

# CURRENT NEWS

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## EARLY BIRD

May 25, 2012

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### MEMORIAL DAY

1. **'I Will Never Leave A Fallen Comrade' -- U.S. Army Soldier's Creed**  
(*USA Today*)....Rick Hampson  
The U.S. military relentlessly seeks to recover the remains of every soldier lost in battle, cost be damned. Sometimes, though, it also takes someone like Lt. Jose Holguin.
2. **Rolling Thunder Motorcycle Rally Remembers POWs**  
(*Washington Times*)....Meredith Somers  
...Beginning Friday, the D.C. area is set to welcome roughly a half-million motorcycle riders for the 25th Rolling Thunder, an annual event to recognize prisoners of war and soldiers missing in action.
3. **'Like' This: Salutes To Troops To Flood Facebook Feeds**  
(*USA Today*)....Cathy Lynn Grossman  
Memorial Day is not just unforgettable: Thanks to Facebook, it's also inescapable.
4. **Memorial Day: Remembering Fallen Of Decade At War**  
(*Atlanta Journal-Constitution (ajc.com)*)....Allen G. Breed, Associated Press  
Most people run marathons to challenge themselves. Maj. George Kraehe runs them to challenge others.

### AFGHANISTAN

5. **Gen. John Allen Discusses Afghanistan Situation**  
(*CNN International*)....Christiane Amanpour  
...And now to Afghanistan, where the United States is scaling back both troops and expectations. The man in charge of the war there, General John Allen, has just confirmed specifics of the drawdown, a quarter of American surge troops will be home by the end of September.
6. **U.S. Troops Winning War Against IEDs Of Taliban**  
(*Washington Times*)....Rowan Scarborough  
The U.S. military is on a path toward significantly fewer battlefield deaths in Afghanistan this year because it has become better at detecting the No. 1 killer of U.S. troops: the improvised explosive device (IED).
7. **Maintenance Snafu Grounds Afghan Fleet**  
(*Wall Street Journal*)....Nathan Hodge  
A \$275 million fleet of Afghan air force transport planes provided by the U.S. over the past three years has been grounded for months because of lack of adequate maintenance and potential safety problems, American military officials said.



8. **4 Kidnapped While Aiding Afghanistan**

(*New York Times*)....Alissa J. Rubin

Four aid workers for an international humanitarian organization were kidnapped Tuesday afternoon in northern Afghanistan, the organization, Medair, announced late Thursday.

9. **French President Says Afghan Mission Completed**

(*Yahoo.com*)....Patrick Quinn, Associated Press

France's new president said on Friday that his country's troops had carried out their mission in Afghanistan and that it was time for them to leave, an early pullout that will be coordinated with the United States and other allies.

## PAKISTAN

10. **Drone Strikes Continue In Pakistan As Tension Increases And Senate Panel Cuts Aid**

(*New York Times*)....Salman Masood

As tension between Pakistan and the United States deepened on multiple fronts on Thursday, a Senate panel voted to cut aid to Pakistan further, and C.I.A. drone strikes continued in northwestern Pakistan for a second consecutive day despite Pakistani condemnation.

## MIDEAST

11. **Iran Nuclear Talks End With No Deal**

(*New York Times*)....Steven Erlanger and Rick Gladstone

...But the sides sought to frame the two days of difficult negotiations in a positive way, asserting that they had greater understanding of each other's positions and agreeing to reconvene in Moscow on June 18 and 19.

12. **Iran Is Seeking Lebanon Stake As Syria Totters**

(*New York Times*)....Neil MacFarquhar

...Iran's eagerness to shower money on Lebanon when its own finances are being squeezed by sanctions is the latest indication of just how worried Tehran is at the prospect that Syria's leader, Bashar al-Assad, could fall.

13. **Navy: Not Clear If Attack On Maersk Ship Was Piracy**

(*Norfolk Virginian-Pilot (pilotonline.com)*)....Adam Schreck, Associated Press

Iran and an American-led naval coalition each said Thursday they responded to a distress call by a U.S.-flagged cargo ship that came under fire from gunmen in the Gulf of Oman a day earlier. But a Navy spokesman cast some doubt about whether the attack was piracy.

14. **'We Are The First Ones' To Beat Al-Qaeda**

(*USA Today*)....Iona Craig

Resistance fighters rise to battle militant force over Yemeni town.

15. **IDF Working To Upgrade Range Of Iron Dome System**

(*Jerusalem Post*)....Yaakov Katz

The IDF is working to increase the range of the Iron Dome counter rocket defense system, with the aim of enabling it to intercept longer range rockets, The Jerusalem Post has learned.

16. **U.S. May Support Arms For Syrians**

(*Arizona Republic (Phoenix)*)....Matthew Lee, Associated Press

As one diplomatic effort after another fails to end more than a year of brutal violence in Syria, the Obama administration is preparing a plan that would essentially give U.S. nods of approval to arms transfers from Arab nations to some Syrian opposition fighters.

## CONGRESS

17. **House Panel Probes U.S. Troops' Food Supplier**

(*Washington Post*)....Karen DeYoung



Congressional investigators have given the Defense Logistics Agency and the contractor that provides virtually all food supplies to U.S. troops in Afghanistan 10 days to explain why the military paid more than \$750 million in what it now alleges were double-billed and excessive charges.

18. **Senate Panel Backs \$631 Billion In Defense Spending**

(Reuters.com)....David Alexander, Reuters

A Senate panel voted on Thursday to authorize \$631.4 billion in defense spending for the 2013 fiscal year, blocking plans to cut the Air Force and ordering offsetting reductions in Pentagon civilian personnel to stay within the president's budget limits.

19. **SASC Bill Holds Off Air Guard Cuts**

(Aerospace Daily & Defense Report)....Jen DiMascio

...The bill also asks the Pentagon to provide the committee with a report on the effects of an across-the-board budget reduction that will fall on the Pentagon in January if Congress fails to reduce the federal deficit by \$1.2 trillion.

20. **Senate Panel Kills Big Tricare Fee Hikes**

(ArmyTimes.com)....Rick Maze

A Pentagon plan endorsed by the Joint Chiefs of Staff to raise Tricare health care fees as a way to dramatically reduce personnel costs appears dead after the Senate Armed Services Committee refused to back the proposal.

## DEFENSE DEPARTMENT

21. **Defense Funding At Risk, Official Says**

(Johnstown (PA) Tribune-Democrat)....David Hurst

...The Department of Defense and Congress have the specter of budget sequestration looming, said Frank Kendall, the undersecretary for Defense Acquisition, Technology and Logistics. And if the forced cuts go through, as currently planned, armed forces funding and contracts to major defense players could be far more scarce in the years ahead, he added.

22. **Bin Laden Film Got No Special Ops Help: U.S. Admiral**

(Reuters.com)....Phil Stewart and Mark Hosenball, Reuters

The U.S. admiral who oversaw the operation to kill Osama bin Laden denied on Thursday that he or his staff helped advise Hollywood film makers shooting a movie about last year's secret raid to kill the al Qaeda leader.

23. **DoD Official: BRAC Fight May Not Be Over**

(FederalTimes.com)....Andy Medici

The Defense Department is still pushing for two more rounds of base realignments and closures despite opposition from Congress, according to a senior Pentagon official.

## MEDIA

24. **Propaganda Firm Owner Admits Attacks On Journalists**

(USA Today)....Gregory Korte

The co-owner of a major Pentagon propaganda contractor publicly admitted Thursday that he was behind a series of websites used in an attempt to discredit two USA TODAY journalists who had reported on the contractor.

## MILITARY COMMISSIONS

25. **Don't Split 9/11 Trial, Judge Urged**

(Miami Herald)....Carol Rosenberg

Pentagon prosecutors argued in a motion Thursday against splitting up the joint death-penalty prosecution at Guantanamo of the five men accused of orchestrating the 9/11 attacks.

## ARMY



26. **General Retracts Controversial Suicide Comments**  
(*NationalJournal.com*)....Yochi J. Dreazen  
In a highly unusual move, a senior Army general publicly retracted blunt comments about suicide that drew criticism for appearing to deride troops struggling with serious mental problems.
27. **How This Leg Was Saved**  
(*Time*)....Nate Rawlings  
A small medical team is helping some of our best warriors return to the fight.
28. **Manning Seeks Dismissal Of 10 Of 22 Counts**  
(*ArmyTimes.com*)....David Dishneau, Associated Press  
An Army private charged in the biggest leak of government secrets in U.S. history is seeking dismissal of 10 of the 22 counts he faces, contending they are either unconstitutionally vague or fail to state a prosecutable offense.
29. **At Fort Hood, A Welcome Home For Veterans Of A War Long Past**  
(*At War (NYTimes.com)*)....Kristina Shevory  
...This was the first welcome-home ceremony for Vietnam veterans held at Fort Hood and, like most things in Texas, it was big and considered the most elaborate in the country with over 600 veterans and another 600 guests in attendance.

## MARINE CORPS

30. **Inquiry Into Marine's Death At Fort Meade**  
(*Washington Post*)....Mary Pat Flaherty  
The Naval Criminal Investigative Service is investigating the death of a Marine whose body was found in his barracks room Wednesday afternoon at Fort Meade.

## NAVY

31. **Fire Damage Raises Questions About Sub's Future**  
(*Yahoo.com*)....David Sharp, Associated Press  
Even before the Navy completed its first damage assessment, the severity of a fire that swept through a nuclear-powered submarine in dry dock at Portsmouth Naval Shipyard triggered questions about whether the USS Miami can be salvaged.
32. **Carrier Vinson Home For Awhile**  
(*U-T San Diego*)....Jeanette Steele  
Two deployments in 18 months saw ship aiding Haiti after quake, carrying out bin Laden's burial at sea.

## NATIONAL GUARD/RESERVE

33. **Kansas National Guard To Name McConnell Intel Complex After Gates**  
(*Wichita Eagle (kansas.com)*)....Associated Press  
Wichita native and former Secretary of Defense Robert Gates will be honored later this month by the Kansas National Guard.
34. **Brunswick Woman Nominated For Top Navy Reserve Post Says She's Just 'Part Of The Team'**  
(*Brunswick (ME) Times Record*)....Beth Brogan  
A Brunswick woman has been nominated by President Barack Obama for promotion to vice admiral and chief of the Navy Reserve.

## RUSSIA

35. **Report: U.S. Role Eyed In Sukhoi Crash**  
(*Moscow Times*)....Roland Oliphant



Russian intelligence agencies are investigating the possibility that the U.S. military played a part in the crash of a Sukhoi Superjet in Indonesia, according to a report.

## LEGAL AFFAIRS

### 36. Conviction For Soldier In Texas Bomb Plot

(*Wall Street Journal*)....Nathan Koppel

A federal jury in Waco, Texas, convicted a U.S. soldier of planning to detonate a bomb last year near the army base of Fort Hood as part of a plot to avenge the U.S. military's killing of his fellow Muslims in Iraq and Afghanistan.

## MILITARY

### 37. Jeremy Hilton: U.S. Military's First Male Spouse Of The Year

(*TheDailyBeast.com*)....Jesse Ellison

Military Spouse Magazine honored the dad for his stay-at-home work with disabled daughter.

## OBITUARY

### 38. Wesley Brown, Pioneer As Black Naval Graduate, Dies At 85

(*New York Times*)....Paul Vitello

Wesley A. Brown, a retired Navy lieutenant commander who endured intense racial hazing to become the first black graduate of the United States Naval Academy, died Tuesday in Silver Spring, Md. He was 85.

## BUSINESS

### 39. Newport News Shipyard Reaches Milestone On New Aircraft Carrier

(*Newport News Daily Press*)....Michael Welles Shapiro

Crane operators at Newport News Shipbuilding lowered the final piece of the aircraft carrier Gerald R. Ford's keel into place Thursday morning, a construction milestone for the yard.

## COMMENTARY

### 40. The Art Of The Ask For Afghanistan

(*Wall Street Journal*)....Jonathan Hillman and Courtney Lobel

With all eyes on President Barack Obama and Gov. Mitt Romney as they court Americans in what is expected to be the most expensive election in American history, an international fundraising challenge is going ignored: the campaign for Afghanistan.

### 41. The Best News Out Of Afghanistan

(*Time*)....Joe Klein

In the beginning, as American troops pushed toward Baghdad in March 2003, General David Petraeus asked Rick Atkinson of the Washington Post a famous question: "Tell me how this ends?" For years, the Petraeus question has stood as a sober, unanswered counterpoint to George W. Bush's swaggering, inaccurate mission accomplished banner.

### 42. No Money For LOST

(*Washington Times*)....Rep. Gus Bilirakis

...The Law of the Sea Treaty seeks to regulate and limit the use of the world's oceans for commercial use and environmental management and would determine the extent to which national territory extends off a nation's coasts. In doing so, the treaty ignores centuries of already established international practices regarding freedom of navigation on the seas and would empower multiple U.N.-established bureaucracies.

### 43. Stop Throwing Good Money After Bad On MEADS

(*Politico.com*)....Bob Barr



Remember the infamous so-called Bridge to Nowhere--a multimillion-dollar, taxpayer-funded proposal to link a tiny Alaska town to a small island airport? That proposed boondoggle has spawned an even more expensive offspring: the Medium Extended Air Defense System.

44. **Why They Serve--'If Not Me, Then Who?'**

(*Wall Street Journal*)....Tom Manion

I served in the military for 30 years. But it was impossible to fully understand the sacrifices of our troops and their families until April 29, 2007, the day my son, First Lt. Travis Manion, was killed in Iraq.

45. **Why Is General McChrystal Teaching An Off-The-Record Course At Yale?**

(*TheAtlantic.com*)....Gian Gentile

It's fine for a military office to play the role of professor -- but not if that means allowing 'special arrangements' that corrupt intellectual freedom.

46. **Our Man In Pakistan**

(*Wall Street Journal*)....Editorial

Since Osama bin Laden met his demise in the garrison town of Abbottabad last May, Pakistani officials say they haven't found anyone who helped him hide out for most of a decade in their backyard. But our supposed allies have spared no effort to hunt down the people who helped the U.S. find the al Qaeda mastermind.

47. **Once More On The Law Of The Sea**

(*New York Times*)....Editorial

There are few things the environmental community and the oil and gas industry agree on. But here is one: the need for the United States to join the Law of the Sea Convention, a worthy global agreement that the Senate has stubbornly refused to ratify for nearly 30 years.

48. **Sea Sick**

(*Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*)....Editorial

...Secretary of Defense Leon E. Panetta, Secretary of State Hillary R. Clinton, and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. Martin E. Dempsey argued before the Senate Wednesday that America's national strategic interests continue to be adversely affected by the absence of U.S. participation in Law of the Sea deliberations.

49. **A Court Covers Up**

(*New York Times*)....Editorial

The Obama administration has added to its string of victories in a tawdry pursuit--making overly expansive claims of secrecy and executive power to deny full disclosure of torture and other abuses of prisoners committed during the George W. Bush administration.

## CORRECTIONS

50. **Corrections**

(*Washington Post*)....The Washington Post

A May 24 A-section article about a State Department campaign to counter al-Qaeda propaganda incorrectly reported that cyber experts had hacked into the group's sites to replace its rhetoric with information about Yemeni civilians killed in terrorist strikes. U.S. officials did post such information, mimicking the format used by the group, but they did so on publicly accessible forums. They did not gain unauthorized access to sites, and they did not alter content already on the sites.



USA Today  
May 25, 2012  
Pg. 1

## **Memorial Day: America remembers**

### **1. 'I Will Never Leave A Fallen Comrade' -- U.S. Army Soldier's Creed**

*The U.S. military relentlessly seeks to recover the remains of every soldier lost in battle, cost be damned. Sometimes, though, it also takes someone like Lt. Jose Holguin.*

By Rick Hampson, USA

Today

The fallen navigator waited until dawn to crawl from the jungle. His back was broken, his jaw ripped open by shrapnel. There was a bullet hole in his left leg.

In the night, Lt. Jose Holguin had parachuted from a burning B-17. Painted on its nose were a scantily clad woman and the words "Naughty but Nice." Now the bomber lay before him in pieces.

He hobbled to the plane's mid-section, where he saw the charred, mangled bodies of two of his nine comrades. He fired his pistol twice, signaling the crew to rendezvous. He heard nothing in return.

This is when he made his hardest decision -- to flee -- and his most important promise, one as old as war. "I told the men that I couldn't take them with me," he would recall. "But I would be back to take care of them."

That was June 26, 1943, on an island in the Southwest Pacific, at the height of World War II. Many vows like Holguin's were uttered in the war. But when it ended, 79,000 Americans were missing and presumed dead. Half were virtually unrecoverable -- lost to the deepest oceans, highest mountains or thickest jungles.

So when the war ended in 1945, Americans mostly got on

with living. The dead rested where they fell.

Today, that's changing. No nation has ever tried so hard to recover so many remains from battlefields so distant and so old. This is manifest each Memorial Day at new grave sites bearing remains discovered or identified over the past 12 months. Since Memorial Day 2011, the bodies of 79 servicemen from wars past have been accounted for, including 20 from World War II.

The military's "full accounting mission," originally focused on Vietnam, is expanding. As many World War II cases have been investigated over the past two years as in the six previous, according to the POW/MIA Accounting Command. Last year, the war was the focus of a third of the military's 63 recovery expeditions.

Only the United States has the technology, the personnel (a force of about 600) and the money for such a task. Recovering a single set of remains can involve everything from ground-penetrating radar to hand-panning mud, and easily cost a million dollars.

Why such an expensive, virtually open-ended commitment?

For one thing, "we say we never leave a fallen comrade" -- living or dead, says Irving Smith, a former Army Ranger officer. Recovering their own remains is part of the ethos that binds units of warriors.

Leonard Wong, who teaches at the Army War College, says that in the post-9/11 era, the mission fills a national need to express support for troops and their families. Diane Mazur, a University of Florida law professor and former Air Force officer, likens it to the reverent treatment of victims' remains at Ground Zero.

Sometimes the military cannot or will not do it alone. Sometimes it takes a Jose Holguin.

Having survived the crash, he spent two years as a POW. After the war, like most veterans, he moved on. But he didn't forget his promise to the men of Naughty but Nice. He *couldn't*; it was "like a rumble inside me," he said. And it got louder and louder.

#### **A survivor's quest**

At noon one Saturday two years ago, Leonard Gionet found two soldiers at his door in Portland, Ore. They said the remains of his father Leonard -- who was killed 67 years earlier, when Gionet was 6 months old -- had been identified.

The elder Gionet went down with Naughty but Nice, having never seen his son. Growing up, Leonard had to construct a father out of photos, stories and his father's medals, which were pinned on Leonard at a ceremony when he was 3. The family had long given up hope of having anything to bury or any grave to visit.

Now, he marveled, these soldiers are here as if my father died in Afghanistan.

The discovery was not entirely unexpected; Gionet knew about Jose Holguin.

Holguin had joined the Army Air Force shortly after the attack on Pearl Harbor. In 1942, he went to the Pacific, where American and Japanese fliers battled under hellish conditions -- high mountains, unpredictable weather, poorly charted terrain.

The Naughty but Nice was a flying melting pot with crewmen from seven states. They included Gionet (Jhee-oh-nay) of Massachusetts; Henry Garcia, like Holguin a Mexican American from L.A.; and Frank Peattie, an Upstate New Yorker of Scotch-Irish descent.

Peattie and Holguin were best men at each other's weddings.

"These were men I learned to love," Holguin said years later, "men I depended on for my survival."

He credited Peattie with saving his life in an air raid and standing up for him when other officers refused to accept a Hispanic as what one called "a real American."

By June 25, after the stress of three dozen bombing missions, they were all Americans.

That night they hit a Japanese airfield near Rabaul on New Britain island, off the coast of New Guinea. As they left the target, fire from a Japanese fighter killed the pilot and set fire to the left wing.

Holguin bailed out seconds before the plane crashed, he later told his family. His parachute collapsed in the tree canopy, and he broke two vertebrae in the fall. He limped away, using a branch for a crutch, and inflated his flotation vest to drift down a stream. He caught a few fish and birds and ate them raw.

After almost a month, he was discovered by natives, who tended his wounds and, rather than have their village destroyed, gave him to the Japanese. By war's end in August 1945, only six of his 64 fellow POWs were alive.

At home, the missing airmen's relatives were still waiting for word. "This anxiety is awful," Della Gionet, Leonard's wife, wrote to Holguin's mother.

In the months after he got home, Holguin and his wife, Rebecca, contacted and visited the crew's families around the country. He often was the first to tell them their husband or son was dead. He told Della Gionet about Leonard a month



before she heard from the War Department.

Today, families are promptly notified by special military teams that follow strict protocols. Holguin was neither obligated to carry out this mission, nor trained for it. And he did it, his son Curt says, while suffering from post-traumatic stress.

One father, bereft over the loss of his only son, tried to legally adopt Holguin on the spot. When Holguin visited Henry Garcia's home, his wife was so afraid of what he was going to say that she hid in a closet with her children. Their grandmother was left to meet the messenger.

#### **A dream deferred**

The moment he heard the war was over, Holguin said, he had one thought: "How do I get back into the mountains for my crew?"

Other obligations took precedence. In 1946, the Holguins had the first of seven children. He rose to lieutenant colonel in the Air Force before leaving in 1963 for a career as a Los Angeles school teacher and administrator.

Finding the crash site seemed unlikely; there were hundreds on New Guinea and its surrounding islands, most hidden by jungle and eroded by tropical rains.

Unfulfilled, Holguin's vow seemed to take a toll, his son Curt recalls. At times this man, so solicitous toward his comrades' families, showed flashes of violent anger toward his own. He could be abusive to his wife, neglectful of his children, inflexible and autocratic.

The rumble inside him would not be still.

By 1981, Holguin -- his children largely raised and educated -- had time and money to make good on his promise. American

attitudes toward recovery of war remains were changing. Some relatives of troops listed as missing in Vietnam demanded an accounting, spurring the government to act.

That summer, he went back to New Britain.

He tracked down villagers he'd met in 1943 (including a woman who had treated his injuries) and spread the word that he was looking for the crash site. When he came back a year later, an old man led him and other searchers into the jungle.

They climbed a gentle ridge, hacking their way through undergrowth. Suddenly, they came on an open B-17 cockpit -- control columns, seat backs, instrument panel. The right inboard engine fire extinguisher control was switched to "on." He'd flipped it just before bailing out.

Nearby, Holguin found the plane's nose half buried in the ground. His crew lifted it up. There, on the left side, was the Naughty but Nice pinup girl.

There was no sign of human remains.

It was the same when he came back a third time, in 1983. Before giving up, he searched New Britain's war archives. There he found an old U.S. Army report.

In 1949, natives had directed an Army survey engineer to a crash site where he found wreckage he could not identify and partial remains of several bodies in a shallow grave. The only clue was a gold ring inscribed "HG."

The bodies were sent to the Army's forensic skeletal lab in Hawaii, then as now the world's largest. When attempts at identification failed, the remains, case "1B 28" were buried as unknown in Punchbowl, the vast military cemetery in Honolulu.

Holguin told the Army that these were his buddies, and

Rebecca helped him get Sen. Alan Cranston of California to intervene to have the bodies exhumed. In February 1985, they were identified as Sgt. Robert Griebel, Lt. Herman Knott, Sgt. Pace Payne, Lt. Frank Peattie (Holguin's best man) and Sgt. Henry Garcia -- the ring's "HG."

