

# CURRENT NEWS

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## EARLY BIRD

June 21, 2012

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### MIDEAST

1. **U.S. Security Chiefs Visit Saudi After Royal Death**  
(Reuters.com)....Phil Stewart, Reuters  
U.S. security chiefs visited Saudi Arabia on Wednesday to convey President Barack Obama's condolences for the death of Crown Prince Nayef, underscoring the importance of a relationship seen as key in the battle against al Qaeda.
2. **Naif Cemented Ties: Panetta**  
(Arab News (Jeddah, Saudi Arabia))....Arab News  
...In a statement, Panetta paid tribute to Prince Naif for working "tirelessly for the protection of the Kingdom and the Saudi people" over nearly four decades as interior minister.
3. **U.S. Cargo Aircraft May Aid In Yemen**  
(Los Angeles Times)....David S. Cloud  
Spurred by recent battlefield gains, the Pentagon is making plans to send U.S. military aircraft to Yemen for the first time to help move government troops and supplies more quickly into battle against Islamic militants, U.S. officials said.
4. **'30 Qaeda Dead' In Yemen Raids, Anti-West Plot Foiled**  
(Yahoo.com)....Agence France-Presse  
Yemeni security forces carried out air strikes in which 30 suspected Al-Qaeda militants were reported killed in the south of the country on Wednesday and said they foiled a plot to attack embassies.
5. **C.I.A. Said To Aid In Steering Arms To Syrian Opposition**  
(New York Times)....Eric Schmitt  
A small number of C.I.A. officers are operating secretly in southern Turkey, helping allies decide which Syrian opposition fighters across the border will receive arms to fight the Syrian government, according to American officials and Arab intelligence officers.
6. **Israeli Strike On Iran Stays On Hold, For Now**  
(Wall Street Journal)....Joshua Mitnick  
Israel is unlikely to launch a strike on Iran as long as sanctions on Tehran intensify and diplomatic efforts continue, despite the failure of international talks in Moscow this week, Israeli officials and security experts said.
7. **U.S. Urged To Confront Iran On Nuclear Work**  
(New York Times)....Mark Landler  
With high-stakes negotiations over Iran's nuclear program at an impasse, the Obama administration is under mounting pressure to rethink a diplomatic exercise that many argue is simply stringing along the rest of the world.

8. **Faltering Iran Negotiations Stoke Fears Of New Conflict**

(*Washington Post*)....Joby Warrick

The near-collapse of nuclear talks with Iran has ushered in what experts on Wednesday described as a dangerous new phase in the decade-long standoff over Tehran's nuclear program.

## AFGHANISTAN

9. **Afghanistan Blast Kills 3 U.S. Troops**

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

Two explosions in eastern Afghanistan, one targeting an American convoy, killed three U.S. troops, an Afghan interpreter and at least 24 other Afghans on Wednesday, defying what the military had described as a trend of diminishing violence this year.

10. **A Long Road Home, Pitted With Worry**

(*Washington Post*)....Kevin Sieff

...The uncertainty shrouding Afghanistan's future has prompted thousands of Afghans to seek an escape route — foreign visa applications, asylum pleas, long journeys across the border. But every day, families swim against that current, returning to Afghanistan after years abroad, finding a country that has been transformed by all the development and war wrought by a decade-long U.S. intervention and a persistent insurgency.

11. **Attacks On Afghan Forces Increasing: Karzai**

(*Yahoo.com*)....Agence France-Presse

Insurgent attacks on Afghan security forces have increased in recent months, President Hamid Karzai said Thursday, a day after a Taliban suicide bomber struck a convoy, killing 21 people.

12. **Afghanistan Eyes \$4 Billion Aid In July Conference**

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

The war-torn Afghanistan expects a key international conference on the country's economy to pledge 4 billion U.S. dollars a year after 2014 when all foreign combat troops leave the country, President Hamid Karzai said on Thursday.

13. **ISAF: Afghan Transition Remains On Track**

(*Stars and Stripes*)....Chris Carroll

Quran burnings, killings of international troops by Afghan forces, continuing insurgent attacks -- none of it is affecting the timetable for handover of security responsibilities in Afghanistan, the top NATO official for transition planning said Wednesday at the Pentagon.

14. **General 'Not Concerned' With Afghan Funding**

(*Politico.com*)....Stephanie Gaskell

Congress is going to send less and less cash to Afghanistan to train and equip local forces, but a top general said Wednesday he's "not concerned."

15. **Summer Poses Toughest Test For Afghan Force**

(*Yahoo.com*)....Donna Cassata, Associated Press

This summer's fighting in Afghanistan will be the toughest test for the country's evolving security forces as they try to root out insurgents in the more heavily populated regions, senior defense officials told skeptical lawmakers on Wednesday.

16. **US Probes Afghan Tax On Companies Doing Rebuilding**

(*Yahoo.com*)....Pauline Jelinek, Associated Press

A government watchdog is looking into Afghanistan's practice of taxing U.S. companies involved in America's multibillion-dollar effort to rebuild the war-torn nation.

17. **Missing Afghan Army Night-Vision Goggles May Aid Taliban**

(*Bloomberg.com*)....David Lerman, Bloomberg News

U.S. and Afghan forces have lost track of hundreds of night-vision goggles used to hunt the Taliban, raising the odds of the high-technology eyewear falling into enemy hands, according to the Pentagon's inspector general.

18. **Pentagon Probing Alleged Abuse At Afghan Military Hospital**

(Reuters.com)....Susan Cornwell, Reuters

The Pentagon is investigating a U.S.-funded Afghan military hospital where there have been allegations of corruption and abuse of patients, a Defense Department official said on Wednesday.

## PAKISTAN

19. **Pakistan Arrests Frenchman Suspected Of Qaeda Links**

(New York Times)....Declan Walsh

Pakistani intelligence officials have detained a Frenchman of Algerian origin who is suspected of having links to a cell of Al Qaeda that carried out the attacks of Sept. 11, a senior Pakistani official said Wednesday.

20. **Pakistan To Talk With Militants On Anti-Polio Ban**

(Yahoo.com)....Agence France-Presse

Pakistani authorities will try to persuade militants in a northwest tribal area to lift a ban on anti-polio vaccination teams imposed in protest at US drone strikes, officials said Wednesday.

21. **America, Pakistan And Never Having To Say Sorry**

(Yahoo.com)....Kimberly Dozier, Associated Press

Say you're sorry. That's what the Pakistani government says it wants from the United States in order to jump-start a number of initiatives between the two countries that would help the hunt for al-Qaida in Pakistan and smooth the end of the war in Afghanistan.

## DEFENSE DEPARTMENT

22. **Report Faults Military School's Use Of Anti-Islamic Material**

(Washington Post)....Pauline Jelinek, Associated Press

Poor judgment and poor oversight led to the teaching of anti-Islamic material at a military school for officers, according to a Pentagon report released Wednesday.

23. **Congress Won't Let Panetta Close Bases**

(Washington Times)....Rowan Scarborough

Congress is poised to deliver a defeat to the Obama administration on one of its main defense policies in the new budget - base closings.

24. **Report: Military Spending Totals \$20.6 Billion In San Diego**

(U-T San Diego)....Nathan Max and Jeanette Steele

San Diego County's economy will benefit from an estimated \$20.6 billion of direct spending related to the military in the 2012 fiscal year, but growth is slowing, according to a report released Wednesday by the San Diego Military Advisory Council.

25. **DoD Not Tracking 9/11 Responder, Survivor Health**

(Military.com)....Bryant Jordan

More than 10 years after terrorists crashed a fully fueled airliner into the Pentagon, causing a fireball of atomized metal, concrete, plastic, blood and bone, the Defense Department has not compiled data on the long-term health of first responders or the building's workers.

## ASIA/PACIFIC

26. **Phl Ships Ready To Return To Shoal**

(Philippine Star)....Edith Regalado

The Philippines will send ships back to Panatag (Scarborough) Shoal if Chinese vessels remain in the area, President Aquino said yesterday.

27. **S. Korea, Japan, US Begin Drill Amid N. Korea Protest**

(Yahoo.com)....Agence France-Presse

South Korea, Japan and the United States Thursday began a joint naval exercise denounced by North Korea as a "reckless provocation".

## ARMY

28. **U.S. Army Will Focus On Training, Partnering With SOF: Odierno**

(DefenseNews.com)....Paul McLeary

The U.S. Army is looking to preposition stocks of equipment to keep them close to potential global flashpoints and assist with multilateral training missions with partner nations.

29. **Army Renewable Energy Commitment Is Serious: Hammack Details Program**

(AOL Defense (defense.aol.com))....Peter Gardett

The commitment of the US military to renewable energy is serious, long-term and about guaranteeing energy security for missions, and it is not a short-term environmental program, the US Army's energy and installations chief stressed today.

## NAVY

30. **Moving Navy Ships Will Take A Financial Toll, Study Finds**

(Norfolk Virginian-Pilot)....Bill Bartel

Three Navy ships leaving Hampton Roads for Mayport Naval Station in Florida will take with them paychecks, repair work and spending power that add up to 5,220 jobs and \$590 million of the region's annual gross product, according to the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission.

## AIR FORCE

31. **Dover Whistleblowers To Receive Recognition**

(Washington Post)....Lisa Rein

Three civilian whistleblowers who reported missing body parts and other failures at the mortuary that handles the remains of America's fallen troops will be honored as public servants of the year at a ceremony next week.

32. **Vermont Town Doesn't Want F-35s Flying Overhead**

(Fort Worth Star-Telegram)....Barry Shlachter, Scott Nishimura and Sandra Baker

One would think that in this down economy, a former mill town in Vermont would be working hard to get 18 or 24 F-35s based nearby, as two places near Air National Guard sites in South Carolina and Florida are doing.

33. **Atlas' Secret Payload Likely To Relay Data, Experts Say**

(Florida Today)....James Dean

An Atlas V rocket delivered a classified national security satellite to orbit Wednesday, completing the 50th launch by the decade-old Air Force program under which the rocket and its sister, the Delta IV, were developed.

34. **Squadron Commander Relieved Of Duties After CV-22 Osprey Crash**

(InsideDefense.com)....Christopher J. Castelli

The Air Force has removed the commander of the 8th Special Operations Squadron, citing a lack of confidence in his leadership following last week's crash of a CV-22 Osprey.

## WHITE HOUSE

35. **White House Rejects Requests For 'Targeted Killing' Papers**

(Yahoo.com)....Lou Kesten, Associated Press



The Obama administration has rejected requests from The New York Times and the American Civil Liberties Union seeking information about its "targeted killing" program against suspected terrorists, saying the release of the requested documents would harm national security.

## ENVIRONMENT

### 36. Searing Questions

(*Los Angeles Times*)....Julie Cart

...Birds aren't the only flying objects at risk. The Defense Department has expressed concern about large-scale solar plants' compatibility with aviation and weapons training at the Mojave region's nine military installations.

## VETERANS

### 37. Labor Awards Grants To Aid Homeless Vets

(*Washington Post*)....Steve Vogel

The Labor Department is awarding \$15 million in grants that it says will provide 8,600 homeless veterans with job training.

### 38. VA Looking To Technology To Reduce Suicide Risks

(*Yahoo.com*)....Kevin Freking, Associated Press

The Veterans Affairs Department hopes to reduce the risk of suicide among veterans by making greater use of video conferences between patients and doctors and by gradually integrating its electronic health records with those maintained by the Defense Department, VA Secretary Eric Shinseki told mental health professionals Wednesday.

## COMMENTARY

### 39. Somebody In The Government Finally Raises A Question About War And Taxes

(*Washington Post*)....Walter Pincus

At last, after 11 years of the United States at war, a few minutes of public discussion of a tax to pay for the fighting. But that would be for the next war.

### 40. Drones Vs. Diplomacy

(*Washington Post*)....David Ignatius

As America's relationship with Pakistan has unraveled over the past 18 months, an important debate has been going on within the U.S. Embassy in Islamabad over the proper scope of CIA covert actions and their effect on diplomatic interests.

### 41. Plugging The National Security Leaks

(*Wall Street Journal*)....Michael B. Mukasey

The imprudent release of secrets has become a hallmark of the current administration.

### 42. The Greening Of America's Military

(*Norfolk Virginian-Pilot*)....Editorial

Not too long ago, it was the stuff of science fiction: A green Navy, powering its ships, jets and helicopters with a blend of cooking grease, algae and oil. Next month, it'll become a reality during an exercise off the coast of Hawaii.

### 43. Military Death Penalty Discredits American Justice

(*Tacoma News Tribune*)....Editorial

Genuine justice doesn't play favorites with either criminals or their victims. A state, for example, that's quick to execute murderers who kill whites, but not those who kill blacks, shouldn't be in the business of executing anyone at all.

### 44. Where Are Those Words In The Treaty? -- (Letter)

(*Wall Street Journal*)....Richard J. Douglas

Ken Adelman's rebuttal (Letters, June 18) of Donald Rumsfeld's June 13 criticism of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea repeats two persistent myths about this deeply flawed and unnecessary treaty, to wit: that the U.S. would have a permanent seat in the treaty's governing body and could exercise a veto over its decisions. Neither of these assertions is true.

Reuters.com  
June 20, 2012

## 1. U.S. Security Chiefs Visit Saudi After Royal Death

By Phil Stewart, Reuters

JEDDAH -- U.S. security chiefs visited Saudi Arabia on Wednesday to convey President Barack Obama's condolences for the death of Crown Prince Nayef, underscoring the importance of a relationship seen as key in the battle against al Qaeda.

The delegation was led by Defense Secretary Leon Panetta and included Federal Bureau of Investigation director Robert Mueller, Assistant to the President for Homeland Security, Counter-terrorism John Brennan and former Central Intelligence Agency director George Tenet.

Mike Morrell, the CIA's deputy director, also joined the delegation which met Prince Salman, the new crown prince.

"The president wanted me ... to convey to you not only our sorrow for your loss but also our best wishes to you in your new position," Panetta told Prince Salman at the Royal Court in Jeddah, where delegations from around the world were visiting.

Nayef, who was interior minister for 37 years, built up a formidable domestic security apparatus which crushed al Qaeda inside the kingdom and has helped foil attempts by the militant group to attack international targets from its base in Yemen.

"He played a pivotal role in strengthening the relationship between the United States and the kingdom of Saudi Arabia," Panetta said in a statement late on Tuesday.

After the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks on the United States, Prince Nayef was at first unwilling to accept that Saudi citizens could have participated,

when they in fact made up 15 of the 19 hijackers.

But former diplomats to the kingdom said he later reversed this position and worked closely with U.S. security forces after a string of al Qaeda attacks hit targets inside Saudi Arabia.

King Abdullah on Monday named Prince Salman, defence minister in the world's top oil exporter, as his new heir.

Salman is responsible for Saudi Arabia's multi-billion dollar arms purchases which have historically been used to cement relations with key allies including Washington.

However, analysts say Nayef's death will likely not affect the kingdom's security operations as his long-time deputy Prince Ahmed was appointed to replace him as interior minister.

Nayef's son Prince Mohammed bin Nayef has stayed on as head of the security forces which have been praised by U.S. officials for expelling al Qaeda from Saudi Arabia.

"Prince Nayef was involved in strategic decisions, not the day-to-day operational side, so I don't think we will see any change, particularly on counter terrorism," said Mustafa Alani, a security expert at the Gulf Research Centre based in Jeddah.

"Prince Ahmed will endorse the operational policy of Prince Mohammed and continue the close relationship with the U.S., not only inside Saudi but on Yemen, Somalia ... It's region-wide," Alani added.

After stepping off the plane, Panetta, in a dark suit, shook hands and smiled as he was greeted by the Saudi protocol chief.

British Defence Secretary Philip Hammond and Prince Andrew the Duke of York offered condolences to Crown Prince Salman on Tuesday.

*Additional reporting and writing by Angus McDowall in Riyadh.*

Arab News (Jeddah, Saudi Arabia)

June 21, 2012

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## 2. Naif Cemented Ties: Panetta

By Arab News

JEDDAH: Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Abdullah yesterday received a telephone call from US President Barack Obama, who conveyed his condolences on the death of Prince Naif. The two leaders also discussed major regional and international issues.

Obama also sent a high-level US delegation led by Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta to the Kingdom to offer condolences. The delegation included James Smith, US ambassador to Saudi Arabia; John Brennan, top White House official for homeland security; and FBI Director Robert Mueller.

Prince Naif, 78, who was the Kingdom's crown prince, deputy premier and minister of interior, died Saturday in Geneva. His body was buried in Makkah after funeral prayers at the Grand Mosque.

In a statement, Panetta paid tribute to Prince Naif for working "tirelessly for the protection of the Kingdom and the Saudi people" over nearly four decades as interior minister.

"His visionary leadership and courage were instrumental to the gains we have made together against terrorism and extremism, and helped save Saudi and American lives," Panetta said.

"Prince Naif played a pivotal role in strengthening the relationship between the United

States and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia," he said.

Panetta said he would "express the condolences of the American people on this loss, reaffirm my commitment to our strong security partnership, and express my hope that this partnership will endure as a lasting tribute" to the late prince.

A number of foreign delegates arrived in Jeddah yesterday to convey their condolences to King Abdullah and other royal family members.

They included French Defense Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian, Prince Philippe of Belgium, Japanese Crown Prince Naruhito, Deputy Italian Foreign Minister Staffan de Mastura, Dutch State Minister and former Prime Minister Wim Kok.

Foreign diplomats accredited to the Kingdom also arrived in Jeddah to offer condolences. Foreign delegations participating in a UN conference in Brazil met with Saudi delegates to convey their condolences.

Tabuk Gov. Prince Fahd bin Sultan received a large number of mourners in the region. Speaking on the occasion, he highlighted the important position Prince Naif had in the hearts of Saudis.

"Every house in the Kingdom knows what Prince Naif contributed to reinforce the Kingdom's security and stability. He launched a war on those who tried to undermine the country's security," he said.

Prince Fahd congratulated the newly appointed Crown Prince Salman and Interior Minister Prince Ahmed. "Prince Salman is a statesman and man of wisdom. We all know the new crown prince. He has established strong international relations."

Interior Minister Prince Ahmed congratulated Prince Salman on his appointment as crown prince, deputy premier and minister of defense. "Myself and all staff of the Interior Ministry pledge our allegiance to the new crown prince and wish him success." He thanked King Abdullah for appointing him as interior minister.

