# CURRENT NEWS

# EARLY BIRD

June 30, 2012

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Item numbers indicate order of appearance only.

## PANETTA/DEMPSEY PRESS BRIEFING

## 1. Pentagon Chief Urges Congress To Block New Defense Cuts

(NYTimes.com)....Reuters

Defense Secretary Leon Panetta urged Congress on Friday to act soon to stop a new round of defense budget reductions next year, saying the threat of \$500 billion more in cuts leaves military families and defense workers under a cloud of uncertainty.

### 2. Panetta: Sequestration Threatens 'Critical' Programs

(Politico.com)....Stephanie Gaskell

Defense Secretary Leon Panetta made a patriotic plea to Congress just days before the Fourth of July holiday to prevent sequestration budget cuts from threatening "the programs critical to our nation's security."

#### 3. Panetta And Dempsey Slam Sequester, Defend Afghanistan Strategy

(AOL Defense (defense.aol.com))....Sydney J. Freedberg Jr.

Defense Secretary Leon Panetta and Joint Chiefs chairman Gen. Martin Dempsey took the stage together at the Pentagon this afternoon, 12 months after Panetta took office, to urge Congressional action against sequestration and to defend the administration's strategy in Afghanistan.

#### 4. Panetta On Pakistan: At Least We're Talking

(Security Clearance (CNN.com))....Jennifer Rizzo

In frank remarks Friday, Defense Secretary Leon Panetta said the fact that discussions are even taking place to reopen Pakistan's supply routes into Afghanistan is a good sign, an indicator of the rift in U.S. and Pakistan relations.

## 5. U.S. Downplays Turkish Troop Moves Near Syrian Border

(NYTimes.com)....Reuters

U.S. defense chiefs on Friday downplayed Turkey's deployment of troops and military vehicles toward its border with Syria, saying the movements didn't appear aimed at escalating tensions with Syrian President Bashar al-Assad.

## 6. US-Israel War Game Rescheduled For Autumn

(Omaha World-Herald)....Robert Burns, Associated Press

The top U.S. military officer says the U.S. and Israel will hold a major missile defense exercise in October.

## 7. Here's What Defense Secretary Panetta Learns From Gravely Wounded US Troops

(BusinessInsider.com)....Walter Hickey

Today at the last Department of Defense press briefing before the Fourth of July, Defense Secretary Leon Panetta opened up to the press.

## MIDEAST

## 8. U.S., Russia Diplomats Can't Bridge Syria Gaps

(Los Angeles Times)....Patrick J. McDonnell and Paul Richter

The top U.S. and Russian diplomats failed to bridge critical differences about Syria during talks in Russia on Friday, leaving prospects uncertain for a high-level international "action group" scheduled to gather Saturday in Geneva.

## 9. Syrian Groups Say Violent Day Left High Civilian Toll

(New York Times)....Rod Nordland and Rick Gladstone

Syria's opposition on Friday reported the deadliest 24-hour period so far in the uprising against President Bashar al-Assad and said rebel fighters had seized two Syrian generals, including the highest-ranking officer to fall into insurgent hands.

#### 10. Doubts Cast On Turkey's Story Of Jet

(Wall Street Journal)....Julian E. Barnes, Adam Entous and Joe Parkinson

U.S. intelligence indicates that a Turkish warplane shot down by Syrian forces was most likely hit by shore-based antiaircraft guns while it was inside Syrian airspace, American officials said, a finding in tune with Syria's account and at odds with Turkey.

#### 11. Iranian Says Nuclear Talks Have Reached 'Critical Point'

(New York Times)....Rick Gladstone

Iran's ambassador to the United Nations said Friday that negotiations with the big powers over the disputed Iranian nuclear program had reached a "critical point," implicitly raising the possibility of failure, because of the new regimen of harsh economic sanctions that have just been imposed on his country by the United States and European Union.

#### 12. Amid Standoff, More Sanctions For Iran

(Washington Post)....Jason Rezaian and Joby Warrick

...With public discontent growing, Iranian leaders have taken the unusual step of publicly acknowledging the economic pain.

## 13. Morsi Says He Will Work For Release Of Sheik Jailed In U.S.

(New York Times)....David D. Kirkpatrick

...But a promise Mr. Morsi made as part of his speech may provoke Washington: to work for the release of Sheik Omar Abdel Rahman, the Egyptian-born militant Islamist convicted after the 1993 World Trade Center attack of plotting to bomb several New York City landmarks.

## **AFGHANISTAN**

### 14. U.S. Moves To Disrupt Taliban's Cash Flow

(Washington Post)....Joby Warrick

The Obama administration imposed sanctions on a pair of informal money-exchange networks in Afghanistan and Pakistan on Friday in what officials described as the first use of the tactic to attack the financial underpinnings of Taliban militants who rely on the system to fund their insurgency.

## 15. Afghan Phaseout Of Security Firms Draws Concerns

(Wall Street Journal)....Nathan Hodge

The Afghan government's plan to phase out private security firms has "increased the uncertainty over security" for U.S.-funded aid projects and increased the cost of guarding them, an audit released Friday by a U.S. government watchdog agency said.

#### 16. Afghanistan: Insurgents Kill 10 In Attacks On Villages

(New York Times)....Graham Bowley

Insurgents attacked three villages in the Kamdesh district of Nuristan Province near the Pakistan border on Friday, killing six Afghan security officials and four civilians, Afghan officials said.

### 17. Troop Immunity Likely To Be Focus Of U.S., Afghanistan Deal

(Reuters.com)....Missy Ryan and Hamid Shalizi, Reuters

U.S. and Afghan officials are likely to tussle over legal protections for American soldiers in Afghanistan when they begin negotiations on a security agreement that would allow some U.S. troops to remain beyond 2014.

## DEFENSE DEPARTMENT

#### 18. Pentagon Asks Congress To Shift Billions In Funding

(Bloomberg.com)....Tony Capaccio, Bloomberg News

The Pentagon asked Congress to shift \$8.2 billion in previously approved fiscal 2012 funds to bankroll "higher priority" items, including added fuel costs to resupply U.S. forces in Afghanistan. The shift is detailed in an 82-page "reprogramming request" sent to congressional defense committees yesterday.

## 19. Pentagon Celebrates Gay Pride Month, But Can It Really Make Gays Equal?

(Christian Science Monitor (csmonitor.com))....Anna Mulrine

The repeal of 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell' has exposed some inequalities – between spousal benefits for heterosexual troops and those for homosexual troops who are also in legal partnerships.

## DETAINEES

#### 20. Gitmo Inmates May Be Moved To Afghan Jail

(Norfolk Virginian-Pilot (pilotonline.com))....Anne Gearan, Associated Press

The Obama administration is considering a new gambit to restart peace talks with the Taliban in Afghanistan that would send several Taliban detainees from the military prison at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, to a prison in Afghanistan, U.S. and Afghan officials told The Associated Press.

#### 21. Pentagon Drops Kuwaiti's War Crimes Charges

(Miami Herald)....Carol Rosenberg

The Pentagon on Friday abruptly dropped nearly 4-year-old charges against a Kuwaiti captive at Guantanamo, on the same day the Kuwaiti ambassador disclosed ongoing talks for release of the oil nation's last two citizens held at the prison camps in Cuba.

### COLORADO FIRES

#### 22. California Air National Guard Sends Two Planes To Fight Colorado Fires

(L.A. Now (LATimes.com))....Tony Perry

...Two C-130J planes from the North Carolina Air National Guard have also been ordered to Colorado. The new planes will push to eight the number of C-130J planes fighting the flames.

#### 23. U.S. Soldiers Training To Fight Wildfires

(CNN)....Barbara Starr

Firefighters recruited from across the country are throwing everything they can at the inferno in Colorado. Now U.S. Army troops are preparing to get involved as well.

## 24. Carson GIs Could Be Called On To Fight Fires

(ArmyTimes.com)....John Miller and Susan Montoya Bryan, Associated Press

...The Forest Service on Friday was also training a Fort Carson Army battalion to serve as firefighters to boost the number of crews available nationwide.

## ARMY

## 25. Family Friends Identify Slain Fort Bragg Soldier As Lt. Col. Roy L. Tisdale

(Fayetteville (NC) Observer)....Drew Brooks

A Fort Bragg battalion commander who was shot and killed Thursday afternoon has been identified by family friends as Lt. Col. Roy L. Tisdale. Tisdale was killed during a unit safety briefing in a field near the Bastogne Gables neighborhood on Fort Bragg.

### 26. Army Preps Spy Blimp

(Wall Street Journal)....Nathan Hodge

The U.S. military is preparing for the maiden flight of a football-field-size airship laden with surveillance gear designed to do the work of a dozen drones--and destined for Afghanistan.

#### 27. O-3 Loses CIB, Gets Boot In Friendly Fire Death

(ArmyTimes.com)....Joe Gould

Army Secretary John McHugh has revoked the Combat Infantryman Badge awarded to an officer who fatally shot a member of his squad, Pfc. David H. Sharrett, during a 2008 friendly fire incident in Iraq, an Army spokesman confirmed. The officer, Capt. Timothy R. Hanson, is also being processed for separation from the Army after a review of his actions during the incident, according to an email to Sharrett's father, David H. Sharrett, from an Army official.

#### 28. Texas: Judge Denies Another Delay In Fort Hood Trial

(New York Times)....Associated Press

A military judge ruled Friday against delaying the trial of the Army psychiatrist charged in the Fort Hood shooting, who remains banned from the courtroom because his beard violates Army regulations.

## 29. Rockbridge Loses A Son, A Soldier, A Leader

(Roanoke (VA) Times)....Matt Chittum

After such a stellar high school career, Chase Prasnicki was bound to play college football, and he had a few colleges to choose from.

## MARINE CORPS

#### 30. V-22s Cleared For Okinawa And Heads To UK Air Shows

(AOL Defense (defense.aol.com))....Richard Whittle

The Pentagon and the Japanese government announced early Friday that a dozen Marine Corps MV-22 Ospreys are being shipped to Japan for deployment on Okinawa but the planes won't fly until investigations into two recent crashes of the tiltrotor troop transport are complete.

## NAVY

### 31. U.S. Hosts 22 Nations In Hawaii For Naval Training

(Arizona Republic (Phoenix))....Audrey McAvoy, Associated Press

About 25,000 sailors and other military personnel from 22 nations are converging on Hawaii in the world's largest naval exercises to practice hunting for submarines and catching pirates. The U.S. Pacific Fleet is hosting the Rim of the Pacific exercises, which started Friday.

## 32. Environmentalists Knock EPA's OK Of Plan To Sink Navy Ships

(Honolulu Star-Advertiser)....William Cole

As the Navy touts upcoming biofuel tests in what it has dubbed the "Great Green Fleet" during Rim of the Pacific war games off Hawaii, environmentalists are decrying the planned sinking of three old Navy ships as polluting the sea.

#### 33. SEAL Training Range Won't Show Woman As Target

(Norfolk Virginian-Pilot)....Kate Wiltrout

The Navy will not use a target depicting a Muslim woman holding a gun at a new training range for SEALs in Virginia Beach. The announcement came hours after the Council on American-Islamic Relations asked the Pentagon to remove the target.

## AIR FORCE

#### 34. Key Issue Arises As Trainer's Hearing Concludes

(San Antonio Express-News)....Tracy Idell Hamilton

Were the Air Force trainees who had sex with their superiors in a supply room "grown women" who could make their own decisions or "impressionable teenagers" still under the sway of those who directed every aspect of their lives for the preceding 8.5 weeks?

#### 35. US Wants Deserter To Surrender

(Boston Globe)....Associated Press

American officials are trying to convince a man who claims to be a wanted US Air Force deserter to turn himself in after 28 years on the run, his Swedish lawyer said Friday.

## CONGRESS

## 36. Pay Afghanistan And Strike Pakistan, Experts Tell House

(AOL Defense (defense.aol.com))....Sydney J. Freedberg Jr.

The US must not go ahead with planned cuts to the Afghan National Army and police, a panel of experts urged the House Armed Services Committee today. Instead, we must keep spending \$6 billion a year to support 350,000 Afghan security personnel, go slowly on drawing down our own forces -- and escalate the drone war in Pakistan by striking Taliban sanctuaries previously off-limits.

## **PAKISTAN**

#### 37. Allen Visits Pakistan For Constructive Military-To-Military Talks

(Dawn.com (Pakistan))....Agence France-Presse

...According a joint statement of Pakistan Army and Isaf issued by Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) here on Friday, during this visit, the commanders specifically discussed the mutual progress being made to eliminate terrorism, combat extremism and ensure that both Pakistan and Afghanistan territory is no longer used as safe haven for cross border attacks.

## ASIA/PACIFIC

#### 38. U.S. Reaches Out To China, But Not For Naval Maneuvers

(New York Times)....Jane Perlez

As the United States' top military commander for Asia and the Pacific wrapped up a four-day tour of China on Friday, a large multinational maritime war exercise hosted by the United States was getting under way in the waters off Hawaii. China was not invited.

### 39. Tensions Derail Japan-Korea Pact

(Wall Street Journal)....Evan Ramstad and Yuka Hayashi

Seoul deferred plans Friday to sign a modest military cooperation pact in Tokyo after news of the accord sparked a flood of domestic criticism, a sudden move that shows how historical tensions between South Korea and Japan continue to hamper efforts at improving relations.

#### 40. First F-35s To Run ¥10.2 Billion Each

(Japan Times)....Kyodo

The Defense Ministry said Friday it has signed a contract to buy the first four of 42 F-35 fighter jets from the United States for ¥10.2 billion each, ¥300 million more than initially estimated.

#### 41. Phl-US Naval Exercises Start Monday

(Philippine Star)....Jaime Laude

This year's joint naval exercises between the Philippines and the United States will push through on Monday amid China's declaration that it will resolutely oppose any military provocation in its territorial waters.

## BUSINESS

# 42. Northrop Grumman Snags A \$782 Million Sole-Source Contract For Afghanistan Communications

(NextGov.com)....Bob Brewin

The Air Force on Wednesday quietly disclosed it had awarded a \$782 million sole source contract to Northrop Grumman Corp. to continue operating an airborne communications relay system in Afghanistan through September 2015, pushing the total value of the project to \$1.7 billion.

## COMMENTARY

## 43. High Anxiety

(National Journal)....Nancy Cook

...Still, all of the hand-wringing misses the point. Hysteria is good, because it will prompt action. Freak-outs on the Hill and in the halls of think tanks and defense firms may persuade Republicans to ultimately agree to policies that make them uncomfortable, such as increased taxes, to stave off the Pentagon cuts. Democrats may have to yield on entitlements.

#### 44. 7 Habits Of Highly Effective Austerity Planners

(SmallWarsJournal.com)....Robert Haddick

In my Foreign Policy column, I apply CSBA's latest report on coping with defense austerity to the Pentagon's current predicaments.

#### 45. Republicans And Democrats Can Agree On Myanmar (Burma)

(Christian Science Monitor (csmonitor.com))....Susan Collins

In Myanmar (Burma) the tide of democracy is growing. But Aung San Suu Kyi rightly cautions foreign investors that the country still has no 'rule of law.' The US must continue to support those working to further human rights and civil society while carefully watching Burma's generals.

#### 46. How Egypt's Army Won

(New York Times)....Joshua Stacher

...In this latest grand spectacle manufactured by the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces, the generals symbolically respected the people's choice while using the election to further entrench their unaccountable political autonomy.

### 47. Full Circle

(National Journal)....Yochi J. Dreazen

America's war on terrorism began in Yemen. It may end there, too.

## 48. Compared To Civilians, Military Pay Higher Than Ever

(Kitsap (WA) Sun)....Tom Philpott

As private sector salaries flattened over the last decade, military pay climbed steadily--enough so that by 2009, pay and allowances for enlisted members exceeded the pay of 90 percent of private sector workers of similar age and education level.

## 49. In Military Justice System, An All-Powerful Arbiter

(At War (NYTimes.com))....Rachel Natelson

In the criminal justice system, the people are represented by two separate, yet equally important, groups: the police, who investigate the crime, and the district attorneys, who prosecute the offenders.

## 50. The Right To Lie

(Washington Post)....Editorial

The Supreme Court was right to strike down the Stolen Valor Act.

#### 51. A Time For More Than Talk

(Washington Post)....Editorial

...While Syrian forces shell towns and villages, and resistance forces battle government troops, the rest of the world is preparing to contribute more talk.

## 52. A New Month In The Armed Forces

(Norfolk Virginian-Pilot)....Editorial

Not so long ago gay military members feared revelation of their sexual orientation as a cataclysmic event that would lead to losing their jobs.

## SATURDAY READING

## 53. Soldier Deployed In Afghanistan Comes Home To 'Set Tone' For Bronco World Series

(New Lenox (IL) Patch)....David Hansen

Before the 12-year-olds on the Rays and Brewers started their World Series game Wednesday night, they took time to thank an American soldier.

NYTimes.com June 29, 2012

## 1. Pentagon Chief Urges Congress To Block New Defense Cuts

WASHINGTON (Reuters)
- Defense Secretary Leon
Panetta urged Congress on
Friday to act soon to stop a
new round of defense budget
reductions next year, saying the
threat of \$500 billion more in
cuts leaves military families and
defense workers under a cloud
of uncertainty.

"Congress can't keep kicking the can down the road or avoiding dealing with the debt and deficit problems that we face," Panetta told a news conference. "The men and women of this department and their families need to know with certainty that we will meet our commitments to them and to their families."

Panetta's remarks come at a time of renewed focus on the looming across-the-board defense cuts, which would be carried out under a process known as "sequestration." Industry officials met with House Democrats to discuss the cuts on Thursday and held talks with Panetta at the Pentagon on Tuesday.

Senator Carl Levin, the chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, said this month that several different groups of lawmakers were holding talks on how to deal with the threat of sequestration. Some lawmakers are pushing to delay the cuts by up to a year, well beyond the November election.

Republican lawmakers in the House of Representatives on Friday accused Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, a Democrat, of blocking efforts to halt the new round of cuts due to go into force on January 2. They urged him to "put forward your own plan or stop obstructing plans others have already offered."

"Further cuts to the military don't affect some faceless bureaucracy," Republicans from the House Armed Services Committee said in a letter to Reid. "The White House has determined that sequestration will arbitrarily gut the funding to our troops who are putting their lives on the line."

The Pentagon has said that unless Congress acts to change the law, it will have to implement the cuts on January 2 by slashing all programs by the percentage needed to bring about the required spending reduction, regardless of strategic need.

The potential new budget cuts come at a time when the Defense Department is already reducing projected spending by \$487 billion over 10 years as required by the Budget Control Act passed by Congress last year. The act was an attempt to curb the government's trillion-dollar deficits.

### No alternative deal

The cuts under sequestration were included in the act as part of an effort to encourage Republican and Democratic lawmakers to reach an alternative deal to cut spending by more than \$1 trillion. But they failed to achieve a compromise and now the cuts are due to go into force.

Panetta and senior military commanders have warned that a new round of spending reductions under sequestration would be devastating to the military and would force the Pentagon to abandon the new strategy adopted in January as part of the budgeting process.

But some analysts point out that the cuts being implemented come after a decade of rising defense spending and are far smaller proportionally than during previous military drawdowns.

They predict defense spending eventually will be reduced by several hundred billion dollars more, with or without sequestration.

Industry leaders who met with Panetta this week warned that the Pentagon could face billions of dollars in contract termination fees and other costs when the new cuts go into force next year. Panetta said the industry executives shared many of the Pentagons fears about the cuts.

"They're very concerned about the impact that it will have on their companies and on their employees," Panetta told the news conference.

He noted that company executives faced legal requirements to notify their employees about possible terminations, letters that would have to go out just days before the November elections.

"Both the companies as well as the Defenses Department are making very clear to Capitol Hill that this is a matter that ought not to be postponed, that it ought to be dealt with soon so that sequester ... will not happen," Panetta said.

Politico.com June 29, 2012

# 2. Panetta:

# Sequestration Threatens 'Critical' Programs

By Stephanie Gaskell

Defense Secretary Leon Panetta made a patriotic plea to Congress just days before the Fourth of July holiday to prevent sequestration budget cuts from threatening "the programs critical to our nation's security."

"Next week we celebrate the birth of our nation," Panetta said during a Friday afternoon briefing at the Pentagon. "It is a time for our leaders and for every American to recognize that blessings of freedom are not free." Panetta and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Martin Dempsey stepped up their rhetoric and asked for "a balanced approach" to staving off \$500 billion in automatic across-the-board cuts if an agreement can't be reached on the nation's deficit.

They listed the military's accomplishments over the past year -- the end of the Iraq war, the NATO mission in Libya, repealing the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy, the drawdown in Afghanistan among them -- and said troops are expressing concern about budget cuts.

"I've seen extraordinary examples of courage and sacrifice over the past year, in the men and women that I've met in the war zones, in the wounded warriors that I've met here at home. They are willing to put their lives on the line in order to protect our country. They deserve better than the threat of sequestration," Panetta said.

"Too often today the nation's problems are held hostage to the unwillingness to find consensus and compromise and in the face of that gridlock, artificial devices like sequester are resorted to in order to somehow force action. But in the absence of action, sequestration could very well threaten the programs critical to our nation's security," he warned.