#### **'Thankful that he is home'**

They were reburied in their home towns. Holguin attended each service, pinning the men's medals on their relatives and sometimes giving them a piece of the plane he'd retrieved.

Garcia was last. "We are thankful he has been returned to us," Holguin said at the grave. "We are thankful that he is no longer among the unknown. We are thankful that he is home."

When congratulated, Holguin demurred, "There are four men I haven't found."

Army expeditions in 1983 and 1984 found no remains. In 1987, Holguin went to Japan and spoke to an airman who saw Naughty but Nice go down. Holguin thought Gionet also might have parachuted out. But the observer told him, "I saw one parachute."

Holguin was still following leads in March 1994 when he died of a sudden heart attack. He was 73.

The case seemed closed. But a military expedition to the crash site in 2001 discovered equipment, coins, rings and badges belonging to the crew, as well as human remains that could be subjected to DNA analysis.

It was nine years before soldiers were sent to Leonard Gionet's door. DNA identified only Payne and Griebel, both of whom had remains buried in 1985. Since other remains found in 2001 could not be linked to any particular crewman, they were attributed to all nine (including Gionet, Lt.

William Sarsfield, Lt. Charles Trimmingham and Sgt. Robert Christopherson).

They were buried in a single coffin at Arlington National Cemetery last September. Twenty-eight members of the Gionet family attended. They included his son, who in a sense finally had his father, and his widow, to whom he was married for 391 days.

Della's sergeant assured her he'd return from the war "because a bad penny always comes back." She'd believed him; now, there he was.

At the grave they thought not only of the nine who died in the crash, but of the one who survived. "He could have gone on with his life," Leonard Gionet says of Jose Holguin. "But he thought that was his duty, to bring them home."

Washington Times

May 25, 2012

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## **2. Rolling Thunder Motorcycle Rally Remembers POWs**

By Meredith Somers, The Washington Times

It was just a parade.

For years, that's what Cottage City resident Wanda Prue thought about the thousands of motorcycle riders who descended on the District in late May.

Sure, a lot of people waved and cheered, and it fostered a sense of camaraderie with her fellow bikers out of a Harley Davidson store near the District, but it wasn't until a year ago when a friend encouraged her to join a local Rolling Thunder chapter that Ms. Prue, 65, finally learned the meaning behind the roar of the bike engines.

"I found out it's a protest," Ms. Prue said. "My era has Vietnam veterans. I see what they've gone through. I see



how we as Rolling Thunder members appreciate the people and try to help families, and just do everything the country should be doing and doesn't."

Beginning Friday, the D.C. area is set to welcome roughly a half-million motorcycle riders for the 25th Rolling Thunder, an annual event to recognize prisoners of war and soldiers missing in action.

Named after the deep rumble caused by thousands of motorcycles wending their way through D.C. streets, the weekend-long event includes concerts, vigils, memorial services and speeches.

"It's definitely going to be one of those weekends when you take a big, deep breath on Sunday," said Richard Hawkins, president of Virginia's Rolling Thunder Chapter 1 in Winchester, who is helping out with stage security this year.

"It's nice to see who they bring to the stage to talk about different issues and where we stand now. Some speakers talk about what they went through during their part of the war. It's amazing some of the crap those poor fellows went through. Most don't realize what those guys gave up."

On Sunday, the parents of Bowe Bergdahl, who's been held by the Taliban for nearly 1,000 days, are scheduled to speak near the Lincoln Memorial.

"They're very modest people, very down-to-earth people whose son just happens to be a POW," Rolling Thunder Inc. spokeswoman Nancy Regg said of the private couple, who are traveling from their home in Idaho. "They're coming because of our POW message. They're here to back us and we're here to back them."

The Bergdahls are scheduled to speak during the motorcycle ride through

the District. The ride usually takes all day, as hundreds of thousands of riders make their way from the Pentagon to West Potomac Park.

Arlington County Police announced that Washington Boulevard would be closed from Interstate 395 to the Memorial Bridge between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. on Sunday.

Though the ride is the most well known and well attended part of the Memorial Day weekend, there are a number of other events throughout the weekend, including a trip Friday morning by Maryland's Rolling Thunder Chapter 1 to Walter Reed National Military Medical Center in Bethesda.

According to ride leader Dale Williams, the chapter has been visiting injured soldiers for two years. The goal, he said, "is to let them know people are out there that care. We support them and want them to feel like they're not just in this on their own."

Friday night, a candlelight vigil is scheduled for 9 p.m. at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial and on Saturday there is a daylong concert, including an appearance by Rolling Thunder founder Ray Manzo, and a performance by actor Gary Sinise and the Lt. Dan Band, named after Mr. Sinise's character in the movie "Forrest Gump" who loses his legs during the Vietnam War.

Rolling Thunder participants plan to lay a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at 11 a.m. Monday, followed by the National Memorial Day Parade at 2 p.m.

USA Today  
May 25, 2012  
Pg. 8

### **3. 'Like' This: Salutes To Troops To Flood Facebook Feeds**

By Cathy Lynn Grossman, USA Today

Memorial Day is not just unforgettable: Thanks to Facebook, it's also inescapable.

Salutes to troops past and present will be showing up every few seconds this weekend, if the pace of posting is anything like Memorial Day 2011.

Experts and everyday Facebook users says holiday posts are a contagious phenomenon, encouraging users to mark every celebratory moment online. "Likes" for Facebook's own flag-emblazoned Memorial Day page passed 102,000 by this week.

"The pressure is on to show you remember the birthday or national holiday," says Sara Linton, 28, of Oakland.

Linton says she'll post an image of one of her most precious possessions, a letter from her grandfather, Ted Linton, to his wife, her grandmother Thora, on VJ Day in 1945.

"I'm proud we get to honor people and remember what they did," Linton says. "Posting something unique and real makes Facebook less superficial."

Holiday posts are about the urge to be known, like getting a tattoo or putting a bumper sticker on the car says Sam Gosling, a psychology professor at University of Texas.

Ed Reiman presents his Facebook and Twitter identity as a husband, a grandfather and a retired businessman in Portland, Ore., and -- perhaps, most telling of all -- as a Vietnam War veteran.

Reiman, 65, tweeted at #USWarstories this week: "Was in Vietnam in the Army ... '67/'68 ... thru 'Tet' ... survived ... think about it and friends I lost there everyday, but have

lived well, raised a family ... have 'grands' ... and am now retired. I am blessed."

He has mixed feelings about the outpouring of Memorial Day posts.

"I think most folks are sincere, but I also think some people are trying to get rid of their own guilt for not speaking up sooner against the Vietnam War or for turning a cold shoulder to those veterans for 20 or 30 years," Reiman says.

Atlanta Journal-Constitution (ajc.com)  
May 25, 2012

### **4. Memorial Day: Remembering Fallen Of Decade At War**

By Allen G. Breed, Associated Press

Most people run marathons to challenge themselves. Maj. George Kraehe runs them to challenge others.

As a member of the Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors' "run & remember team," the New Mexico Army National Guard officer has participated in 20 races. Most times, as he sweats his way along each 26.2-mile course, flapping against Kraehe's back is the laminated photograph of a service member who has died in what has become our nation's longest war.

The 46-year-old military lawyer from Albuquerque does it to raise money, but also "to be kind of a visible sign that there still are people out there fighting and dying, unfortunately, in these conflicts."

"Because I don't think it's something that is foremost in people's thoughts," he said in a recent telephone interview from Kabul, Afghanistan. "I think you could say that because we have done so well, because we have been a big part of preventing another attack on



U.S. soil, it is easier for people to forget we're here."

As the nation approaches its 11th Memorial Day since the United States launched the Global War on Terror, Kraehe and others fear many have done just that.

About 2.2 million U.S. service members have seen duty in the Middle Eastern war zones, many of them veterans of multiple tours. And more than 6,330 have died--nearly 4,500 in Iraq, and more than 1,840 in Afghanistan.

But as striking as those numbers are, fewer Americans today may have a direct connection to the ongoing fighting than during any previous war.

Unlike World War II, when 16 million men and women put on a uniform, less than 1 percent of the nation's population serves in the U.S. military. And unlike Korea or Vietnam, when the threat of imminent draft hung over the head of every physically fit male over the age of 18, only those who have volunteered need worry about being plucked from their routine lives and placed in harm's way.

When retiring Adm. Mike Mullen addressed the West Point graduating class last May, the outgoing chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff told the new Army officers that he believed most Americans appreciated the military's sacrifices. But, he added, "I fear they do not know us. I fear they do not comprehend the full weight of the burden we carry or the price we pay when we return from battle."

In a survey released shortly after the 10th anniversary of the 9/11 attacks, the Pew Research Center found that 84 percent of recent veterans felt the general public has "little or no understanding" of the problems they and their families face. Of

the civilians polled, 71 percent agreed.

The same study found that only a third of Americans between the ages of 18 and 29 had an immediate family member who had served in the military. When she unveiled a special Gold Star Christmas tree at the White House last year to honor the families of fallen service members, first lady Michelle Obama lamented, "Not every American knows what a Gold Star family is."

"I've had people say to me, 'Oh. We still have troops in Afghanistan?'" says Ami Neiberger-Miller.

The gold star license plate on her car is for her kid brother.

Army Spc. Christopher T. Neiberger was standing in a turret, manning the .50-caliber machine gun, during a run through Baghdad when an improvised explosive device blew apart his Humvee. It was Aug. 6, 2007--three days after his 22nd birthday.

While those who've lost someone to these wars are not as numerous as in her grandparents' generation, the proliferation of memorial T-shirts, car decals and even tattoos makes the survivors more visible, says Neiberger-Miller.

"I would hope that those things would invite questions," she says. "And what is surprising is how often they don't."

One difference between this war and, say, World War II is that shared sense of purpose, says Neiberger-Miller, a spokeswoman for TAPS.

"My grandparents have stories about rationing and sacrifice and having a victory garden--all of those things Americans did for the war effort," she says. "Here, it's just a different environment. I don't think people feel they've been

asked to sacrifice as a group for the war effort."

The profound sacrifice of losing a loved one in service to flag and country carries its own complexity. As part of this fraternity of sorrow, survivors like Neiberger-Miller are stuck in a sometimes awkward limbo: wanting people to honor their fallen, but needing to set boundaries.

Chris Neiberger is buried at Arlington National Cemetery, in Section 60. During a recent visit, his sister was sitting silently in front of his gravestone when a walking tour came by.

Although making a point of not engaging the tourists, she politely answered a couple of questions. When a woman approached to hug her, Neiberger-Miller stepped aside and shook her hand instead.

"I mean, they WANT to connect," she says. "They want into that world, but they DON'T want into it."

Rachel Ascione thinks people are aware of what's going on. They often just don't know how to show it.

Her stepbrother, Marine Cpl. Ronald R. Payne Jr., of Lakeland, Fla., died May 8, 2004, when his patrol came under fire from rocket-propelled grenades while searching for a Taliban official outside Kandahar in southern Afghanistan. Just 23, he was the Corps' first combat casualty in that country.

Ascione--whose mother married Payne's father when the kids were in kindergarten together--has a sticker on the back window of her car memorializing her brother. Sometimes, she will emerge from a store or restaurant to find a note from a stranger, "thanking me for my brother's sacrifice."

She recently hung out with a friend of Ron's who'd just

returned from a stint as a medic in Afghanistan. He told her people here at home have no idea how bad things are.

"The longer we're there, the more people are dying," the 30-year-old Cranford, N.J., woman says. "Ultimately, everyone will know someone."

Maj. Kraehe, the marathon runner, is trying to help the rest of us "know" some of these fallen heroes.

In civilian life, Kraehe is an assistant U.S. Attorney, husband and father of two boys. When he puts on his uniform with its oak leaf insignia, he is a member of the Judge Advocate General's Corps.

Kraehe learned about the TAPS running program in 2006, during his first deployment, in Iraq. That December, he ran his first memorial race, whimsically dubbed the Honolulu Marathon "Forward." Kraehe and about 200 others ran through the flat desert along the perimeter of Contingency Operations Base Speicher, just north of Tikrit.

He did it in honor of CW2 Ruel Garcia, 34, of Wahiawa, Hawaii, who was killed Jan. 16, 2006, when his AH64D Apache helicopter was shot down over Baghdad.

In 2009, Kraehe made a decision: to run marathons in all 50 states, honoring a native son or daughter in each.

So far, he's made it to races from Arkansas (the Hogeye Marathon) to Wisconsin (the Madison Marathon), and "Rock 'n Roll" runs in both New Orleans and Las Vegas. And although his second deployment--this time to Herat in western Afghanistan--has made achieving his objective more difficult, Kraehe still finds time to honor his fallen comrades.

In October, he hitched a ride on a C-130 cargo plane to run a marathon in Kabul.



A day before the race, a suicide bombing in the city killed seven Americans. So he and the other two dozen participants were confined to the embassy compound.

"The course was a .9-mile loop," he says with a laugh. "So we were just kind of running around in a circle."

Twenty-eight times.

Last month, while home on R&R, Kraehe decided to run the Boston Marathon.

Normally, TAPS hooks him up with the family of a fallen service member and obtains a photo. But the organization was unable to find someone in time, so Kraehe chose a young man who'd been killed where he is now serving.

On Sept. 28, Army Spc. Steven E. Gutowski of Plymouth, Mass., was part of a four-person team clearing roads of bombs in Afghanistan's Ghazni Province. The combat engineer and two others were killed when an IED exploded.

In Boston, when Kraehe began to flag under the day's record heat, he reflected on why he was there.

"They didn't quit," he says. "They gave it their all, literally."

The 24-year-old soldier's mother didn't know of Kraehe's tribute until a reporter told her about it.

"It's overwhelming," Joan Gutowski said, her voice breaking. "These soldiers are unbelievable. They're a cut above everybody else, I'll tell you."

CNN International  
May 24, 2012

## 5. Gen. John Allen Discusses Afghanistan Situation

CNN's Amanpour (CNN  
International), 3:00 PM

CHRISTIANE

AMANPOUR: Welcome back. And now to Afghanistan, where

the United States is scaling back both troops and expectations. The man in charge of the war there, General John Allen, has just confirmed specifics of the drawdown, a quarter of American surge troops will be home by the end of September. That's 23,000. But he did say he'll need strong combat forces for the foreseeable future.

And when I sat down with him at the Pentagon, he also took strong exception to the way the situation in Afghanistan going forward is being described in the White House as "Afghan good enough."

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

AMANPOUR: General Allen, thank you very much for joining me.

GEN. JOHN ALLEN, USMC, ISAF COMMANDER: It's a pleasure to be with you this morning.

AMANPOUR: Senator Feinstein and Representative Rodgers, both from their respective intelligence committees, came to Afghanistan. And when they came out, they told us that the Taliban was stronger since the surge.

Would you agree with that assessment?

ALLEN: I don't think that we're out of agreement on this. I don't think that there's a difference of opinion. I think the difference really is whether the Taliban think they will succeed or not, and we need to persuade them that there is no alternative to peace.

They cannot win this fight kinetically. They cannot win this fight violently. The success for them will be a peaceful outcome, not a violent outcome.

AMANPOUR: But at the moment, there are no talks of any consequence with the Taliban. I mean, a quote I read sort of sums up the shift of power.

Five years ago, the United States was refusing to talk to the Taliban. Now the Taliban is refusing to talk. They see you leaving. Does that not make it more difficult for you to persuade them to come in?

ALLEN: No, I don't think so. I think that the unambiguous international support for Afghanistan has been a very powerful message. You know, that was the message that came out of the NATO summit. We will not abandon Afghanistan. The international community's role here over the long term is good for the region.

So we are not leaving. And the narrative for the Taliban that they can wait us out is a flawed narrative.

AMANPOUR: You say we're not leaving, but we are leaving. The president has said it, 2014 is the date, 2013 is the date when all combat is going to stop, according to the President of the United States. So we are leaving. And they know it.

ALLEN: Well, let me calibrate your question, which I think is important. The president did not say there would be no combat after 2013. What he said is that the ANSF move into the lead for combat operations and we will support them.

AMANPOUR: Right.

ALLEN: The second issue with regard to the forces after this drawdown of the surge, I have told the president, through my chain of command, that I owe him analysis following the successful drawdown of the 23,000 troops on what we think we'll need in 2013.

That analysis will include an analysis of the state of the Taliban, the insurgency, how the Afghan National Security Forces are doing, what we anticipate the operational environment being in 2013 and the result of that analysis, the

aggregation of those will be a recommendation from me to him on what I think both the U.S. and the international combat power will be needed in 2013.

AMANPOUR: And that assessment, you anticipate making when and delivering when?

ALLEN: Before the end of the year. My anticipation would be it would be in November or early December.

AMANPOUR: If you had to make that assessment now in the middle of this fighting season, which seemed quite fierce, what would you say?

(CROSSTALK)

ALLEN: Well, I've been clear that we need sufficient combat power to ensure that the ANSF do not fail. I don't anticipate they will, and I think that the conversation is wide open right now.

It's a very important strategic conversation, and it is one that is not predicated around a number. It is one that's predicated around a requirement. And I've got to build that requirement for the president, and clearly express it to him in the analysis of -- that I'll do for him.

AMANPOUR: In that case, how do you assess Afghan good enough? That seems to be the mantra coming out of the White House.

And Afghan good enough, I've got sheaves of papers, of quotes here. It's such a scaling back of expectations for Afghanistan. The national security advisors said publicly that our goal is to provide a modicum of stability for Afghanistan, a modicum of stability, when years before it was to defeat, it was to prevent, it was to have a real secure Afghanistan. How do you assess that?

ALLEN: Well, I -- you know, first, I don't use the



term "Afghan good enough," because we're all sacrificing way too much for something that's "Afghan good enough." I think that term understates or undersells the commitment that we've all made to this.

Afghanistan is an important country in an important region. And the outcome of our investment, this global investment of 50 nations and ISAF and many other nations who've been involved for a long period of time with great generosity is not about being good enough.

It's about creating stability that is enduring in Afghanistan, preventing the Taliban from overthrowing the Afghan government, and in so doing creating a platform yet again where Al Qaeda or similarly motivated groups might be willing to launch attacks upon the United States or the capitals or the population centers of many of our allies.

AMANPOUR: I hear what you say, that we've worked way too hard, we've sacrificed way too much and we had very good goals. So my question then to you is why the surge? Why the surge? Why send more and more people into this if the president was going to pull them out, win or lose? He's already said that the Pentagon didn't get -- the goal was not to defeat the Taliban.

Does that worry you, the fact that all these men and women went into the field for a goal that was, we're coming out, win or lose?

ALLEN: Well, I think the goal was very clear. The goal was to reverse the momentum of the Taliban, and the Taliban in '08 and '09 were building significant momentum. And remember that the Afghan National Security Forces were immature at the time.

AMANPOUR: But you've just said the Taliban are coming back.

ALLEN: Well --

AMANPOUR: So you still have a --

ALLEN: -- the Taliban believe that they are -- they have the capability of winning. But we don't believe that.

AMANPOUR: So, the Afghan National Security Forces are basically the insurance policy. If NATO is going to withdraw, then there must be indigenous force --

ALLEN: That is correct.

AMANPOUR: -- to take over, that is correct?

ALLEN: That is correct.

AMANPOUR: And you have put a huge amount of training, money, blood, sweat and tears into getting them up and running.

ALLEN: That's correct.

AMANPOUR: And many people say they're doing a lot better than expected.

ALLEN: Yes. They are.

AMANPOUR: You would agree with that?

ALLEN: We would, yes.

AMANPOUR: Then how do you assess the latest news, which is that according to the Strategic Partnership Agreement, these forces are going to be built up, some 350,000 or so, and then they're going to be built down by another 100,000, get rid of them.

And again, not conditions-based. based on, apparently, according to the defense secretary, the amount of funds on the table. What kind of a signal is that, and does that worry you?

ALLEN: We still haven't recruited the full force. We still haven't fielded the full force. That will occur in '13. We'll continue with that plateau for a couple of years. During that period of time, as the commander, I will be required

to assess their capabilities every six months.

And the outcome of that assessment will ultimately determine what the final size, state and composition of the ANSF will be as the drawdown ultimately approaches. For now, we have a target. And that's what we're planning for is that target. But if those operational assumptions change dramatically, that target could change.

AMANPOUR: When you say that, I hear you saying what any good military commander would say, that it's going to be conditions-based. But that's not what they're saying at the White House or in the capitals around Europe.

ALLEN: No, I think that one of the outcomes of the NATO summit was a very clear signal by the international community that it is supportive of a long-term support to the Afghan National Security Forces. That's an important outcome.

And the lesson that we learned was in the post-Soviet era in Afghanistan. The force that was left behind by the Soviet era ultimately failed because it was under-resourced. And we learned that as a very hard lesson in a direct-line relationship, it generated what happened on the 11th of September in 2001.

AMANPOUR: Do you have that commitment?

ALLEN: Oh, yes.

AMANPOUR: That the commanders on the ground will be able to make that assessment?

ALLEN: Yes, oh yes. That is a commitment. It's part of the mission that I have now.

AMANPOUR: One of the things we've been reading a lot about recently is Afghan forces, who you have all trained up, some of them attacking NATO

forces. How big a problem is that right now?

ALLEN: Well, any attack is a blow, and we are very, very conscious of this. It is a tragedy every time it occurs. We should not be surprised that the Taliban seek to infiltrate the ANSF. But fewer than 50 percent of those attacks are actually infiltration. Some of those are self-radicalized individuals who have elected to manifest that radicalization by attacking their mentors or their advisors.

AMANPOUR: That's a worrying development.

ALLEN: Well, it is, but it's not -- we're not surprised by it. We anticipate that in counterinsurgencies, this sort of thing will occur. Now the Afghans have embraced this. They're working very, very hard to reduce the possibility of this occurring in the future. Any one is a tragedy. But they have taken steps with the employment of Afghan counterintelligence entities.

They've taken steps in the vetting of the Afghan troops and police that are coming into the service, a far more thorough vetting to reduce the possibility that radicals or extremists are inducted into the forces or to reduce the possibility that the insurgency can recruit inside the forces.

And it's not well known, but in the last several months since they've really embraced this, they've made over 160 arrests out of the security forces of those who might be plotting or might be considering attacking ISAF forces.

But every one of those is a tragedy. And it's important to say that, even though each one is a tragedy, there are tens of thousands of interactions every single day across Afghanistan between the Afghan troops and ISAF forces. And every one of those is successful. And



most of those, every single day continue to deepen and broaden the relationship that we seek to have with them.

AMANPOUR: General Allen, thank you very much indeed.

ALLEN: Thank you, ma'am. It's wonderful to see you. (END VIDEO CLIP)

AMANPOUR: And as he heads back to Afghanistan, it was fascinating to see in that interview the resolve of soldiers on the ground epitomized by General Allen and the race for the exits led by the White House. We'll be back in a moment.

But first, check out our Facebook page, where you can watch a report about the troubling Taliban effort to take control of rural schools in Afghanistan. That's at [amanpour.com/Facebook](http://amanpour.com/Facebook). Stay with us.