Transport Minister Jabara Al-Seraisy described Prince Salman as "an outstanding international figure and one of the strong pillars of the Kingdom."

He is well known for his wisdom and administrative capabilities as well as humanitarian services, he added.

Abdullah Al-Saihati, a prominent businessman in the Eastern Province and chairman of Saihati Group, congratulated Prince Salman and Prince Ahmed on their new appointment as crown prince and interior minister respectively. "We pledge our allegiance to the new crown prince and hope he would take the Kingdom to greater heights under the strong leadership of King Abdullah," Al-Saihati told Arab News.

Huda Al-Ameel, president of Princess Nourah University, congratulated Prince Salman on his appointment. "His appointment comes as a continuation of the country's development process. It reflects King Abdullah's desire to take the country to greater heights," she said. Al-Ameel commended Prince Salman's support for education and research.

Saudi Ambassador to UK Prince Muhammad bin Nawaf received citizens and foreign delegates who came to convey condolences.

They included former Kuwaiti Speaker Sheikh Jassim Al-Khurafi, former

Kuwaiti Deputy Premier and Foreign Minister Sheikh Muhammad Al-Sabah and Arab ambassadors accredited to the UK.

Los Angeles Times

June 21, 2012

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### 3. U.S. Cargo Aircraft May Aid In Yemen

By David S. Cloud

WASHINGTON --

Spurred by recent battlefield gains, the Pentagon is making plans to send U.S. military aircraft to Yemen for the first time to help move government troops and supplies more quickly into battle against Islamic militants, U.S. officials said.

Senior U.S. commanders responsible for the Middle East argue that deploying American cargo aircraft could be crucial to carrying on a U.S.-backed offensive that has driven members of Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula and allied groups out of several cities and towns.

"This wasn't an American idea. It was a Yemeni idea and one worth considering given our common fight against Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula," said a U.S. official, who, like others, spoke on condition of anonymity because the plan is not public. "Nothing's been decided, and it may take some time before the Yemenis themselves sort out whether they need this kind of support or not."

The proposal does not have final White House approval yet and has prompted concern among officials in the White House, the State Department and even within the Pentagon. Militants who have targeted the U.S. are based in Yemen, which also is riven by regional and tribal differences, and skeptics

fear the conflict is looking increasingly like a civil war.

Deploying aircraft would invite a backlash in the country and the wider Middle East, said administration officials critical of the idea.

"We have to be very mindful of the fact that there is a lot of attention being paid to the role of the United States in Yemen," said another U.S. official. "We want it to be appropriate, and not something which is taking kind of a controlling role, if you will, in these activities. And that I think is where the concerns lie now."

The plan, which could include providing Yemen's troops with vehicles and other supplies, would still limit the U.S. to a support role, which White House officials have insisted is as far as President Obama will go.

Obama, who has withdrawn U.S. troops from Iraq and is in the process of drawing down American forces in Afghanistan, has said he has no intention of putting U.S. boots on the ground in Yemen.

U.S. officials have insisted for months that they will not be drawn into a civil war and do not intend to put ground troops in Yemen, other than trainers and small special-operations units. But a decision to use U.S. aircraft and air crews in Yemen would be another sign that the United States is taking on a more active role in the country.

Recent gains by Yemeni forces have strengthened the hand of U.S. military commanders. They argue that sending aircraft and other additional assistance could help turn the tide in Yemen. Over the last year, militants appeared to be gaining strength and setting up fledgling governments in southern provinces under their control, several officials said.

In contrast to its recent successes, the Yemeni

military's previous efforts to conduct operations in the country's rugged hinterlands have frequently ended with the government suffering bloody defeats at the hands of Islamic militants and well-armed tribes.

Yemen's armed forces rely on an aging fleet of Soviet-era helicopters and poorly maintained trucks to transport its forces.

The questions of how many and what types of U.S. aircraft would be required are being studied by the Pentagon's Joint Staff and by planners at U.S. Central Command, which is responsible for U.S. military operations in the Middle East, officials said.

Dozens of U.S. Special Forces troops deployed to Yemen this year and have been supplying intelligence and advice on tactics that have aided the operations, officials said.

The U.S. military and CIA are coordinating a separate but related campaign of airstrikes against members of Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, which U.S. intelligence officials say poses the greatest threat to America and is one of several militant groups fighting the Yemeni government. The group claimed responsibility for recruiting "underwear bomber" Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab, who tried to blow up a plane heading to Detroit on Christmas Day 2009.

The group exploited a security vacuum last year during a popular uprising against Yemen's longtime president, Ali Abdullah Saleh, to seize territory in the southern provinces of Abyan and Shabwa. That raised fears it could use the area as a foothold from which to launch more attacks on U.S. targets.

A senior U.S. official said the further expansion of direct U.S. military support for the Yemeni armed forces was being



considered seriously by the administration to capitalize on the recent gains in the south. U.S. commanders are eager to move quickly because Yemen's president, Abdu Rabu Mansour Hadi, is proving far more willing than Saleh to accept and even solicit U.S. military assistance.

Hadi, who took office in February, has vowed to defeat the insurgency, unlike Saleh, who allowed militants take control of large parts of Yemeni territory.

Marine Gen. James Mattis, who is in charge of Central Command, met with Hadi and other Yemeni officials this week in Sana, Yemen's capital, and "affirmed the United States' readiness to support Yemen's efforts to defeat Al Qaeda, which threatens Yemen and the international community alike," according to a statement issued by the U.S. Embassy.

Mattis' visit came less than a month after a visit by Army Brig. Gen. Ralph Groover, the deputy director for plans and policy at Central Command.

"We're all trying to be as helpful as we can to President Hadi and the campaign that he and the Yemeni armed forces are waging in the south to dislodge the AQAP presence and allow civilian authorities to return," said the U.S. official critical of the Pentagon plan, using an acronym for Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula.

"If American aircraft were ferrying Yemeni government troops, it would be evident that we were involved in a substantial way," the official said. "It invites a lot of attention that would not be helpful."

A senior military official involved in the discussions described them as "nascent." He declined to give details because of the danger of tipping off militants.

But other officials said that the discussions were well advanced and that details were being circulated to departments and agencies involved in Yemen policy. The Pentagon's Joint Staff is preparing specific operation plans, including what types of aircraft would be deployed to Yemen and other military assistance that would be required, the officials said.

*Times staff writer Ken Dilanian contributed to this report.*

Yahoo.com  
June 20, 2012

#### **4. '30 Qaeda Dead' In Yemen Raids, Anti-West Plot Foiled**

By Agence France-Presse

Yemeni security forces carried out air strikes in which 30 suspected Al-Qaeda militants were reported killed in the south of the country on Wednesday and said they foiled a plot to attack embassies.

A Yemeni Red Cross worker was also killed in the air raids as he travelled in the south on a mission to help negotiate the release of a kidnapped French colleague, a relative told AFP.

The aircraft carried out several strikes, the mayor of Mahfed town on the outskirts of Abyan and Shabwa provinces, Yaslam al-Anburi, told AFP by telephone. "There were 30 deaths in Al-Qaeda ranks for sure."

"Yemeni aircraft carried out a series of raids against concentrations of Al-Qaeda fighters, mainly in the Wadi Dhiman and Dayda valleys, killing 30 and wounding many others," he said.

Earlier, a tribal chief said three suspected militants were killed and four wounded in an air raid targeting a group of Al-Qaeda fighters in a desert region

between Abyan and Shabwa provinces.

Yemen's military launched a campaign in May against Al-Qaeda in the south which ended more than a year of jihadist control over a string of towns and villages in Abyan and Shabwa.

The group's fighters are believed to have retreated to safe havens in mountainous regions of Shabwa, Marib and Hadramawt provinces where they enjoy tribal protection.

Red Cross worker Hussein Saleh, killed in the air strikes on Wednesday, was in the region along with the head of the International Committee of the Red Cross for the southern port city of Aden, Saleh's relative said.

He was on a mission to help secure the release of a French ICRC employee who was abducted in April, he added, while the ICRC said Saleh died in unclear circumstances while on a humanitarian mission.

The ICRC delegation head in Yemen, Eric Marclay, added: "We are devastated by the tragic loss of our friend and colleague Hussein," who leaves behind a pregnant wife and four children.

On April 22, the ICRC said a French member of its staff was abducted in western Yemen. There has been no news of him since then.

More than 200 people have been abducted in Yemen in the past 15 years, many of them by members of the country's powerful tribes who use them as bargaining chips with the authorities. Almost all of them were freed unharmed.

Earlier, a security official said a plot to attack embassies in Sanaa had been foiled, state news agency SABA reported. "Three suspects armed with weapons, explosives and maps showing the (embassy) locations" were detained.

He said the residences of "military commanders and other important people" were also marked on the maps.

The reports came two days after a suicide bomber killed Salem Ali Qoton, the general who spearheaded the month-long offensive against Al-Qaeda in Abyan and Shabwa provinces.

Also on Wednesday, security forces said they arrested Majed al-Qulaisi, "a member of the (Al-Qaeda) cell that planned" a massive suicide attack that killed more than 100 troops at a military parade rehearsal in Sanaa last month.

A Tunisian, "one of Al-Qaeda's most dangerous foreign nationals in Yemen," Nizar Abdel Rahman, was also arrested, SABA reported.

After taking office in February, President Abdrabuh Mansur Hadi has pledged to destroy Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, the network's local branch, which is considered by Washington as the group's most active and deadly.

New York Times  
June 21, 2012  
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#### **5. C.I.A. Said To Aid In Steering Arms To Syrian Opposition**

By Eric Schmitt

WASHINGTON — A small number of C.I.A. officers are operating secretly in southern Turkey, helping allies decide which Syrian opposition fighters across the border will receive arms to fight the Syrian government, according to American officials and Arab intelligence officers.

The weapons, including automatic rifles, rocket-propelled grenades, ammunition and some antitank weapons, are being funneled mostly across the Turkish

border by way of a shadowy network of intermediaries including Syria's Muslim Brotherhood and paid for by Turkey, Saudi Arabia and Qatar, the officials said.

The C.I.A. officers have been in southern Turkey for several weeks, in part to help keep weapons out of the hands of fighters allied with Al Qaeda or other terrorist groups, one senior American official said. The Obama administration has said it is not providing arms to the rebels, but it has also acknowledged that Syria's neighbors would do so.

The clandestine intelligence-gathering effort is the most detailed known instance of the limited American support for the military campaign against the Syrian government. It is also part of Washington's attempt to increase the pressure on President Bashar al-Assad of Syria, who has recently escalated his government's deadly crackdown on civilians and the militias battling his rule. With Russia blocking more aggressive steps against the Assad government, the United States and its allies have instead turned to diplomacy and aiding allied efforts to arm the rebels to force Mr. Assad from power.

By helping to vet rebel groups, American intelligence operatives in Turkey hope to learn more about a growing, changing opposition network inside of Syria and to establish new ties. "C.I.A. officers are there and they are trying to make new sources and recruit people," said one Arab intelligence official who is briefed regularly by American counterparts.

American officials and retired C.I.A. officials said the administration was also weighing additional assistance to rebels, like providing satellite imagery and other

detailed intelligence on Syrian troop locations and movements. The administration is also considering whether to help the opposition set up a rudimentary intelligence service. But no decisions have been made on those measures or even more aggressive steps, like sending C.I.A. officers into Syria itself, they said.

The struggle inside Syria has the potential to intensify significantly in coming months as powerful new weapons are flowing to both the Syrian government and opposition fighters. President Obama and his top aides are seeking to pressure Russia to curb arms shipments like attack helicopters to Syria, its main ally in the Middle East.

"We'd like to see arms sales to the Assad regime come to an end, because we believe they've demonstrated that they will only use their military against their own civilian population," Benjamin J. Rhodes, deputy national security adviser for strategic communications, said after Mr. Obama and his Russian counterpart, Vladimir V. Putin, met in Mexico on Monday.

Spokesmen for the White House, State Department and C.I.A. would not comment on any intelligence operations supporting the Syrian rebels, some details of which were reported last week by The Wall Street Journal.

Until now, the public face of the administration's Syria policy has largely been diplomacy and humanitarian aid.

The State Department said Wednesday that Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton would meet with her Russian counterpart, Sergey V. Lavrov, on the sidelines of a meeting of Asia-Pacific foreign ministers in St. Petersburg, Russia, next Thursday. The private talks are

likely to focus, at least in part, on the crisis in Syria.

The State Department has authorized \$15 million in nonlethal aid, like medical supplies and communications equipment, to civilian opposition groups in Syria.

The Pentagon continues to fine-tune a range of military options, after a request from Mr. Obama in early March for such contingency planning. Gen. Martin E. Dempsey, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, told senators at that time that the options under review included humanitarian airlifts, aerial surveillance of the Syrian military, and the establishment of a no-fly zone.

The military has also drawn up plans for how coalition troops would secure Syria's sizable stockpiles of chemical and biological weapons if an all-out civil war threatened their security.

But senior administration officials have underscored in recent days that they are not actively considering military options. "Anything at this point vis-à-vis Syria would be hypothetical in the extreme," General Dempsey told reporters this month.

What has changed since March is an influx of weapons and ammunition to the rebels. The increasingly fierce air and artillery assaults by the government are intended to counter improved coordination, tactics and weaponry among the opposition forces, according to members of the Syrian National Council and other activists.

Last month, these activists said, Turkish Army vehicles delivered antitank weaponry to the border, where it was then smuggled into Syria. Turkey has repeatedly denied it was extending anything other than humanitarian aid to the opposition, mostly via refugee camps near the border. The

United States, these activists said, was consulted about these weapons transfers.

American military analysts offered mixed opinions on whether these arms have offset the advantages held by the militarily superior Syrian Army. "The rebels are starting to crack the code on how to take out tanks," said Joseph Holliday, a former United States Army intelligence officer in Afghanistan who is now a researcher tracking the Free Syrian Army for the Institute for the Study of War in Washington.

But a senior American officer who receives classified intelligence reports from the region, compared the rebels' arms to "peashooters" against the government's heavy weaponry and attack helicopters.

The Syrian National Council, the main opposition group in exile, has recently begun trying to organize the scattered, localized units that all fight under the name of the Free Syrian Army into a more cohesive force.

About 10 military coordinating councils in provinces across the country are now sharing tactics and other information. The city of Homs is the notable exception. It lacks such a council because the three main military groups in the city do not get along, national council officials said.

Jeffrey White, a defense analyst at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy who tracks videos and announcements from self-described rebel battalions, said there were now about 100 rebel formations, up from roughly 70 two months ago, ranging in size from a handful of fighters to a couple of hundred combatants.

"When the regime wants to go someplace and puts the right package of forces together, it



can do it," Mr. White said. "But the opposition is raising the cost of those kinds of operations."

*Neil MacFarquhar contributed reporting from Beirut, Lebanon. Souad Mekhennet also contributed reporting.*

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## 6. Israeli Strike On Iran Stays On Hold, For Now

By Joshua Mitnick

TEL AVIV—Israel is unlikely to launch a strike on Iran as long as sanctions on Tehran intensify and diplomatic efforts continue, despite the failure of international talks in Moscow this week, Israeli officials and security experts said.

That puts Israeli leaders in a bind: While lack of progress on diplomatic attempts to curb Iran's nuclear program bolsters Israel's position that Tehran won't compromise, it needs to wait for diplomacy and sanctions to be exhausted so it can better persuade others to join it in taking tougher measures, analysts said.

"As long as the international community is willing to continue, Israel won't say, 'Stop.' That's unthinkable," an Israeli official said. "If the negotiations don't bring Iran to concessions, at least there will be a clear-cut case showing that Iran does not want to cooperate."

The failure of the Moscow negotiations with the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council plus Germany heightened pessimism in Washington about the prospects for diplomacy and fueled talk of military options.

A group of former U.S. and international officials testified before the House

Armed Services Committee on Wednesday that the military threat against Iran is "at this point, underdeveloped" and must be reinforced through more intensive U.S. preparation and stronger messaging.

"We don't think that Iran is sufficiently persuaded that military force really is in prospect should they fail to come to an acceptable agreement to the problem," said Steven Rademaker, who served in the State Department during the George W. Bush administration.

The Obama administration, holding to a two-track strategy of pressure and diplomacy, pointed to a coming round of lower-level talks in Istanbul as the next milestone in attempts to persuade Iran to dial back its nuclear program.

"If following this July 3rd session, we are still not making progress, we're going to continue to work together on what more pressure we can bring to bear, including on the sanctions track," said Victoria Nuland, the State Department spokeswoman.

Some Israeli officials worry that Iran will eventually offer an 11th-hour compromise that will split the international negotiators, a group known as the P5+1.

Spokesmen for Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu declined to comment on the latest round of talks. Several weeks ago, Mr. Netanyahu expressed concern that negotiators might accept a compromise that would permit Iran to continue with low-grade uranium enrichment. No such deal appears to be on the agenda.

"My feeling is there's a kind of relief on part of the Government of Israel" about the P5+1's resistance to compromise, said Ephraim Kam, a fellow at the Institute for

National Strategic Studies, a Tel Aviv University think tank with close ties to Israel's security establishment.

Israel isn't likely to launch a strike in the immediate future, Mr. Kam said. "The military will be delayed for some time....The Americans and Europeans will tell Israel, 'You have to wait,' and we have to wait and see what the impact of the sanctions are."

Iran's rial lost value against the dollar and gold on Wednesday on the news of the failed talks and anticipation of U.S. sanctions on firms doing business with Iran's central bank beginning June 28 and a European embargo on Iran's oil exports set to take effect July 1. Iran, struggling with a growing budget deficit, is offering price reductions for its oil to retain customers.

Iranian Finance Minister Shamsedin Hussein denied a link between Iran's economic woes and its approach in talks. "This is a ploy to make our economy look weak," he said Wednesday. Iran denies accusations that it is pursuing development of a nuclear weapon.

Israeli experts are divided on what approach would prompt Iran to change course. Some say only a credible threat of military action by the West will work. "Sanctions are known to take a very long time to have an impact on the country you are targeting," said Dore Gold, a former ambassador to the United Nations during Mr. Netanyahu's first term in office. "It's important to put in place, but the clock is ticking."

—Jay Solomon in Washington, David Crawford in Berlin and Farnaz Fassihi in Beirut contributed to this article.

