

# CURRENT NEWS

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## EARLY BIRD

June 14, 2012

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### PANETTA/DEMPSEY TESTIMONY

1. **Pakistan's Border Closure Hits U.S. Hard**  
(*Washington Post*)....Karen DeYoung  
Pakistan's seven-month-long refusal to allow U.S. and NATO supplies to cross its territory into Afghanistan is costing the United States an additional \$100 million a month to fund alternative routes, Defense Secretary Leon E. Panetta said Wednesday.
2. **Pakistan: Supply Detour Costs \$100 Million A Month**  
(*New York Times*)....Thom Shanker  
Pakistan's closing of NATO's ground supply routes to Afghanistan has added about \$100 million a month to the costs of the Afghan war, Defense Secretary Leon E. Panetta told Congress on Wednesday.
3. **Panetta: 'Huge Gaps' In Military's Review Of Mental Health Cases**  
(*McClatchy Newspapers (mcclatchydc.com)*)....Farah Mohamed, McClatchy Newspapers  
Defense Secretary Leon Panetta told a Senate panel on Wednesday that he is unsatisfied with the Pentagon's current approach to combating military suicides and that the Defense Department will review its procedures for handling mental health cases.
4. **Pentagon Defends Itself**  
(*Los Angeles Times*)....Ken Dilanian  
Disputing charges by some Republican lawmakers, Defense Secretary Leon E. Panetta denied Wednesday that any classified information or material was given to the Hollywood producers of a planned film about the Navy SEAL raid that killed Osama bin Laden in Pakistan last year.

### AFRICA

5. **Military Expands Spying In Africa**  
(*Washington Post*)....Craig Whitlock  
The U.S. military is expanding its secret intelligence operations across Africa, establishing a network of small air bases to spy on terrorist hideouts from the fringes of the Sahara to jungle terrain along the equator, according to documents and people involved in the project.

### MIDEAST

6. **Copters In Syria May Not Be New, U.S. Officials Say**  
(*New York Times*)....Eric Schmitt, Mark Landler and Andrew E. Kramer

When Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton accused Russia on Tuesday of shipping attack helicopters to Syria that would “escalate the conflict quite dramatically,” it was the Obama administration’s sharpest criticism yet of Russia’s support for the Syrian government.

7. **U.S. Bolsters Ties To Fighters In Syria**

(*Wall Street Journal*)....Jay Solomon and Nour Malas

U.S. intelligence operatives and diplomats have stepped up their contacts with Syrian rebels in part to help organize their burgeoning military operations against President Bashar al-Assad's forces, according to senior U.S. officials.

8. **U.N. Kept Out Of A Town That Syria Says It ‘Cleansed’**

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

Syria announced on Wednesday that the village of Al Heffa in its Mediterranean hinterland, which United Nations monitors had been physically blocked from visiting to check on fears of a massacre there, had been “cleansed” of armed terrorist gangs, the government’s blanket term for the opposition.

9. **Tehran Hardens Nuclear Stance**

(*Wall Street Journal*)....Farnaz Fassihi

Iran's chief nuclear negotiator said Iran wouldn't compromise on its right to enrich uranium, casting doubts on whether the country could reach a deal during talks with international powers in Moscow this month.

10. **Bomb Attacks Around Iraq Target Shiites, Killing Dozens**

(*New York Times*)....Tim Arango

In the deadliest day in Iraq since the withdrawal of the United States military in December, a series of explosions that mostly targeted Shiite Muslims amounted to an emphatic demonstration of the still-potent capabilities of the Sunni insurgency and a reminder of the instability left behind by American forces.

11. **Offensive Against Militants Builds**

(*Los Angeles Times*)....Unattributed

Airstrikes and clashes intensified in southern Yemen as army troops followed major victories with more pressure on Al Qaeda militants holding small towns, according to tribal and military officials.

## PAKISTAN

12. **US Drone Strike Kills 3 In Pakistan, Officials Say**

(*Yahoo.com*)....Rasool Dawar, Associated Press

Pakistani intelligence officials say a U.S. drone strike has killed three suspected militants in an attack on a building in a town close to the Afghan border.

## AFGHANISTAN

13. **In The Afghan War, A Little Robot Can Be A Soldier's Best Friend**

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

The 310 SUGV is a distant cousin of the Roomba, the robotic vacuum cleaner currently being promoted as a Father's Day gift. In Afghanistan, the Marines call him the Devil Pup. And when a Devil Pup gets sick, Marines can send the little bot to the Joint Robotics Repair Detachment—Afghanistan, where a team of military and civilian technicians practice the healing arts on robots.

14. **Troop-Supply Bid Faces Scrutiny**

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

The U.S. military is preparing to award its last big contract for feeding troops in Afghanistan, a decision made more complicated by a dispute with the current supplier and by Pakistan's closure of a border crossing.

15. **War's Toll Is Rising For Children In Afghanistan, United Nations Reports**

(*Los Angeles Times*)....Laura King

Children have been increasingly bearing the brunt of the war in Afghanistan, a new United Nations report says, detailing an array of hazards that includes recruitment of child bombers, school attacks and sexual abuse of minors in government custody.

16. **Milestones In Afghanistan**

(CBS)....David Martin

The war in Afghanistan has just passed two milestones – it has lasted more than 3,900 days and it has cost more than 2,000 American lives. But there is one statistic that we can't give you: the number of lives changed by each of those deaths. There are too many to count, as David Martin found.

17. **Afghan Neighbors Try To Tackle Issues Together**

(Yahoo.com)....Deb Riechmann, Associated Press

Afghanistan's neighbors and regional heavyweights met in Kabul on Thursday to do something they rarely do -- try to tackle common threats and problems together.

## MILITARY

18. **Military Suicides More Common**

(USA Today)....Gregg Zoroya

The most common way that U.S. servicemembers die outside of combat is by their own hand, according to an analysis released by the Pentagon on Wednesday.

## CONGRESS

19. **G.O.P. Senators Oppose Choice For Iraq Envoy**

(New York Times)....Rebecca Berg

Opposition mounted in the Senate on Wednesday to the nomination of Brett McGurk as the next ambassador to Iraq, as seven Republican senators recommended that his name be withdrawn from consideration. The White House expressed support for its embattled nominee.

20. **The Pentagon's Biggest Threat In Years? Budget Cuts**

(NPR)....Larry Abramson

The Pentagon says it's trying to fend off one of the biggest threats to national security in decades - budget cuts. As NPR's Larry Abramson reports, Pentagon officials are warning members of Congress to find a way out of a budget stalemate or risk undercutting the effectiveness of the nation's military.

## NAVY

21. **Navy Sails To Greener Future**

(Wall Street Journal)....Keith Johnson

Next month, in naval exercises off the coast of Hawaii, five U.S. warships will make history: They will be the first to use biofuels to power their huge turbines, as well as the jet planes screaming off a carrier's deck and helicopters hovering overhead.

22. **Navy Alters Evaluation Of Prospective Officers**

(Stars and Stripes)....Erik Slavin

The Navy is standardizing the way it evaluates prospective commanding officers, to include assessments from peers and subordinates for mid-level ship officers, according to an order issued earlier this month by Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Jonathan Greenert.

## AIR FORCE

23. **F-22's Balky Vests Add Clue In Mystery Of Ailing Pilots**

(Bloomberg.com)....David Lerman and Tony Capaccio, Bloomberg News

A potentially faulty pressure vest is the latest clue in a yearlong mystery over why Air Force pilots flying Lockheed Martin Corp.'s F-22 Raptor keep getting dizzy and disoriented.

24. **CV-22 Osprey Crashes Near Navarre, Five Airmen Injured**

(*Northwest Florida Daily News*)....Lauren Sage Reinlie

An Air Force CV-22 Osprey assigned to the 1st Special Operations Wing crashed during a routine training mission Wednesday evening.

## RUSSIA

25. **Syria Crisis And Putin's Return Chill U.S. Ties With Russia**

(*New York Times*)....Peter Baker

Sitting beside President Obama this spring, the president of Russia gushed that "these were perhaps the best three years of relations between Russia and the United States over the last decade." Two and a half months later, those halcyon days of friendship look like a distant memory.

26. **Allegations Of Combat Helicopter Sales To Syrian Regime Roil U.S.-Russian Ties**

(*Washington Post*)....Joby Warrick and Will Englund

The United States and Russia traded fresh barbs Wednesday over allegations of arming Syria's combatants, further straining relations at a time when the two powers are struggling to preserve unity in confronting Iran over its nuclear ambitions.

27. **U.S. Attacks Russia Over Copters For Syria, But Pentagon Buys Them, Too**

(*McClatchy Newspapers (mcclatchydc.com)*)....Maria Recio, McClatchy Newspapers

Sen. John Cornyn, R-Texas, is in the middle of a high-stakes diplomatic chess match over a Russian government-owned arms agent that supplies the U.S.-backed army in Afghanistan as well as President Bashar Assad's regime in Syria, which the United Nations says is embroiled in a civil war against anti-government rebels.

## ASIA/PACIFIC

28. **US, S. Korea To Discuss N. Korea At High-Level Meeting**

(*Yahoo.com*)....Associated Press

The top diplomats and defense chiefs of the U.S. and South Korea will discuss Thursday how to strengthen their alliance and cope with the threat posed by North Korea.

29. **Marines To Boost Ranks On Okinawa**

(*Stars and Stripes (Japan)*)....Travis J. Tritten and Chiyomi Sumida

The United States plans to add thousands of Marines to bases on Okinawa, swelling the ranks here to levels not seen since the end of the Cold War, even as Washington works with Japan on a new agreement to reduce the controversial American military presence on the island, the Department of Defense has confirmed.

30. **India Wants Defence Tech Transfer, Co-Production With US**

(*Press Trust of India*)....Lalit K Jha

India has emphasized on defence technology transfer, co-development and co-production with the US in the expanding defence ties between the two countries.

31. **No Increase In U.S. Troops At Base In Kyrgyzstan: New Commander**

(*Xinhua News Agency*)....Xinhua

The number of American troops at the U.S. military transit center at Manas International Airport in Kyrgyzstan will not increase, the center's new commander said.

## DETAINEES

32. **Decision On Court Wardrobe Challenged**

(*Miami Herald*)....Carol Rosenberg

Accused 9/11 mastermind Khalid Sheik Mohammed wanted to wear paramilitary-style woodland-patterned camouflage clothing to court.

## LEGAL AFFAIRS

### 33. Government Seeks Dismissal Of Ex-Airman's Lawsuit Over Botched Surgery

(Fort Worth Star-Telegram)....Chris Vaughn

The U.S. government has asked a federal judge in Fort Worth to dismiss a lawsuit filed this spring on behalf of a retired Air Force airman who had both legs amputated when a routine surgical procedure went horribly wrong in a military hospital in California three years ago.

## TBI

### 34. NFL, Military Partner On Concussions

(Washington Post)....Rick Maese

In a conference room on the third floor of the Pentagon, introductions were made and the conversation quickly turned to concussions. Everyone seated at the long table had impressive credentials from either the battlefield or the football field.

## COMMENTARY

### 35. How Drones Help Al Qaeda

(New York Times)....Ibrahim Mothana

"DEAR OBAMA, when a U.S. drone missile kills a child in Yemen, the father will go to war with you, guaranteed. Nothing to do with Al Qaeda," a Yemeni lawyer warned on Twitter last month. President Obama should keep this message in mind before ordering more drone strikes like Wednesday's, which local officials say killed 27 people, or the May 15 strike that killed at least eight Yemeni civilians.

### 36. Let's Admit It: The US Is At War In Yemen, Too

(Danger Room (Wired.com))....Noah Shachtman and Spencer Ackerman

...For all the handwringing about the undeclared, drone-led war in Pakistan, it's quietly been eclipsed. Yemen is the real center of the America's shadow wars in 2012.

### 37. My Real 'Crime' Against Pakistan

(Washington Post)....Husain Haqqani

I am saddened but not surprised that a Pakistani judicial inquiry commission has accused me of being disloyal while serving as my country's ambassador to the United States. The tide of anti-Americanism has been rising in Pakistan for almost a decade. An overwhelming majority of Pakistanis consider the United States an enemy, notwithstanding the nominal alliance that has existed between our countries for six decades. Americans, frustrated by what they see as Pakistani intransigence in fighting terrorism in Afghanistan, are becoming less willing to accept Pakistani demands even though Pakistan has suffered heavily at the hands of terrorists.

### 38. The Battle For The Military's Future

(Washington Post)....Walter Pincus

"The face of war, the face of how we do business, is changing."

### 39. The Court Retreats On Habeas

(New York Times)....Editorial

When the Supreme Court ruled in 2008 that Congress could not strip federal courts of jurisdiction to hear habeas corpus petitions from non-American prisoners at Guantánamo Bay, the 5-to-4 majority opinion written by Justice Anthony Kennedy appeared to be a landmark victory for the rights of detainees. "The laws and Constitution are designed to survive, and remain in force, in extraordinary times," Justice Kennedy wrote in *Boumediene v. Bush*, and "the framers decided that habeas corpus, a right of first importance," must be part of the American legal framework.

40. **Criminalizing Leaks**

(*Washington Post*)....Editorial

Here's a story that we've heard before: The White House is suspected of leaking sensitive national security information to reporters for nakedly political reasons. The Justice Department has opened a criminal investigation, but some in Congress aren't satisfied. They demand that an independent counsel be empowered to follow the evidence wherever it leads.

41. **Syria's Cease-Fire Of The Grave**

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

Syria continues to sink deeper into a civil war that we were told would break out if the U.S. and its allies emintervened/em to oust Bashar Assad. So the West has stayed out, but the killings have multiplied to include at least four massacres in two weeks, and now Russia is escalating its military aid to the Assad regime to include attack helicopters. Even "leading from behind" worked better than this.

42. **Combat Readiness Trumps Green Energy In Texas**

(*Fort Worth Star-Telegram*)....Editorial

Tarrant County has been a good home for the military since Camp Worth was settled on June 6, 1849. And the military has been a good neighbor to the county through wartime and peacetime.

43. **Military Suicides -- (Letter)**

(*New York Times*)....Christopher Kosseff

While the Defense Department has done an extraordinary job of bolstering mental health services with creative strategies and wraparound support for our armed forces, the tragedy of military suicides continues unabated, proving how difficult these challenges are.

Washington Post  
June 14, 2012  
Pg. 9

## 1. Pakistan's Border Closure Hits U.S. Hard

*Alternative supply lines cost \$100 million to fund monthly, Panetta says*

By Karen DeYoung

Pakistan's seven-month-long refusal to allow U.S. and NATO supplies to cross its territory into Afghanistan is costing the United States an additional \$100 million a month to fund alternative routes, Defense Secretary Leon E. Panetta said Wednesday.

Panetta's testimony to a Senate appropriations panel was the first time the Obama administration has put a dollar figure on the extra amount. Pakistan closed its border to NATO transit in November, after a U.S. cross-border air assault inadvertently killed 24 Pakistani soldiers.

Defense Department and Pakistani negotiators have agreed on a new payment structure for the transit, but Pakistan has also demanded an apology for the troop deaths. The Obama administration has expressed "regret" and offered condolences, but it has said that an apology is unnecessary for an incident in which Pentagon investigators found fault on both sides.

The apology issue has become a political lightning rod in Pakistan, where anti-American sentiment runs high. In the United States, Congress and the administration have grown increasingly irate over what is seen as Pakistani intransigence. During a visit to the region last weekend, Panetta said the United States was "reaching the limits of ... patience" with Pakistan.

Asked by lawmakers whether he would recommend stopping U.S. aid to Pakistan, Panetta said, "I'd be very

careful about, you know, just shutting it down." Instead, he said without elaboration that he would place conditions on aid based on "what we expect them to do." The administration requested about \$3.5 billion in military and economic assistance for Pakistan for fiscal 2013.

Until the border closure, Pakistan was the main transit route for the vast bulk of U.S. and NATO supplies for the Afghanistan war, with goods arriving by ship at the Karachi port and trucked in cargo containers across the border. Most of the goods now enter Afghanistan from the north, via Russia and Central Asia, at significantly higher expense. The costs are expected to mount when U.S. troop withdrawals are stepped up later this year.

New York Times  
June 14, 2012

## 2. Pakistan: Supply Detour Costs \$100 Million A Month

By Thom Shanker

Pakistan's closing of NATO's ground supply routes to Afghanistan has added about \$100 million a month to the costs of the Afghan war, Defense Secretary Leon E. Panetta told Congress on Wednesday. Mr. Panetta said the added expenses were a result of using the longer northern route to supply the military and carry out the American drawdown in Afghanistan. Pakistan closed NATO's supply routes across its border in November after an American airstrike mistakenly killed 24 Pakistani soldiers at a frontier outpost. Talks with Pakistan to reopen the route have stalled. Mr. Panetta also said he would advise Congress on recommendations to deal with Pakistan in the future, including on the question of

American financial assistance to Islamabad.

McClatchy Newspapers  
(mcclatchydc.com)

June 13, 2012

## 3. Panetta: 'Huge Gaps' In Military's Review Of Mental Health Cases

By Farah Mohamed,  
McClatchy Newspapers

WASHINGTON

Defense Secretary Leon Panetta told a Senate panel on Wednesday that he is unsatisfied with the Pentagon's current approach to combating military suicides and that the Defense Department will review its procedures for handling mental health cases.

Under questioning by Sen. Patty Murray, D-Wash., Panetta said that there are "still huge gaps" in the way a mental health diagnosis is determined.

"We're doing everything we can to try to build a better system," Panetta said at a Senate Appropriations defense subcommittee hearing. "But there are still huge gaps in terms of the differences in terms of how they approach these cases and how they diagnose the cases and how they deal with them — and frankly, that's a whole area we have to do much better on."

Murray's questioning came one week after the Pentagon announced that 154 active duty military suicides have occurred this year, meaning that more soldiers have died from suicide this year than in combat.

The issue is of particular concern to Murray, who also chairs the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee, due to a series of misdiagnoses that occurred at the Madigan Army Medical Center in her home state. More than 100 soldiers originally diagnosed at the center have had their diagnoses for post-traumatic

stress disorder reversed. Most said they originally were told they didn't have PTSD.

Diagnosis of a condition like PTSD is important to soldiers and veterans because of the major impact it has on the disability benefits they can receive over their lifetimes.

Some patients in Madigan have complained that their diagnoses were lessened or altered in an effort to save money and meet Army cutbacks, Murray said. Others, according to Murray, were accused of exaggerating their conditions and subsequently denied proper medical care.

"You can't imagine what it's like to talk to a soldier who was told he had PTSD," said Murray. "His family was working with him, and then when he went to the disability evaluation system, he was told he was a liar or malingering. He was taken out of it and he went out in the civilian world not being treated. That's a horrendous offense."

Wednesday's hearing addressed a range of other Pentagon issues, including the defense strategy review for fiscal year 2013 and cyberspace threats.

Panetta discussed the implications of automatic defense cuts and across-the-board reductions, known as sequestration, that would go into effect in January if Congress does not pass a plan to cut spending.

Sequestration would mean fewer troops and weapons, said Army Gen. Martin Dempsey, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, who testified with Panetta. He worried that the measure could decrease the country's overall power and increase its vulnerability in future conflict.

During Murray's questioning on the disability system, Panetta suggested he

meet with VA Secretary Eric Shinseki to discuss improvements.

"I totally appreciate your saying that to me today, but sitting down and talking with Secretary Shinseki is something we've been hearing for a long time," Murray said. "We need some recommendations and we need to move forward and we need it to be a top priority out of the Pentagon as we transition now out of Afghanistan."

Panetta admitted the system was more "bureaucratic" than he would have liked, reiterating that the Pentagon had been working to review behavioral and mental health diagnoses since 2001.

"I share all of your frustrations," Panetta said to Murray. "My job is to make sure that we don't come here with more excuses and that we come here with action."

Los Angeles Times  
June 14, 2012  
Pg. D2

#### 4. Pentagon Defends Itself

Disputing charges by some Republican lawmakers, Defense Secretary Leon E. Panetta denied Wednesday that any classified information or material was given to the Hollywood producers of a planned film about the Navy SEAL raid that killed Osama bin Laden in Pakistan last year.

Panetta, who previously headed the CIA, told the defense subcommittee of the Senate Appropriations Committee that director Kathryn Bigelow and screenwriter Mark Boal were given the same kind of access as other Americans who seek help from the Pentagon.

"I can assure you, I've asked the question," Panetta said. "In this instance, no one, nobody released

any information that was unauthorized."

Rep. Peter T. King (R-N.Y.) and some others have alleged that the Obama administration jeopardized national security by cooperating too closely with Bigelow and Boal, who won Academy Awards for their 2008 film, "The Hurt Locker." Their film on the Bin Laden raid is scheduled to be released after the November election.

-- Ken Dilanian

Washington Post  
June 14, 2012  
Pg. 1

#### 5. Military Expands Spying In Africa

*U.S. sets up network of small air bases*

By Craig Whitlock

OUAGADOUGOU, Burkina Faso — The U.S. military is expanding its secret intelligence operations across Africa, establishing a network of small air bases to spy on terrorist hideouts from the fringes of the Sahara to jungle terrain along the equator, according to documents and people involved in the project.