Panetta has said that the Pentagon isn't planning for sequestration, which would go into effect on Jan. 1. The defense industry is already warning of massive layoffs.

"Congress can't keep kicking the can down the road," Panetta said.

House Armed Services Committee Chairman Buck McKeon (R-Calif.) sent a letter to Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid on Friday urging him to bring to the Senate floor a plan to stop sequester from hitting the Defense Department.

"While sequestration won't officially be enforced until next year, it is exacting a cost on our national security and our economy today," McKeon wrote.

"The time for rhetoric has passed," he said. "Resolution cannot wait until next month or a lame duck session or even the next Congress."

AOL Defense (defense.aol.com) June 29, 2012

# 3. Panetta And Dempsey Slam Sequester, Defend Afghanistan Strategy

By Sydney J. Freedberg Jr. PENTAGON--Defense

Secretary Leon Panetta and Joint Chiefs chairman Gen. Martin Dempsey took the stage together at the Pentagon this afternoon, 12 months after Panetta took office, to urge Congressional action against sequestration and to defend the administration's strategy in Afghanistan.

The normally calm Panetta became audibly emotional as he discussed the sacrifices of the wounded troops he's visited.

"First and foremost, when you walk in these rooms and see these wounded warriors, you cannot help but be inspired by the spirit that they have to fight on," he said, his voice starting to quaver. "I had a chance ... to go across the street to the Intrepid Center where they are providing rehab to our wounded warriors and they're together, they're all going through rehab together, there's tremendous spirit, tremendous things are being done, miracles are being produced every day with regard to these kids."

"Most of them want to go back," Panetta went on, segueing into his defense of the administration's war strategy. "Most of them want to go back.," he repeated, almost incredulous. "The one thing that they want to see is that we don't walk away from this, but that we continue the effort to make sure this mission is accomplished."

When a skeptical reporter asked point-blank why no one really talks in terms of "winning" in Afghanistan anymore, instead of just withdrawal, Gen. Dempsey stepped in:

"I've recently been to Afghanistan and I wouldn't characterize it that way," the Chairman said. "I think what you're seeing is a recognition that as we've learned the lessons of the last ten years and of this kind of conflict is that winning is defined in their terms.... It is the Afghans that have to win this fight." The American role is to hold the line and give the Afghans time to establish a government, an economy, and security forces that can function: "That is the definition of winning," said Dempsey. "It's that kind of conflict."

On the homefront, the biggest battle Panetta and Dempsey are waging is clearly against sequestration. In his opening remarks, after a tour de horizon of the US military's achievements in the year since he became Secretary, Panetta declared:

"Let me be frank: The biggest risk to everything I've talked about - to the health of our force to the well-being of our servicemembers and our families - is the threat of the sequester. Sequester will cut another \$500 billion dollars across the board from our national security budget and do it in a way that threatens to hollow out our national defense. I've seen extraordinary examples of courage and sacrifice over the past year in the men and women I've met in the war zones and the wounded

warriors I've met here at home. They are willing to put their lives on the line to protect our country. They deserve better than the threat of sequestration."

"Congress can't keep kicking the can down the road," Panetta went on, citing the uncertainty and threat of layoffs that hang over the defense industry in particular. "This next week we celebrate the birth of our nation. It is a time for our leaders and for every American to recognize that the blessings of freedom are not free."

Security Clearance (CNN.com) June 29, 2012

# 4. Panetta On Pakistan: At Least We're Talking

By Jennifer Rizzo

In frank remarks Friday, Defense Secretary Leon Panetta said the fact that discussions are even taking place to reopen Pakistan's supply routes into Afghanistan is a good sign, an indicator of the rift in U.S. and Pakistan relations.

"We continue to have a line of communication with the Pakistanis to try to see if we can take steps to reopen the (Ground Lines of Communication)," Panetta said. "And the good news is that there continues to be those discussions."

Pakistan shut down the key supply routes, stretching from Afghanistan through the lawless western tribal regions of Pakistan and down to the southern port of Karachi, in November after dozens of its troops were killed in a mistaken U.S. airstrike.

The routes offer a shorter and more direct path than the one NATO has been using since, which goes through Russia and other nations, avoiding Pakistan altogether.

It has cost the U.S. \$100 million more a month to use the alternative northern routes.

The remarks were made during a news conference with Joint Chiefs Chairman Gen. Martin Dempsey.

This month, Panetta expressed frustration with Pakistan's failure to go after militant safe havens within its borders, particularly those of the al Qaeda-linked Haqqani network.

Gen. John Allen, the U.S. military's top commander in Afghanistan, met with Pakistan's army chief, Gen. Ashfaq Parvez Kayani, this week. Panetta said Kayani was receptive to Allen's concerns over the threat from the Haqqani network.

"They too have been the victim of terrorism," Panetta said. "They lost 17 Pakistanis on a patrol to the (Tehrike-Taliban Pakistan), and so every day, they too are the victims of terrorism. So we have a common enemy. It would make sense if we could work together to confront that common enemy."

NYTimes.com June 29, 2012

# 5. U.S. Downplays Turkish Troop Moves Near Syrian Border

WASHINGTON (Reuters)
- U.S. defense chiefs on
Friday downplayed Turkey's
deployment of troops and
military vehicles toward its
border with Syria, saying the
movements didn't appear aimed
at escalating tensions with
Syrian President Bashar alAssad.

A Turkish official on Thursday described the movement as a precaution after Syrian air defenses shot down a Turkish warplane a week ago.

U.S. Defense Secretary Leon Panetta noted that Turkey has maintained troops along the border. "And I wouldn't read too much into the movements that have been in the press," Panetta told reporters at the Pentagon.

Army General Martin Dempsey, chairman of the U.S. military's Joint Chiefs of Staff, added that "I wouldn't read that as provocative in any way."

Dempsey, who recently spoke with his Turkish counterpart, General Necdet Ozel, added: "You'd probably have to ask the Turks. I've asked them and they are not seeking to be provocative."

Commenting on his conversation with Ozel, Dempsey said: "He's taking a very measured approach to the incident. So he and I are staying in contact."

Turkish commanders on Friday inspected missile batteries deployed in the border region, seen as a graphic warning to Assad after last Friday's shoot-down of the Turkish plane.

Regional analysts said that while neither Turkey nor its NATO allies appeared to have any appetite to enforce a formal no-fly zone over Syrian territory, Turkish Prime Minister Tayyip Erdogan had made it clear Assad would be risking what he called the 'wrath' of Turkey if its aircraft strayed close to its borders.

Erdogan told a rally in the eastern city of Erzurum on Friday, broadcast by Turkish television: "We will not hesitate to teach a lesson to those who aim heavy weapons at their own people and at neighboring countries."

The Turkish border region is sheltering more than 33,000 Syrian refugees as well as elements of the rebel Free Syrian Army.

Omaha World-Herald June 30, 2012

## 6. US-Israel War Game Rescheduled For Autumn

By Robert Burns, Associated Press

WASHINGTON--The top U.S. military officer says the U.S. and Israel will hold a major missile defense exercise in October.

The exercise Austere Challenge '12 was scheduled originally for April but was postponed amid growing talk of Israel preparing to attack Iran over its nuclear program. The odds of an Israeli attack in the near term appear to have lessened.

Joint Chiefs of Staff chairman Army Gen. Martin Dempsey told reporters at the Pentagon on Friday that he is unfamiliar with exact details but that the postponed exercise is expected to take place in October.

The exercise is designed to test multiple Israeli and U.S. air defense systems against incoming missiles and rockets from places as far away as Iran.

BusinessInsider.com June 29, 2012

# 7. Here's What Defense Secretary Panetta Learns From Gravely Wounded US Troops

By Walter Hickey

Today at the last Department of Defense press briefing before the Fourth of July, Defense Secretary Leon Panetta opened up to the press.

He gave a deep answer to a personal question.

One journalist asked a somewhat personal question of the Secretary: what were his interactions with soldiers gravely wounded in a war where winning outright no longer seems the goal?

Panetta was visibly emotional when discussing his

repeated trips to hospitals to speak with the severely wounded, and was surprised with what he learned.

"Most of them want to go back," he said.

Panetta talked about going to both Hospitals and the Center for the Intrepid rehabilitation center

"You cannot help but be inspired by the spirit they have to fight on," the Defense Secretary said. "They've got incredible wounds as a result from the IEDs and yet they have a smile on their face and their going to fight on."

He was taken aback by both the medical advances and the wounded troops' ability to a recover from devastating wounds. "Miracles are being produced each day with regards to these kids," he said.

The troops also gave Panetta encouragement with how the war is going for the soldiers on the ground, a frequent question on the Secretary's mind. "They thought they were doing well," he said "They felt very good about the mission they were involved with with."

"I'm getting very good reports about what they were able to achieve."

Chairman of the Joint Chiefs General Martin Dempsey stressed that the military leadership understood that the civilian population puts immense trust in them to take care of the troops.

When Panetta and Dempsey left, the Secretary finished by wishing all the present a happy Fourth.

Los Angeles Times June 30, 2012

# 8. U.S., Russia Diplomats Can't Bridge Syria Gaps

Secretary of State Clinton fails to sway her counterpart on an

assertive global role in ending the violent conflict.

By Patrick J. McDonnell and Paul Richter, Los Angeles Times

BEIRUT--The top U.S. and Russian diplomats failed to bridge critical differences about Syria during talks in Russia on Friday, leaving prospects uncertain for a high-level international "action group" scheduled to gather Saturday in Geneva.

Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton attempted to persuade Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov that world powers need to take a more assertive role in bringing about a "political transition" to end the raging violence in Syria.

U.S. officials say that as part of any transition, Syrian President Bashar Assad must go. But Russia has insisted that other nations cannot force out Moscow's longtime ally and that Syrians must decide, without external influence, who leads them.

Friday's encounter in St. Petersburg apparently did not alter fundamental differences about how to end the violence in Syria.

A senior administration official said the two diplomats had "serious discussions on all areas of difficulty" on Syria, but that important gaps remained.

Nevertheless, U.S. officials have concluded that the Saturday meeting — meant to salvage United Nations special envoy Kofi Annan's faltering peace plan and hammer out a transition blueprint for Syria — may still be productive, the official said.

The Russia foreign minister sounded an upbeat tone after meeting with Clinton, the Russian state RIA Novosti news agency reported.

"We have a very good chance tomorrow in Geneva to find a common denominator and find a path forward in order to stimulate the implementation of Annan's plan," RIA Novosti quoted Lavrov as saying. "We're agreeing on most things."

The Russian diplomat has said Syrian authorities are prepared to withdraw their forces from populated areas in conjunction with a similar pullback by rebel fighters. But Annan has said that the government has the "first responsibility" to redeploy forces.

Russia's support for any U.N.-backed transition plan for Syria is crucial because Moscow is a veto-wielding permanent member of the Security Council.

The Geneva meeting comes as a wave of escalating violence is sweeping across Syria's many contested zones, including the central city of Homs and the restive Damascus suburb of Duma, which has become battleground. Opposition have alleged activists massacre of civilians in Duma, while the government says dozens of "terrorists" have been killed in an offensive.

The amended peace plan from Annan envisions a Syrian "transitional" national unity government that could include members of the current government and opposition figures.

Although the plan does not explicitly address Assad's fate, the transitional administration would bar anyone "whose continued presence and participation would undermine the credibility of the transition and jeopardize stability and reconciliation." U.S. officials argue that Assad squarely fits the definition of someone who should be disqualified.

The transition proposal is expected to be the focus of Annan's much-awaited "action group" meeting in Geneva.

The high-voltage guest list includes the foreign ministers of all five permanent U.N. Security Council members, including Clinton and Lavrov, along with ministers from Turkey, Iraq, Kuwait and Qatar. Iran, a close Assad ally, was not invited at Washington's insistence. The session is widely viewed as a last chance to rescue Annan's peace plan.

Assad is Russia's last major Arab ally, following the U.S.supported toppling of two other Arab autocrats, Iraq's Saddam Hussein andLibya's Moammar Kadafi.

Street demonstrations that began almost 16 months ago against Assad have evolved into a full-fledged insurgency featuring thousands of rebels across the country battling government troops and armor.

violence As the escalates, opposition-Syria monitoring groups have regularly reported daily civilian death tolls exceeding and have blamed government forces for various "massacres." The government has accused the opposition of exaggerating casualty counts for public relations purposes and concocting stories of massacres in a bid to sway global opinion in advance of major international meetings on Syria, such as the Saturday session in Geneva.

A recent U.N.-commissioned study found that killings in Syria were increasingly sectarian in nature and warned of "catastrophic" consequences should the spiraling violence continue unchecked.

Government tanks, artillery and attack helicopters have been laying siege to densely populated Damascus suburb of Duma, the opposition said. One account, which could not be independently verified, said at least 60 people, mostly women

and children, had been killed in recent days. Activists circulated unverified video footage of what were described as corpses wrapped in white shrouds, alleged victims of the assault on Duma.

The official Syrian state news agency reported Friday that "dozens of terrorists" had been killed and "big numbers" wounded or arrested during crackdown in Duma, where many buildings "used by the terrorist groups" were destroyed.

In the city of Homs, the Red Cross has been unable to access areas where hundreds of civilians are said to be trapped, and opposition activists allege daily shelling of civilian districts. Each side in the conflict has blamed the other for blocking access to Red Cross and Red Crescent ambulances.

McDonnell reported from Beirut and Richter from Washington.

New York Times June 30, 2012 Pg. 7

# 9. Syrian Groups Say Violent Day Left High Civilian Toll

By Rod Nordland and Rick Gladstone

BEIRUT, Lebanon — Syria's opposition on Friday reported the deadliest 24-hour period so far in the uprising against President Bashar al-Assad and said rebel fighters had seized two Syrian generals, including the highest-ranking officer to fall into insurgent hands.

Accounts of the intensified mayhem in Syria came as Kofi Annan, the special envoy for the United Nations and the Arab League, prepared to hold a high-level meeting in Geneva that includes the five permanent members of the

Security Council to rescue his sidelined Syrian peace plan from total irrelevance.

Mr. Annan told Reuters television that he was optimistic that the meeting, to be held Saturday, would be a success. But Russia, the Syrian government's most important backer, suggested that Mr. Annan's hope for creating a political transition in Syria had serious problems.

In a statement, the Russian Foreign Ministry called for new cease-fire mechanisms and the synchronized withdrawal of all armed combatants from Syria's populated battle zones. Only then, the statement said, could talks begin that "would allow the Syrians to independently define the agenda and time frames of the transition period."

Russia has opposed any proposal that would impose a political solution on the Syrians from the outside.

Ministry The Foreign statement was issued shortly before Foreign Minister Sergey V. Lavrov of Russia met in St. Petersburg with Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton, who has repeatedly clashed with Mr. Lavrov over the Syria crisis and has called on Mr. Assad to resign as part of any solution. Both Mr. Lavrov and Mrs. Clinton plan to attend the Geneva conference, but there was no indication after their three-hour meeting that they had bridged their differences.

Tallies by Syrian opposition groups that track casualties reported on Friday that the previous day's death toll had reached 190 from violence in towns and cities throughout the country. The counts were detailed but could not be confirmed independently.

The largest number was concentrated in the Damascus suburb of Douma, an insurgent enclave about eight miles northwest of the capital,

according to reports from the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, a group based in Britain, and the Local Coordination Committees, a Syrian-based group.

spokesman for the Syrian Observatory said the death toll on Thursday was the worst of any single day this year, with 125 confirmed civilian fatalities as well as the deaths of 65 fighters reported but under investigation. The observatory considers a death confirmed when videotape or other documentary evidence identifying the victim received.

The coordination committees, which uses similar methodology but acts independently, reported 139 civilian deaths on Thursday.

Syria's Al Dunya TV confirmed the concentration of deadly violence on Douma. "The eradication operations in Douma are based on a 'surgical approach' and will continue to exterminate all terrorists," the station said.

With half a million residents, most of them members of Syria's Sunni majority, Douma has 80 mosques, and residents reached by Skype said most of them were closed.

"For the first time in Douma's history we don't have Friday Prayers," said one activist who identified himself as Mohammad Sayid. "People are hiding in the basements, and we're afraid mosques might be shelled."

The two Syrian generals who were reported seized appeared in a rebel video with three masked fighters who ordered them to identify themselves. They said they were arrested by rebels on June 22 and 23 in Damascus, and the video, posted on the Internet, showed close-ups of their identity cards and what

appeared to be bruising on their faces.

One said he was Maj. Gen. Faraj Shehadeh al-Makt, a pilot identified by the rebel video as the highest-ranking officer seized by the insurgency so far. A government news Web site, Syria Online, said a lieutenant general — an even higher rank — by the same name had been abducted in the Adawi area, near the capital, by an "armed terrorist group" that had stopped his car.

There was no official mention of the second officer shown in the rebel video, who identified himself as Brig. Gen. Ahmad Silaybi and said that he worked at a notorious prison as a counterterrorism expert.

Violence around the country has increased drastically in the past two weeks, since the United Nations monitoring mission deployed as part of Mr. Annan's peace plan suspended work, saying it was no longer possible for the 300-member monitor team to operate safely.

An opposition activist, Imad Hosary of the Local Coordination Committees, attributed the increased deaths to retribution against communities that had previously cooperated with the United Nations monitors. The impending Geneva meeting is a factor as well, Mr. Hosary said.

"The regime wants to show the Russians that they are still controlling the ground after most of the areas have gone out of government control, like Idlib, Aleppo Province, Damascus Province," he said.

June appears to have been the deadliest month in the 16-month conflict, with 1,771 civilians killed, according to the observatory's figures. With rebel military deaths, the toll rises to about 3,000 so far — compared with 411 total deaths in June 2011.

In Douma, heavy shelling continued for the second day on Friday, according to an activist there who was reached via Skype. He said the opposition was operating two field hospitals, which were both over capacity with more than 100 seriously wounded patients.

Other areas said to have been hard hit include Homs, with 25 dead; Deir al-Zour, with 13; Dara'a, with 12; and Hama, with 10, an observatory spokesman said.

Rod Nordland reported from Beirut, and Rick Gladstone from New York. Reporting was contributed by Hwaida Saad and Dalal Mawad from Beirut, Ellen Barry from Moscow, Alan Cowell from London and Nick Cumming-Bruce from Geneva.

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# 10. Doubts Cast On Turkey's Story Of Jet

U.S. Intelligence, Contradicting Ankara, Indicates Aircraft Was Shot Down by Syria in Its Own Airspace, Officials Say By Julian E. Barnes, Adam Entous and Joe Parkinson

U.S. intelligence indicates that a Turkish warplane shot down by Syrian forces was most likely hit by shore-based antiaircraft guns while it was inside Syrian airspace, American officials said, a finding in tune with Syria's account and at odds with Turkey.

The Turkish government, which moved tanks to the Syrian border after the June 22 incident, says the debris fell in Syrian waters, but maintains its fighter was shot down without warning in international airspace. Ankara also has said the jet was hit too far from

Syrian territory to have been engaged by an antiaircraft gun.

Damascus has said it shot down the plane with an antiaircraft battery with an effective range of about 1.5 miles.

"We see no indication that it was shot down by a surface-to-air missile" as Turkey says, said a senior defense official. Officials declined to specify the sources of their information. The senior U.S. defense official cautioned that much remains unknown about the incident.

A Turkish official said he wasn't aware of the American doubts, and reiterated the government's position that a Syrian missile downed the plane in international airspace.

The Turkish government has scheduled a special meeting for Saturday morning on Syria. A spokesman for the prime minister said the U.S. intelligence on the incident would likely be discussed.

The downing of the jet spurred fears of a widening regional conflict and led the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, following a presentation on Tuesday by Turkey, to condemn Syria's action.

The use of antiaircraft fire would suggest the Turkish plane was flying low to the ground, and slowly, U.S. officials said —though Syria said the jet was traveling at 480 miles an hour.

If hit by antiaircraft fire, the jet likely came closer to the Syrian shoreline than Turkey says, U.S. officials said.

The plane's pilots haven't been found, and the Turkish Navy has continued to search for them. U.S. officials say they believe the pilots perished.

Some current and former American officials believe Ankara has been testing Syrian defenses. The version of the Turkish F-4 Phantom that was shot down typically carries surveillance equipment, according to U.S. defense officials.

A former senior U.S. official who worked closely with Turkey said he believed the flight's course was meant to test Syria's response. "You think that the airplane was there by mistake?" the former official said.

"These countries are all testing how fast they get picked up and how fast someone responds," said a senior U.S. official. "It's part of training."

The Turkish official said the plane wasn't on a surveillance mission. "All NATO members have condemned the Syrian hostile act and have supported Turkey," the official said.

The emerging discrepancies could prove embarrassing to Ankara and strain continuing discussions between the U.S. and Turkey, a NATO ally that shares a long border with Syria.

Turkey occupies a critical role in the U.S. and Western strategy for dealing with the Syrian crisis. American officials and defense analysts say the U.S. approach depends largely on Turkey's willingness to keep pressure on Syrian President Bashar al-Assad.

NATO officials said Turkey's presentation on the incident on Tuesday was very detailed, but diplomats didn't closely question the Turks on their version of events. The U.S. backed Turkey and, American officials said, pushed NATO to issue a statement sharply condemning Syria.

The incident has put NATO in a tough spot. Alliance members are eager to back Ankara, but don't want to be dragged into a military conflict in Syria.