## 7. U.S. Urged To Confront Iran On Nuclear Work

By Mark Landler

WASHINGTON — With high-stakes negotiations over Iran's nuclear program at an impasse, the Obama administration is under mounting pressure to rethink a diplomatic exercise that many argue is simply stringing along the rest of the world.

After two days of fruitless talks in Moscow, negotiators for the United States and other major powers did not even schedule another high-level meeting with Iran, committing only to a lower-level session in July to go over the technical details of a proposal to suspend the enrichment of uranium that Iran has already rejected in principle.

Dennis B. Ross, a former senior White House adviser on Iran, said he believed the negotiations had become a trap, allowing Iran to continue enriching nuclear fuel while the two sides fail to agree on even interim measures to slow the Iranian program. The major powers, he said, should scrap the step-by-step approach in favor of a comprehensive deal that would test Iran's sincerity, but could also hasten a military confrontation.

"The issue here is, 'How do you deal with a process that's going to be harder and harder to justify?'" said Mr. Ross, who left the administration in December and is now a senior fellow at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy. "If it looks like you're engaging in a process for the sake of process, that's a bigger problem."

Other critics are even blunter, labeling the talks a "charade" and demanding that Congress pass another round of sanctions against Iran. On Friday, 44 Republican and

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Democratic senators sent a letter to President Obama urging him to abandon the negotiations if the Moscow meeting failed to produce any concessions from Iran.

"Talks are going slowly but Iran's centrifuges are moving quickly," said Representative Brad Sherman, a California Democrat and member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee who has taken a tough line against Tehran.

Mr. Sherman said the United States should impose sanctions against all of Iran's banks that go beyond unilateral measures aimed at cutting off its Central Bank. Those measures, which will take effect at the end of the month, could still cause a change of heart on the part of the Iranians, administration officials say.

These officials acknowledge that there are deep gaps between the two sides and no sign yet that the Iranians have made a genuine decision to bargain. But with the banking sanctions and a European Union oil embargo about to take effect, they insist that the step-by-step approach is worth pursuing a while longer.

At the working-level meeting, on July 3 in Istanbul, officials said they would seek further details on an Iranian proposal made in Moscow that left Western diplomats puzzled. The proposal was made in response to the demand that Iran suspend its enrichment of uranium to 20 percent, ship out its existing stockpile of that uranium and shut down its heavily fortified Fordo enrichment facility near the holy city of Qum.

While the Iranian offer made reference to 20 percent uranium, it was, in the words of a senior administration official, "elliptical." And even though the diplomats met for hours on Monday and Tuesday, the

official said there was not enough time to determine whether the Iranian offer held the prospect for progress.

"Iran submitted a good proposal to them," Mohammad Reza Bahonar, a senior member of Iran's Parliament, said at a news conference in Tehran.

Iranian officials and commanders reiterated that they would never relinquish what they called Iran's nuclear rights. Some asserted that not only was Iran impervious to Western threats but was also poised to prosper economically, despite evidence that the sanctions could cripple its ability to sell oil, its financial lifeline.

Such assertions do not mask the economic pain that analysts said was about to fall on Iran with the imposition of the oil sanctions. To some experts, that is reason enough to allow the diplomatic process to grind on.

"It looks hopeless now, but let's not blind ourselves with our own rational Western culture," said Cliff Kupchan, an Iran analyst at the Eurasia Group, a consulting firm. "This is a trading culture. It can turn on a dime."

Mr. Ross, in an article published in *The New Republic*, argued that the major powers should skip all these steps and offer the Iranians a civil nuclear power capacity that would be limited and monitored in a way that would not allow Iran to develop a weapon. If Iran rejected that offer, he said, it would clarify Tehran's intentions.

Shifting to such an approach, Mr. Ross said, would also assuage the doubts of the Israelis, who say the Iranians are using the talks to buy time while they enrich fuel to use in bombs. And it would give the West sounder justification for a military strike on Iran's nuclear facilities,

since Tehran's ultimate goal would no longer be ambiguous.

"For them to really feel they need to reach an agreement, they need to know that if diplomacy fails, the pressure is on them," Mr. Ross said in a telephone interview from Israel, where he was meeting with Israeli officials.

Mr. Ross said he worried that the calendar, which initially worked against Iran because of the sanctions, was now in its favor. In particular, he said, the Iranians appeared to be calculating that Mr. Obama wanted to keep diplomacy going until after Election Day on Nov. 6. "They read the 6th as us not wanting diplomacy to fail," he said.

Though Mr. Ross keeps lines to former colleagues at the White House, he has not persuaded the administration to change course. A senior administration official said pursuing a comprehensive deal would take months of negotiation, during which time Tehran would continue to enrich uranium. Agreeing on interim steps could freeze Iran's enrichment sooner.

"Time is problematic," said the official, who spoke on condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the talks. "As time moves on, it gets more problematic."

*Ellen Barry contributed reporting from Moscow, Thomas Erdbrink from Tehran, and Artin Afkhami from New York.*

The near-collapse of nuclear talks with Iran has ushered in what experts on Wednesday described as a dangerous new phase in the decade-long standoff over Tehran's nuclear program.

A new round of sanctions is scheduled to take effect July 1, increasing the pressure on Iran's faltering economy. At the same time, prominent Israeli and U.S. politicians are renewing calls for preparations for a military strike to halt Iran's nuclear progress.

Iranian officials sounded fresh notes of defiance a day after talks concluded in Moscow, blaming Western countries for the lack of progress and insisting that no amount of pressure would persuade Iran to give up its right to a civilian nuclear energy program. The negotiations between Iran and the bloc of countries known as the P5-plus-1 ended late Tuesday with no agreement and no further substantive talks scheduled, other than technical consultations.

"There is not a one of us who is not aware how serious this is," said a senior Obama administration official, reflecting on the failure to achieve any meaningful agreement with Tehran after three rounds of direct negotiations with Iranian officials since April.

While insisting that diplomatic efforts would continue, the official said the White House was "sober" in assessing the outcome of the Moscow talks, in which Iran was said to have balked at demands for freezing production of a type of enriched uranium that can be easily converted to fuel for nuclear weapons. The United States and its allies contend that Iran is using civilian facilities as a cover for developing a

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## 8. Faltering Iran Negotiations Stoke Fears Of New Conflict

*Stalled nuclear talks fuel concern over dangerous new maneuvers*

By Joby Warrick



nuclear weapons capability, an assertion Iran denies.

The counterproposals from the Iranian side were "far from where the rest of us are," leading to the decision to hold low-level technical consultations next month in Turkey so the sides can clarify their positions, said the official, who insisted on anonymity in describing the diplomatically sensitive negotiations.

The United States and other members of the six-nation bloc (the U.N. Security Council's five permanent members and Germany) pushed hard in the final hours of the Moscow meeting to preserve at least an appearance of continuing negotiations, fearing that a complete failure would increase the likelihood of a military strike. But U.S. officials said they would not agree to open-ended talks that allow Iran to continue adding to its uranium stockpile. "This is not indefinite," the administration official said.

Iran had sought relief from potentially crippling sanctions as a condition for any concessions on curbs to its nuclear program.

With diplomacy in tatters, Tehran faces the full brunt of a European Union oil embargo on July 1 and new U.S. sanctions targeting the country's central bank.

Economists and Middle Eastern analysts say the new sanctions are likely to drain billions of dollars from the country's economy and increase the pressure on Iran's currency, the rial, which has lost half its value over the past year.

Worsening economic hardship could drive Iran's leaders to adopt more aggressive and confrontational policies in the region and perhaps beyond, Iran experts warned.

"A provocative unpredictability will probably become more prominent in Iran's foreign policy," said Cliff Kupchan, a former State Department official and Middle East analyst for the Eurasian Group.

After months of relative quiet, he said, Tehran could revert to the aggressive behavior it displayed late last year when it threatened to shut down shipping in the Strait of Hormuz.

"The risk is that an Iranian foreign policy based on weakness and anger emerges," he said.

Iranian officials scoffed Wednesday at the impact of new sanctions, saying they were ready to weather years of hardship if necessary.

"Our nation is prepared to prove that '5-plus-1' equals zero, and that no means can pressure Iran," Brig. Gen. Mohammad Reza Naqdi, commander of Iran's paramilitary Basij force, told Iran's FARS news agency.

In Washington, the faltering of diplomacy sparked renewed debate over the possibility of a military strike to halt Iran's nuclear progress.

At a congressional hearing Wednesday, lawmakers from both parties suggested that the Pentagon should begin preparations for military action as a means of demonstrating seriousness to Iran.

Former senator Charles S. Robb (D-Va.), testifying before the House Armed Services Committee, said the preparations should include expedited deployment of new bunker-busting munitions designed to penetrate Iran's underground nuclear bunkers.

"It is only the credible threat of force, combined with sanctions, that affords any realistic hope of an acceptable diplomatic solution," said

Robb, who co-wrote a study on Iran strategy for the Bipartisan Policy Center.

But others cautioned that a military strike would be costly and would probably only delay Iran's pursuit of nuclear technology — not stop it.

"It is premature to conclude that a military strike is immediately required," said the top Democrat on the committee, Rep. Adam Smith (Wash.).

Los Angeles Times

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## 9. Afghanistan Blast Kills 3 U.S. Troops

*The Americans are among about 30 people slain in two explosions.*

By Laura King

KABUL, AFGHANISTAN -- Two explosions in eastern Afghanistan, one targeting an American convoy, killed three U.S. troops, an Afghan interpreter and at least 24 other Afghans on Wednesday, defying what the military had described as a trend of diminishing violence this year.

Western officials had been citing decreased civilian casualties in the first four months of the year as a sign that the insurgency is waning and Afghan forces are increasingly showing the ability to safeguard the country. But deaths have been increasing in recent weeks.

Both blasts -- one in the city of Khowst, the other in a rural district of Lowgar province -- occurred at the lunch hour, a time when many people are on the streets.

The Khowst explosion, aimed at a convoy carrying coalition troops, was triggered by a suicide bomber on a motorbike, the Interior Ministry said. The ministry put the Afghan death toll at 16, including two police officers,

and the injury count at 37, including two women.

Western military officials said three Americans and an interpreter died in the explosion, and the U.S. Embassy condemned what it called a "murderous campaign against all" by the Taliban and other insurgents.

Khowst, the capital of the province of the same name, lies just across the border from Pakistan's tribal areas, where the Haqqani network, a virulent Taliban offshoot, is based. The Haqqanis are active in Khowst and neighboring provinces, but other insurgent groups operate there as well. There was no immediate claim of responsibility.

Hospitals and clinics in Khowst were overwhelmed by the number of casualties, and besieged by panicked relatives of those who were injured and killed.

Khowst city remains volatile even though there is a major American-run base on its outskirts. That installation, known as Camp Salerno, came under a fierce and concerted insurgent attack June 1 that left dozens of troops seriously injured.

At the time, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization force disclosed little about the incident, including the fact that insurgents had set off a huge truck bomb at the gates of the installation, causing about 100 injuries, some three dozen of them serious. The Washington Post first reported the actual severity of the attack, an account that was subsequently confirmed by Western military officials.

About the same time as Wednesday's Khowst attack, a civilian vehicle in the Baraki Barak district of Lowgar province hit a roadside bomb, killing eight civilians, half of them children, the Interior

Ministry said. It blamed "terrorist Taliban" for planting the device.

Two other civilians were hurt in that blast, the ministry said.

Baraki Barak was the scene of a civilian-casualty episode that inflamed tensions between the government of President Hamid Karzai and the NATO force. An American airstrike on a civilian compound where a wedding had taken place killed at least 17 civilians this month, together with some insurgents.

Western military officials initially denied that any civilians had died, but days later acknowledged the deaths, and Gen. John Allen, the commander of Western forces in Afghanistan, traveled to Lowgar to extend condolences and apologies.

*Special correspondent Hashmat Baktash contributed to this report.*

Washington Post

June 21, 2012

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## 10. A Long Road Home, Pitted With Worry

*Droves of Afghan refugees, pushed out of their adopted lands, return to war-ravaged nation*

By Kevin Sieff

Kabul — During the last stretch of his family's journey home, Esmatullah perched atop a truckload of kitchenware, firewood and furniture, hurtling toward Kabul while the evidence of three decades in exile shifted beneath him.

On either side of the truck, the bazaars grew denser. The buildings became taller and more fortified. American convoys snaked through traffic, heading downtown.

Nearly two days after leaving their home in Pakistan, Esmatullah and his 22 relatives had made it to Afghanistan's

capital, after 30 years as refugees. They looked out at their country. They tried not to panic.

The uncertainty shrouding Afghanistan's future has prompted thousands of Afghans to seek an escape route — foreign visa applications, asylum pleas, long journeys across the border. But every day, families swim against that current, returning to Afghanistan after years abroad, finding a country that has been transformed by all the development and war wrought by a decade-long U.S. intervention and a persistent insurgency.

Some of the returnees are here by choice — nostalgic for the country of their youth, drawn back by word of renewed security and opportunity. Most, like Esmatullah's family, have returned involuntarily — compelled by the Pakistani government's unwillingness to extend their refugee status.

Nearly 3 million Afghans will be expelled from Pakistan by the end of the year if an extension isn't granted, according to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. Such a mass deportation could further destabilize Afghanistan, straining its economy and challenging its fledgling security forces. Although UNHCR officials are optimistic that the issue will be resolved, many Afghans in Pakistan have responded to the looming deadline by heading home after years in exile.

Esmatullah's father, Haji Bismillah, fled Afghanistan in 1979, at the beginning of the Soviet occupation. He was 35 when he left the country on horseback, with a wife and three young children. When he returned this month, he looked brittle, worn by hard decades. With him were his nearly

two-dozen sons, daughters and grandchildren, most of whom had never been to Afghanistan.

As the family's truck sped closer to downtown Kabul, Bismillah marveled at how the city had grown — shops and military bases and government buildings fanning out for miles. "I'm finally home," he said.

But as Bismillah rejoiced, his sons, who spoke Pashto with thick Pakistani accents, grew worried. They had heard stories about terrorism and a bleak economy.

"I cannot stay here" thought Mohammed Ullah, 19. "I will run away."

"There is no value for human life here," thought his brother, Rahmatullah, 33.

What were they expecting? It is hard to say exactly. They didn't know which stories were true, how bad the violence would be, whether their neighbors would assume that they were spies.

More than 8 million Afghans fled to Pakistan between 1979 and 2002. At least half of them have returned since 2001, attracted by the promise of a post-Taliban Afghanistan. When that transition proved rocky, many fled once again, the allure of home dimmed by protracted conflict.

Bismillah and his family watched those waves of migration just as they watched the war itself: from 500 miles away, on television, through stories from relatives and friends — a distance that imbued the unrest with a kind of unreality.

Then the war came to them. Last year, on a warm night in May, the brothers awoke to a large blast and the buzz of helicopters hovering above their adopted home town of Abbottabad, Pakistan. When the family awoke, they learned that al-Qaeda leader Osama bin

Laden had been killed a mile from where they slept. The next day, they walked over to take photos of bin Laden's littered compound.

The war knocked again when mounting tensions between Afghanistan and Pakistan — exacerbated by the bin Laden raid — meant that their visas would not be renewed, that they would have no choice but to return.

Rahmatullah had been sent to Kabul several weeks before the rest of the family to look for a home big enough for 23 people but cheap enough for the poor refugee family. He arrived on the same day that the Taliban executed a coordinated attack in seven locations across the country.

He called his father while the assault continued and pleaded, "Let's not move. Let's never move here."

But Bismillah said they must. The Pakistani government had made life hard for Afghan refugees, he said. He was getting old. He wanted to die on his own soil.

So the family hired a driver with an open-roof truck and piled in their belongings: electric fans, carpets, bicycles, anything that would fit. Then the brothers each stuffed their bags and pockets with more sentimental items. Mohammed Ullah took photos of his classmates. Rahmatullah took a poster of his favorite park in Islamabad. Esmatullah took a shirt that said "Karachi."

They drove through the night in early June, arriving as the sun rose at a UNHCR center on the outskirts of Kabul, where dozens of other families had lined up to be processed. An employee went from truck to truck asking families why they had decided to return. Most had come from refugee camps outside Peshawar, the largest city in Pakistan's northwest.



They accepted about \$150 per person from the U.N. agency and disappeared to the surrounding districts or provinces, often to land doled out by the government.

When his turn came, Bismillah told the U.N. employee, "We're here because we're tired of being harassed in Pakistan. We are ready to come home." He handed over a nearly expired refugee identification card.

Three days later, the 23 relatives had squeezed into a two-bedroom apartment with no electricity or running water. Most of the brothers slept on the floor.

Even Bismillah, first wowed by the city's growth, was becoming frustrated. He got lost on his way to an old mosque, confused by a flurry of new activity on a familiar street. Still, the city seemed secure, he said: "We can walk around here. It is safe."

His sons were not convinced. A week before they arrived, an American airstrike killed a family of five in their ancestral province of Paktia. A week after, more than 20 civilians were killed in a mix of Taliban attacks and NATO airstrikes in a single day. On local television stations, experts railed against what they called an insidious Pakistani influence.

Rahmatullah worried that his neighbors would accuse him of being a Pakistani spy and threaten the family. Someone pointed to his thick mustache — a fashion common in Pakistan but unusual in beard-loving Afghanistan — and asked him whether he was a foreigner. He considered shaving the mustache off.

"We stand out here," he said. "It's like we don't belong."

Mohammed Ullah dropped out of school to work at a construction site with a few

of his brothers. He keeps his Abbottabad friends' class portraits in his pocket while he mixes cement. He tells people that he's Afghan, but he feels Pakistani.

Still, Bismillah was hopeful. His sons will come around, he said, and security in Afghanistan will improve.

Mohammed Ullah doesn't pretend to believe his father.

"When I leave," he said, "I will never come back."

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Yahoo.com

June 21, 2012

## 11. Attacks On Afghan Forces Increasing:

### Karzai

By Agence France-Presse

Insurgent attacks on Afghan security forces have increased in recent months, President Hamid Karzai said Thursday, a day after a Taliban suicide bomber struck a convoy, killing 21 people.

Karzai told a special session of parliament that every day "20 to 25 of our youths are making the sacrifice for this country and being killed".