At the heart of the surveillance operations are small, unarmed turboprop aircraft disguised as private planes. Equipped with hidden sensors that can record full-motion video, track infrared heat patterns, and vacuum up radio and cellphone signals, the planes refuel on isolated airstrips favored by African bush pilots, extending their effective flight range by thousands of miles.

About a dozen air bases have been established in Africa since 2007, according to a former senior U.S. commander involved in setting up the network. Most are small operations run out of secluded

hangars at African military bases or civilian airports.

The nature and extent of the missions, as well as many of the bases being used, have not been previously reported but are partially documented in public Defense Department contracts. The operations have intensified in recent months, part of a growing shadow war against al-Qaeda affiliates and other militant groups. The surveillance is overseen by U.S. Special Operations forces but relies heavily on private military contractors and support from African troops.

The surveillance underscores how Special Operations forces, which have played an outsize role in the Obama administration's national security strategy, are working clandestinely all over the globe, not just in war zones. The lightly equipped commando units train foreign security forces and perform aid missions, but they also include teams dedicated to tracking and killing terrorism suspects.

The establishment of the Africa missions also highlights the ways in which Special Operations forces are blurring the lines that govern the secret world of intelligence, moving aggressively into spheres once reserved for the CIA. The CIA has expanded its counterterrorism and intelligence-gathering operations in Africa, but its manpower and resources pale in comparison with those of the military.

U.S. officials said the African surveillance operations are necessary to track terrorist groups that have taken root in failed states on the continent and threaten to destabilize neighboring countries.

#### A hub for secret network

A key hub of the U.S. spying network can be found in Ouagadougou (WAH-gah-

DOO-goo), the flat, sunbaked capital of Burkina Faso, one of the most impoverished countries in Africa.

Under a classified surveillance program code-named Creek Sand, dozens of U.S. personnel and contractors have come to Ouagadougou in recent years to establish a small air base on the military side of the international airport.

The unarmed U.S. spy planes fly hundreds of miles north to Mali, Mauritania and the Sahara, where they search for fighters from al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb, a regional network that kidnaps Westerners for ransom.

The surveillance flights have taken on added importance in the turbulent aftermath of a March coup in Mali, which has enabled al-Qaeda sympathizers to declare an independent Islamist state in the northern half of the country.

Elsewhere, commanders have said they are increasingly worried about the spread of Boko Haram, an Islamist group in Nigeria blamed for a rash of bombings there. U.S. forces are orchestrating a regional intervention in Somalia to target al-Shabab, another al-Qaeda affiliate. In Central Africa, about 100 American Special Operations troops are helping to coordinate the hunt for Joseph Kony, the Ugandan leader of a brutal guerrilla group known as the Lord's Resistance Army.

The results of the American surveillance missions are shrouded in secrecy. Although the U.S. military has launched airstrikes and raids in Somalia, commanders said that in other places, they generally limit their involvement to sharing intelligence with allied African forces so they can attack terrorist camps on their own territory.

The creeping U.S. military involvement in long-simmering

African conflicts, however, carries risks. Some State Department officials have expressed reservations about the militarization of U.S. foreign policy on the continent. They have argued that most terrorist cells in Africa are pursuing local aims, not global ones, and do not present a direct threat to the United States.

The potential for creating a popular backlash can be seen across the Red Sea, where an escalating campaign of U.S. drone strikes in Yemen is angering tribesmen and generating sympathy for an al-Qaeda franchise there.

In a response to written questions from The Washington Post, the U.S. Africa Command said that it would not comment on “specific operational details.”

“We do, however, work closely with our African partners to facilitate access, when required, to conduct missions or operations that support and further our mutual security goals,” the command said.

Surveillance and intelligence-gathering operations, it added, are “simply a tool we employ to enable host nation militaries to better understand the threat picture.”

#### **Uncovering the details**

The U.S. military has largely kept details of its spy flights in Africa secret. The Post pieced together descriptions of the surveillance network by examining references to it in unclassified military reports, U.S. government contracting documents and diplomatic cables released by WikiLeaks, the anti-secrecy group.

Further details were provided by interviews with American and African officials, as well as military contractors.

In addition to Burkina Faso, U.S. surveillance planes have operated periodically out

of nearby Mauritania. In Central Africa, the main hub is in Uganda, though there are plans to open a base in South Sudan. In East Africa, U.S. aircraft fly out of bases in Ethiopia, Djibouti, Kenya and the Indian Ocean archipelago of the Seychelles.

Army Gen. Carter F. Ham, the head of U.S. Africa Command, which is responsible for military operations on the continent, hinted at the importance and extent of the air bases while testifying before Congress in March. Without divulging locations, he made clear that, in Africa, he wanted to expand “ISR,” the military’s acronym for intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance.

“Without operating locations on the continent, ISR capabilities would be curtailed, potentially endangering U.S. security,” Ham said in a statement submitted to the House Armed Services Committee. “Given the vast geographic space and diversity in threats, the command requires increased ISR assets to adequately address the security challenges on the continent.”

Some of the U.S. air bases, including ones in Djibouti, Ethiopia and the Seychelles, fly Predator and Reaper drones, the original and upgraded models, respectively, of the remotely piloted aircraft that the Obama administration has used to kill al-Qaeda leaders in Pakistan and Yemen.

“We don’t have remotely piloted aircraft in many places other than East Africa, but we could,” said a senior U.S. military official, who spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss intelligence matters. “If there was a need to do so and those assets were available, I’m certain we could get the access and the overflight [permission] that is necessary to do that.”

#### **Common aircraft**

Most of the spy flights in Africa, however, take off the old-fashioned way — with pilots in the cockpit. The conventional aircraft hold two big advantages over drones: They are cheaper to operate and far less likely to draw attention because they are so similar to the planes used throughout Africa.

The bulk of the U.S. surveillance fleet is composed of single-engine Pilatus PC-12s, small passenger and cargo utility planes manufactured in Switzerland. The aircraft are not equipped with weapons. They often do not bear military markings or government insignia.

The Pentagon began acquiring the planes in 2005 to fly commandos into territory where the military wanted to maintain a clandestine presence. The Air Force variant of the aircraft is known as the U-28A. The Air Force Special Operations Command has about 21 of the planes in its inventory.

In February, a U-28A crashed as it was returning to Camp Lemonnier in Djibouti, the only permanent U.S. military base in Africa. Four airmen from the Air Force Special Operations Command were killed. It was the first reported fatal incident involving a U-28A since the military began deploying the aircraft six years ago.

Air Force officials said that the crash was an accident and that they are investigating the cause. Military officials declined to answer questions about the flight’s mission.

Because of its strategic location on the Horn of Africa, Camp Lemonnier is a hub for spy flights in the region. It is about 500 miles from southern Somalia, an area largely controlled by the al-Shabab militia. Lemonnier is

even closer — less than 100 miles — to Yemen, where another al-Qaeda franchise has expanded its influence and plotted attacks against the United States.

Elsewhere in Africa, the U.S. military is relying on private contractors to provide and operate PC-12 spy planes in the search for Kony, the fugitive leader of the Lord’s Resistance Army, a group known for mutilating victims, committing mass rape and enslaving children as soldiers.

Ham, the Africa Command chief, said in his testimony to Congress in March that he was seeking to establish a base for surveillance flights in Nzara, South Sudan. Although that would bolster the hunt for Kony, who is wanted by the International Criminal Court, it would also enable the U.S. military to keep an eye on the worsening conflict between Sudan and South Sudan. The two countries fought a civil war for more than two decades and are on the verge of war again, in part over potentially rich oil deposits valued by foreign investors.

Other aviation projects are in the offing. An engineering battalion of Navy Seabees has been assigned to complete a \$10 million runway upgrade this summer at the Manda Bay Naval Base, a Kenyan military installation on the Indian Ocean. An Africa Command spokeswoman said the runway extension is necessary so American C-130 troop transport flights can land at night and during bad weather.

About 120 U.S. military personnel and contractors are stationed at Manda Bay, which Navy SEALs and other commandos have used as a base from which to conduct raids against Somali pirates and al-Shabab fighters.

About 6,000 miles to the west, the Pentagon is spending \$8.1 million to upgrade a forward operating base and airstrip in Mauritania, on the western edge of the Sahara. The base is near the border with strife-torn Mali.

The Defense Department also set aside \$22.6 million in July to buy a Pilatus PC-6 aircraft and another turboprop plane so U.S.-trained Mauritanian security forces can conduct rudimentary surveillance operations, according to documents submitted to Congress.

#### **Crowding the embassy**

The U.S. military began building its presence in Burkina Faso in 2007, when it signed a deal that enabled the Pentagon to establish a Joint Special Operations Air Detachment in Ouagadougou. At the time, the U.S. military said the arrangement would support "medical evacuation and logistics requirements" but provided no other details.

By the end of 2009, about 65 U.S. military personnel and contractors were working in Burkina Faso, more than in all but three other African countries, according to a U.S. Embassy cable from Ouagadougou. In the cable, diplomats complained to the State Department that the onslaught of U.S. troops and support staff had "completely overwhelmed" the embassy.

In addition to Pilatus PC-12 flights for Creek Sand, the U.S. military personnel in Ouagadougou ran a regional intelligence "fusion cell" code-named Aztec Archer, according to the cable.

Burkina Faso, a predominantly Muslim country whose name means "the land of upright men," does not have a history of radicalism. U.S. military officials saw it as an attractive base because of its

strategic location bordering the Sahel, the arid region south of the Sahara where al-Qaeda's North African affiliate is active.

Unlike many other governments in the region, the one in Burkina Faso was relatively stable. The U.S. military operated Creek Sand spy flights from Nouakchott, Mauritania, until 2008, when a military coup forced Washington to suspend relations and end the surveillance, according to former U.S. officials and diplomatic cables.

In Ouagadougou, both sides have worked hard to keep the partnership quiet. In a July 2009 meeting, Yero Boly, the defense minister of Burkina Faso, told a U.S. Embassy official that he was pleased with the results. But he confessed he was nervous that the unmarked American planes might draw "undue attention" at the airport in the heart of the capital and suggested that they move to a more secluded hangar.

"According to Boly, the present location of the aircraft was in retrospect not an ideal choice in that it put the U.S. aircraft in a section of the airfield that already had too much traffic," according to a diplomatic cable summarizing the meeting. "He also commented that U.S. personnel were extremely discreet."

U.S. officials raised the possibility of basing the planes about 220 miles to the west, in the city of Bobo Dioulasso, according to the cable. Boly said that the Americans could use that airport on a "short term or emergency basis" but that a U.S. presence there "would likely draw greater attention."

In an interview with The Post, Djibril Bassole, the foreign minister of Burkina Faso, praised security relations between his country and the

United States, saying they were crucial to containing al-Qaeda forces in the region.

"We need to fight and protect our borders," he said. "Once they infiltrate your country, it's very, very difficult to get them out."

Bassole declined, however, to answer questions about the activities of U.S. Special Operations forces in his country.

"I cannot provide details, but it has been very, very helpful," he said. "This cooperation should be very, very discreet. We should not show to al-Qaeda that we are now working with the Americans."

Discretion is not always strictly observed. In interviews last month, residents of Ouagadougou said American service members and contractors stand out, even in plainclothes, and are appreciated for the steady business they bring to bars and a pizzeria in the city center.

In April 2010, one American, in particular, drew attention. A U.S. contractor who had been assigned to support the surveillance missions in Ouagadougou was flying home from Africa on leave when he announced that he had been "in Ouaga illegally" and was carrying dynamite in his boots and laptop.

As the contractor, Derek Stansberry, mumbled other incoherent stories about allegedly top-secret operations, he was grabbed by U.S. air marshals aboard the

Paris-to-Atlanta flight. No explosives were found, but the incident drew international attention.

Stansberry, who did not respond to a request for comment, was found not guilty by reason of temporary insanity; he said he was overstressed and

had overdosed on the sleep aid Ambien.

A photograph on his Facebook page around the time of the incident showed him posing in the cockpit of a Pilatus aircraft. The caption read: "Flying a PC-12 ain't that hard."

New York Times  
June 14, 2012

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### **6. Covert Ops In Syria May Not Be New, U.S. Officials Say**

By Eric Schmitt, Mark Landler  
and Andrew E. Kramer

WASHINGTON — When Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton accused Russia on Tuesday of shipping attack helicopters to Syria that would "escalate the conflict quite dramatically," it was the Obama administration's sharpest criticism yet of Russia's support for the Syrian government.

What Mrs. Clinton did not say, however, was whether the aircraft were new shipments or, as administration officials say is more likely, helicopters that Syria had sent to Russia a few months ago for routine repairs and refurbishing, and which were now about to be returned.

"She put a little spin on it to put the Russians in a difficult position," said one senior Defense Department official.

Mrs. Clinton's claim about the helicopters, administration officials said, is part of a calculated effort to raise the pressure on Russia to abandon President Bashar al-Assad, its main ally in the Middle East. Russia has so far stuck by Mr. Assad's government, worried that if he were ousted, Moscow would lose its influence in the region.

In response to Mrs. Clinton's allegations, the

Russian foreign minister, Sergey V. Lavrov, accused the United States of hypocrisy on Wednesday, saying it had supplied weapons that could be used against demonstrators in other countries in the region. Mr. Lavrov, during a visit to Iran, repeated Russia's claim that it is not supplying Damascus with any weapons that could be used in a civil war.

"We are not providing Syria or any other place with things which can be used in struggle with peaceful demonstrators, unlike the United States, which regularly supplies such equipment to this region," Mr. Lavrov said. He singled out a recent delivery to "one of the Persian Gulf states"—perhaps a reference to Bahrain. "But for some reason the Americans consider this completely normal."

Syria has long been a staunch Russian ally and is home to Russia's only naval base on the Mediterranean Sea. But American officials have warned the Russians that Mr. Assad's exit is inevitable, and that if Russia wants to preserve its influence in Syria, it needs to be part of the effort to arrange a political transition. If Russia is viewed as complicit in the Assad government's attack on its own people, these officials said, it would be shunned by any new Syrian government, as well as by the rest of the Arab world, which is increasingly appalled by the violence.

Mrs. Clinton underscored this point in remarks Wednesday after meeting with India's foreign minister: "Russia says it wants peace and stability restored. It says it has no particular love lost for Assad. And it also claims to have vital interests in the region and relationships that it wants to continue to keep. They put all of that at risk if they do not move more constructively right now."

Though Mrs. Clinton's remarks about the helicopters came in answer to a question at a session sponsored by the Brookings Institution, they were part of a lengthy discussion of the West's options in dealing with Syria and seemed anything but accidental.

Administration officials declined to give details about the helicopters, saying the information was classified. But White House and intelligence officials have backed up the substance of her comments. Some officials said that whether the helicopters were new or refurbished, they were equally deadly when turned against the civilian population.

"What Secretary Clinton said was a continuation of what we've been saying," the White House spokesman, Jay Carney, told reporters. "The situation in Syria is obviously terrible. Assad's brutality is unacceptable. He will go down in history as a tyrant who will be loathed by generations of Syrians who are the victims of his brutality."

Timing may have also driven Mrs. Clinton. In her remarks, she noted that the United Nations Security Council must decide by mid-July whether to extend the mandate for Kofi Annan's six-point peace plan, which included putting monitors on the ground to try to ensure the government and rebel fighters were abiding by the terms of a cease-fire. Mr. Annan is the special envoy for the United Nations and the Arab League.

"Certainly, if there is no discernible movement by then," Mrs. Clinton said, "it will be very difficult to extend a mission that is increasingly dangerous for the observers on the ground."

There have been scattered reports since April of the Syrian government's firing missiles

from Russian-made helicopters rather than just the machine guns used previously. A video of a helicopter shot near Aleppo in May shows the distinctive smoke of what would appear to be a missile, although the authenticity of such recordings is difficult to prove.

A single Russian state-owned arms monopoly, Rosoboronexport, handles all or nearly all formal weapons exports, including helicopters produced by a variety of enterprises in Russia. Rosoboronexport is also the sales agent handling the American-financed contract for Mi-17 helicopters for the Afghan military.

A company spokesman, Vyachislav Davidenko, said in a telephone interview Wednesday that Rosoboronexport is fulfilling its contracts to Syria because they do not violate United Nations sanctions. Russia has blocked any effort at the Security Council to impose sanctions against Syria.

The company, he said, has not adjusted its arms trading because of the violence. It is sending "no extraordinary supplies, not speeding up contracts, and sending no additional shipments." Asked if helicopters could be en route to Syria after undergoing repairs in Russia, Mr. Davidenko said "that seems to be the case" but said he could not verify it.

Other sources indicate that the Syrian arsenal included Russian helicopter gunships long before the outbreak of violence. The Armed Forces Review, for example, reported in an article published on June 6 that Syria has a total of 86 Mi-24 and Mi-25 helicopters. It also has dozens of older Mi-17 helicopters, which can be used as transport or attack aircraft, American military officials said.

One prominent independent Russian military analyst, Ruslan Pukhov, the director of the Center for Analysis of Strategies and Technologies, said in a telephone interview that Syria purchased its helicopter fleet in the 1980s and 1990s, and has not bought a new Mi-24 aircraft in at least a decade.

Rosoboronexport often services client helicopters in Russia for regular overhauls and repairs, Mr. Pukhov said. Syria signed such a contract "well before the Arab Spring began," perhaps four or five years ago, he said.

Day-to-day maintenance on the helicopters is performed by "legions" of Russian technicians working in Syria, a senior Defense Department official said. For major repairs, the aircraft are sent to Russia in batches, overhauled at their required service intervals, and returned to Syria, Mr. Pukhov said.

American analysts said the Syrian government's use of helicopters has not only escalated the conflict but could make it more difficult for the United States and other countries to avoid being drawn into it.

"We can no longer say the regime is not using air power against the civilian population," said Andrew J. Tabler, an expert on Syria at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy. "That brings the discussion of intervention and 'no-fly zones' closer."

*Eric Schmitt and Mark Landler reported from Washington, and Andrew E. Kramer from Moscow. Ellen Barry contributed reporting from Moscow, and Neil MacFarquhar from Beirut, Lebanon.*

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## 7. U.S. Bolsters Ties To Fighters In Syria

*CIA Helping With Logistics but Not Arms, Officials Say*

By Jay Solomon and Nour Malas

WASHINGTON—U.S. intelligence operatives and diplomats have stepped up their contacts with Syrian rebels in part to help organize their burgeoning military operations against President Bashar al-Assad's forces, according to senior U.S. officials.

As part of the efforts, the Central Intelligence Agency and State Department—working with Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Qatar and other allies—are helping the opposition Free Syrian Army develop logistical routes for moving supplies into Syria and providing communications training.

U.S. officials also are considering sharing intelligence with the Free Syrian Army, or FSA, to allow the rebels to evade pro-Assad forces, which are believed to be getting intelligence, arms and communications support from Russia and Iran, the officials said. Iran it denies it is involved in Syria; Russia says the arms it sells Syria aren't used in the crackdown.

Details of the deepening U.S. involvement comes as many international and local observers say Syria's deadly 15-month conflict has reached new lows. On Wednesday, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton warned that "the situation is spiraling toward civil war."

The CIA's heightened role is seen by some as a sign of growing U.S. seriousness about the military effort against the Assad government. U.S. officials also think that added pressure could force the regime to agree to a cease-fire.

The U.S. in many ways is acting in Syria through proxies,

primarily Saudi Arabia, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates, say U.S. and Arab officials. Saudi Arabia is particularly fixated on overthrowing Mr. Assad, said Arab officials, viewing it as a way to settle scores with an arch foe and weaken its chief regional rival Iran.

Saudi Arabia and Qatar are providing the funds for arms, Arab officials and Syrian opposition leaders say. The Obama administration hasn't agreed to arm the FSA, the U.S. officials stressed. Mrs. Clinton on Wednesday denied charges by Syria and others that the U.S. has armed the rebels.

The U.S.'s stepped-up links with the FSA are also part of an effort to gain a better understanding of the rebels' capabilities and of the identities and allegiances of fighters spread in disparate groups across the country, the U.S. officials said. The U.S. officials remain wary of some rebels' suspected ties to hard-line Islamists, including elements of al Qaeda. They acknowledge the FSA doesn't represent all parts of the insurgency against the Assad regime.

But the administration hopes that their growing contacts will result in a more-organized fighting force that will shed more-troublesome associations.

"Some of [this communication] is dedicated to figuring out who these people are by talking to them," said a U.S. official briefed on Syria. "We're not going to give out weapons and comms to people who can't figure out how their chain of command works."

The U.S. operatives are drawing on their experience in Libya, and are conveying the message that the FSA needs to professionalize its ranks and better organize itself to receive

further assistance, the official said.

"Recognizing that the phenomenon is not going to go away, we want it to have a command and control structure, and be responsive to civilian leadership at the local level," said a Western official who has worked with the Syrian opposition.

The U.S. has had diplomatic contacts with Syrian dissidents for more than six months. The CIA and State Department began stepping up contacts with the FSA around March, according to U.S. officials and Syrian opposition groups, due in part to the rising concerns about the presence of extremist groups, especially after twin bombings in Damascus that month.