If the plane had been struck by a missile, a senior military official said, it would be an indication that Damascus had authorized the action. But the use of antiaircraft fire may mean a local commander decided on his own initiative to fire at the Turkish plane, according to officials and analysts.

U.S. defense officials said they weren't alarmed by Turkey's movement of forces to its border with Syria. Gen. Martin Dempsey, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, praised Turkey's "very measured" approach. "I've asked them, and they are not seeking to be provocative," Gen. Dempsey said.

The U.S.-Turkish relationship is unlikely to be affected by the apparent discrepancies in accounts of the downing of the jet. Cooperation between Ankara and Washington has grown closer in recent months, after a period of significant strain in 2009 and 2010.

That marks a turnaround for Turkey, which 18 months ago moved to cultivate relations and trade with neighboring Muslim regimes, including Mr. Assad's, while downgrading ties with former ally Israel, raising concerns in Washington.

The revolutions of the Arab Spring, however, upended that policy. In a major change, Turkey agreed last fall to house a NATO missile-defense system, which was designed by the U.S. to contain Iran.

Turkish analysts said the debate in Turkey is now focused on the escalating tensions along the country's 565-mile border with Syria.

"What's important for most Turks is that the government has been seen to respond by boosting troop capacity on the border, which will further pressure Assad," said Atilla Yesilada, a partner at Istanbulbased political risk consultancy Istanbul Analytics.

New York Times June 30, 2012 Pg. 6

## 11. Iranian Says Nuclear Talks Have Reached 'Critical Point'

By Rick Gladstone

Iran's ambassador to the United Nations said Friday that negotiations with the big powers over the disputed Iranian nuclear program had reached a "critical point," implicitly raising the possibility of failure, because of the new regimen of harsh economic sanctions that have just been imposed on his country by the United States and European Union.

"This by itself indicates that they are not willing to engage with us in a meaningful dialogue," the ambassador, Mohammad Khazaee, told reporters at a news conference convened by Iran's United Nations mission to present its view of the nuclear negotiations, which have made scant progress after three rounds of high-level talks since April.

A meeting of lower-level negotiators representing Iran and the so-called P5-plus-1 group of nations — the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council plus Germany — is set for Tuesday in Istanbul.

Mr. Khazaee rarely holds news conferences, and the timing suggested that Iranian officials were posturing to lay the groundwork for possible disappointment or worse at the meeting in Turkey.

While he expressed hope for progress, he said, "at the same time it is clear to us that some members of the 5-plus-1, for whatever reasons, obviously and mainly political reasons, are not forthcoming and serious enough for finding a solution."

"If the talks do not proceed as they should," he added, "we are going to have another standoff in the talks. Therefore, we can say that we are at a critical point in our talks with some members of the 5-plus-1."

He spoke a day after a new American law took effect that penalized countries that did business with Iran's central bank by denying their banks access to the United States market. Twenty nations that had significantly reduced their reliance on Iranian oil were exempted from the law, including China, Iran's biggest customer.

On Sunday, the European Union will invoke a potentially more damaging sanction on Iran, banning imports of Iranian oil and prohibiting Europebased insurers from covering Iranian oil shipped anywhere. That measure has already caused havoc for Iran as well as many non-European customers because Europe dominates the maritime insurance business.

American and European diplomats have said Iran's willingness to even talk about its nuclear program is the result of pressure from the sanctions, which have already caused a plunge in Iran's exports of oil and contributed to a sharp rise in inflation there.

Mr. Khazaee restated Iran's longstanding contention that the sanctions had to be rescinded before negotiations could succeed. But he also said sanctions pressure, no matter how damaging, would do nothing to change the Iranian position in the dispute. "We have learned how to cope with these problems," he said.

The P5-plus-1 group has said Iran must abide by Security Council resolutions that demand that it halt enrichment of uranium and answer questions about activities that United Nations nuclear inspectors have raised regarding possible military applications of the Iranian nuclear program.

Iran contends that the Security Council resolutions are invalid because Iran has signed the Treaty on the Nonproliferation of Nuclear Weapons, which entitles it to enrich uranium for peaceful purposes. Iran has also said that its supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, has banned nuclear weapons as un-Islamic.

Mr. Khazaee reiterated those points and criticized what he called the West's double standard of suspecting motives of Iran but not those of Israel, which has nuclear weapons and has not signed the nonproliferation Israel has never treaty. officially acknowledged nuclear arsenal, but it is believed to have 75 to 200 nuclear weapons, according to the Arms Control Association, a Washington-based group.

Washington Post June 30, 2012 Pg. 8

## 12. Amid Standoff, More Sanctions For Iran

It's debatable whether added economic pain will elicit concessions By Jason Rezaian and Joby Warrick

TEHRAN — With negotiations over Iran's nuclear program stalled, the European Union and the United States moved forward this week with their toughest sanctions to date. But experts questioned whether the financial pain will lead to concessions by Iran's leaders.

The moves have come during difficult times for Iran's economy, which is already suffering from previous rounds of sanctions. On the streets of Tehran, the biggest concern is the quickly rising cost of basic necessities, especially bread.

With public discontent growing, Iranian leaders have

taken the unusual step of publicly acknowledging the economic pain.

"Each day I receive around 2,000 letters, e-mail messages and faxes showing people's concerns, and their main concern is high prices," an influential hard-line cleric, Ayatollah Nasser Makarem-Shirazi, told a gathering in the Shiite holy city of Qom this week.

In Washington, the Obama administration has sought to tabulate the damage to Iran's economy, citing oil industry statistics that confirm plummeting exports of Iranian crude in the past year, from 2.5 million to 1.5 million barrels a day. The estimated annual cost to Iran is about \$32 billion.

White House officials also cited the ripple effects of sanctions: a shortage of jet fuel and aircraft parts for Iran's commercial airlines, a virtual boycott of Iranian ports by major cargo lines, an inflation rate that U.S. officials estimate at more than 20 percent.

"In short, sanctions are having a major adverse impact on Iran's economy, and things will only go from bad to worse unless Iran gets serious about addressing the international community's concerns about its nuclear program," said a senior administration official, who insisted on anonymity in discussing U.S. strategy on Iran.

But U.S. officials and Iran experts are divided on whether any amount of economic pain will yield concessions from Iran at the negotiating table. Iranian officials, during three rounds of talks with world powers this spring, rebuffed proposals to curtail production of enriched uranium in exchange for gradual relief from sanctions.

Elliot Abrams, a former adviser on the Middle East to the George W. Bush administration, said Iran's leaders appear willing to accept economic deprivation rather than budge on their right to enrich uranium.

"They faced a choice between their nuclear program and increased economic difficulty, and now we've seen their answer," said Abrams, now a senior fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations in Washington.

The new sanctions aim to further limit Iran's ability to sell and transport crude oil, the country's primary source of income. The European Union's moves ban all oil imports from Iran and block third parties from insuring Iranian oil shipments. Last year, E.U. countries accounted for 18 percent of Iranian crude exports.

Meanwhile, U.S. sanctions that passed Congress in December and went into effect Thursday focus on Iran's central bank and seek to punish foreign financial institutions that do business with it "or other blacklisted Iranian financial entities."

Publicly, Iran's leadership has remained defiant, insisting that the Islamic republic has learned to deal with punitive measures by the West and that the sanctions have bolstered Iran's independence from the global economy.

"The sanctions imposed by the arrogant powers mainly target the Iranian people so that pressures wear down the Iranian people's patience, separating them from the Islamic republic," the country's supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, told senior members of Iran's judiciary Wednesday. "But by God's will, they will not be successful in this plot because they have not known our people and authorities yet."

Iran's position has long been that it is developing a peaceful nuclear energy program and has no desire to build nuclear weapons. The United States and other global powers are suspicious of Iran's intentions and have sought to block it from developing the technological capacity for weaponization.

Prices for goods in Iran
— foreign and domestic —
have been steadily rising since
the beginning of the year.
But Iranians are readying
themselves for another possible
price jolt in the coming days.
Law enforcement authorities
this month announced that
inspectors would be deployed in
the country's bazaars to watch
for hoarding and price gouging.

Members of the Iranian religious and security establishment, meanwhile, have been using the rising prices as ammunition to attack domestic political rivals, with some of the blame directed at President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad and his economic policies.

At the meeting in Qom, Makarem-Shirazi urged politicians to take a stronger role in responding to the public's concerns. "The high prices have made people angry, and we have to do something about it," he said.

Iran has been able to keep its economy afloat thus far thanks to relatively high global oil prices and vast gold and hard currency reserves. But declining energy prices in recent months have only added to the strain.

After years of increasing prosperity, standards of living for most Iranians are now in sharp decline. Purchasing power has been especially hard hit, thanks to a spike in inflation in January. While the rial stabilized against the dollar in the months that followed, it began to lose value again this week as the new sanctions took hold.

Last Saturday, the first day of the Iranian work week, the

dollar was trading at just over 18,500 rials. But by Thursday it had crossed the 20,000 mark for the first time since late January. With a heavy reliance on imports for most household purchases, the decline in the rial's value has been keenly felt.

Warrick reported from Washington.

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# 13. Morsi Says He Will Work For Release Of Sheik Jailed In U.S.

By David D. Kirkpatrick

CAIRO Presidentelect Mohamed Morsi Brotherhood the Muslim military's pre-empted the choreographed swearing-in ceremony by taking an oath of office a day early on Friday, in a televised speech to tens of thousands of supporters in Tahrir Square.

But a promise Mr. Morsi made as part of his speech may provoke Washington: to work for the release of Sheik Omar Abdel Rahman, the Egyptian-born militant Islamist convicted after the 1993 World Trade Center attack of plotting to bomb several New York City landmarks.

Mr. Morsi referred briefly to Mr. Abdel Rahman in an almost offhand aside in the context of a vow to free Egyptian civilians imprisoned here after military trials under the rule of the generals. "I see signs for Omar Abdel Rahman and detainees' pictures," he said. "It is my duty and I will make all efforts to have them free, including Omar Abdel Rahman."

A Brotherhood spokesman said later that Mr. Morsi intended to ask federal officials in the United States to have Mr. Abdel Rahman extradited to Egypt on humanitarian grounds. He was not seeking to have Mr. Abdel Rahman's convictions overturned or calling him a political prisoner.

An Obama administration official, speaking on the condition of anonymity, shrugged it all off as empty talk, saying, "There is zero chance this happens."

Egyptians were far more concerned about the spectacle of the speech in Tahrir Square — the proving ground of the country's revolution — as the latest power play in the standoff between the Muslim Brotherhood and the ruling generals over Egypt's future.

"I come to you as the source of legitimacy," Mr. Morsi declared, pointedly pledging his allegiance to the public and eschewing the institutions of the government of his ousted predecessor, Hosni Mubarak. "Everyone hears me, all the people and the cabinet and government, army, police. There is no authority over this authority. You have the power!"

His soaring talk of popular sovereignty, however, appeared to be an attempt to cover up for an early concession to the generals, who still cling to power.

On the eve of Mr. Morsi's election, the generals dissolved Parliament, seized its powers and issued a new interim charter depriving the office of Egypt's president of much of its authority. They also stipulated that the president should swear the oath in front of the Mubarak-appointed judges of the Supreme Constitutional Court.

That same court had issued a hurried decision authorizing the generals to dissolve Parliament, and the generals' new interim Constitution assigned the court a role overseeing the drafting of a new, permanent charter. Swearing-in before the court,

then, was seen a tacit recognition of its authority and that of the generals.

The Brotherhood and Mr. Morsi demanded that the swearing-in take place before a reinstalled Parliament, as did thousands of their supporters who have occupied Tahrir Square for more than a week demanding the return of Parliament and the withdrawal of the interim charter.

But on Friday it became clear that Mr. Morsi had agreed to take his formal oath in front of the court Saturday morning and that his Tahrir Square speech was in part an effort to distract from that agreement.

An engineering professor with only a short history in electoral politics, Mr. Morsi has never been known as an orator. Even on Friday he read from a prepared speech held chest-high, often balancing it awkwardly in the same hand as his microphone.

Still, his speech was unexpectedly rousing. The staging might have helped. An advance team arrived early to build a platform much grander than the usual Tahrir Square pedestals, reflecting his status as president-elect. It was then decorated with banners proclaiming, "No to dissolving Parliament!" a denunciation of the military's power grab.

His new retinue of presidential guards accompanied Mr. Morsi, who at the start of the speech, pushed aside two heavily armed soldiers in bulletproof vests so he could stand face to face with the crowd.

"I am here today with you, with the Egyptian people," he said. Later, pulling open his sport coat, he said: "I have nothing to protect me from any bullets. I fear God almighty and then I work for you." The moment was in vivid contrast to

Mr. Mubarak's heavily guarded public speeches.

Few Egyptians appeared to notice Mr. Morsi's comments about Mr. Abdel Rahman, and it was not clear whether they might play into suspicions among some in Washington of the president-elect's roots in the Muslim Brotherhood, an 84-year-old Islamist group with a history of opposition to the policies of the United States and Israel.

In an interview with Shadi Hamid of the Brookings Doha Center, Mr. Morsi once said he harbored suspicions that unknown hands might have played a role in the attacks on the World Trade Center on Sept. 11, 2001.

"When you come and tell me that the plane hit the tower like a knife in butter, then you are insulting us," Mr. Morsi said, according to an article Mr. Hamid wrote in Foreign Policy magazine. "How did the plane cut through the steel like this? Something must have happened from the inside."

Although it is nearly impossible to find an Egyptian who supports terrorist attacks like those on Sept. 11 or the 1993 car bombing of the World Trade Center garage, many are very skeptical of official American accounts about who was responsible.

Mr. Morsi's pledge to seek Mr. Abdel Rahman's extradition may also play well with Egyptians who perceived Mr. Mubarak as a lackey to Washington. But it runs sharply counter to assiduous efforts over many years by Brotherhood leaders to convince the West that their group advocates only peaceful reform and does not condone violence.

Mr. Abdel Rahman, who is blind, is serving a life sentence at a federal prison in North Carolina. He was convicted of conspiring to conduct a war of urban terrorism against the United States through acts that included the 1993 World Trade Center bombing, though he was not accused of helping to carry out that attack. He was also convicted of plotting to kill Mr. Mubarak during a planned visit by the Egyptian leader to New York in 1993 that never materialized.

After Mr. Morsi's speech, Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg of New York said, "The conviction of Sheik Omar Abdel Rahman was a measure of justice against a man who tried to kill so many, and New Yorkers would oppose any effort to undermine him serving his life sentence."

Michael B. Mukasey, the judge who presided over Mr. Abdel Rahman's trial in 1995 and is now in private practice, said: "This guy is not a political prisoner. He was convicted in a system that leans heavily in favor of defendants, and every benefit of that system was given to him."

Mai Ayyad contributed reported from Cario, Benjamin Weiser from New York, and Mark Landler from Washington.

Washington Post June 30, 2012 Pg. 2

## 14. U.S. Moves To Disrupt Taliban's Cash Flow

New sanctions target two informal banks for alleged aid to insurgency

By Joby Warrick

The Obama administration imposed sanctions on a pair of informal money-exchange networks in Afghanistan and Pakistan on Friday in what officials described as the first use of the tactic to attack the financial underpinnings of Taliban militants who rely

on the system to fund their insurgency.

The sanctions announced by the Treasury Department were coordinated with similar measures adopted by the United Nations as part of a broad effort to slow the flow of cash used by the Taliban to pay salaries and purchase weapons for attacks in Afghanistan.

These informal cash networks — commonly known as hawalas — have long been used by Taliban commanders and other militants to move funds back and forth across the Afghan-Pakistani border, according to administration officials who helped prepare the legal case against the two institutions.

The two hawalas were identified as the Haji Khairullah Haji Sattar Money Exchange and the Roshan Money Exchange. Both were described as large networks that operate in Afghanistan and Pakistan, with most transactions occurring in border provinces.

Treasury Department documents allege that Afghan Taliban commanders maintained accounts in both networks and regularly withdrew thousands of dollars to pay off Taliban-backed "shadow" governors, buy weapons and pay fighters' salaries.

The documents say much of the cash deposited in the accounts appears to have come from narcotics trafficking, a multibillion-dollar business in Afghanistan that helps finance the insurgency.

While U.S. officials in past have targeted Afghan hawalas used by drug traffickers, the new sanctions the first specifically are aimed at disrupting Taliban's finances, said senior administration official, who insisted on anonymity

in discussing an ongoing investigation.

On Friday, U.N. officials added the names of the same two institutions and their principal backers a list of groups officially associated with Taliban militancy, meaning they will be subject to international sanctions as well.

The U.S. and U.N. measures together are likely to severely restrict the network's ability to conduct business with overseas banks or tap into international cash flows of legitimate hawalas, the senior official said.

"We have every reason to believe that the designation will be quite disruptive to their activities," he said.

Hawalas exist throughout the Muslim world as a routine way of banking, particularly for immigrant workers and people too poor to have a bank account.

But they are also "an important cog in the terrorist financing machinery," said the senior official. "Whether it's al-Qaeda, the Taliban or other extremist groups, we are keenly aware that all of them have long made use of the informal sector."

He asserted that the two networks targeted by sanctions had knowingly supplied cash to the Taliban for years.

"This is not an instance where an otherwise unwitting financial conduit is being used by bad actors," he said. "These guys have set up shop in part to support the Taliban."

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# 15. Afghan Phaseout Of Security Firms Draws Concerns

By Nathan Hodge

KABUL—The Afghan government's plan to phase

out private security firms has "increased the uncertainty over security" for U.S.-funded aid projects and increased the cost of guarding them, an audit released Friday by a U.S. government watchdog agency said.

The Special Inspector Afghanistan General for Reconstruction, or Sigar, said security costs for more than a dozen major development projects could increase by over \$55 million over one year as contractors switch to the Afghan Public Protection Force, a state-owned security force that is replacing private firms.

"Security costs are likely to increase and could be substantial," the report states.

The Sigar was created in 2008 to oversee the billions of taxpayer dollars spent on reconstruction projects in Afghanistan. It conducts both audits and criminal investigations.

The audit describes an uneasy transition, as some new Afghan guards show up with inadequate uniforms and equipment, submit invoices for projected hours instead of actual work, and demand additional benefits beyond those outlined in their contracts.

The audit, for instance, quotes a U.S. Agency for International Development contractor as saying officers in the Afghan force demanded trips to the Afghan capital to visit family, plus a car and fuel, items not agreed to in their contract.

The transition from private to state-run security has also driven up costs, the audit says. In some cases, the audit states, labor costs could rise by as much as 200% as contractors bring in expatriate security consultants to supervise the transition, it says. The cost of hiring Afghan guards could

increase by 46%, the report adds.

U.S. contractors in Afghanistan rely on private security for a range of services, from night watchmen and armed guards at housing compounds to more high-end escorts who protect convoys or provide bodyguard services to VIPs.

The costs of security in war-torn Afghanistan are high. According to the audit, at least \$300 million of the \$2.9 billion spent on some of USAID's largest projects in 2009 to 2011 went directly to security.

A USAID official said the agency had been closely monitoring the creation of the new force and hadn't witnessed a sharp cost increases in the first months of transition. "Security costs have not markedly increased, but we continue to monitor the cost and level of security services provided by the APPF," the official said.

Hired guns have been deeply unpopular in Afghanistan because of perceptions that they operate with impunity. Afghan President Hamid Karzai, after pledging to disband the private security companies, issued a decree in March 2011 that set a timeline for the dissolution of most of the firms.

While the U.S. initially expressed reservations about the plan to disband the firms, U.S. advisers are now helping assist in the creation of the new force.

As the audit suggests, the transition to state-provided security has been anything but smooth. The Afghan government has extended the licenses of some private because of security firms delays in the transition. Two top officials at the Afghan Public Protection Force, the organization's deputy minister and the business director,

resigned recently—doing so, according to a person familiar with the matter, because of troubles in the transition.

The force was supposed to be a one-stop shop for everything from weapons registration to vehicle licensing, but had stumbled on issues such as assuming responsibility for convoy protection, this person said. "They have not even gotten the convoy [transition] implemented, which was the issue...that resulted in the release of the deputy minister and the business director," the person said.

The Afghan Ministry of Interior, which oversees the new force, didn't immediately respond to a request to comment on the resignations and audit.

In addition to the management upheaval, the audit underscores some of the bureaucratic hurdles still faced by aid contractors and their security providers.

According to the audit, contractors reported cases in which it took as long as 24 months to clear vehicles for importation to Afghanistan. One Afghan official "attempted to charge an additional \$10,000 to register the company's vehicles," according to one of the contractors quoted. The audit offers no further explanation.

The report comes ahead of a conference in Tokyo that will outline the international community's long-term commitment to rebuilding Afghanistan. The report, which underscores the potential cost of the new security arrangement, is likely to put the spotlight on the costs of reconstruction.

The Afghan Public Protection Force is "a large, brand new organization, so the challenges get in the way," said a U.S. official.