Washington Times  
May 25, 2012  
Pg. 1

## 6. U.S. Troops Winning War Against IEDs Of Taliban

*Dogs and devices sniff out top killer*

By Rowan Scarborough, The Washington Times

The U.S. military is on a path toward significantly fewer battlefield deaths in Afghanistan this year because it has become better at detecting the No. 1 killer of U.S. troops: the improvised explosive device (IED).

With the 2009 surge forces leaving the country and Afghan troops preparing to take over more of the fighting, U.S. forces are averaging about 23 fatalities each month. That number would bring the death toll to about 276 this year, compared with 317 in 2009, 499 in 2010 and 418 last year,

according to statistics compiled by [icasualties.org](http://icasualties.org).

"The threat is still there, no doubt about that, but there have been some improvements in detection and plenty of lessons learned," said Joe Kasper, spokesman for Rep. Duncan Hunter, California Republican and a House Armed Services Committee member.

The Pentagon has spent more than \$200 million a year developing and deploying devices to detect roadside bombs as they are being put into place or when they lie buried ahead of U.S. foot patrols and convoys. Its Joint Improvised Explosive Device Defeat Organization (JIEDDO), which is scheduled to receive \$217 million in fiscal 2013, also has put more reliance on dogs to sniff out different types of IEDs.

Military statistics indicate that the U.S. is on a trend for about 120 IED deaths this year, compared with 252 last year and 368 in 2010.

"The rate of incidents is still high, but the fatalities are down considerably," said Mr. Kasper.

Mr. Hunter, a veteran of the Iraq and Afghanistan wars, has pushed JIEDDO to do a better job of keeping pace with how the Taliban change tactics and bomb components.

Mr. Hunter this month won passage of an amendment to the fiscal 2013 Pentagon budget bill that would require JIEDDO to become more involved in stopping agricultural materials made in Pakistan from falling into the hands of bomb makers in Afghanistan.

"Enemy tactics have become less sophisticated, if anything," Mr. Kasper said. "Basic materials are being utilized in place of more-complicated systems. Take pesticides, for example, and their origin in Pakistan."

Pakistan has refused to stop the movement of calcium ammonium nitrate, the main bomb precursor used by the Taliban.

"We have not seen the level of cooperation or action that we have requested or desired," Marine Gen. John R. Allen, the top NATO commander in Afghanistan, told Congress in March.

NATO command statistics in Kabul show that what are called enemy-initiated attacks dropped for the first time since 2008, by 10 percent in the fall of 2011 and first part of this year.

IED attacks were down 10 percent in April at just under 400, compared with the same month last year. The military detected and cleared more than 200 bombs before they exploded.

In all, IED attacks fell 20 percent the past three months, compared with the same period last year.

Gen. Allen credited JIEDDO for developing protective body armor and detection systems.

"All of these have contributed to reducing the vulnerability of our troops and reducing the casualties," he said. "But the casualties are still too high."

As the surge forces leave villages this summer, a big challenge for NATO is to watch how the Taliban react and whether they step up IED attacks.

"The Taliban have been unambiguous in that they intend to take advantage of the removal of the surge forces, and so we have planned for that," Gen. Allen said Sunday. "If we detect that there is, in fact, a Taliban presence beginning to surge in behind our forces, we have forces that are available that we intend to put against that to prevent that from happening."

Bill Roggio, who edits the Long War Journal for the Foundation for Defense of Democracies, said a decrease in fatalities does not always tell the full story.

"Attacks are down overall nationwide and Afghan forces are being pushed to the fore as well, so this may also factor in to the lower numbers of U.S. deaths," he said. "Casualties are not the best way to judge the strength or weakness of an insurgency."

The U.S. has 90,000 troops in Afghanistan, down from a surge peak of 100,000. By the end of September, another 23,000 are scheduled to exit. Members of the Obama administration are debating the size of the force for 2013. Most U.S. combat forces are expected to leave in 2014.

Wall Street Journal  
May 25, 2012  
Pg. 8

## 7. Maintenance Snafu Grounds Afghan Fleet

*Air Force Planes Provided by the U.S. Have Been Out of Service for Months, Hindering Development of Kabul's Military*

By Nathan Hodge

KABUL—A \$275 million fleet of Afghan air force transport planes provided by the U.S. over the past three years has been grounded for months because of lack of adequate maintenance and potential safety problems, American military officials said.

The fleet of 15 C-27A cargo planes is meant to provide the logistics backbone for the Afghan military, which now depends instead on air transport by the U.S.-led coalition—at a time when the U.S. is working to prepare its Afghan counterparts to manage their own security affairs.



The Italian aircraft, also known as the G222, were built from 1977 to 1985 and in service with the Italian air force before the U.S. bought them for Afghanistan. Prime contractor Alenia Aermacchi North America, a unit of Italian defense conglomerate Finmeccanica SpA, rebuilt and upgraded the aircraft at a facility near Naples.

The Afghan air force began receiving the refurbished cargo planes in 2009 to replace obsolete Soviet-made aircraft.

Since then, some work performed by a maintenance subcontractor hired by Alenia "did not meet contract specifications," forcing the planes to be grounded in December in Kabul, said Capt. Agneta Murnan, a spokeswoman for the U.S. Air Force's 438th Air Expeditionary Wing.

Some of the planes were later cleared for flight, but the fleet was grounded again in early March after additional safety problems were identified.

Who is ultimately responsible for the problems that required the grounding of the fleet is unclear. The Defense Department's inspector general is preparing a report card that will look at the C-27A procurement as part of an assessment of the progress of training and equipping the Afghan air force.

Until April, a unit of L-3 Communications Holdings Inc. carried out ground support and maintenance work. The company said the subsidiary, L-3 Systems Field Support, "performed maintenance and sustainment work as outlined in the contract."

A spokesman for Alenia's U.S.-based subsidiary said the company was "working jointly with the U.S. Air Force in a methodical and deliberate process to rectify the situation.

We expect the fleet will begin flying again very soon."

The C-27As are currently "non-mission capable," aviation-speak for a lack of equipment and spare parts, a person familiar with the matter said. "Most of the ground-support equipment is unserviceable or the wrong type, or the part's missing," the person said. Documentation for parts was incomplete and the system to fill oxygen bottles was inoperable, the person said.

The U.S. military said a new contractor is now conducting maintenance to get the planes back in the air.

Air transport is critical in Afghanistan, where the road network is underdeveloped and often impassable because of insurgent bombs. Transport support by the U.S.-led coalition is likely to end as most foreign forces withdraw by the end of 2014.

The grounding of the Afghan transport fleet hinders training of the Afghan force as the clock runs down to 2014. While the planes are grounded, Afghan pilots have made use of simulators to compensate for lost flying time, Capt. Murnan said.

Fifteen C-27A aircraft have been delivered out of a planned total of 20 aircraft, according to an Air Forces Central representative. The twin-turboprop C-27A is larger and more capable than the single-engine C-208B planes currently flying transport missions for the Afghan air force.

The new aircraft are supposed to provide essential support to the Afghan military, ferry cargo, passengers and humanitarian aid, as well as fly medical evacuation missions. Two of the planes were to be configured as VIP transports for the Afghan government.

As part of its exit strategy, the U.S. has set a target of building an Afghan force of around 145 aircraft. Around 100 have been delivered, including training aircraft and transport helicopters.

U.S. officials said the C-208Bs and Russian-made Mi-17 helicopters have been providing airlift support since the "stand down" started in mid-December.

Air Force Brig. Gen. Timothy Ray, who heads the NATO air training command in Afghanistan, said the coalition's focus was to build the foundations of a professional air force, not a one-for-one replacement of coalition air power. "It's a very small force to begin with," he said.

The grounding of the aircraft is only the most recent setback to efforts to build a capable and self-sufficient Afghan air force.

Afghanistan has seen a series of deadly incidents in which Afghans trained and advised by coalition have turned their weapons on their mentors. In April 2011, an Afghan air force officer killed eight airmen and a contractor at their training base at Kabul International Airport, one of the deadliest attacks on coalition troops in recent years.

Col. Abdul Wahab Sultan, an Afghan air force officer, said the incident "broke our hearts," and set back training efforts.

Maj. Anthony Graham, a mentor to Afghan air force personnel, said heightened security concerns had forced the Afghans to reshuffle personnel, delaying some parts of the training program.

At the Kabul headquarters, U.S. Air Force trainers now wear body armor and carry rifles as they make the rounds with their Afghan trainees. A security guard keeps watch while advisers do their work.

On a recent flight ferrying Afghan student pilots and air force officers from Kabul to Shindand, a young Army specialist occupied one of the seats closest to the cockpit. Pointing his thumb to the U.S. pilots, he said his job was to "keep them safe" during the flight.

New York Times

May 25, 2012

Pg. 11

## 8. 4 Kidnapped While Aiding Afghanistan

By Alissa J. Rubin

KABUL, Afghanistan — Four aid workers for an international humanitarian organization were kidnapped Tuesday afternoon in northern Afghanistan, the organization, Medair, announced late Thursday.

Medair, which specializes in emergency relief work and provides food aid and nutrition projects in Afghanistan, said in a statement on its Web site that the four workers were abducted while visiting a project site in the northern province of Badakhshan. The group said it would not release details about their identities or nationalities.

"Publicity at this point can only jeopardize efforts to secure the release of our staff and prolong the pain of their families," Aurélien Demareux, a spokesman for the group, said in the statement.

A spokesman for the Badakhshan governor said the kidnapping occurred about 4 p.m. on Tuesday on a rural stretch of road between the districts of Yaftal and Raghistan. The spokesman, Abdul Marouf Rasikh, said at least two of the abducted workers were foreigners. No one has yet claimed responsibility for the kidnapping.



Medair works primarily in areas of conflict, including Somalia, Sudan and Afghanistan, but also in extremely poor communities in Haiti and Zimbabwe, according to the group's Web site.

The north of Afghanistan had been thought to be a relatively safe area for humanitarian workers until the summer of 2010, when 10 people who were running an eye care operation for impoverished Afghans were killed by gunmen as they traveled between Nuristan and Badakhshan Provinces. The Taliban claimed responsibility for the attack, saying that the workers were proselytizing Christians. But aid officials said that the victims were not missionaries, and there are lingering questions about whether the Taliban were really responsible for the attack.

Since 2010, there have been signs of rising instability in Badakhshan, with increasing amounts of opium poppy cultivation in the province and reports of Taliban activity, even though the area is overwhelmingly from the Tajik ethnic group and the Taliban are primarily from the Pashtun ethnic group. In the north, however, there have been some Taliban from other ethnic groups.

*An employee of The New York Times contributed reporting from Kunduz, Afghanistan.*

Yahoo.com  
May 25, 2012

## 9. French President Says Afghan Mission Completed

By Patrick Quinn, Associated Press

KABUL, Afghanistan -- France's new president said on Friday that his country's troops had carried out their mission

in Afghanistan and that it was time for them to leave, an early pullout that will be coordinated with the United States and other allies.

Francois Hollande arrived early that day in Afghanistan to meet with troops and Afghan President Hamid Karzai to discuss plans to pull out 3,300 troops more than a year earlier than scheduled. His visit was not announced ahead of time for security reasons.

"Several reasons justify this decision to withdraw our combat troops from Afghanistan," Hollande told French troops at a base in the Nijrab district of eastern Kapisa province. "The time for Afghan sovereignty has come."

He also added that "the terrorist threat that targeted our territory, while it hasn't totally disappeared, is in part lessened." Another reason "is that, simply, you have carried out your mission."

"Thank you for what you have accomplished for France, what you are doing for Afghanistan," Hollande told the troops before flying to Kabul to meet Karzai.

Hollande announced plans at a NATO summit this week to pull out French troops by the end of the year, well ahead of the alliance's 2014 withdrawal date.

Amid increasing French disillusionment with the war, Hollande's conservative predecessor Nicolas Sarkozy had pledged to withdraw all troops by the end of 2013. Hollande, elected president earlier this month, made a more immediate pullout a pillar of his campaign.

Tension over Hollande's pledge to end his country's combat mission two years early dominated the NATO summit in Chicago, and unleashed fears of a domino effect of other allies withdrawing

early. Hollande has suggested noncombat troops may remain beyond Dec. 31.

Although the departure of French troops should not affect the campaign against the insurgency, there are fears it could cause some allies to accelerate their withdrawal.

President Barack Obama last year decided to pull out 33,000 U.S. combat troops by September, leaving 68,000 in Afghanistan.

The coalition has already started handing over security control to Afghan army and police in areas home to 75 percent of the population with a goal of putting them in the lead for all the country by mid-2013. NATO and other foreign forces would then be in a support role for the 352,000-strong Afghan National Security Forces.

Most foreign combat troops will have left Afghanistan by the end of 2014, when Afghanistan will take complete control for security around the country.

Kapisa, where French forces are based, is one of the areas already being transferred to Afghan control. Ashraf Ghani, head of a commission overseeing the transition, said earlier this month that "the risks in Kapisa are containable and within our capability."

French Defense Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian and Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius are also in Kabul with Hollande.

Despite assurances from the Afghan government and the U.S.-led coalition that the situation in Afghanistan has been improving, violence persists around the country.

Afghan officials said that three explosions in three cities of southern Afghanistan on Friday killed three and wounded at least nine others.

Fareed Ayal, a spokesman for the police in Uruzgan

province, said a police vehicle hit a roadside mine in Chora district, killing one police inspector and wounding two other policeman.

Daud Ahmadi, a spokesman in Helmand province, said a roadside bomb struck a bus the same day in Gereskh district. Two civilians died and four others were injured. He says the bomb was planted near a NATO supply site in an apparent attempt to target foreign troops.

In Kandahar province, police chief Gen. Abdul Razaq said a suicide bomber on a motorcycle blew himself up in Spin Boldak district, wounding one border policeman and two civilians.

*Associated Press writers Mirwais Khan in Kandahar and Angela Charlton in Paris contributed to this report.*

New York Times  
May 25, 2012  
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## 10. Drone Strikes Continue In Pakistan As Tension Increases And Senate Panel Cuts Aid

By Salman Masood

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan — As tension between Pakistan and the United States deepened on multiple fronts on Thursday, a Senate panel voted to cut aid to Pakistan further, and C.I.A. drone strikes continued in northwestern Pakistan for a second consecutive day despite Pakistani condemnation.

Relations have worsened in recent days over Pakistan's refusal to reopen NATO supply lines that were closed down in November. The issue led President Obama to refuse to hold a meeting with President Asif Ali Zardari on Monday at the NATO summit meeting in Chicago, administration officials said, in a clear diplomatic slight.



A new issue arose when a Pakistani tribal court sentenced a Pakistani doctor, Shakil Afridi, to 33 years in prison on Wednesday for treason after he helped the C.I.A. locate Osama bin Laden's hide-out in Pakistan last year. In Washington, administration officials and members of Congress reacted with fury over the sentencing.

The Senate, which had already slashed foreign aid to Pakistan, moved on Thursday to cut an additional \$33 million in military assistance, \$1 million for each year Dr. Afridi was sentenced. Senator John McCain of Arizona, ranking Republican on the Armed Services Committee, said, "All of us are outraged at the imprisonment and sentence of some 33 years, virtually a death sentence, to the doctor in Pakistan who was instrumental — not on purpose, but was instrumental and completely innocent of any wrongdoing" in the raid that killed Bin Laden.

Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton also condemned the sentence, saying the administration had raised the case with Pakistan and would continue. "We regret both the fact that he was convicted and the severity of his sentence," she said at the State Department. "His help, after all, was instrumental in taking down one of the world's most notorious murderers. That was clearly in Pakistan's interests as well as ours and the rest of the world."

In northwestern Pakistan, an American drone struck militant hide-outs, killing 7 to 10 people believed to have been militants, Pakistani officials and local residents said Thursday.

Thursday's strike occurred in Hasso Khe in the Lar Dewar area of North Waziristan, an area considered a redoubt of local and foreign militants. Most of the militants killed in

the strike were Uzbek fighters who belonged to the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, said local residents who were reached by telephone.

A strike the day before, in the village of Datta Khel Kalai, also in North Waziristan, killed four suspected militants, The Associated Press reported, citing Pakistani intelligence officials.

The American drone strikes are immensely unpopular in Pakistan and have caused increasing friction between the two countries. While the United States views the remotely piloted aircraft as vital in the fight against militants, the drones are seen as a breach of national sovereignty that also cause civilian deaths.

Politicians across the Pakistani political spectrum have been unanimous in their criticism of the strikes. A spokesman for the Pakistani Foreign Affairs Ministry on Thursday called the continued strikes against international law, adding, "They are illegal, counterproductive and totally unacceptable."

The Pakistani Parliament has made ending the drone campaign a requirement for restoring access to NATO's supply lines that run through Pakistan to Afghanistan, despite signals from senior government and military officials last week that they were ready to allow a deal to go through, albeit only at a much higher transit fee for each NATO container.

The supply lines were cut off in November after an American airstrike mistakenly killed 24 Pakistani soldiers, and Mr. Obama has refused to meet Pakistani demands for an apology.

*Steven Lee Myers contributed reporting from Washington, and Ihsanullah Tipu Mehsud from Islamabad.*

New York Times  
May 25, 2012  
Pg. 4

## 11. Iran Nuclear Talks End With No Deal

By Steven Erlanger and Rick Gladstone

BAGHDAD — Talks between Iran and six world powers on its disputed nuclear program failed to produce a breakthrough on Thursday, in an apparent diplomatic setback for both sides.

The six wanted a freeze on Iranian production of uranium enriched to 20 percent purity, which is considered a short step from bomb grade. The Iranians wanted an easing of the onerous economic sanctions imposed by the West and recognition of what they call their right to enrich.

But the sides sought to frame the two days of difficult negotiations in a positive way, asserting that they had greater understanding of each other's positions and agreeing to reconvene in Moscow on June 18 and 19. That will be the third such meeting since the talks resumed in Istanbul in April after a 15-month lapse, and could be the last before July 1, when tougher American and European penalties take effect on Iran's banking system and its oil industry, the country's economic lifeline.

The agreement on both a site and a date for the next meeting came only at the end of the two days of talks, after a final news conference had been postponed twice for more negotiations.

"What we have now is some common ground, and a meeting in place where we can take that further forward," said Catherine Ashton, the European Union's top foreign policy official and the lead negotiator for the six powers: the United States, Russia, China, Britain, France and Germany. Still,

she told reporters at the news conference in Baghdad, "significant differences remain" after what she called two days of "very intense and detailed discussions," and she emphasized that time was short.

The chief Iranian negotiator, Saeed Jalili, the secretary of Iran's National Security Council and the personal representative of Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, Iran's supreme leader, described the talks as positive. But he suggested in his remarks to reporters that the main obstacle was the other side's refusal to accept Iran's claimed right to enrich its own nuclear fuel, which it has continued to do despite four Security Council resolutions demanding a suspension.

"This is our right, and it is clearly irrefutable," Mr. Jalili said. If the six powers accept such a right, he said, "we will, of course, welcome some offer to cooperate on."

The six counter that the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty has no explicit "right to enrich," only the right to a civilian nuclear program under strict supervision by the International Atomic Energy Agency, and that Iran has been out of compliance.

Part of Iran's proposal, never put into writing, centered on the demand that the global powers recognize its right to enrich, "something we are obviously not willing to do," a senior American official said after the talks.

The proposal of the six centered on getting Iran to suspend enrichment to 20 percent, to export its current and continuing stock of 20 percent enriched uranium and to open up its once-secret Fordo enrichment plant to international inspection. But Iran did not consider the



benefits offered for doing so to be sufficient.

There had been hopes in Washington, Israel and Saudi Arabia that these talks would produce at least a suspension of that enrichment, but the American official and European negotiators said that they did not expect to get a suspension at the Baghdad talks. Still, the failure to do much more than agree to another set of talks is likely to be criticized by Republicans and by pro-Israeli lobbying groups and legislators in the United States.

The goal of the six powers — that Iran suspend all uranium enrichment as the Security Council has demanded — remained the same at the Baghdad talks. Five of the six are the permanent members of the Security Council.

A senior American official said the six had never expected to reach an agreement with Iran at this stage and that the measures coming into force on July 1, notably a European embargo on Iranian oil, would “increase the leverage on this negotiation as we move forward. Maximum pressure is not yet being felt by Iran.”

During the Baghdad talks, the six powers exchanged detailed proposals with the Iranian side, which presented what Iranian news reports described as a five-point plan containing both nuclear and nonnuclear elements, including nuclear safety and cooperation, regional issues, and the “right to enrich.” Mr. Jalili said the proposal included cooperation battling drug traffickers and Somali piracy off the Horn of Africa.

But much of the conversation dealt with the issue of highly enriched uranium, considered the most important issue, because it brings Iran closer to being able to construct a nuclear

weapon if it wishes. This Iran denies intending to do, citing Ayatollah Khamenei’s statement that nuclear weapons are “haram,” or forbidden by Islam. Iran says it is stockpiling 20 percent enriched uranium for use in medical reactors and has disputed Western assertions that the supply far exceeds what the Iranians need.

Whatever expectations there may have been for substantive progress in Baghdad faded as the second day of discussions began, when Iran’s state-financed Press TV satellite broadcaster reported the prospects for success were “vague and under question” if the powers rejected the Iranian plan.

Several accounts in Iran’s state-controlled media compared the positions taken by Tehran’s interlocutors in Baghdad to those of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel, which considers Iran’s nuclear program an existential threat.

In return for early Iranian steps to freeze 20 percent, the six offered benefits like spare parts for civilian aircraft, help with nuclear safety at civilian installations, and perhaps a pledge that Iran has the right to a peaceful nuclear program so long as it resolves doubts about its intentions through serious, detailed, technical negotiations with the six and through openness with the inspectors of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

The six also offered a new version of a fuel-exchange program, to take Iran’s 20 percent enriched uranium and return it as processed fuel for medical reactors.

Iran experts said it was premature to judge the outcome of the Baghdad round.

Trita Parsi, president of the National Iranian American Council in Washington, a strong

proponent of negotiations, said it was not surprising that both sides went into the talks with hard bargaining positions. But, he said, “I think the Iranians are going to have to accept that the full scope of sanctions they want lifted are not going to be done. At the same time, I have a hard time believing this will be kept alive, with significant steps by Iran and no reciprocal concessions by the six powers.”

Aaron Miller, a former senior State Department official, called the talks “a management exercise driven by Iran’s vulnerability and need for sanctions relief and the West’s fear of war.” He said that it would be hard nonetheless to find a sustainable deal. “The West can’t give enough on sanctions and Iran won’t concede enough on the nuclear side,” he said.

*Steven Erlanger reported from Baghdad, and Rick Gladstone from New York. Alan Cowell contributed reporting from London, and Thomas Erdbrink from Tehran.*

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May 25, 2012  
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## 12. Iran Is Seeking Lebanon Stake As Syria Totters

By Neil MacFarquhar

TANNOURINE, Lebanon — The Islamic republic of Iran recently offered to build a dam in this scenic alpine village, high in the Christian heartland of Lebanon.

Farther south, in the dense suburbs of Beirut, Iranian largess helped to rebuild neighborhoods flattened six years ago by Israeli bombs — an achievement that was commemorated this month with a rollicking celebration.

“By the same means that we got weapons and other stuff, money came as well,”

the Hezbollah leader, Hassan Nasrallah, exclaimed to roars of approval from the crowd. “All of this has been achieved through Iranian money!”