In April, Mrs. Clinton said publicly that the State Department would begin providing communications equipment to the Syrian National Council, the umbrella group that brings together Syria's main political opposition. Privately, American officials have acknowledged that much of this gear will end up with the FSA.

The State Department and CIA declined to comment.

U.S. defense officials and Syria analysts believe the FSA has grown into an increasingly sophisticated fighting force in recent months, after getting routed in the central Syrian city of Homs in February.

The flow of ammunition has increased to the FSA through Syria's northern border with Turkey, they said. And the FSA's internal command structure appears more organized and able to communicate to a sprawling mix of insurgent groups operating across the country.

The rebels have obtained increasingly lethal roadside bombs in recent months, as well

as anti-tank rockets, say rebels and U.S. officials.

This week, Syrian rebels began to say publicly they are able to intercept government military communications. Rebel commanders also say new, secure communications between their ranks have allowed them to organize larger defections.

On Sunday, rebels said they had briefly overtaken an air-defense base that held advanced surface-to-air missiles and antiaircraft vehicles. The FSA's operation to target the al-Ghanto missile base north of Homs is outlined in a series of videos posted on YouTube said to have been shot by rebels.

In the videos, commanders describe the orchestrated defection of soldiers and officers at the base, as well the swift regime attack that followed. It appeared to leave the area around the base on fire and destroy the arsenal of weapons and ammunition, said rebel officers involved in the alleged operation.

In one video, an officer says the missile base was completely destroyed in bombing by government helicopters after rebels there seized some weapons and ammunition. It isn't clear what weaponry they may have made away with, but the reported incident illustrates a growing boldness among rebel fighters in attempting larger-scale operations.

"In the past two months, the rebels have shown renewed vigor....They are pressing the regime on a lot of areas," said Jeffrey White, a former Defense Intelligence Agency analyst, now at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy. "The FSA is stretching the regime's capabilities."

U.S. and Arab officials believe Mr. Assad is increasingly losing control of

the Syrian countryside, even though he maintains power in cities like Damascus, Aleppo and Latakia. On Wednesday, the government said it regained control of Haffa, a rebellious city perched atop the mountainous Latakia coast, a government stronghold.

The president is also seen losing his ability to control supply routes connecting his forces to northern Syria and the coast.

"There's a stalemate in which the government controls key major cities. But once you get off the main highway, the rebels basically own it," said Joseph Holliday, an analyst at Washington's Institute for the Study of War.

The political resurgence of the exiled Syrian Muslim Brotherhood, the largest and only opposition group with experience in fighting the Assad regime, has also raised concerns in Washington that the loosely connected Syrian militias will pursue a bloody, chaotic and ultimately unsuccessful insurgency like the one the Brotherhood led in the 1980s.

To reassert influence, Syria's Brotherhood, a large faction in the opposition Syrian National Council, has bypassed its parent coalition and created its own military bureau to funnel funds and arms to fighters in Homs and parts of Hama.

Some of these fighters, desperate for support, say they are halfheartedly pledging political allegiance to the Brotherhood—a short-term promise they say they intend to later betray. Already, rebel fighters say rival militias have fought each other—and other unidentified fighters—in hourslong battles in Homs and Idlib. In recent weeks, rebel fighters have responded to international calls to better centralize command of the

fight. They have created nine military councils at the level of Syria's provinces led by appointed army defectors—rather than civilian fighters—that command smaller brigades. It is too soon to tell how such efforts will play out, with over 100 fighting groups spread across the country.

The growing instability in Syria is feeding a growing debate inside the Obama administration and allied governments about the potential need to intervene to stop the bloodletting inside Syria.

Washington is against taking military action in Syria without a formal mandate from the United Nations Security Council, something Russia and China have so far opposed. There is increasing talk of establishing buffer zones on Syria's borders with Turkey and Jordan to protect civilians from Mr. Assad's forces. Allies also have discussed providing greater security for U.N. monitors operating inside Syria.

These discussions come as senior American, Israeli and Arab officials have said in recent weeks that they are growing increasingly worried that Syria is degenerating into a failed state and that violence inside the country could spill into Iraq, Lebanon, Turkey and Jordan.

In a worst-case scenario, these officials said, the country could split into zones: with Mr. Assad and his closest allies—Iran and the Lebanese militant group Hezbollah—maintaining control of Syria's northwest. Sunni extremists and Islamist fundamentalist groups, such as al Qaeda and the Muslim Brotherhood, could control other regions, while Kurdish groups would maintain their own areas.

Further feeding fears is the potential for Syria's large

stockpile of chemical weapons to fall into the hands of Hezbollah or al Qaeda, as Mr. Assad's forces are no longer able to secure arms depots. Such a threat, combined with the spreading violence, is causing some U.S. and allied officials to conclude that an intervention into Syria is inevitable at some juncture.

"Syria has the potential to be totally fragmented," said a senior Israeli official. "It has the potential to be the new model of Iraq. It will project into the whole region."

—*Siobhan Gorman and Julian E. Barnes contributed to this article.*

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June 14, 2012

## 8. U.N. Kept Out Of A Town That Syria Says It 'Cleansed'

By Neil MacFarquhar

BEIRUT, Lebanon — Syria announced on Wednesday that the village of Al Heffa in its Mediterranean hinterland, which United Nations monitors had been physically blocked from visiting to check on fears of a massacre there, had been "cleansed" of armed terrorist gangs, the government's blanket term for the opposition.

Activists in the opposition said a ferocious blizzard of artillery shelling by the Syrian military had forced all residents of Al Heffa to flee.

The Syrian Foreign Ministry issued a statement declaring that the United Nations monitors, who are unarmed, were now invited to visit Al Heffa to inspect the situation after "security and calm" had been restored. It said that the armed groups had carried out "killing and terrorizing against the innocent citizens, and acts of looting and

vandalism against public and private properties and shops."

The ministry declaration represented a U-turn from a day before, when the United Nations monitors retreated after an angry mob had attacked their vehicles with stones and iron rods before they reached Al Heffa. Residents of the surrounding villages are mostly Alawites, the same minority sect of President Bashar al-Assad, while Sunni Muslims were the majority in Al Heffa.

A video posted on YouTube on Wednesday showed the mob attacking the vehicles, including a young man treating one vehicle like a trampoline.

The official version of that event was also different, claiming three residents were injured after being run over while trying to get the inspectors to stop to listen to their stories about how armed gangs had terrorized them, according to the government-run Syrian Arab News Agency.

Government opponents said Al Heffa was virtually empty, with hundreds of residents and opposition fighters moving over the roughly five miles of mountainous terrain toward the Turkish border or elsewhere inside Syria.

"We didn't have enough medication to treat the injured, the roads were bad, and we were in danger," said Ahmad, an opposition activist reached by telephone, who was helping people negotiate the rough terrain. He asked to be identified only by his first name because he often crossed the border.

Ahmad and another opposition member said 1,500 people had fled elsewhere in Syria or into Turkey, including 150 wounded who had crossed the border, with about 8 of them dying along the way.

In Turkey, the semiofficial Anatolian news agency said 280 Syrians, including 20 injured, had come through in one crossing. It was impossible to resolve the difference in the counts.

"Al Heffa is now empty; we evacuated everyone," said Ahmad. "There are only shabiha and security men there," he said, referring to the pro-government militiamen often deployed alongside Syria's armed forces. "All the homes have been shelled, and most of them are now destroyed."

Fighters were killed on both sides, according to the two accounts, but it was impossible to ascertain the correct toll.

Amin, a resident of Al Heffa now recuperating in a hospital in Antakya, Turkey, said he had been at a demonstration there on Friday when helicopters attacked with what he described as rockets. Everyone fled into the surrounding fields, but shrapnel from the helicopter attack wounded him in his hands and arms to the extent that he could not hold a telephone, he said, using a speakerphone to talk from a government hospital.

"It was hard getting here," he said, with helicopters shelling the convoy twice.

In the city of Homs, also the target of sustained government shelling, opposition fighters said there were at least 100 people injured, 15 critically, in a rudimentary field hospital. They could not be evacuated because government forces ringed the Old Homs neighborhood, said the head of the local coordination committee, who identified himself as Abu Bilal al-Homsi.

Even as the idea of a cease-fire under United Nations auspices became more remote by the day, outside powers

were still seeking ways to bring it about. Laurent Fabius, the French foreign minister, echoed the head of United Nations peacekeeping operations, Hervé Ladsous, in saying that Syria could be considered to have entered into a civil war.

France, he said, would pursue making the six-point plan negotiated by the special envoy Kofi Annan enforceable under Chapter 7 rules of the United Nations, which allow for the use of force.

Russia and China have blocked two Security Council resolutions already, making clear that they will veto anything that might lead to the kind of foreign intervention used in Libya. The chances of agreement in the Council seemed to become even more remote as the United States and Russia traded accusations on Wednesday over arming Syria.

But in Damascus, the Foreign Ministry rejected the very idea of civil war, describing the conflict as a "war against the armed groups which chose terrorism as their way to achieve their objectives and conspire against the present and future of the Syrian people," according to a statement carried by the government news agency.

The opposition also rejected the civil war label, saying it was a peaceful opposition movement demanding democratic change that took up arms in self-defense.

*Hwaida Saad and Dalal Mawad contributed reporting.*

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June 14, 2012  
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## 9. Tehran Hardens Nuclear Stance

By Farnaz Fassihi

Iran's chief nuclear negotiator said Iran wouldn't

compromise on its right to enrich uranium, casting doubts on whether the country could reach a deal during talks with international powers in Moscow this month.

Saeed Jalili, the negotiator, updated lawmakers in Iran's parliament on Wednesday over the status of the country's nuclear talks, in a speech that was aired live on radio and published by official media.

Mr. Jalili's narrative of several rounds of nuclear talks dating to last year suggested a hardening of Iran's position. The diplomat, who represents the views of Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, dismissed a suspension of uranium enrichment, a central demand of the international powers.

The diplomat said Iran had recently threatened to pull out of the talks if they only focus on the nuclear issue and don't address Iran's other concerns such as human rights in Bahrain and piracy in the Persian Gulf.

He said Tehran only changed its mind after Catherine Ashton, the European Union's Foreign Secretary, called him Monday to reassure him Iran's concerns were on the table.

Mr. Jalili also suggested the West was conducting a colonial war against Iran to keep it from scientific advancement. "The Islamic Republic's nuclear program and nuclear energy is based on our legitimate rights and it's a symbol of our resistance and progress," he told parliament.

He added that the West's opposition to Iran's nuclear program stemmed from "fear that the Islamic Republic could serve as a role model for progress and defiance in other countries."

Iran is scheduled to resume talks with the five permanent United Nations

Security Council members and Germany in Moscow on Monday and Tuesday. The meetings will mark the third round of negotiations this year after two others in Istanbul in April and Baghdad in May.

Amid high expectations, those talks were ultimately regarded as unproductive and both Iran and the international community only agreed to keep negotiating.

The talks come ahead of plans by the EU to impose a full embargo on Iranian oil exports on July 1 and amid suggestions by Israel that it could conduct a military strike against Iran's nuclear program if diplomacy fails.

Japan, looking to secure a steady energy supply, is pressing the EU to loosen its pending sanctions, which would prohibit European firms from insuring Japan's imports of Iranian oil after July 1, said people familiar with the effort.

The EU's views on the state of talks with Iran appear to be divided. Some EU diplomats say the coming talks risked collapse, while others said talks would likely continue for some time.

"It's not about a breakthrough or no breakthrough, it's about the level of serious engagement which will lead eventually to a breakthrough," said a senior diplomat. "We are very much determined to pursue this process as long as there is momentum to pursue it and as long as there is commitment [from Iran] to pursue the nuclear issue in substance."

Russian's Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov traveled to Tehran on Wednesday to discuss the coming talks, as well as other regional issues such as Syria, meeting with his counterpart Ali Akbar Salehi.

Mr. Lavrov didn't give details of his meetings but said

the "Iranian side is interested in coming up with solutions" to settle the standoff.

Russia and China are seen as the most sympathetic countries toward Iran among the Security Council members.

The six-nation negotiating group says it is concerned that Iran is developing nuclear weapons and has demanded that Iran suspend its current practice of enriching uranium to 20% purity. Nuclear weapons require an approximate 90% enrichment level, but nuclear experts say the most extensive technical work is required in the earlier stages—moving to 20% purity from 3.5% levels.

Iran insists that the intention of its nuclear program is for obtaining peaceful energy and medical advancements. Iran had indicated that it might consider reducing enriched uranium to below 5% if the international community would ease the economic sanctions that are crippling its economy.

But Western countries say they won't lift sanctions now and worry that Iran might be stalling talks to buy time for its nuclear program.

—*Laurence Norman in Brussels and David Crawford in Berlin contributed to this article.*

New York Times

June 14, 2012

## 10. Bomb Attacks Around Iraq Target Shiites, Killing Dozens

By Tim Arango

BAGHDAD — In the deadliest day in Iraq since the withdrawal of the United States military in December, a series of explosions that mostly targeted Shiite Muslims amounted to an emphatic demonstration of the still-potent capabilities of the Sunni insurgency and a reminder of

the instability left behind by American forces.

Shortly after midnight Wednesday, a homemade bomb exploded here in the capital, a harbinger of mayhem. Around 5 a.m., a truck bomb exploded in Kadhimiya, a Baghdad neighborhood where Shiite pilgrims had begun to gather to commemorate the life and death of a revered imam who was the Prophet Muhammad's great-grandson. Then, reports of other attacks flooded in from around the country — Samarra, Kirkuk, Mosul, Falluja, Ramadi, Hilla — and by midday officials said more than 90 people were dead and at least 260 were wounded.

The attacks were a reality check for a country that has made substantial steps toward a sense of normalcy. A front-page newspaper article here on Wednesday heralded the return of women to local cinemas. Lately, new red double-decker buses have begun operating in Baghdad, and checkpoints and blast walls have been dismantled, providing some relief to the city's notorious traffic delays. But after the first attacks struck Wednesday morning, security forces closed off roads, lending a sense of siege to the capital that will continue over the next several days leading up to the culmination of the Shiite religious festival on Saturday. In the afternoon, the government declared that Thursday would be a day off so that the army and the police could secure the city.

Helicopters buzzed over Baghdad, and in hospitals, familiar and bloody scenes of grief unfolded. Among the victims in Kadhimiya were people, some of them Sunnis, who had set up tents to serve water and food to the pilgrims.

"The explosion was large enough to tell us that the target is all Iraqis, not just

Shiites, because I had two Sunni friends helping me," said Ali al-Baydhani, 39, who had a food stand.

An official from the Ministry of Interior said five parked cars detonated across Baghdad, aimed at Shiite pilgrims celebrating the eighth-century martyrdom of the holy man, Imam Musa Kadhim. The pilgrimage reaches its peak on Saturday.

In Baghdad alone, at least 29 people were killed and about 80 were hurt.

In Hilla, a predominantly Shiite city south of Baghdad, two car bombs left at least 20 people dead and nearly 40 hurt. One attack struck a restaurant near the local police academy; many of those killed were recruits eating breakfast, a local official said. Also, Shiite mosques in the Hilla area were damaged by homemade bombs, although there were no casualties in those explosions. And in a village east of Karbala, a bomb struck a group of day laborers as they gathered for work.

Haider Ali, 32, a merchant in Hilla, was shopping nearby when the restaurant was attacked. He ran outside, he said, and "saw smoke and smelled burnt flesh." He continued: "I saw an old man who used to bring breakfast to his family every morning. He had lost one of his legs and had serious wounds on the other. I think he died while being transferred to the hospital."

The attacks came amid a political crisis that erupted in December and has continued unabated for months. It began when an arrest warrant was issued for the Sunni vice president, Tariq al-Hashimi, on terrorism charges; the move worsened a sense of disenfranchisement among Iraq's Sunni minority. Lately, Sunni and Kurdish lawmakers

have been seeking to force the Shiite prime minister, Nuri Kamal al-Maliki, from office through a vote of no confidence in the Parliament.

Most analysts and diplomats say Mr. Maliki's opponents are too divided to be likely to succeed in the effort, but the crisis has paralyzed the government and raised fears that insurgents will continue to use the political situation as an impetus for more attacks.

At the same time, two recent polls show that Mr. Maliki has weathered the crisis well, with his popularity rising among his Shiite base and even among some Sunni tribes. The polls reflect a sense of disillusionment about Mr. Maliki's rivals over the perception that they are divided and obstructionist, even as fears persist that the prime minister is becoming too powerful.

"Today is a disaster," said Iskander Witwit, a member of Parliament's security committee. "And it's all because of the political problems between the parties that are reflected in the streets."

On Wednesday, Mr. Maliki led a meeting of his top commanders and warned in a statement that the political crisis engulfing his government might encourage insurgents to unleash attacks.

Numerous other smaller attacks were reported across the country Wednesday morning. In Kirkuk, four car bombs exploded, two near Kurdish political offices. In Balad, north of Baghdad, two car bombs detonated, killing 5 and wounding 30, according to a security official. In Diyala Province, gunfire and homemade bombs killed five.

*Zaid Thaker, Duraid Adnan and Yasir Ghazi contributed reporting. Employees of The New York Times contributed reporting*

from Baghdad, Hilla, Mosul, Kirkuk, Samarra, Falluja and Ramadi.

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## 11. Offensive Against Militants Builds

Airstrikes and clashes intensified in southern Yemen as army troops followed major victories with more pressure on Al Qaeda militants holding small towns, according to tribal and military officials.

At least 17 militants were killed in the latest phase of Yemen's offensive, they said.

The attacks came a day after Yemeni forces regained control of Jaar and Zinjibar, two major Al Qaeda strongholds, which had been in the hands of the militants for more than a year.

A monthlong Yemeni government push in the south, aided by U.S. military advisors and bankrolled by neighboring Saudi Arabia, succeeded in driving the militants from two towns.

Yahoo.com  
June 14, 2012

## 12. US Drone Strike Kills 3 In Pakistan, Officials Say

By Rasool Dawar, Associated Press

PESHAWAR, Pakistan -- Pakistani intelligence officials say a U.S. drone strike has killed three suspected militants in an attack on a building in a town close to the Afghan border.

The strike Thursday in Miran Shah in North Waziristan was the second in the region in less than 24 hours.

The officials say the identities and nationalities of the men killed were not known. They didn't give their names because they were not

authorized to speak to the media on the record.

Washington has pushed on with its drone campaign against suspected Taliban and al-Qaida operatives in Pakistani tribal areas, despite Pakistani objections.

The U.S. doesn't release information on who it is killing, or the criteria used when targeting. Human rights groups say innocents are among the victims.

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June 14, 2012  
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## 13. In The Afghan War, A Little Robot Can Be A Soldier's Best Friend

*Some Are as Adorable as WALL-E, and Injured Ones Now Go to Bot Rehab*

By Nathan Hodge

BAGRAM, Afghanistan —The 310 SUGV is a distant cousin of the Roomba, the robotic vacuum cleaner currently being promoted as a Father's Day gift. In Afghanistan, the Marines call him the Devil Pup. And when a Devil Pup gets sick, Marines can send the little bot to the Joint Robotics Repair Detachment—Afghanistan, where a team of military and civilian technicians practice the healing arts on robots.

Army Spec. Steven Grado recently tended to a Devil Pup, shipped from the front lines to the repair facility in a travel case. He installed a battery, switched the robot on and, like a yoga instructor, put the little guy through a series of poses. He scribbled notes, listing the symptoms.

Made by iRobot Corp., the Devil Pup looks like a sibling of Disney's fictional WALL-E movie character. It scoots around on tank-like treads, equipped with a manipulator arm and high-

resolution cameras. It can wade through 6 inches of water, clamber over an obstacle or walk point in front of a patrol. This robot—"really strong for its size," according to Spec. Grado—was easy to diagnose. The robotic hand it uses to probe roadside bombs wouldn't fully close.

That, in turn, required physical therapy. Spec. Grado turned a calibration switch on, manipulated the arm until the full range of motion was restored, then rebooted it. "Sometimes they take a couple tries," says Spec. Grado. "That's just how computers go."

Robots used to be the war's disposable heroes: If one got in trouble, the device could simply be junked. But now, in a time of fiscal constraints, these machines are getting the loving care they deserve.

The detachment, housed at Bagram Airfield, the sprawling military installation north of Kabul, has surgery bays and diagnostic tools to give the military's robot companions a second chance. Col. King says the focus now is on developing robots that are durable rather than disposable.

The military currently has as many as 3,500 robots in Afghanistan, from small contraptions that a soldier can pitch through a window to bulldozer-size machines that can plow over mine-seeded roads. Instead of dispatching a young soldier to probe for a mine or search a cave, a commander these days often sends in a small robot.

This, in turn, means that the combat troops sometimes develop emotional attachments to their robotic companions. Army Maj. Christopher Orlowski, science and technology officer for the robotics detachment at Bagram, said the soldiers and Marines sometimes name their robots—

and even give them battlefield "promotions" for successfully spotting mines or explosive devices.

When some damaged robots are brought in, said Maj. Orlowski, who has a Ph.D. in aerospace engineering and wrote a thesis on insectlike drones, some troops insist that they get the same robot back—not a replacement unit.

