graduate from high school, they are at the bottom rung of all the countries that will be competing with us in the next millennium for the kind of competitive industries and the kinds of things that are necessary to keep America strong.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Washington Post, Feb. 25, 1998]

U.S. HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS RANK NEAR BOTTOM—EUROPEANS SCORE HIGHER IN MATH, SCIENCE TEST

(By Rene Sanchez)

American high school seniors have scored far below their peers from many other countries on a rigorous new international exam in math and science.

The test results, which were released yesterday, present a damning assessment of

American students in their last year of mandatory schooling: In both subjects, their scores ranked close to last among the 21 nations that participated. And their showing was much worse than the marks that American elementary and middle school students have earned on similar international exams in the past two years.

Even the scores of academically elite American students—those who take either physics or advanced math courses in high school—were a disappointment. They also finished below the international average and lagged behind many other nations on the latest test.

The nation's education leaders reacted with dismay to the poor results yesterday. Education Secretary Richard W. Riley called the American scores "unacceptable" and said that too many schools are failing to establish tough academic standards for students and often lack qualified teachers in math and science even when they do.

"We need to have higher expectations for our students," Riley said. "Many of our students stop taking math and science after 10th or 11th grade."

Riley said that middle schools also may be a source of the problem. "Other nations begin to introduce challenging concepts such as algebra, geometry, probability and statistics, but we continue to focus on arithmetic, even though our students are good at arithmetic," he said. "So we shouldn't be surprised that by the 12th grade, our students have fallen even further behind our counterparts abroad."

The work of American fourth-graders is quite strong in math and science when compared to similar students in other countries, but from that point their scores decline in international tests. American eighth-graders posted mediocre marks in both subjects when their work was matched recently against counterparts around the world.

In a speech to the National Council of Jewish Women yesterday, President Clinton said the fact that fourth-graders do well while eighth- and 12th-graders struggle indicates the problem lies in instruction, not in the abilities of students, or that the United States has more students from disadvantaged backgrounds than other nations.

"The fourth-graders represent the same socioeconomic diversity" as the older students, Clinton said. "Therefore, there is something wrong with the system. . . . I do not believe these kids cannot learn. I am tired of seeing children patronized because they happen to be poor or from different cultural backgrounds than the majority. That is not true."

About 10,000 seniors selected randomly from more than 200 public and private high schools across the United States took the international exam. American high schools are often run quite differently from secondary schools abroad. Here, most schools are comprehensive and strive to teach all types of students. In other countries, however, many teenagers are instead placed into specific kinds of schools, some heavily academic, others vocational. But test officials said they accounted for the differing academic arrangements in other countries by giving the test to students from varying backgrounds and types of schools.

The 90-minute test assessed students' general knowledge of math and science concepts through problem-solving and multiple-choice questions.

Only 57 percent of American students, for example, chose the correct answer to this question: "Experts say that 25 percent of all serious bicycle accidents involve head injuries and that, of all head injuries, 80 percent are fatal. What percent of all serious bicycle accidents involve fatal head injuries?" The answer is 20 percent.

American students fared poorly in math and science even though they expressed more enthusiasm for learning the subjects than their peers in other nations and reported using computers and having lab experiments and practical lessons more often in class.

Also, none of the Asian nations that have finished at the top of other similar tests in math and science participated in this one. Most of the countries that excelled on the exam are in Europe, in particular the Netherlands, Sweden and Norway. But Canada and New Zealand also had higher marks than the United States. American scores were comparable to those of students from Russia, Italy and the Czech Republic. American students outperformed students only in Cyprus and South Africa.

"This study is a wake-up call for us to change the culture in the classroom," said Gerry Wheeler, executive director of the 53,000-member National Science Teachers Association. He added that many science teachers say they get mixed signals about what to teach and lack the time and resources to achieve more in class.

A report on the test, which was supervised by the Education Department and similar government agencies around the world, does not give conclusive reasons for why American students had such a dismal performance. But it offers possible clues.

First, researchers said that school curricula seem stronger in other nations than in the United States. The percentage of high school seniors taking math and science courses also is lower here than in most other nations. American students spend fewer hours on homework than most of their international peers. And many more American high school seniors work. More than half of them who took the test said they spend three hours a day at a paid job. Only about one-fifth of high school students from other nations had to balance a daily job with their class work. American students reported watching roughly the same amount of television weekly as students abroad.

To some educators, the test results starkly reveal how far the nation's high schools are from the goal state governors set at the start of the decade: to make American students "first in the world" in math and science.

Many states and school districts have begun the difficult task of revamping what they teach in those vital subjects, and there are signs that strides are being made. On another highly regarded exam, the National Assessment of Educational Progress, student scores in math and science have risen in recent years.

But some of the nation's top business leaders, worried about American competitiveness in the global economy, have been pressuring schools to show more academic progress. "These results are very disappointing," said Susan Traiman, who directs education initiatives for the Business Roundtable, a national group of executives from large corporations. "It looks like reforms are taking hold in the early grades, but one we get beyond the basics, it's clear that our curriculum is still not demanding."

Other educators, however, contend that drawing profound conclusions from an international test is risky, even dubious, because the educational systems of other nations are so different from those in the United States, where schools are run locally and often have extraordinarily diverse student enrollments. Of the 21 nations that took part in the latest test, for example, half had a strict national curriculum, a notion that much of the American public views either with suspicion or hostility.