June 30, 2012 Pg. 7

# 16. Afghanistan: Insurgents Kill 10 In Attacks On Villages

By Graham Bowley

Insurgents attacked three villages in the Kamdesh district of Nuristan Province near the Pakistan border on Friday, killing six Afghan security officials and four civilians, Afghan officials said. The fighting lasted for more than 12 hours, and more than 50 houses were destroyed, said Shams Rahman, a border police battalion commander in Nuristan. He said more than a hundred insurgents had stormed the area. A large explosion set off by insurgents outside the district governor's house killed the district governor's wife, he said. NATO said that it provided some air support for Afghan security forces involved in the fighting. Coalition ground forces, led by the United States, have withdrawn from the remote province in eastern Afghanistan. In 2009. insurgents attacked two American bases in the Kamdesh district, killing eight Americans.

Reuters.com June 29, 2012

# 17. Troop Immunity Likely To Be Focus Of U.S., Afghanistan Deal

By Missy Ryan and Hamid Shalizi, Reuters

KABUL--U.S. and Afghan officials are likely to tussle over legal protections for American soldiers in Afghanistan when they begin negotiations on a security agreement that would allow some U.S. troops to remain beyond 2014.

Afghan officials say they expect the deal with the United States to include the number of U.S. troops permitted to remain in Afghanistan beyond 2014;

the number of bases where troops will be located, and who will control them; what those troops can and can't do and legal immunities for those soldiers.

Talks on the security agreement, which have not begun, follow the conclusion of another bilateral deal outlining the two countries' future ties, which U.S. President Barack Obama and Afghan President Hamid Karzai signed in Kabul in May.

This time, negotiators must tackle some of the most sensitive issues that were ultimately excluded from the first deal, even as many Afghans, and Karzai himself, chafe against a foreign troop presence that has lasted more than a decade.

If such talks failed, the United States would be forced to pull out a force now numbering 90,000 by the end of 2014, when NATO nations are due to remove most troops, despite few signs that a resilient Taliban insurgency will soon die out.

Aimal Faizi, chief spokesman for Karzai, said the agreement, which is supposed to be finished by next May, would focus on the "nature, scope and obligations" of the U.S. military mission in Afghanistan after 2014.

"Both sides will start talking based on these three areas," Faizi told Reuters.

It's not known how many U.S. troops stationed in Afghanistan will stay behind after the end of 2014.

The remaining force could include several tens of thousands of U.S. soldiers, likely focusing on special forces operations targeting al Qaeda and other militants, advising Afghanistan's inexperienced military, and retain the ability to launch U.S. drones that target militants in neighboring Pakistan.

"The security agreement will touch upon the most contentious issues that have had times strained the relationship between the two countries - so I expect that these will take a very long time," said Brian Katulis, a senior fellow at the Center for American Progress, a Washington think tank.

Long-standing Afghan demands to subject foreign soldiers to local law may be the main stumbling block for negotiations.

#### A harder line?

Whether, and when, a U.S. soldier might be tried in a local court was perhaps the most contentious issue when the United States hammered out a similar deal in 2008 with Iraq. Ultimately, the deal allowed Iraq to try U.S. soldiers for "grave" crimes committed offduty, and off base.

As in Iraq, foremost in the mind of Afghan negotiators will likely be past missteps or abuse by American soldiers, along with years of civilian deaths that have occurred during NATO military operations.

A series of scandals involving American soldiers this year culminated in March when a U.S. staff sergeant is alleged to have walked off his base and shot at least 16 villagers in their homes.

The soldier accused in that case, Robert Bales, was whisked out of Afghanistan and is facing military trial in the United States.

Afghans also demanded that U.S. soldiers who burned copies of the Muslim holy book on a NATO base face local trial. But U.S. officials have indicated they may face only administrative discipline within the U.S. military.

A current U.S. troop agreement with Afghanistan, which has been in force since 2003, gives U.S. military personnel protection from prosecution in Afghan courts in most cases.

Yet Karzai, who critics see as bowing to Western interests, may be keen to be seen to assert Afghan sovereignty by taking a harder line in those negotiations.

At the same time, Katulis said, "the Afghan government's negotiating stance will be more limited than what we saw in Iraq last year because the Afghan government is much more dependent on external sources of support".

There is always the possibility that Afghanistan could ultimately rebuff the U.S. bid to secure its future troop base in Afghanistan beyond 2014 if the two countries can't hammer out a deal on troop immunity, or for other reasons.

Last year, U.S. officials abandoned talks for a deal that would have allowed some U.S. soldiers to remain in Iraq beyond the expiration of the two countries' security pact.

That is seen as far less likely in Afghanistan given the country's reliance on outside military power and the threat from the Taliban.

Bloomberg.com June 30, 2012

## 18. Pentagon Asks Congress To Shift Billions In Funding

By Tony Capaccio, Bloomberg News

The Pentagon asked Congress to shift \$8.2 billion in previously approved fiscal 2012 funds to bankroll "higher priority" items, including added fuel costs to resupply U.S. forces in Afghanistan.

The shift is detailed in an 82-page "reprogramming request" sent to congressional defense committees yesterday. It would provide at least \$772 million to pay for increased fuel costs for transporting supplies by northern routes into Afghanistan after Pakistan closed its ground lines to U.S. convoys.

Pakistan cut off use of its routes in November after NATO and U.S. forces accidentally fired on Pakistani troops, killing 24 soldiers. The closing has forced the U.S. to use more expensive northern routes, which Defense Secretary Leon Panetta has said added about \$100 million a month to the cost of resupplying troops.

"Without this funding the Army runs the risk of an interruption in the flow of supplies, subsistence and mail to deployed warfighters," according to the document sent to Congress.

The Pentagon also asked approval to provide \$20 million to reflect the "rapid increase" in costs related to the military trial of accused Sept. 11 mastermind Khalid Sheik Mohammed and four co-defendants. The money would go to the Defense Legal Services Agency, which is already getting \$104.6 million in the current year.

#### **Congressional Approval**

The reprogramming must be approved by the four congressional defense committees -- the authorization and appropriations panels in the House and Senate -- before the shift takes effect.

Reflecting plans to bolster Persian Gulf naval forces, the Pentagon requested \$9.6 million to buy missile launchers for five ships from Raytheon Co. (RTN) That would allow installation of Griffin missiles on U.S. patrol boats "to protect vessels and personnel from the increased threat of hostile fastattack craft" used by Iran, according to the document.

The request also includes \$6.4 million to buy 40 additional Griffin missiles for installation on Navy patrol vessels in the Gulf.

The Pentagon plans to spend \$30.2 million on the Raytheon system through 2017 because it was urgently requested by the U.S. Central Command, according to the document.

#### Iraq, Afghanistan

The Defense Department also asked approval to spend \$29.9 million, in addition to \$80.5 million already budgeted, to accelerate development of a missile designed to intercept rockets fired from low-elevation angles by insurgents in Iraq and Afghanistan at U.S. diplomatic and military personnel.

"This system will greatly improve soldier force protection," the Defense Department said in the document.

Within the services, the Army will see a shift of \$3.7 billion in funds; the Air Force, \$2.8 billion; the Navy, \$1 billion; and Pentagon-wide agencies, \$574 million.

Among the Army reductions are \$619.7 million from "other procurement" such as vehicles and electronics, including \$334.6 million from the WIN-T Ground Tactical Network made by General Dynamics Corp. (GD)

Also from the Army, \$514 million would be shifted from operations and maintenance; \$102.9 million from tracked combat vehicles; and \$86.4 million from ammunition.

The reprogramming requests that \$228 million be shifted from Navy personnel accounts and \$119 million from cruiser modernization programs.

## 'Glide' Bombs

At the request of the Marines Corps, the Pentagon asked to shift \$8 million to start a new program arming small drones with precision-guided "glide" bombs. The RQ-7B Shadow drones are designed to fly as high as 8,000 feet (2,438 meters.)

The money would buy 215 bombs Marines could use to kill insurgents in Afghanistan who plant roadside bombs, the Pentagon said.

"The First Marine Expeditionary Force estimated 90 occasions over a sixmonth" Afghan deployment when insurgents could have been attacked, the Pentagon said.

The Pentagon also acknowledged the U.S. needs to be more vigilant in tracking social-media sites globally. The Defense Department sought \$2.7 million to give special operations commandos access to instant translations and transcriptions.

"A combination of emergent technologies and new social media -- i.e. Twitter, blogs, Facebook -- and current events has brought about the critical need to find a solution to this capability gap," the Pentagon said in the document.

Christian Science Monitor (csmonitor.com) June 29, 2012

# 19. Pentagon Celebrates Gay Pride Month, But Can It Really Make Gays Equal?

The repeal of 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell' has exposed some inequalities – between spousal benefits for heterosexual troops and those for homosexual troops who are also in legal partnerships. By Anna Mulrine, Staff writer

Washington--A year and a half after the repeal of "Don't Ask, Don't Tell," US military officials in a standing-room-only Pentagon auditorium celebrated Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Pride Month. For Sue Fulton, a US Army veteran and 1980 graduate of West Point, it was a time to "really celebrate the professionalism of the force in handling the repeal so well" – at an event that would have until quite recently been unimaginable.

"You know, a lot of people seem surprised that the 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell' repeal went so smoothly," Ms. Fulton, a panelist at the event this week, told the audience. "And for a moment, I was one of them."

The Pentagon's top lawyer, Jeh Johnson, reflected on the months of investigation into whether the repeal was feasible, as well as on the service members who "had started off skeptics and had become satisfied that our military can do this," he said.

"By the end of the 10 month study – during which I think we actually saw attitudes shift as we stirred the pot on this issue – we had the overwhelming sense that, with proper education and leadership, the military could be ready for this change," Mr. Johnson said.

Yet though senior military officials have marveled at the ease of transition, they acknowledge that the repeal also "exposes certain inequalities" – as Johnson put it, between spousal benefits for heterosexual US troops and those for homosexual troops who are also in legal partnerships. "This troubles our leaders," he told the audience at the Pentagon LGBT event.

For this reason, the Pentagon is studying which benefits could be extended to the legal partners of gay troops. Many benefits that spouses of heterosexual troops enjoy – such as new GI Bill benefits and access to base medical care – are prohibited for gay spouses under the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA).

"Though the Department of Justice has said it will not defend the constitutionality of DOMA in court," Johnson noted, "until final resolution of that issue, adherence to that law is basic for the military and central to our efforts."

In the meantime, the top Democrat on the House Armed Services Committee, Rep. Adam Smith of Washington, has introduced a bill to "ensure equality" for military and veteran benefits "for all military spouses."

It endeavors to circumvent DOMA provisions by changing the definition of spouse in federal documents: "An individual shall be considered a 'spouse' if the marriage of the individual is valid in the state in which the marriage was entered into."

The bill is expected to gain little traction in the Republicancontrolled House.

For now, there are other steps the Pentagon can take, says Fulton, a founding board member of OutServe, an association for active-duty gay and lesbian military personnel.

This includes, for starters, giving partners access to base facilities like the gym, day-care center, and grocery store – known as the commissary in military parlance.

These privileges can be granted at the discretion of base commanders in many cases, and they do not require partners to be labeled as legal spouses.

Other benefits, such as new GI Bill benefits, can go to partners of gay troops only through changes in federal law – initiatives that the Obama administration has promised to take up in the months to come.

Norfolk Virginian-Pilot (pilotonline.com) June 30, 2012

# 20. Gitmo Inmates May Be Moved To Afghan Jail

By Anne Gearan, Associated Press

WASHINGTON--The Obama administration is considering a new gambit to restart peace talks with the Taliban in Afghanistan that would send several Taliban detainees from the military prison at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, to a prison in Afghanistan, U.S. and Afghan officials told The Associated

Under the proposal, some Taliban fighters or affiliates captured in the early days of the 2001 U.S. invasion of Afghanistan and later sent to Guantanamo under the label of enemy combatants would be transferred out of full U.S. control but not released. It's a leap of faith on the U.S. side that the men will not become threats to U.S. forces once back on Afghan soil. But it is meant to show more moderate elements of the Taliban insurgency that the U.S. is still interested in cutting a deal for peace.

Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton and others have said that while negotiations with the Taliban are distasteful, they are the best way to settle the prolonged war.

The new compromise is intended to boost the credibility of the U.S.-backed Afghan government. President Hamid Karzai and U.S. officials are trying to draw the Taliban back to negotiations toward a peace deal between the national Afghan government and the Pashtun-based insurgency that end a war U.S. would commanders have said cannot be won with military power alone.

The Taliban have always been indifferent at best to negotiations with the Karzai government, saying the U.S. holds effective control in Afghanistan. The Obama administration has set a 2014 deadline to withdraw forces and is trying to frame talks among the Afghans beforehand.

Under the new proposal, Guantanamo prisoners would go to a detention facility adjacent to Bagram air field, the largest U.S. military base in Afghanistan, officials of both governments said. The prison is inside the security perimeter established by the U.S. military, and is effectively under U.S. control for now. It is scheduled for transfer to full Afghan control in September.

Defense Secretary Leon Panetta would have to sign off on the transfer and certify that the men did not pose a danger. He would not confirm details of the new proposal at a Pentagon news conference Friday, but he said discussions continue to try to promote a peace deal.

"There are no specific commitments that have been made with regard to prisoner exchanges at this point," he said. "One thing I will assure you is that any prisoner exchanges that I have to certify are going to abide by the law and require that those individuals do not return back into the battle."

Any such transfer is unlikely to include the five most senior Taliban figures held at Guantanamo, the subjects of separate negotiations with the Taliban that have stalled, a senior U.S. official said.

The officials spoke on condition of anonymity because the transfer is still under discussion and no offer has been made.

Afghan officials and other diplomats said it is not yet clear whether the new proposal could include those five, but said it has not been ruled out. Republicans in Congress bitterly opposed the plan to send those men to house

arrest in Qatar, a Persian Gulf nation that has emerged as a key broker with the Muslim Taliban. The opponents feared the men would be set free and endanger the U.S.

The latest proposal was a topic of recent discussions in Washington with members of Karzai's peace committee, a group of elders charged with reaching out to the Taliban on the government's behalf.

"The possibility is strong," for a transfer to Afghanistan that includes the five top figures, said Ismail Qasemyar, international relations adviser for the Afghan High Peace Council.

Afghans involved in the discussions were still angling to get all 17 prisoners, including the five most senior men, released or transferred. The Taliban has demanded release of all the Guantanamo detainees as a condition for talks.

The Taliban abandoned direct talks in March, accusing the U.S. of reneging on several promises. The United States considers the talks suspended, not dead. The U.S. and the Afghan government are pursuing several new avenues to restart talks, including the use of proxy emissaries to the Taliban, diplomats said.

Karzai has long sought the return of all 17 Afghans imprisoned at Guantanamo, men he sometimes calls brothers, as a point of national pride. He has argued that their imprisonment at the detested Guantanamo prison undermines his credibility as a national leader, and that Afghanistan's own institutions should deal with captured insurgents.

The U.S. has said publicly that, in regards to the five senior Taliban, they would be transferred to another country's control, not released. But terms for the proposed transfer to Qatar were fairly

loose. Officials briefed on the discussions said the men would have to agree not to return to fighting, forswear any ties to al-Qaida, and submit to a ban on their travel. Beyond that it was not clear how closely they would be controlled by the Qatar government.

The Taliban would have been asked to release Sgt. Bowe Bergdahl, the only U.S. prisoner of war from the Afghan conflict.

Qatar recently sent a letter to U.S. officials with proposals to rekindle talks, a U.S. official said, but it was not clear whether the new proposal for transfer to Afghanistan was among them.

The latest Bagram proposal would appeal to the Taliban, Qasemyar said.

"The High Peace Council could use that opportunity as a goodwill gesture," he said in an interview.

Qasemyar said that the proposal may have benefits for the U.S. beyond boosting his organization's bargaining power with the Taliban.

"What I gathered from what I heard in Washington is the U.S. government was afraid that if they released a prisoner and he went back to fighting," the Obama administration "would lose faith before the Congress or before the people of the United States," he said.

A way around that concern, Qasemyar said, is "to send them to the Afghan government. Then that responsibility would be shifted to our side."

Karzai supports the new proposal, Qasemyar said, despite some concern in the Afghan government that the five could become a rallying point for ethnic tension in Afghanistan.

Mullah Norullah Nori, for example, could be a problem for Karzai. He was a senior Taliban commander in Mazare-Sharif when the Taliban fought U.S. forces in late 2001. He previously was a Taliban governor in two provinces in Northern Afghanistan, where he has been accused of ordering the massacre of thousands of Shiite Muslims.

Miami Herald June 30, 2012

## 21. Pentagon Drops Kuwaiti's War Crimes Charges

By Carol Rosenberg

The Pentagon on Friday abruptly dropped nearly 4-year-old charges against a Kuwaiti captive at Guantanamo, on the same day the Kuwaiti ambassador disclosed ongoing talks for release of the oil nation's last two citizens held at the prison camps in Cuba.

In the case of Faiz 37, military Kandari, commissions officials noted that a senior Pentagon official, retired Vice Adm. Bruce MacDonald, dismissed the Bush-era charges "without prejudice," meaning the Pentagon could once again charge the Kuwaiti with war crimes.

The Pentagon would not provide an explanation for the timing. A Pentagon prosecutor swore out the charges in October 2008, but he had never been brought before the war court to face formal charges.

The dismissed charge sheet alleged that Kandari trained with al Qaida, served as an advisor to Osama bin Laden and also produced al Qaida tapes that recruited men to jihad. His military defense lawyer had said that Kandari was a Muslim in Afghanistan at the wrong time and the military has built a case based on vague allegations and triple hearsay.

His family has said he went as a student to Afghanistan after

the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks, to volunteer as a charity worker.

In Washington, Kuwaiti ambassador Salem al Jaber al Sabah told the official news agency KUNA on Friday that a delegation dispatched by the emir was engaged in talks with U.S. officials for the release of Kandari and a second citizen held at Guantánamo, Fawzi al Odah, 35.

Emir Sheik Sabah al Ahmad al Jabar al Sabah had instructed the delegation "to find a quick solution to bring back the detainees to their homeland as soon as possible," KUNA reported.

Negotiations had led to the release, through the years, of 10 other Kuwaitis held at Guantánamo, including at least one man who like Kandari had been accused during the Bush era of war crimes, and had charges sworn for a military commission.

Odah and Kandari have been held in military detention for more than a decade. Each man had sued for his freedom in federal court, and each lost his habeas corpus petition. U.S. District Court Judge Colleen Kollar-Kotelly, in Washington, D.C., ruled in separate hearings in 2010 that each man was lawfully held

Kandari's Pentagon assigned defense lawyer, Air Force Lt. Col. Barry Wingard, said he was taken by surprise by the decision to withdraw the charges. He added that he expected to continue representing the captive even without pending charges at military commissions.

As of Friday, the Pentagon held 169 captives at Guantánamo — six of them awaiting capital trials at commission and five of them convicted of war crimes. One convict, Ali Hamza al Bahlul of Yemen, is serving life in prison as bin Laden's former media

secretary. Another convict, Ibrahim al Qosi of Sudan, finishes up his sentence next month.

L.A. Now (LATimes.com) June 29, 2012

# 22. California Air National Guard Sends Two Planes To Fight Colorado Fires

Two fire-fighting planes from the California Air National Guard are set to leave Saturday to join the battle against the flames ravaging Colorado.

The two C-130J planes from the 146th Airlift Wing in Port Hueneme will leave from the Channel Islands Air National Guard Station. Thirty personnel will leave with the aircraft.

Each plane can release 3,000 gallons of water or retardant per drop.

Two C-130J planes from the North Carolina Air National Guard have also been ordered to Colorado. The new planes will push to eight the number of C-130J planes fighting the flames.

The cost of the mission will be reimbursed by the federal government, California Gov. Jerry Brown said in announcing the deployment.

In 2008, when brush fires burned 2,000 acres in California, firefighters, engines and aircraft from Colorado came to the state to provide assistance.

-- Tony Perry in San Diego

CNN June 29, 2012 **23. U.S. Soldiers** 

# Training To Fight Wildfires

The Situation Room (CNN), 5:00 P.M.

CANDY CROWLEY: Firefighters recruited from across the country are throwing everything they can at the inferno in Colorado. Now U.S. Army troops are preparing to get involved as well. We want to bring in our Pentagon correspondent, Barbara Starr.

Barbara, what's the military planning right now? What can they bring to the table?

BARBARA STARR: Well, Candy, as we have seen so many times in the large-scale tragedies, the military is now beginning to step in.

Let me bring you up to date, first. The military, by tomorrow night, will have all eight of its C-130 aircraft equipped with fire fighting capability from the air on station in Colorado. These essentially are the big guns. They've had four of them there for some time. The rest of them are joining. That means the entire fleet.

What do these C-130s do? Well, they've already dropped – the ones that are there – 140,000 gallons of fire retardant. Each mission can drop 3,000 gallons in five seconds of either fire retardant or water. We've seen those pictures before. They are now throwing all their airplanes at this.

And when they drop their fire retardant or water, they can cover an area one-quarter mile long, 100 feet wide. When they hit the ground again, they can reload, refill those tanks within 12 minutes. Colorado, of course, is a huge area for the U.S. military. There are a number of military families that are displaced. I can add to what Jim said: just two nights ago I got an e-mail from someone we know quite well in Afghanistan, he was trying to find out if his house had burned down and exactly where his family had evacuated to.

CROWLEY: The problem is you know there are stories like that throughout Colorado, tonight.

STARR: Absolutely.