Iran’s eagerness to shower money on Lebanon when its own finances are being squeezed by sanctions is the latest indication of just how worried Tehran is at the prospect that Syria’s leader, Bashar al-Assad, could fall. Iran relies on Syria as its bridge to the Arab world, and as a crucial strategic partner in confronting Israel. But the Arab revolts have shaken Tehran’s calculations, with Mr. Assad unable to vanquish an uprising that is in its 15th month.

Iran’s ardent courtship of the Lebanese government indicates that Tehran is scrambling to find a replacement for its closest Arab ally, politicians, diplomats and analysts say. It is not only financing public projects, but also seeking to forge closer ties through cultural, military and economic agreements.

The challenge for Iran’s leaders is that many Lebanese — including the residents of Tannourine, the site of the proposed hydroelectric dam — squirm in that embrace. They see Iran’s gestures not as a show of good will, but as a stealth cultural and military colonization.

“Tannourine is not Tehran,” grouched Charbel Komair, a city council member.

The Lebanese have largely accepted that Iran serves as Hezbollah’s main patron for everything from missiles to dairy cows. But branching out beyond the Shiites of Hezbollah is another matter.

“They are trying to reinforce their base in Lebanon to face any eventual collapse of the regime in Syria,” said Marwan Hamade, a Druse leader and Parliament member,



noting that a collapse would sever the “umbilical cord” through which Iran supplied Hezbollah and gained largely unfettered access to Lebanon for decades.

“Hezbollah has developed into being a beachhead of Iranian influence not only in Lebanon, but on the Mediterranean — trying to spread Iranian culture, Iranian political domination and now an Iranian economic presence,” Mr. Hamade said. “But there is a kind of Lebanese rejection of too much Iranian involvement here.”

That has not stopped Iran from trying. Mohammad-Reza Rahimi, Iran’s first vice president, arrived in Beirut a couple of weeks ago with at least a dozen proposals for Iranian-financed projects tucked under his arm, one for virtually every ministry, Lebanese officials said. The size of the Iranian delegation — more than 100 members — shocked government officials. Lebanese newspapers gleefully reported embarrassing details of the wooing; in their haste to repeat their success in forging closer ties with Iraq, for example, the Iranians forgot to replace the word Baghdad with Beirut in one draft agreement.

Iran offered to build the infrastructure needed to carry electricity across Iraq and Syria into Lebanon. It offered to underwrite Persian-language courses at Lebanon’s public university. Other proposals touched on trade, development, hospitals, roads, schools and, of course, the Balaa Dam in Tannourine.

Yet virtually no substantial new agreements were signed. The Iranian ambassador, Ghazanfar Roknabadi, reacted like a spurned suitor, grumbling publicly that Lebanon needed to do more to carry out agreements. The embassy here

rejected a request for an interview, but Iran’s state-run Press TV quoted Mr. Roknabadi as saying, “The Iranian nation offers its achievements and progress to the oppressed and Muslim nations of the region.”

Therein lies the rub. Syria, run by a nominally Shiite Muslim sect, fostered its alliance with Iran as a counterweight to Sunni Muslim powers like Saudi Arabia. The alliance was built more on confronting the West and its allies than on any sectarian sympathies.

In Lebanon, a nation of various religious sects, many interpret Iran’s reference to “Muslim” as solely “Shiite Muslim.” Hezbollah insists that that is not the case and that the money comes with no strings attached and is for the good for all Lebanese.

“The Iranians say, ‘If you want factories, I am ready, if you want some electricity, I am ready,’ and they do not ask for any price in return,” said Hassan Jishi, the general manager of Waad, the organization that rebuilt the southern suburbs. (The name means “promise” in Arabic, referring to Mr. Nasrallah’s promise to reconstruct the area.) It cost \$400 million to build apartments and stores for about 20,000 people, Mr. Jishi said.

Half the money came from Iran, Mr. Nasrallah said in his speech, adding that he had telephoned the country’s supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, to ask for reconstruction aid even before the August 2006 cease-fire with Israel. Both Ayatollah Khamenei and President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad responded generously, he said.

“We owe a special thanks to the leaders of the Islamic republic of Iran, to the government, to the

people, because without Iranian funding, we could not even have begun to achieve what we did,” Mr. Nasrallah said.

In the southern suburbs, what was once a jumble of haphazard construction is now neat rows of handsome tangerine-and-rose-colored apartment blocks with elevators, generators and parking. But anarchic power lines still crisscross the streets like so many cobwebs, because the electricity supply remains hit-or-miss. Lebanon suffers from a chronic shortage of electricity, generating just 1,500 megawatts against a peak summer demand of 2,500 megawatts.

Iran’s project to finance the dam appeared to be aimed at addressing such problems — and winning hearts and minds by meeting a need the government has so far failed to address.

Here in Tannourine, the sound of rushing water ricochets off the high valley walls, riven with caves where the first Christian monks sought sanctuary from prosecution centuries ago. Restaurants built over the Joze River draw a weekend crowd from Beirut, 45 miles south, for long lunches of meze and shish kebab washed down with smooth, locally made arrack. Local springs also feed one of Lebanon’s most popular bottled-water brands, called Tannourine.

The idea of a dam proved popular among the 35,000 inhabitants because it would both generate electricity and provide for irrigation, said its mayor, Mounir Torbay.

The dam was included in Lebanon’s 2012 budget and the contract was awarded to a Lebanese company, the mayor said. Then it got embroiled in local politics.

A prominent Christian politician trying to one-up his

rivals asked the Islamic republic for \$40 million for the dam, and Iran agreed last December, provided an Iranian company built it. Most of the solidly Christian area’s population was horrified by the prospect that the Iranians would move in, said Mr. Torbay, most likely bringing their mosques, their wives and perhaps even their missiles. Many suspect that some company with links to the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps will get the contract.

“We want the dam badly, but we don’t want an Iranian company to build it,” the mayor said. “They are from a different religion, a different social condition.”

There are still about 70 churches in Tannourine, with 22 dedicated to the Virgin Mary, and most Christians feel that their culture and tradition face enough of a threat already throughout the Middle East, residents said.

“One of the dreams of Iran is to gain a foothold over the mountains,” the mayor said. “It is important for them to oversee the Mediterranean. So Lebanon is a full part of their strategy.”

The fate of the project remains uncertain. The cabinet is inclined to accept the \$40 million, not least because most foreign aid has dried up since a Hezbollah-dominated alliance formed the government last year.

As to Iranian plans to prevail in Lebanon, many Lebanese point out that the Christians and Sunni Muslims have failed at that endeavor before.

“I think the Iranian project to control Lebanon is a candidate for failure, too,” said Sejaan M. Azzi, vice president of the Lebanese Forces, a political party and once a Christian militia. “We don’t have confidence in Iranian economic aid; we consider it



part of a political, security, military project."

*Hwaida Saad contributed reporting.*

Norfolk Virginian-Pilot  
(pilotonline.com)

May 24, 2012

### 13. Navy: Not Clear If Attack On Maersk Ship Was Piracy

By Adam Schreck, Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates--Iran and an American-led naval coalition each said Thursday they responded to a distress call by a U.S.-flagged cargo ship that came under fire from gunmen in the Gulf of Oman a day earlier. But a Navy spokesman cast some doubt about whether the attack was piracy.

Armed guards aboard the 488-foot (148-meter) Maersk Texas thwarted the attack northeast of the Emirati port of Fujairah, Danish shipper A.P. Moller-Maersk said. The attack happened not far from the tense waters of the Strait of Hormuz, a key transit point for a fifth of the world's oil.

The Copenhagen-headquartered company said armed attackers in "multiple pirate skiffs" raced straight toward the ship around noon Wednesday despite clear warning signals from the Texas. Guards on board fired warning shots, but the suspected pirates opened fire, prompting ship guards to shoot back at them, according to the shipping line.

No one on the Texas was injured in the incident, and the ship continued on its voyage to the U.S., Maersk said.

Iranian news agencies reported that the attackers fled when Iran's navy intervened after responding to an emergency call from the American ship.

Lt. Cdr. Mark Hankey, a spokesman for the Bahrain-based Combined Maritime Forces, was unable to confirm Iran's role in the incident. He also cast doubt on whether the attack was an act of piracy.

"The full facts of the event have yet to be fully ascertained. Piracy has to be judged according to a number of factors. It is not clear from the information available to date whether this was a piracy event," Hankey said.

Somali pirates have been increasing their range, but attacks near the Strait of Hormuz remain relatively rare.

Hankey declined to say who the attackers might have been if not pirates, though he noted that fishermen and smugglers frequent the area. He did not suggest that the Iranian military, which operates a fleet of small, fast attack craft, might be involved.

The Combined Maritime Forces is a naval partnership including more than two dozen nations that operates in and around the Middle East. It is commanded by a U.S. Navy admiral.

An Australian ship assigned to the multinational force, the HMAS Melbourne, picked up a distress call from the American ship, Hankey said. It dispatched a helicopter to monitor the situation and set a course to assist.

Iran's official IRNA news agency and semiofficial Mehr news service reported that the Islamic Republic's navy helped thwart the attack. IRNA said an Iranian naval vessel picked up a distress call from the ship, and because of the navy's "vigilance and timely reaction ... the pirates fled the scene."

While he was not aware of Iranian aid to the Texas, Hankey said such assistance would not necessarily be out of the ordinary.

"If you hear of a vessel in distress, you do your best to assist" on the high seas, he said. "If the Iranians responded to a mayday call, then that's perfectly normal activity. ... That's what this whole mayday call is about."

American ships have occasionally come to the aid of Iranian merchant vessels in similar circumstances.

*Associated Press writers Jan M. Olsen in Copenhagen and Nasser Karimi in Tehran, Iran contributed reporting.*

USA Today  
May 25, 2012  
Pg. 6

### 14. 'We Are The First Ones' To Beat Al-Qaeda

*Resistance fighters rise to battle militant force over Yemeni town*

By Iona Craig, Special for USA Today

LAWDER, Yemen – From the top of the Mount Thira plateau, Yemen's southern province of Abyan stretches out to the Arabian Sea.

Between the mountain escarpment and the blue water haze on the distant horizon, al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula has made its home. It is here that the first victory on the northern front of the U.S.-backed war against al-Qaeda's most threatening offshoot is being celebrated.

"We are the first ones to have beaten al-Qaeda. No one has beaten them before. Not in Pakistan, Afghanistan or here in Yemen," boasted Ali Aydah, 38.

Ayдах is one of the commanders of a resistance force that rose up here against Ansar al-Sharia, the insurgent arm of the terror group al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, after Yemeni army soldiers retreated from the edge of the battle-scarred town weeks ago. A

suicide bombing Monday in the capital of Sanaa that killed nearly 100 soldiers was done by Ansar al-Sharia.

For two months, the ragtag force of local residents and tribesmen fought alongside the soldiers to take control of their town against the tanks and heavy weapons the militants had captured from Yemeni military units.

The battlefield is largely invisible from the plateau above the desert towns and jagged mountain ranges where the fighting has raged. The first signs of Yemeni military positions come into view during the winding descent from the plateau's 3,000-foot-high ridge.

On the desert plain below, tank tracks can be seen tattooed into the asphalt. Soldiers surround ancient stone forts erected centuries ago for the same purpose they are used for today — defensive positions.

At night, sporadic shelling from artillery echoes from a hillside — warning shots for al-Qaeda fighters who may be thinking of attacking under the cover of the mosquito-infested darkness.

The people's militia of about 5,000 men, armed with AK-47 automatic weapons and vintage bolt-action rifles, took the greatest number of casualties during the recent fierce fighting here. Sixty men died in the battle to hold the town while 33 government soldiers lost their lives. More than 580 of the joint force were left injured.

The hardest fighting took place at the town's power station. The bodies of at least a dozen local fighters and soldiers captured by the terrorists were found in the charred remains of the facility. Their decapitated heads had been tossed to one side as a message to those who dared challenge al-Qaeda.



"They'd peeled his head off like the top of can," Adyah said. "Another of our fighters they left hanging in a tree."

The militias in southern Yemen have pushed for years for independence from the government, seated to the north in Sanaa. A war in 1994 between North and South Yemen ended with the North's conquest of the Southern capital, Aden, and the combining of the two countries.

People here have long viewed the Yemeni military as an occupying force. But for the first time, the historic rivals fought side by side, partners in the battle to push al-Qaeda-linked insurgents out of at least five towns they have held for more than a year.

That effort is supported by the United States, which provides assistance to the Yemeni military and has been striking al-Qaeda targets with drone-fired missiles. One such strike in September killed Anwar al-Awlaki, an American who was a senior cleric and operational commander for al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula.

"They dig tunnels and hide in holes," said Madah Awal, a militia commander who described the tactics of fighters for Ansar al-Sharia, which seeks a strict Muslim state run by Islamic law.

Most recruits to Ansar al-Sharia are teenagers, who are more easily persuaded to join because of their "clean minds," Awal said. Some have been killed for refusing to act as suicide bombers.

From a nearby military base, Jamal Naser al-Aqel, the provincial governor, said the support of the tribesmen and residents is vital in the offensive to crush the insurgency.

Long-term success is likely to depend on improving the impoverished lives of the people here.

"We have a lot of problems here. The greatest problem here in Abyan is poverty," al-Aqel said. "Al-Qaeda is here because of the poverty. What we need from America is economic help."

About 10 million Yemenis, or 44% of the population, are undernourished. International donors recently pledged \$4 billion in aid at the Friends of Yemen donor conference held in Saudi Arabia.

Although the terrorists have been pushed from Lawder, Ansar al-Sharia controls several towns in southern Yemen, including the provincial capital of Zinjibar, where the group wins support from locals by providing electricity, water and food.

Yemen's army has made several attempts to capture Zinjibar, but about 2,000 Islamists have prevented the military from making sustainable advances. Sadeq al-Qad, 38, who fled Zinjibar with his family last year, has been living in a school turned displacement camp in Aden. Qad is pessimistic about the prospect of returning to his hometown.

"Even if we go back, we have nothing left but the vultures and the snakes," he said.

Jerusalem Post  
May 25, 2012  
Pg. 2

### 15. IDF Working To Upgrade Range Of Iron Dome System

*If effort succeeds, less batteries would be required to defend Israel's border*

By Yaakov Katz

The IDF is working to increase the range of the Iron Dome counter rocket defense system, with the aim of enabling it to intercept longer range

rockets, The Jerusalem Post has learned.

To achieve the improved performance, the IDF is focusing on two tracks – technological upgrades to the system as well as modifications to the Israel Air Force's operational doctrine.

The Iron Dome was originally designed to defend against rockets at a range of 4-70 km. Each battery consists of a mini multi-mission radar manufactured by Israel Aerospace Industries and three launchers, each equipped with 20 interceptors called Tamirs.

The radar enables Iron Dome operators to predict the impact site of the enemy rocket and decide not to intercept it if it is slated to hit an open area. Each interceptor costs between \$50,000-100,000 and usually two are fired at rockets slated for interception.

"This is significant since it would allow us to intercept more rockets with less batteries," a senior defense official explained.

The system recently underwent a series of tests in conjunction with manufacturer Rafael to determine its ability to intercept longer range rockets.

The IDF currently operates four Iron Dome batteries and plans to deploy an additional two within the coming year. Last week, the United States announced that it will provide Israel with \$70 million in immediate aid for the purchase of additional Iron Dome batteries.

Since its deployment last year, Iron Dome batteries have intercepted over 90 Katyusha and Kassam rockets fired into Israel from the Gaza Strip. The new aid package comes after the Obama administration gave Israel \$205 million in 2011 and comes on top of the \$3 billion Israel receives in annual foreign aid from the United States.

Arizona Republic (Phoenix)  
May 25, 2012

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### 16. U.S. May Support Arms For Syrians

*Policy shift would OK Arab allies aiding rebels*

By Matthew Lee, Associated Press

WASHINGTON - As one diplomatic effort after another fails to end more than a year of brutal violence in Syria, the Obama administration is preparing a plan that would essentially give U.S. nods of approval to arms transfers from Arab nations to some Syrian opposition fighters.

The effort, U.S. officials told the Associated Press, would vet members of the Free Syrian Army and other groups to determine whether they are suitable recipients of munitions to fight the Assad government and to ensure that weapons don't wind up in the hands of al-Qaida-linked terrorists or other extremist groups such as Hezbollah that could target Israel.

The plan, which has not yet been finalized, reflects U.S. frustration that none of the previous efforts -- including diplomatic rhetoric from the United Nations and the multinational Friends of Syria group, and special envoy Kofi Annan's plan for a cease-fire -- has even begun to nudge President Bashar Assad from power. The vetting would be the first tiny step the U.S. has made toward ensuring that the Syrian opposition uses the weapons to fight Assad and not to turn it into a full sectarian conflict.

Although some intelligence analysts worry that there may be no suitable recipients of lethal aid in the Syria conflict, the vetting plan has arisen as the least objectionable idea in a complicated situation.



U.S. officials, most of whom spoke on condition of anonymity because of the sensitive nature of the subject, stressed that the United States, which is already providing non-lethal aid to Syria's political opposition, is not supplying military assistance to Assad's foes.

The administration's position remains that adding more weapons to the conflict is a bad idea and will only fan the fire of instability.

"We don't think that adding fuel to this fire is the right way to go," State Department spokeswoman Victoria Nuland said.

"Our decision is to support the civilian opposition in non-lethal ways," she said. "There are other countries who have made other decisions."

But, she added, "we are obviously consulting with various states about the decisions that we've made, that they've made."

Privately, officials say that as conditions continue to deteriorate, it would be irresponsible not to weigh in with Arab countries such as Saudi Arabia, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates and others such as Turkey that have indicated interest in arming the rebels.

By some accounts, those nations already have begun to ship weapons with tacit U.S. agreement. In Turkey, private businessmen have begun funneling weapons into Syria.

Libya's new rulers, fresh from their own revolution that toppled longtime dictator Moammar Gadhafi, have pledged support for the Syrian rebels, but actually transferring weapons is tricky. Last month, Lebanese authorities seized a ship carrying rocket-propelled grenades and heavy-caliber ammunition, possibly bound for Syrian rebels.

The fighters' attempts to bring in heavier arms that could change the course of the 15-month-old uprising so far have been stymied, even by countries sympathetic to the revolt. All are wary of being drawn into the fight.

The rebels have cast a wide net, contacting weapons dealers in Bulgaria, Greece, Georgia and Azerbaijan.

Without some type of U.S. vetting as to who should receive such shipments, the Obama administration and some of its European allies fear that weapons might be used against Western interests.

Although the "main" Syrian opposition is not aligned with al-Qaida, the chance that weapons might fall into the wrong hands in an unstable environment like Syria is "always a concern," a senior intelligence official said.

Al-Qaida has established a limited operational capability in Syria and is responsible for several attacks on Assad targets, the official said. He said analysts believe the goal is to "sow further chaos" and advance an extremist agenda.

The official would not comment on any military aid that might be given to the rebels by U.S. allies.

Yet he and others acknowledged the situation is growing more dire.

Interviews with security officials, rebels and arms dealers in countries neighboring Syria indicate that individual rebel units have to scrounge for weapons.

Washington Post  
May 25, 2012  
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## **17. House Panel Probes U.S. Troops' Food Supplier**

By Karen DeYoung

Congressional investigators have given the Defense Logistics Agency and the contractor that provides virtually all food supplies to U.S. troops in Afghanistan 10 days to explain why the military paid more than \$750 million in what it now alleges were double-billed and excessive charges.

The House subcommittee in charge of national security oversight has called on DLA and the contractor, Swiss-based Supreme Foodservice, to produce all documents and calculations regarding the alleged overpayments under a contract to deliver "subsistence" supplies to U.S. military bases in Afghanistan since 2005.

In making public letters they sent late Wednesday to the DLA and Supreme Foodservice, subcommittee Chairman Rep. Jason Chaffetz (R-Utah) and ranking Democrat Rep. John F. Tierney (Mass.) criticized the contractor and the Pentagon's contract management.

"It is outrageous that DLA could ever be in the position of possibly overpaying any vendor by three-quarters of a billion dollars — especially at a time when troop levels are being scaled back because funding is tight," Chaffetz said.

In December, based on audits it conducted in 2008 and 2011 that found bloated billing, excessive profit margins and missing company documents, DLA calculated that it had overpaid Supreme by \$756,908,587 and demanded full reimbursement within 30 days. After a Pentagon board rejected the company's request to defer payment until an appeal could be heard, DLA in March began subtracting \$21.7 million from an estimated \$150 million in monthly payments to the contractor.

In a statement Thursday, Supreme's Washington office said that such contract disputes were "not uncommon" and that the Armed Services Board of Contract Appeals would determine "the amount of refund due to DLA or payment due to Supreme." Subcommittee aides said Supreme Foodservice has said it is owed about \$1 billion in military underpayments.

"In the meantime," the Supreme Foodservice statement said, "we continue to work well with DLA, performing the contract to extremely high standards. We remain focused on provision of support to the war fighters in some very challenging environments."

DLA did not immediately respond to requests for comment.

Despite the military's allegations about Supreme Foodservice, investigators said the company has been short-listed for a new, \$10 billion, five-year food delivery contract to take effect in January. U.S. combat troops in Afghanistan, now totalling about 90,000, are due to be withdrawn by the end of 2014, with a follow-on training and counterterrorism force of undetermined size to remain.

Tierney said the subcommittee intended to examine how problems with the current contract, which has paid Supreme Foodservice about \$5 billion over the past seven years, "will affect the impending award of the new contract."

Discrepancies in the food service contract, one of the largest in Afghanistan, were first publicly revealed in a Defense Department Inspector General's audit in March 2011. It said DLA "did not provide sufficient oversight of contract costs and performance," failed to adhere to Pentagon and



other government contracting rules and made significant overpayments.

DLA, Supreme Foodservice and the subcommittee agree that work under the initial contract rapidly expanded as the U.S. military presence grew in Afghanistan.

"When it was first awarded on June 3, 2005, the contract required Supreme to deliver food to four locations in Afghanistan," Chaffetz and Tierney wrote to DLA Director Vice Admiral Mark D. Harnitchek. "Within three months, DLA radically expanded the contract to include an additional 64 forward operating bases in isolated and hard-to-reach locations. Today, the number of sites has swelled to 265."

But "DLA and Supreme apparently never agreed on pricing terms for delivering food and supplies to the additional sites despite having agreed to expand the contract," the letter said.

Instead, the two sides have been in dispute ever since over everything from the price of apples to the distance between Afghan locations by helicopter. When DLA came to the conclusion in 2006 that Supreme Foodservice's charges were unjustified, it began paying only 75 percent of the billed amount, and subsequently reduced its payment to 50 percent. In December, DLA calculated it had still overpaid by more than \$750 million.

Despite the findings of its own audits, however, DLA twice approved one-year extensions of the original contract, which was supposed to run for five years.

At a subcommittee hearing in December, Pentagon Inspector General Gordon Heddell called the Pentagon's contract management failures

and lost funds on the Supreme Foodservice contract "an example of just about as bad as it can get."

Reuters.com  
May 24, 2012

## **18. Senate Panel Backs \$631 Billion In Defense Spending**

By David Alexander, Reuters  
WASHINGTON--A

Senate panel voted on Thursday to authorize \$631.4 billion in defense spending for the 2013 fiscal year, blocking plans to cut the Air Force and ordering offsetting reductions in Pentagon civilian personnel to stay within the president's budget limits.