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Xinhua News Agency

June 21, 2012

## 12. Afghanistan Eyes \$4 Billion Aid In July Conference

KABUL (Xinhua) -- The war-torn Afghanistan expects a key international conference on the country's economy to pledge 4 billion U.S. dollars a year after 2014 when all foreign combat troops leave the country, President Hamid Karzai said on Thursday.

"The international community has already pledged some 4.1 billion U.S. dollars to assist the Afghan security forces from 2014 to 2024 in Chicago but we expect the donor nations to pledge such an amount, less or more, in Tokyo

conference for economic and non-military assistance," Karzai told a special session of the Afghan parliament.

An international conference on Afghan economy is expected to be held in Tokyo, Japan on July 8.

The Afghan leader also said that the Afghan government is committed to take full control from international forces by 2014 and to fight the rampant administration corruption in the country.

The Afghan leader made the comment while Afghan army and police are getting ready to begin the third phase of a gradual takeover of security responsibility from NATO-led troops in the coming weeks.

The Afghan forces and NATO troops have completed transition in the first two of five tranches of provinces and districts across the country where about half of the Afghan population now lives.

Under U.S. President Barack Obama's withdrawal plan, 10,000 U.S. troops already pulled out from Afghanistan last year and another 23,000 will return home by September this year.

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Stars and Stripes

June 21, 2012

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## 13. ISAF: Afghan Transition Remains On Track

By Chris Carroll, Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON -- Quran burnings, killings of international troops by Afghan forces, continuing insurgent attacks -- none of it is affecting the timetable for handover of security responsibilities in Afghanistan, the top NATO official for transition planning said Wednesday at the Pentagon.

"I've certainly seen nothing to date at all that questions the pace of transition," said British Brig. Gen. Richard Cripwell, the International Security Assistance Force strategic transition director. "Transition is simply about security forces being able to be in the lead. It doesn't necessarily mean that all the challenges that lie within that district or province have been solved."

In May, the NATO alliance entered third phase of a five-step security handover, which officials say will end with all provincial capitals and the majority of the Afghan population in areas where Afghan security forces have taken the lead. Transition is scheduled to be complete throughout the country by the end of 2014, when NATO combat forces will largely depart.

Cripwell said the Afghan force is advancing in its competence and doing "very serious soldiering."

The force is improving from top to bottom, and a question based on the premise some NATO troops regard many lower-echelon Afghan troops as incompetent drew a rebuff from the British general.

"You cannot mount, as the Afghans are doing, brigade-level operations and hope that a thin veneer of professionalism is in some way hiding a basic incompetence below that," he said. "A brigade operation requires a properly trained and indeed, resourced force. They're doing that around the country."

"So I certainly haven't heard the apocryphal stories that you mentioned, and I don't believe the evidence on the ground would support them either."

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Politico.com

June 20, 2012

## 14. General 'Not Concerned' With Afghan Funding

By Stephanie Gaskell

Congress is going to send less and less cash to Afghanistan to train and equip local forces, but a top general said Wednesday he's "not concerned."

"We think the Afghan security forces are going to be in very good shape to take the lead and maintain security," said Major General Stephen Townsend, director of the Pakistan/Afghanistan Coordination Cell in the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff office testified before a panel of the House Armed Services Committee.

His reasoning: the cost of maintaining a military and police force is "significantly less" than building one since the expensive heavy equipment they've already bought is not a recurring cost. So even though the 2013 budget to train Afghan forces shrunk to \$5.7 billion from \$11.7 billion the year before, the work can still get done he said.

"It costs a lot more money to build a force than to sustain it," he told POLITICO after the hearing. "The operations cost will be significantly less than the cost to build that force. We're building that force to 352,000 and we're buying helicopters and trucks and guns and all that stuff. It's expensive. So the operations cost will be a lot less.

"I'm not concerned. We've resourced the effort at the level we've planned for," he said.

Townsend said that commanders will be assessing the readiness of the Afghan force every six months and correct course, if necessary.

The International Security Assistance Force will continue to equip and train 352,000

Afghan soldiers and police officers by 2017, and the budget will continue to shrink.

Not everyone at the hearing was so optimistic about the Afghan military's future.

"Our current mission is unrealistic," said Rep. Mike Coffman (R-Colo.), a Marine and Army veteran who serves on the House Armed Services Committee. "I don't see where the [Afghan] government is ever going to have the revenue to support their own military. And my fear is that it eventually falls exclusively on the backs of the U.S. taxpayers."

"I'm not trusting of the information that I get from the Department of Defense in general because I think they're in an impossible position because the war is unpopular among the American people, the war is unpopular among members of Congress and they're concerned about what limited support they have for the war would evaporate if they told us what was really going on," Coffman said.

Yahoo.com

June 20, 2012

## 15. Summer Poses Toughest Test For Afghan Force

By Donna Cassata, Associated Press

WASHINGTON -- This summer's fighting in Afghanistan will be the toughest test for the country's evolving security forces as they try to root out insurgents in the more heavily populated regions, senior defense officials told skeptical lawmakers on Wednesday.

The officials said that while the next few months will be a significant challenge, it also comes before the United States withdraws its surge force of 23,000 American troops in a war that has lasted more than a

decade and left the public war-weary.

"The time to test them is now, when we have the forces in theater to ensure their success," David Sedney, deputy assistant secretary of defense for Pakistan, Afghanistan and Central Asia, told a House Armed Services subcommittee.

Members of the panel voiced concerns about the capabilities of the Afghan National Security Forces, questioning the attrition rate and the operations in which Afghans are assuming the lead. The hearing came against the backdrop of fresh violence in the country. A suicide bomber killed 21 people including three U.S. soldiers at a checkpoint in a crowded market in eastern Afghanistan. It was the third assault targeting Americans in as many days and raised questions about the U.S.-led coalition's plan to handover security to Afghan forces at the end of 2014.

There was no question about the latest violence at the hearing. But lawmakers sought an assessment of the Afghan force, whether goals on the number in the force can be met and the size of the enemy. Pressed on the number of Taliban, Sedney said they number 15,000 to 20,000, based on the latest intelligence estimate, though some only fight for a day while others battle every day.

Army Maj. Gen. Stephen Townsend, director of the Pakistan-Afghanistan coordination cell, told the panel that the percentage of attrition has dropped though it still remains a problem. He said the Afghan National Army is still on track to meet its goal of 195,000 by the end of the summer, the national police 157,000 before October and the security forces 352,000.

Townsend said the forces are taking on greater responsibilities.

"The percentage of Afghan-led partnered operations increase from 33 percent in January 2012 to 59 percent in April. In some regions of the country Afghan forces conduct independent operations at a higher rate than their partnered operations," he said.

This summer, operations will focus on more heavily populated regions. Rep. Rob Wittman, R-Va., chairman of the subcommittee and a recent visitor to Afghanistan, asked what would happen if the security forces were less than successful this summer.

Sedney said the next few months will give Marine Gen. John Allen, the top commander in Afghanistan, a chance to evaluate the Afghan forces and determine future requirements, which inevitably would involve how many U.S. troops to keep in the country.

The United States currently has 88,000 American troops there. President Barack Obama envisions a final withdrawal of U.S. combat troops in 2014 though no timetable has been set.

Members of the committee have challenged Obama's planned withdrawal. The defense bill that the House approved earlier this year calls for keeping a sizable number of U.S. combat troops in the country. The bill cites significant uncertainty in Afghanistan about U.S. military support and says that to reduce the uncertainty and promote stability the president should "maintain a force of at least 68,000 troops through Dec. 31, 2014, unless fewer forces can achieve United States objectives."

The hearing was part of the Republican-led committee's



work on a report on Afghanistan that likely will be released in the weeks before the November elections, according to lawmakers and staff.

Yahoo.com  
June 20, 2012

## 16. US Probes Afghan Tax On Companies Doing Rebuilding

By Pauline Jelinek, Associated Press

WASHINGTON -- A government watchdog is looking into Afghanistan's practice of taxing U.S. companies involved in America's multibillion-dollar effort to rebuild the war-torn nation.

The office of the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction will audit fees charged contractors by Kabul for supplies, materials and other items imported into Afghanistan or bought there, according to an inspector general memo obtained by The Associated Press.

The fees include tariffs, customs duties and other taxes that eventually come out of U.S. taxpayer dollars because they're charged to reconstruction projects run by the Pentagon, State Department or the U.S. Agency for International Development.

"This is a step in the right direction," said a statement from Democratic Rep. Peter Welch of Vermont and GOP Rep. Walter Jones of North Carolina. "We're hopeful this audit will and bring to an end the absurd practice by the Afghan government of taxing America's effort to rebuild their country."

"While such behavior may make sense in (Afghan President) Hamid Karzai's world, it makes no sense to the American taxpayer," they said.

The U.S. has appropriated roughly \$89.42 billion for Afghanistan reconstruction since 2002. But President Barack Obama is winding down the effort, having requested \$9.7 billion for reconstruction for the budget year beginning in October — a 34 percent reduction from the \$14.8 billion Congress provided for 2012.

It's unclear how much money has been collected by Kabul from contractors doing the work — building highways, schools, facilities for Afghanistan's growing security forces and so on. But a number of American contractors complained last year that they had received bills for overdue taxes and were threatened with arrest and revocation of their licenses to operate there.

Taxation of U.S. government assistance is prohibited by American law and bilateral accords between the United States and Afghanistan, officials say. But there has been disagreement from Afghans over what tax-exempt status means and who gets it.

According to a letter to the Pentagon, State Department and USAID notifying them of the audit, the special inspector general's office will begin work this month to determine:

- \*What Afghan fees are levied on contractors and subcontractors supporting U.S. reconstruction programs and the amounts collected.

- \*Whether Afghan fees levied on contractors and subcontractors violate international agreements.

- \*What the impact will be on Afghanistan's operating budget from declining activity by the international coalition there and after the 2014 withdrawal of forces.

There was no date given for when the audit might be completed.

Welch and Jones also have been working to address the issue. In December, they introduced legislation to bar future assistance to Afghanistan unless U.S. contractors and subcontractors delivering aid are exempt from taxation by the government of Afghanistan. Welch and Jones successfully amended the National Defense Authorization Act — which passed the House last month — to include a similar provision.

Karzai also has gone head-to-head with Americans on other contractor issues, ordering that all new foreign development projects employ government security guards rather than those from private Afghan and foreign companies. Private development companies complained that the move would threaten billions in U.S. aid to the country because companies would delay projects or leave altogether out of fear they wouldn't be safe using strictly local security.

The Afghan government in late March gave companies extensions of varying lengths to make the change.

risk during night missions in Afghanistan," according to a report from the inspector general dated June 18.

"Improving accountability will decrease vulnerabilities to theft or loss of night-vision devices," Jacqueline Wicecarver, assistant inspector general for acquisition and contract management, said in a memorandum accompanying the report.

Defense and NATO officials, Afghan security forces and defense contractors "did not maintain complete accountability" for 7,157 night-vision goggles and spare parts purchased for Afghan forces, the report found. Those goggles are now "more vulnerable to theft or loss," the GAO said.

The report cited hundreds of missing serial numbers, 518 "discrepancies" and 75 goggles that were "unaccounted for during our physical inventory."

Defense officials said they would "continue to improve accountability procedures," according to the report.

Reuters.com  
June 20, 2012

## 18. Pentagon Probing Alleged Abuse At Afghan Military Hospital

By Susan Cornwell, Reuters

WASHINGTON -- The Pentagon is investigating a U.S.-funded Afghan military hospital where there have been allegations of corruption and abuse of patients, a Defense Department official said on Wednesday.

David Sedney told a House of Representatives subcommittee that "investigations and corrective action" were under way at Dawood National Military Hospital in Kabul.

"The things that happened at that hospital are the kind

Bloomberg.com  
June 19, 2012

## 17. Missing Afghan Army Night-Vision Goggles May Aid Taliban

By David Lerman, Bloomberg News

U.S. and Afghan forces have lost track of hundreds of night-vision goggles used to hunt the Taliban, raising the odds of the high-technology eyewear falling into enemy hands, according to the Pentagon's inspector general.

A lack of adequate supervision of the goggles, which were purchased for the Afghan Army and police, means U.S. and Afghan soldiers "may be at greater security

of things that should never happen to any human being anywhere," said Sedney, deputy assistant secretary of defense for Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Central Asia. "We are working with the Afghans to correct them."

U.S. lawmakers began asking questions about the hospital last year after incidents of Afghan service members dying there of neglect and starvation were reported by The Wall Street Journal in September.

Last week, Republican Representative Jason Chaffetz sent Pentagon chief Leon Panetta a letter about the hospital on behalf of the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee. Chaffetz asked the Pentagon to investigate whether senior U.S. military officials sought to cover up reports of abuse at the facility back in 2010.

Sedney was not asked about any cover-up allegations on Wednesday during his testimony before a subcommittee of the House Armed Services Committee. The topic of the hearing was the Afghan national security forces.

The U.S.-led NATO force in Afghanistan is preparing to hand control of Afghanistan to that country's security forces by the middle of next year, putting the Western alliance on a path out of the unpopular, decade-long war.

Republican Representative Mike Coffman told Sedney that \$42 million in U.S. aid was "missing, unaccounted for" at the Kabul military hospital. The lawmaker said he was concerned about U.S. taxpayer dollars that had been spent at the facility and to train Afghan security forces.

"Afghan police and Afghan soldiers were dying in the hospital from malnutrition, and from a lack of medical care,

because the families couldn't come up with the necessary bribes," Coffman said.

Coffman questioned what the alleged corruption at the hospital meant for the U.S. strategy of preparing Afghan forces to take over the fight against the Taliban, wondering how "capable" those forces were when they allowed such events to occur.

Sedney responded that "corruption has been part of the fabric of life" in Afghanistan, but he did not believe the majority of Afghans wanted that to continue.

"While recognizing corruption is a problem, I would not agree it's endemic to the point where our investments (in Afghanistan) are not going to pay off," Sedney said.

New York Times  
June 21, 2012

## 19. Pakistan Arrests Frenchman Suspected Of Qaeda Links

By Declan Walsh

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan — Pakistani intelligence officials have detained a Frenchman of Algerian origin who is suspected of having links to a cell of Al Qaeda that carried out the attacks of Sept. 11, a senior Pakistani official said Wednesday.

The official identified the man as Naamen Meziche and said he had been captured in western Baluchistan Province, between the main city, Quetta, and the remote Iranian border, sometime in the past month. "He was trying to travel out, probably to Somalia," said the official, who spoke on the condition of anonymity.

The arrest was confirmation that intelligence cooperation was still operating at some level between Pakistan and the United States despite a critical breakdown in relations

over a variety of issues, like NATO supply lines and Taliban infiltration into Afghanistan.

It also pointed to a pattern of militant migration from Waziristan, along the Afghan border, to safer locations in Somalia and Yemen, perhaps as a result of the rising toll of C.I.A. drone strikes in Pakistan.

Western intelligence assessments describe Mr. Meziche as being in his early 40s and acting as a midlevel recruiter for Islamist extremist groups, including Al Qaeda.

They say Mr. Meziche, who lived in Germany for an unspecified amount of time, was close to Mohamed Atta and other members of the Hamburg, Germany, cell who participated in the Sept. 11 attacks.

After September 2001, Mr. Meziche helped recruit militants for Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, the leader of Al Qaeda in Iraq, according to an account attributed to European officials in the Long War Journal, a blog that follows drone strikes and militant activity. At one point he was said to have been detained in Syria while trying to make his way into Iraq.

Mr. Meziche later traveled to Pakistan's tribal belt, along the Afghan border, where he set up house. He was familiar with the area: in the 1990s he gained his introduction to the jihadist world at militant training camps in Taliban-controlled Afghanistan.

In Waziristan, Western intelligence officials believe, Mr. Meziche sheltered under the umbrella of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, an ethnic Uzbek group that has close ties to Al Qaeda and that over the years has provided a gateway into the jihadi world for several recruits coming from Germany.

Some of the Uzbek group's fighters have used Iran as a transit area for reaching

Waziristan; Mr. Meziche's relatives said he also stayed there at times in recent years. In 2010, Mr. Meziche linked up with Younis al-Mauritani, a Qaeda operations chief who was arrested in the suburbs of Quetta in September 2011, the Pakistani official said. "They wanted to work together on external operations. After we arrested Mauritani, it led to his name," said the official, referring to Meziche.

While Mr. Mauritani's arrest was the result of cooperation between American and Pakistani intelligence services, Pakistani officials said they had picked up Mr. Meziche on their own. The official declined to give the exact date of his arrest, saying only that it occurred between one week and one month ago.

Speaking by phone from her home in Hamburg on Wednesday, Mr. Meziche's ex-wife, Miriam Fizazi, said she had no information about his arrest.

"The last time I spoke to him was in December," she said. "We had been in touch for quite some time while he was in Iran. I tried to convince him to come back, but he didn't listen to me. I feel especially sorry for my children."

Ms. Fizazi said the couple divorced this year.

In January, Ms. Fizazi told The New York Times that her husband did not have any connection to Al Qaeda. He had moved to the tribal belt to live under Shariah law, she said.

At the time, Mr. Meziche was believed to be in Iran, where he was said to be in regular contact with his lawyer and relatives in Germany.

The Pakistani security official could not say where Mr. Meziche is being held, or under what authority, but said that he was most likely to be deported to France.



*Souad Mekhennet*  
*contributed reporting.*

Yahoo.com  
 June 20, 2012

## **20. Pakistan To Talk With Militants On Anti-Polio Ban**

By Agence France-Presse

Pakistani authorities will try to persuade militants in a northwest tribal area to lift a ban on anti-polio vaccination teams imposed in protest at US drone strikes, officials said Wednesday.

Local warlord Hafiz Gul Bahadur Saturday banned the anti-polio campaign in North Waziristan, a Taliban and Al-Qaeda-infested region bordering Afghanistan.

"We have requested the governor of northwestern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province to direct the political agent (administrator) of North Waziristan to open a dialogue with this group," a senior government official told AFP.

Bahadur, who is allied with Afghan Taliban fighting US-led troops across the border, said the ban would remain until the US stops drone attacks in the tribal region.

"On the one hand they are killing innocent women, children and old people in drone attacks and on the other they are spending millions on vaccination campaign," he said in a statement distributed in the region's main town Miranshah.

The government official said vaccinating all children in the tribal areas was a top priority in Pakistan's polio eradication programme.