The robots may have their adorable qualities, but they are engaged in a serious business. Col. King showed the remains of one robot that recently arrived at the depot: an olive-drab box held the blast-shattered remains. What was left—a heap of gears, rubber treads and a frayed wiring harness—were the remains of a PackBot, another model made by iRobot.

Like thousands of robots deployed by U.S. forces in Afghanistan, PackBot fulfilled a mission that flesh-and-bones soldiers, risking life and limb, used to do. According to statistics provided The Wall Street Journal by the U.S. military, more than 750 such robots have been lost in combat in Iraq and Afghanistan—a number that translates into many saved lives.

Even parts of a bomb-damaged robot can be salvaged. In the case of the PackBot, technicians recovered the controller, an important piece of hardware that could be paired with another bot.

Rich Ramsey, a civilian technician, said that this was one of the more serious casualties the facility had to treat. "This one took a hit on both sides, and in the center," he explained. "And probably got run over at the same time. So... there isn't a whole lot left."

While the human lives that these robots save are priceless, the robots themselves often are very expensive. The

smallest robot that comes in for diagnostic work at the Bagram repair facility costs \$9,000. A remote-controlled vehicle used to clear mines can cost a quarter of a million dollars.

The Army has recently ordered new throwable robots such as the ReconRobotics Inc. Recon Scout XT, a dumbbell-shaped robot, and the iRobot FirstLook, a small robot designed to survive a 15-foot drop. Many of these robots will require some attention during their tour.

Once cured, robots here get a little fresh-air therapy. After finishing repairs, the technicians put the robots through their paces out on Disney Drive, Bagram's main drag, drawing stares from soldiers on the base. The street was named in honor of Army Spec. Jason Disney, killed in 2002 when clearing scrap metal at Bagram.

Inside the robot hospital one day recently, technician Thomas Vialpando was tinkering with the innards of a Honeywell International Inc. T-Hawk, a hovering robot used by ordnance-disposal teams.

The T-Hawk, which resembles a quarter keg of beer or a hibachi, has a swiveling robotic eye mounted on a gimbal so it can hover and stare at a target. The robot's ducted-fan design can be temperamental in the dust and high altitudes of Afghanistan—and Mr. Vialpando was swapping out the robot's two-stroke engine so it could stay aloft.

The robot doctors at Bagram recently took in a Talon robot, a larger, brawnier cousin to the Devil Pup made by U.K.'s QinetiQ Group PLC. The Talon had a strange malady: It spun in circles as if possessed.

No exorcism was required. The robot doctors simply installed a new OCU—operator

control unit—and the Talon was back in working order.

For soldiers who work at the facility, the job has its tangible rewards. "That's my biggest mission: to make sure the robots are 100% healthy before they go out the door," says Spec. Grado.

If a robot is sacrificed in the line of duty, he adds, "that's fine, as long as everybody comes home."

Wall Street Journal  
June 14, 2012  
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## 14. Troop-Supply Bid Faces Scrutiny

By Nathan Hodge

WASHINGTON—The U.S. military is preparing to award its last big contract for feeding troops in Afghanistan, a decision made more complicated by a dispute with the current supplier and by Pakistan's closure of a border crossing.

The contract, to supply food to bases around the country for the next five years, is expected to be worth at least \$10 billion, according to the Pentagon.

The military's current contract with Supreme Foodservice GmbH, a unit of Netherlands-based Supreme Group—to provide everything from juice and bottled water to "front of the plate" items such as meat and potatoes—expires in December.

Food supply is drawing scrutiny from lawmakers who question how effectively the military is spending taxpayer dollars in a war from which the U.S. intends to withdraw by the end of 2014.

On Wednesday, Defense Secretary Leon Panetta told a congressional panel that the U.S. is spending an additional \$100 million a month in shipping costs to supply troops

in Afghanistan because of Pakistan's closure of the chief overland route.

Pakistan closed the route to North Atlantic Treaty Organization supply convoys after U.S.-led forces accidentally killed 24 Pakistani troops on Nov. 26. The Pentagon has since expanded a northern distribution network and stepped up air shipments.

The Pentagon has spent about \$6.8 billion on the current food-supply contract with Supreme. It says it was overcharged. In March, the Pentagon's Defense Logistics Agency began reducing monthly payments to Supreme by \$21.7 million in order to start recouping what it says were \$750 million overpayments. The current overall spending rate for the contract to feed about 100,000 troops is around \$150 million a month.

The agency now faces a decision on whether to award a new five-year contract to Supreme, despite the dispute, or hand the task to a newcomer ahead of a precarious withdrawal. The agency declined to name finalists in the bid, saying it would make the information public once the contract is awarded.

Supreme, in a statement, said billing disputes are "not uncommon in complex contracts such as this one." The amounts billed reflected the challenges and risks of operating in Afghanistan's remote, mountainous terrain, said Victoria Frost, a spokeswoman for the company. She also said the scope of work required by the Defense Logistics Agency grew rapidly after the original contract award.

"The original contract in June 2005 called for us to deliver fresh food to four relatively secure bases by road,"

she said. "This mandate has grown to the 252 delivery locations we serve today."

Rep. Jason Chaffetz (R., Utah), chairman of the national security subcommittee of the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, said his panel was planning a hearing into the government's oversight of the supply contract as part of a larger probe into the problems of contracting in Afghanistan.

"How they think they got overbilled by hundreds of millions of dollars is stunning," he said. "But...there aren't a lot of options in Afghanistan."

The Defense Logistics Agency said it wasn't aware of the planned hearing.

People familiar with the bid said a winner is expected to be announced within days or weeks. "We're pretty much at the breaking point, where DLA is going to have no choice but to award the contract to Supreme or come up with another bridge contract" to the incumbent, a congressional aide said Monday. "I don't see how another competitor could get up to speed in time unless they award this tomorrow."

Some lawmakers have questioned the need for a supply contract that will end in 2017. "You have to question a five-year contract when we're not anticipating being there beyond 2014," said Rep. John Tierney (D., Mass.).

According to solicitation documents, the supply deal would be broken down into several increments, including a six-month ramp-up period and another two-year performance period.

That would support troops through withdrawal. Officials have said Afghanistan may have a small residual force of U.S. troops focused on counter-terror missions and training after 2014.

Delivering food and supplies to the front lines in Afghanistan is a logistical feat. Supreme delivers 10.3 million kilograms (22.7 million pounds) of food, water and produce a week to locations around the country, and operates 14 flights a week on Boeing 747 jets to bring in fresh fruit and vegetables to the country, according to Supreme.

Within Afghanistan, Supreme maintains a fleet of 22 helicopters and 12 fixed-wing aircraft.

The controversy surrounding its supply contracts has drawn attention from government watchdogs, including the Commission on Wartime Contracting.

"The amount of money the government the government is having to withhold is evidence of one of the worst cases of overbilling of the war," said Charles Tiefer, a professor at the University of Baltimore School of Law and a former member of the commission.

Los Angeles Times

June 14, 2012

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## 15. War's Toll Is Rising For Children In Afghanistan, United Nations Reports

By Laura King

KABUL,

AFGHANISTAN -- Children have been increasingly bearing the brunt of the war in Afghanistan, a new United Nations report says, detailing an array of hazards that includes recruitment of child bombers, school attacks and sexual abuse of minors in government custody.

The number of children killed or injured in the Afghan conflict last year climbed to 1,756, an average of 4.8 child casualties a day and a substantial increase from the

1,396 children hurt or killed in the previous year, according to a global report on children and armed conflict.

The U.N. children's agency, UNICEF, on Wednesday expressed "deep concern" about trends in Afghanistan highlighted in the report, which was released this week in New York by Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon.

"The death or maiming of a single child is a tragedy," said UNICEF's deputy Afghanistan representative, Vidhya Ganesh. "It is imperative that all parties to the conflict do everything they can, right away, to protect the lives and basic rights of the children of Afghanistan."

Separately, the United Nations documented a decline of more than 20% in overall civilian casualties in Afghanistan in the first four months of the year but said some of that decrease probably resulted from seasonal factors. The country was gripped this year by a particularly harsh winter, which reduced the level of violence during the cold months.

The parts of the global-conflict report dealing with Afghanistan highlight the disturbing practice of children being recruited as suicide bombers or unwittingly carrying explosives that are detonated by remote control. The report cited at least 11 such cases last year in Afghanistan.

The Taliban movement is responsible for the bulk of child combatants, but UNICEF called on all armed groups in Afghanistan, including the Afghan military, to refrain from recruiting minors.

CBS

June 13, 2012

## 16. Milestones In Afghanistan

**CBS Evening News, 6:30 PM**

SCOTT PELLEY: The war in Afghanistan has just passed two milestones – it has lasted more than 3,900 days and it has cost more than 2,000 American lives. But there is one statistic that we can't give you: the number of lives changed by each of those deaths. There are too many to count, as David Martin found.

DAVID MARTIN: The number 2,000 only begins to tell the story of what's been lost in Afghanistan. Take 21-year-old Nicholas Kirven, gunned down by insurgents on Mother's Day, 2005. It was his last mission before he was due to come home.

There's his mother, Beth. She signed the papers for him to enlist in the Marines right after 9/11. He was 17.

BETH KIRVEN [Mother of Fallen U.S. Soldier]: He had to get my permission. I had to sign the form.

MARTIN: Then there's his stepfather, Michael, his younger brother Joseph, and older sister, Pride.

BETH KIRVEN: She lost her best friend. Joseph lost his big brother.

MARTIN: That makes four people whose lives will never be the same.

BETH KIRVEN: It changes who you were. It changes where your children fit. It really changes who you are.

MARTIN: Then there's Lexi Bastian, whom Nick fell in love with while stationed in Hawaii.

BETH KIRVEN: It's just – it's hard for her.

MARTIN: So add another life.

BETH KIRVEN: Another one.

MARTIN: The story of what was lost is all around you in the house where Nick grew up.

Did that ballcap and scarf come back with his personal effects?

BETH KIRVEN: That was the first thing we pulled out of his box from Afghanistan.

MARTIN: You can tell it's done some hard traveling.

BETH KIRVEN: Yes.

MICHAEL KIRVEN [Stepfather of Fallen U.S. Soldier]: Yes. Beth wouldn't clean it off.

MARTIN: She wouldn't even clean it?

BETH KIRVEN: No.

MICHAEL KIRVEN: That's Afghan dust.

BETH KIRVEN: It came back just the way he wore it and that's how I wanted it to stay.

MARTIN: There are pictures of Nicholas all over the house. This is his mother's favorite because it answered the question she kept asking.

BETH KIRVEN: Are you really in a better place? Are you really happy? And for the first time, I saw a lettering to the side of his head and I focused in to see what it says and you can see what it says.

MARTIN: It's great.

MARTIN: There's a debate in the family about whether there are too many reminders of Nick making their house more shrine than home. His combat boots, which are more heart wrenching than his mother realized until this very moment.

MARTIN: So I have to ask: are these the boots he died in?

MICHAEL KIRVEN: Yes.

BETH KIRVEN: I didn't know that. Oh, okay. Sorry.

MARTIN: And then, there's this hat.

MICHAEL KIRVEN: This is the hat he also died in.

MARTIN: Brought to them by a sergeant who was there.

MICHAEL KIRVEN: The sergeant really had a hard time with all of this and sort of went off the deep end and had post-traumatic stress.

MARTIN: Two thousand dead – they're the ones who sacrificed the most. But behind them are thousands more still reeling from the loss.

David Martin, CBS News, Fairfax, Virginia.

Yahoo.com  
June 14, 2012

## 17. Afghan Neighbors Try To Tackle Issues Together

By Deb Riechmann,  
Associated Press

KABUL, Afghanistan -- Afghanistan's neighbors and regional heavyweights met in Kabul on Thursday to do something they rarely do -- try to tackle common threats and problems together.

With NATO's combat mission ending in 2014, the region's countries are being called on to help stabilize Afghanistan by joining forces to resolve regional problems such as extremism, drug-trafficking, poor coordination on economic issues and, most importantly, terrorism. Any cooperation, however, is bound to share the stage with longtime neighborhood rivalries, the ongoing war in Afghanistan and a fragile effort to reach a peace accord with the Taliban.

In opening the one-day conference, Afghan President Hamid Karzai said the head of the government-appointed peace council will travel soon to Saudi Arabia and Pakistan to seek the two nation's continued help in talking peace with the Taliban in hopes of ending decades of war.

Karzai said that successful peace discussions with the Taliban are one of the most important elements in attaining harmony in the region.

The Afghan leader, who has pushed neighboring Pakistan to do more to help further the peace process,

thanked Saudi Arabia for the help it has given in trying to find a political resolution to the war.

"We also very much hope that our brothers and sisters in Pakistan will do same," Karzai said. "We are already engaged in a serious, deep dialogue with our neighbors in Pakistan as well."

The Taliban have been willing in the past to hold discussions with the United States, but have rejected talks with the Afghan government, although Karzai insists that Taliban leaders have spoken with his government in private. The Taliban have announced their intent to open an office in Qatar. Karzai has backed that plan, but has been pushing Saudi Arabia as a venue for any possible talks.

Karzai said that Salahuddin Rabbani, the head of the high peace council, would visit Saudi Arabia and Pakistan in the near future. Rabbani is the son of former Afghan President Burhanuddin Rabbani, who was killed in September 2011 by a suicide bomber who was posing as a peace emissary from the Taliban.

Karzai also urged the nations participating in the conference to invest in economic projects in Afghanistan and said that during his remaining time in office, he will work to shore up Afghanistan's weak government. Karzai's second five-year term ends in 2014 and the Afghan constitution bars him from seeking a third term.

Afghanistan's allies have harshly criticized the Karzai administration for widespread corruption, saying that graft and bribery undermine the U.S.-led military coalition's efforts to fight the Taliban and gain the allegiance of the Afghan population.

Karzai did not mention the word "corruption." But he said

a joint session of the Afghan parliament would convene next Thursday to discuss steps that can be taken to strengthen governance across the country where there is a disconnect between the central government in Kabul and the outlying provinces.

"It is our job for the next two years that I still am in office to undertake a fundamentally stronger activity toward improved, better governance in Afghanistan," he said.

Thursday's gathering in Kabul is the second meeting of the so-called "Heart of Asia" countries. The first was held in November in Istanbul.

The participants include: Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, China, India, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan, United Arab Emirates and Uzbekistan. Representatives of 15 mostly Western countries and a dozen regional and international organizations are also attending.

USA Today  
June 14, 2012  
Pg. 2

## 18. Military Suicides More Common

*It's the No. 2 cause of death behind combat*

By Gregg Zoroya, USA Today

The most common way that U.S. servicemembers die outside of combat is by their own hand, according to an analysis released by the Pentagon on Wednesday.

Since 2010, suicide has outpaced traffic accidents, heart disease, cancer, homicide and all other forms of death in the military besides combat, the report says. One in four non-combat deaths last year were servicemembers killing themselves.

This year, suicides among troops occur on average once a day, according to Pentagon figures obtained by USA TODAY. The data, first reported by the Associated Press, show that after the end of the Iraq War, suicides might become more common than combat deaths.

There were 154 confirmed or suspected suicides this year through June 3, while 127 troops died in the Afghanistan War, Pentagon data show.

Defense Secretary Leon Panetta told Congress on Wednesday that he has directed all military branches "to immediately look at that situation and determine what's behind it, what's causing it and what can we do to make sure it doesn't happen."

On a related issue, Panetta revealed Wednesday that he will have all service branches follow the Army's lead in reviewing mental health cases dating to 2001. The goal is to see whether any current or former servicemember was denied appropriate medical retirement benefits.

Last year, 26% of military deaths occurred in combat, 20% by suicide and 17% in traffic accidents. The percentage of suicides is up from 10% in 2005.

All the services except the Navy are seeing increases in suicide among active-duty members this year. All have studied the issue.

The Army -- which has the highest suicide rate, on par with the civilian rate -- is spending about \$75 million to understand why it is happening and what to do about it.

No one so far has answers, said Army Col. Carl Castro, who leads researchers trying to find effective forms of prevention and treatment.

"We were slow to react (at first) because we weren't sure if

it was an anomaly or it was a real trend," Castro said. "Then it just takes time to program the money and get the studies up and going."

All the services introduced suicide prevention programs based on promising ideas, Castro said, but none is rooted in scientific research.

"Everything we do in suicide prevention, there's no evidence it works," Castro said.

Castro said the research efforts, among the first of their kind in the nation on suicide, could begin producing findings in the months ahead.

Panetta said suicide is "one of the most complex and urgent problems" he faces. "Commanders cannot tolerate any actions that belittle, haze, humiliate or ostracize any individual, especially those who require or are responsibly seeking professional services," Panetta wrote.

#### **Leading causes of active-duty military deaths**

Combat -- 2009: 22.7%, 2010: 30.6%, 2011: 26.4%

Transportation accidents -- 2009: 20.4%, 2010: 19.4%, 2011: 17.3%

Suicide -- 2009: 20.1%, 2010: 19.8%, 2011: 19.5%

Source: *Defense Department*

New York Times  
June 14, 2012

### **19. G.O.P. Senators Oppose Choice For Iraq Envoy**

By Rebecca Berg

WASHINGTON

Opposition mounted in the Senate on Wednesday to the nomination of Brett McGurk as the next ambassador to Iraq, as seven Republican senators recommended that his name be withdrawn from consideration. The White House expressed support for its embattled nominee.

The senators, all members of the Foreign Relations Committee, sent a letter to President Obama saying that Mr. McGurk "lacks the leadership and management experience necessary" for the post. "There are strong concerns about Mr. McGurk's qualifications, his ability to work with Iraqi officials, and now his judgment," the letter read.

A week ago, a Web site published e-mails indicating that Mr. McGurk had a personal relationship with Gina Chon, an Iraq correspondent for The Wall Street Journal, while he was a senior Iraq adviser to President George W. Bush. Mr. McGurk and Ms. Chon later married. On Tuesday, The Journal issued a statement saying Ms. Chon had resigned.

Given that Mr. McGurk rose to prominence under Mr. Bush and worked for several years at the Bush White House, the Republican opposition to him came as a surprise.

Jay Carney, Mr. Obama's spokesman, said on Wednesday that the president would continue to back Mr. McGurk, who Mr. Carney said "has a great deal of experience in Iraq, not just in this administration but in the prior administration."

The Journal said in its statement that Ms. Chon resigned after acknowledging that she had violated the paper's code of conduct by showing Mr. McGurk some unpublished news articles. It said it had found "no evidence that her coverage was tainted by her relationship with Mr. McGurk."

A vote in the committee on Mr. McGurk's nomination is likely to take place next week, Senate officials said.

NPR

June 13, 2012

### **20. The Pentagon's Biggest Threat In Years? Budget Cuts**

All Things Considered (NPR), 8:00 PM

AUDIE CORNISH: The Pentagon says it's trying to fend off one of the biggest threats to national security in decades - budget cuts. As NPR's Larry Abramson reports, Pentagon officials are warning members of Congress to find a way out of a budget stalemate or risk undercutting the effectiveness of the nation's military.

LARRY ABRAMSON: After more than a decade of fighting, Pentagon warriors are bracing for years of austerity. But Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta says a leaner military does not have to be weaker.

DEFENSE SECRETARY LEON PANETTA: I don't think we have to choose between our national security and our fiscal security. But at the same time, this is not an easy task.

ABRAMSON: Don't have to choose, but in fact Panetta says Congress is forcing him to pick one or the other, national security or a lower deficit. Panetta has put together a budget that envisions a smaller military with fewer troops, planes and ships. He's cut what he considers aging equipment, but members of Congress have voted to reverse a lot of those cuts because in many cases they represent programs beloved in their home districts.

PANETTA: My concern is that if these decisions are totally reversed, then I've got to find money somewhere in order to maintain this old stuff, which has me literally in a situation where I've got to hollow out the force in order to do that.

ABRAMSON: In other words, Panetta says he might have to pay for a bigger force demanded by Congress by cutting back on training and equipment. Meanwhile, Panetta

told a Senate appropriations hearing the stuff he did request for 2012 is getting more expensive. He says he needs more money to cover \$3 billion in higher fuel costs. And you may also have heard about a spat with Pakistan that has led that country to close transit routes to Afghanistan.

Panetta says he needs more money to cover the extra costs of sending equipment to the war zone over a much longer route through other countries.

PANETTA: I think the amount is about \$100 million a day...

UNIDENTIFIED MAN: A month.

PANETTA: A hundred million dollars a month because of the closure.

ABRAMSON: If the budget for this year is tight, in the near future, the Pentagon may have to wear a very tight corset. The budget gridlock in Congress could well lead to an additional \$500 billion in required cuts over the next decade. That's on top of the 500 billion the Pentagon has already found. And those additional savings would have to be across the board. Every program would get hit.

That dismal prospect goes under the awful name of sequestration. Republican Senator Lindsey Graham of South Carolina agreed with Panetta - this would be defense Armageddon.

SEN. LINDSEY GRAHAM: Okay. And your message about sequestration is I'm doing my best to handle 450 to 500 billion. If you want to double that, you're going to destroy the best military we've ever had. Is that simply put?

PANETTA: That's right.

ABRAMSON: In fact, many in Congress agree that sequestration would be a disaster, but that has not loosened up budget gridlock.