CROWLEY: And it's still just 15 percent contained. I understand, Barbara, you also have some information on ground troops?

STARR: Yes. You bet. The military even putting more against this starting today. They began training 530 soldiers, many of them Afghanistan veterans, in firefighting. So they are on standby ready to be called in by the Forest Service, if needed. They will learn over the next three days to dig ditches, how to clear brush.

They're going to make sure they keep these guys safe. They're not sending them right into the front line of the fire. But the firefighters, the private firefighters, the community firefighters are so exhausted from all of this, of course, they need that backup help. And so they're going to use these troops, potentially, to do that hard tough work like digging fire breaks, digging ditches. Candy.

CROWLEY: Wow. Well, reinforcements are on their way. That's always good to hear. Especially for the people of Colorado right now. Barbara Starr, thank you so much.

STARR: Sure.

ArmyTimes.com June 29, 2012

## 24. Carson GIs Could Be Called On To Fight Fires

By John Miller and Susan Montoya Bryan, Associated Press

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M.

— Flames eat through the second story of a home in Colorado as a car sits in the driveway. In the background, an entire neighborhood glows orange as it goes up in flames.

A wall of fire consumes the front of a home as a lone firefighter futilely blasts it with water.

A heavy air tanker working to slow the flames is dwarfed as a massive plume of smoke looms in the background.

The dramatic images provide just a glimpse of this year's fire season — one that has broken records in New Mexico, forced thousands of people to flee their homes in Colorado and left a black scar across more than 1.8 million acres of the nation's forests.

"It's been characterized that fire is war, and I suppose in a sense it can be characterized like that," said Tom Harbour, director of fire and aviation management for the U.S. Forest Service.

Holed up in makeshift war rooms packed into school gymnasiums or nondescript warehouses on the fringes of wildfires burning around the West, incident commanders spend nearly every waking hour huddled around big maps, looking at computer screens or glued to the radio, trying to plot their next move.

Their decisions come after pouring over intelligence that's flooding in from crew leaders on the fire lines, weather forecasters, fuels analysts and experts who know the terrain.

Elsewhere, teams of specialists surrounded by computers, monitors tuned into the news and maps smooth out the logistics of shuffling firefighters and equipment around the country. They tap into databases that list the nation's resources and every firefighter who's qualified to fight wildfires.

There are thousands of firefighters on the front lines, from Colorado, New Mexico and Arizona to Utah and Montana. Hundreds of engines, air tankers and helicopters have been mobilized.

"We've got competition for firefighting assets, but we're still at a point where we've got lots of available assets to mix and match on individual incidents," Harbour told The Associated Press in a phone interview.

It didn't feel that way Friday in Utah, where fire commanders battling six wildfires in that state said a shortage of crews and air support left the largest of the blazes with only three ground crews.

"With so many fires out here," said fire investigator Brandon Jensen, "we can't get the resources to fight these fires the way we'd like."

The National Interagency Fire Center on Wednesday ratcheted up the nation's wildfire preparedness level to the second highest level. There are five levels in all, and ever since it hit No. 3, staffers say it's been "a beehive of activity."

This makes for only the third time in the last 20 years the nation has reached this level by late June, with the others coming in 2008 and 2002.

"This is one of the busier June's we've had in quite a while," said Kari Boyd-Peak, a NIFC spokeswoman in Boise, Idaho. She said that while all resources requested are currently being provided to tackle existing fires, shortages can't be ruled out if the weather doesn't cooperate.

"If conditions stay this way, and we get more fires, and these get worse, we could get to that point soon," she said.

Of about 15,000 firefighting personnel nationwide — including everyone from the people on crews digging the actual fire lines to public information officers — more than 10,400 have been deployed.

Colorado's High Park Fire in Larimer County, where

flames have destroyed 259 homes, is requiring more than 1,100 personnel and 79 fire engines, along with aircraft. Another 1,100 firefighters are working on the Waldo Canyon Fire near Colorado Springs, where almost 350 homes were estimated lost.

The Forest Service on Friday was also training a Fort Carson Army battalion to serve as firefighters to boost the number of crews available nationwide.

In New Mexico, more than 200 firefighters continue working on record-setting blazes that have been burning for weeks — one that has destroyed more than 240 homes and another that has blackened 465 square miles.

Despite some criticism, Harbour said the U.S. Forest Service has been working to position resources where they're needed most.

There's a difference between what incident commanders want and what they need to fight a fire effectively, he said. example, a commander's order for 10 hot shot crews - among the most elite firefighters might be filled instead with a mix of hot shots and initial attack crews, which can be just as formidable but with less experience.

Nineteen large air tankers, 170 helicopters and a number of single-engine air tankers are assigned to wildfires across the region. A large DC-10 air tanker capable of carrying 11,700 gallons of fire retardant is also on call, and four military C-130 tankers are positioned to cover the blazes burning near Colorado Springs and Fort Collins as well as the entire Front Range if more fires break out.

To date, the C-130 tankers have dropped 138,400 gallons of retardant in the region. Their

focus has been the Waldo Canyon Fire.

On Friday, the U.S. Forest Service activated the four remaining C-130 tankers to help in Colorado and elsewhere.

Overall, there have been fewer fires and less acreage burned for the first six months of the year than there was for the same period last year. Some states are seeing fires earlier this year, but Harbour said there are resources in reserve.

"With over 10,000 firefighters in the Forest Service and the ability to get over 700 aircraft of all types, we're feeling cautiously confident when you look at the season as a whole," he said.

Once an incident commander, Harbour said he understands the urgency felt by the firefighters and the heartache of residents who are watching their homes burn.

Homes can be rebuilt and more firefighters and pilots can be trained for future seasons, but Harbour said land managers and communities that border dry forests and woodlands need to get to the root of what's resulting in fires that are making 10-mile runs in one day or doubling in size overnight.

"We've got to ask ourselves why these kinds of fires are happening and why so many homes are burning," he said. "And we've got to remind ourselves that response — a good, strong, effective and aggressive response — is just one part of the triangle."

John Miller reported from Boise, Idaho. Associated Press writer Mead Gruver in Cheyenne, Wyo., contributed to this report.

Fayetteville (NC) Observer June 30, 2012

25. Family Friends Identify Slain Fort

## Bragg Soldier As Lt. Col. Roy L. Tisdale

By Drew Brooks, Staff writer

A Fort Bragg battalion commander who was shot and killed Thursday afternoon has been identified by family friends as Lt. Col. Roy L. Tisdale.

Tisdale was killed during a unit safety briefing in a field near the Bastogne Gables neighborhood on Fort Bragg.

Fort Bragg officials have not identified Tisdale or the soldier who opened fire during the briefing before turning the weapon on himself.

A third soldier who was wounded has been identified as Spc. Michael E. Latham, Fort Bragg officials said Friday.

All three were assigned to the 525th Battlefield Surveillance Brigade, according to Fort Bragg.

Latham, a signal support system specialist, was treated at Womack Army Medical Center for minor, non-life-threatening injuries and released.

Latham, 22, is a Vacaville, Calif., native who joined the Army in October 2009.

The shooter is in critical condition and is in custody, Fort Bragg officials said.

The remaining will identifications be released "consistent with Department Defense of policies following next-of-kin notification," according to a news release from Fort Bragg. A Fort Bragg spokesman said he could not say why there was a delay in naming those involved in the shooting, which occurred about 3:30 p.m. Thursday.

Family friends and former colleagues described Tisdale as a family man who deserved to be known for more than just the rank he wore.

Tisdale was commander of the 525th Brigade Support Battalion.

He and his wife, Kim, are from the small town of Alvin, Texas, near Houston.

A woman who went to high school with the pair and described herself as a lifelong friend of Kim Tisdale described Tisdale as a sweet guy who, along with his wife, created the perfect couple.

The friend, who spoke on the condition she not be identified because there had been no official announcement of Tisdale's death, said the couple have two children.

She said Alvin is a small community that is in shock after hearing the news of Tisdale's death.

"We're very proud of him. He's our hometown boy," she said. "We're completely stunned."

The woman described Tisdale as a "wonderful father and husband."

"Family was a priority," she said. "He wanted his family to be happy. This was a wonderful man who was lost."

According to Fort Bragg, someone reported the shooting to 911 at 3:31 p.m. The first military policeman arrived four minutes later, and medical personnel arrived soon after.

After the shooting, two brigade chaplains began helping those on the scene and, within an hour, more than a dozen chaplains from across Fort Bragg and 10 behavioral health specialists responded and spent more than five hours counseling those affected by the incident.

"Taking care of the soldiers in the unit and their families is our number one priority at this time, while we simultaneously work the investigation surrounding this terrible tragedy," Lt. Gen. Daniel B. Allyn, commander of the 18th Airborne Corps and Fort Bragg, said in a news release.

Earlier Friday, officials in the 525th Battlefield Surveillance Brigade thanked the community for its thoughts, prayers and condolences in light of the fatal shooting.

The brief message was posted on the brigade's Facebook page.

After the shooting, an outpouring of support has come to the military installation through social media, including Facebook and Twitter.

Other officials also weighed in.

"I'm deeply saddened and disturbed by the tragic shooting at Fort Bragg yesterday," U.S. Sen. Kay Hagan, D-N.C., said Friday afternoon. "My thoughts and prayers are with the family of the deceased soldier. The unit, the affected families and the citizens of the local Fort Bragg area have my full support during this difficult time."

Thursday's shooting took place in a field near the Bastogne Gables neighborhood on Fort Bragg that is near the 525th Battlefield Surveillance Brigade and the 16th Military Police Brigade.

During the investigation, officials blocked intersections in the area of Letterman and Armistead streets.

Fort Bragg officials said the immediate area around the shooting was closed to traffic and no one outside the vicinity of the shooting was ever in danger.

It is being investigated by Army Criminal Investigation Command.

A CID spokesman, Chris Grey, said the killing was the first caused by a firearm on Fort Bragg in at least five years.

Several gun restrictions are in place on Fort Bragg, and it is unclear whether the shooter used an issued weapon or a personal weapon.

According to the Fort Bragg website, concealed

weapons are not authorized on the military installation unless it is by a working law enforcement officer.

If a soldier lives in barracks or if his unit dictates, he can be made to store his personal weapons in a unit arms room.

Thursday's killing appears to be the first shooting murder on Fort Bragg in more than 15 years, when Sgt. William J. Kreutzer Jr. opened fire on his brigade at Towle Stadium. Kreutzer shot and killed Maj. Stephen Mark Badger and wounded 18 others in October 1995. He is serving a life sentence at a military prison in Kansas.

Wall Street Journal June 30, 2012 Pg. 3

# 26. Army Preps Spy Blimp

By Nathan Hodge

The U.S. military is preparing for the maiden flight of a football-field-size airship laden with surveillance gear designed to do the work of a dozen drones--and destined for Afghanistan.

The experimental craft, known as the Long Endurance Multi-Intelligence Vehicle, or LEMV, is designed to loiter over combat zones for weeks at a time, outfitted with high-tech sensors that can intercept phone calls, shoot full-motion video or track the movement of insurgents.

With the first flight, the Pentagon may also lift the veil on a project that has been shrouded in secrecy. So far, no photo of the LEMV has been released.

Initial flights of the LEMV are scheduled to occur at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, N.J., best known as the site of the 1937 crash of the German passenger airship Hindenburg.

"Once this thing clears the tree line, it's going to be on YouTube," said an Army official.

But first, the LEMV has to get off the ground. The project is months behind schedule, and defense officials said mechanics and engineers from Northrop Grumman Corp., NOC +3.34% the designer of the LEMV, were rushing to put the finishing touches on the giant airship, days ahead of a deadline for a first flight as early as next week.

John Cummings, an Army spokesman, said assembly of the airship was "near completion and engine testing is ongoing."

For months, the project has been the subject of speculation in the specialized aviation press.

Clues as to what the LEMV looks like come from conceptual illustrations, which show a giant, rugby ball-shaped airship emblazoned with the Army logo.

Lighter-than-air surveillance craft are not new: Smaller, tethered blimps known as aerostats are a common sight in Afghanistan, where troops use them to keep an eye out for potential attacks.

But according to military experts, larger airships can carry more cameras and sensors than small blimps, and also allow military commanders to multi-task. For instance, a surveillance airship could carry equipment that would allow it to pick up a phone call, detect its location, and point a camera in the right direction.

Capable of flying at heights greater than 20,000 feet, the airship would be beyond the range of small arms fire or rocket-propelled grenades used by Afghan insurgents.

David Deptula, a retired Air Force general, said airships are potentially cheaper to operate than drones or manned aircraft. "They are exactly the kinds of systems that need to be explored in an era of fiscal restraint," he said.

Mr. Deptula, the Air Force's former head of intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance, also has a stake in the business: He is a senior executive at Mav6 LLC, another airship builder.

Mav6 had a similar project in the works: The Blue Devil II, a 370-foot long airship packed with surveillance equipment that was also bound for Afghanistan. The Air Force, however, recently canceled that project because of cost overruns and design issues.

The LEMV is a similarly complex project: It's a "hybrid" airship that requires some sort of forward motion to maintain level flight.

It has also encountered hiccups in its development. When the company announced in June 2010 it had been awarded \$517 million contract to develop the LEMV, it promised to deliver the first in 18 months. But the Army repeatedly has delayed plans for a first flight.

Randy Belote, a spokesman for Northrop Grumman Corp., said the company "continues to make progress in the development of its state-of-theart airship."

Beyond the first flight, aviation experts say the debut of LEMV brings a host of practical considerations: How many people would be required to operate it; how to fly the slow, lumbering aircraft all the way to Afghanistan; and how the giant airship will handle the high winds and weather of the Hindu Kush.

One person familiar with the program questioned whether it would live up the promise of weeks-long surveillance.

"I've never been anywhere in the world where the weather

was good enough to fly for 21 straight days," this person said.

What's more, the Army will have to figure out one other issue: where in the Afghanistan-Pakistan region to park the massive airship for maintenance.

ArmyTimes.com June 29, 2012

## 27. O-3 Loses CIB, Gets Boot In Friendly Fire Death

By Joe Gould, Staff writer

Army Secretary John McHugh has revoked the Combat Infantryman Badge awarded to an officer who fatally shot a member of his squad, Pfc. David H. Sharrett, during a 2008 friendly fire incident in Iraq, an Army spokesman confirmed.

The officer, Capt. Timothy R. Hanson, is also being processed for separation from the Army after a review of his actions during the incident, according to an email to Sharrett's father, David H. Sharrett, from an Army official. Hanson, a lieutenant at the time of the incident, was since promoted and belongs to a Reserve unit in Wisconsin.

Sharrett, who received the news a day before his son David's birthday, told Army Times he had mixed feelings and expressed gratitude to McHugh — "a stand-up guy."

Of Hanson, Sharrett said, "I feel very sorry for Timothy Hanson, and I pray for him."

Over four years, Sharrett and James Gordon Meek, a former New York Daily News reporter and family friend, pressed the Army for answers and accountability. He said Hanson's commanders knew of Hanson's actions and did not discipline him.

"I feel deeply satisfied and fully vindicated," Sharrett said. "I'm still wondering why it took so long, why now and why it was left up to us to do this."

After meeting with Sharrett in February, McHugh referred Hanson's CIB award to Human Resources Command for review.

Based on the recommendation of the HRC Army Awards Board, McHugh approved the revocation of Hanson's CIB on Thursday, said Troy Rolan, an Army spokesman at the Pentagon.

McHugh also referred the investigations and reviews of Hanson's actions to the commander of U.S. Army Reserve Command for review in late February.

"Upon completing that review, the commander initiated elimination proceedings against Hanson," the Army official's email to Sharrett states. "As a result, CPT Hanson is currently being processed for separation from the Army."

Then-Lt. Hanson was awarded the badge for his service Jan. 16, 2008. On that day, Hanson led a squad into a fierce pre-dawn firefight in which he mistakenly shot Pfc. Sharrett. After the battle, Hanson left unhurt on a helicopter before Pfc. Sharrett was found.

Two other soldiers, Pfc. Danny Kimme and Cpl. John P. Sigsbee, were killed by enemy fire in the firefight.

New York Times June 30, 2012 Pg. 16

## 28. Texas: Judge Denies Another Delay In Fort Hood Trial

By Associated Press

A military judge ruled Friday against delaying the trial of the Army psychiatrist charged in the Fort Hood shooting, who remains banned from the courtroom because

beard violates Army regulations. Maj. Nidal Malik Hasan's trial in the 13 killings will proceed as scheduled, beginning on Aug. 20. Defense lawyers said they needed more time to prepare. But the judge, Col. Gregory Gross, said the defense had already had plenty of time. Prosecutors had indicated that they were ready for trial last fall, but the court-martial was scheduled for March and was postponed first to June and then to August at the request of the defense team.

Roanoke (VA) Times June 29, 2012

Pg. 1

# 29. Rockbridge Loses A Son, A Soldier, A Leader

The former football star was killed Wednesday in Afghanistan by a mine while on patrol.

By Matt Chittum

After such a stellar high school career, Chase Prasnicki was bound to play college football, and he had a few colleges to choose from.

But some demanded more than others. The Rockbridge County High School star quarterback thought long and hard before settling on the U.S. Military Academy at West Point. Playing for Army, after all, meant joining the Army while his country was at war.

"But then I thought 'What's better than fighting for your country? There's no more honorable thing can you do," Prasnicki said in a 2006 Roanoke Times story.

Prasnicki graduated from West Point in 2010, but it was only Sunday that he finally got the chance to fight for his country. That's the day he landed in Afghanistan.

By Wednesday night, Prasnicki, 24, was dead, killed by an improvised explosive device.

He wasn't yet supposed to be on patrol, said his former football coach at Rockbridge, Jason White. But Prasnicki volunteered anyway.

The vehicle in which he was riding apparently drove over the IED about 6 p.m. by the clock in his hometown of Lexington. Prasnicki survived evacuation to a hospital, but died there, White said.

That Prasnicki volunteered for the patrol didn't surprise White.

"From the word go, he was a leader, and he wasn't going to be outworked by anyone, either," he said. "When he spoke in the huddle, no one else talked, and everybody listened."

White recalled a defining moment in Prasnicki's career, during his junior year when Rockbridge had fallen behind Fort Defiance 18-0 in a playoff game. Prasnicki put the team on his back and led them back to within two points, with the ball and under two minutes to play.

Prasnicki took a minute and thirteen seconds to get his team to within 13 yards of a winning touchdown. The coaches called a pass play, but Prasnicki saw an opening, tucked the ball under his arm and slipped tackles all the way to the winning score.

"He told his teammates we were going to win, and they believed it," White said.

His leadership came from not only that intangible quality only some have, but from a discipline rare in kids his age. He not only studied the playbook year-round to the point of memorizing every receiving route, he worked out five days a week on the offseason and held himself to an 11 p.m. curfew year-round.

"If you want to be a leader, you have to lead by example," he said in a 2005 Roanoke Times story.

With his senior season at Rockbridge under way, he already had a scholarship offer from Virginia Military Institute. His father, David Prasnicki, who played football at Parry McCluer High School in Buena Vista and at Emory &Henry College, is an executive at the VMI Foundation.

Chase Prasnicki visited Duke University, too.

But West Point had been in his thoughts since his dad suggested it during his freshman year.

He was recruited there by Bobby Ross, a VMI graduate who coached the San Diego Chargers to a Super Bowl appearance. Ross had been a member of Prasnicki's Lexington church before taking the job coaching at West Point.

He ultimately played little at West Point, never rising above backup quarterback, though he got significant playing time his senior year after switching to defense.

In a blog post Thursday about Army football, a Middletown (N.Y.) Times Herald-Record sports writer called Prasnicki, whose nickname there was "Nitro," "the ultimate team player."

In that 2006 Roanoke Times story, Prasnicki made it clear he was still enjoying life as a college football player.

"Running out there with all these people, there's smoke and bagpipes. It's a rush," he said. "We come in with a big flag. And everybody has a flag, but here the flag really means something."

Prasnicki is survived by his father, mother Debbie, sister Lauren and brother Tyler, and his wife. He married Emily Nichols seven months ago Tuesday.

AOL Defense (defense.aol.com) June 29, 2012

# 30. V-22s Cleared For Okinawa And Heads To UK Air Shows

By Richard Whittle

The Pentagon and the Japanese government announced early Friday that a dozen Marine Corps MV-22 Ospreys are being shipped to Japan for deployment on Okinawa but the planes won't fly until investigations into two recent crashes of the tiltrotor troop transport are complete.

The announcement - issued the same day four MV-22s were scheduled to fly from North Carolina to England to take part in two international air shows - emphasized that "Japan will be the only location worldwide where the United States will suspend MV-22 flight operations. The United States will continue uninterrupted flight operations of the MV-22 and (Air Force) CV-22 elsewhere around the world, including the continental United States."

The Marines have long had plans to deploy two squadrons of Ospreys the island of Okinawa to replace aged CH-46E Sea Knight and CH-53D Sea Stallion helicopters based at Marine Corps Air Station Futenma. Local residents and politicians have resisted the plan, citing noise and worries about the helicopter-airplane hybrid Osprey's safety -- a concern heightened in the wake of an MV-22 crash April 11 in Morocco that killed two Marines and a CV-22 crash in Florida June 13 that injured five Air Force Special Operations Command crew members.