"The federal government has told the governor to use all available means to ensure that the polio campaigns in the tribal area are not disrupted for the sake of tribal children in particular and Pakistan in general," the official said.

A senior health official said authorities were concerned about the safety of vaccination teams in North Waziristan.

"With a vaccination campaign coming up this week, we are concerned for over 161,000 children under five in the area who require the polio vaccination, many of whom have never been vaccinated even once against this crippling disease," he said.

"We are also very concerned for the safety of front line polio workers who, despite great personal risk, work to ensure every child is vaccinated."

Officials said the polio vaccination programme had made headway this year in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas.

Pakistan is one of just three countries where polio remains endemic, along with Afghanistan and Nigeria.

The highly infectious disease affects mainly the under-fives and can cause paralysis in a matter of hours. Some cases can be fatal.

Yahoo.com  
 June 20, 2012

## **21. America, Pakistan And Never Having To Say Sorry**

By Kimberly Dozier,  
 Associated Press

WASHINGTON -- Say you're sorry. That's what the Pakistani government says it wants from the United States in order to jump-start a number of initiatives between the two countries that would help the hunt for al-Qaida in Pakistan and smooth the end of the war in Afghanistan.

Pakistan wants the U.S. to apologize for a border incident in November 2011 in which the U.S. killed 24 Pakistani troops in an airstrike. The U.S. has expressed regret for

the incident, a diplomatic step removed from an apology, and said it was a tragic case of mistaken identity, in which each side mistook the other for militants and both sides erroneously fired on the other.

Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton even explored the possibilities of an apology with a Pakistani diplomat in a London meeting but then backed off when the Pakistanis insisted the apology be timed for maximum political impact on their turf.

The Pakistanis have put the apology at the top of a long list of demands to address what they see as insults to national pride and sovereignty — from the Navy SEAL raid onto Pakistani territory last year that killed Osama bin Laden to the steady U.S. drone strikes on Pakistani territory. A lot of these demands are now up in the air with the news Tuesday that Pakistan's high court had dismissed the prime minister, a move that could usher in months of turmoil in the country's government.

From the American point of view, Pakistan has not done enough to stop attacks on U.S. troops carried out by the Taliban and members of the Haqqani clan who shelter in Pakistan's tribal areas.

So the two nominal allies are at a standoff. A look at what that means for the U.S. taxpayer, the war and counterterrorism efforts:

**SUPPLY ROUTES** -- Pakistan shut its borders to NATO resupply convoys heading to Afghanistan because of the deadly November incident. The U.S. and NATO had been trucking supplies in and out of the Afghan war zone from the Pakistani port of Karachi. The Pakistanis charged the U.S. \$500 per truck. Because the U.S. has not apologized for the airstrike,

Pakistan has closed that route, and supplies to U.S. and NATO troops have been taking a northern route that Defense Secretary Leon Panetta says is costing an extra \$100 million a month now and could grow as the U.S. starts to withdraw equipment in advance of the 2014 troop drawdown in Afghanistan. Negotiations have stalled over reopening the routes, mostly over the apology, and it's clear the Pakistanis plan to charge double or more to use their route if they reopen it.

**MILITARY AID** -- For the Pakistanis, the impasse over the apology means other longstanding issues cannot be resolved, like the resumption of all U.S. security aid to Pakistan. Pakistan still receives roughly \$1.2 billion in annual security assistance, but last summer the U.S. halted or suspended hundreds of millions of dollars in aid — and reimbursements to Pakistan for helping secure Afghanistan's border — over another squabble. That one was over Pakistan's irritation that the U.S. didn't brief its leaders before launching the successful raid against bin Laden, who had been living for some time in the Pakistani garrison town of Abbotabad. In retaliation, Pakistan expelled U.S. military trainers, and the U.S. cut off some aid.

**INTELLIGENCE SHARING** -- Fewer U.S. and Pakistani military officers are sharing training or intelligence. They previously jointly operated mobile U.S. intelligence centers throughout the Pakistani tribal areas, monitoring together information coming from U.S. drones, which helped Pakistani troops track militants bent on killing inside Pakistan. Now, unilateral U.S. drone strikes continue to bite at al-Qaida targets, with a recent strike killing al-Qaida deputy

Abu Yahya al-Libi, while Pakistan is on its own when it comes to hunting the branch of the Taliban that sends suicide bombers to hit Pakistani military and civilian targets. Joint U.S.-Pakistani efforts at one time helped take down dozens of targets that were dangerous to both sides, including mastermind of the Sept. 11 attacks Khalid Sheikh Mohammed.

**CIA OPERATIONS** -- CIA officers once were able to roam fairly freely, often working together with Pakistan's intelligence operatives to go after targets in joint raids. Now, CIA officers are closely tracked and often harassed, and the Pakistani intelligence chief, who had been invited by the CIA, postponed his scheduled visit last month to the U.S.

Like a bad divorce, the bitterness has taken on a personal tone. President Barack Obama kept Pakistani President Asif Ali Zardari cooling his heels in a hallway at the NATO summit in Chicago and had him meet with Clinton instead of a leader-to-leader meeting. And Panetta, during a visit to Pakistan's arch rival, India, made a joke before an Indian audience about keeping the Pakistani government in the dark over the bin Laden raid.

Washington Post  
June 21, 2012  
Pg. 2

## 22. Report Faults Military School's Use Of Anti-Islamic Material

By Pauline Jelinek, Associated Press

Poor judgment and poor oversight led to the teaching of anti-Islamic material at a military school for officers, according to a Pentagon report released Wednesday.

An Army lieutenant colonel who taught the

class has been relieved of his teaching duties, and investigators recommended reviewing the actions of two civilian officials at the Virginia school to see whether they, too, should face discipline, the Defense Department said in a statement.

A course for military officers at Joint Forces Staff College in Norfolk included material that portrayed the United States as at war with Islam. That's an idea counter to repeated assertions by U.S. officials that the nation is fighting a war against terrorists.

Some of the material suggested that the United States ultimately might have to obliterate the Islamic holy cities of Mecca and Medina without regard for civilian deaths, citing such World War II precedents as the atomic bombing of Hiroshima, Japan, and the allied firebombing of Dresden, Germany.

Lt. Col. Matthew Dooley also taught that the Geneva Convention, which sets standards for the treatment of prisoners, was "no longer relevant" and instructed officers that Muslims "hate everything you stand for."

The Pentagon suspended the course in late April when a student objected to the material. The FBI also changed some agent training last year after discovering that its curriculum, too, was critical of Islam.

The report was released by the office of chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Army Gen. Martin Dempsey, who had ordered all of the service branches to review their training to ensure that courses don't use anti-Islamic material and that procedures are in place to screen course content.

The two-part review found that such problems with approving curriculum, presentations and guest

lecturers existed only at Joint Forces Staff College, said a statement from Dempsey's spokesman, Marine Col. Dave Lapan.

The inquiry into the Norfolk elective course, called "Perspectives on Islam and Islamic Radicalism," found "institutional failures in oversight and judgment" that allowed the course to be modified over time in a way that left out instruction on U.S. counterterrorism strategy and policy. Somewhere along the line, the course adopted "a teaching methodology that portrayed Islam almost entirely in a negative way," Lapan said.

Dooley was removed from his teaching job this year. Lapan said he is due for a routine transfer to another assignment in August.

Among other recommendations are that the course should be redesigned to include aspects of U.S. policy and that the course should rely less on outside instruction, which included guest speakers. The report suggested changing the school's system for reviewing and approving course curriculum.

Washington Times  
June 21, 2012  
Pg. 1

## 23. Congress Won't Let Panetta Close Bases

*Proponents see politics at play*  
By Rowan Scarborough, The Washington Times

Congress is poised to deliver a defeat to the Obama administration on one of its main defense policies in the new budget - base closings.

Both the House and Senate Armed Services committees have produced fiscal 2013 spending bills that deny Defense Secretary Leon E. Panetta's request to set up a Base Realignment and Closure

Commission (BRAC) next year - the sixth since 1988.

Some in defense circles say it is the result of election-year politics and members of Congress will realize next year that they need to heed top Pentagon officials who have testified that they have too much infrastructure and not enough money.

"It is election-year posturing," said an aerospace executive who monitors BRAC.

Others are not so sure, saying base closings would put thousands of people out of work in a tepid job market.

"I do not think the appetite will go up postelection," said Steven P. Bucci, a Heritage Foundation military analyst who served as a senior Pentagon official in the George W. Bush administration.

"Congress has never shown any appetite for any BRAC because they, Congress, are by design taken out of the process," he said.

"A BRAC commission does the research, makes the recommendations for closures, and then everyone has to basically 'eat' the results. I sound harsh, but Congress sees the protection of jobs and installations in their districts and states to be their duty," Mr. Bucci said.

With BRAC, Congress stays mostly on the sidelines. It can lobby the commission, but the commission's closure list can be accepted or rejected only in full.

### Cutting troops, not bases

The Republican-led House already has passed the no-BRAC bill crafted by its Armed Services Committee, and the Democrat-led Senate panel has approved unanimously its defense bill omitting base closures.

A conference committee to reconcile the bills will have no pro-BRAC members,



thus delaying the base-closing process for at least a year.

Mr. Panetta has said he needs to close bases and small installations to help him achieve \$487 billion in congressionally mandated spending cuts over the next 10 years.

The final defense spending bill not only will deny a new BRAC but also likely will include language that prohibits the military from taking unilateral action to close small facilities without prior White House notification to Congress.

A Pentagon spokeswoman declined to comment when asked what options remain, saying the legislative process is not complete.

To meet budget-cutting demands, Mr. Panetta is slashing Marine Corps and Army troops by 90,000, while the Navy and Air Force are trimming manpower on a smaller scale.

The Air Force has provided a snapshot of how to reduce operating costs without necessarily shuttering buildings. It announced in March a series of unit deactivations, such as a 600-troop communications unit known as the Third Herd at Tinker Air Force Base in Oklahoma.

The Air Force is targeting big and small, even reaching down to deactivate bands, such as the Band of Liberty at Hanscom Air Force Base in Massachusetts.

The overall plan is to reduce manpower by 3,900 active airmen, 5,100 Air National Guardsmen and 900 reservists.

Some defense sources say the Air Force has an excess of training centers and bases for bombers and cargo planes.

#### **Military investments**

Retired Gen. T. Michael Moseley, former Air Force

chief of staff, said it would be a mistake to close centers where pilots learn to fly supersonic jet fighters and long-range bombers.

"One thing that is a given for the United States Air Force is: Always train pilots. Always," said Gen. Moseley, a former fighter pilot. "Never ever, ever miss a chance to keep the numbers robust and the training baseline robust. You can always take a pilot and use them somewhere else. You cannot go the other way."

He drew a distinction between the investment in a pilot and in a soldier.

"By the time you get this guy or gal into a squadron, you've already got between six and seven years tied up in this kid," he said. "You can create an Army rifleman or a Marine rifleman inside a year. You can't create a pilot of a high-performance airplane inside that time period I outlined."

Gen. Moseley, who ran the air campaign in the 2003 invasion of Iraq to oust Saddam Hussein, said that while base closures need to be studied, so do the sizes of the Army and Marine Corps - what is called end strength.

Gen. Moseley, like several other retired fighter jocks, is upset that the Pentagon ended procurement of the F-22 Raptor stealth fighter short of what Air Force commanders said was needed.

"We're out of Iraq," he said. "We're going to come out of Afghanistan. Isn't it time to look at some of the strategic throw-weights, the things that actually deter and dissuade and persuade? Wouldn't that be something that looks like Navy and Air Force investment?"

#### **Military real estate**

The Pentagon publishes an annual report on the real estate it manages around the world.

Referring to the Pentagon's "vast portfolio," the report says it operates 542,000 facilities at 5,000 sites on more than 28 million acres.

In the U.S., the Pentagon operates 4,127 sites, including a reserve training center, an ammunition depot and a sprawling Army base. Each site would be reviewed by the military if Congress were to approve a base closure commission.

After the last BRAC assessment, seven years ago, the commission closed 185 sites and realigned 135.

Heritage's Mr. Bucci said "it is near impossible" for the Pentagon to close a base unilaterally.

The president has the authority to do so, but lawmakers have set up speed bumps that require the Pentagon to first notify Congress if a site employs a certain number of workers.

Choosing to close one base over another could spark a civil war on Capitol Hill, as well as moves to block closure by crafting legislation to deny needed funds.

Without a BRAC, pending automatic defense spending cuts of more than \$500 billion, set to begin in January, become even more damaging, Mr. Bucci said.

"If you cannot close installations, the only way to make those draconian cuts is to eliminate people and modernization programs," he said. "This too will kill jobs, both in the military and in any associated businesses."

U-T San Diego

June 21, 2012

### **24. Report: Military Spending Totals \$20.6 Billion In San Diego**

*After 'ripple effect,' it accounts for one in four local jobs*

By Nathan Max and Jeanette Steele

San Diego County's economy will benefit from an estimated \$20.6 billion of direct spending related to the military in the 2012 fiscal year, but growth is slowing, according to a report released Wednesday by the San Diego Military Advisory Council.

The estimate would represent a 1.7 percent rise from fiscal 2011, far less than the 6.6 percent year-over-year increase from 2010 to 2011. The report predicts growth will continue to slow, with direct spending in the local economy growing by 0.4 percent in fiscal year 2013.

"As we look at the most likely case for fiscal 2013 in San Diego, it would appear that overall defense spending coming into this region would be holding about steady," said Lynn Reaser, chief economist at Point Loma Nazarene University's Fermanian Business & Economic Institute, which prepared the report.

"There are huge unknowns, but San Diego fortunately does possess some key stabilizers."

The report is fairly rosy despite dramatic defense spending cuts on the horizon. The Pentagon Defense Department is scheduled to slash \$492 billion over the coming decade under a budget agreement passed last summer.

Reaser said one reason for the positive picture is that backlogs and work on previous military procurement contracts will sustain spending in that sector through 2013.

Also the new U.S. defense strategy, with its shift to the Pacific, greater use of special operations forces, greater reliance on unmanned vehicles and a focus on cyber security, is expected to favor this region. The Navy is adding four new helicopter squadrons

to North Island Naval Air Station and 16 new littoral combat ships will be dispatched to San Diego Naval Base.

The economic study estimates that jobs supported by military spending account for one in every four in the region after including the "ripple effects."

In total, military and defense is responsible for approximately 311,000 jobs. About 142,000 people get Pentagon or Veterans Affairs paychecks and another 169,000 jobs are tied directly or indirectly to military spending.

San Diego's unemployment rate would be more than one-half percentage point lower if Navy and Marine Corps personnel were included in official figures, the report said. An additional 108,000 jobs would appear on the employment rolls if people in uniform were counted.

Military spending will generate \$32 billion of gross regional product in fiscal 2012, the study concluded.

But the hold-steady projection comes with an asterisk. Looming on the economic horizon is the possibility of sequestration, the roughly \$600 billion in deficit-busting defense cuts expected to start in January. Unless Congress acts to slash spending another way, the Pentagon budget would take a 10 percent hit, about \$55 billion, in the first year.

"Sequestration remains a significant threat," Reaser said, adding that how the process would play out is still fuzzy. "It hasn't even been determined whether or not personnel would be included in those automatic cuts. But it certainly would be a larger impact on San Diego."

Retired Rear Adm. George Worthington, a former Navy SEAL commanding officer, attended the Wednesday

breakfast where the military council unveiled its report. Worthington painted a fairly dire picture under sequestration.

"Less is less, and it will be felt strongly if San Diego ships are retired, crews sent elsewhere, and labor demands stripped from suppliers on the waterfront, and impacts further inland on housing, schools and businesses," he said.

While the number of Navy personnel is scheduled to increase in 2013 with the return of the aircraft carrier Ronald Reagan as a permanent presence, the Marine Corps will see a decrease of 3,500 local troops as part of a corps-wide reduction of 20,000 people, according to the report.

There are three primary ways in which defense dollars enter the region. First, through wages and benefits for active duty military and civilian workers; second, through benefits for retirees and veterans; and third, through contracts, grants, small purchases and tourism from visiting family members and friends of servicemen.

The report includes employment in fields as varied as engineering, food services, construction, shipbuilding, health care, real estate, financial services and research as being directly affected by the military's presence in the region.

"It shows how important the San Diego community is with respect to the military," said retired Navy Rear Adm. James Johnson, president of the military advisory council. "When you look at the number of military assets that are concentrated here, from an economic standpoint, those assets create an enormous economic footprint."

He takes a long view on the defense cuts.

"The nation's been at war since 2001," Johnson said. "As the nation rebalances from that, you expect military personnel to be less. However, if you look at how that relates to the overall economy and how it relates to San Diego, the important focus is, in spite of our decreasing presence in Afghanistan, our presence is holding steady in the San Diego community."

As for the sweeping automatic cuts, "what it tells the community is how important the military is here, and that they need to pay attention to sequestration."

Military.com

June 20, 2012

## 25. DoD Not Tracking 9/11 Responder, Survivor Health

By Bryant Jordan

More than 10 years after terrorists crashed a fully fueled airliner into the Pentagon, causing a fireball of atomized metal, concrete, plastic, blood and bone, the Defense Department has not compiled data on the long-term health of first responders or the building's workers.

Responding to queries from Military.com, DoD officials said they are not aware of any research or studies by the Pentagon, the Walter Reed National Military Medical Center or the Joint Task Force National Capital Region Medical Command into the health of those who were at the Pentagon in the hours and days following the Sept. 11 attack.

Art Rosati, a Pentagon police officer on 9/11 who now says he has prostate cancer and as-yet-undiagnosed nodules on his liver, left lung and left leg, says he's not surprised.

"In my opinion, that shows neglect or malfeasance on their part. That means they failed to perform their duties," says

Rosati, who served nearly 22 years in the Army Reserve as an MP -- with active service in Desert Shield, Desert Storm and Operation Uphold Democracy in Haiti -- before joining the Pentagon police force in 1999. He entered medical retirement for severe post-traumatic stress in May.

A Defense Department spokeswoman said no study was ordered because it did not appear necessary.

Based on the limited smoke and airborne exposure, officials determined there was nothing to scientifically or medically justify the need for such a study, said spokeswoman Cynthia Smith.

She said Johns Hopkins Medical Center expressed an interest in doing a study, but dropped the plan because the Pentagon "couldn't develop a comprehensive roster of all the people who worked at the Pentagon" that day, she said.