The Senate Armed Services Committee approved a defense policy bill that would authorize a base Pentagon budget of \$525.8 billion along with \$88.2 billion for the Afghanistan war and other overseas operations. The panel also authorized \$17.3 billion for Energy Department nuclear weapons programs.

The measure - the National Defense Authorization Act - is expected to go to the full Senate in June at the earliest. After passage there, it would have to be reconciled with the version approved last week by the Republican-controlled House of Representatives before going to Obama for his signature.

"We're within the president's budget, \$631.4 billion, unlike the House of Representatives, which is about \$4 billion over the president's budget request," said Carl Levin, the chairman of the Democratic-controlled panel.

The authorization bill sets spending limits but does not actually appropriate funds. The Senate Appropriations Committee had not yet completed its spending plan for the 2013 defense budget, so

the funding available to the Pentagon is not clear.

Levin said the panel had rejected most of the portion of the president's budget that called for reductions in the Air Force and Air National Guard. But the committee did permit elimination of some transport aircraft, he said.

The Air Force had sought to cut seven tactical air squadrons and 130 transport aircraft, along with 11,600 personnel as part of the Pentagon's efforts to reduce projected spending over the next decade by \$487 billion as ordered by Congress last year.

"There was a broad feeling in the committee that the Air Force did not have a basis that was solid for where they were making these reductions," Levin said. "So we decided that we'd just better put a freeze on this for the year and then have them come back (next year) ... with a much better case."

### **Frustration with Pakistan**

The panel expressed frustration over ties with Pakistan and moved to block certain military aid payments until the defense secretary can certify Islamabad has reopened supply lines to Afghanistan and released a Pakistani doctor imprisoned for 33 years for helping the CIA locate Osama bin Laden.

Islamabad closed its frontier to supplies for international forces in Afghanistan late last year after a border clash killed 24 Pakistani soldiers. The two sides are reportedly close to a deal on reopening the supply lines.

"Our goal is to have good relationships with Pakistan," said Senator John McCain, the top Republican on the committee.

"Our goal is to see that they allow us to be able to support the men and women who are fighting and dying in

Afghanistan. It is our goal to make sure that this doctor is not sentenced to death, which is basically what he got," he said.

The measure approved by the panel, which included 150 changes from the president's budget request, would block increases in fees for the Tricare healthcare system for military retirees. And it would block closure of the Abrams tank production line of General Dynamics, moving to keep it open with funding for upgrading vehicles.

To offset some of the increased costs, the bill would require the Pentagon to cut civilian personnel and service contractor funding by 5 percent over five years, which would save about \$5 billion, McCain said.

McCain said the committee also took action in the bill to try to contain cost overruns in many of the Pentagon's biggest weapons systems.

"We have a strong restriction on cost overruns on the (aircraft) carrier, the Gerald R. Ford, and we have several other restrictions and modifications to the funding which we hope will at least bring some of these overruns under control," he said.

Aerospace Daily & Defense Report  
May 25, 2012  
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## **19. SASC Bill Holds Off Air Guard Cuts**

The Senate Armed Services Committee on May 24 passed a defense policy bill authorizing the Pentagon to spend \$631.4 billion in fiscal 2013 that follows the House in putting a hold on the U.S. Air Force's plans to scale back the Air National Guard.

"We rejected the Air Force plan, and fully funded the equipment and personnel,"



committee Chairman Sen. Carl Levin (D-Mich.) told reporters in a press conference after the committee voted unanimously to approve the legislation.

The bill provides funding for equipment and personnel as well as the end strength "needed" by the Air National Guard, Levin says. It does pick up some of the Air Force's suggestions, including one to retire C-5As.

Lawmakers were aghast that the Air Force failed to provide adequate analysis to support its reductions to the Guard force. They were also upset that the Air Force slashed the Guard disproportionately, compared with other services.

"To prevent this kind of decision from being made in the future with as little care as this one," the Senate panel created an advisory panel on the structure of the Air Force charged with reporting back on the Air Force's plans for force structure by the end of March 2013, Levin says.

"Never underestimate the influence of the National Guard," says Sen. John McCain (Ariz.), the committee's top Republican.

Senators also continued to ax funding for Lockheed Martin's Medium Extended Air Defense System and added additional funding for Israel's Iron Dome short-range rocket defense program.

The bill would reduce the Pentagon's civilian personnel and service contracting force by 5% over the next five years, according to McCain.

The bill also asks the Pentagon to provide the committee with a report on the effects of an across-the-board budget reduction that will fall on the Pentagon in January if Congress fails to reduce the federal deficit by \$1.2 trillion.

--Jen DiMascio

ArmyTimes.com

May 24, 2012

## 20. Senate Panel Kills Big Tricare Fee Hikes

By Rick Maze, Staff writer

A Pentagon plan endorsed by the Joint Chiefs of Staff to raise Tricare health care fees as a way to dramatically reduce personnel costs appears dead after the Senate Armed Services Committee refused to back the proposal.

"We prevailed," said Sen. Jim Webb, D-Va., chairman of the committee's personnel panel. "We did not approve their plan."

While work on the 2013 defense budget is far from over, the Senate committee's decision comes one week after the House of Representatives passed its own version of the 2013 defense authorization bill that also omits the Defense Department's proposal to raise enrollment fees and deductibles for working-age retirees, including income-based enrollment fees for the Tricare Prime and the Tricare For Life programs.

With the Defense Department plan left out of both the House and Senate versions of the defense policy bill, it would take some extraordinary reversal by lawmakers to approve the Pentagon plan as part of the final compromise legislation that will be completed later this year.

This does not mean there would be no fee increases, however.

Last year, when Congress rejected a different Pentagon plan to raise health care fees for retirees, lawmakers created a process under which fees can increase each Oct. 1 by the amount of the annual cost-of-living adjustment in military retired pay.

The most recent retiree COLA was 3.6 percent, which means annual Tricare Prime

fees will rise next Oct. 1 to \$269 for individuals and \$539 for families. However, for most people these fees will represent a 17 percent hike over what they are now paying, because people who were enrolled in Tricare Prime before Oct. 1, 2011, were temporarily paying a lower rate.

The 17 percent increase may sound like a lot, but the Defense Department's plan for tiered enrollment fees would have been far higher. DoD proposed setting the 2013 fees at \$600 for family coverage for the lowest tier and \$820 for the highest tier, and over five years would have raised the Tricare Prime enrollment fees to \$893 for the lowest tier and \$2,048 for the highest tier.

Johnstown (PA) Tribune-Democrat

May 25, 2012

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## 21. Defense Funding At Risk, Official Says

By David Hurst

The annual Showcase for Commerce keynote breakfasts are often part #atta-boy# to the region's defense industry and part #heads-up# to opportunities that may exist. This year's speaker showed up with a warning.

The Department of Defense and Congress have the specter of budget sequestration looming, said Frank Kendall, the undersecretary for Defense Acquisition, Technology and Logistics. And if the forced cuts go through, as currently planned, armed forces funding and contracts to major defense players could be far more scarce in the years ahead, he added.

#It will be devastating,# Kendall said, maintaining it could mean up to 20 percent cuts across the board for defense spending, including funds allocated for troops at

home and abroad # and the tools and weapons that support them.

As written, it would be a line item-by-line item budgetary slash not seen since the Cold War ended decades ago, Kendall said.

Those were different times, of course.

#The threat against us, essentially, evaporated back then,# he said.

#Today, the threat against us hasn't changed. Terrorism is still there ... North Korea and Iran still loom,# Kendall added.

The sequestration effort began as an effort to spur bipartisan negotiations on federal budget deficits.

Last year, Congress passed the Budget Control Act, raising the federal debt ceiling and pledging to trim \$2.1 trillion from deficits from 2012 to 2021.

It included \$900 million in cuts, half of that from defense spending.

Sequestration, forcing more automatic defense and nondefense cuts, was introduced as a far-worse alternative, designed to spur Democrats and Republicans to the bargaining table to work to avoid it.

It hasn't worked, said U.S. Rep. Mark Critz, who hoped that a Congress-created #supercommittee# would address the deficit spending sequestration also targets, making it unnecessary.

That hasn't worked either. And a congressional effort to postpone sequestration for a year has also stalled, he added.

Meanwhile, the Defense Department has tried to ignore the sequestration possibility # announcing no plans for how they'd handle it, Critz said.

Kendall said that's because the department doesn't want to signal in any way that it's acceptable.



#Congress has to act,# he said.

Now, the clock is ticking, with cuts set to take effect at year's end. And it's the middle of a presidential election year, a time party politics is in full force, Critz added.

#Like it or not, it's coming at us,# he added, hopeful that voters, defense companies, military families and others across the nation will press their elected federal leaders to find a solution.

If they don't, it may soon mean layoff notices nationwide to employees from many major defense contractors because they often are required to issue those notices months ahead of time, he added.

#Unfortunately, that may be what gets the ball rolling,# Critz said, #once it starts impacting people at home.#

Reuters.com  
May 24, 2012

## **22. Bin Laden Film Got No Special Ops Help: U.S. Admiral**

By Phil Stewart and Mark Hosenball, Reuters

WASHINGTON -- The U.S. admiral who oversaw the operation to kill Osama bin Laden denied on Thursday that he or his staff helped advise Hollywood film makers shooting a movie about last year's secret raid to kill the al Qaeda leader.

A conservative legal group this week made public documents which it said showed how the Obama administration arranged special access to top officials for film makers Kathryn Bigelow and Mark Boal, the director and screenwriter of "The Hurt Locker," a 2008 film about the Iraq war that won the Academy Award for Best Picture.

Judicial Watch said the documents indicated that the

Pentagon granted Bigelow and Boal access to a "planner, Operator and Commander of SEAL Team Six," the Navy commando unit that carried out the raid during which bin Laden was killed in Abbottabad, Pakistan, where he apparently had lived for years.

But Admiral William McRaven, who commanded the mission and was later promoted to head the U.S. military's Special Operations Command (USSOCOM), denied anyone from USSOCOM dealt with the filmmakers in any way.

"I ... had no interaction, neither has anyone at USSOCOM had any interaction, with folks that are making this movie," McRaven told reporters, speaking a press conference in Tampa, Florida. "We have not provided any planners."

The most revealing document obtained by Judicial Watch is a 16-page transcript of a July 15, 2011 meeting between the two filmmakers and Michael Vickers, Undersecretary of Defense for Intelligence and one of the key administration officials involved in the bin Laden operation.

In the transcript, Vickers says that the Pentagon was willing to "make a guy available" to them who "was involved from the beginning as a planner; a SEAL Team Six Operator and Commander."

Upon hearing this, screenwriter Mark Boal exclaimed: "That's dynamite." Director Kathryn Bigelow said: "That's incredible," according to the transcript.

A Defense Department official, speaking on condition of anonymity, acknowledged McRaven's command offered to make available a "planner" who was not a current member of SEAL Team Six as a possible point of contact for additional

information, if instructed by the Pentagon to do so.

But the official said the Defense Department did not grant the filmmakers access to that individual "nor to our knowledge was it pursued by the filmmakers."

The film project, titled "Zero Dark Thirty" about the May 2011 raid on bin Laden's compound, became a focus of controversy last year when New York Times columnist Maureen Dowd reported that its producers planned to release it weeks before the November 6 election in which President Barack Obama is seeking a second term in office.

The release has been pushed back to December.

Boal last year denied the film was tied to any political party, noting the killing of bin Laden was "an American triumph, both heroic and non-partisan."

White House spokesman Tommy Vietor noted on Wednesday that it was common practice to help authors, reporters and film makers working on projects related to the president "to make sure the facts are correct."

"We do not discuss classified information. The information that the White House provided about the bin Laden raid was focused on the President's role in that decision-making process," Vietor said. "The same information was given to the White House press corps."

McRaven played down the sensitivity of the mechanics of the raid itself.

"There was nothing frankly overly sensitive about the raid. We did 11 other raids much like that in Afghanistan that night," McRaven said.

"From a military standpoint, this was a standard raid and really not very sexy."

FederalTimes.com

May 23, 2012

## **23. DoD Official: BRAC Fight May Not Be Over**

By Andy Medici

The Defense Department is still pushing for two more rounds of base realignments and closures despite opposition from Congress, according to a senior Pentagon official.

Dorothy Robyn, deputy undersecretary of Defense for installations and environment, said it's typical for Congress to reject DoD requests for a BRAC on the first try. The Defense Department requested in its fiscal 2013 budget two new rounds of base closures — one in 2013 and one in 2015.

While Robyn would not speculate about whether the Defense Department plans to request the BRAC rounds again in the 2014 budget if it's rejected in its 2013 budget request, she said she would be surprised if DoD didn't continue to ask for it.

"In the past, DoD has had to make repeated requests before it finally gets a BRAC round," Robyn said.

The House passed the National Defense Authorization Act May 18 that prohibits DoD from proposing, planning or carrying out a BRAC round in 2013. Sen. Claire McCaskill, D-Mo., chairwoman of the Senate Armed Services Committee panel with jurisdiction over military installations, said she is willing to allow the closing of U.S. military bases overseas, but not domestic bases.

Robyn said that there was support within Congress for additional BRAC rounds, but that the supporters "are less vocal," than the detractors. She said DoD asked for the rounds in 2013 and 2015 in order to prevent BRAC from becoming an election issue.



"You want to keep it as removed from politics as possible," Robyn said.

She said BRAC gives DoD more authority to work with communities to help lessen the impact of base closures and to promote the economic development of closed installations. For example, BRAC allows DoD to convey buildings directly to the affected community instead of going through the traditional property disposal process, Robyn said.

USA Today  
May 25, 2012  
Pg. 2

## **24. Propaganda Firm Owner Admits Attacks On Journalists**

*Contractor's smear campaign targeted USA Today journalists*

By Gregory Korte, USA Today

WASHINGTON – The co-owner of a major Pentagon propaganda contractor publicly admitted Thursday that he was behind a series of websites used in an attempt to discredit two USA TODAY journalists who had reported on the contractor.

The online "misinformation campaign," first reported last month, has raised questions about whether the Pentagon or its contractors had turned its propaganda operations against U.S. citizens. But Camille Chidiac, the minority owner of Leonie Industries and its former president, said he was responsible for the online activity and was operating independently of the company and the Pentagon.

"I take full responsibility for having some of the discussion forums opened and reproducing their previously published USA TODAY articles on them," he said in

a statement released by his Atlanta attorney, Lin Wood.

"I recognize and deeply regret that my actions have caused concerns for Leonie and the U.S. military. This was never my intention. As an immediate corrective action, I am in the process of completely divesting my remaining minority ownership from Leonie," Chidiac said.

Chidiac, who stepped down as president of Leonie in 2008, said he used only personal funds to create the websites, using proxy services to hide his involvement. Although Chidiac has continued to represent Leonie at various conferences, the company said any involvement was "informal and unofficial."

The Pentagon said Defense Secretary Leon Panetta was aware of the statement and "has directed the department to review this matter and to take appropriate action."

"We were deeply disappointed to read this disclosure from Leonie Industries. Smear campaigns — online or anywhere else — are intolerable, and we reject this kind of behavior," Pentagon press secretary George Little said.

In February, USA TODAY reported on the Pentagon's "information operations" program, which was coming under criticism even within the Pentagon for spending hundreds of millions for poorly monitored marketing campaigns in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Leonie, founded by Chidiac and his sister, Rema DuPont, has received at least \$120 million in Pentagon contracts since 2009. DuPont owns 51% of the Los Angeles-based company; Chidiac, 49%. The pair had \$4 million in liens for unpaid federal income taxes,

though records show they have since been paid.

Even before the stories ran, USA TODAY Pentagon reporter Tom Vanden Brook noticed that someone registered the site tomvandenbrook.com. Twitter and Facebook accounts were also registered in his name, and a Wikipedia entry and discussion group postings misrepresented his reporting on the West Virginia Sago Mine disaster.

Chidiac said he clearly labeled the websites as "fan sites" of Vanden Brook and his editor, Ray Locker, but said comments on the websites "quickly degenerated from legitimate criticism to immature and irrelevant rhetoric by unknown users."

Chidiac's attorney said the Twitter and Wikipedia entries were created by someone else with "absolutely no relationship or connection with Leonie Industries," whom he did not name. One online reputation expert, Andy Beal, said the effort appeared to be coordinated and called it a "sophisticated reputation attack."

The distribution of federally funded propaganda for domestic targets could be a violation of a federal law prohibiting the Defense Department from spending money for "propaganda purposes within the United States." The company said no federal funds were used.

"Mr. Chidiac does not have access to Leonie's bank accounts and other financial resources, derived from government contracts or otherwise, and he used non-Leonie funds to participate in the online activity," said a statement from Gar Smith, Leonie's director of marketing and communications. "This was the act of an individual, not the company."

Smith said that Chidiac was in the process of divesting himself of his 49% stake but that the terms of that deal were a matter between DuPont and Chidiac.

Leonie said it's "in the process of informing government officials of the situation," though it's unclear whether the episode will affect Leonie's Pentagon contracts. In March, the Pentagon's inspector general told members of Congress that the Defense Criminal Investigative Service had launched an investigation into issues raised by the USA TODAY report. Last week, a House committee voted to cut the Pentagon's "information operations" budget by one-third.

Chidiac's lawyer said Chidiac was "personally offended" by USA TODAY's reporting on his tax troubles, which he believed were unfairly characterized. "I do not believe the previous reporting has properly recognized the excellent work that has been performed by the employees of Leonie in support of U.S. military efforts over the past several years," Wood said.

Susan Weiss, executive editor of USA TODAY, said the newspaper would continue reporting on the information operations industry. "I am glad to see that we now know who was responsible for these false attacks on Tom Vanden Brook, Ray Locker and USA TODAY. We stand behind our reporters and our stories," she said.

Miami Herald  
May 25, 2012  
Pg. 3

## **25. Don't Split 9/11 Trial, Judge Urged**

By Carol Rosenberg

Pentagon prosecutors argued in a motion Thursday against splitting up the joint



death-penalty prosecution at Guantanamo of the five men accused of orchestrating the 9/11 attacks.

The chief war court judge, Army Col. James L. Pohl, sought the opinion last week after encountering scheduling conflicts for a motions hearing scheduled for June 12-15 at the U.S. Navy base in southeast Cuba. The 9/11 prosecutors wrote in a court filing Thursday that early scheduling conflicts in the death penalty did not necessitate splitting the five-man prosecution.

"Severance of this jointly-referred capital commission would be an extraordinary action that should not be regarded by the military judge as 'appropriate relief' in these circumstances," the prosecution wrote.

Prosecutors also argued in their brief that "no defense counsel or accused" had sought a speedy trial. Nor had any of the alleged Sept. 11 plotters "articulated any prejudice that any accused might suffer by proceeding jointly."

NationalJournal.com  
May 24, 2012

## 26. General Retracts Controversial Suicide Comments

By Yochi J. Dreazen

In a highly unusual move, a senior Army general publicly retracted blunt comments about suicide that drew criticism for appearing to deride troops struggling with serious mental problems.

Maj. Gen. Dana Pittard, the commander of the sprawling Fort Bliss Army installation in Texas, issued a statement on Thursday apologizing for having described suicide as "a selfish act."

"Thanks to many of you and your feedback, I have learned that this was a hurtful

statement," Pittard wrote. "I also realize that my statement was not in line with the Army's guidance regarding sensitivity to suicide. With my deepest sincerity and respect towards those whom I have offended, I retract that statement."

National Journal reported on Pittard's initial comments, which were posted on his official blog.

"I have now come to the conclusion that suicide is an absolutely selfish act," Pittard wrote in the controversial posting. "I am personally fed up with soldiers who are choosing to take their own lives so that others can clean up their mess. Be an adult, act like an adult, and deal with your real-life problems like the rest of us."

The post was subsequently scrubbed from the Fort Bliss website, but the comments drew criticism for conveying the wrong message to emotionally fragile troops.

"Soldiers who are thinking about suicide can't do what the general says: They can't suck it up, they can't let it go, they can't just move on," said Barbara Van Dahlen, the founder of Give an Hour, an organization that matches troops with civilian mental-health providers. "His statement — whatever motivated it — can do little good for those who are already on the edge."

Pittard's initial comments drew new attention to the military's struggle against the suicide epidemic ravaging its forces. The Army's suicide rate has been climbing for years, and last year a record 164 active-duty, National Guard, and Reserve soldiers took their own lives, compared with 159 in 2010. In 2008, the Army's suicide rate exceeded that of the civilian world for the first time.

Many who work with Pittard were surprised by his blog comments, given the high

priority he puts on suicide prevention. Fort Bliss, home to more than 100,000 troops and civilians, has an unusually large staff of 160 psychologists, psychiatrists, and other mental-health professionals.

But Fort Bliss, like most other bases, continues to struggle to bring down its suicide numbers. So far this year, two troops from the base have killed themselves, putting the total Fort Bliss roughly on pace to match the six who took their lives last year. In 2010, five troops from the base killed themselves there.

Time

June 4, 2012

## 27. How This Leg Was Saved

*A small medical team is helping some of our best warriors return to the fight.*

By Nate Rawlings, San Antonio

In March 2010, David, a U.S. Army special Forces deputy commander in Afghanistan, was injured when a 160-lb. bomb tore through his left leg. Over the next year, he underwent 23 surgeries, mostly to carve out small hunks of dying tissue; in one major procedure, doctors at Walter Reed removed 4 in. of his tibia because of an infection. He endured the painful stretching of the remaining bone, using a vise that, as it expands, pulls the ends of the bone apart. The daily sessions lasted six months, extending his tibia 1 mm a day to get to the point where the two pieces of bone were close enough to be fused together.

A year after his injury, David -- who requested that TIME not print his last name because of the secret nature of his missions -- could walk, but only very slowly and with intense pain. His doctors at Fort Lewis in Washington State sent

him to Brooke Army Medical Center (BAMC) in San Antonio to see Lieut. Colonel Joe Hsu, an orthopedic surgeon and the director of a rapidly expanding program for limb salvage. "I was pretty much expecting him to tell me to cut my leg off," David says. "I had kind of come to terms with it. It's that simple. If I can't do the things I want to do, then take it off."

Instead, David was outfitted with a brace called the Intrepid Dynamic Exoskeletal Orthosis (IDEO). "It was night and day," he says. "After the first five minutes, I could walk at a normal pace." He quickly graduated to jumping on and off boxes and sprinting. A free-fall parachutist, David returned to his unit and plans to start high-altitude parachute jumping again. "Two years ago they'd have cut the leg off and sent us on our way," he says.

Because of the number of bomb-blast injuries in Iraq and Afghanistan, doctors in the U.S. have gotten very good at saving limbs. For every amputee from those wars, there are now an estimated five or six limb-salvage patients. But saving a severely damaged limb is a grueling process that requires as much physical therapy as an amputation, if not more. Although the overwhelming majority of limb-salvage patients learn -- through extensive rehabilitation -- to walk again, many suffer from chronic pain and loss of function. Yet it's worth the effort for several reasons. For one, doctors can always cut it off later, but once a leg is gone, there's no bringing it back. And while prostheses have improved dramatically in recent decades, every amputee who leaves the hospital leaves with a wheelchair. Prostheses break, amputees suffer infections, and many experience real pain in



phantom limbs, which can be hard to treat.