The DoD announcement said Japanese officials agreed the Marines could go ahead with the Osprey deployment to Okinawa after being briefed on preliminary findings of investigations into those two crashes. As AOL Defense has

previously reported, aircraft malfunction has been ruled out in the Morocco crash, and the commander of AFSOC's 1st Special Operations Wing at Hurlburt Field, Fla., has said there is no evidence of any mechanical problems or design flaws in the Osprey that crashed at Eglin Air Force Base. The Osprey, a revolutionary design, tilts two large wingtip rotors up to fly like a helicopter and forward to fly like an airplane.

"In recognition of the remaining concerns of the Japanese government about safety of the aircraft, DoD will refrain from any flight operations of the MV-22 in Japan until the results of the investigations are presented to the Japanese government and the safety of flight operations is confirmed," the Pentagon announcement said. "The Defense Department anticipates presenting information to the Japanese government in August."

As the debate in Japan shows, the Osprey's reputation remains marred in some quarters by three crashes during its 25-year development that killed 30 people between 1992 and 2000, including 15 Marine infantry who were taking part in an operational test. Even with its two recent crashes, though, the Osprey has been one of the safest rotorcraft in the U.S. military inventory since 2001, a period in which the armed forces have lost 414 helicopters at a cost of 606 lives. During the same period, six people have been killed in three Osprey crashes.

The Marines and the makers of the Osprey, 50-50 partners Bell Helicopter Textron Inc. and Boeing Co., have high hopes of making a first foreign sale of the V-22 sometime soon, which is why the four MV-22s are being sent to the upcoming air shows in

England, From July 7-8, they'll will be used to take senior air commanders from around the world on demonstration flights during the world's largest military air show, the Royal International Air Tattoo at Royal Air Force Base Fairford, two hours northwest of London. From July 9-15, the Ospreys will offer flights to military brass and foreign VIPs during the Farnborough International Airshow, which alternates biennially with the Paris Air Show as the world's premier aviation trade fair.

An Osprey was on display last November at the Dubai Airshow, and the United Arab Emirates are thought to be the most likely first foreign buyer of Ospreys. UAE and U.S. military representatives have recently been meeting and exchanging paperwork on a possible Osprey purchase in a "very active dialog," said a government official privy to the discussions. "Looks pretty serious. Until the contract's written, though, the contract's not written."

Arizona Republic (Phoenix) June 30, 2012

# 31. U.S. Hosts 22 Nations In Hawaii For Naval Training

Exercises show America's new focus on Pacific
By Audrey McAvoy,

Associated Press

PEARL HARBOR, Hawaii
- About 25,000 sailors and
other military personnel from
22 nations are converging on
Hawaii in the world's largest
naval exercises to practice
hunting for submarines and
catching pirates.

The U.S. Pacific Fleet is hosting the Rim of the Pacific exercises, which started Friday. The exercises take place every two years in Hawaii and surrounding waters.

Countries from Japan to Tonga and Russia to Chile are sending 42 surface ships, six submarines and 200 aircraft to participate in the series of drills, which takes place over the next five weeks.

Participants will train to clear mines, dispose of explosives and go to the aid of civilians in natural disasters, among other drills.

Adm. Cecil Haney, Pacific Fleet commander, said the drills help different nations prepare for emergencies.

"It provides an opportunity for naval forces of likeminded countries to work together so that, as things come up, we can more easily assemble and address things like humanitarian assistance, disaster relief," Haney said during a recent interview at his Pearl Harbor headquarters.

The exercises, known as RIMPAC, date to 1971 but have expanded in recent years. Eight nations took part in 2006, 10 in 2008, and 14 two years ago.

This year's exercises come as the U.S. refocuses its attention on the Asia-Pacific region.

In January, the Obama administration announced defense new strategy boost the country's presence because Asia of the region's economic importance China's rise as military power. It aims maintain American military pre-eminence worldwide even as the U.S. cuts spending to reduce the nation's deficit.

As part of that strategy, Defense Secretary Leon Panetta this month told a conference in Singapore that the U.S. would assign 60 percent of its fleet to the Pacific Ocean by 2020. Currently, the Navy divides its roughly 285 ships equally between the Atlantic and Pacific oceans.

Ralph Cossa, president of the Pacific Forum Center for Strategic & International Studies, a Honolulu-based think tank, said the drills show that Panetta and the U.S. Pacific Command, which oversees all American forces in the region, are serious when they say readiness in the Pacific won't be affected by defense drawdowns.

"What better way to prove that than holding the world's largest maritime exercise," Cossa said. "That's putting your money and your ships where you mouth is."

Honolulu Star-Advertiser June 29, 2012 Pg. 19

# 32. Environmentalists Knock EPA's OK Of Plan To Sink Navy Ships

By William Cole

As the Navy touts upcoming biofuel tests in what it has dubbed the "Great Green Fleet" during Rim of the Pacific war games off Hawaii, environmentalists are decrying the planned sinking of three old Navy ships as polluting the sea.

The vessels Kilauea, Niagara Falls and Concord are scheduled to be sunk as part of target practice during RIMPAC, while the Coronado will be deep-sixed during the exercise Valiant Shield later this year, according to a coalition of environmental groups.

The groups maintain that the ships are contaminated with toxic metals and polychlorinated biphenyls, based on documentation of contaminants found in more than 100 ships previously sunk by the Navy in the past 12 years.

Several decommissioned ships are sunk every two years off Hawaii during RIMPAC with missiles, guns, bombs and torpedoes, in target practice that takes place at least 57 miles from land and in waters at least 6,000 feet deep, the Navy said.

The environmental groups
Basel Action Network, Sierra
Club, Earthjustice and Center
for Biological Diversity
jointly condemned the Navy's
shipsinking exercises, which
the Navy has dubbed
"SINKEX."

"The hypocrisy of the Navy's new ecological 'Great Green Fleet' demonstrating its 'greenness' by sinking ships containing globally banned pollutants off the coast of Hawaii is particularly ironic," Colby Self of the Basel Action Network's Green Ship Recycling Campaign said in a written statement. "But the realization that this choice by the Navy to dump poisons into the marine environment is not only unnecessary, but also is costing Americans hundreds of green recycling jobs, makes this SINKEX program both an environmental and an economic insult."

The Navy is demonstrating a Great Green Fleet by using a 50/50 blend of traditional petroleum-based fuel and biofuel made from waste cooking oil and algae oil to power some ships and aircraft.

Navy The said SINKEX vessels are prepared in accordance with permit issued U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Each ship "is put through a rigorous cleaning process," including the removal of PCBs, transformers and large capacitors, small capacitors to the greatest extent practical, trash, floatable materials and materials containing mercury or fluorocarbons, the service said.

Petroleum fuel and oils are also cleaned from tanks, piping and reservoirs, the Navy said.

"SINKEX events enhance combat readiness by providing realistic training that cannot be duplicated in simulators," the Navy said.

The Niagara Falls and Concord are Mars-class combat supply ships, while the Kilauea is an ammunition ship.

Two years ago during RIMPAC, the retired helicopter carrier New Orleans stayed afloat for hours as it was pummeled by at least seven Harpoon anti-ship missiles. An Air Force B-52 bomber also dropped a laser-guided 500pound bomb onto the 603-foot amphibious ship, which was finished by deck guns from a firing squad of ships from the United States, Japan, Australia, Canada and France. The big ship finally went down about 70 miles northwest of Kauai.

In December, the Basel Action Network and Sierra Club sued the EPA for what the groups said was the federal agency's "ongoing failure to adequately regulate a federal ship sinking program that pollutes the sea with toxic chemicals."

The suit claims the EPA fails to adequately regulate the ocean dumping of PCBs, mixtures of synthetic organic chemicals that are toxic and dangerous to human health and the environment and can accumulate through the marine food chain.

The Associated Press reported that under an agreement with the EPA, the Navy must document how much toxic material is removed and how much goes into the sea during the ship sinkings, but an AP review of Navy reports since 2000 found incomplete and inconsistent estimates of PCBs and other toxins.

Amanda Goodin, an Earthjustice attorney representing the environmental groups in the lawsuit, said an injunction has not been sought to stop the RIMPAC sinking exercises.

"Our lawsuit is against EPA, it's not against the Navy," Goodin said. "We would like to see the Navy not sink these three vessels, certainly, but what we're asking is for EPA to increase its regulation of the sinkings and to require higher levels of remediation."

Norfolk Virginian-Pilot June 30, 2012

# 33. SEAL Training Range Won't Show Woman As Target

By Kate Wiltrout, The Virginian-Pilot

NORFOLK--The Navy will not use a target depicting a Muslim woman holding a gun at a new training range for SEALs in Virginia Beach.

The announcement came hours after the Council on American-Islamic Relations asked the Pentagon to remove the target. A picture of the cardboard target, which shows a woman in a headscarf holding a pistol, was published in The Virginian-Pilot on Tuesday. The image shows verses of the Quran hanging on the wall behind the woman, which also generated criticism from the group.

Nihad Awad, executive director of the Washington-based council, said in the letter to Defense Secretary Leon Panetta dated Friday that the target "is offensive and sends a negative and counterproductive message to trainees and to the Muslim-majority nations to which they may be deployed."

Panetta's press office did not respond to a request for comment. Late Friday, Lt. David Lloyd, a spokesman for Naval Special Warfare Group 2, said the materials in question would not be used on the close quarters combat training range, which was dedicated Monday at Joint Expeditionary Base Fort Story.

"We have removed this particular target and Arabic writing in question from the range in the near term, and will explore other options for future training," Lloyd said.

Naval Special Warfare Group Two, which oversees SEAL teams 2, 4, 8 and 10 at Joint Expeditionary Base LIttle Creek, has not yet put the \$11.5 million facility to use.

The 26,500-square-foot building contains 52 interconnected spaces, including mock-ups of markets, a hospital, schools, a bank, a bus depot and two mosques. It will allow small groups of SEALs to practice enemy engagement at close range.

Many of the details were taken from actual raids over the past decade, Capt. Tim Szymanski, the commodore of Naval Special Warfare Group 2, said during a tour of the facility Monday.

Szymanski said SEALs must differentiate in a split second between civilian bystanders and potential enemies, and noted other cardboard cut-outs on the range would show people holding animals, not weapons.

Ibrahim Hooper, a spokesman for the Islamic group, said it's important that military units not be trained to see Muslims as enemies, even if they are fighting in Afghanistan or other Muslimmajority nations.

"There are all kinds of people all over the world trying to do us harm. Why would you use this particular image in training people how to kill?" Hooper asked. "It creates the impression, we believe, in subtle and not-so-subtle ways, that you should view Muslim women in headscarves with hostility and suspicion."

The council also spoke out in recent months against an instructor at the Joint Forces Staff College in Norfolk who taught a course on Islamic radicalism that referred to the war on terror as a war against Islam.

The course was halted after a military officer who was a student complained. The instructor, an Army officer, was relieved of his teaching duties. A broader review of training across the military related to Islam found no other problems.

San Antonio Express-News June 30, 2012

## 34. Key Issue Arises As Trainer's Hearing Concludes

By Tracy Idell Hamilton

Were the Air Force trainees who had sex with their superiors in a supply room "grown women" who could make their own decisions or "impressionable teenagers" still under the sway of those who directed every aspect of their lives for the preceding 8.5 weeks?

That was the ultimate question put forth during the Article 32 evidentiary hearing that wrapped up Friday morning against Staff Sgt. Craig LeBlanc, one of 12 trainers at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland being investigated for illicit sexual relationships with trainees.

LeBlanc has been charged with aggravated sexual assault, obstruction of justice, violating a no-contact order, adultery, absence without leave and making a false official statement.

The investigating officer presiding over the hearing will now weigh the evidence and recommend whether LeBlanc should face a court-martial. If he's found guilty of all charges, he could face up to 45 years in prison.

Although LeBlanc faces a slew of charges, the two-day

hearing focused intently on the sexual assault charge, with his defense arguing that the decision to have sex between the instructor and the trainee, who had just turned 19, was consensual.

That airman and another left their dorm room just hours before shipping off to technical school to meet LeBlanc and another instructor, Staff Sgt. Kwinton Estacio, in the supply room.

Estacio's Article 32 hearing was June 2; a decision whether to court martial him has yet to be made.

Estacio's alleged victim, who was 18 at the time of the incident, was the only one to testify Friday before both sides made their final case to the investigating officer.

LeBlanc and the other instructors are guilty "of using their rank, authority and position" to coerce teenage girls into having sex with them, said prosecuting attorney Capt. Jason Gammons, who specializes in sexual assault cases.

"He didn't need to give a direct threat that night," Gammons said. Basic training, which had just concluded, is "8½ weeks of 'anything I say, you do."

Defense attorney Joseph Jordan said the case had "clearly been blown out of proportion," an overzealous response by the Air Force as the scandal has widened.

The trainees, Jordan said, were "grown women who knew what they were doing."

After the hearing, Jordan said he would "fight every charge" on behalf of LeBlanc, "a decorated, eight-year veteran who has deployed two times."

Boston Globe June 30, 2012 Pg. 3

# 35. US Wants Deserter To Surrender

STOCKHOLM

American officials are trying to convince a man who claims to be a wanted US Air Force deserter to turn himself in after 28 years on the run, his Swedish lawyer said Friday.

Last month, a man alleging to be 49-year-old David Hemler from Cleona, Pa., contacted Stockholm-based lawyer Emma Persson, saying he missed his family and wanted to reveal his true identity after living in Sweden under a false name for nearly three decades.

For years, the former airman has been listed as "a security issue" on the Air Force most wanted list of fugitives.

The man, who went public with his story two weeks ago, said he had deserted his post at an American base in Augsburg in southwestern Germany in 1984 for ideological reasons.

-- Associated Press

AOL Defense (defense.aol.com) June 29, 2012

# 36. Pay Afghanistan And Strike Pakistan, Experts Tell House

By Sydney J. Freedberg Jr.

CAPITOL HILL--The US must not go ahead with planned cuts to the Afghan National Army and police, a panel of experts urged the House Armed Services Committee today. Instead, we must keep spending \$6 billion a year to support 350,000 Afghan security personnel, go slowly on drawing down our own forces -- and escalate the drone war in Pakistan by striking Taliban sanctuaries previously off-limits.

Most of today's hearing by the HASC subcommittee for oversight and investigations focused on US support for the Afghan National Security Forces. the ANSF. But unremarked by the legislators, two of the three panelists --Savage Wars of Peace author Max Boot and retired Vice Chief of Army Staff Gen. Jack Keane -- called for drone strikes against the suspected Taliban leadership base in Quetta. That's the capital of Balochistan, a province of Pakistan proper, whereas the drone strikes to date have been confined to the Federally Administrated Tribal Areas (FATA), a largely lawless region where the Pakistani government and its British predecessors themselves have always relied more on punitive strikes than permanent control. (In US terms, the difference is a bit like that between the 50 states and Guam -- if Guam were ruled by traditional Guamian tribal law administered by AK-47wielding elders).

Approached by AOL Defense after the hearing, both Boot and Keane confirmed that they were calling for an escalation. The third witness, the Brookings Institution's Michael O'Hanlon, was more cautious but agreed a strike on Quetta could be worth the insult to Pakistani sovereignty for the right target.

Striking Quetta might be provocative, Boot acknowledged, but "it's hard to imagine what could be more provocative" than what Pakistan is already doing by sheltering Taliban commanders responsible for the deaths of US troops. Boot had earlier told the committee to cut all US aid to the Pakistani military.

Gen. Keane had a more nuanced approach: "We should lay out some conditions down initially," he told AOL Defense, making it clear to the Pakistanis that they no longer enjoy the full support the US gives an ally and that they must take action against the Taliban leadership in

Quetta -- and if they don't, we will, with lethal force.

Said O'Hanlon, "If you could do a drone strike in Quetta that killed ten leaders in one place, it would be hard to say no." While the Pakistani government would certainly object to this new violation of their sovereignty, he noted, "they're helping take American lives in a country beyond their own borders" and thus have little moral standing to complain about US actions against the Taliban in Quetta. But US strikes beyond the FATA into Pakistan proper would have to meet a high threshold for the value of the target, the accuracy of the intelligence, and the avoidance of civiian casuaties, he went on "something like the Bin Laden raid." (Osama bin Laden was killed at his compound in Abbottabad in the North-West Frontier Province, just outside the FATA). "I wouldn't rule things out categorically," he said. "It has to be intelligencebased."

Where all three witnesses agreed absolutely was in their appeal to continue paying the full \$6 billion a year required to keep the Afghan security forces at their full strength, 350,000, instead of cutting funding to \$4 billion after 2014 and reducing the force to 230,000, which is the administration's current plan. That \$2 billion savings is nothing to sneeze at in a tight budget environment, but it's still a fraction of what the US has already invested in the Afghan war -- and a fraction of what it expects to save from drawing down its own forces, which are much more expensive per man than local soldiers.

Indeed, it might be cheaper to pay Afghans than to fight them, said Boot. Neither Afghanistan's economy nor its security situation can easily handle 120,000 men laid off from the security forces: "It's far from clear where these 120,000 would find gainful and legal employment," he said, and many might end up working for drug lords, warlords, and militias.

Nor is it just a question of cutting the Afghan security forces by a third. "Right now we have more than 400,000 combined forces" -- US, NATO allies, and Afghans -- said O'Hanlon. Since the US and NATO will (largely) withdraw after 2014, leaving the Afghans (largely) on their own, that's a more than 40% cut in the total forces fighting the Taliban. The administration's proposed figure for Afghan forces came from internal US planning that looked at a range of possible scenarios, with 230,000 being the low-end option for the best-case security conditions, O'Hanlon said: "It was supposed to be an option or a scenario, now it's become a default plan."

In military terms, "it makes no sense," agreed Gen. Keane, who has made four visits to Afghanistan in the last four months to assess conditions for US commanders there.

While the Afghans have impressive foot troops and human intelligence sources, they lack almost everything else -- air support, medical evacuation, logistics, electronic eavesdropping gear, even equipment to clear routes of roadside bombs -- and will need the Americans' help for years to come. That means a sizable US support force, not just a handful of special operators and advisors, will be required in Afghanistan after 2014.

Boot cited an estimate from the Center for New American Security that said the post-2014 force should be 23,500 to 35,000 Americans strong, at an annual cost of \$25 to \$35 billion. In that context, spending an extra \$2 billion to keep 120,000 more Afghan fighters on the payroll -- which might allow a smaller, cheaper US force -- sure seems like a bargain.

Dawn.com (Pakistan) June 30, 2012

# 37. Allen Visits Pakistan For Constructive Military-To-Military Talks

By Agence France-Presse

RAWALPINDI--General John R. Allen, Commander of the International Security Assistance Force who arrived in Islamabad on June 27 and met with General Ashfaq Parvez Kayani, Pakistan's Chief of Army Staff for constructive military-to-military talks.

According a joint statement of Pakistan Army and Isaf issued by Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) here on Friday, during this visit, the commanders specifically discussed the mutual progress made to eliminate terrorism, combat extremism and ensure that both Pakistan and Afghanistan territory is no longer used as safe haven for cross border attacks.

The commanders also discussed current operational realities.

This visit helped advance our efforts to achieve the regional stability.

The meeting provided us perfect opportunity to refocus our attention on our continuing efforts to eliminate the corrosive effects of extremists operating on both sides of the border, General Allen said.

The purpose of this trip was to build on the positive momentum established during last month's meeting of the Afghanistan-Pakistan-ISAF Tripartite Commission.

During May's Tripartite gathering, the first such

discussion in nearly a year, commanders and key staff discussed issues of tactical, operational and strategic importance including cross-border cooperation.

The meeting served as an opportunity to renew everyone desire to address topics and issues of mutual importance, it concluded.

New York Times June 30, 2012 Pg. 6

# 38. U.S. Reaches Out To China, But Not For Naval Maneuvers

By Jane Perlez

BEIJING — As the United States' top military commander for Asia and the Pacific wrapped up a four-day tour of China on Friday, a large multinational maritime war exercise hosted by the United States was getting under way in the waters off Hawaii. China was not invited.

The contrast between the message of collaboration brought by the commander, Adm. Samuel J. Locklear III. and the absence of the Chinese in the naval exercise - which included China's regional rivals, Russia and India, among its 22 participants - highlighted the wary relationship between the American and Chinese militaries as the United States seeks to reinforce its military presence in Asia and strengthen its regional alliances.

Publicly, Admiral Locklear, in the first such visit here by a senior American military officer in four years, held out a hand of friendship to the Chinese. "I think that as China rises as a power, like any rising power, it has a number of decisions and choices it can make," he said. "And as it goes through this rise, our objective

is for them, as they rise, to rise as a productive partner with us."

But the Chinese are growing increasingly skeptical about American intentions. In an editorial on Friday, The Global Times, a newspaper that leads the nationalist drumbeat here, wrote that China should not worry about being excluded from the naval exercise, known as Rim of the Pacific.

"China should get used to being left out in the cold by the U.S.," the paper said. "Those who have some knowledge of the military know that the more countries join such an exercise, the less military significance it has."

During his visit, Admiral Locklear, who was appointed to lead the United States Pacific Command in April after heading the NATO campaign in Libya last year, spoke at the China Academy of Military Science. In remarks prepared for delivery, he said the United States was not in the region to "contain" China but to collaborate with China, and "to improve our compatibility."