The DoD still believes there are no long-term health risks to people at the Pentagon on 9/11, Smith said.

To date, the most ambitious look at links between cancers and the contaminants kicked up by the 9/11 attacks was unveiled by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, an agency of the Centers for Disease Control.

That study tied the toxic environment of the World Trade Center to 50 cancers. Though the study included no data on Defense Department personnel, those at the Pentagon on 9/11 -- as well as responders to the Pennsylvania field where a fourth hijacked plane went down -- will now be eligible for compensation and medical treatments through a \$4.3 billion fund established by Congress last year.

Until NIOSH published its cancer list last week, the federal government recognized



only respiratory illnesses as being related to the breathing in the air of the 9/11 sites. That conclusion had long been a sore point among many New Yorkers, especially first responders.

For many, it was easy to dismiss the federal conclusions. Within a week of the 9/11 attacks Christie Whitman, head of the Environmental Protection Agency in 2001, announced that tests showed the air in the area of Ground Zero was at safe levels. Later reports described a plume that lingered for weeks composed of dioxins created by burned computers and electrical equipment, mercury, asbestos and other substances. "Vast quantities of dust, glass and pulverized cement were blown throughout the surrounding neighborhood," the Natural Resources Defense Council reported.

A federal judge in New York later concluded that Whitman misled the public about the air quality.

And suspicion like that expressed by Rosati also has been around a long while: For many years during and after the Vietnam War, the Pentagon rejected post-traumatic stress disorder and evidence that the dioxins it sprayed over Vietnam to defoliate jungle areas were making veterans sick.

No one today denies that PTSD is real or that Agent Orange claimed American lives long after the troops came home. The Department of Veterans Affairs only a few years ago increased the number of "presumptive" illnesses related to Agent Orange, a move that brought a whole new wave of aging, sick vets into the VA healthcare system.

The Fire Department of New York was a major force in getting NIOSH to accept that cancers were linked to exposure at Ground Zero. For years,

the firefighters claimed their members were seeing increased rates of cancer as a result of the toxic air and debris.

FDNY produced seven years of data from its health records to make its case. It submitted the information to the British medical journal *The Lancet*, which reviewed and published its findings. Those findings showed that New York firefighters who responded to the WTC attack had a 19 percent higher rate of cancer than firefighters who were not there.

"The majority of the data in the study that helped us was based on our extensive medical records of our firefighters both pre- and post-September 11th," FDNY spokesman Frank Dwyer said in an email. "We had baseline info on their health before 9/11 to compare to how their health is now."

Rosati said he was happy New York's Fire Department was able to make the government act, but disappointed that NIOSH rejected the fire department's recommendation to include prostate cancer in the list of covered illnesses.

Some members of NIOSH's Scientific/Technical Advisory Committee, which drafted the final list, wanted to include it. They were persuaded by FDNY statistics showing it was turning up in firefighters in their 30s and 40s.

Prostate cancer is among the most common types of cancer among men, but it typically develops in men after 60. Rosati is 52.

"It's not just about myself -- anybody that was involved [on 9/11], from any police department or fire agency -- any rescue worker" is affected, Rosati said.

Philippine Star  
June 21, 2012

Pg. 1

## 26. Phl Ships Ready To Return To Shoal

By Edith Regalado

DAVAO CITY – The Philippines will send ships back to Panatag (Scarborough) Shoal if Chinese vessels remain in the area, President Aquino said yesterday.

"The guidelines are very clear. If there are vessels that are not ours, we have to send back our vessels," the President told reporters here after addressing participants in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) convention on local governance at the Waterfront Insular Hotel Davao.

"I have ordered them back (to port) because of the weather condition," the President said, referring to a patrol boat of the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) as well as a ship of the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR).

The PCG and BFAR vessels left Panatag Shoal at the height of tropical storm "Butchay" late last week.

"If there's a presence in our territorial waters, then we will redeploy," Aquino told reporters. "But if there is no other presence or other vessels that might impinge on our sovereignty, there's no need to deploy."

He also ruled out establishing permanent structures in Panatag Shoal.

"It is physically impossible," Aquino said.

Philippine and Chinese vessels have squared off for more than two months at the shoal, a rich fishing ground just 124 nautical miles from Zambales.

It is also within the Philippines' 200-mile exclusive economic zone under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.

The Philippines announced over the weekend it would

withdraw its remaining two ships because of bad weather endangering Filipino crewmen.

The Department of Foreign Affairs said China would also pull out its ships, but this was later denied by Beijing.

The reports of the planned withdrawal of Chinese and Philippine ships from the area rekindled hopes that the standoff was nearing its end.

Indonesian Foreign Minister Marty Natalegawa even welcomed what was thought to be the calming of tensions between China and the Philippines, saying yesterday that his country has called on both sides "to refrain from further escalating tensions and instead promote peaceful settlement by diplomatic means."

The standoff began last April when Chinese "maritime surveillance" vessels came to the rescue of Chinese poachers on eight fishing boats who were about to be arrested by Philippine Navy sailors. The poachers were able to flee with their harvest of endangered corals, giant clams, and live sharks. Chinese vessels have remained in the area since then.

House Minority Leader and Quezon Rep. Danilo Suarez, meanwhile, said Aquino scored a "qualified victory" against Beijing in the Panatag Shoal standoff, and that his next step should be to unite the nation.

Suarez also warned Aquino not to be complacent as China appears to be determined to press harder on its claim over the shoal.

He also said the President should not be preoccupied with persecuting perceived political enemies and officials of the past administration.

"To the President's credit, we note that the country recently won a qualified victory on the Panatag Shoal issue," Suarez said. "The advent of



bad weather forced both our vessels and the Chinese vessels to vacate the area."

But he said China's declaration that it has no intention to withdraw its ships from the shoal for good is a cause for alarm.

"Clearly, the battle is not yet over. We urge the President to begin to unify our nation in this continuing face-off with China, instead of dividing us with continuing persecution of his predecessor and the rest of his imagined enemies," Suarez said.

-- With Paolo Romero

Yahoo.com  
June 21, 2012

## **27. S. Korea, Japan, US Begin Drill Amid N. Korea Protest**

By Agence France-Presse

South Korea, Japan and the United States Thursday began a joint naval exercise denounced by North Korea as a "reckless provocation".

Seoul's defence ministry said the two-day drill involving destroyers, supply ships and helicopters would practise humanitarian operations such as search and rescue missions. It said no live-fire exercises were planned.

But it comes at a time of rising tensions with the North following Pyongyang's failed rocket launch in April -- seen by the US and its allies as an attempted ballistic missile test.

Pyongyang said Thursday the three-nation exercise threatened to bring a "new cloud of war" to Northeast Asia.

"The North's people and military are intensely watching the trilateral military drill," said ruling party newspaper Rodong Sinmun, urging the three allies to stop "reckless provocation".

A defence ministry spokesman declined to say how many personnel were involved

in the exercise in international waters south of South Korea's Jeju island, but said such drills had been held since 2008.

The US nuclear-powered aircraft carrier George Washington will join the exercise Friday before taking part in a separate drill with South Korea in the Yellow Sea from Saturday to Monday.

On land, South Korean and US forces are to hold their biggest joint live-fire exercise Friday. The aim is to showcase their "watertight defence posture and war-fighting capabilities", Seoul's defence ministry said earlier in the week.

It said 2,000 troops, F-15K and KF-16 jet fighters and light-attack planes would be among the weaponry deployed.

Four US Apache attack helicopters as well as tanks and rocket launchers will fire thousands of rounds during the drill at Pocheon near the border with the North, which marks 62 years since the start of the Korean War.

The North has taken a hostile tone with the South since new leader Kim Jong-Un took over in December, threatening "sacred war" to avenge perceived insults to Pyongyang's regime.

DefenseNews.com  
June 20, 2012

## **28. U.S. Army Will Focus On Training, Partnering With SOF: Odierno**

By Paul McLeary

The U.S. Army is looking to preposition stocks of equipment to keep them close to potential global flashpoints and assist with multilateral training missions with partner nations.

One of the places critical to this new program is Australia, the U.S. Army Chief of Staff Gen. Ray Odierno said June

20 during an appearance at the Council on Foreign Relations in Washington.

"We're working with the Australians where we can do multilateral training," he said, adding that "one of the concepts we're looking at, [is] putting prepositioned equipment there ... then bring countries from around the region in to conduct multilateral efforts."

While not naming specific nations, Odierno said the Army is looking to do the same thing in Africa, adding that the train and advise mission is "going to be more and more important as we go forward" in a post-Iraq and Afghanistan era.

Army officials have already said that early plans call for about 11,000 MRAPs to be prepositioned around the globe.

Odierno said the Army's role will likely shift toward performing more advisory missions, beginning with assigning a Brigade Combat Team to the AFRICOM command in 2013 to act as a pilot program for the Regionally Aligned Force concept, which aims to marry brigades with certain countries and regions to give units a deeper understanding of the culture and politics of different regions around the globe.

Africa is becoming increasingly important to the Army's plans due in no small part to the fact that "terrorist elements around the world go to the areas they think has the least resistance," the chief said, "and right now, you could argue that's Africa."

But just as the White House and the Pentagon begin to shift their gaze toward the Pacific region, and as the Air Force and the Navy push their Air-Sea Battle concept, the Army has been forcefully making the case that it also has an interest in the region.

One way of staying involved is through engagement and training efforts, including the prepositioned stocks plan. Odierno said that efforts to conduct multilateral training will focus "on the Pacific and other areas where we have not done that in the past."

He stressed that there are already 66,000 U.S. soldiers stationed in the Pacific area of operations, and because these troops no longer will be rotated in and out of Iraq and Afghanistan, "one of the first priorities I have is making sure that they remain dedicated to the Pacific region."

As he has done repeatedly in recent months, Odierno reiterated that 22 of the 27 heads of their respective defense departments in the Pacific come from their land forces, and seven of the 10 largest armies are located in the Pacific region.

Closer to home, the chief said he is working to build on relationships between Special Operations Forces and big Army that were developed in Iraq and Afghanistan, particularly on foreign advisory and weapons of mass destruction (WMD) missions. The Army and SOF recently held exercises at Fort Polk, La., for the first time "in a very long time," Odierno said, "and we have these planned throughout the year to work issues such as this. In the future I would foresee us doing a rotation that deals with WMD specifically and how we might deal with that and what the different scenarios might be."

The exercise highlights an issue identified at the Unified Quest war game in early June at the Army War College in Carlisle, Pa. One participant, an Army colonel, complained that details of how SOF and general purpose forces should collaborate isn't being integrated quickly enough into

Army doctrine. The youngest officers coming out of school don't have the joint experience from Iraq and Afghanistan that combat veterans possess, he said.

AOL Defense  
(defense.aol.com)  
June 19, 2012

## **29. Army Renewable Energy Commitment Is Serious: Hammack Details Program**

By Peter Gardett

The commitment of the US military to renewable energy is serious, long-term and about guaranteeing energy security for missions, and it is not a short-term environmental program, the US Army's energy and installations chief stressed today.

"I'm here to tell you that the Army is serious about this; this is not about environmentalism," US Army Assistant Secretary for Installations, Energy and Environment Katherine Hammack said at the Renewable Energy Finance Forum – Wall Street in New York City today.

Military installations need to be highly energy efficient, include smart grid networks that can prioritize and match loads and have sufficient baseload power to meet "critical mission sets," Hammack stressed.

A commitment by the Department of Defense to install 3 GW of renewable energy by 2020 has emerged as a rare bright spot for the US renewable energy business, which is struggling to grow as low natural gas prices combine with slipping federal budget support for incentives to limit the appeal of wind, solar and other renewable energy sources.

While the US Army, which like the other two armed services has committed to a 1GW share of the

total renewable energy planned portfolio, already produces roughly 48,000 MW hours of renewable energy each year, it will have to grow that number significantly to meet its goal. Roughly 100 MW of the Army's commitment has been chosen, and the remaining 900 MW will be selected and announced over the next several years as the program ramps up.

The need for increased self-sufficiency through distributed renewable energy is self-evident in the context of both reliability and the Army's budget, Hammack said.

There has been a "fourfold" increase in power disruption in the past year to military installations she said, amid a \$1 billion climb in the Army's energy costs year over year despite only a 2% rise in consumption. The Army's total energy bill was \$5 billion in 2011, she said.

"This is about the bottom line of the United States Army; it is about military effectiveness," retired US Navy Vice Admiral Dennis McGuinn, who is now the President of the American Council on Renewable Energy (ACORE), said about the program at REFF Wall Street.

With a focus on identifying renewable energy suppliers able to provide a range of potential project solutions, smaller and more focused renewable energy firms have previously issued complaints about the Department of Defense approach to contracting for fulfillment of its renewable energy goals. The Army is now "adopting a flexible approach that will reflect site-specific needs" when it comes to contracting, and is seeking to speed the contracting process overall, Hammack said.

Energy performance savings contracts and long-term power purchase agreements

backed by the federal government's strong credit rating will help the Army leverage private capital as it faces its share of roughly half a trillion dollars in budget cuts over the next decade, Hammack said.

Norfolk Virginian-Pilot  
June 21, 2012

## **30. Moving Navy Ships Will Take A Financial Toll, Study Finds**

By Bill Bartel, The Virginian-Pilot

Three Navy ships leaving Hampton Roads for Mayport Naval Station in Florida will take with them paychecks, repair work and spending power that add up to 5,220 jobs and \$590 million of the region's annual gross product, according to the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission.

Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus announced Friday that the ships, which were due to relocate to Mayport in 2015, will be going south much sooner. The New York, an amphibious transport dock ship, will leave in 2013. The following year, the amphibious assault ship Iwo Jima and the Fort McHenry, a dock landing ship, will depart.

About 1,800 of the jobs are held by sailors aboard the ships, according to the commission. The others will come from ship maintenance work and the trickle-down effect of less money being spent on goods and services by the crews, the Navy and the military contractors.

While the estimated loss is less than 1 percent of the region's \$83 billion gross product, commission officials say the ship departures are significant.

The analysis sheds light on what happens when ships leave for a new homeport,

said Greg Grootendorst, a Planning District Commission economist.

The Navy has sought for years to move a Norfolk-based aircraft carrier to Mayport as part of an effort to disperse the carrier fleet, but Virginia's congressional delegation has blocked the move. Economists have estimated that a carrier contributes 6,000 jobs and \$425 million in annual revenue to the local economy.

Dwight Farmer, the commission's executive director, said that as the Pentagon begins to make budget cuts and considers base closings, the region must do a better job of playing to its strengths, including its deep natural harbor, strong ties to the Navy and proximity to Washington.

"We probably excel as a place where you want to consolidate," Farmer said.

Washington Post  
June 21, 2012  
Pg. B4

## **31. Dover Whistleblowers To Receive Recognition**

By Lisa Rein

Three civilian whistleblowers who reported missing body parts and other failures at the mortuary that handles the remains of America's fallen troops will be honored as public servants of the year at a ceremony next week.

James G. Parsons Sr., Mary Ellen Spera and William Zwicharowski will be recognized next Thursday by the Office of Special Counsel, the independent federal agency that investigates complaints of wrongdoing brought by whistleblowers.

As with many whistleblowers, these employees, based at Dover



Air Force Base in Delaware, suffered retaliation after speaking up about serious missteps at the mortuary. Their revelations prompted an 18-month investigation by the special counsel's office that concluded that supervisors at the mortuary had wrongfully tried to fire two of the employees and taken disciplinary action against others after they reported missing body parts, lax management and other problems at the base.

At the time, senior Air Force officials said there was no evidence that the whistleblowers had suffered reprisals or that the supervisors had broken any specific rules. When the special counsel's report was released in January, the Air Force was criticized for not taking enough action against the officials who retaliated against the whistleblowers.

Top mortuary officials eventually were punished.

Parsons, an autopsy embalming technician, was fired last year but was reinstated after the special counsel's office intervened.

Spera and Zwicharowski said they were suspended or placed on leave after they disclosed the problems at Dover.

The ceremony will be held at 2 p.m. at the Reserve Officers Association at 1 Constitution Ave. NE.

Fort Worth Star-Telegram  
June 21, 2012

## 32. Vermont Town Doesn't Want F-35s Flying Overhead

By Barry Shlachter, Scott Nishimura and Sandra Baker

One would think that in this down economy, a former mill town in Vermont would be working hard to get 18 or 24 F-35s based nearby, as two

places near Air National Guard sites in South Carolina and Florida are doing.

Yet many of Winooski's 7,267 residents are fighting the introduction of the joint strike fighter made by Lockheed Martin in Fort Worth.

The city's biggest employer, a large textile mill on the Onion River, moved to South Carolina decades ago, devastating the economy.

Even Mayor Mike O'Brien was surprised that 100 people demonstrated against the F-35 a week ago. That's not only a big turnout for Winooski, it was the only public protest he can remember during 14 years of public life -- or before.

That's unlike three public meetings near Columbia, S.C., and another three in Jacksonville, Fla., where not a single negative comment was voiced, said Nick Germanos, the Air Force project manager for the F-35 environment impact studies.

But from Winooski, there have been 300 written comments, most of them critical, not to mention packed meetings, the protest, blogs and a website, [www.stopthef35.com](http://www.stopthef35.com). "This is very unusual," Germanos said.

The issue is noise.

Although a "stealthy" fighter, the highly advanced aircraft is noisier than the F-16s that now fly in and out of the Guard portion of Burlington International Airport, a mile away.

"That's a new engine in a new plane," the mayor said. "Can't something can be done to quiet the engine?"

About half of Winooski, including its rebuilt business center with outdoor dining, would fall under a noise contour that is not conducive to residential living, according to the Air Force's environmental assessment. Homeowners fear

that property values will plummet.

O'Brien and others have complained that the Pentagon hasn't addressed many of the community's concerns, prompting the City Council to pass a resolution Monday rejecting the F-35 deployment until adequate responses are given.

Winooski will get Air Force answers in October with the release of a revised environmental study, Germanos told us.

All three of the candidate bases would get the F-35, but Burlington would get it first -- "unless it is rejected on environmental grounds, which also covers socio-economic things," he said. "That's the only thing standing in Burlington's way."

Florida Today  
June 21, 2012

## 33. Atlas' Secret Payload Likely To Relay Data, Experts Say

*Rocket's satellite is on its way to replace aging previous model*

By James Dean, Florida Today  
CAPE CANAVERAL —

An Atlas V rocket delivered a classified national security satellite to orbit Wednesday, completing the 50th launch by the decade-old Air Force program under which the rocket and its sister, the Delta IV, were developed.