### **The Patient's Choice**

The practice of limb salvage isn't confined to military hospitals. Because of greater use of seat belts and air bags, more people are surviving car wrecks with more-severe limb trauma, says Dr. Andrew Pollak, president of the Orthopaedic Trauma Association. Typically, he says, if a patient makes it through the first night without needing an amputation, he or she gets to choose whether to try to salvage the limb. "You begin a very difficult series of conversations with the patient and the family about what those two paths look like," says Pollak, who is also an orthopedics professor at the University of Maryland Medical Center. "Someone who works as an accountant in a chair in an office has dramatically different demands than someone who was in construction before and will be up on his feet all day long walking around. The accountant may be able to tolerate ongoing operations -- and an inability to walk -- and still do his job. The guy in construction may say, 'I simply can't put food on the table that way. I need an amputation so I can get a prosthesis and get back to work.'"

It sounds counterintuitive: cut off a leg to increase mobility. But it speaks to the advances in prosthetics technology over the past two decades. Many troops requested amputations so they could get a prosthesis nicknamed a cheetah leg, a curved carbon-fiber blade invented in 1984 and made famous in recent years by Oscar Pistorius, the South African double amputee who is one race away from qualifying to compete in the London Olympics.

For wounded troops, a severe injury can be a ticket out of the military. But for some limb-salvage patients who want to return to service, cheetah legs start to look pretty attractive as the months of rehab drag on.

"The reason why we had all these guys who wanted their legs cut off was that they wanted to run," says Johnny Owens, a physical therapist who is the director of limb-salvage rehab at BAMC. For high-performing troops, running separates those who can do their jobs from those who can't. On any given day at BAMC, dozens of amputees can be seen jogging on cheetah legs along the palm-tree-lined streets. As part of their recovery, many are training for triathlons and other endurance races.

In 2009, Owens and other specialists at BAMC noticed that an alarming number of patients were coming to the center asking for a "late" amputation -- i.e., one performed months or even years after the injury. Most had conditions such as fused ankles and severe nerve and muscle damage that made it hard to walk, let alone jog. Their requests led Ryan Blanck, a prosthetist at BAMC, to design the IDEO. It fits into a patient's shoe and runs a carbon-fiber strut up the calf to a cuff that attaches just below the knee, acting as a cheetah-like springboard for an ankle that can't flex and muscles that no longer exist.

Once a patient gets this custom-made orthosis, he -- almost all of the limb-salvage patients at BAMC are men -- walks over to the rehab gym, where Owens mixes sports-medicine techniques into the regimen, teaching guys to run by landing midfoot instead of on their heels, using the same barefoot running style that's becoming popular even among

noninjured runners. The result: patients who were in such pain that they could barely walk 10 ft. are, within a week of starting special training, jumping and sprinting.

### **Running Speed**

More than 200 troops have gone through BAMC's Return to Run program since 2009; of those, 97 -- including Navy SEALs, Rangers and Special Forces soldiers -- have sought and received the go-ahead to return to active duty, where they are jumping out of planes and fast-roping out of helicopters.

The BAMC specialists have been so successful in treating limb-salvage patients that they're now inundated with requests, but Blanck's shop can handle only about 25 cases at a time. "The problem is, this is not an official program, so there's been no initial funding," Hsu says.

The Return to Run team, which has applied for grants to fund larger studies, hopes to replicate its training platform at other military bases and eventually create a version that can be used in the civilian world. If the clinical trials are successful, insurance companies might take an interest in their work. According to a study conducted at the University of Michigan, when prosthesis-related costs are taken into account, the lifetime health care cost for patients who undergo an amputation can be two to three times as high as that of limb-salvage patients, depending on how long they live. Because each IDEO is custom-made, they would be expensive in the civilian market but would likely cost less than prostheses in the long run.

BAMC already knows its program can work on non-war-related injuries. Sergeant William Porter, a helicopter mechanic in the Marine Corps,

had returned from his third Iraq tour when a dirt-bike crash near Miramar, Calif., resulted in partial paralysis in his left foot. Porter's orthopedic surgeon told him about BAMC, where Blanck fitted him with an IDEO, and Porter was soon back to running more than three miles. He passed his physical-fitness exam and has returned to full duty. "Had I not done that, I'd probably be on my way out of the Marine Corps," Porter says.

Returning to active duty isn't the only goal. "It's about getting back to life," Blanck says. "Playing softball. Just being a coach for their kid's soccer or T-ball team. It's amazing how demoralizing that can be if you can't do that."

For Ryan, a Green Beret sergeant who requested that TIME not print his last name out of concern for the safety of his unit, keeping his leg was the first battle. On Sept. 11, 2010, he stepped into a doorway to fire at an insurgent in Afghanistan's Helmand province and had both bones in his lower right leg blown out by an improvised explosive device. The eruption tore off the bottom of his foot and mangled 95% of the flesh below his knee. Eight days after his injury, Ryan landed in front of Hsu. "It was week by week whether I'd have an amputation for six months," Ryan says.

After Hsu saved his leg, Ryan attacked his rehabilitation with the same fervor that had driven him to the Special Forces in the first place. He tried walking while still in a stabilizing brace with pins and screws in his bones, but he could muster only "a very aggressive walk," he says, "and that would ruin me for the rest of the day." Then Blanck fitted Ryan with an IDEO. "I couldn't believe it," Ryan says. "All of a sudden I can walk normally. I can jog. I can sprint and jump.



It was a really weird feeling because I was limited for over a year. It was something else."

This spring, Ryan is back with the Special Forces in Afghanistan, leg and all, running three or more miles at a time and hauling 100-lb. rucksacks with his fellow Green Berets. For the past few months he has been conducting combat patrols over rough terrain. With his orthosis and a lot of training, he's back to about 90% of his former strength. "Given an injury of this significance," he says, "it's the best of a worst-case scenario."

ArmyTimes.com

May 24, 2012

## **28. Manning Seeks Dismissal Of 10 Of 22 Counts**

By David Dishneau,  
Associated Press

HAGERSTOWN, Md. —

An Army private charged in the biggest leak of government secrets in U.S. history is seeking dismissal of 10 of the 22 counts he faces, contending they are either unconstitutionally vague or fail to state a prosecutable offense.

Pfc. Bradley Manning's civilian defense attorney, David Coombs, posted the documents late Wednesday on his website. A military judge will consider the motions at a pre-trial hearing June 6-8 at Fort Meade near Baltimore.

Manning, a 24-year-old Crescent, Okla., native, faces the possibility of life in prison if convicted of the most serious charge, aiding the enemy. He allegedly sent to the anti-secrecy website WikiLeaks hundreds of thousands of classified diplomatic cables and war logs downloaded from government computers while working as an intelligence analyst in Baghdad in late 2009 and early 2010.

The defense contends the government used unconstitutionally vague language in eight counts charging Manning with unauthorized possession and disclosure of classified information. The motion specifically targets the government's use of the phrases, "relating to the national defense" and "to the injury of the United States or to the advantage of any foreign nation."

Both phrases are so sweeping in their scope that they fail to provide the accused with fair warning of what conduct is prohibited, the defense said.

The defense is also seeking dismissal of two counts alleging Manning exceeded his authorized access on computers linked to the Secret Internet Protocol Router Network, or SIPRNet, a Defense Department intranet system.

The government alleges Manning used the computers to obtain certain State Department cables that were then transmitted to a person not entitled to receive them. The defense argues that a someone's purpose in accessing a computer is irrelevant to the charge of exceeding authorized access.

"Pfc. Manning clearly had authorization to access the government computers in question," the motion reads.

Prosecutors didn't immediately respond Thursday to a request for comment on the filings.

The motions were dated May 10. Coombs released them under a military court order last month permitting him to publicly release defense filings, often with portions redacted for security and privacy reasons. The ruling came in response to requests from news media, including The Associated Press,

for access to all records of the proceedings.

On Thursday, the New York-based Center for Constitutional Rights filed a petition asking the Army Court of Criminal Appeals to order public and media access to the government's motion papers, the court's written orders and transcripts of the proceedings.

Coombs also revealed Wednesday that Army Maj. Thomas Hurley, who formerly represented a soldier charged with fatally shooting 17 Afghan villagers, has joined Manning's defense team. Coombs wrote that Manning personally asked to have Hurley defend him.

Hurley was assigned earlier this year to help defend Staff Sgt. Robert Bales. He stepped aside last month in what Bales' civilian attorney said was a mutual decision after they disagreed about defense strategy.

Manning's team also includes Capt. Joshua Tooman.

Manning is in pre-trial detention at Fort Leavenworth, Kan.

At War (NYTimes.com)

May 24, 2012

## **At War: Notes From the Front Lines**

### **29. At Fort Hood, A Welcome Home For Veterans Of A War Long Past**

By Kristina Shevory

FORT HOOD, Tex. -- This welcome-home ceremony seemed like many held at the largest Army base in the country, although a little more elaborate. There were cheering families outfitted in red, white and blue, many carrying posters and flags. The multistory III Corps banner billowed in the wind as hundreds of soldiers stood in formation on the expansive parade ground waiting for the buses of troops.

But small details revealed that this was no typical ceremony. Aretha Franklin's 1967 hit "Respect" blared at full volume. Many of the posters congratulated grandfathers for serving. A few older men were brought onto the parade ground in wheelchairs.

A long line of white school buses pulled up in front of the parade ground. Out poured crowds of men in their 60s and 70s, wearing black "Vietnam Veteran" baseball caps. A few wore their original dress uniforms, and one former Army Ranger still fit into his green fatigues. A receiving line of active duty soldiers stood waiting to shake their hands. A Huey helicopter, with its distinctive thop, thop, thop, made slow loops overhead and some veterans turned and waved.

"Ladies and gentleman, America's heroes are home!" yelled Lt. Gen. Don Campbell, commander of Fort Hood and III Corps. "Welcome home, Vietnam veterans! Hooah."

This was the first welcome-home ceremony for Vietnam veterans held at Fort Hood and, like most things in Texas, it was big and considered the most elaborate in the country with over 600 veterans and another 600 guests in attendance.

"I feel personally that I'm finally home," Gen. Robert M. Shoemaker, now retired, who served three tours in Vietnam and later led the United States Army Forces Command, told the crowd. "That may be one of the great legacies of Vietnam. The nation has vowed never to make that mistake again of failing to honor the warriors even if we don't appreciate the wars."

Welcome-home ceremonies for Vietnam veterans have been going on in small towns and at military installations, like Fort Campbell



and Fort Benning, over the last three years as commandeers and politicians, many with family members who served in Vietnam, decided that these older veterans needed their own recognition after returning Iraq and Afghanistan veterans were warmly received. The 50th anniversary of the start of the Vietnam War this year and the withdrawal of combat troops from Iraq have given an added boost to these celebrations.

"It's about time," said Lt. Gen. Paul Funk, now retired, who served in Vietnam, led the Third Armored Division in Operation Desert Storm and later commanded troops at III Corps and Fort Hood. "I really think that people feel guilty now, and they're doing as much as they can."

On Memorial Day, President Obama will attend an anniversary ceremony at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial with 6,000 veterans scheduled to attend. Although the event is intended as a kickoff for a national effort to honor Vietnam veterans, the Defense Department has no other large events planned for the day and its efforts have seemingly been marred by problems. A Defense Department spokeswoman said they hoped to partner with community groups to host other events after the ceremony.

When Lt. Gen. Don Campbell assumed command of Fort Hood and III Corps last year, he wanted to host a welcome-home ceremony for Vietnam veterans after attending so many for soldiers returning from Iraq and Afghanistan. It also helped that his father is a Vietnam veteran who never received an official welcome.

"It hit me in the gut when the buses rolled up," General Campbell said. "It was very emotional to see the vets in the windows and then to walk into

the crowd and have them hug me and thank me. I hope it gives them some kind of closure that they can move on and continue to serve."

If the throngs of Vietnam veterans who surrounded General Campbell to shake his hand or hug him were any indication, the gathering was a hit.

"It really touched me here," said Robert Stevens, 64, from Lampasas, Tex., pointing to his chest.

"I think this is something we've been missing all this time," said Mr. Stevens, who served two tours in Vietnam as an Army pilot. "What General Campbell has done is just awesome."

His wife, Lee, said General Campbell "made it seem like we were welcoming them home."

"It took 40 years, and it seemed real," she said.

While some veterans said some of their friends refused to attend the Fort Hood ceremony because it was "too little, too late," most were happy for any recognition, even if it came more than four decades after they returned home.

"It's never too late in my opinion," said John Rowan, national president of Vietnam Veterans of America, a nonprofit advocacy group in Silver Spring, Md. "Let's do it while we're still alive and kicking."

Ceremonies for Vietnam veterans are likely to continue through 2015 to honor a variety of important milestones in the war, like the fall of Saigon. While the start and end dates for the Vietnam War are much debated, 1962 was selected by the Defense Department because it was the United States' first combat mission against the Viet Cong.

The date made little difference to the veterans and their families at Fort Hood. The

only thing important, they said, was that this welcome back was even happening.

"It was a big honor to stand in for him since he couldn't be here," said Nathan Childs of Kempner, Tex., who cradled a large framed photograph of his father, Lovey Childs, a retired command sergeant who died in February. "He would have really enjoyed this, and I don't think there is a better way to honor him."

Some veterans were hesitant to attend and needed a little encouragement. Diane Logan saw a newspaper advertisement for the ceremony and used it to persuade husband, James, who served in an aviation unit with the Marines during the war.

"He's not one for accolades," she said with a grin as she wrapped an arm around him.

Mr. Logan, who still looked like a young Marine, with a flat stomach and ramrod posture, said he had decided to attend to "maybe get a little closure."

"This will help erase the memory of how I came home and was spat on," said Mr. Logan, 67, of Copperas Cove, Tex.

Most of the veterans at Fort Hood said they had taken civilian flights back to the states after the war, and took off their uniforms so they could blend in and avoid protestors. Others said they kept their military service off their résumés and did not tell people they had served in the war.

"We went into the closet and didn't tell anyone we were Vietnam vets," said William Whittaker, president of the Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 1000 of Central Texas, who drove an Army truck in the war. "We're coming out now."

*Kristina Shevory served eight years in the Army as a linguist. She has written*

*for The New York Times, Wired, Business Week and The Atlantic.*

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Washington Post

May 25, 2012

Pg. B3

### **30. Inquiry Into Marine's Death At Fort Meade**

By Mary Pat Flaherty

The Naval Criminal Investigative Service is investigating the death of a Marine whose body was found in his barracks room Wednesday afternoon at Fort Meade.

The Marine's name will not be released until 24 hours after his relatives have been notified, said a Marine spokesman, Col. Sean D. Gibson.

The Marines did not release additional information about the circumstances in which the body was found.

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Yahoo.com

May 25, 2012

### **31. Fire Damage Raises Questions About Sub's Future**

By David Sharp, Associated Press

KITTERY, Maine -- Even before the Navy completed its first damage assessment, the severity of a fire that swept through a nuclear-powered submarine in dry dock at Portsmouth Naval Shipyard triggered questions about whether the USS Miami can be salvaged.

The USS Miami's nuclear propulsion was spared from the intense blaze but some forward compartments including living quarters, command and control, and torpedo room suffered extensive damage, officials said Thursday.

The Navy was unable to complete a formal assessment Thursday but the damage was



severe enough to raise questions about whether costly repairs would make sense for the 22-year-old Los Angeles-class attack submarine.

"The duration of the fire suggests extensive damage that could render the vessel useless. These submarines were designed decades ago. So they're no longer state of the art," said Loren Thompson, defense analyst at the Arlington, Va.-based Lexington Institute. "If this vessel returns to service, I will be amazed."

Working in the submarine's favor is the fact that workers had removed some equipment and gutted part of the vessel during the retrofit, said U.S. Rep. Chellie Pingree of Maine after meeting with the shipyard commander.

Rear Adm. Richard Breckenridge, commander of Submarine Group Two in Groton, Conn., where the USS Miami is based, told reporters on Thursday that it was premature to say whether the submarine could be salvaged.

If it's scrapped, it would mean the loss of a ship that cost about \$900 million at the time to build. The U.S. Navy's newest attack submarines, the Virginia-class, are even more expensive at about \$2.6 billion apiece.

The fire broke out Wednesday evening while the Miami was on a 20-month stay at the shipyard for an overhaul, and it took firefighters from more than a dozen departments until Thursday morning to douse the fire, described as intense and smoky.

Pingree described it as a "hot scary mess."

"It takes a lot of guts to go into a burning building. But the idea of going into a submarine full of hot toxic smoke — that's real courage," she said.

Two crew members, three shipyard firefighters and two civilian firefighters were hurt,

but their injuries were minor, officials said.

Officials were waiting Thursday to begin venting smoke and noxious fumes so workers go inside the submarine to assess damage.

Workers had to let fire-damaged compartments cool enough for fresh air to be safely introduced without risk of another fire.

There were no details on the cause of the fire, but Breckenridge promised that there will be a thorough investigation.

Firefighters isolated the flames so they would not spread to nuclear propulsion spaces at the rear of the submarine. There was nuclear fuel on board the sub, but the reactor has been shut down for two months and was unaffected.

The rear compartments including the nuclear propulsion unit remained habitable, and crew members never left that part of the sub during the fire, Breckenridge said.

Nonetheless, the blaze was stubborn.

"The fire spread to spaces within the submarine that were difficult to access, presenting a challenging situation for initial responders. But they persevered in incredible heat and smoke conditions, demonstrating exceptional courage," the admiral said.

Residents reported hearing sirens from fire trucks and ambulances throughout the night, and the smoke spread over the area.

"It smelled like plastic burning," said Janet Howe of Kittery, who lives three-quarters-of-a-mile from the shipyard.

Reporters were not allowed onto the base to see the submarine Thursday. But Pingree and others who viewed the vessel said there were

no outward signs of damage, because the fire was contained inside the 360-foot-long hull.

It was unclear how many people were aboard the vessel or what type of work was being done when the fire started. The submarine, commissioned in 1990, has a crew of 13 and 120 enlisted personnel. It arrived at the shipyard March 1.

U-T San Diego

May 24, 2012

Pg. B1

## 32. Carrier Vinson Home For Awhile

*Two deployments in 18 months saw ship aiding Haiti after quake, carrying out bin Laden's burial at sea*

By Jeanette Steele, U-T

After back-to-back deployments, and two years of missed Christmases, Valentine's and Mother's Days, the sailors of the aircraft carrier Carl Vinson returned to San Diego Wednesday morning for a good long rest.

The carrier pulled up to its North Island Naval Air Station pier just before 11 a.m., ending a six-month tour that included launching jets for patrols over Afghanistan and working in the Persian Gulf during tense relations with Iran.

"There was a considerable amount of rhetoric coming from the country of Iran. Our sailors went in there and demonstrated only very professional seamanship," said Rear Adm. Thomas Shannon, who leads the Vinson strike group.

"We provided a strong signal of strength, stability and security to that important part of the region."

The cruiser Bunker Hill and the destroyer Halsey also returned to San Diego after making up part of the carrier group.

This was the Vinson's second deployment in 18 months. The carrier and its 3,000-person crew spent barely six months at home between the two tours.

In fact, the flattop has been busy since emerging from its five-year mid-life overhaul in January 2010. Almost immediately, it was dispatched to give aid to Haiti after a major earthquake. The ship arrived in San Diego in April 2010.

Next came a historic deployment in December of that year. After the death of terrorist mastermind Osama bin Laden, the Vinson was the location of his burial at sea — though no one was allowed to discuss it when the carrier returned home last June.

In November, the ship hosted the first-of-its-kind Veterans Day Carrier Classic, when the flight deck was transformed into a basketball court for a collegiate game. President Barack Obama and the First Lady attended.

Just a few weeks later, the Vinson left on the trip it completed Wednesday.

Crew members have come and gone during that frenetic two-year period. But many Vinson families have endured at least these last two deployments.

Marianne Royster waited patiently at the North Island pier Wednesday morning, under gloomy May-gray skies.

And her daughters, ages 3 and 5, have been patient over the past year and a half while their sailor dad was away. There were t-ball games he never saw, and a surgery during which the 3-year-old had pins inserted in her thin arm.

"It's been hard for them at night," Royster said, her voice quivering a little as she spoke. "They see their friends, and their dads are home."



During the past six months, the carrier's aircraft flew 1,085 missions totaling 6,600 flight hours.

Skipper Capt. Kent Whalen said air flights over Afghanistan have become less about offense and more about showing the presence of Vinson F/A-18 fighters in the skies.

"We don't necessarily have to drop a lot of ammunition. If we fly over, maybe with afterburners, that's a (reminder) that the Air Force or the Navy is here. And the enemy tends to melt away at the sight of that or the sound of that," said Whalen, who commanded a Hornet squadron at the beginning of the Afghanistan war.

The ship also conducted exercises with Singapore, Britain, India and Australia. The April exercise with India, an annual event called Malabar, was the first time a U.S. nuclear carrier practiced a refueling maneuver with an Indian oiler.

Shannon said that exercise "moved the ball down the field in our country's relationship with that country."

For Vinson families, the good news is that the flattop will be home for Christmas, this year.

The ship is slated for maintenance through at least February. The next deployment is not yet scheduled.

Wichita Eagle (kansas.com)  
May 24, 2012

### 33. Kansas National Guard To Name McConnell Intel Complex After Gates

By Associated Press

TOPEKA, Kan. — Wichita native and former Secretary of Defense Robert Gates will be honored later this month by the Kansas National Guard.

The Guard announced Thursday it will name its intelligence complex at

McConnell Air Force Base after Gates. Dedication for the Robert M. Gates Intelligence Complex is set for May 30.

Gates served as Defense Secretary between 2006 and 2011. He was director of the Central Intelligence Agency from 1991 to 1993.

The three-building complex at McConnell Air Force Base is home to more than 350 airmen who help produce intelligence information collected by various manned and unmanned aircraft.

In April, it was announced that Gates would join an international consulting firm headed by former Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice.

Brunswick (ME) Times Record  
May 25, 2012

### 34. Brunswick Woman Nominated For Top Navy Reserve Post Says She's Just 'Part Of The Team'

By Beth Brogan, Times Record

BRUNSWICK, Maine — A Brunswick woman has been nominated by President Barack Obama for promotion to vice admiral and chief of the Navy Reserve.

Rear Adm. Robin R. Braun, deputy director of the European Plans and Operations Center at U.S. European Command in Stuttgart, Germany, said Tuesday while home on leave that she hopes to be confirmed by the U.S. Senate this summer.

If confirmed, Braun would be the first woman to serve as leader of the 65,000-member Navy Reserve, reporting directly to Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Jonathan Greenert.

Her new post would involve "working to shape the Navy Reserve — the policy aspects of it, authorities, the budget," Braun said. "It's all

about the managing of the force."

"I was tremendously honored to be nominated for this job," Braun said. "The Navy Reserve is basically 65,000 men and women who are citizens — sailors who have full-time jobs and then also serve in the Navy Reserve as part-time sailors. Really, the tradition of the Navy Reserve is for 97 years we've had men and women serving their country on a part-time basis. I take a lot of pride in being able to lead that force and provide added capabilities to the Navy."

Braun would be the first woman to hold the position, and while she said she is proud of that distinction, she doesn't consider herself "a trailblazer."

