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Myers Doubts Chinese Government Helping al Qaeda

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WASHINGTON, Aug. 9, 2002 -- Air Force Gen. Richard Myers expressed doubt today that the Chinese government is providing weapons to al Qaeda forces believed to be hiding in Pakistan.

Myers, Joint Chiefs chairman, was responding to a reporter's question regarding a Christian Science Monitor article today that reported al Qaeda forces are attempting to acquire surface-to-air missiles in China.

Myers said the U.S. government knows al Qaeda and Taliban forces are hiding in the area and that they're trying to acquire arms and supplies. But, he said, he'd be surprised if the Chinese government was helping them.

"We've gotten pretty good support from China on the war on terrorism, and it would be hard for me to believe that they'd want to help al Qaeda," the chairman said in a Pentagon media briefing.

Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld then noted that Afghanistan is a country rife with weapons. He gave some details on weapons caches found by coalition troops in Afghanistan.



Through July 16, coalition forces have identified 345 caches. They included:

- 1,785 AK-47 rifles with 370,000 rounds of ammunition;
- 30 heavy machine guns with 3.5 million rounds;
- 72 mortar tubes and 52,000 mortar rounds;
- 142 recoilless rifles with 1,700 rounds;
- 2,100 air-to-air missiles;
- 2,800 rocket-propelled grenade launchers with more than 4,000 grenades;
- 43,000 rounds of 107 mm and 122 mm rockets;
- 319 shoulder-fired surface-to-air missiles;
- 50 tanks;
- 40 armored vehicles;
- 2,000 mines; and
- More than 20 anti-aircraft weapons.

"The nation is filled with weapons," Rumsfeld said. "It is a country that (weapons have been) pouring into from all countries." He noted many are old and unstable and have been destroyed, but many others are being preserved for use by the Afghan National Army.

With a tongue-in-cheek reference to his conservative background and experience in the Depression, Rumsfeld said, "We're not going to waste anything if we can avoid it."

Related Sites of Interest:

- DoD News Transcript: [DoD News Briefing - Secretary Rumsfeld and Gen. Myers](#), Aug. 9, 2002
-  AFRTS Radio Report: [Secretary Rumsfeld envisions a post-Saddam Iraq](#)
-  AFRTS TV Report: [Secretary Rumsfeld says "containment" policy against Iraq "has not done the job"](#)

http://osd.dtic.mil/news/Aug2002/n08092002_200208093.html