Riley said the poor test results offer compelling evidence for why states and Congress

should support Clinton's call for voluntary national tests for eighth-graders in math. Only a small sample of students now take national tests, and many educators say Clinton's plan—which Congress has delayed—could prompt schools to demand more from students. But critics say the testing Clinton wants could create too much federal involvement in schools and lead to a national curriculum.

The latest test results are the third and final part of an international study that began three years ago. It is the most comprehensive attempt ever made to compare the academic work of students around the world. Some skeptics of other similar efforts say this one is more credible because students from all types of high schools were tested.

One bright spot on the test for the United States was that, unlike in many other nations, the scores of male and female students in math and science were roughly the same.

Mr. DOMENICI. While I am here and while the chairman of the committee is here, let me suggest that it is time we at the national level stop looking at proliferating programs on behalf of education. We don't need any more programs on behalf of education. Let me say what I think we ought to do. Let me state for the Record the General Accounting Office, assisting the Budget Committee, has found the following: We have 86 teacher training programs in 9 agencies and offices of the Government. I repeat, 86 teacher training programs. At-risk and delinquent youth, the Federal Government has 127 at-risk and delinquent programs in 15 agencies and departments. Some of them you don't even have jurisdiction over because they are in Interior and all kinds of departments. Young children, the Federal Government has over 90 early childhood programs in 11 agencies and 20 offices.

It is time we square with the American people and say we have just been duplicating, adding programs on programs because there is a problem out there. Yet today we wake up and read the article in the paper this morning. One wonders whether we have any idea with all this proliferation of programs that I just read.

Frankly, Mr. President, if we ask the GAO to take another five areas they will find a proliferation just as large and significant as previously mentioned. When you wake up today and read this article—let's take another look and try to do it. It doesn't mean more. It means go to the problem and try to solve the problem.

I yield the floor.

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BROWNBACK. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Under the previous order, the Senator from Kansas is recognized for up to 10 minutes.

Mr. BROWNBACK. Mr. President, thank you, very much.

(The remarks of Mr. BROWNBACK and Mr. HUTCHINSON pertaining to the introduction of S. 1673 are located in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

Mr. FAIRCLOTH addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair recognizes the Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. FAIRCLOTH. I thank the Chair.

(The remarks of Mr. FAIRCLOTH pertaining to the introduction of S. 1674 are located in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

Mr. FAIRCLOTH. Mr. President, I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HUTCHINSON). The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, what is the pending situation in the Senate?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate is conducting morning business until 11:30 a.m., at which time there will be 2 hours of debate on the veto message to accompany H.R. 2631.

Mr. BYRD. Do I have any time under a previous order?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia had 20 minutes reserved. Since we only have 10 minutes left in morning business, the Senator would be recognized for 10 minutes.

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I may be recognized for the 20 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. GRAMM. Would the distinguished Senator yield?

Mr. BYRD. Yes, I will be happy to.

Mr. GRAMM. Would the distinguished Senator amend his unanimous consent request to include that I might have 5 minutes at the conclusion of his remarks?

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, parliamentary inquiry. I believe that under the order that was entered into with respect to the line-item veto debate, I had 5 minutes, did I not?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia will control 30 minutes.

Mr. BYRD. In that debate?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. In that debate.

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I may control 20 minutes in that debate and have 10 minutes now for other purposes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I may speak out of

order. I yield—how much time does the Senator wish?

Mr. GRAMM. Mr. President, I think 5 minutes would be sufficient.

Mr. BYRD. I yield 5 minutes.

Mr. GRAMM. I will listen to the distinguished Senator from West Virginia. At the conclusion of his speech—would he like me to go ahead and speak?

Mr. BYRD. I prefer that the Senator would go ahead first, if he will.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas is recognized for 5 minutes.

#### THE HIGHWAY BILL

Mr. GRAMM. Mr. President, over one year ago the distinguished Senator from West Virginia and I got together to talk about a real problem in America related to highway funding. It is a problem of priorities and it is a problem of basic honesty in Government. The problem of priorities is that we have a crumbling transportation infrastructure in America.

My State has 31,000 miles of highways that are substandard. We built our farm-to-market system in the 1930s, and those roads had a life of about 30 years. That life basically ended in 1960, yet we are still using those roads today. Our newest highways in Texas, our Interstate System, were built in the 1950s and 1960s, and it is approaching the end of its life. This is not just a problem in Texas; it is a problem all over America. That is the priority problem that Senator BYRD and I are concerned about.

The fairness problem, the honesty problem, is that when Americans all over the country go to the filling station and stick that nozzle in the tank of their car or truck, and pump gas, they read right on the sign on the gas pump, that about a third of the cost of a gallon of gasoline is taxes, but the tax goes to build highways. The problem that Senator BYRD and I started working on a year ago, was that that statement is not true. In fact, since the late 1980s, we have been collecting money in gasoline taxes and spending the money on other things. Then starting in 1993, the diversion got as big as about 30 cents on the dollar.

Senator BYRD and I worked together last year on the tax bill where I offered an amendment in committee to guarantee that every penny of the gasoline tax went into the highway trust fund. We offered a sense-of-the-Senate resolution last year on the budget saying that it is the sense of the Senate that the money ought to go into the trust fund and it should be spent on highways. Eighty-three Members of the Senate voted for that amendment, and it is now the law of the land that all gasoline taxes go into the trust fund.

What Senator BYRD and I have been working to do is guarantee that the money is spent on highways. We are in the process now of looking at the highway bill coming up perhaps as soon as tomorrow. Senator BYRD and I have