"In the Navy you're taught from Day 1 [that] you're part of the team," she said. "For me, for 32 years I've been part of the team, whether I was in a supporting role or I was leading the team, it's all about the 'we,' and not the 'I.' While I'm very proud of being a woman and being nominated for this position, it's still all about the teamwork."

Braun moved to Maine from Washington, D.C., in 1999, when her husband was transferred in the U.S. Navy. When he retired, they made their home and raised a family in Brunswick.

She has lived in Germany nearly full time for the past 18 months, though, and before that was based in Washington, D.C., Tennessee and New Orleans, commuting back to Brunswick, because "I consider this home," she said.

Braun is on military leave from her civilian job as a pilot for Federal Express, but the new position would require her to return to active duty full time for four years and work from the Pentagon in Washington, D.C.

Braun said that if confirmed, she looks forward to the new post and "helping to determine what capabilities will reside in the reserve, recommendations on how large the force should be, and basically the strategic direction the Naval Reserve will take."

"As the war in Afghanistan winds down and we've heard about significant budget cuts and force structure cuts of our military, it will be very important that we look to right-size the Navy Reserve and look to focus on missions that will provide the needed capabilities for the Navy," she said.

The new littoral combat ship, "unmanned vehicles" and cyberdefense are among areas the Navy is now focusing on, she said, "so we've got to take a look at what capabilities need to reside in the Navy Reserve and where can we best support the active duty Navy."

Moscow Times  
May 25, 2012  
Pg. 3

### 35. Report: U.S. Role Eyed In Sukhoi Crash

*Russian intelligence officials say it is possible that interference from a U.S. air base could have caused a fatal crash in Indonesia.*

By Roland Oliphant, The Moscow Times

Russian intelligence agencies are investigating the possibility that the U.S. military played a part in the crash of a Sukhoi Superjet in Indonesia, according to a report.

Citing sources in the GRU, Russia's military intelligence agency, Komsomolskaya Pravda reported Thursday that interference from a U.S. air base near Jakarta could have caused onboard equipment to go haywire, leading to the May 9 crash, which killed 45 people.



"We know that they have special equipment that can cut communications between an aircraft and the ground or interfere with the parameters on board. For example, the plane is flying at one altitude, but after interference from the ground, onboard equipment shows another," a GRU general told the paper.

The Sukhoi Superjet 100 disappeared from radar screens shortly after the pilot asked for permission to reduce altitude to 1,800 meters, a dangerous maneuver in such a mountainous area.

The wreckage was later found on a spur of Mount Salak, a volcano that has been the site of numerous air crashes in the past.

The published claim adds to the speculation about the cause of the crash, some of which has come from the jet's manufacturer.

"The main question is why the controller authorized the request to reduce altitude," a source at Sukhoi told Komsomolskaya Pravda. "Maybe he didn't see that the plane was heading straight for the mountain. On the other hand, we don't rule out the possibility that this was deliberate industrial sabotage to drive our aircraft from the market."

Attempts to implicate the United States are the latest wrinkle in the conspiracy theory.

"When the plane flew toward the mountain, it should have triggered an automatic mode that would have guided it away from the obstacle," a pilot safety official at Domodedovo Airport told the tabloid. "At the Jakarta airport, there is a U.S. air base, and among our staff there is talk: Couldn't a signal have been sent from that base at a particular moment to put the equipment out of order?"

This is not the first time that supposed American sabotage beams have been blamed for the loss of Russian equipment.

In October, a former official blamed "powerful American radar" in Alaska for the loss of the Fobos-Grunt space probe.

The Sukhoi Superjet 100 is the first new civilian aircraft built in Russia since the Soviet collapse. The model that crashed was on a tour of Southeast Asia to drum up business for the new aircraft.

Industry observers say the program may never recover if the investigation finds that technical failure was to blame for the crash.

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Wall Street Journal  
May 25, 2012  
Pg. 2

### **36. Conviction For Soldier In Texas Bomb Plot**

By Nathan Koppel

A federal jury in Waco, Texas, convicted a U.S. soldier of planning to detonate a bomb last year near the army base of Fort Hood as part of a plot to avenge the U.S. military's killing of his fellow Muslims in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Pfc. Naser Jason Abdo, a 22-year-old infantryman who had been stationed at Fort Campbell, Ky., was convicted Thursday of six felonies, including attempting to use a weapon of mass destruction, which carries a potential life sentence.

Mr. Abdo traveled last summer to Killeen, Texas, home to Fort Hood, the same base where army psychiatrist Nidal Hasan allegedly killed 13 soldiers in 2009.

Mr. Abdo planned to bomb a restaurant near the base and then to shoot any survivors, according to court testimony.

He was arrested just hours before he had finished assembling the bomb, the government said.

Mr. Abdo had pleaded not guilty. His lawyer, Zachary Boyd, argued to the jury that his client should be acquitted because the government couldn't prove Mr. Abdo could actually carry out the attack.

Mr. Boyd likened Mr. Abdo to someone who contemplates suicide and purchases a knife but never carries out the act.

"Suicide doesn't happen until you put the knife on your skin and start to cut," Mr. Boyd said in his opening argument.

Mr. Boyd says he anticipates appealing the conviction.

In a little more than two days of testimony, federal prosecutors introduced damning evidence, including surveillance video of Mr. Abdo buying bomb-making components.

Police officers discovered the components at Mr. Abdo's Killeen hotel, along with an article titled, "How to build a bomb in the kitchen of your mom," according to court records.

A Federal Bureau of Investigation agent testified that Mr. Abdo confessed that he planned the attack to "martyr himself," both for the military's killing of Muslims and also to show kinship with Mr. Hasan, a fellow Muslim, with alleged links to radical Islam.

Mr. Hasan awaits trial in a military court.

Robert Pitman, the U.S. Attorney for the Western District of Texas, said that Mr. Abdo's plot "was interrupted and a potential tragedy prevented because an alert citizen notified law enforcement of suspicious activity."

His sentencing is scheduled for July 20.

Separately, a Texas man, Barry Walter Bujol Jr., who was convicted of seeking to give al Qaeda restricted military documents, GPS equipment and money, was sentenced Thursday to 20 years in prison--the maximum he could receive, the Associated Press reported.

Mr. Bujol also was ordered to pay a \$10,000 fine during his sentencing hearing before U.S. District Judge David Hittner.

Mr. Bujol was convicted in November on charges of attempting to provide material support to a foreign terrorist organization and aggravated identity theft, the AP said.

"We do not take matters of potential national security lightly," U.S. Attorney Kenneth Magidson said in a statement. "This case and its successful resolution represents our commitment to making our communities a safer place to live."

Before his sentence was handed down, Mr. Bujol, a U.S. citizen, told Judge Hittner he never wanted to hurt anyone.

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TheDailyBeast.com  
May 24, 2012

### **37. Jeremy Hilton: U.S. Military's First Male Spouse Of The Year**

*Military Spouse Magazine honored the dad for his stay-at-home work with disabled daughter.*

By Jesse Ellison

When Deanie Dempsey, whose husband is the chair of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, took the stage at the Marine Barracks Washington earlier this month to announce 2012's "Military Spouse of the Year," she fumbled for her words. There were six nominees--five women and one man--and Dempsey clearly had trouble finding the appropriate gender-



neutral pronoun, in order to not blow the identity of the winner. Finally, she gave up. "I have confidence that he will do his fellow spouses proud," she said. The room collectively gasped.

This was, after all, decidedly a ladies' luncheon. The hot-pink gift bags held tubes of shimmery eye shadow and sparkly necklaces. But this year, for the first time ever, the spouse of honor was not a wife, but a husband: Jeremy Hilton, a cheerful, mustachioed fellow. Taking the podium, Hilton cracked a joke, "Now, we've obviously established that this is not a beauty contest."

Hilton is an outlier in more ways than one. Women like his wife, Renae, a lieutenant colonel in the Air Force, make up fewer than 15 percent of active-duty armed-service members; fewer than half of them are married. Nine years ago, Hilton left his own career in the Navy to care for the couple's daughter, Kate, who was born with hydrocephalus—a condition that has required multiple surgeries and caused significant brain damage in their little girl. Hilton's choice made him one the country's rare stay-at-home dads, not just in the military but in the country as a whole. (According to the U.S. Census, in 2010, there were an estimated 154,000 stay-at-home fathers, compared with 5 million such moms.)

But for all his exceptionalism, Hilton's place at the podium is also one more sign that the military—among the most male-dominated, staunchly traditional institutions in America—has, over the course of the past year, begun to undergo a seismic change. In September, the ban on open sexuality of gay and lesbian service members was lifted with the repeal of "don't ask, don't tell." Then, a few months

ago, it was announced that the Pentagon would revise its policy excluding women from combat roles, opening up 14,000 new jobs for female service members.

Hilton's trajectory itself exemplifies the changes that have been ushered in during recent years. When he was in the Navy, Hilton served on submarines that excluded women until 2010. Now his business cards are hot pink. "I'm probably an example of the widest swing you can make," he laughs. "I think I'm just secure enough in my manhood that none of this bothers me."

It's the fifth year that Military Spouse Magazine has given out the honorific title of Spouse of the Year. Each winner is tasked with speaking on behalf of the nation's 1.1 million military spouses, and each nominee chooses a particular platform and agenda to push. For Hilton, it's advocating for families affected by disabilities, a mission that seems particularly relevant this year, as more and more veterans return from overseas suffering from traumatic brain injuries and posttraumatic stress disorder.

Hilton's advocacy started, as most passion projects do, at home. Many of the programs and support systems for Americans with disabilities are administered on a state-by-state basis, often with long waiting lists. In Virginia, where the Hiltons currently live, while his wife is stationed at the nearby Joint Base Andrews, the waiting list for Medicaid waivers is some 15 years long. "If I was a civilian, my daughter would hopefully be provided some support by the time she was an adult," Hilton explains. Instead, because the family has to move so frequently, "we go from the bottom of the waiting

list to the bottom of the waiting list."

Hilton hopes that as soldiers return from Iraq and Afghanistan, the time is ripe for a national conversation about disabilities and stigmas, one that might prompt a change comparable to what the GI Bill did for education. "We're all impacted," he told *The Daily Beast*. "You may not be now, but just wait, it's coming. You will be impacted and you'll be glad that it's been thought through."

It is an argument that Hilton will bring to Capitol Hill, in visits with lawmakers, which he says he does whenever he can find a babysitter. And it was a point that he made particularly well at the Marine Barracks luncheon. "For some, this will happen in a split second, whether from an IED or from the doctor telling you that something is wrong with your baby," Hilton said. "For others, it will be the shocking realization of the road you're about to travel as you deal with M.S., cancer, or Alzheimer's."

For Hilton, the cause is much more important than breaking gender barriers. "I don't want to be applauded for being a man. I want to be applauded for what I've done," he says. "I don't want to be known as the first male military spouse of the year. I suspect the first female fighter pilot was like, I'm a damn good fighter pilot, and that has nothing to do with my sex. It's because I've worked my butt off."

*Jesse Ellison is a staff writer and articles editor at Newsweek and The Daily Beast, covering social justice and women's issues. A Front Page Award winner, she has discussed gender equality on CNN, WNYC, and at Princeton University.*

May 25, 2012

Pg. B15

### 38. Wesley Brown, Pioneer As Black Naval Graduate, Dies At 85

By Paul Vitello

Wesley A. Brown, a retired Navy lieutenant commander who endured intense racial hazing to become the first black graduate of the United States Naval Academy, died Tuesday in Silver Spring, Md. He was 85.

The cause was cancer, said his wife, Crystal.

Mr. Brown, who entered the academy in 1945 and graduated in 1949, was the sixth black man admitted in the 100-year history of the Annapolis military college but the first to withstand the kind of hazing that had forced the others to leave within a year, according to Navy historians.

White cadets refused to sit next to Mr. Brown, racial epithets were whispered behind his back, and fellow plebes barred him from joining the choir — all of it mixed with and hidden behind a torrent of regular hazing that underclassmen were expected to bear. He told interviewers that not a day passed when he did not consider quitting.

But unlike his predecessors, he said, Mr. Brown had the support of a handful of fellow cadets, who were friendly to him despite receiving threats from hostile classmates, and from the academy commandant, who intervened to protect him from excessive harassment.

"If not for that, I'm not sure I would have made it," Mr. Brown told an interviewer.

One cadet who visited his dorm room to talk and encouraged him to "hang in there," Mr. Brown said, was Jimmy Carter, the future president, who was then an upperclassman and fellow



member of the academy's cross-country team.

In a speech last year at a Naval Academy event, Mr. Carter recalled Cadet Brown as part of "my first personal experience with total integration."

"A few members of my senior class attempted to find ways to give him demerits so that he would be discharged," Mr. Carter said, "but Brown's good performance prevailed."

Blacks had served in the American armed forces since the Revolution. But for the most part they remained in segregated units until 1948, when President Harry S. Truman ordered the integration of the services. Attempts to integrate the academies, beginning after the Civil War, had met intense resistance. Only a half-dozen blacks had graduated from West Point, for instance, by the time Mr. Brown decided to seek a commission as the first black graduate of the naval academy.

Mr. Brown's career as a naval cadet was widely covered in both black newspapers and mainstream ones. When he graduated, he told *The New York Times* that he had "really enjoyed" his four years as a midshipman — except for the publicity, which he called "a bad angle."

"I feel it is unfortunate the American people have not matured enough to accept an individual on the basis of his ability and not regard a person as an oddity because of his color," he said. "My class standing shows that around here, I am an average Joe." He was ranked 370th in a class of 790.

He first publicly discussed his hazing with the Navy historian Robert J. Schneller Jr., who interviewed him for his 2005 book, "Breaking the Color Barrier: The U.S.

Naval Academy's First Black Midshipmen and the Struggle for Racial Equality." In an interview on Thursday, Mr. Schneller expanded on Mr. Brown's version of why he made it through four years when others had not.

"He made it because he was a gentle guy, and a hard worker, who came from a community where they taught their children not to believe the bull white people gave them about the black man's 'limited abilities' — who taught them that they could do what they wanted," Mr. Schneller said.

Wesley Anthony Brown was born in Washington on April 3, 1927, the only child of William and Rosetta Brown. His father drove a truck for a produce market, and his mother worked in a laundry. During most of Mr. Brown's childhood the family shared a large house near Logan Circle, owned by his grandmother Katie Shepherd, with many other relatives.

Mr. Brown became active in the neighborhood church, a nexus for community activists. He recommended Mr. Brown to the Harlem congressman Adam Clayton Powell Jr., who wanted to appoint a black candidate for the naval academy.

As a Navy civil engineer, Mr. Brown served in the Korean and Vietnam Wars and worked on Navy construction projects around the world before retiring in 1969. He was a facilities manager and planner at Howard University in Washington until 1988.

In 2008, the Naval Academy dedicated a new facility for athletic programs, the Wesley Brown Field House. The \$25 million structure was built with many innovative features, academy officials said, including a skinlike shell made from blastproof glass.

Besides his wife, he is survived by two daughters,

Wiletta Scott and Carol Jackson; two sons, Wesley Jr., and Gary; and seven grandchildren.

Throughout his life Mr. Brown loyally attended class reunions. In a 2006 interview with *The Baltimore Sun*, he described former classmates who sometimes approached him. "They'll say, 'I was very mean and ugly to you when you were a midshipman,' " he said. "Lots of times I'll say, 'I don't remember you and don't remember you doing anything like that, so forget it.' "

He added: "You remember the good stuff. A lot of the bad stuff — I can't relate to it."

Newport News Daily Press  
May 25, 2012

### 39. Newport News Shipyard Reaches Milestone On New Aircraft Carrier

By Michael Welles Shapiro

Crane operators at Newport News Shipbuilding lowered the final piece of the aircraft carrier Gerald R. Ford's keel into place Thursday morning, a construction milestone for the yard.

Hundreds of shipyard employees stood on either side of Drydock 12, looking on as the 680-ton, 60-foot tall lower bow was slowly placed on oak-topped keel blocks, completing the lower structure of the massive ship.

"We started this unit close to a year ago, knowing we had to put it in drydock today," said Geoff Hummel, a construction director at the yard, which is owned by Huntington Ingalls Industries.

"It's got about 45,000 or 50,000 man hours worth of work put into it so far, and it's been done by the whole shipyard," Hummel said.

The largest of the shipyard's 600 cranes, Big Blue

performed the lift. The gantry crane, the largest in the Western Hemisphere, was part of a \$270 million upgrade to prepare for construction of the Ford-class of carriers. The giant crane, which could lift up to 900 tons, can now handle 1,050 tons.

At around 10 a.m. the crane's three hooks hoisted the lower bow which was sitting in the yard. Workers blew whistles, a warning to anyone standing between the unit and the drydock.

"That's just telling people there's an overhead load," said shipyard president Matt Mulherin. He noted that the significance and size of the lift meant the whistles were almost an unnecessary precaution.

The steel unit was painted with an orange primer and lightly coated with surface rust. It will be power-washed and painted gray along with the rest of the ship before it's finished.

The ship is scheduled to be completed in the summer of 2013 and delivered in 2015.

"We get kind of immune to this," Mulherin said, as the bow unit hovered over the keel blocks in the drydock. "They lift these big pieces all the time."

That was not apparent by looking at employees watching the event.

Jeff Lacy, boatwright lines foreman, whose team makes sure the keel units line up, said it's satisfying to watch the steel parts of the keel fit together.

"On this piece we pre-cut it," Lacy said. When pieces don't fit perfectly, "we might do a little bit of trimming," he added.

Hummel said the lift went "great," and wind, a potential hazard during so-called superlifts, held off.

As the lower bow was set onto blocks, and welders waited for the go-ahead to start fastening it into place, Hummel said the lift represents a shift



to the next step of the carrier's construction process.

"This is just the start of a whole new round of work," he said.

The Navy's latest cost estimates put the price tag of the Ford at \$884 million above its \$5.2 billion contract. The shipyard has said the overruns are the result of new design elements, and added capabilities of the carrier, the first in its class.

The design of the ship, however, adds acreage to the flight deck, while cutting by more than 600 the necessary number of sailors.

The Navy estimates the manpower reduction will save \$5 billion over the 50-year life of the carrier.

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Wall Street Journal  
May 25, 2012  
Pg. 11

## **40. The Art Of The Ask For Afghanistan**

*We need more help with the financial burden. Here's how to get it.*

By Jonathan Hillman and  
Courtney Lobel

With all eyes on President Barack Obama and Gov. Mitt Romney as they court Americans in what is expected to be the most expensive election in American history, an international fundraising challenge is going ignored: the campaign for Afghanistan.

As the United States draws down its combat forces, it has launched a desperate effort to secure billions of dollars in pledges to shore up Afghan security forces and fund critical development and reconstruction projects. Put simply, Afghanistan's fate hinges on foreign aid, which accounted for 92% of its public spending last year.

As fundraisers, however, U.S. officials are coming

up woefully short. At the end of Monday's NATO summit in Chicago, there was no announcement that coalition partners had cobbled together the \$4.1 billion needed annually to keep Afghanistan's security forces afloat after NATO's mission ends in 2014. Attempting some early damage control, NATO Secretary-General Anders Fogh Rasmussen said over the weekend that the summit was "not a pledging conference."

Yet funding was at the top of the summit agenda, and shortfalls have already constrained NATO strategy in Afghanistan. Acknowledging the funding challenges, U.S. officials have proposed cutting Afghan security forces to 228,000 from 352,000 by around 2017, a move that threatens to leave more than 100,000 trained fighters without jobs. To finance this scaled-down force, the U.S. is asking its allies for \$1.3 billion annually, a modest sum for a group of nations that are among the richest in the world, despite their considerable economic challenges.

So what went wrong? Partially to blame is the approach taken by U.S. diplomats, who circulated a "Target Asks" list in advance of Monday's summit.

Assigning specific sums to coalition partners, the list is reported to have provoked resentment among U.S. allies. Rather than continue this ham-handed approach to fundraising by decree, U.S. officials must overhaul their fundraising strategy before international donors meet in Tokyo on July 8. When it comes to "the art of the ask," there are some time-honored principles for persuading donors to give big that American officials would do well to keep in mind.

An age-old fundraising maxim rings true for U.S. efforts in Afghanistan: If you want advice, ask for money; if you want money, ask for advice. In other words, donor nations will be more inclined to fund projects that they are involved with devising.

NATO allies were caught off guard in February, when Defense Secretary Leon Panetta suggested that the U.S. combat operations would end in mid-to-late 2013, a year ahead of schedule. The U.S. must avoid future surprises if it hopes to keep its allies more than rhetorically invested in Afghanistan.

Furthermore, fundraising is most successful when donors are asked to fund projects that align with their values. Many NATO partners are more concerned with development and governance issues than they are with training Afghanistan's security forces.

The U.S., which already spends roughly \$2 billion a week on the war, could offer more than the \$2.3 billion it has pledged for Afghanistan's annual security expenses after 2014 if NATO partners agree to provide larger sums for non-security projects.

Most importantly, the U.S. must expand Afghanistan's pool of donor nations. American officials invited more than 30 non-NATO countries to participate in the Chicago summit, but more must be done to persuade regional powers to invest in Afghanistan's security.

In addition to India and Pakistan, which have clear stakes in a stable Afghanistan, China has mining and oil investments in Afghanistan, and Russia has expressed concerns that the drug trade and terrorism could increase after the NATO forces depart. U.S. officials must take a donor-centered approach and make the case

that if sufficient funds cannot be raised, these interests will be seriously at risk.

To be sure, U.S. diplomats have a difficult pitch to make. Corruption continues to cripple the Karzai-led government, and Taliban forces have been more resilient than expected. But the international community could pay dearly down the road if U.S. officials can't convince more nations to invest in Afghanistan's future today.

*Mr. Hillman is a research associate at the Council on Foreign Relations. Ms. Lobel is associate director for foundation relations at the Council on Foreign Relations.*

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Time  
June 4, 2012  
**In The Arena**

## **41. The Best News Out Of Afghanistan**

By Joe Klein

In the beginning, as American troops pushed toward Baghdad in March 2003, General David Petraeus asked Rick Atkinson of the Washington Post a famous question: "Tell me how this ends?" For years, the Petraeus question has stood as a sober, unanswered counterpoint to George W. Bush's swaggering, inaccurate mission accomplished banner.

But now, with the NATO decision to pull all combat troops out of Afghanistan by the middle of next year, we can hazard some guesses. The Bush war on terrorism will end as it began and should have remained--a special-forces war. It is as John Kerry described it in the 2004 presidential campaign: a constant national-security concern, requiring intense intelligence work and occasional special operations, but one that never required a major commitment of U.S. forces. It also ends better than



we had any right to expect, given the disastrously stupid invasion of Iraq--a fact largely attributable to the job Petraeus did to stabilize the situation there in 2007.

Of course, it isn't really over. The consequences of the U.S. response to the terrorist attacks of September 2001 will ramify for decades. Iraq may fall into civil war or dissolve entirely (the Kurds already have signaled their intent to achieve *de facto* independence), or it may enjoy a rush of oil wealth that will salve the Sunni-Shi'ite friction. Afghanistan seems likely to remain trapped in its perpetual civil war between the southern Pashtun and the northern ethnic factions. The NATO decision carries with it the implicit faith that the Afghan National Army, composed almost entirely of non-Pashtuns, will be able to keep the Taliban out of Kabul. This will be done at some expense: an estimated \$4 billion a year in aid, mostly from the U.S. But it also reflects a new reality: the war against al-Qaeda has gone elsewhere and become more diffuse.