The Pentagon says the S-word is so terrible, so impossible to deal with, the military simply cannot prepare for it. They have not released any numbers on where those cuts would fall. That's despite the fact that this is an organization that prides itself on preparing for all eventualities.

Once again, Senator Lindsey Graham helped Panetta illustrate the consequences.

GRAHAM: If we do not change the sequestration dilemma, if we don't do something about it before the election as a Congress, when can we expect layoff notices to hit?

ABRAMSON: Graham is alluding to recent announcements by defense contractors such as Lockheed Martin. If the Pentagon faces major across-the-board cuts, these companies say the law requires they issue layoff notices at least two months in advance. Panetta indicated he might have to do the same for Pentagon workers. That creates the prospect of big layoff notices coming in the fall right around election time.

Larry Abramson, NPR News, Washington.

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## 21. Navy Sails To Greener Future

*But Move Toward Biofuels Is Opposed by Some as Too Costly and Experimental*

By Keith Johnson

Next month, in naval exercises off the coast of Hawaii, five U.S. warships will make history: They will be the first to use biofuels to power their huge turbines, as well as the jet planes screaming off a carrier's deck and helicopters hovering overhead.

The flotilla—powered by a mixture of cooking grease and

algae oil—is the centerpiece of the U.S. Navy's efforts to shake off its centurylong dependence on petroleum.

But now it has become the center of a political storm. Lawmakers in both houses of Congress last month voted to stop the Navy from buying any more of the still-pricey alternative fuel and to keep the Pentagon from investing \$170 million in new biofuel refineries.

"Using defense dollars to subsidize new-energy technologies is not the Navy's responsibility," Sen. John McCain, a Republican from Arizona and a third-generation naval officer, told Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus at a hearing earlier this year.

Sen. McCain and other critics were most upset by the cost of the alternative fuel needed for this summer's green-fleet exercise: \$12 million for 450,000 gallons, or \$26 a gallon—about five times the price for regular fuel.

"I think we cannot afford not to do this," replied Mr. Mabus. Each \$1 increase in the price of a barrel of crude costs the Navy \$31 million a year, and in the current fiscal year that created a \$1 billion rise in the Navy's fuel bill, which "means that our sailors and Marines are forced to steam less, fly less, and train less," he said.

Altogether, the Pentagon spent about \$18 billion on fuel in fiscal year 2011, substantially more than a decade ago.

The Navy hopes that after this summer's trials, a full green carrier strike group will be operational by 2016. By 2020, the Navy plans to use alternative fuel for half of all consumption afloat. While other branches of the military are looking at biofuels the Navy is taking the lead.

The Pentagon wants to boost the U.S. biofuels industry

so it can build larger refineries and bring down costs, much the way the military's need for titanium, advanced turbines and digital communications spurred those industries.

"I would argue that out of any government entity in the entire world, the U.S. Department of Defense is by far the most effective catalyst for innovation," said Jonathan Wolfson, chief executive of Solazyme Inc., which is supplying oil extracted from algae for this summer's exercise. Other fuel to be used comes from used cooking oil.

The planned refinery investments, at a time when the Navy and Marines are cutting personnel and struggling to maintain fleet size, worry some lawmakers of both parties. Democrats who joined Republicans to block buying pricey biofuels include Sens. Joe Manchin of West Virginia and Jim Webb of Virginia. Sen. James Inhofe (R., Okla.) called the energy push part of "a far-left environmental agenda that is being imposed on the Department of Defense."

Retired Adm. Richard Truly, a former astronaut and NASA chief who worked on four Pentagon energy studies over the past decade, disputed that charge, saying the Pentagon's energy overhaul was always about increasing battlefield effectiveness and included initiatives taken by the George W. Bush administration.

"I don't remember a single conversation where we talked about spending any money for environmental reasons," Mr. Truly said. "We were trying to make it easier for the Defense Department to operate."

Throughout history, navies have driven energy revolutions: The shifts from oars to sails to coal to oil to nuclear power all came from naval commanders'

desire to gain an edge on their foes. In many cases, the changes in ship propulsion spurred transformations in the wider world.

Winston Churchill's decision before World War I to run Royal Navy battleships on oil instead of coal gave the British fleet a few crucial knots-per-mile edge over German rivals, though at the cost of tethering Britain to Persian oil and Middle East politics.

Churchill once stressed the importance of diversifying oil sources by saying, "Safety and certainty in oil lie in variety and variety alone." The U.S. Navy says adding a new fuel source would help it contend with volatile energy markets. Lowered dependence on foreign oil also could reduce the military's need to commit forces to oil-rich areas of the world.

But the shift to biofuels is fundamentally different from earlier naval revolutions. The Navy plans to use only 50% blends of biofuels and conventional oil, not a wholesale replacement. And biofuels don't give the fleet any clear operational gain such as longer range. Perhaps most important, when the U.S. Navy traded its sailing ships for coal-burning ones, and later embraced oil, those fuel markets were established. Biofuel remains in its infancy.

"It makes me nervous that we seem to be expecting the Navy to help create a biofuels market," said James Holmes, a naval historian and professor at the Naval War College in Newport, R.I. "If there's a market out there for green energy, then private industry will develop it."

A report commissioned by the Pentagon in 2011 found that replacing half the conventional fuel with alternative fuel could add \$800 million to \$2.2 billion a year to the Defense

Department fuel bill by 2020, unless the price of crude oil rises significantly.

Mr. Mabus said biofuels' cost has fallen in half in the two years the Navy has been buying test batches, and that "as the military brings a market here, the cost of biofuels will be competitive with existing fossil fuels."

Stars and Stripes

June 14, 2012

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## **22. Navy Alters Evaluation Of Prospective Officers**

By Erik Slavin, Stars and Stripes

**YOKOSUKA NAVAL BASE, Japan** — The Navy is standardizing the way it evaluates prospective commanding officers, to include assessments from peers and subordinates for mid-level ship officers, according to an order issued earlier this month by Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Jonathan Greenert.

The June 4 instruction makes command leadership school mandatory and sets servicewide standards for command qualifications that had been left up to the myriad officer communities within the Navy.

The directive comes in the wake of dozens of dismissals of commanding officers in recent years. Ten commanding officers have been relieved this year for problems ranging from mishandling classified materials to extramarital affairs and personal misconduct. Another 23 commanders were relieved in 2011.

The biggest change comes within the Navy's surface warfare community, where department heads will be subject to a 360-degree evaluation pilot program beginning no later than

June 2013, according to the instruction. Although details of the program have not yet been announced, 360-degree evaluations typically include input from subordinates and peers, as well as supervisors.

In 2004, the Surface Warfare Commanders Conference agreed to a three-year pilot program for a small percentage of its officers, in order to judge whether to implement the idea servicewide, according to Navy documents.

The 360-degree idea has since been used in the Navy as a counseling tool, but has not generally factored into decision of whether an officer is fit for command.

The instruction did not discuss whether the evaluation could be included during a command screening board. Board deliberations are typically kept secret.

In a 2010 Stars and Stripes story examining the Navy's promotion system, most officers disagreed with the idea of having their leadership rated by subordinates, and one master chief petty officer said he did not feel he could give an honest evaluation without fear of reprisal.

Retired Capt. Mike Abrashoff, who supported 360-degree evaluations, said at the time that consulting subordinates aided him when he decided not to recommend his executive officer for command.

"I wanted to make sure I was seeing it from every angle," said Abrashoff, who commanded the USS Benfold and now works as a corporate consultant and author. "Nobody knows the effect of leadership on a crew better than a command master chief."

The pilot 360-degree evaluation program will be assessed for effectiveness

in 2014, according to the instruction.

Greenert's instruction also requires commanders who recommend executive officers for command to explain their decisions in detail within an official certification — a move that could later raise questions about that commander's judgment, should the executive officer later be relieved.

The instruction requires the commanding officer making the recommendation to "discuss the executive officer's demonstrated leadership performance, personal behavior both on and off duty, and other professional characteristics" as part of the certification.

Bloomberg.com

June 14, 2012

## **23. F-22's Balky Vests Add Clue In Mystery Of Ailing Pilots**

By David Lerman and Tony Capaccio, Bloomberg News

A potentially faulty pressure vest is the latest clue in a yearlong mystery over why Air Force pilots flying Lockheed Martin Corp.'s F-22 Raptor keep getting dizzy and disoriented.

Pilots have been instructed to stop using the vest during routine flight operations as the Air Force works on a fix, the service's Air Combat Command said yesterday. The vest, part of a "G suit" used to help pilots avoid blacking out during high-speed maneuvers, "increases the difficulty of pilot breathing under certain circumstances," according to an e-mailed statement.

Unable to explain episodes of dizziness, the Air Force is looking at everything from the prosaic -- hoses, masks and now G suits -- to the top-secret coatings and adhesives used in the plane's radar-absorbing

stealth skin that makes it harder to track. So far, all the engineers and investigators have come up short of a solution to symptoms that include what's been called a "Raptor cough."

"The bottom line is we don't have a single causative factor," Brigadier General Daniel Wyman, the Air Combat Command's surgeon general, said in an interview this week.

About two dozen pilots and five ground-maintenance workers have reported symptoms associated with a lack of oxygen. There have been 11 reported incidents since the plane resumed flying operations last year after a four-month halt because of safety concerns.

Defense Secretary Leon Panetta imposed new safety measures last month that include limiting flight durations and speeding the installation of back-up oxygen systems.

No oxygen problem was detected before the Raptor was declared ready for combat in 2005.

"I don't have any ready answers to why we are experiencing a serious problem that apparently didn't surface during the supposedly extensive testing the Air Force did," Thomas Christie, who was the Pentagon's top weapons tester from 2001 to 2005, when the plane was in development, said in an interview.

The Pentagon has spent \$67 billion buying 188 of the supersonic jets, which have never flown in combat. It plans to spend \$11.7 billion to upgrade the planes at a time when the Pentagon is cutting spending after a decade of war in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The Raptor has been called "the most expensive, corroding hangar queen ever" by Arizona Senator John McCain, the top Republican on the Senate Armed Services Committee.

The oxygen deficiencies promise to require even more money to fix. Bethesda, Maryland-based Lockheed Martin, the world's largest defense contractor, won a \$19 million contract last week for the back-up oxygen supply system.

"It really is a conundrum," said Jeffrey Sventek, executive director of the Aerospace Medical Association, whose annual conference last month included a briefing by the Air Force on the F-22 investigation.

The Air Force said yesterday that it's looking at whether the equipment donned by F-22 pilots may be restricting their ability to breathe.

"Testing has determined that the upper pressure garment increases the difficulty of pilot breathing under certain circumstances," Lieutenant Colonel Edward Sholtis, an Air Combat Command spokesman, said in an e-mailed statement. "We're also looking at the layering of other aircrew flight equipment as contributing to that difficulty."

The service is looking in particular at the flight suits, worn in combination with the pressure vests, by F-22 pilots at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson in Alaska and at Joint Base Langley-Eustis in Virginia, according to a government official briefed on the latest information.

The official, who spoke on condition of anonymity because the investigation is being handled in private, said investigators suspect the combination of clothing may be restricting a pilot's ability to expand his chest and take a full breath.

The Air Force isn't declaring the case solved.

"The upper pressure garment is not 'the' cause of physiological incidents, and we still have other variables

to work through before we can determine what the major factors are and how they interact to produce the number of unexplained incidents we've seen," Sholtis said.

The probe focused initially on the plane's On-Board Oxygen Generating System built by Honeywell International Inc. Honeywell, based in Morris Township, New Jersey, has said the system, which provides enriched oxygen to the pilot, is performing as designed.

Retired General Gregory Martin, who headed a study of the F-22 for the Air Force Scientific Advisory Board, told reporters in March that the system "might not produce as much oxygen as it would when it was not under G," or a high level of acceleration. Still, he said the oxygen level was "never in an area of concern."

The oxygen system is "a common design," Charles Oman, a senior research engineer and lecturer who specializes in aerospace physiology at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Cambridge, Massachusetts, said in an interview. "That's why everyone was so mystified."

Wyman, the surgeon general, said the oxygen system in the F-22 is unique because it funnels highly concentrated oxygen directly to the pilot, instead of being mixed with air from the cockpit. While the F-22 also operates at higher altitudes and air speeds than other fighters, Wyman said evaluations show its oxygen system "works as advertised."

With answers still elusive, critics of the plane such as Pierre Sprey say the toxic coatings used for the stealth skin may be entering the plane's air intakes and fouling the oxygen flow.

"That's the No. 1 candidate," Sprey, who was an

Air Force architect of the F-16 fighter and the A-10 ground-attack plane in the 1970's and 1980's, said in an interview. "There's no candidate that comes closer to filling the bill on the evidence."

Raptor pilots also have reported suffering from a persistent cough and vertigo, symptoms not associated with classic hypoxia, or deprivation of oxygen, Sprey said.

The stealth coatings theory also may explain why five ground-crew technicians also have reported symptoms, even though they are never in the air using the oxygen system.

"This airplane is constantly being reglued, which is why the maintenance guys came down with these symptoms," Sprey said.

While the Air Force is investigating that theory, it has no evidence to support it, Sholtis said.

"If the stealth coating, adhesives or other materials were off-gassing or otherwise leaking contaminants into the pilot's air supply, you would expect to see significant amounts of harmful chemicals or other evidence of toxicity" when air samples are chemically analyzed, Sholtis said by e-mail.

"We don't see the evidence," he said. "So it's difficult for us to say with any confidence that that kind of contamination is occurring."

Sventek, a physiologist who ran oxygen chambers for the Air Force for decades, said he is skeptical of the stealth-skin theory.

"I would find it hard to believe that once the skin is cured that there would be any off-gassing," or release of toxic gases into the air, he said. "That would be a stretch."

Senate Armed Services Committee Chairman Carl Levin indicated the Air Force

was doing all it could to get to the bottom of the oxygen mystery.

"The long-term modernization programs certainly depend on the F-22 being safe for our pilots to fly, but there is no reason at this point to believe that the Air Force cannot solve this current problem," Levin, a Michigan Democrat, said in a statement.

The F-22 can be used in combat if needed even with its undiagnosed problems, Deputy Defense Secretary Ashton Carter said at a May 30 forum in Washington.

With 11 unexplained incidents out of 12,000 sorties since the flight ban was lifted last year, the hypoxia rate remains relatively low, Wyman, the surgeon general, said.

"We have pilots flying daily, and this isn't happening to them," he said.

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Northwest Florida Daily News  
June 14, 2012

## **24. CV-22 Osprey Crashes Near Navarre, Five Airmen Injured**

By Lauren Sage Reinlie, Daily News

**HURLBURT FIELD —** An Air Force CV-22 Osprey assigned to the 1st Special Operations Wing crashed during a routine training mission Wednesday evening.

All five airmen aboard were injured, said Master Sgt. Kristina Newton, a spokeswoman for Hurlburt Field. Three of the airmen were flown to local hospitals and two were taken by ambulance, Newton said.

The extent of their injuries had not been released as of 10 p.m.

The Osprey crashed on Eglin Air Force Base's reservation north of Navarre about 6:45 p.m.

The aircraft, a cross between a helicopter and plane, is noted for its ability to take off and land vertically.

A board of Air Force officials will investigate the accident, according to the public affairs office for the 1st SOW. More information will be released as it becomes available, Newton said.

The first operational CV-22 was delivered to the 1st SOW in January 2007. The Osprey's cost has been reported at about \$70 million.

The extent of damage to the CV-22 had not been released Wednesday night.

New York Times

June 14, 2012

## 25. Syria Crisis And Putin's Return Chill U.S. Ties With Russia

By Peter Baker

WASHINGTON — Sitting beside President Obama this spring, the president of Russia gushed that “these were perhaps the best three years of relations between Russia and the United States over the last decade.” Two and a half months later, those halcyon days of friendship look like a distant memory.

Gone is Dmitri A. Medvedev, the optimistic president who collaborated with Mr. Obama and celebrated their partnership in March. In his place is Vladimir V. Putin, the grim former K.G.B. colonel whose return to the Kremlin has ushered in a frostier relationship freighted by an impasse over Syria and complicated by fractious domestic politics in both countries.

The back-and-forth this week over Russian support for Syria's government as it tries to crush an uprising underscored the limits of Mr. Obama's ability to “reset” ties with Moscow. He signed an arms control

treaty with Mr. Medvedev, expanded supply lines to Afghanistan through Russian territory, secured Moscow's support for sanctions on Iran and helped bring Russia into the World Trade Organization. But officials in both capitals noted this week that the two countries still operated on fundamentally different sets of values and interests.

The souring relations come as Mr. Obama and Mr. Putin are preparing to meet for the first time as presidents next week on the sidelines of a summit meeting in Mexico. With Mitt Romney, the Republican presidential candidate, saying Wednesday that Mr. Obama's Russia policy “has clearly failed,” and Mr. Putin stoking anti-American sentiment in response to street protests in Moscow, the Mexico meeting may be a test of whether the reset has run its course.

“We were already at a place with the Russians where we were about to move to a new phase,” said Benjamin J. Rhodes, a deputy national security adviser to Mr. Obama. “A lot of this is can we continue to build on the initial steps we've taken with the Russians even as we've had differences emerge, most notably on Syria.”

Others see the situation more pessimistically. “There is a crisis in the Russian-American relationship,” said Aleksei K. Pushkov, the hawkish head of Russia's parliamentary foreign affairs committee. “It is a crisis when the sides have to balance their interests but they cannot do so because their interests diverge. It is developing into some kind of long-term mistrust.”

Signs of that divergence seem increasingly pronounced lately, despite private reassurances from Mr. Putin that he wants to deepen ties. Michael A. McFaul, a former

Russia adviser to Mr. Obama, has been subjected to an unusual campaign of public harassment since arriving in Moscow as ambassador. A Russian general threatened pre-emptive strikes against American missile defense sites in Poland in the event of a crisis. Mr. Putin has cracked down on demonstrations while blaming Americans for them, and he skipped the Group of 8 summit meeting hosted by Mr. Obama last month.

“The reset failed to change the underlying suspicion and distrust of America shared by a majority of Russians as well as Putin himself,” said Masha Lipman, an analyst at the Carnegie Moscow Center. “America is seen as a threat, an agent seeking to undermine Russia, to weaken it, to do harm to it. Russia always has to be on the alert, on the defensive.”

Adding to the tension have been moves in Congress to block visas and freeze assets of Russians implicated in human rights abuses. The bipartisan legislation, named for Sergei L. Magnitsky, a lawyer whose corruption investigation led to his death in prison, passed a House committee last week and will be taken up by a Senate panel next week.

“I see this as part of an effort to make clear the expected international conduct as it relates to human rights,” said Senator Benjamin L. Cardin, a Maryland Democrat sponsoring the legislation. “This is what friends do. We point out when you need to do better.”

The Obama administration, seeking to avoid a rupture, opposes the bill on the grounds that the State Department has already banned visas for Russians implicated in Mr. Magnitsky's death.

Instead, the administration is highlighting legislation

introduced on Tuesday to repeal decades-old trade restrictions on Russia known as Jackson-Vanik.

On Tuesday, hours after Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton accused Russia of supplying attack helicopters to Syria, she sent an under secretary of state, Wendy Sherman, to a Russia Day reception at the Russian Embassy in Washington, where she pointed to the proposed Jackson-Vanik repeal and talked about “mutual respect,” with no explicit mention of Syria.

The complication for Mr. Obama is that lawmakers like Mr. Cardin and Senator John McCain, Republican of Arizona, want to link the Jackson-Vanik repeal to the Magnitsky legislation, angering Russian officials, who were shocked to learn that the White House apparently cannot block it. Mr. Putin was already upset at even the administration's mild criticism of his domestic crackdown; Mr. Pushkov said the Kremlin viewed that to “not be very loyal.”

Mr. Obama is focusing on enlisting Russia's help on issues like stopping Iran from building nuclear weapons. The next round of talks between Iran and international powers opens in Moscow next week, and the administration hopes that Russia's role as host will prompt it to use its influence with Tehran to extract more concessions.

One of the biggest successes of the reset, however, has also made the United States more dependent on Russia. With Pakistan cutting off supply lines to Afghanistan, the so-called northern distribution network through Russia is the primary reinforcement route for America's war on the Taliban.

“We need more from them than they need from us at the

moment,” said Angela E. Stent, director of Russian studies at Georgetown University. The Russians are less invested than Mr. Obama in the notion of a reset. “They look at that as an American course correction. But it’s not their policy, it’s an American policy,” Ms. Stent said.

Publicly, the administration rejects any connection between Syria and the Afghan supply route. But, privately, officials worry that Russia will try to use the leverage provided by the supply route.

So far, Russian officials have reassured their American counterparts that they will not. If anything, Moscow worries that the United States is pulling out of Afghanistan too soon, fearing a security collapse near Russia’s southern flank.

For Mr. Obama, who considers improved ties with Russia one of his signature accomplishments, the question is whether the current friction is temporary or is a sign that the reset has accomplished what it can.

The coming meeting in Los Cabos, Mexico, could prove uncomfortable for Mr. Obama. The first time the two men met, in July 2009, when Mr. Putin was prime minister, Mr. Putin delivered an hourlong harangue about the United States.