He also said that enhanced United States military ties with Pacific allies were "not something China should fear." Reporters were not permitted to attend.

The visit to China by Admiral Locklear was seen as important by Washington, in part because of the long lapse since the last visit by a Pacific commander. China had canceled previously planned visits because of American arms sales to Taiwan.

The goal of the admiral's visit, American officials said, was to establish more candid and more frequent discussions with senior Chinese military leaders. Among others, Admiral Locklear met with Gen. Lian Guanglie, a member of the Central Military Commission, and with the deputy chief of the

general staff, Gen. Ma Xiaotian, officials said.

His overall itinerary was similar in some respects to a visit by Defense Minister Ng Eng Hen of Singapore, a nation that attempts to balance its relationship between the United States and China. But Mr. Ng was accorded a special audience not included in Admiral Locklear's schedule: a session with Xi Jinping, who is expected to become the next leader of China in the fall.

The United States recently announced Singapore had given permission for the United States to use its port for four ships for use in coastal waters, called littoral combat ships, new fast vessels central to the Obama administration strategy of projecting increased American power in Asia.

Chinese analysts, who often reflect the views of the military, say that United States, even it talks of cooperation, essentially trying to contain China's military ambitions. "Containment is a natural subject for China to discuss with Admiral Locklear," said Shen Dingli, who heads the Center for American Studies at Fudan University in Shanghai. "Why else would the United States be back and deploy 60 percent of its naval assets from the Middle East to the Pacific?"

On the American side, military experts warn that China's weaponry soon may be capable of threatening American aircraft carriers in the event of war.

"If these rates of growth in military expenditures continue at similar rates in the coming decade, while ours decline, the current U.S. regional military advantage will begin to erode," said Lt. Gen. Karl W. Eikenberry, a former American ambassador to Afghanistan who

served as defense attaché in Beijing.

Wall Street Journal June 30, 2012 Pg. 11

# 39. Tensions Derail Japan-Korea Pact

By Evan Ramstad and Yuka Hayashi

Seoul deferred plans Friday to sign a modest military cooperation pact in Tokyo after news of the accord sparked a flood of domestic criticism, a sudden move that shows how historical tensions between South Korea and Japan continue to hamper efforts at improving relations.

The agreement, which is designed to make it easier for the two counties to exchange military information, would have little practical effect. But it has been touted by proponents as step toward normalization of relations between America's two largest Asian allies—and blasted by critics as papering over resentment of Japan's 35-year occupation of Korea that began a century ago.

Less than an hour before diplomats were scheduled to sign the agreement in Tokyo, officials in Seoul asked the Japanese government to suspend the ceremony so they could take more time to explain it to Korean lawmakers and the public.

The development of the agreement, however, has been widely discussed in the South Korean media in recent months. Indeed, the two countries had originally planned to sign the pact in May during a scheduled visit to Tokyo by Korean defense minister. The visit was canceled after Korean opposition politicians demanded the government explain the pact at parliament.

The agreement would be the first military deal between the two countries since Japan's occupation of the Korean peninsula ended in 1945.

Under it, the two militaries would create a formal channel and legal clearance to exchange information on common concerns, such as North Korean threats and China's rising military influence. The pact doesn't compel information-sharing.

South Korean President Lee Myung-bak approved the agreement at a cabinet meeting Thursday. A spokesman for the country's foreign ministry announced plans for a Friday signing. That was followed by approval from the cabinet of Japanese Prime Minister Yoshihiko Noda on Friday morning.

But in Seoul on Friday, lawmakers in Mr. Lee's conservative party joined those from opposition leftist parties, who are frequently critical of Japan, in pressing to delay the agreement until after a parliamentary review.

"We asked the Japanese government to suspend the signing because we have very bad public perception about this," a spokeswoman for the South Korean foreign ministry said. "We are going to consult with the National Assembly before we sign it."

On online message boards in South Korea, people portrayed the agreement as a form of submission to Japan, which is considered intolerable. On Twitter, a man identified as Cho Yang-ik compared the deal to the moment in 1910 when Japan took control of the Korean peninsula. "In 1910, Lee Wan-yong visited Japan and signed the annexation treaty," Mr. Cho wrote.

The postponement of signing was "regrettable," Japan's chief cabinet secretary, Osamu Fujimura, told reporters. For Japan, the military pact with South Korea is fairly significant, coming as its troops are further expanding their roles overseas, testing limits imposed on them as self-defense forces bound at home since the end of World War II.

At a news conference Friday morning, before signing ceremony was scrubbed, Japanese foreign Koichiro Gemba minister described the signing as a "historic event that contributes to Japan's national security." He added: "Considering the current security environment in East Asia, it is extremely meaningful that Japan and South Korea establish a foundation that will allow us to share confidential information."

As the U.S. and its allies in the Asia-Pacific respond to China's rising military presence and North Korea's nuclear ambitions, Japan is in talks with the U.S. to build joint exercise facilities on Guam and nearby islands. As it begins working more closely with other U.S. allies in the region, Japan's Maritime Self-Defense Force last weekparticipated for the first time in a joint exercise with the U.S. and South Korea in the Yellow Sea near Korea.

The U.S., the main defense ally to both South Korea and Japan, has for years pressed militaries of the two countries to overcome their historical differences and work together.

But Friday's diplomatic tangle shows how legacy issues from the World War II era continue to hamper efforts to beef up bilateral cooperation over important issues.

A swath of South Korean media, professors and other consultants routinely express resentment of Japan's occupation despite the close economic, diplomatic and cultural ties South Korea and Japan have built over the last five decades.

At the heart of the current discord: a dispute over tiny islets claimed by the two nations, and the treatment of Korean women forced to work at Japanese military brothels during World War II. The latter, in particular, has flared up since last summer, when a South Korean court ruled efforts by its leaders to solve the issue were unconstitutional. Seoul demands Japan's prime minister make a formal apology and agree to new compensation arrangements. Tokyo maintains the issues have already been solved.

In an editorial Friday, the left-wing Hankyoreh newspaper said the pact may eventually lead to a full military alliance with Japan. "We cannot stand idly by as the government of the very country that suffered most from Japan's militarism now takes the lead in encouraging its development into a military power," the newspaper said.

Adding to the view that the pact hasn't received enough airing in South Korea, the National Assembly hasn't met since new members were elected in April, due to fighting between political parties over committee assignments and other organizational matters. Leaders of the two main parties agreed earlier Friday to open the parliament next week.

South Korean defense officials who were involved in creating the pact had already watered it down from a two-part agreement, the second portion of which called for the two militaries to work with each other in times of natural disasters.

The joint exercises that started last week between the U.S., Japanese and South Korean navies were held in waters south of South Korea's Jeju island. They prompted an outcry from North Korea, which issued a series of statements via state media accusing Mr. Lee of conspiring with "masters" from the U.S. and Japan to invade the North.

Japan Times June 30, 2012

# 40. First F-35s To Run ¥10.2 Billion Each

By Kyodo

The Defense Ministry said Friday it has signed a contract to buy the first four of 42 F-35 fighter jets from the United States for ¥10.2 billion each, ¥300 million more than initially estimated.

The move is part of plans to make the stealthy F-35 the Air Self-Defense Force's nextgeneration mainstay jet.

The F-35 is being developed by an international consortium led by U.S. aircraft giant Lockheed Martin Corp. Japan chose it in December over other aircraft to replace the aging F-4 fleet.

But the United States, facing problems in the development of software to be installed in the jet, said in January it will slow its F-35 procurement, making the prospect of mass production uncertain and leading to a price increase.

Japan once told the United States that it would halt the purchase if prices skyrocketed or procurement was delayed, but it determined later that it had to accept a certain price hike after talks between the two governments.

Philippine Star June 30, 2012

# 41. Phl-US Naval Exercises Start Monday

By Jaime Laude

MANILA, Philippines -This year's joint naval exercises between the Philippines and the United States will push through on Monday amid China's declaration that it will resolutely oppose any military provocation in its territorial waters.

The Philippine Navy said yesterday that the exercise is aimed at enhancing the skills of the naval forces of the two allied states and is not directed towards anybody.

Col. Omar Tonsay, Navy spokesman, said this year's Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training (CARAT) will be held from July 2 to 10 in Mindanao Sea with a staging point in Sarangani Bay in General Santos City, far from the hotly contested West Philippine Sea (South China Sea) that China claims is an integral part of its maritime domain.

Tonsay said that the naval exercise will also fine-tune interoperability between the two forces.

"This is an annual naval exercises and is not geared towards anybody but simply to enhance both our sailors and marine soldiers' skills to operate jointly and to effectively deal with maritime concerns," Tonsay said.

Aside from the Philippine and US sailors and marines, the Philippine and US Coast Guards are also participating in the joint naval exercises.

This year's joint naval war game has been reported as a US-sponsored multinational military exercises dubbed as "Rim of the Pacific" naval exercises, the largest-ever involving 22 nations, including the US, India, Russia, Australia and the Philippines, but without China.

On Thursday, China, through its defense spokesman Geng Yansheng, has declared that it would resolutely oppose any military provocation in its territorial waters, a remark reports said appeared to be directed towards the US, Vietnam and the Philippines.

"We will oppose any military provocation," Geng declared in a report.

Geng's remarks came as the United States launched the Rim of the Pacific naval exercises in Hawaii.

Wire reports also said Geng downplayed multi-national military exercises but voiced concern over Washington's recent announcement that it would deploy more naval forces in the Pacific.

The Philippines, meanwhile, yesterday urged China to refrain from making comments that would escalate the situation in Panatag (Scarborough) Shoal.

The Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) said the Philippines is committed to defusing tension in the area.

-- With Pia Lee-Brago

NextGov.com June 29, 2012

# 42. Northrop Grumman Snags A \$782 Million Sole-Source Contract For Afghanistan Communications

By Bob Brewin

The Air Force on Wednesday quietly disclosed awarded had a \$782 million sole source contract to Northrop Grumman Corp. to continue operating an airborne communications relay system in Afghanistan through September 2015, pushing the total value of the project to \$1.7 billion.

Northrop Grumman began developing the Battlefield Airborne Communications Node in 2006 with two contracts valued at \$50 million from the Advanced Technology Support Program managed by the Defense Microelectronics Activity. The Air Force deployed the first system, housed in a Bombardier BDS-700 business jet, in 2008.

Mountainous terrain in Afghanistan interferes with line-of-sight communications systems that ground troops use and BACN (pronounced "bacon") functions as a highaltitude antenna. It incorporates gateway hardware and software that Northrop Grumman says can bridge the gap between multiple communications systems operating on different frequencies and modulation.

Northrop Grumman said BACN automatically provides translation services between incompatible radios, allowing a troop commander on the ground to use a radio operating on one frequency to easily communicate with the pilot of an aircraft who is operating on another.

The Air Force has deployed three BACN-equipped BD-700 aircraft to Afghanistan and two Northrop Grumman Global Hawk drones packed with BACN gear, with one drone lost in a crash in August 2011.

The Air Force said in a justification and approval document dated April 14 and posted to the FedBizOpps contracting website June 27 that it needed to extend the BACN contract because the current contract ends in June.

The new contract covers continued operation of the three BD-700s and two Global Hawks and ground control systems. The Air Force said it must operate BACN around-the-clock to support communications in Afghanistan and since Northrop Grumman owns the software, no other contractor could meet requirements on time. The service said it is considering acquisition of a new system with full data rights to replace BACN.

National Journal June 30, 2012

Analysis

# 43. High Anxiety

Lockheed Martin's pledge to send layoff notices ahead of the threatened sequester sent shivers of alarm through Capitol Hill. Relax! This is part of the plan. By Nancy Cook

Fretting about sequestration has taken on a more frenzied tone lately, with the defense industry sounding the loudest alarms. Lockheed Martin even threatened to lay off a large chunk of its 123,000 employees if the defense spending cuts take effect on Jan. 2, as scheduled. The formal notices likely would go out close to Election Day.

Sen. Lindsey Graham, R-S.C., wants to ratchet the threat level even higher. This week he called for the Pentagon and defense contractors to issue mass layoff warnings as soon as possible as a way to spur congressional action. "We will do nothing until the layoff notices come," Graham told National Journal. "We're going to sit up here, look at each other, say: 'Pay for it this way. No, pay for it that way.' The problem is, we can't find common ground on how to offset the cuts."

And 49 percent of *NJ*'s Insiders predicted that the spending cuts are somewhat likely to happen. "Washington will work hard to avoid a sequester that no one wants," one Insider wrote in response to a recent question. "If the financial crisis deepens and spreads, however, there may be little politicians can do to stop it."

The thing is, though, this level of panic is exactly the point of the sequester. This was always the plan.

Dating back to the Gramm-Rudman-Hollings Act of 1985, sequestration has been deployed as a blunt instrument, a negotiating tool, leverage. It isn't supposed to delicately or subtly carve away at the government fat of excessive spending; nor is it, this time around, meant to be a panacea to Washington's impasse over tax and spending policies. Instead, it's intended to force politicians to the table to strike a deal even in the most dysfunctional circumstances-in this case, disastrously gridlocked Congress, overshadowed in the past 11 months by a failed super committee and a botched debtceiling deal.

"Everyone is talking about the sequester as if it's a real thing," says Gordon Adams, a professor of U.S. foreign policy at American University and the former associate director for national security and international affairs at the Office of Management and Budget. "But it's all shadow play. The political theater around this is stunning."

The defense industry is forefront of those at the bucking for an Oscar, in part because the sequester dictated by the Budget Control Act of 2011 would force the Pentagon to cut \$55 billion from its fiscal 2013 budget, and some of that downsizing would undoubtedly hit Lockheed and other contractors. Those cuts, say Republican senators such as Graham and John McCain of Arizona, could harm the country's national security but would also sting the economy. Job losses in the private sector could tally 1 million, according to the Bipartisan Policy Center.

Hence, the behemoth defense company's layoff threat, even at the cost of rattling thousands of workers' nerves, is just one tool in the defense industry's arsenal. Lobbying is another. As are campaign contributions. According to the Center for

Responsive Politics, roughly 60 percent of campaign donations from the industry have gone to Republicans this election cycle. The pressure to make the defense portion of the sequester simply evaporate will only intensify from here.

Even partisans on the left are beginning to worry, although they lack the kind of megaphone that Lockheed enjoys. In a white paper, Scott Lilly, a former staff director of the House Appropriations Committee who is now a senior fellow at the liberal Center for American Progress, warns that the spending cuts would lead to a reduction in government services from food safety to transportation to personnel in key agencies such as the FBI, the Internal Revenue Service, and the Social Security Administration. Defenders of the nondefense programs, however, can't match the lobbying muscle of the Pentagon's allies.

Lawmakers both on aisle sides of the agree that sequestration would cause confusion across the government, with federal each department or agency instituting budget cuts in its own way. The Gramm-Rudman-Hollings Act stated that acrossthe-board cuts should be applied evenly by program, project, and activity-language that the writers of the Budget Control Act lifted for their own legislation. This vagueness led Republican McCain and Democratic Sen. Patty Murray of Washington to push an amendment that would force OMB, as well as the Pentagon, clarify the account-byaccount ramifications.

Still, all of the handwringing misses the point. Hysteria is good, because it will prompt action. Freak-outs on the Hill and in the halls of think tanks and defense firms may persuade Republicans to ultimately agree to policies that make them uncomfortable, such as increased taxes, to stave off the Pentagon cuts. Democrats may have to yield on entitlements.

Perhaps the best evidence that the sequester won't really happen—and instead is just a negotiating tool—lies in the two budget proposals this year. President Obama's fiscal 2013 budget assumes that the sequester will not occur; it raises taxes and cuts spending at some government agencies as an alternative means of reducing the deficit.

Likewise, House Budget Committee Chairman Paul Ryan, R-Wis., rolled back the sequester in his proposal by protecting defense spending in favor of deep spending cuts to federal programs and huge changes to Medicare and Medicaid.

The only question now is: When can Congress agree to a deal that finds approximately \$1 trillion in savings, enough to avoid the looming specter of sequestration?

"The president [and] the secretary of Defense said it would be catastrophic to our national defense, but we still haven't found a way through it," McCain said on Tuesday. "Everybody says it's not going to happen, but so far, it's going to happen."

Yochi J. Dreazen contributed.

SmallWarsJournal.com June 29, 2012

# This Week at War 44. 7 Habits Of Highly Effective Austerity Planners

By Robert Haddick

In my Foreign Policy column, I apply CSBA's latest report on coping with defense austerity to the Pentagon's current predicaments.

The reality of defense budget "sequestration" -- the threat of an across-the-board percent cut to most of the Pentagon's spending accounts -- is now beginning rattle policymakers Washington. This week, Sen. Lindsey Graham (R-SC) called defense contractors to issue hundreds of thousands of layoff notices to their workers, as a statute requires them to do 60 days before plant closings occur. Graham's openly expressed intent was to create political pressure on Congress to avert sequestration. Pentagon officials, who have so far refused to discuss any details concerning sequestration, may now be starting to open up a little. Defense Secretary Leon Panetta has recently met with defense industry executives to discuss their plans for sequestration.

recent In a column, discussed one effort to cope with defense cuts triple the size of those that have already been imposed. That analysis attempted to fashion a rational balance among cuts to force structure, modernization, readiness, and research spending.

The Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments (CSBA), a defense think tank, recently submitted its own advice struggling to "Strategy policymakers, Austerity," which examines two case studies of leading global powers coping with relative decline while facing a rapidly rising competitor. At the turn of the twentieth century, the British Empire was passing its peak just as Kaiser Wilhelm's Germany was rapidly ascending and asserting its strength. And in the 1970s, the United States had to deal with its failure in Southeast Asia and political and

economic turmoil at home just as Soviet military power was swelling. The authors extract seven strategies policymakers in these two cases used to cope with the geostrategic challenges they faced.

strategies The seven defense include not only reforms but also diplomatic gambits and calculated risktaking. How might the current generation U.S. of policymakers apply each of these strategies?

In the decades before World War I, Britain employed a new diplomatic strategy that outsourced a portion of its security burden to new allies and partners. France and Russia, formerly longtime rivals, became Britain's partners in an attempt to match Germany's growing power. In the 1970s, Richard Nixon, Gerald Ford, and Jimmy Carter developed an increasingly deep relationship with China in an effort to balance the Soviet Union and complicate its defense planning. Today, U.S. policymakers hope that a deepening relationship with India will offset China's growing influence and also help stabilize Afghanistan during the second half of the decade. U.S. policymakers are also counting on America's extensive network of alliances and partners in the western Pacific to share the security burden and provide diplomatic synergy against possible Chinese assertions.

In the 1970s, the United States negotiated with its principal rival, the Soviet Union, in an attempt to stabilize strategic nuclear race. The resulting agreements on offensive nuclear forces and missile defenses possibly freed up some resources the Pentagon might have otherwise been forced to spend keeping up with expanding Soviet missile arsenals. If so,

the United States benefited from these negotiations by more funding having for research on stealth aircraft and technology precisionguided munitions, which would later become substantial U.S. advantages. The United States and China might, in theory, find it economical to negotiate a halt to the escalating Pacific arms race. Regrettably, the track record of such attempts is poor, most often because one side sees a comparative advantage in weapons production.

The Pentagon will no doubt continue its perennial quest to employ defense resources more efficiently. At the turn of the twentieth century, Britain instituted substantial moneysaving reforms to both its navy and army. The Royal Navy retired 150 obsolete ships that institutional interests had previously protected. A new manpower plan retained only skilled sailors on active service and relied on quickly filling unskilled crew positions after wars broke out. After the draining Boer War in South Africa, the British Army saved money by increasing its reliance on a reformed reservist system. Some defense analysts similarly believe the Pentagon could save money by shifting much of its ground combat power, especially tank-heavy units, to the reserves -- since these are the forces least likely to be needed on active duty after the withdrawal from Afghanistan in 2014. As for finding savings in the rest of the Pentagon's sprawling bureaucracy, workers the building regularly report sightings of waste, but somehow these ghosts always seem to elude the auditors.

Before World War I, the Royal Navy enhanced the effectiveness of its forces by successfully betting on some new technologies that allowed it to sustain its

dominance over Germany's rapidly growing fleet. These new technologies included big naval guns, oil-fired turbine engines, submarines, and a global communications system based on undersea cables and radios. Applying these technologies to new warships, the Royal Navy was to increase its power even while it shrank its ship count and manning. In the 1970s, even in the face of restrained budgets, the Pentagon invested research that led stealthy fighter and bomber aircraft, a global satellitebased navigation system, and precision-guided weapons that threatened the Soviet's numerical superiority. Over the past decade, improvements surveillance drones, other intelligence-gathering techniques, and intelligence analysis software has allowed the United States to improve effectiveness of its counterterrorism and manhunting efforts. In the future, troops will be counting on scientists to master directed energy, cyber, and electronic warfare weapons to counter the rapid proliferation of precisionguided weapons in the hands of adversaries.

Some procurement strategies use comparative advantages to impose costs on an adversary. The CSBA authors note that Britain's shipbuilding industry before World War I was superior to Germany's. Germany was foolish to attempt to match Britain's shipbuilding program, but did so anyway. In the 1970s, the United States upgraded its bomber force with investments in long-range cruise missiles and tools to suppress enemy air defenses. These investments forced the Soviet Union to pour more money into its air defense system, which was tasked with defending a 12,000 mile border.