On the very day of NATO's Afghanistan decision, an al-Qaeda suicide bomber decimated a military parade in Yemen, killing at least 100 and wounding hundreds more. This followed the CIA's successful infiltration of a Yemen-based al-Qaeda cell that was hoping to blow up an airliner with an advanced version of an underwear bomb. Yes, there are still miscreants like Ayman al-Zawahiri wandering the Pakistani borderlands, but al-Qaeda's center of gravity seems to have moved to Yemen, where it will be fought with drones and special-ops teams. That is relatively good news on several counts. The best news is that tens of thousands of American

troops will no longer need to be in harm's way.

The next best news is that we don't have to spend so much time wringing our hands about the Pakistanis anymore. To be sure, Pakistan remains the most dangerous country in the world, far more dangerous, potentially, than Iran. It has a nuclear arsenal of perhaps 100 warheads--and a history of Islamist military coups. It also has a history of foreign policy chicanery, delusion and paranoia. If there were a Pakistani leader with a fraction of, say, Benjamin Netanyahu's knowledge of American politics, Pakistan never would have closed the NATO supply routes to Afghanistan and demanded an apology from Barack Obama for the incident in which 24 Pakistani soldiers were killed by American fire in a cross-border artillery duel last November. For one thing, the Pakistanis fired first. For another, Obama isn't going to apologize for anything in the midst of a presidential campaign in which his opponent has attacked him, falsely, for engaging in a global "apology tour."

Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence directorate estimated that the NATO effort in Afghanistan would survive only 10 to 15 days if Pakistan closed the transport routes. That proved to be ridiculous. "And it is costing Pakistan more than it is NATO," says one regional expert. "The Pakistani truckers are suffering." But then, Pakistan's miscalculations have been legion. It harbored Osama bin Laden and armed Taliban factions, like the Haqqanis, in the mistaken belief that we'd never find out or that we needed Pakistan too much to do anything about it. The truth is, our need for an alliance with Pakistan is marginal. India is

a more reliable partner in the region.

We have learned a great deal in the past 11 years. We have learned about the power of ethnicity, sectarianism and, above all, geography. We've learned of the impotence of Western imperial inventions like the cobbled-together nonstates of Iraq and Pakistan. We've learned that Southwest Asia is no more hospitable to Western expeditionary forces than Southeast Asia was. Perhaps, in the process, we've also learned something about the importance of humility as we make our way in the world.

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Washington Times  
May 25, 2012  
Pg. B3

## 42. No Money For LOST

*Law of the Sea Treaty costs American sovereignty*  
By Rep. Gus Bilirakis

Between secret deals with Russia to weaken our missile defense, the relaxation of conditions on military aid to Egypt, and the granting of visas to the progeny of a dictatorial Cuban regime - just to name a few troubling actions - the current administration's flippant attitude toward America's sovereignty and its role on the world stage is a major cause for concern. This concern is not eased by the administration's latest efforts: a push to ratify the United Nations' Law of the Sea Treaty.

The Law of the Sea Treaty seeks to regulate and limit the use of the world's oceans for commercial use and environmental management and would determine the extent to which national territory extends off a nation's coasts. In doing so, the treaty ignores centuries of already established international practices

regarding freedom of navigation on the seas and would empower multiple U.N.-established bureaucracies.

One cannot be assured that these bureaucracies will fight for the best interests of responsible international actors or of the sea itself. This is particularly troubling when keeping in mind the dubious track records of other U.N. commissions, such as allowing known human rights abusers to lead the U.N. Commission on Human Rights.

Across a number of Congresses, the United States has long resisted the restrictions that would be imposed by the Law of the Sea Treaty, and for good reasons. However, the current administration chooses to continue its pattern of ignoring sensible precedent. Instead, it is pressing the Senate to ratify international standards that would encourage encroachment by foreign actors, burden and constrain the U.S. Navy and subject the United States to international judgments.

The U.S. House of Representatives recently adopted legislative language that limits federal funding from being used by any institution or organization established by the Convention on the Law of the Sea. The U.S. Senate should follow the House of Representatives' lead by rejecting any attempt to implement the Law of the Sea Treaty and sacrifice more of our country's sovereignty.

*Rep. Gus Bilirakis, Florida Republican, is a member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee.*

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Politico.com  
May 24, 2012

## 43. Stop Throwing Good Money After Bad On MEADS



By Bob Barr

Remember the infamous so-called Bridge to Nowhere--a multimillion-dollar, taxpayer-funded proposal to link a tiny Alaska town to a small island airport? That proposed boondoggle has spawned an even more expensive offspring: the Medium Extended Air Defense System.

Whether Congress possesses the willpower to kill this costly Son of the Bridge to Nowhere remains up in the air, but a bipartisan effort to do so is gaining momentum. It needs to.

MEADS — which could very well have been designed by Rube Goldberg, the cartoonist famous for drawing overly complex contraptions for simple tasks — was designed to be developed and deployed in partnership with our North Atlantic Treaty Organization allies Germany and Italy.

In concept, this defense system was to provide a platform that would eventually replace the aging Patriot missile. In reality, the project has been plagued with massive cost overruns. Even the Pentagon has concluded the system can never be made to work properly and, therefore, cannot be deployed. Still, it lives on.

Germany's government recently bit the bullet and decided to stanch the flow of money. The Italians, however, continue to lobby for more U.S. funding. And the U.S., well — advocates on Capitol Hill and at the White House still argue for throwing good money after bad.

Those advocates cite as support for an additional \$400 million — on top of the \$2 billion already spent — the tripartite Memorandum of Understanding, signed in 1996 by Washington, Rome and Berlin. They maintain — apparently, with a straight face — that this memorandum

requires the United States to continue funding the project. Notwithstanding consensus, it never will be deployed.

It is this spendthrift approach to defense spending — after a project has started and money in support thereof has entered the pipeline, the government must continue to fund it no matter the efficacy of the project — that has finally prompted a bipartisan group of senators, led by Sens. Kelly Ayotte (R-N.H.) and Mark Begich (D-Alaska) to demand Congress simply stop appropriating money to keep MEADS on life support.

Sen. John McCain (R-Ariz.), though not a signatory to the Ayotte-Begich letter, has weighed in separately against continued MEADS funding.

The eight senators who signed that letter are not jousting at windmills. Their arguments are sound and well-timed. These bipartisan budget hawks, all of whom serve on the Armed Services Committee, cite the following: the massive cost overruns that have plagued the program for a decade and a half, the fact that the military already knows MEADS cannot and will not ever be deployed and the need for scarce defense appropriations to be used for military programs with at least some chance of being implemented.

The burgeoning national debt, to which MEADS has made a not-insignificant contribution, provides a strong overall framework for the Ayotte-Begich letter.

MEADS advocates, however, continue to cite the memorandum as forcing Washington to make a Hobson's choice between continuing funding and a several hundred million-dollar cancellation penalty. Experts question this conclusion. They note correctly that the

memorandum — reflecting basic procurement law and practice — makes any and all funding subject to legislative appropriations. In other words, if the Congress simply does not appropriate more money for MEADS, then MEADS will die — and the U.S. is not saddled with termination costs.

In what should be a fatal blow to MEADS supporters, this interpretation was confirmed by the Defense Department's chief acquisition officer, Frank Kendall, in a letter to the Senate last month.

No obituary would be necessary to justify such action. Only that Congress acted to protect U.S. taxpayers from further waste and U.S. military personnel and facilities from a system that would never work properly.

The Senate Armed Services Committee is marking up the defense budget bill, including MEADS funding, this week; and the Appropriations Committee will be taking it up shortly. Hopefully, this costly and nonproductive Son of the Bridge to Nowhere will be scuttled at last.

*Bob Barr served as a Republican congressman from Georgia from 1995 to 2003.*

Wall Street Journal

May 25, 2012

Pg. 13

#### **44. Why They Serve--'If Not Me, Then Who?'**

*After more than a decade of war, remarkable men and women are still stepping forward.*

By Tom Manion

I served in the military for 30 years. But it was impossible to fully understand the sacrifices of our troops and their families until April 29, 2007, the day my son, First Lt. Travis Manion, was killed in Iraq.

Travis was just 26 years old when an enemy sniper's bullet pierced his heart after he had just helped save two wounded comrades. Even though our family knew the risks of Travis fighting on the violent streets of Fallujah, being notified of his death on a warm Sunday afternoon in Doylestown, Pa., was the worst moment of our lives.

While my son's life was relatively short, I spend every day marveling at his courage and wisdom. Before his second and final combat deployment, Travis said he wanted to go back to Iraq in order to spare a less-experienced Marine from going in his place. His words--"If not me, then who ... "--continue to inspire me.

My son is one of thousands to die in combat since the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. Because of their sacrifices, as well as the heroism of previous generations, Memorial Day 2012 should have tremendous importance to our entire nation, with an impact stretching far beyond one day on the calendar.

In Afghanistan, tens of thousands of American troops continue to sweat, fight and bleed. In April alone, 35 U.S. troops were killed there, including Army Capt. Nick Rozanski, 36, who made the difficult decision to leave his wife and children to serve our country overseas.

"My brother didn't necessarily have to go to Afghanistan," Spc. Alex Rozanski, Nick's younger brother and fellow Ohio National Guard soldier, said. "He chose to because he felt an obligation."

Sgt. Devin Snyder "loved being a girly-girl, wearing her heels and carrying her purses," according to her mother, Dineen Snyder. But Sgt. Snyder, 20, also took it upon herself to put



on an Army uniform and serve in the mountains of northeastern Afghanistan as a military police officer. She was killed by an enemy roadside bomb, alongside three fellow soldiers and a civilian contractor, on June 4, 2011.

Air Force Tech. Sgt. Daniel Douville was an explosive ordnance disposal technician, doing an incredibly dangerous job depicted in "The Hurt Locker." He was a loving husband and father of three children. "He was my best friend," his wife, LaShana Douville, said. "He was a good person."

Douville, 33, was killed in a June 26, 2011, explosion in Afghanistan's Helmand province, where some of the fiercest fighting of the decade-long conflict continues to this day.

When my son died in Iraq, his U.S. Naval Academy roommate, Brendan Looney, was in the middle of BUD/S (basic underwater demolition) training to become a Navy SEAL. Devastated by his good friend's death, Brendan called us in anguish, telling my wife and me that losing Travis was too much for him to handle during the grueling training regimen.

Lt. Brendan Looney overcame his grief to become "Honor Man" of his SEAL class, and he served in Iraq before later deploying to Afghanistan. On Sept. 21, 2010, after completing 58 combat missions, Brendan died with eight fellow warriors when their helicopter crashed in Zabul province. He was 29. Brendan and Travis now rest side-by-side in Section 60 of Arlington National Cemetery.

"The friendship between First Lt. Travis Manion and Lt. Brendan Looney reflects the meaning of Memorial Day: brotherhood, sacrifice, love of

country," President Obama said at Arlington on Memorial Day 2011. "And it is my fervent prayer that we may honor the memory of the fallen by living out those ideals every day of our lives, in the military and beyond."

But the essence of our country, which makes me even prouder than the president's speech, is the way our nation's military families continue to serve. Even after more than a decade of war, these remarkable men and women are still stepping forward.

As the father of a fallen Marine, I hope Americans will treat this Memorial Day as more than a time for pools to open, for barbecues or for a holiday from work. It should be a solemn day to remember heroes who made the ultimate sacrifice, and also a stark reminder that our country is still at war.

For the Rozanskis, Snyders, Douvilles, Looneys and thousands more like us, every day is Memorial Day. If the rest of the nation joins us to renew the spirit of patriotism, service and sacrifice, perhaps America can reunite, on this day of reverence, around the men and women who risk their lives to defend it.

*Col. Manion, USMCR (Ret.), is on the board of the Travis Manion Foundation, which assists veterans and the families of the fallen.*

TheAtlantic.com  
May 24, 2012

#### **45. Why Is General McChrystal Teaching An Off-The-Record Course At Yale?**

*It's fine for a military officer to play the role of professor -- but not if that means allowing 'special arrangements' that corrupt intellectual freedom.*  
By Gian Gentile

In 1951, American conservative William F. Buckley published *God and Man at Yale*. In his book, Buckley slammed Yale's faculty for turning American liberal ideology into a religion and force-feeding it to Yale's unsuspecting student body.

By the late 1960s, the left-leaning ideological mindset that Buckley criticized no doubt encouraged the widespread opposition at Yale to the Vietnam Conflict -- opposition that turned out to be justified by the facts on the ground in Vietnam. During those days, any notion that an American four-star general involved in the Vietnam debacle, someone like General William C. Westmoreland, should teach a course on leadership at Yale would have been dismissed out of hand as utterly ridiculous.

Fast-forward to 2012 and reality has been turned on its head. Enter retired four-star Army General Stanley McChrystal. McChrystal, who formerly led special operations forces in Iraq and Afghanistan and later became a senior American commander in Afghanistan, now teaches a class at Yale's Grand Strategy Program, where he integrates his military experience with his studies on leadership. In the *New York Times*, McCrystal is quoted as saying "the only reason I'm here to teach," compared with "somebody who's got a Ph.D., is because I've been through it."

McChrystal must have been through something ominous because, according to Elisabeth Bumiller's *Times* article, Yale University imposes restrictions on students who sit in McChrystal's classes, demanding that they take notes on an "off the record" basis -- i.e., not for attribution.

Yale's extraordinary act seems drastically out of place

with notions of academic and intellectual freedom. At the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, where I teach history, intellectual freedom is fiercely encouraged and protected. In addition, there is also accountability. No matter what I say in my history classes -- either about history or my combat experience -- cadets are free to tell it to the world, critique it, or reject it privately or publicly. Restrictions on cadets don't exist even for an instructor with direct ties to the U.S. military. (I did two combat tours in Iraq, the second one in command of a combat battalion in West Baghdad at the height of Iraq's Shia-Sunni civil war in 2006.)

Yale University's readiness to impose special conditions -- enabling a retired American four-star general with celebrity appeal to teach classes in its Grand Strategy program on his own terms -- is puzzling. Why would Yale bend the dictates of academic freedom, especially knowing that McChrystal's students have little personal knowledge of the true nature of the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan, much less of the officers who've decisively shaped their conduct? Have at least portions of the Yale faculty have been seduced by the "better war" myth -- the notion that to win wars of occupation inside the Muslim World, the trick is to put the right general in charge and tweak the tactics of counterinsurgency with clever political science theories that win hearts and minds?

This is not to suggest that former military officers should not be teaching at American Universities. On the contrary, there are many former soldiers, sailors, airmen, and Marines with the background and credentials to teach at the University level, and they should. But intellectual freedom



should not be corrupted by "special arrangements" in order to draw a former general to teach a class at Yale.

Buckley's warning in the early 1950s of the dangers of an ideological mindset, whether left wing or right wing in orientation, is still valid. Yale's faculty and student body should heed the words of George Orwell, himself a former soldier: "During times of universal deceit, telling the truth becomes a revolutionary act."

*Gian Gentile is a serving army colonel, a former Iraq War commander, and an associate professor of history at West Point.*

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Wall Street Journal  
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#### **46. Our Man In Pakistan**

*Why didn't the U.S. help get Shakil Afridi out of trouble?*

Since Osama bin Laden met his demise in the garrison town of Abbottabad last May, Pakistani officials say they haven't found anyone who helped him hide out for most of a decade in their backyard. But our supposed allies have spared no effort to hunt down the people who helped the U.S. find the al Qaeda mastermind.

Soon after the successful American raid, the Pakistani army picked up locals suspected of supplying fuel to SEAL Team Six's helicopters and firing flares to guide them to the bin Laden compound. Their biggest catch was Shakil Afridi, who on Wednesday was convicted of treason in Pakistan and sentenced to 33 years in prison.

His case, as Senators John McCain and Carl Levin noted, is "shocking and outrageous." Dr. Afridi helped the U.S. track down bin Laden by running a hepatitis B vaccination program

in the area around Abbottabad. He collected DNA that the CIA hoped to use to verify bin Laden's presence in the city. Dr. Afridi never got samples from any of bin Laden's family members, but he did gain access to the terrorist's compound. U.S. officials say Dr. Afridi didn't know who the U.S. was looking for.

Part of the mess-up here is that the U.S. failed to get Dr. Afridi out of Pakistan before or soon after the raid. During the Cold War, the CIA tried to get any endangered operative behind the Iron Curtain out of the country. Dr. Afridi's identity was leaked to the press and he ended up in a military prison.

The Obama Administration says the leak came from the Pakistanis, but this is still woeful spycraft by the U.S. and a deterrent to those who might want to help America in the future. Congress should ask how it happened.

The Pakistanis are supposed to be America's partners in the war against al Qaeda, pocketing \$1 billion a year in aid. But Pakistan also provides safe haven to the Taliban and other Islamist terrorist groups. The Senate on Thursday symbolically cut \$33 million from Pakistan's aid budget next year—\$1 million for each year of Dr. Afridi's sentence. More cuts are coming if something doesn't change in Pakistan.

America's larger strategic goals in South Asia have justified engagement with a difficult partner in Islamabad, but Pakistan would be foolish to take America's support and patience for granted. The U.S. has other options in the region. With very few friends, Pakistan does not.

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New York Times  
May 25, 2012  
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#### **47. Once More On The Law Of The Sea**

There are few things the environmental community and the oil and gas industry agree on. But here is one: the need for the United States to join the Law of the Sea Convention, a worthy global agreement that the Senate has stubbornly refused to ratify for nearly 30 years.

Senator John Kerry, the chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, is determined to try once again to win approval. The treaty has been in force since 1994, but the United States cannot join in its deliberations.

The treaty is as sensible a document as one can imagine. Written under United Nations auspices in 1982, and since ratified by 162 countries and the European Union, it gives each nation control over its coastal waters — a 200-mile "exclusive economic zone" — and then sets up rules governing everything from navigation to deep-sea mining.

Yet over the years, a small group of cranky right-wingers and xenophobic activists have managed to bully Senate leaders into inaction. They claim that the treaty somehow infringes national sovereignty by agreeing to negotiated rules on shipping, environmental protection and mining — in international waters.

On Wednesday, in the first of a series of committee hearings designed to rally support, Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton, Defense Secretary Leon Panetta and Gen. Martin Dempsey, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, all pressed the case for ratification.

Mrs. Clinton made the economic case, one also made by petroleum and mining interests. By refusing to ratify the treaty, she said, the United

States will not have a seat at the table when the time comes to negotiate claims to the vast oil and gas resources that are believed to lie in Arctic waters outside each nation's exclusive economic zone — deposits that are becoming more accessible as the earth warms and the ice melts.

Mr. Panetta and General Dempsey emphasized the security benefits, arguing that the treaty provides a mechanism for resolving disputes over strategically important waterways like the Strait of Hormuz. "Frankly," Mr. Panetta said, "I don't think this is a close call." It really never has been.

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Pittsburgh Post-Gazette  
May 25, 2012

#### **48. Sea Sick**

*GOP senators should back the oceans treaty*

Some senators and the administration of President Barack Obama are making a strong new push to bring the United States in line with most of the world in signing and ratifying the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.

Negotiated in 1982 and signed by 161 states and the European Union, the pact governs relations between nations in oceans, seas and other waterways beyond their national boundaries and territorial limits. The United States and 15 other countries, including Israel, Kyrgyzstan and Venezuela, have not signed or ratified it.

It has been put before the U.S. Senate numerous times over the past 30 years with support from both Republican and Democratic presidents. Each time, however, it has been blocked from signature and ratification by a group of conservative senators from states including Idaho,



Oklahoma, Tennessee, Texas and Utah, who contend that the United States would be giving up some of its sovereignty by bowing to this international accord.

The argument in favor of participation is the classic one of the United States needing to have a voice and a role in agreements that maintain orderly relations among states. The part of the Earth's surface covered by waters included in the Law of the Sea Convention is roughly two-thirds.

Secretary of Defense Leon E. Panetta, Secretary of State Hillary R. Clinton, and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. Martin E. Dempsey argued before the Senate Wednesday that America's national strategic interests continue to be adversely affected by the absence of U.S. participation in Law of the Sea deliberations.

Perhaps the most pressing and most challenging issue in which the U.S. government is hampered in defending its political, economic and commercial interests by the lack of participation in Law of the Sea deliberations is the jurisdiction and use of the Arctic Ocean. The melting of the arctic ice makes access to its mineral resources, including oil and gas, and passage through it an area of intense U.S. interest.

Other sensitive ocean areas include the South China Sea, where the United States is involved in arm-wrestling with the Chinese, and the Straits of Hormuz, which is critical to the passage of oil out of the Middle East.

It's no wonder that businesses and trade groups, including the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, support the pact. Top military leaders say being part of the accord will strengthen the nation's naval

power and give it greater navigational rights.

Yet it is the nature of today's Senate that a few narrow-thinking, ideological lawmakers can block passage of things that are so critical to the country as a whole. The ratification of the Law of the Sea should not continue to be one of these.

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New York Times  
May 25, 2012  
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#### **49. A Court Covers Up**

The Obama administration has added to its string of victories in a tawdry pursuit--making overly expansive claims of secrecy and executive power to deny full disclosure of torture and other abuses of prisoners committed during the George W. Bush administration.

A three-judge panel of the United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit in New York has upheld the administration's claim that cables describing the Central Intelligence Agency's use of waterboarding and a photograph of a "high value" detainee, Abu Zubaydah, taken during the time he was subjected to repeated waterboarding, are exempt from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act, or FOIA.

The new decision came as part of a long-running lawsuit brought by the American Civil Liberties Union and other rights groups that are seeking records related to detainee mistreatment. Written by Judge Richard Wesley, the decision is too accepting of the government's weak claim that revealing material redacted from the cables, along with the photo, would harm national security.

The court found that FOIA's exemption for "intelligence methods" applied even though the brutal conduct

illuminated by these records is considered illegal by President Obama and a host of laws and treaties and is not covered by the C.I.A.'s charter. The court also said the C.I.A. was justified in withholding two passages in Justice Department memos that appear to concern the origins of the Bush torture program.

The C.I.A. is, generally, entitled to shield legitimate intelligence sources and methods. But the public's interest in disclosure in this case was especially strong. And, as the A.C.L.U. argued, unlawful waterboarding is not properly an intelligence method within the scope of the FOIA disclosure exemptions. The government argued, and the judges agreed, that the photo of Mr. Zubaydah would reveal the detainee's condition after torture. That is a compelling argument for its release.

The judges should have given the government's overwrought claims of national security and secrecy special scrutiny, not extreme deference.

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Washington Post  
May 25, 2012  
Pg. 2

#### **50. Corrections**

A May 24 A-section article about a State Department campaign to counter al-Qaeda propaganda incorrectly reported that cyber experts had hacked into the group's sites to replace its rhetoric with information about Yemeni civilians killed in terrorist strikes. U.S. officials did post such information, mimicking the format used by the group, but they did so on publicly accessible forums. They did not gain unauthorized access to sites, and they did not alter content already on the sites.

**Editor's Note:** The article referred to by Karen DeYoung and Ellen Nakashima appeared

in the *Current News Early Bird*, May 24, 2012.