Because of the secret payload for the National Reconnaissance Office, coverage of the flight was blacked out about five minutes after the 19-story United Launch Alliance rocket's 8:28 a.m. blastoff from Cape Canaveral Air Force Station.

The bronze and white rocket rose slowly off its Launch Complex 41 pad with a reverberating roar and

disappeared into a cloud deck about a minute into its eastward arc over the Atlantic Ocean.

"Congratulations to the NRO and to all the mission partners involved in this critical national security launch," said Jim Spornick,ULA vice president for mission operations, in a news release confirming success.

Expert spacecraft trackers say the mission will replace an aging communications satellite some 22,000 miles above Earth, orbiting at a slight angle relative to the equator.

"They don't do any imaging themselves," said Ted Molczan, a Toronto-based amateur astronomer who is part of an informal network that specializes in tracking spacecraft launched to secret orbits. "They act as relays for the imaging satellites in low Earth orbit."

Molczan and colleagues base their educated guesses on the type of rocket flown, notifications to mariners and airmen about its trajectory, historical knowledge of national security programs and, ultimately, observations.

He said the just-launched satellite was likely part of the NRO's Satellite Data System, or SDS, and would be positioned high over the Pacific Ocean to complement another relay satellite replaced last year over the Atlantic.

"We'll only know that for certain when, hopefully sometime in the next few weeks, a new satellite shows up in that location," he said.

The launch was the 31st since 2002 by an Atlas V, which Lockheed Martin Corp. developed under the Air Force's Evolved Expendable Launch Vehicle program.

All the launches have been declared successes, including one that delivered a payload to a lower than intended orbit.



Under the same program, The Boeing Co. developed the Delta IV rocket that has a record of 19 successful launches since 2002.

Faced with high costs when projected launches of commercial satellites failed to materialize, the companies merged their fleets in 2006, forming ULA as a 50-50 joint venture that is now the exclusive launcher of high-value U.S. national security and science satellites.

"We are proud of this launch success record, an amazing record in the history of space flight," Gen. William Shelton, commander of Air Force Space Command, said in a statement.

The Atlas V is also the anticipated launcher for several of the spacecraft competing to fly NASA astronauts by 2017.

The EELV program's 51st launch is planned a week from today from the Cape, carrying another satellite for the NRO, whose motto is "vigilance from above." This one will ride on ULA's giant Delta IV Heavy.

InsideDefense.com  
June 20, 2012

### **34. Squadron Commander Relieved Of Duties After CV-22 Osprey Crash**

The Air Force has removed the commander of the 8th Special Operations Squadron, citing a lack of confidence in his leadership following last week's crash of a CV-22 Osprey.

The mishap aircraft, assigned to the 1st Special Operations Wing, crashed at about 6:45 p.m. June 13 during a routine training mission at Hurlburt Field's Eglin Range, north of Navarre, FL, according to the service. The accident is under investigation.

Col. James Slife, the 1st Special Operations Wing

commander, acknowledged the personnel change in a statement provided Wednesday evening to *InsideDefense.com*.

"The commander of the 8th Special Operations Squadron was relieved because of a loss of confidence in his ability to effectively command the unit," Slife said. "The challenges of the 8th Special Operations Squadron's demanding mission require new leadership to maintain the highest levels of precision and to reliably support the ground forces which count on the 8th SOS to safely accomplish their missions."

Slife did not name the individual relieved, but previous Air Force statements issued last year and this spring identify Lt. Col. Matt Glover as the squadron's commander. Glover became the squadron's commander in June 2011 with the goal of growing and improving the CV-22 force, according to a statement issued at the time. Previously, the Texas native served as an officer in the squadron; as a CV-22 student at Kirtland Air Force Base, NM; and as a student at the Air Command and Staff College at Maxwell Air Force Base, AL.

Slife told reporters June 14 that two CV-22s were involved in the training mission that ended with the mishap. The aircraft that crashed sustained significant damage and was found upside down, he said, noting it is unclear how it got into that position. Slife said the cause of the accident remains unknown, but at this point the Air Force has no reason to believe a design flaw is to blame. He said last week the squadron would stand down CV-22 operations for a day, but that otherwise such operations are continuing. The squadron resumed flying Ospreys this week.

Five crewmembers aboard sustained non-life-threatening injuries and were taken to local area hospitals, according to the Air Force. On June 15, two of the injured airmen were released from Eglin Air Force Base hospital. An Air Force spokeswoman said the site of the crash is a remote area. On June 13, the wreckage burned until midnight, a Pentagon source said.

A fatal CV-22 mishap occurred in April 2010 when an Osprey crashed in Afghanistan. An investigation board could not pinpoint the crash's cause, but concluded that engine trouble, crew errors and weather were contributing factors. More recently, the Marine Corps has been investigating a fatal MV-22 Osprey crash in Morocco on April 11. The Marine Corps has ruled out mechanical failure as a cause of that crash. But the Marine Corps' plans to base MV-22s in Japan now face potential delays amid increasing concern there about the safety of the aircraft.

-- Christopher J. Castelli

Yahoo.com  
June 21, 2012

### **35. White House Rejects Requests For 'Targeted Killing' Papers**

By Lou Kesten, Associated Press

WASHINGTON -- The Obama administration has rejected requests from The New York Times and the American Civil Liberties Union seeking information about its "targeted killing" program against suspected terrorists, saying the release of the requested documents would harm national security.

Under the Freedom of Information Act, the Times and the ACLU sought records regarding the legal justifications for the alleged U.S. government

killing of U.S. citizens and others associated with al-Qaida and other terrorist groups.

In a court document filed late Wednesday in New York in response to an ACLU lawsuit, the Justice Department said that "even to describe the numbers and details of most of these documents would reveal information that could damage the government's counterterrorism efforts."

The administration said the information requested is "highly classified," even though details of such operations have been leaked to the media.

"For example, whether or not the United States government conducted the particular operations that led to the deaths of Anwar al-Awlaki and the other individuals named in the FOIA requests remains classified," the government wrote. The U.S.-born al-Awlaki, an al-Qaida leader, was killed in a U.S. drone strike in Yemen in September.

"Likewise, whether or not the CIA has the authority to be, or is in fact, directly involved in targeted lethal operations remains classified," the government wrote.

In response to the government filing, ACLU Deputy Legal Director Jameel Jaffer said Thursday: "The notion that the CIA's targeted killing program is still a secret is beyond absurd. Senior officials have discussed it, both on the record and off."

The Justice Department, however, said, "None of those statements or reports constitutes an official disclosure that could vitiate agencies' ability to safeguard the classified and other statutorily protected information at issue here."

The administration acknowledged public concern about U.S. use of targeted killings, and said it has tried to "set forth for the

American people the legal analysis and process involved in the determination whether to use lethal force." Those efforts have included speeches by a number of U.S. officials, including Attorney General Eric Holder.

But it maintained that the requested records would reveal "whether or not the U.S. government possesses specific intelligence information about particular individuals. Yet, Congress has made the judgment in the CIA Act and the National Security Act that information concerning such intelligence sources and methods should be exempt from public disclosure."

The ACLU's Jaffer said, "The public is entitled to know more about the legal authority the administration is claiming and the way that the administration is using it."

"We continue to have profound concerns with the power the administration is claiming and with the proposition that the president should be permitted to exercise this power without oversight by the courts," Jaffer said.

Los Angeles Times  
June 21, 2012  
Pg. 1

### 36. Searing Questions

*Experts debate risks to birds, planes and motorists from what will be the largest solar plant of its kind.*

By Julie Cart

IVANPAH VALLEY, CALIF. -- At what temperature might a songbird vaporize?

Will the glare from five square miles of mirrors create a distraction for highway drivers?

Can plumes of superheated air create enough turbulence to flip a small airplane?

What happens if one of the Air Force's heat-seeking missiles confuses a solar power

plant with a military training target?

No one knows for sure. But as the state and federal government push hard to build solar energy plants across the Mojave Desert -- there are more than 100 solar applications pending -- the military, birders, aviation officials and others are eager for answers.

When completed, a massive plant now under construction near the California-Nevada border will be the largest of its kind in the world. More than 170,000 garage-door sized mirrors will spread across this broad valley. Every 10 seconds, computers will align the mirrors -- each equipped with its own GPS device -- to track the sun across the desert sky, bouncing radiation to the tops of three 45-story towers. Water stored inside the towers will be heated to 1,000 degrees, creating steam power.

The project's whiz-bang technology has confounded government regulators' ability to analyze the facility, in part because nothing of its type and size exists anywhere else in the world.

Although it approved Ivanpah's permit in 2010, the California Energy Commission struggled to assess the public health effects that would be created by the vast field of mirrors and the volumes of hot air pushed upward by spinning turbines and condensers.

Much of the analysis came from computer modeling, most of it provided by the project owners, Oakland-based BrightSource Energy.

In extensive hearings before the Energy Commission, the firm argued that concerns about its plant were overblown and that the project posed no danger to the public. The power plant -- one of dozens being fast-tracked by the Interior

Department -- is slated to open early next year.

Others have their doubts.

"It's an experiment on a grand scale," said Jeffrey Lovich, a scientist with the U.S. Geological Survey.

Most questions begin with birds, which almost certainly will die at Ivanpah, just as they do at many large outdoor industrial operations. There is already documentation linking solar power to bird deaths.

About 30 years ago, ornithologist Robert McKernan and a colleague conducted studies at the Solar One plant near Barstow. By collecting and analyzing bird carcasses, they found that some birds flying through the solar field were incinerated outright. Others perished after their feathers were singed or burned off, or when they collided with the mirror structures or the central tower.

That plant, which began producing power in 1982, had 1,800 mirrors. The Ivanpah facility has 100 times that number and occupies a significantly larger portion of creosote habitat critical to migrating birds.

But BrightSource officials contend that there is less risk to birds soaring above Ivanpah, in part because the reflected heat at the new plant there will be one-third as intense as at Solar One.

Birds aren't the only flying objects at risk.

The Defense Department has expressed concern about large-scale solar plants' compatibility with aviation and weapons training at the Mojave region's nine military installations.

The test pilot school at Edwards Air Force base said the most common problems are a result of "electromagnetic intrusion/reflection, vertical obstruction, frequency spectrum overlap,

infrared footprint and glint/glare."

Maj. John G. Garza, who represents the Pentagon on a California renewable energy planning group, said potential conflicts with solar plants in the desert are not yet fully understood.

One worrisome possibility?

"The solar tower would be a heat source," Garza said. "A heat-seeking missile could confuse the source, and instead of going to a target on the range, it would go to the tower."

A buffer zone between artillery ranges and solar installations could guard against that scenario. But Garza said no one yet knows how much space would be required.

One known aviation hazard results from the plants' use of high-powered exhaust fans for steam turbines, which can create plumes of superheated air that rise skyward.

Small planes are especially vulnerable.

On the approach to the Blythe airport, for example, aircraft often fly through such superheated air from a fossil fuel power plant at the end of the runway -- causing them to buck and veer off course.

"If you hit a plume dead center, you have one wing in and one wing out of it. It would flip an airplane in a heartbeat," said Pat Wolfe, who operated the Blythe airport for 20 years.

Wolfe said he took complaints to the Federal Aviation Administration and the state Energy Commission. "They didn't care," he said. "The information the power companies gave the Energy Commission was computer-generated, non peer-reviewed. It was a joke."

One Energy Commission report detailed a 2004 incident in which flight instructor Luis Magana was in a twin-engine Beechcraft, with a student at



the controls. As they flew over power plant cooling towers, the plane began to pitch and roll.

The fledgling pilot was able to land, but Magana reported the hazard, warning that smaller planes possibly could become "inverted and sent into a downward spiral."

The commission has estimated that heat plumes at Ivanpah probably would dissipate at a few hundred feet elevation. But Wolfe challenged that assertion.

"We had a King Air -- a big plane -- encounter plume turbulence at 2,700 feet" over Blythe, he said. "It was enough to trip the autopilot."

The Ivanpah project is being constructed six miles from the site of a proposed airport outside Las Vegas. In response to concerns, the FAA has said it will issue a notice instructing pilots not to fly directly over the plant or below 1,350 feet anywhere near the facility.

The agency also said it was working to come up with a general siting policy regarding solar power installations, written in conjunction with an industry lobbying arm.

Of all the concerns surrounding the Ivanpah development, mirror glare is one that experts say can be minimized if pilots and motorists use a dose of common sense and avoid staring.

Cliff Ho, who has studied the issue for Sandia National Laboratories, said pilots observing the plant could be afflicted by flash blindness, causing an image to linger in the eye. And the completed facility -- rising from the desert and visible at a distance of five miles -- will emit a glow that may be all but irresistible to some drivers on nearby Interstate 15.

In the words of James Jewell, an expert on human adaptation to light and former

president of the Illuminating Engineering Society of North America, "It will be an unattractive, big industrial blob in the desert."

Ugly, but apparently not dangerous.

Still, Ho stopped short of pronouncing the Ivanpah plant and others like it completely safe.

"I was informed by my superiors that it's dangerous ground to say if a system is safe," he said. "We stick with the analysis."

*Times researcher Maloy Moore contributed to this report.*

Washington Post

June 21, 2012

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### **37. Labor Awards Grants To Aid Homeless Vets**

By Steve Vogel

The Labor Department is awarding \$15 million in grants that it says will provide 8,600 homeless veterans with job training.

The funding is intended to assist in the Obama administration's goal of ending veteran homelessness by 2015.

"This is a complicated challenge that requires an 'all hands on deck' response," Secretary of Labor Hilda L. Solis said in a conference call with reporters Tuesday.

The number of homeless veterans is below 60,000, Solis said. Figures released by the Department of Veteran Affairs in December reported that 67,495 veterans were homeless in the United States on a single night in January 2011.

"We're making some progress, but have to do more," Solis said.

The money is being allocated to 64 groups around the country, including state and local workforce investment

boards, local public agencies, and faith-based and community organizations.

More such job training grants will probably be awarded over the next several years, said Ismael "Junior" Ortiz, deputy assistant secretary of labor for veterans' employment and training.

Labor will also provide \$19 million for existing grants that provide job training, job search and placement assistance, according to the department.

Ortiz said he thinks the goal of ending veterans homelessness by 2015 is realistic. "I truly do," he said. "I think the goal is achievable."

Yahoo.com

June 20, 2012

### **38. VA Looking To Technology To Reduce Suicide Risks**

By Kevin Freking, Associated Press

WASHINGTON -- The Veterans Affairs Department hopes to reduce the risk of suicide among veterans by making greater use of video conferences between patients and doctors and by gradually integrating its electronic health records with those maintained by the Defense Department, VA Secretary Eric Shinseki told mental health professionals Wednesday.

Among active-duty troops, there has been an uptick in suicides this year -- about one a day, compared with one every 36 hours in previous years, The Associated Press reported earlier this month. Among veterans from all of the nation's wars, about 18 each day commit suicide.

Shinseki said the video conferencing would reduce the distance patients have to travel and make it easier to fit appointments within

a busy schedule. He also pointed out that more veterans were communicating with the department's staff through online chats and text messages, and that the department is encouraging the trend because it lessens the stigma that some patients feel when they seek treatment.

"Shame keeps too many veterans from seeking help," Shinseki said at a suicide prevention conference.

Shinseki oversees a department that members of Congress have criticized heavily in recent months for overstating how frequently patients are able to see a doctor or other mental health professional. An inspector general's investigation found that nearly half of the veterans seeking mental health care for the first time waited about 50 days before getting a full evaluation. Meanwhile, the VA had been reporting that the vast majority of evaluations were being conducted within 14 days.

Shinseki said the path toward suicide often begins before soldiers take off their uniforms, and that's why he hopes to integrate the electronic health records used by the VA and the Defense Department by 2017. He specifically cited one soldier's suicide to make his case that the two departments need to do a better job of maintaining and sharing information, noting that the soldier knew he was experiencing mental distress and asked to retire rather than go back to Iraq. That request was denied.

Shinseki said that upon the soldier's return from Iraq his military records contained no entries of depression or post-traumatic stress disorder. His enrollment in the VA also did not reflect that he was in distress.



"VA should have received ample warning about the mental health burden this veteran was carrying," Shinseki said. "There was no handoff between our departments that would have enabled us to track and treat this veteran or any other veteran today."

VA officials note that the suicide rate among veterans has remained rather constant since 2005, while it has increased slightly for the general public. Also, as many as two-thirds of the veterans who commit suicide are not enrolled in VA health care.

"We can't influence and help those we don't see," Shinseki said.

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Washington Post

June 21, 2012

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**Fine Print**

### **39. Somebody In The Government Finally Raises A Question**

#### **About War And Taxes**

By Walter Pincus

At last, after 11 years of the United States at war, a few minutes of public discussion of a tax to pay for the fighting. But that would be for the next war.

"What would be the impact of going to war again without committing to pay for that war with upfront taxes, something we did not do in either Iraq or Afghanistan, for the first time in the history of the country?" Sen. Patrick J. Leahy (D-Vt.) asked Defense Secretary Leon E. Panetta at a Senate defense appropriations subcommittee hearing on June 13.

That's a question that should be asked before any president sends U.S. forces into a fight overseas or members of Congress propose legislation that authorizes some sort of military action abroad.

"We basically ran that war [Iraq] on a credit card," Leahy told Panetta, who was there to discuss the fiscal 2013 defense appropriations bill. "Now we find people who are calling for more military action in other parts of the world; at the same time, they do not want to consider any way of paying for it."

No details were mentioned, but Leahy obviously was thinking about the drumbeat to provide air cover and arms to the Syrian opposition to President Basharal-Assad that is coming from Sens. John McCain (R-Ariz.), Lindsey O. Graham (R-S.C.) and Joseph I. Lieberman (I-Conn.), as well as from GOP presidential candidate Mitt Romney and his advisers. And who is ready to pay for whatever it may take if the United States has to resort to military action to keep Iran from getting a nuclear weapon? Last year's Libya effort cost more than \$1 billion.

Leahy could also have been thinking about Congress authorizing President Obama's sending of 100 Special Forces troops into Central Africa in October. They are providing support to Ugandan, Congolese and Central African Republic units searching for the ruthless Joseph Kony and his Lord's Resistance Army.