“The president’s going to be yearning for the days of meetings with Dima,” said David J. Kramer, an official in the George W. Bush administration, using Mr. Medvedev’s nickname. “It probably won’t be a pretty meeting. And it shouldn’t be a pretty meeting.”

*Ellen Barry contributed reporting from Moscow, and Thom Shanker from Washington.*

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## 26. Allegations Of Combat Helicopter Sales To Syrian Regime Roil U.S.-Russian Ties

*Diplomatic tiff comes as both nations seek to work on Iran issues*

By Joby Warrick and Will Englund

The United States and Russia traded fresh barbs Wednesday over allegations of arming Syria’s combatants, further straining relations at a time when the two powers are struggling to preserve unity in confronting Iran over its nuclear ambitions.

While insisting that Iran diplomacy remains on track, officials in Washington and Moscow acknowledged damage to bilateral ties a day after the Obama administration publicly accused Russia of selling attack helicopters to Syrian President Bashar al-Assad. The allegation drew a chorus of denials and denunciations from Russian leaders, some of whom accused Washington of mistaking a shipment of refurbished or repaired helicopters for new ones.

Moscow News quoted a defense expert as saying that Russia has not delivered new attack helicopters to Syria since the early 1990s. Andrei Frolov, editor of the Arms Exports journal, suggested that the U.S. allegations might be based on “a case of the repair or possible modernization of earlier delivered machines.”

Russian officials also accused the White House of hypocrisy, saying that U.S. officials had supplied arms to Syrian rebels — a charge the Obama administration denies. “We are not delivering to Syria, or anywhere else, items that could be used against peaceful demonstrators,” Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov

told reporters in Tehran, where he was on an official visit. “In this we differ from the United States.”

The Obama administration stood by the helicopter accusation, which was leveled by Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton in response to a question at a foreign-policy forum in Washington. Clinton cited evidence of new sales of Russian-built attack helicopters to Syria and suggested that Russian officials were concealing their support for Assad’s repression of the country’s opposition movement.

Syria is widely reported to be using Russian-built attack helicopters in assaults against civilian protesters, but Clinton’s comments were the first by an Obama administration official alleging that new Russian helicopters were heading toward Syria.

Clinton repeated the assertion Wednesday, brushing aside suggestions from Russian diplomats that U.S. spies had spotted evidence of shipments of helicopter parts, not whole helicopters.

“We know — because they confirm — that they continue to deliver,” Clinton told reporters. “We believe that the situation is spiraling towards civil war.”

The diplomatic tiff comes at a sensitive time for U.S.-Russian relations, as the two countries hone their strategy ahead of nuclear talks with Iran scheduled to begin Monday in the Russian capital. Despite differences over economic sanctions against Iran, President Obama and Russian President Vladimir Putin have been united in demanding strict limits on Iran’s nuclear activities.

The two powers, joined by Britain, China, France and Germany, are expected to press Iran next week to agree to freeze production of a type of

enriched uranium that can be easily converted to fuel for nuclear weapons.

Administration officials said they expect to keep working closely with Moscow on Iran issues.

“The Russians have been extremely helpful on Iran,” said a senior administration official, who spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss internal policy deliberations on Iran. “We’ve been able to disagree with Russia in the past while continuing to work closely in areas where we have common interests.”

Indeed, current and former administration officials argue that Russia has its own reasons for ensuring that the nuclear talks with Iran remain on track. For one thing, Russian officials are anxious to avoid further angering Sunni Muslim populations that are incensed by Moscow’s support for Assad, said Dennis Ross, who until last fall was the White House’s chief adviser on Iran.

“If they were cast as defenders of Iran, the damage to their image in the Middle East — and in their own Muslim-majority republics — would be great,” said Ross, who is counselor for the Washington Institute for Near East Policy.

Syria is Russia’s last remaining client in the Middle East, but relations between Moscow and Damascus have gone through rough patches in the past decade.

Lavrov defended Russian military sales to Syria, saying Moscow was merely “completing the implementation of contracts that were signed and paid for a long time ago,” he said. “All these contracts concern exclusively anti-aircraft defense,” he said.

In contrast, he said, the United States “regularly delivers riot-control equipment

to the region, including a recent delivery to a Persian Gulf country," an apparent reference to Bahrain, which used U.S.-made riot gear in repressing a Shiite-led uprising.

*Englund reported from Moscow.*

McClatchy Newspapers  
(mcclatchydc.com)

June 13, 2012

## **27. U.S. Attacks Russia Over Copters For Syria, But Pentagon Buys Them, Too**

By Maria Recio, McClatchy Newspapers

WASHINGTON — Sen. John Cornyn, R-Texas, is in the middle of a high-stakes diplomatic chess match over a Russian government-owned arms agent that supplies the U.S.-backed army in Afghanistan as well as President Bashar Assad's regime in Syria, which the United Nations says is embroiled in a civil war against anti-government rebels.

For Cornyn, the issue is the Pentagon's \$900 million no-bid contract with Rosoboronexport — the Russian government-owned arms supplier — which he told reporters Wednesday "strikes me as profoundly wrong and inappropriate." Russia, he said, has "blood on its hands, specifically Syrian blood."

The senator, a member of the Armed Services Committee, has called for an investigation into the contract.

The issue of Russian support for Assad's regime has taken center stage this week after Secretary of State Hillary Clinton spoke out against Russia sending a new shipment of attack helicopters that she said were being used to kill Syrian civilians.

"We have confronted the Russians about stopping their continued arms shipments to

Syria," Clinton said Tuesday, adding that the helicopters would "escalate the conflict quite dramatically."

Russian Defense Minister Sergei Lavrov hit back Wednesday, saying at a news conference in Tehran that the Russians were sending only defensive weapons to Syria and, in turn, accusing the United States of arming the Syrian rebels.

The flap has placed the Pentagon in the uncomfortable position of having to defend its contract to buy helicopters for the Afghans from the same company that does business with Assad, whom the Obama administration has accused of wantonly killing civilians.

Cornyn challenged Defense Secretary Leon Panetta in a letter Monday to open the bidding for the next contract phase, sponsored an amendment in the defense authorization bill to investigate the contract and placed a hold on the nomination of the assistant secretary of the Army for acquisition, logistics and technology.

"I remain deeply troubled that the Department of Defense would knowingly do business with a firm that has enabled mass atrocities in Syria," Cornyn said Monday. "I support the president's call for the end of the Assad regime, as well as the goal of stopping the flow of arms to Syria... But the Department of Defense's ongoing business relationship with Rosoboronexport undermines both."

In his weekly conference call with Texas reporters Wednesday, Cornyn said the reports of gunships going to Syria now made for "an intolerable situation" and stressed that most Americans who learn that the U.S. is doing

business with an arms supplier to Syria are "aghast."

At the Pentagon, the situation isn't so clear-cut. While defense officials echo the Obama administration's condemnation of the Syrian regime, they also are focused on the U.S. military's timetable for exiting Afghanistan after more than 10 years of increasingly unpopular war. A linchpin of that strategy is arming and training Afghan forces, which historically are familiar with Russian helicopters.

The Mi-17 helicopters that the United States is purchasing for the Afghans are for transport — although they can be outfitted as gunships — and are different from the Mi-24 helicopters being supplied to Syria, which have attack capabilities.

Pentagon Press Secretary George Little said this week that the department would respond to Cornyn, but he defended the contract.

"The Mi-17 helicopter, from our vantage point, is ... about equipping the Afghan air force with what they need to ensure that they have the capabilities from an air standpoint to defend themselves," Little said.

The Afghans have a long-time familiarity with the Russian-made equipment, arguably making the Rosoboronexport buy a cheaper option than U.S.-made helicopters. But defense expert Loren Thompson of the Lexington Institute, a Washington-area research center, said: "Cornyn is raising valid questions about where the U.S. buys its weapons. There's no question Bell and Sikorsky and Boeing could supply world-class helicopters for the Afghans."

Texas has several helicopter operations, including Bell Helicopter Textron and Sikorsky.

Defense experts said the United States had a key interest in seeing Rosoboronexport fulfill its contract to supply Afghan forces.

"If you're trying to help the Afghans, we're trying to get along with the Russians in Afghanistan, and (taking action on Rosoboronexport) complicates the exit strategy," said Michael O'Hanlon, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, another Washington-area research center. "I'm not defending the buy, but we have an interest in the Afghans getting the helicopters quickly. We make very good helicopters, but they are more expensive and the Afghans are used to the Russian ones."

Russia expert Stephen Blank of the U.S. Army War College in Carlisle, Pa., agreed that while the United States could express anger with Russia in other ways, the Pentagon shouldn't kill the Afghanistan contract. Selling the Mi-17s to the Afghans, he said, "makes perfect economic sense" and despite "the knee-jerk reaction of some senators, depriving them of helicopters benefits nobody."

Human Rights First, an advocacy group, argues that the Pentagon should end the contract.

"We cannot allow deals with Rosoboronexport to get lost in the shadows of defense contracts and procurement. It's increasingly frustrating to hear the administration claim one position only to discover that its actions run counter to it," said Sadia Hameed, the director of the group's Crimes Against Humanity program.

"They need to shine a light on defense purchases to reassure the American people that they are not buying weapons from a company that is enabling the massacre

of thousands of Syrian men, women and children,” Hameed said.

Yahoo.com  
June 14, 2012

## 28. US, S. Korea To Discuss N. Korea At High-Level Meeting

WASHINGTON (AP) — The top diplomats and defense chiefs of the U.S. and South Korea will discuss Thursday how to strengthen their alliance and cope with the threat posed by North Korea.

Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton and Defense Secretary Leon Panetta will host South Korean Foreign Minister Kim Sung-hwan and Defense Minister Kim Kwan-jin.

The State Department says the meeting will cover a full range of bilateral, regional and global issues. But attention is likely to focus on North Korea.

The North in April attempted to blast a rocket into space, violating a U.N. ban, and speculation then grew it was preparing a nuclear test.

Last week, Pyongyang said it has no current plans to conduct one, despite what it called South Korean provocation.

Stars and Stripes (Japan)  
June 14, 2012  
Pg. 1

## 29. Marines To Boost Ranks On Okinawa

By Travis J. Tritten and Chiyomi Sumida, Stars and Stripes

CAMP FOSTER, Okinawa — The United States plans to add thousands of Marines to bases on Okinawa, swelling the ranks here to levels not seen since the end of the Cold War, even as Washington works with Japan on a new agreement to reduce the controversial American military presence on

the island, the Department of Defense has confirmed.

Existing units will be filled to maximum potential and a unit deployment program will rotate in troops to boost the number of Marines on Okinawa from an average of 15,700 since the late 1990s to around 19,000 in advance of any eventual drawdown on the island, according to a senior DOD official who works closely on the issue and was authorized to speak on background.

Yet that number would be nearly double the size of the force of 10,000 Marines that U.S. and Japanese negotiators agreed to in April, after years of stalled efforts to reduce the American footprint on Okinawa. No timetable for reaching that reduced end-state number was specified in the agreement.

“Yes, in the near-term there will be an increase in the actual number of Marines on the island,” the DOD official said in an interview with Stars and Stripes. “The authorized strengths of those units [on Okinawa] are between 19,000 and 20,000 today. ... As the Marines come back from Afghanistan, we expect the number of Marines on Okinawa at any one time will be close to that number.”

Filling out the forces on the island is a natural progression as combat operations end and troops begin returning to units that may have been depleted of personnel for the past decade, the official said.

Newly available Marines who are returning from Afghanistan as well as rotational deployments will be a key to adding the thousands of troops.

Additionally, about 800 Marines from Hawaii are expected to begin rotations to Okinawa this summer as the

Marine Corps unit deployment program ramps up again after being dormant for the past decade, according to Capt. Gregory Wolf, a Marine Corps spokesman. The number of Marines who take part in the future still depends upon operations winding down in Afghanistan, Wolf wrote in an email to Stars and Stripes.

News of the planned increase in Marines on Okinawa has apparently not been shared with Okinawa officials.

“If the U.S. military is planning to increase the number of Marines on Okinawa to the fullest of the authorized number, it owes Okinawa a clear and proper explanation,” said Susumu Matayoshi, director-general of the executive office of the Okinawa governor. “It is unacceptable if the increase is decided behind our back.”

Matayoshi added that Okinawa residents and officials have long held serious reservations about the size of Marine force stationed here because it shifts without any local input or explanation from the United States.

This year’s agreement to eventually reduce the number of Marines on the island was the latest attempt by the U.S. and Japanese governments to appease the Okinawans, who have protested for generations over the large number of U.S. bases here as well as aircraft noise and the occasional crimes committed by military personnel.

However, until the realignment is accomplished, the Marine presence on Okinawa will be pumped up as part of a massive American military pivot into the Pacific region.

Since late last year, the military has begun pursuing new deployments and bases in Australia, Singapore and Guam

to shore up security in a key trading zone and provide a counterweight to the rise of China following a decade of wars. Now, Okinawa is also set to see a surge in troop levels as well.

Last year, there were 15,365 Marines deployed to the island — the highest number by far since 2004, according to the most recent annual U.S. force numbers reported to the Okinawa prefectural government.

The Defense Department now wants to fill out the force to meet the maximum authorized number of Marines, which is a force size decided by military planners, who weigh unit and security needs. The authorized size of the force has also been included in the U.S. security pact with Japan and in the negotiations on the Marine realignment.

The last time the island hosted the planned 19,000 to 20,000 Marines was in 1989, at the close of the Cold War, and forces have steadily shrunk over the past two decades. The number of Marines fell to about 15,000 by the end of the 1990s and then as low as 12,400 during the height of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, the annual force numbers show.

Jeff Kingston, director of Asian Studies at Temple University Japan, said the DOD plans to increase force strength before the drawdown do not appear to be in line with the stated U.S. and Japanese efforts to move troops and bases off Okinawa.

“The question is, ‘Why do [the Marines] need to be redeployed to Okinawa given plans to more or less redistribute Marines to Guam?’ ” Kingston said.

Bruce Klingner, a senior Northeast Asia research fellow for the Heritage Foundation, said it is not surprising that units

would be regaining strength on Okinawa following the wars.

The island remains a critical stage for U.S. forces in the Pacific and Marine forces are typically very fluid around the world compared to other military branches, Klingner said.

He said the public should not focus on the "wrong numbers" – the actual count of Marines in recent years -- but instead on the total potential of troops on the island when judging the realignment plans.

"There will be those in Okinawa who will be looking for a conspiracy," he said. "The reality is you move Marines in units."

No deadline has yet been set for the relocation of the Marines off the island, and key components are still unplanned or undecided.

Many of the Marines are expected to be moved to Guam, but the U.S. has not completed required environmental studies or decided what facilities might be needed, a process that is expected to take at least two years. It could potentially take even longer to build the facilities needed to host the Marines.

The DOD also has yet to decide what will be done with another 4,000 Marines who are supposed to be redeployed off of Okinawa, despite media reports that they may be moved to Hawaii or rotated through Australia, the official told Stars and Stripes.

Press Trust of India  
June 14, 2012

### 30. India Wants Defence Tech Transfer, Co-Production With US

By Lalit K Jha

Washington (PTI) -- India has emphasized on defence technology transfer, co-development and co-production

with the US in the expanding defence ties between the two countries.

"The Secretary (of State) and I support the growing emphasis on defense technology transfer and co-development and co-production in our expanding defense relationship," External Affairs Minister S M Krishna told reporters at a joint news conference with Hillary Clinton.

Clinton and Krishna briefed reporters on the outcome of the third India US Strategic Dialogue that was held at the Foggy Bottom headquarters of the State Department.

According to a fact sheet issued by the State Department, the US and India continue to develop their defense partnership through military sales and joint research, co-production and co-development.

With more than USD 9 billion in sales over the last decade and another USD 10 billion in the pipeline, US defense sales to India will create hundreds of US jobs, it said.

Through defense sales, the US and India will have the largest C-17 transport fleets in the world, strengthening their ability to deliver humanitarian assistance across the region and facilitating their continued roles in United Nations peacekeeping operations around the world, it said.

In 2011 the United States participated in 56 cooperative events across all services with India - more than New Delhi has with any other country. These include the Malabar, Shatrujeet, and Yudh Abhayas exercises.

In support of the United States' commitment to accounting for all Americans missing from past conflicts, India has agreed to resume US missions to recover service

member remains in India. There are an estimated 400 unaccounted for US service members in Northeast India, primarily as a result of WWII aircraft crashes.

"I have informed Secretary Clinton of our willingness to receive a team of officials to visit India for the search and recovery of the remains of the MIAs from World War II," Krishna told reporters.

Earlier in the day, in her opening remarks, to the India-US Strategic Dialogue, Clinton said the militaries of the two countries are participating in joint exercises and are increasingly cooperating to combat piracy, patrol vital sea lanes, and protect freedom of navigation.

"Bilateral defense trade has surpassed USD 8 billion over the last five years. We are convinced this partnership can grow in the future to include joint research, development, and co-production of defense systems," she said.

"In our discussions today, I hope we can focus in particular on the need to deepen cooperation on cyber security, which is a growing concern for both of us," she said.

Xinhua News Agency  
June 14, 2012

### 31. No Increase In U.S. Troops At Base In Kyrgyzstan: New Commander

BISHKEK (Xinhua) -- The number of American troops at the U.S. military transit center at Manas International Airport in Kyrgyzstan will not increase, the center's new commander said.

"At present 1,600 soldiers serve at the TCM and their number will not increase," Col. Cory Martin said Wednesday at an official change of command

ceremony. He replaced Col. James Jacobson.

Martin has participated in combat operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. Previously he was vice commander of the 18th Air Base Wing of the U.S Air Force in Japan.

He pledged to develop cooperation between Kyrgyzstan and the United States.

The Transit Center at Manas International Airport, located 23 km from the capital Bishkek, began operations in December 2001.

The coalition forces were deployed at the center and started to support military operations in Afghanistan after the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks.

Miami Herald  
June 14, 2012  
Pg. 3

### 32. Decision On Court Wardrobe Challenged

*Documents reveal details of a dispute over what the 9/11 defendants wanted to wear to the war court last month.*

By Carol Rosenberg

Accused 9/11 mastermind Khalid Sheik Mohammed wanted to wear paramilitary-style woodland-patterned camouflage clothing to court.

His nephew wanted to sport the same cap he used to pose for a Red Cross photo.

A series of documents unsealed at the Pentagon this week reveal a source of tension at the May 5 arraignment of the Sept. 11 accused at Guantánamo — the men sought to wear what the prison camps commander considered alternately unsafe, culturally inappropriate or disruptive attire. And he forbade it.

Now, lawyers for the five men who face a death-penalty trial are appealing to the chief military commissions judge to

stop the camps commander, Rear Adm. David B. Woods, from interfering with their clients' court wardrobe.

The challenge to the authority of Woods, who runs the camps that house 169 prisoners, is the latest in a series by defense attorneys who argue that the career Navy officer, whose speciality is intelligence jamming, has interfered with the court process by having his forces go through the captives' attorney-client mail. Woods, who will be replaced at the U.S. Navy base later this month, has countered that security is paramount.

Now, in an affidavit, the admiral explains how he and the colonel in charge of the prison camp guard force went through the accused men's proposed wardrobe — provided by their Pentagon attorneys, most uniformed officers — and rejected everything but the white gowns and prison camp uniforms that they wore to court for the unusual Saturday arraignment.

#### **Secular attorney**

As a result, the most traditionally clad person in court was a secular attorney — Cheryl Bormann from Chicago — who donned a black abaya, a shapeless head scarf and gown that covered her hair and left only her face exposed.

Bormann, paid by the Pentagon to defend accused al-Qaida deputy Walid bin Attash, said she was respecting her client's Muslim sensibilities and at one point scolded women on the Pentagon prosecution team to watch their hemlines.

The hearing spanned 13 hours and began with attorneys bitterly complaining that the five men accused of organizing, training and funding the Sept. 11 hijackings were refused their choice of attire.

In the instance of the alleged mastermind, Woods

wrote, Mohammed's lawyer presented a jacket, hunting vest and fabric for a proposed turban all made of "woodlands camouflage print" — shown with a label calling it a "Ranger's Vest" in a court document. Woods said he forbade it because of "security and good order and discipline concerns, and because they were inappropriate courtroom attire."

#### **Afghan caps**

War crimes defendants at World War II tribunals in Tokyo and Nuremberg were able to wear military-style clothing to their trials, said Mohammed's attorney, Army Capt. Jason Wright. Mohammed sought to wear "militia-style" clothing in the Laws of Armed Conflict sense of the term, as a paramilitary organization.

Two of the accused sought to wear traditional Afghan caps and vests — no camouflage — purchased at a Virginia shop called Halalco that specializes in Muslim products. And in each instance, Woods rejected that choice of attire because "such vests are traditionally only worn during the winter or in colder climates."

James Connell III, the attorney for Mohammed's nephew, known as Ammar al Baluchi, said the cap that his client wasn't allowed to wear to court was the same as the one he wore to pose for photographs that were taken by the International Committee of the Red Cross.

Those photos have turned up on websites sympathetic to al-Qaida. Neither contained any messages, he said, describing Baluchi's proposed wardrobe as "banal."

