

DIY cruise missile thwarted

A New Zealand man who built a cruise missile in his garage claims the New Zealand government forced him to shut down his project after coming under pressure from the United States.

Bruce Simpson says he built the missile using parts bought off the internet to show how easily it could be done.

He says he attracted considerable interest from potential buyers - including an offer from Iran to pay him for details of his research.

"The New Zealand government at first said I had done nothing illegal. But then a US official was quoted as saying it was 'extremely unhelpful', " Mr Simpson told BBC News Online.

"The authorities here finally decided to bankrupt me over a tax debt and I have now had to give the missile to a friend for safe keeping."

Although his own missile building days have come to an end, he believes he has proved his point - "that by using off-the-shelf technology in a suburban garage a terrorist can create a weapon against which there is no effective defence."

New Zealand officials have said they cannot comment for reasons of "secrecy".

Story from BBC NEWS:

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/2/hi/asia-pacific/3302763.stm>

Published: 2003/12/09 09:27:34 GMT