Panetta gave the answer you would expect from a former House Budget Committee chairman, Office of Management and Budget director and chief of staff to President Bill Clinton. As Clinton's chief of staff in 1996, he helped negotiate a budget compromise with Republican congressional leaders.

"Obviously," Panetta told the senators, "if we repeated the mistake of not paying for the war that we decide to engage in, whatever that might be, the results would be that you would

simply add more to the deficit and to the debt of this country for the future. You just put that burden on our kids for the future."

He added, "All of us bear some responsibility to pay those costs if we're willing to engage in war."

How quickly would Congress have voted in October 2002, on the eve of congressional elections, to give President George W. Bush authority to use force in Iraq if the resolution had also contained a provision to raise taxes?

In October 2007, a war surtax for Iraq was proposed by three Democratic House members - David R. Obey (Wis.), then chairman of the Appropriations Committee, John P. Murtha (Pa.), then chairman of the defense appropriations subcommittee, and Jim McGovern (Mass.), then vice chairman of the Rules Committee. It called for low- and middle-income taxpayers to add 2 percent to their tax bill (owe \$1,000, pay \$20 more) and upper-income taxpayers to add 15 percent (owe \$10,000, pay \$1,500 more).

Sadly, the House Democratic leadership refused to support the measure, which could have generated up to \$150 billion a year, or nearly all that Bush was seeking that year. Then-House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) criticized Bush for "adding hundreds of billions of dollars in debt for future generations to repay." She added, "Just as I have opposed the war from the outset, I am opposed to a draft and I am opposed to a war surtax."

Given today's situation, why doesn't Obama link his request to restore Clinton-level taxes on the wealthy to the \$88.5 billion requested for fiscal 2013 topay for continuing

the war in Afghanistan and counterterrorism efforts worldwide? That Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) account, the supplemental appropriation created to fund Iraq, Afghanistan and other military actions abroad, is expected to continue as long as the United States has troops in Afghanistan and elsewhere overseas confronting terrorists.

For planning purposes, the Congressional Budget Office sees the OCO account running \$44 billion a year through 2022.

What about Obama, Romney or even hawkish members of Congress introducing a special excise tax on telephone calls or even Internet usage or ending some tax loopholes to pay that \$44 billion a year. Taxes have been used to pay for America's past conflicts going back to the War of 1812 - except for Iraq and Afghanistan.

I assume the answer is that no one has the nerve, at least not with elections looming.

Panetta's words should be engraved in marble in the Senate and House chambers and hung on a plaque in the Oval Office: "Frankly, all of us bear some responsibility to pay those costs if we're willing to engage in war."

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Washington Post

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### **40. Drones Vs. Diplomacy**

By David Ignatius

As America's relationship with Pakistan has unraveled over the past 18 months, an important debate has been going on within the U.S. Embassy in Islamabad over the proper scope of CIA covert actions and their effect on diplomatic interests.

The principals in this policy debate have been Cameron Munter, the U.S. ambassador

since October 2010, and several CIA station chiefs who served with him. The technical issue was whether the ambassador, as chief of mission, had the authority to veto CIA operations he thought would harm long-term relations. Munter appears to have lost this fight.

The larger issue is the intersection of drone warfare and diplomacy. It's a crucial question for the Obama administration, which has sharply increased the CIA's use of these unmanned aircraft to strike at al-Qaeda targets in Pakistan, Yemen and Somalia. But there has been relatively little public examination of how these covert weapons should coexist with the goals of statecraft.

In this season of leak investigations, I should make clear that this story didn't come from either the CIA or Munter, who has announced that he will leave his post in Islamabad this summer for personal reasons and will resign from the Foreign Service. The sources described the Islamabad debate because they believed the issues deserved wider public discussion and understanding.

Munter arrived in Islamabad with the difficult challenge of replacing Anne Patterson, a widely admired diplomat who had maintained an easy working relationship with her CIA station chief, John D. Bennett, who in July 2010 became the director of the national clandestine service. Bennett was replaced in Islamabad by a promising younger officer, but the new chief had to be recalled in December 2010 after his cover was blown. The station chief's name was "outed" by a legal action brought by victims of U.S. drone attacks, but this was almost certainly the work of Pakistani intelligence.

The next station chief arrived in Islamabad on Jan. 26, 2011. As it happened, this was one day before a CIA operative named Raymond Davis was arrested in Lahore for killing two Pakistanis. The new station chief, a veteran of operations in Eastern Europe, is said to have argued that the case should be handled by "Moscow rules," meaning don't give an inch. Munter initially followed that advice but then began his own discussions with Pakistani authorities.

Munter's talks with the Pakistanis helped lead to Davis's release in March 2011, after the payment of "blood money" to the victims' families under the tribal code. Though Davis was free, the case fueled Pakistani public anger. And the tension within the embassy continued as well. The new chief left in July 2011, partly for health reasons and also because of the personal and policy wrangle with Munter.

As ambassador, Munter assumed that he had final authority over all activities inside Pakistan that involved the embassy. Patterson had a similar veto power, though it was rarely tested because she and the agency were usually in agreement. But Munter was said to be more wary of the Obama administration's expansion of drone attacks, fearing that the pace and timing were dissipating long-term U.S. interests in Pakistan for short-term counterterrorism gains.

The strains in the U.S.-Pakistani relationship became acute after the May 2, 2011, attack on Abbottabad that killed Osama bin Laden. So did the intra-embassy dispute about drones. Munter is said to have supported "high-value target" strikes on named individuals and "imminent threat" strikes to stop, say, a car bomb. But he questioned the cost-

benefit ratio for some so-called "signature" strikes, where the name of the target isn't known. Sometimes these strikes produce a bonanza, as in the June 2011 signature attack that killed Ilyas Kashmiri, one of al-Qaeda's most dangerous operatives.

The issue of ambassadorial veto power was kicked upstairs; the State Department now has a formal consultative role, but in the case of a dispute, final authority rests with the top of the chain of command in any covert action, which is the president and the CIA director. But interestingly, Director David Petraeus is said to have sided often with Munter, sharing his view that the long-term costs of drone attacks in Pakistan sometimes outweighed the short-term gains. Petraeus's skepticism is said to have strained his relations with the chief of the CIA's counterterrorism center.

I described Obama last year as "covert commander in chief," and he obviously has relished this role. But he needs to remember that he is diplomat in chief, too.

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## 41. Plugging The National Security Leaks

*Accountability is the key. A Congressional investigation makes more sense than a special prosecutor.*

By Michael B. Mukasey

The imprudent release of secrets has become a hallmark of the current administration.

It began in April 2009 with the attorney general's disclosure of Justice Department legal opinions, written in 2003, describing classified interrogation techniques that were harsh but lawful by the standards then in force—

and effective, although used on only a tiny fraction of captured terrorists. That disclosure informed the nation's enemies of the absolute limit of what they could face if captured, and it demoralized the intelligence operatives who had thought they could rely on Justice Department opinions but were then told that those opinions were no longer valid.

Imprudence accompanied even the splendid achievement of killing Osama bin Laden, with revelations about the intelligence seized from his residence. These included knowledge about the location of al Qaeda safe houses, which warned those who would otherwise have been targets and thereby frustrated the use of that information. There was also the disclosure of a Pakistani physician's cooperation with U.S. intelligence agents trying to obtain bin Laden's DNA to confirm his presence in Abbottabad, which caused the physician's imprisonment for 33 years on a charge of treason and will probably deter many potential foreign sources in the future.

Imprudence has now degenerated into incontinence: detailed disclosure in newspapers of how the drone program operates; how an undercover agent was said to have penetrated an al Qaeda operation and frustrated a plot to put a bomb aboard an airliner bound for this country; and how the United States and Israel allegedly developed and then inserted into Iranian nuclear-enrichment equipment a computer virus that caused centrifuges to spin out of control and destroy themselves, and then another virus that allowed us to monitor the workings of Iran's nuclear program.

It would be difficult to overstate the damage inflicted by these revelations, and a



comprehensive assessment will be impossible even decades from now. Consider that in May 2011, the Defense Department announced that a cyber attack that inflicted physical damage on the U.S. would be considered an act of war and would justify a kinetic response. As one general put it, if anyone took down our power grid with a cyber attack, we would feel justified in putting a missile down the smokestack of one or more buildings where the attack originated.

Has a so-far-unnamed U.S. official, in boasting about the physical damage caused by a computer virus we allegedly helped develop, now justified a kinetic response from Iran or some group claiming to act in its behalf? What protective steps will our enemies take to counteract the programs described in these newspaper articles? What valuable information will foreign intelligence agencies now withhold from us in the justified belief that we cannot be trusted to protect secrets?

Assuming the information in these articles is true, it is of a sort that is closely held, known only to a few and treated with the strictest of confidence. That includes, among other things, conversations in the White House Situation Room—conversations that occurred only among people who hold the highest security clearance known to our government, and in a place open only to such people. Documents setting forth such information may not be taken out of secure facilities even by those people, who are finite in number.

The outrage about this seems to be bipartisan (for once), with calls for investigations by various congressional committees and by prosecutors both ordinary and special. The attorney

general, who regrettably opened the bidding with his 2009 disclosure of the previously classified interrogation memos, said he was asking not one but two U.S. attorneys to investigate the latest disclosures. And of course there have been numerous calls for appointment of a special prosecutor—more precisely an "independent counsel," although "special prosecutor" sounds so much more ... special.

As to the two U.S. attorneys, both may be assumed to be honest and competent, and it is not unheard of for a U.S. attorney to ask a grand jury to indict even a high government official; I worked for the U.S. attorney who secured the indictment of an incumbent attorney general, John Mitchell, in 1973 (for alleged crimes connected to an attempt to improperly influence the Securities and Exchange Commission).

But those bent on concealment can assure that even diligent investigations are prolonged for months (even past a certain November election). Independent counsels proceed no faster. The time needed to set up and staff the office of an independent prosecutor can itself delay an investigation.

Moreover, the record of such counsels has been spotty, not to mention their constitutionally anomalous status—within yet supposedly independent of the executive. Criminal investigations would also frustrate any congressional subpoena, which would be met with the claim that disclosure to Congress could compromise the criminal proceedings. In addition, the standard under current criminal law could require a showing beyond a reasonable doubt that the leaker in question acted with intent to injure the security of the U.S., or

with knowledge that such injury likely would occur—a difficult standard to meet.

Nor is it clear that there has been a violation of any criminal law. Those empowered to classify information are also empowered to declassify it. If these disclosures came from, or with authorization from, people allowed to declassify information—including but not limited to the president—there was no crime even in the disclosure of purported cyber activity.

But there is every reason why this inquiry should proceed in Congress, where oversight authority resides. If the bipartisan outrage is genuine, Congress is peculiarly well suited to investigate and disclose what went on here, and who is responsible. An informed electorate would be grateful.

To prevent further intelligence disclosures during the process, a joint congressional committee, populated by lawmakers from intelligence and armed services committees already used to handling classified information, could meet when necessary in executive session, with limited and cleared staff, and eventually make findings in which the nation could have confidence.

The president, too, has a role. For one thing, he could order any of the finite number of public officials who had access to this information and who is summoned for questioning to waive any assurance of confidentiality that might have been received from a journalist. Thus the journalists involved would be free to testify without offending the rules of their craft. An official who refused to sign would be justly suspect and could be dismissed, serving as he does at the pleasure of the president.

Holding people to account is far more useful at this time and in this situation than putting people in prison, and it avoids the difficulty of proving a conventional crime.

To be sure, the Constitution hints broadly that more than mere disclosure could result. It empowers Congress to investigate, prosecute and try what our founding charter quaintly refers to as "high crimes and misdemeanors," a category that may include conventional crimes but is certainly not limited to them. Rather, it embraces all grave breaches of public trust, criminal or not, and the public trust assuredly was breached here.

I do not advocate impeaching anyone, particularly not at this late stage in the electoral cycle. But at a minimum, investigating diligently and disclosing candidly would allow Congress to pull up its dismal level of public approval. It's worth a try.

*Mr. Mukasey served as U.S. attorney general from 2007-09, and as a U.S. district judge from 1988-2006.*

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Norfolk Virginian-Pilot  
June 21, 2012

## 42. The Greening Of America's Military

Not too long ago, it was the stuff of science fiction: A green Navy, powering its ships, jets and helicopters with a blend of cooking grease, algae and oil. Next month, it'll become a reality during an exercise off the coast of Hawaii.

But if some people in Congress have their way, the goal of deriving half of the Navy's energy needs from alternative fuels by the end of this decade will soon be relegated to the realm of imagination. And, with it, any



hopes of converting the rest of the military - and the rest of America - to new energy sources grow more distant, too.

The Navy's project is too costly an endeavor in lean times, congressional critics say, and it's driven less by actual need than by - in the words of Sen. James Inhofe, R-Okla. - "a far-left environmental agenda that is being imposed on the Department of Defense."

If all this is part of a scheme to turn warriors into tree-huggers, it's undoubtedly news to folks like Republican John Warner, a former Navy secretary who served 30 years in the U.S. Senate.

Warner is one among many military heavyweights who enlisted early in the campaign to bring a sense of urgency to a military transition from fossil fuels - to make clear these are steps necessary to protect America's troops, save tax dollars and reduce a risky reliance on foreign oil.

"I think we cannot afford not to do this," says Navy Secretary Ray Mabus, who acknowledges that alternative fuels are four to five times more costly than traditional fuels - at the moment.

Pentagon officials believe those costs will drop as military use expands. As Mabus recently told *The Wall Street Journal*, the cost of biofuels has fallen by one-half in the two years that the Navy has been buying test batches.

Republicans in Congress - joined by Democrats Jim Webb of Virginia (also a former Navy secretary) and Joe Manchin of coal-friendly West Virginia - are attempting to block expenditures on alternative fuels.

With the military facing cutbacks, now isn't the time to experiment, some critics contend. That's a point worthy of debate, but it should require

an answer on when a good time might be.

Mabus reminds opponents there's a human cost to continued reliance on fossil fuels. For every 50 convoys bringing fuel into combat zones, a Marine is killed or wounded.

"That," he says, "is too high a price to pay." Greater energy efficiency would put fewer troops at risk and free up money for defense and other needs.

The argument over a green Navy should focus on those human costs - and certainly not on claims by Inhofe and others, including Rep. Randy Forbes of Chesapeake, that the Navy's project is driven by environmentalists.

It stands to reason that the military's use of alternative fuels could help develop new applications for civilian use, just as the Internet and other military innovations made their way into public use.

Many of these green initiatives began during the Bush administration - and the goal was single-minded. Retired Adm. Richard Truly, a former NASA chief who worked on four Pentagon energy studies in the past decade, recently told *The Journal* that the objective was clear - military readiness. "I don't remember a single conversation where we talked about spending any money for environmental reasons," he said.

It's often said, by Mabus and others, that energy security is synonymous with national security. The Navy is pursuing both. Congress should get out of the way.

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Tacoma News Tribune  
June 21, 2012  
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### 43. Military Death Penalty Discredits American Justice

Genuine justice doesn't play favorites with either criminals or their victims. A state, for example, that's quick to execute murderers who kill whites, but not those who kill blacks, shouldn't be in the business of executing anyone at all.

For many years, the U.S. military court system has been flunking the test of impartiality in handing down death sentences. As *The News Tribune's* Adam Ashton documented Sunday, the military has been willing to condemn its own to death only if they kill Americans. For killing foreign noncombatants, U.S. personnel have gotten - at most - life in prison.

The four soldiers, one airman and one Marine now on death row at Fort Leavenworth all got there by murdering fellow Americans. In more recent cases, prosecutors have sought the death sentence against two defendants: Army Maj. Nidal Hasan, accused of slaughtering 13 people in 2009 at Fort Hood, Texas, and Army Sgt. John Russell, accused for murdering five other service members in 2009 in Iraq.

Conspicuously missing from both lists are any troops accused or convicted of killing foreign civilians. Members of the rogue "kill team" - four Joint Base Lewis-McChord soldiers who killed three Afghan noncombatants for sport in 2010 - never faced capital punishment, for example.

In a more appalling atrocity, a civilian court chose not to condemn the ringleader of a gang-rape and murder of a 14-year-old girl and the massacre of her family in Iraq; the Army did not seek the execution of

any of the other four soldiers involved.

The pattern is clear. Iraqis and Afghans couldn't help but conclude that their lives are worth less than Americans' in the eyes of the United States.

The case of Staff Sgt. Robert Bales of Lake Tapps poses an extreme test of prosecutorial discretion. He stands charged with killing 16 Afghan villagers, most of them children, on March 11. This wasn't a question of shooting the wrong people in a split-second mistake or otherwise confusing bystanders with enemies; Bales is accused of sneaking off base twice in the middle of the night to systematically kill and burn the bodies of obvious noncombatants.

Arguments against executing U.S. troops for such atrocities typically invoke the soul-deadening fear, stress and confusion many experience in combat zones. A man who winds up as a war criminal conceivably might have remained a law-abiding citizen had he not served in the first place.

This is a reasonable rationale for imposing a life sentence instead of capital punishment, but it also produces a double standard. As long as death row is reserved only for personnel who kill Americans, the United States appears unconscionably lenient in dealing with those who kill mere foreigners.

The military isn't big on the death penalty. It hasn't executed anyone since 1961. Given its lack of interest in carrying them out, its nominal death sentences chiefly serve to undermine America's moral authority abroad. Better to strike capital punishment from the Uniform Code of Military Justice.

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June 21, 2012  
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**44. Where Are Those  
Words In The Treaty? --  
(Letter)**

Ken Adelman's rebuttal (Letters, June 18) of Donald Rumsfeld's June 13 criticism of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea repeats two persistent myths about this deeply flawed and unnecessary treaty, to wit: that the U.S. would have a permanent seat in the treaty's governing body and could exercise a veto over its decisions. Neither of these assertions is true.

Our nation is not mentioned in the treaty or its appendices, much less afforded a "permanent seat" anywhere. The word "veto" appears nowhere in the text.

**Richard J. Douglas,**  
*College Park, Md.*

*Mr. Douglas served as deputy assistant secretary of defense 2006-2009 and is former chief counsel to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.*

**Editor's Note:** The op-ed by Donald Rumsfeld appeared in the *Current News Early Bird*, June 13, 2012, and the Ken Adelman letter appeared June 18, 2012.