All five of the men who got to Guantánamo in 2006 from CIA custody were allowed to wear their skullcaps to court, Woods said in the affidavit, "in

recognition of their cultural and religious significance."

And they were allowed to bring their prayer rugs with them, unfurling them inside the maximum-security courtroom during breaks.

But Woods wrote he was forbidding "clothing that is inconsistent with the decorum and dignity of a court proceeding whether in the United States or the Middle East."

Plus, no vests are allowed. Or anything with pockets, "a potential means of removing unauthorized items from the courtroom."

"Excessive clothing could potentially complicate the guards' ability to gain control of a detainee."

Fort Worth Star-Telegram  
June 14, 2012

### **33. Government Seeks Dismissal Of Ex-Airman's Lawsuit Over Botched Surgery**

By Chris Vaughn

The U.S. government has asked a federal judge in Fort Worth to dismiss a lawsuit filed this spring on behalf of a retired Air Force airman who had both legs amputated when a routine surgical procedure went horribly wrong in a military hospital in California three years ago.

Fort Worth attorney Darrell Keith sued the government on behalf of Colton Read and his wife, Jessica, both of whom grew up in Arlington, challenging a 60-year-old Supreme Court precedent that bars service members from collecting damages from the government for wrongful death, medical malpractice or any other typical tort claims.

The lawsuit, filed in U.S. District Court in Fort Worth, seeks tens of millions of dollars for the Reads for pain,

impairment, disfigurement, loss of earning capacity and mental anguish.

In a recently filed response, U.S. attorneys cite exactly that precedent -- known as the Feres Doctrine after the name of the original case in 1950 -- in arguing that the Reads' claims are a dead end.

"This case involves a straightforward application of the Supreme Court's nearly sixty-year-old holding in Feres," the brief states. "This Court is without jurisdiction to entertain the Reads' claims, and this case should be dismissed."

If Judge John McBryde dismisses the claim, Keith hopes eventually to persuade the Supreme Court to review the case and overturn what he once called the "extremely unjust, outmoded, universally criticized and judicially erroneous Feres Doctrine."

"Colton and his wife and I were expecting the federal government's response and motion to dismiss," Keith said. "The government's motion is just the first step in the long run to the Supreme Court."

The Feres Doctrine has withstood challenges over the years from military members and their families. The last challenge came from the family of an airman who died after a botched appendectomy at the same hospital where Read had his surgery, a case that ended last year when the Supreme Court declined to reverse a lower-court ruling that tossed out the suit.

Although other government employees and citizens can sue the government under the Federal Tort Claims Act, the Supreme Court ruled in the 1950s that military personnel cannot. Instead, the government has said that military members who are injured, no matter the cause,

can receive pension benefits and lifelong medical care from the Department of Veterans Affairs.

The government attorneys said there is no disputing what the Supreme Court has ruled.

"Simply put, the FTCA's waiver of sovereign immunity does not extend to injuries which arise incident to military service, which is broad enough to encompass the alleged injuries sustained by the Reads," the government brief states.

Government attorneys also argued that the case should be dismissed because it was filed in the wrong venue.

At the least, the attorneys said, the case should be transferred to a federal judge in the Western District of Texas or in the Eastern District of California. The Reads own a home in New Braunfels, and the surgery was performed at Travis Air Force Base in California, neither of which are in the federal system's Northern District of Texas, the brief states.

Keith said that although the couple owns a house in New Braunfels, "as far they are concerned, it's still a temporary residence."

On July 9, 2009, Read went to the base hospital at Travis for laparoscopic, or minimally invasive, surgery to remove his gallbladder, an operation he needed before deploying overseas. The routine surgery turned nearly deadly when one of his doctors lacerated his aorta at the beginning of the procedure, according to court documents, and he started hemorrhaging.

It took several hours for the doctors to determine what had happened and fix it. Keith's lawsuit alleges that the doctors sewed Read's aorta shut and prevented blood from reaching his legs for longer still. When

Read was transferred to a civilian hospital later that day, physicians had to amputate both his legs, one all the way to the hip.

The lawsuit accuses the government, the Air Force and the hospital of negligence and says they are liable for 23 different actions, or lack of actions, made by the two military surgeons that day.

Washington Post

June 14, 2012

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### 34. NFL, Military

#### Partner On Concussions

*Change sought in culture of coping with head trauma*

By Rick Maese

In a conference room on the third floor of the Pentagon, introductions were made and the conversation quickly turned to concussions. Everyone seated at the long table had impressive credentials from either the battlefield or the football field.

"Just the knowledge of what a concussion is has totally changed," said Mike Rucker, a retired defensive end who had military personnel seated on either side of him. "We thought a concussion was when somebody was knocked out and was unresponsive. Now we have the understanding, no, it's those little stars that you see."

Beset by the ongoing concussion issue, the NFL has partnered with the U.S. Army and Marines to try to change attitudes of both athletes and troops toward brain injuries. While the NFL has worked with the USO and sent its athletes to military bases around the world since the 1960s, both sides say this is the first formal undertaking aimed at effecting change on this issue.

Medical personnel from the league and military will share information and the two sides

are in the early stages of plotting an awareness campaign that will target current players, active military personnel and future generations of athletes and servicemen.

"It has to start with the kids," said former running back Brian Westbrook. "Then they'll get older and they'll realize, 'Hey, this isn't just part of the sport. It's way more serious than that and it has to be treated the right way.'"

Last month NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell met with Gen. Raymond T. Odierno, the Army's chief of staff. Since then, a group of NFL players, coaches and medical personnel have held two meetings at the Pentagon with military leaders, including the one last Friday.

The first session included Arizona receiver Larry Fitzgerald, Pittsburgh safety Ryan Clark and ESPN analyst Merrill Hoge, among others, and last Friday's meeting brought Rucker, Westbrook, Cleveland tackle Joe Thomas, retired Giants' center Shaun O'Hara and several others to the same table with members of the Army and Marines.

As they went around the room, a shared culture and similar attitudes quickly emerged.

"We need the two populations to talk to each other about not rubbing dirt on it and going back on the field," said Paul Hicks, the NFL's executive vice president, "about adding a component to the culture that says, 'It's okay to go get checked out even if the injury isn't as visible as a cut.'"

While research on head trauma continues, studies have found that six in 10 former NFL players have suffered concussions and nearly one-third report having at least three. According to military figures, there have been nearly

230,000 reports of traumatic brain injury among the more than 2 million Americans who have been deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan.

"These issues with traumatic brain injuries have an effect on our readiness," said Maj. Gen. Stephen R. Lanza. "They have an effect on our families, they have an effect on guys as they transition out of the military."

Lanza said the biggest challenge for both the NFL and the military has been persuading the men and women on the ground to appreciate the severity of the injury and to react accordingly.

"You hear them saying, 'I'm not taking myself off the battlefield.' Why? 'Because the guy on my left and my right trust that I'll be there,'" Lanza said. "You heard the same thing from the players. 'I'm not coming out of the game because I need to help my team.'"

Staff Sgt. Shawn Hibbard, who participated in both roundtable meetings, said when he first enlisted more than 12 years ago, no one talked about brain injuries. In two tours, he was the victim of four IED explosions in Afghanistan and suffered traumatic brain injury. Too often, he said, soldiers adopt the attitude, "If I can walk, I can fight."

"When you go through something like that, you're just like, 'Okay, I have all my limbs, I'll continue on,'" Hibbard said.

Similarly, football players say they entered the league with little knowledge of concussions. Westbrook said when he was a rookie, he was warned about money, women and partying. This year's crop of rookies will also be told about brain injuries.

At the league's rookie symposium later this month in Canton, Ohio, players will be on hand to discuss traumatic brain injuries with the rookies.

Eventually, the NFL hopes troops will meet in person with young football players to discuss brain injuries, and military brass similarly wants its servicemen and women to hear from football players.

"If I try to address this with a soldier, they may understand what I'm saying," Lanza said. "But if I put an NFL guy in there who says, 'Hey, I understand what you're going through, I had this issue, too,' boy, that resonates with our soldiers."

The two sides also began planning an awareness campaign: posters that would hang in NFL locker rooms and Army barracks, and social media strategies that might reach young and old alike.

Neither side is certain where the partnership may lead, but as the relationship progresses it's possible the NFL and military will share technology, medical information and marketing strategies. For now, their attention is focused on making sure concussions are treated properly at all levels.

"The question is, how do we talk to each other in the most effective way?" said the NFL's Hicks. "And the honest answer is, we don't know. That's what we're trying to figure out."

New York Times  
June 14, 2012

## 35. How Drones Help Al Qaeda

By Ibrahim Mothana

Sana, Yemen -- "DEAR OBAMA, when a U.S. drone missile kills a child in Yemen, the father will go to war with you, guaranteed. Nothing to do with Al Qaeda," a Yemeni lawyer warned on Twitter last month. President Obama should keep this message in mind before ordering more drone strikes like Wednesday's, which local officials say killed

27 people, or the May 15 strike that killed at least eight Yemeni civilians.

Drone strikes are causing more and more Yemenis to hate America and join radical militants; they are not driven by ideology but rather by a sense of revenge and despair. Robert Grenier, the former head of the C.I.A.'s counterterrorism center, has warned that the American drone program in Yemen risks turning the country into a safe haven for Al Qaeda like the tribal areas of Pakistan — "the Arabian equivalent of Waziristan."

Anti-Americanism is far less prevalent in Yemen than in Pakistan. But rather than winning the hearts and minds of Yemeni civilians, America is alienating them by killing their relatives and friends. Indeed, the drone program is leading to the Talibanization of vast tribal areas and the radicalization of people who could otherwise be America's allies in the fight against terrorism in Yemen.

The first known drone strike in Yemen to be authorized by Mr. Obama, in late 2009, left 14 women and 21 children dead in the southern town of al-Majala, according to a parliamentary report. Only one of the dozens killed was identified as having strong Qaeda connections.

Misleading intelligence has also led to disastrous strikes with major political and economic consequences. An American drone strike in May 2010 killed Jabir al-Shabwani, a prominent sheik and the deputy governor of Marib Province. The strike had dire repercussions for Yemen's economy. The slain sheik's tribe attacked the country's main pipeline in revenge. With 70 percent of the country's budget dependent on oil exports, Yemen lost over \$1 billion. This strike also

erased years of progress and trust-building with tribes who considered it a betrayal given their role in fighting Al Qaeda in their areas.

Yemeni tribes are generally quite pragmatic and are by no means a default option for radical religious groups seeking a safe haven. However, the increasing civilian toll of drone strikes is turning the apathy of tribal factions into anger.

The strikes have created an opportunity for terrorist groups like Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula and Ansar al-Sharia to recruit fighters from tribes who have suffered casualties, especially in Yemen's south, where mounting grievances since the 1994 civil war have driven a strong secessionist movement.

Unlike Al Qaeda in Iraq, A.Q.A.P. has worked on gaining the support of local communities by compromising on some of their strict religious laws and offering basic services, electricity and gas to villagers in the areas they control. Furthermore, Iran has seized this chance to gain more influence among the disgruntled population in Yemen's south.

And the situation is quite likely to get worse now that Washington has broadened its rules of engagement to allow so-called signature strikes, when surveillance data suggest a terrorist leader may be nearby but the identities of all others targeted is not known. Such loose rules risk redefining "militants" as any military-age males seen in a strike zone.

Certainly, there may be short-term military gains from killing militant leaders in these strikes, but they are minuscule compared with the long-term damage the drone program is causing. A new generation of leaders is spontaneously emerging in furious retaliation

to attacks on their territories and tribes.

This is why A.Q.A.P. is much stronger in Yemen today than it was a few years ago. In 2009, A.Q.A.P. had only a few hundred members and controlled no territory; today it has, along with Ansar al-Sharia, at least 1,000 members and controls substantial amounts of territory.

Yemenis are the ones who suffer the most from the presence of Al Qaeda, and getting rid of this plague is a priority for the majority of Yemen's population. But there is no shortcut in dealing with it. Overlooking the real drivers of extremism and focusing solely on tackling their security symptoms with brutal force will make the situation worse.

Only a long-term approach based on building relations with local communities, dealing with the economic and social drivers of extremism, and cooperating with tribes and Yemen's army will eradicate the threat of Islamic radicalism.

Unfortunately, liberal voices in the United States are largely ignoring, if not condoning, civilian deaths and extrajudicial killings in Yemen — including the assassination of three American citizens in September 2011, including a 16-year-old. During George W. Bush's presidency, the rage would have been tremendous. But today there is little outcry, even though what is happening is in many ways an escalation of Mr. Bush's policies.

Defenders of human rights must speak out. America's counterterrorism policy here is not only making Yemen less safe by strengthening support for A.Q.A.P., but it could also ultimately endanger the United States and the entire world.

*Ibrahim Mothana, a writer and activist, is a co-founder of the Watan Party.*

Danger Room (Wired.com)  
June 14, 2012

## **Danger Room: What's Next In National Security**

### **36. Let's Admit It: The US Is At War In Yemen, Too**

By Noah Shachtman and  
Spencer Ackerman

After years of sending drones and commandos into Pakistan, Defense Secretary Leon Panetta last week finally admitted the obvious: The US is “fighting a war” there. But American robots and special forces aren’t just targeting militants in Pakistan. They’re doing the same — with increasing frequency and increasing lethality — in Yemen. The latest drone attack happened early Wednesday in the Yemeni town of Azzan, killing nine people. It’s the 23rd strike in Yemen so far this year, according to the *Long War Journal*. In Pakistan, there have been only 22.

Surely, if America is at war in Pakistan, it’s at war in Yemen, too. And it’s time for the Obama administration to admit it.

For all the handwringing about the undeclared, drone-led war in Pakistan, it’s quietly been eclipsed. Yemen is the real center of the America’s shadow wars in 2012. After the US killed al-Qaida second in command Abu Yahya al-Libi earlier this month, Pakistan is actually running out of significant terrorists to strike. Yemen, by contrast, is a target-rich environment — and that’s why the drones are busier there these days.

The White House has declared al-Qaida’s affiliate in Yemen is to be the biggest terror threat to Americans today. The campaign to neutralize that threat is far-reaching — involving commandos, cruise

missiles, and, of course, drone aircraft. It is also, according to some experts on the region, completely backfiring. Since the US ramped up its operations in Yemen in 2009, the ranks of al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula, or AQAP, have swelled from 300 fighters to more than 1,000.

The congressional foreign relations committees have had some briefings on the military and intelligence efforts in Yemen, Danger Room is told. But there’s been scant discussion in public of the campaign’s goals, or a way for measuring whether those goals have been reached. Outside of the classified arena, there’s little sense of what our Yemen operations cost, nor of what the costs would be if they were discontinued. It’s an odd situation, notes Micah Zenko, a fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations, since “it’s accurate to say we are ‘at war in Yemen.’”

“What should be accompanied with any (even unofficial) declaration of war is a clearly articulated strategy of what America’s strategic objectives in that country are, a cogent strategy for how current US policies will lead to that outcome, how US airstrikes are coordinated with other elements of power, and how much it might cost and when we might expect that to occur,” Zenko tells Danger Room. “Unfortunately, none of that has happened.”

There is no definitive accounting of America’s operations in Yemen and the region that surrounds it. But some details of the secretive missions have been leaked to the press. Here’s what we know.

The US has two separate drone campaigns underway in Yemen — one is run by the CIA, the other by the military’s Joint Special Operations Command. Some

of the drones’ targets are authorized by President Obama himself. Some just happen to look or act like perceived threats. According to the tally assembled by the *Long War Journal*, only nine of the 155 people killed in Yemen by US drones this year have been civilians; no innocents were among the 81 slain in 2011. But it’s hard to know how much to trust those statistics. One of those killed in 2011 was Abd al-Rahman al-Awlaki, a 16 year-old American citizen whose father was a notorious al-Qaida propagandist. And the White House “counts all military-age males in a strike zone as combatants,” the *New York Times* reports. Perhaps Awlaki met that threshold.

The twin drone operations are only one facet of American efforts in Yemen, however. According to the *Los Angeles Times*, a contingent of at least 20 US special operations troops stationed inside the country are using “satellite imagery... eavesdropping systems and other technical means to help pinpoint targets” for the Yemeni military. Pieces from American-made BGM-109D Tomahawk cruise missiles and BLU97 A/B cluster bomblets have been photographed in the town of al-Majala, where 35 women and children were allegedly killed in a December 2009 strike. (The Yemeni journalist who documented the attack is now in prison, supposedly for abetting terrorists.) In neighboring Djibouti, eight American F-15Es jets are flying missions from the US outpost known as Camp Lemonnier; the Pentagon just handed out a \$62 million contract to maintain the base. According to the investigative journalist Jeremy Scahill, who has spent extensive time in the region, Djibouti is where “much of the

coordination for Yemen ops” takes place.

For all of that firepower, there’s something rather obvious missing: a sense of how and why we’re fighting there. Yes, terrorists based there have tried to attack Americans — tried and repeatedly failed. And yes, the Authorization for the Use of Military Force, passed by Congress right after 9/11, gives the military wide latitude to chase al-Qaida adherents around the globe. But there’s no articulated rationale for why *these* unsuccessful militants in Yemen warrant *this* particular military response. No sense of what victory looks like.

“I don’t believe that the US has a Yemen policy,” Princeton University scholar Gregory Johnsen recently told *Foreign Policy* magazine. “What the US has is a counterterrorism strategy that it applies to Yemen.”

In this case, however, countering terror also carries the risk of participating in a civil war. The local al-Qaida group “is joined at the hip” with an insurgency largely focused on toppling the local government, one US official told the *Washington Post*. Take on the wannabe terrorists, and you may be wind up fighting the area’s insurgents, as well.

“In an effort to destroy the threat coming out of Yemen, the US is getting sucked further into the quicksand of a conflict it doesn’t understand and one in which its very presence tilts the tables against the US,” Johnsen wrote.

Katherine Zimmerman, an analyst at the American Enterprise Institute, doesn’t believe all this fighting adds up to the US being at war in Yemen, although she admits it’s “understandable” why others might hold that view. She sees the difference between the Pakistan war and the

Yemen conflict as one of partnership, and intent. "It's slightly different because of the local cooperation. The effort in FATA [Pakistan's Federally Administered Tribal Areas] are more heavily driven by Americans," Zimmerman tells Danger Room. "In Yemen, we're essentially acting as a stop gap until Yemenis can take full responsibility. We've got a very willing partner in Yemen. We're working on making it an able partner."

Of course, Yemen is only one part of an even larger regional conflict. The US maintains additional drone bases, not far away in the Seychelles and Ethiopia. The American Navy keeps around 30 warships in the nearby Indian Ocean, mostly to help fight local pirates. A pair of *Lewis and Clark*-class supply ships, possibly used as seaborne military camps for Special Forces, have been spotted in the region of late. At least one Somali terrorist was held by American commandos aboard the *USS Boxer* for weeks.

Over in nearby Somalia, just across the Gulf of Aden, America has backed proxies from the Kenyan army to a "butcher" warlord to take on the local terror group, al-Shabab. But American forces have become directly involved, too. US destroyers have launched missiles and fired their guns at terrorist targets. Members of SEAL Team 6 have dropped in to rescue hostages. Then of course, there are the drones. Perhaps, by Panetta's standards, this means the US is "at war" in Somalia, as well.

Undeclared wars are dangerous wars. Questions about goals and resources can go unanswered, when there's no need to convince the people or the Congress of their merits. No one knows how undeclared wars end, or even when they're

won, because no one measures the progress of wars fought in the shadows. The only way they end is when the US decides to simply walk away — as with the 80s-era shadow war the US helped wage in Afghanistan. Looked like a great success for a decade; not so much on 9/11.

Of course, missions can drift and resources can vanish in a declared war; just look at Iraq. But when a fight is kept in the shadows by design, the chances for shenanigans and miscalculations rise. At least we have some sense of when and where resources were misspent in our open war in Afghanistan of today; in our secret campaign in Pakistan, there's almost none.

The president doesn't need to address a joint session of Congress every time he dispatches a warship or a handful of military advisers, naturally. But this fight in Yemen isn't a disconnected, sporadic series of strikes. It's wide-ranging and it's multi-pronged. It's costing lives while building up the ranks of our enemies. It's war. And it's time our Commander in Chief came out and said it.

If this war is worth waging, it's worth waging openly. And it's worth having a strategy with a clearly defined, achievable goal. Does anyone know what that is in Yemen? Is it the end of al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula? The containment of AQAP? A functional Yemeni government that can fight AQAP without US aid? We've gotten so use to fighting in the shadows for so long, we barely even ask our leadership what victory looks like.

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Washington Post

June 14, 2012

Pg. 19

### **37. My Real 'Crime' Against Pakistan**

By Husain Haqqani

I am saddened but not surprised that a Pakistani judicial inquiry commission has accused me of being disloyal while serving as my country's ambassador to the United States. The tide of anti-Americanism has been rising in Pakistan for almost a decade. An overwhelming majority of Pakistanis consider the United States an enemy, notwithstanding the nominal alliance that has existed between our countries for six decades. Americans, frustrated by what they see as Pakistani intransigence in fighting terrorism in Afghanistan, are becoming less willing to accept Pakistani demands even though Pakistan has suffered heavily at the hands of terrorists.

This is a difficult time to openly advocate friendly relations between the United States and Pakistan. I am proud that I did so as ambassador. During my tenure, the United States agreed to initiate a strategic dialogue with Pakistani civil and military leaders. The idea was to overcome the episodic nature of bilateral relations: Our countries had a pattern of working together for a few years and then falling out amid complaints about each other. The strategic dialogue sought to reconcile Pakistan's regional concerns about Afghanistan and India with U.S. global concerns about nuclear proliferation and terrorism. But the dialogue stalled last year, and a series of unfortunate incidents, culminating in Osama bin Laden being found in Pakistan last year, has brought our countries to the brink of an adversarial relationship.

My sincere efforts to transcend the parallel narratives that have shaped U.S.-Pakistani relations were not always appreciated in Pakistan, where conspiracy theories and hatred

for the United States have become a daily staple of the national discourse. My detractors in Pakistan's security services and among pro-Jihadi groups have long accused me of being pro-American; they condescendingly described me as the U.S. ambassador to Pakistan based in Washington. Falsehoods were circulated in Pakistani media about my issuing thousands of visas to "CIA spies" who would allegedly act with impunity against my country. Few considered that Pakistan was pledged record amounts of U.S. aid and that Pakistani views were being heard on a range of issues. The expectation that Washington should simply do whatever the Pakistani hyper-nationalists desire remains unrealistic.

I resigned last November after a U.S. businessman of Pakistani origin - now residing in Monaco - claimed that I had asked him to deliver a secret memo to Adm. Michael Mullen, then chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, seeking U.S. help in thwarting a military coup right after the U.S. operation that killed bin Laden. The affair was dubbed "Memogate" by the Pakistani media. Our Supreme Court, pursuing a populist ideological agenda without regard to legal or constitutional niceties, intervened directly. Without any trial, it created a Commission of Inquiry and barred me from leaving Pakistan, though it later relented.

This week the commission presented its findings. It alleged that I had acted against Pakistan's interests and had authorized the controversial memo. The report's release has been timed to distract attention from serious allegations by a Pakistani businessman that he paid millions to the son of

Pakistan's chief justice as part of efforts to buy favors.

How ironic that Pakistani hard-liners claim I was an American agent of influence with access in Washington's power corridors. Were that true, there would have been no reason for me to seek help, certainly not from a businessman of dubious credentials, to deliver a message to the U.S. government. The one-sided "evidence" has failed to prove my connection to the memo. I have not been charged or tried - though the report could lead to charges, and a treason conviction carries the death penalty. No, I was simply labeled guilty by a "fact-finding" commission that bent over backward to accommodate my discredited accuser.

The commission's bias was clear in its refusal to hear from me via videoconference - a request I made in light of security threats - and its lack of interest in seeking the testimony of U.S. officials who received the controversial memo, Mullen and Gen. Jim Jones. Notably, Jones said in a sworn affidavit that I had nothing to do with the document that had been transmitted to him and that the memo reflected the ideas of its author, the American businessman Mansoor Ijaz.

The commission's findings are motivated by politics, not law. I served Pakistan sincerely. Most people in Washington saw and know that. Branding me a traitor will not solve any of Pakistan's myriad problems, not least of which is the prospect of international isolation. The 2012 BBC Globescan poll found that the international perception of Pakistan is as bad as that of Iran and North Korea.

It is tragic that anti-Americanism is being exploited to push ideological agendas, but I stand by my view that positive U.S.-Pakistan relations

under a civilian-led Pakistani government are necessary for international peace and Pakistan's stability. My real "crime" is standing up for U.S.-Pakistan relations for Pakistan's sake. I had nothing to do with writing and sending that memo. But many people around the world would recognize that its contents suggesting changes in Pakistan's counterterrorism and nuclear policies reflect reasonable views that are not treasonous and are, in fact, in line with global thinking.

*Husain Haqqani, a professor of international relations at Boston University and a senior fellow at the Hudson Institute, served as Pakistan's ambassador to the United States from 2008 to 2011.*

Washington Post

June 14, 2012

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**Fine Print**

### **38. The Battle For The Military's Future**

By Walter Pincus

"The face of war, the face of how we do business, is changing."

That's retired Marine Corps Gen. James Cartwright, former vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, sharing how he sees the military's future at a National Press Club session for reporters Tuesday. Cartwright, who was known for his forward thinking while on active duty, has apparently decided to share his ideas through a series of public appearances.

One area that he sees changing in the military is what he calls "the platforms" - by which he means tanks, troop carriers, ships, aircraft, heavy guns and even rifles. They are becoming less important in Cartwright's view than the new electronics, sensors and other gadgetry.

He recalls being with then-Defense Secretary Robert Gates in Georgia reviewing an Army unit ready to deploy to Central Asia with new systems that included iPads and droids for individual soldiers. Cartwright said Gates asked one sergeant during a barracks walkthrough, "What do you think of all this stuff?"

The sergeant replied, "I'd sooner leave this barracks without my rifle as to leave without these things."

The lesson for Cartwright was that the new electronics, which the military calls information technology (IT), will replace in importance the current platforms - in which the side with the most modern guns, tanks and aircraft often won. Platforms, however, take time to develop.

"We're starting to move away from platform-centric towards the leverage that is gained by IT systems that allow us to gain advantage no matter what the platform is," said Cartwright, who holds the Harold Brown Chair in Defense Policy Studies at the Center for Strategic and International Studies.

Another factor is the time available to make changes for the new battlefield.

"Spending 20 years in development of a platform [such as an armored personnel carrier] and then building it," as well as taking two or three years to make adjustments, all "seems somewhat irrelevant," Cartwright said. In the future, there will be much shorter time periods in which to upgrade systems.

This was one lesson he learned from combatting IEDs [improvised explosive devices], first in Iraq and now in Afghanistan, where they continue to be the greatest threat to U.S. and coalition forces.

As Cartwright described it, dealing with IEDs has become super fast-paced. The enemy invents a new fuse to detonate an IED; someone on the U.S. or coalition side invents a counter to that fuse and by the time it is deployed another new fuse has turned up. "It's about a 30-day cycle to try to stay up with that fight," he said.

Cartwright says cyberwarfare will determine leverage on the next tactical battlefield. And that cyberfight will have a time cycle "between nine and 14 days."

A second issue for the future in Cartwright's view is maintaining the all-volunteer force.

"Their expectations of service [personnel] are substantially different than a conscript force," he said, referring to past wars followed by peacetime cutbacks when the military draft provided the basic manpower needs. The more professional, career-minded all-volunteer force expects "to come to work and have equipment that works," Cartwright said. "They expect to come to work and do training that is relevant to what they think is going to happen next, so that they are ready."

During the years of the Iraq and Afghanistan wars, from 2001 to today, the services have expanded in numbers and have had all the funds needed to arm their forces with new types of weaponry. There was so much money that the Defense Department by 2008 was paying cost overruns of \$295 billion on 95 weapons systems, according to the Government Accountability Office. Now the Obama administration is proposing cutting 80,000 soldiers from the Army and 20,000 Marines from the Corps over the next five years.

"This is the first time that we have gone through a fiscal downturn with an all-volunteer force. What are the dangers of not preparing for the realities of that downturn?" Cartwright asked.

"If we hollow that force out, their ability to vote with their feet is pretty significant," he said, meaning many would resign if their activity slows down, pay stagnates, promotions become limited or their equipment deteriorates in quality.

The \$487 billion in Pentagon cuts over 10 years agreed upon last year represents about an 11 percent reduction in defense spending. As Cartwright points out, "Historically after a conflict, we come down somewhere in the neighborhood of 20 percent to 25 percent," which would mean more cuts can be expected.

Unofficially, the Pentagon is looking at how to manage spending on personnel not just in the face of further funding reductions but also when the economy revives and civilian jobs tempt highly trained military personnel while, at the same time, quality enlistments drop off. Retirement and health-care costs are already a focus, no matter what further cuts are made.

Each service is studying retention - "how you keep the ones you want to keep" in the words of one Pentagon official. There are leading and lagging factions when it comes to incentives that range from money to housing to long-term health care for retirees. Looking out 10 and 20 years, the official said, "It takes fine tuning to get the right formula."

Cartwright said the military services "don't want to give away anything they are planning" because if they announce it, "then all of a sudden it happens."

Some serious planning about further cuts are probably being discussed behind closed doors, according to Cartwright, where defense officials "feel safe that they can explore the options without having somebody take the decision away from them."

New York Times  
June 14, 2012

### 39. The Court Retreats On Habeas

When the Supreme Court ruled in 2008 that Congress could not strip federal courts of jurisdiction to hear habeas corpus petitions from non-American prisoners at Guantánamo Bay, the 5-to-4 majority opinion written by Justice Anthony Kennedy appeared to be a landmark victory for the rights of detainees. "The laws and Constitution are designed to survive, and remain in force, in extraordinary times," Justice Kennedy wrote in *Boumediene v. Bush*, and "the framers decided that habeas corpus, a right of first importance," must be part of the American legal framework.

But this week the court rejected appeals in seven habeas cases involving detainees challenging the legality of their imprisonment. (The justices also rejected an appeal in a separate civil suit brought by Jose Padilla, an American citizen, against former Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld and other officials for abuse and torture during his detention.) With no dissents in the denials, it is devastatingly clear that the Roberts court has no interest in ensuring meaningful habeas review for foreign prisoners.

For four years, the justices have left it to the Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit to devise rules for the Guantánamo habeas

cases. That court has developed substantive, procedural and evidentiary rules that are unjustly one-sided in favor of the government. In *Latif v. Obama*, for instance, decided last October, the majority of a three-judge panel required trial courts to presume the accuracy of questionable evidence.

Judge David Tatel, dissenting in the case, argued that "it is hard to see what is left of the Supreme Court's command" if the appeals court is allowed to repudiate *Boumediene* and "calls the game in the government's favor." The same can be said about that court's handling of almost all other Guantánamo cases. In the 19 appeals it has decided, the court has never allowed a prisoner to prevail.

In *Boumediene*, Justice Kennedy noted that habeas review is less about prisoners' rights than the judicial power to check undue use of executive power. In refusing to correct the appeals court's misguided rulings, the justices fail to support important principles proclaimed in *Boumediene* and diminish their own authority.

Washington Post  
June 14, 2012

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### 40. Criminalizing Leaks

*Prosecution could do a lot of damage.*

Here's a story that we've heard before: The White House is suspected of leaking sensitive national security information to reporters for nakedly political reasons. The Justice Department has opened a criminal investigation, but some in Congress aren't satisfied. They demand that an independent counsel be empowered to follow the evidence wherever it leads.

The last time an issue like this came up, some Democrats had strong views.

Rep. Nancy Pelosi argued that the possibility that the leak came from senior White House officials created a conflict of interest for the attorney general and his staff that could be resolved only by the appointment of an outside counsel. Then Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton and Joseph R. Biden Jr. agreed: "I think it would be very difficult for the attorney general to oversee such an investigation," said Ms. Clinton.

Then, of course, the Democrats were talking about the George W. Bush administration's leak of the name of CIA employee Valerie Plame, whose husband's attacks on the case for the Iraq war had become a liberal cause celebre. Now, following stories containing disclosures about a cyberattack against Iran and an al-Qaeda double agent, those same Democrats are happy to leave the investigating to the two federal prosecutors named by Attorney General Eric H. Holder Jr. last week - even though one of the stories, which portrayed President Obama in a favorable light, was sourced in part to unnamed "members of the president's national security team."

In 2003, we were initially sympathetic to the Democrats' position. We came to regret that view as special counsel Patrick Fitzgerald pursued a lengthy, costly and ultimately counterproductive investigation in which several reporters were forced to disclose confidential sources, a New York Times reporter was jailed for 85 days while refusing to do so, a senior White House official was prosecuted for perjury - and no one, including the primary source of the original leak, was sanctioned for that disclosure.

Whether undertaken by Justice's prosecutors or an independent counsel, the

current investigation should, and almost certainly will, lead to a similar dead end - which is one reason we believe it should not have been begun at all. As in previous cases, including the six mostly unsuccessful leak prosecutions so far launched by the Obama administration, it's doubtful that any law was broken. Disclosing classified information is not by itself a crime, and courts have found that under the flawed 1917 espionage statute used in such cases, prosecutors must show that a leak was intended to harm U.S. security - an appropriately high bar.

Last week Mr. Obama indignantly denied that "my White House would purposefully release classified national security information." But the president has authority to declassify and disclose such information and did so this year when he spoke about the use of drones to target al-Qaeda operatives. In general, the more that can be made public about a president's decision-making - whether it is in selecting terrorists for drone strikes or ordering a cyberattack - the better the public is served. Whatever their impact on his reelection prospects, the recent stories about Mr. Obama's national security decisions were illuminating about critical areas of policymaking. They deserve more airing and debate, not a criminal investigation.

Did top presidential aides respond to reporters' inquiries by describing situation room meetings and other secret deliberations in an attempt to buff their boss's image? That wouldn't surprise us. If Mr. Obama's opponents believe it to be true and they're convinced that U.S. interests were harmed, they are free to make that case to the public, as they are doing. But the attempt to criminalize such leaks is misguided and

will do more harm than good. Elevating the investigation from the appointed prosecutors to an independent counsel would only compound the damage.

Wall Street Journal  
June 14, 2012

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### 41. Syria's Cease-Fire Of The Grave

*Assad, Russia and Iran are rolling over a timid West.*

Syria continues to sink deeper into a civil war that we were told would break out if the U.S. and its allies *intervened* to oust Bashar Assad. So the West has stayed out, but the killings have multiplied to include at least four massacres in two weeks, and now Russia is escalating its military aid to the Assad regime to include attack helicopters. Even "leading from behind" worked better than this.

U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton continued her intervention of words Tuesday, disclosing that "We are concerned about the latest information we have that there are attack helicopters on the way from Russia to Syria." Russia's foreign minister responded on Wednesday by saying the U.S. arms other countries in the region—which doesn't do much for Syria's opposition, which is carrying a gun to a tank and artillery fight.

This is the same Russia that has protected Mr. Assad from even the mildest U.N. sanctions. Readers may also recall that Russia and Syria were Exhibits A and B of Mr. Obama's policy of engaging with countries that supposedly only disagreed with America because Dick Cheney was Vice President. Four years later, Syria remains Iran's best ally and is slaughtering its own people, while Russia of the famous "reset" in relations is resorting to its Cold War vetoes of collective Western action.

Meanwhile, on Wednesday French Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius called on the U.N. Security Council to enforce U.N. envoy to Syria Kofi Annan's cease-fire, by military force if necessary. That would be the same cease-fire that Mr. Assad agreed to honor in April but has since violated every day. The Russians and Chinese can veto any such U.N. move, and they will no doubt shudder at the moral denunciations that follow from Western editorial pages that still oppose U.S. intervention.

The reality is that Mr. Assad and his protectors aren't going to accept any cease-fire or peace plan until it is the peace of the grave for his opponents. This is an existential fight for survival by a hard regime backed by even harder regimes that don't want to lose a client. Mr. Assad isn't going to accept a "transition"—Mrs. Clinton's policy word of choice for Syria—until he is dislodged by force.

Mr. Assad the ophthalmologist can see even without eyeglasses that Mr. Obama has no desire to intervene militarily to stop the slaughter. That perception alone gives Damascus a freer hand to carry out the very massacres Mrs. Clinton and her colleagues condemn. A similar scenario played out in Bosnia in the 1990s, until NATO intervened with air strikes that ended the war at little cost in Western lives. That intervention only happened after the killing of thousands in Srebrenica, a toll that Syria has already exceeded. The Administration's stated case against military intervention is that it would make the humanitarian situation worse, though we doubt that is how they see it in the massacre towns of Houla and Qubeir. There's also the fear that we don't know enough about the

Syrian opposition and what it might do if it came to power. But as with Slobodan Milosevic in Serbia, it's hard to imagine how Syria under new leadership could be worse for U.S. interests than the Assad clan.

If the realists are right that Iran is America's greatest threat in the region, then ousting Iran's best friend would be a strategic victory. On the other hand, if Mr. Assad murders enough people to survive, he will be even more beholden to Iran and Russia, and more inclined to make trouble for Lebanon, Turkey, Israel and the Gulf Arab states. If he prevails, the rest of the region—and the world—will also know that he did so despite insistent but irrelevant calls from the U.S. that he had to go. American credibility and influence will be weaker for it.

Intervening in Syria does not mean reprising the war in Iraq. A Bosnia-style air campaign targeting elite Syrian military units could prompt the general staff to reconsider its contempt for international opinion, and perhaps its allegiance to the Assad family. Short of that, carving out some kind of safe haven inside Syria would at least save lives.

The best argument against intervention at this point is Mr. Obama himself. Only a U.S. President can lead a coalition of the willing outside of the U.N., as well as persuade the American people, and Mr. Obama clearly doesn't want to do it. Diffident leadership made the Libya campaign take longer and look harder than it should have, and Syria would be more difficult.

Mr. Obama wants his Syrian nightmare to go away before the election, and with Russian helicopters and Mr. Assad's efficient butchery, it might.

Fort Worth Star-Telegram  
June 14, 2012

## 42. Combat Readiness Trumps Green Energy In Texas

*Wind industry officials would  
be wise to communicate with  
Texas base commanders*

Tarrant County has been a good home for the military since Camp Worth was settled on June 6, 1849. And the military has been a good neighbor to the county through wartime and peacetime.

The sprawling Naval Air Station Fort Worth Joint Reserve Base is a stellar example of interservice cooperation that efficiently and effectively uses taxpayer dollars in its mission to train and equip air crews and aviation ground support personnel. But the installation's presence is woven so deeply into Fort Worth's fabric that most folks don't think about it much -- though the county's economic health is directly tied to its annual impact of \$1 billion-plus.

Communities that value their military assets must be ever mindful of any development that might negatively affect their mission. In the case of Naval Air Station Fort Worth, the mission is to "provide joint training capabilities and resources to enable war fighter readiness while sustaining personnel and families' needs, future compatibility and a culture of safety."

A significant amount of that joint training takes place in the airspace above the 1,805-acre base. Each branch of service has flying assets, and they are used to train personnel as well as respond when military or humanitarian needs arise.

The "culture of safety" extends beyond concern for the 11,000 base employees to the

people living and working in the surrounding communities. Too much commercial and/or residential "encroachment" or development underneath the all-important flight path not only presents a potential safety hazard, but it could raise a red flag with a future secretary of defense who views it as a reason to realign or even close the base.

Capt. Rob Bennett is following in the footsteps of previous base commanders T.D. Smyers, John McCormack and Paul Paine in keeping an eye on what's occurring beyond the naval air station's fence. These days, Bennett is seeing the potential for wind turbines -- with their massive rotating blades -- disrupting the radar needed to safely control air traffic. It doesn't make for a pretty picture in his head.

Wind turbines present a challenge: balancing the interests of landowners, who want to develop their property in whatever way earns them the highest return, and the continuing viability of an important military facility that trains pilots and aviation crews.

Developing "green energy" is important to America's future energy independence. Combat readiness, however, may trump that objective.

Federal laws require the Defense Department to look for compromises and technical solutions to allow for wind energy and other types of development that may conflict with military missions. Bennett and the members of the Texas Commanders Council, which he founded, are more than willing to work with wind energy developers on finding those solutions.

The question is, How willing is the wind industry to notify base commanders of plans to construct a wind farm within their sphere of operation?

The answer is "not very," if the 2011 Texas legislative session is any indication of cooperation. Wind industry proponents lobbied hard to stall a bill that would have required developers to notify the Public Utilities Commission at least 120 days before the planned construction or expansion of wind turbines within 25 miles of military facilities.

Someday, this discussion won't be necessary. Aviation technology will advance to the point that GPS or some other advancement will replace radar for keeping track of aircraft. But that day is still far on the horizon. In the meantime, newcomers to Tarrant County would be wise to acknowledge the strong connection folks here have to our military if they are looking for a warm welcome.

New York Times  
June 14, 2012

## 43. Military Suicides -- (Letter)

To the Editor:

Re "Suicides Outpacing War Deaths for Troops" (news article, June 9):

While the Defense Department has done an extraordinary job of bolstering mental health services with creative strategies and wraparound support for our armed forces, the tragedy of military suicides continues unabated, proving how difficult these challenges are.

The alarming statistics -- about one suicide a day this year among active-duty military personnel -- highlight the challenges to carrying out effective interventions.

Stigma, interventions of limited efficacy and the compounding effects of multiple life stressors all impede our ability to prevent military suicides, just as they limit our success with civilians.

An innovative strategy pioneered by the New Jersey National Guard is the use of trained veterans to act as peer counselors. This confidential peer-to-peer approach has proved to be effective in preventing problems from escalating into crises and should be considered for all active-duty military personnel.

The cost of carrying out such a strategy is minimal, stigma is avoided and veterans are trained and employed.

**CHRISTOPHER  
KOSSEFF, President,  
UMDNJ-University  
Behavioral HealthCare,  
Piscataway, N.J., June 12,  
2012**

**Editor's Note:** The article by Timothy Williams appeared in the *Current News Early Bird*, June 9, 2012.