Today's drone campaign hopes to force terrorist adversaries to spend all of their resources on survival rather than planning future attacks. As mentioned above, U.S. defense planners hope that advantages in electronic warfare and directed energy weapons will ruin the investments adversaries are making in guided missiles.

During period a of austerity, policymakers will have to take risks and shed low priority commitments. The Royal Navy made a successful gamble on new warship technology, just as did the Pentagon with its bets on stealth aircraft technology and precision-guided weapons. Today, the Pentagon has placed a huge wager on the troubled F-35 Joint Strike Fighter program, which is horribly over budget and very late arriving into service. To cover the unplanned gap until the F-35 is operational, the U.S. Navy wants to continue buying the legacy F-18 fighter-bomber for its aircraft carriers. At the risk of not having enough naval air power for a contingency that occurs over the next few years, the Pentagon could save money by forcing the Navy to wait for the F-35 to arrive later. Beyond that one example, the Pentagon's defense guidance released acknowledges January numerous other such risks it is accepting with a more austere budget. These risks include insufficient ground combat power later this decade and the inability to cope efficiently with certain combinations of simultaneous crises.

The ultimate risk is a breakdown in deterrence, induced by a perception of weakness brought on by defense austerity. Whether such a perception played a factor in the Soviet decision to invade Afghanistan in 1979 remains open for debate. There is no question that that move, combined with the Islamist takeover of Iran at the same time, resulted in the beginning of a defense buildup in the United States, begun by President Jimmy Carter and rapidly expanded by the Ronald Reagan administration. That leads to the CSBA's final strategy: increase defense spending as necessary, and impose austerity elsewhere. As U.S. diplomats meet with their counterparts around the world, they will have to assess to what extent U.S. plans for defense austerity are inducing hedging behavior by allies and aggressiveness by adversaries. U.S. defense planners may legitimately believe that a \$487 billion cut over 10 years adds only a minimal and acceptable level of risk. But friends and adversaries get their votes and their opportunities to miscalculate. U.S. diplomats and policymakers should pay attention to the responses they hear and ensure that austerity today does not lead something much more expensive later.

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In the private sector, Haddick was Director of Research at the Fremont Group, a large private investment firm and an affiliate of the Bechtel Corporation. He established the firm's global proprietary trading operation and was president of one of

Fremont's overseas investment subsidiaries.

In addition to Foreign Policy and Small Wars Journal, Haddick's writing has been published in the New York Times, the Wall Street Journal, Air & Space Power Journal, and other publications. He has appeared in many radio and television interviews.

Christian Science Monitor (csmonitor.com)
June 29, 2012

# 45. Republicans And Democrats Can Agree On Myanmar (Burma)

In Myanmar (Burma) the tide of democracy is growing. But Aung San Suu Kyi rightly cautions foreign investors that the country still has no 'rule of law.' The US must continue to support those working to further human rights and civil society while carefully watching Burma's generals. By Susan Collins

Washington--Landing in Naw Pyi Daw, Myanmar's (Burma's) capital, last month, I realized that I had tumbled down the rabbit hole into an altered reality, but one that, unlike Alice's, carried little wonder.

Our delegation arrived at a huge gleaming new airport, but ours was the only airplane there. I saw massive new buildings, each with perfectly manicured lawns tended by a small army of groundskeepers, but I saw no residents or other workers. I drove on 12-lane highways where I saw only a handful of cars.

I saw several grand ministry buildings, parliament, and a gilded presidential palace, in a country where a third of the people live in poverty. And I met with a set of government leaders who each delivered the same set of talking points that have not progressed beyond

this summer's surprising initial reforms toward more freedom for the Burmese people. It was difficult to judge what was real and what was illusory.

I went to Burma in advance of a trip to the World Economic Forum in Bangkok May 30 - June 1, where I had been invited to speak on regional security in Southeast Asia. I went to meet with the country's leadership, including the newly elected parliamentarian, Nobel Laureate Aung San Suu Kyi, to discover if Burma's tentative moves toward democracy were genuine and lasting or selfinterested and reversible. I wanted to find out what effect these changes would have on civil society and to assess whether the leaders would continue to pursue reforms.

What I found were Burmese generals, some now out of uniform, taking incremental steps toward reform and a society left to figure out for itself how to take advantage of the recent easing of repression.

In today's US Senate, bipartisanship is increasingly rare. On America's policy toward Burma, however, both administration Obama my Republican own party broadly agree. support democratic reforms and increased investment in human rights and economic development, but both believe that the relaxation of sanctions should be matched demonstrable progress on the treatment of ethnic minorities, the release of more political prisoners, and the expansion of traditional democratic rights.

That demand for real action is justified, because the limited reforms made on the ground thus far, while real, are not occurring out of a desire by all for democratic progress. Rather, the reforms must be divorced from a Western perspective that

believes in the idea of selfless action and placed in the context of the environment in which they are occurring.

Burma's "reformist" generals. including the President Thein Sein, who has taken the tentative first steps toward reform, have systematically controlled the economy and access to Burma's wealth of natural resources for a generation. They have used the political process to enhance their control at the expense of their own people, especially certain ethnic minorities who are not even considered to be citizens.

Their rule has seen, if not permitted, an illicit trade in poppies and other goods, including human trafficking, across a porous border populated by disenfranchised minorities.

When I met with him, Burma's president, Mr. Thein Sein, avoided any real dialogue about the myriad of these issues facing his devastatingly poor nation. Instead, he calmly delivered a monologue on the threats he faces. To the president's credit, he did initiate the reforms, which took courage.

But in part, sanctions also forced his hand, and failure to move toward reform would have resulted in such a degree of diplomatic and economic isolation that Burma would either have collapsed under its own weight or become a paralyzed pariah, much like North Korea. Ironically, in order for the ruling class to preserve and extend its privileges of power, Burma had to change.

Yet whatever the motivations of the generals, the tide of democracy is growing. There are hundreds, if not thousands, of committed Burmese citizens that want change and are willing to risk,

quite literally, their lives for the prospect of reform.

Later in my trip, while in Bangkok at the World Economic Forum, I sat down with the most famous of the Burmese activists, Aung San Suu Kyi, or "Mother," as she is endearingly called by those that follow her. Her participation in the Forum was her first journey abroad after 15 years of house arrest and 24 years where she felt she would be prohibited from returning if she left the country. Literally closing the door to exclude her hundreds of admirers, we discussed her country's future.

Aung San Suu Kyi, who seems genuinely surprised at the attention given to her, expressed a deep wariness of those still in power. But she also expressed an equal determination to use the reforms, regardless of the reasons behind them, to benefit her country. Later, in front of an open forum, she cautioned those that would invest in her country, stating quite bluntly that the rule of law does not yet exist and that many of the protections to commerce and economic activity which exist in a modern democracy are simply still absent in Burma.

In other words, Burma is a bit like the Wild West, and companies may very well be on their own, a situation mirrored in civil society.

In the old capitol of Rangoon, I sat down with a group of women involved in on-the-ground reform efforts affecting all Burmese. Among others, I spoke with the founder of a small start-up company employing those living with HIV who make bed nets to help prevent malaria. And I met with Zin Mar Aung, the winner of the International Women of Courage Award, who has founded four different civil society groups. These young women are the future of a Burma that will truly make lives better - if they are given a chance.

Is this how a Burmese revolution happens? Not with the flash of guns or mass demonstrations in the streets, but rather with a group of activists committed to incremental change? It doesn't grab the international spotlight, but ultimately, it may be more effective and, I hope, less violent.

When the seeds of democracy grow in Burma, it benefits the United States. In order for those seeds to continue growing, we must continue to support the nascent reforms and assist those working to improve human rights, the rule of law, and civil society, even as we carefully watch the motivations of the generals and their next actions.

The recent riots and ethnic violence in western Burma clearly demonstrate the fragility of progress and the very real possibility that generals could return the repression of the last decades. President Thein Sein's statements, in particular, underscore the necessity of every tool at our disposal, including financial aid, sanctions, and US influence in the region, to keep pressure on the regime so that, like Alice, we do not end up in Wonderland again and again.

Sen. Susan Collins (R) of Maine is a ranking member of the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

New York Times June 30, 2012 Pg. 21

## 46. How Egypt's Army Won

By Joshua Stacher

Cairo--JUBILANT chants echoed far beyond Tahrir

the Muslim Square when Brotherhood's candidate, Mohamed Morsi, was confirmed as Egypt's first civilian president last week. Mr. Morsi's election was lauded across the globe, and many are hailing today's "transfer" of power as a triumph for democracy.

But there is little reason for celebration. In this latest grand spectacle manufactured by the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces, the generals symbolically respected the people's choice while using the election to further entrench their unaccountable political autonomy.

2011, In February most analysts assumed that Mr. Mubarak's government had collapsed. They wrong. The regime never changed. It was reconfigured. underlying centralized The structures of the system that the military council inherited from Mr. Mubarak persist, and the generals have sought to preserve them. The recent election was just the latest attempt generals' to formalize the executive authority while winning public legitimacy.

military The council exemplifies the highly adaptive quality of Egypt's governing elite. Egypt's senior generals have remade the ruling coalition by using centralized authority to neutralize newly included political forces and divide the increasingly marginalized protesters. In the process, the military has effectively prevented all groups from resisting its encroachment as a fourth estate.

possible This was because the state's apparatus, while disrupted, held after Mr. Mubarak's departure. The hierarchy within the vast and largely cohesive bureaucracy state resumed

functioning as the effect of the protests subsided. The state media began accusing protesters of causing chaos, scaring tourists and being agents of foreign elements. The demands of workers, women and Coptic Christians were dismissed as special interests of secondary importance.

The security services were re-branded, and successive courtroom acquittals gave them a guarantee that their repression of fellow Egyptians would have no legal ramifications. As time passed, the post-Mubarak regime began to look and act like its predecessor. Buttressed by the machinery of the state, the military then sought allies to contain the power of future protests. High electoral drama has produced what political scientists call a "pact making" exercise.

Egyptians have gone to the polls five times since March 2011. Rather than elections' producing real choices, though, the military has used them to create an environment in which it can negotiate a pact with the winners. And the Muslim Brotherhood, which is trying to gain a lasting foothold in the system, has willingly participated. Yet it remains a comparatively weak actor, forced to compete on the military's uneven playing field.

The Brotherhood has long skeptical of popular mobilization, making it a useful accomplice to the military's efforts to consolidate power. Despite some Brotherhood members' condemnation of the military's recent maneuvers as a "coup," protest politics has become more complicated now that one of their own occupies the presidency. The Muslim Brothers will have a hard time persuading others that they are still an opposition force. Indeed, any Brotherhood members who flock to Tahrir Square are now tacitly resisting their president.

In a sign of continuity, Mr. Morsi has met with the interior minister and pledged not to purge that despised ministry or seek revenge against it. Consequently, the Muslim Brothers have become invested in a centralized state that blocks the clamor for change from below. Given this political structure, Mr. Morsi isn't likely to be able to resist the generals' ultimatums in the short-term.

Mr. Morsi's control of any of the national security portfolios is unlikely. It remains unclear whether the disbanded parliament will be reinstated or when a new one might be elected. The military has laid mines in the constitution-drafting process, threatening to exercise its veto at every turn. This traps the Brotherhood between street protesters and the generals, with few good options.

can't The protesters seriously pressure the army into transferring actual political power without cooperating with the Brotherhood. And although the protesters won't disappear, the Brotherhood is unlikely to cooperate closely with them. Mr. Morsi is more likely to attend to Egypt's ailing economy and save political battles with the generals for another day. In the process, the unaccountable military will be able to better ingrain itself politically while the democratically elected Mr. Morsi becomes the object of popular blame for the country's economic ills and political gridlock.

The military checkmated Mr. Morsi before he was crowned. Egypt's leading generals had a long-game strategy to capture control and they have emerged as the election's actual victors because they are poised to remain in

charge of the country for the foreseeable future.

Joshua Stacher, an assistant professor of political science at Kent State, is the author of "Adaptable Autocrats: Regime Power in Egypt and Syria."

National Journal June 30, 2012

# Analysis 47. Full Circle

America's war on terrorism began in Yemen. It may end there, too.

By Yochi J. Dreazen

When a CIA drone strike in Yemen last May killed Fahd al-Quso, a ringleader of the 2000 USS Cole attack, it was more than just the culmination of a long and quiet campaign to hunt down the perpetrators of that bombing, which killed 17 American sailors and wounded 90 others. The strike also underscored Yemen has replaced Pakistan as the focal point of the Obama administration's counterterrorism war. The White House surprised both supporters and critics with its willingness to ramp up the drone campaign in Pakistan; now, recognizing the threat of Yemeni militants, it is expanding that shadow war to a new battlefield.

The CIA spent the past decade killing militants in the lawless border regions of Pakistan, but a rapidly growing proportion of the agency's drones are now focused on Yemen, and commandos from the military's elite Joint Special Operations Command work there. The United States conducted 10 drone, air, and cruise-missile strikes in Yemen in 2011, according to Long War Journal, which tracks the strikes. So far this year, it has conducted at least 24. Those numbers are set to rise: The CIA recently received permission

from the White House to target Yemen-based militants, even when American intelligence officials don't know their names or identities.

Washington is also devoting new resources to its expanding counterterrorism fight there and its effort to train and equip the Yemeni military. The Pentagon will provide \$160 million in helicopters, trucks, and other nonlethal supplies, up from \$78 million in fiscal 2010 and \$110 million in fiscal 2011. Washington is also considering plans to give American cargo aircraft, ground vehicles, and other equipment to the Yemeni armed forces. "It's not that Yemen was ever forgotten, but there's no question that the main U.S. focus since 9/11 had been on Afghanistan and Pakistan," says a senior Defense official, speaking on condition of anonymity. "That has changed because the most serious terror plots against the U.S. are now emerging from Yemen."

Senior officials at both the CIA and the Pentagon say that Yemen is home to the leadership, most of the bomb-makers, and the key operational personnel of al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula, the terrorist group responsible for an array of recent plots against the United States. Army Maj. Nidal Hasan, accused of killing 14 soldiers at Fort Hood in November 2009, had been corresponding with a Yemenibased radical American cleric named Anwar al-Awlaki (who was killed in a CIA strike in Yemen last fall). AQAP experts built the so-called underwear bomb that Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab tried to detonate aboard a Detroitbound flight on Christmas Day 2009. The following year, AQAP operatives smuggled bombs onto two cargo planes in an ambitious plan to down the aircraft over American cities. More recently, a Saudi double agent helped foil an AQAP plot to use a more sophisticated underwear bomb to blow up an American passenger jet.

American officials fear that those efforts will multiply because of the security vacuum created by the ouster of Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh, an autocratic ruler who gave Washington license to conduct airstrikes inside his country. American officials believe that AQAP and affiliated groups now operate freely across much of southern Yemen, making it easier to train operatives, plan attacks, and build explosives and other weapons for use against the West. Yemen's fragile new government doesn't yet have the muscle or political will to recapture those provinces.

The focus on Yemen carries clear risks. Constant drone strikes, especially if they kill civilians, could spark public fury toward the United States and weaken the new government's standing. And the shift away from Pakistan may be premature: An array of wanted terrorists, including Ayman al-Zawahiri, Osama bin Laden's successor, still live there. The number of drone strikes inside Pakistan declined from 40 at this point in 2011 to 24 so far this year, according to Long War Journal. If the number continues to fall, al-Qaida may be able to reestablish safe havens there. Still, U.S. officials now see the Yemenibased franchise as the main American adversary.

Yemen brings the U.S. counterterrorism fight full circle. In the years before Sept. 11, no single Qaida attack killed more Americans than the strike on the *Cole* (the embassy bombings in Kenya and Tanzania killed 223 Africans but only 12

Americans). The destroyer was moored near Aden when militants crashed a small motor boat filled with explosives into it; the resulting blast was a prelude to a war fought mostly in Central Asia.

The hunt for the Cole perpetrators has lasted more than a decade and achieved remarkable, if little-heralded, success. A CIA drone strike in Yemen killed Ali al-Harithi, one of the key planners of the attack, in 2002. Abd al-Rahim al-Nashiri, thought to be the second mastermind of the bombing, was arrested in Pakistan in 2002 and now faces a military trial at Guantánamo Bay. Tawfig bin Attash was captured in Pakistan; Abdel-Monem al-Fathani, another Cole suspect, was killed by a CIA drone in Yemen this January. Quso, a key figure who helped purchase the boat used to attack the Cole, was tracked down with the help of the Saudi double agent and killed in the southern province of Shabwa in May.

The Cole bombing marked al-Qaida's emergence as a global force capable of striking American targets around the world. Today, only one of the major suspects, Jamal al-Badawi, remains at large. But Yemen's Qaida affiliate is growing in size and ambition. The war on terrorism, which began there, has come home.

Kitsap (WA) Sun
June 30, 2012

Military Update

48. Compared To

Civilians, Military Pay

Higher Than Ever

By Tom Philpott

As private sector salaries flattened over the last decade, military pay climbed steadilyenough so that by 2009, pay and allowances for enlisted members exceeded the pay of 90 percent of private sector workers of similar age and education level.

That's one of the more significant findings of the 11th Quadrennial Review of Military Compensation report released last week, given its potential to impact compensation decisions by the Department of Defense and Congress as they struggle to control military personnel costs.

The military pay advantage, which had been a worrisome gap in 1999, is larger now than it has ever been, said QRMC director Thomas Bush.

"I believe it is, and there is a chart in our report that illustrates that. [It] shows where we are, which is probably the highest point that we have been" compared with civilian pay, Bush said.

The military gained its lead with annual raises from 2000 to 2010 that exceeded private sector wage growth and some extra increases in housing allowances to eliminate average out-of-pocket rental costs. Meanwhile, civilian pay growth stalled as markets collapsed and jobs disappeared.

Officer pay by 2009 exceeded salaries of 83 percent of civilian peers of similar age with bachelor and masters degrees. Enlisted are compared to workers with high school diplomas, some college or associate's degrees.

To make its pay comparisons, the **ORMC** used Regular Military Compensation, which combines basic pay with Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) and Basic Allowance for Subsistence (BAS) plus the federal tax advantage on the tax-free allowances.

By 2009, the report says, average RMC for enlisted exceeded the median wage for civilians in each comparison group — high school diploma, some college and two-year

degrees. Average RMC was \$50,747 or "about \$21,800 more than the median earnings for civilians from the combined comparison groups."

For officers, average RMC was \$94,735 in 2009. That was "88 percent higher than earnings of civilians with bachelor's degrees, and 47 percent higher than earnings of those with graduate-level degrees," the report says.

Neil Singer, a former senior analyst at the Congressional Budget Office who advised a recent commission on military pay issues as it studied ways to address the nation's debt crisis, said he supports the QRMC's call to target more money to individual skills by expanding use of special and incentive pays and also giving more recognition to members who serve in combat.

An obvious way to pay for that, Singer said, is to freeze across-the-board raises until RMC "comparability" with private sector wages is restored to levels endorsed by earlier QRMCs. The 1.7 percent across-the-board raise planned for January, for example, would cost more than \$1 billion. That money should be used instead as pay incentives for Special Forces, linguists, and other high-demand skills highhighlighted by the QRMC, and also to expand benefits for those who see combat, wounded warriors, their families and caregivers.

In 2002, the 9th QRMC concluded that keeping RMC at the 70th percentile of private sector wages would sustain a volunteer force. The 11th QRMC didn't do the work to "revalidate" that benchmark, said director Bush, "so I am reluctant to say the 70th is the right percentile ...[It] would be appropriate to validate that over several QRMCs so we'll know we're in the right ballpark."

The 11th QRMC also isn't calling for a military pay freeze.

"We have given the department facts they can use to balance competing interests," Bush explained.

Excluded from its pay comparisons with civilian workers are other elements of compensation that would make the military advantage appear wider. The military pays no FICA payroll tax on BAH and BAS, for example. Also, active duty receive free health care for themselves and family members if enrolled in TRICARE Prime, while health insurance costs for civilian workers have increased steadily over the decade.

If health benefits were compared, says the report, the take-home pay advantage over civilians would grow by \$3,000 and \$7,000 per year for enlisted, depending on family size, and by \$2,000 to \$4,800 for officers. The officer advantage is smaller because more of their peers in the private sector have employer health coverage

Marine Staff Sgt. Andrew Gallagher, 29, doesn't believe pay comparisons using only age and education level, even with associate degree earners tossed in the mix, is fair to career enlisted.

Gallagher will pass the 12-year mark in the Corps this November. He has served three tours in Iraq, the second shortened by wounds suffered in an IED attack. His total pay, before taxes and including BAH and BAS, is about \$58,000 a year at Camp Lejeune, N.C.

"I believe the amount and levels of training an individual receives over a career in the military far exceeds an associate degree level of training," Gallagher said. He notes that his own career has been peppered with sixto-eight-week training periods, attending classes and receiving more training for 12 to 16 hours

a day versus perhaps only four hours each day at a college.

His extra training included an Infantry Squad Leaders an Infantry Unit Course, Leaders Course, Small Weapons Arms Instructor qualification, correspondence courses in war fighting and advance war fighting. recruiter school which he compares to management-level sales training.

Gallagher said he wouldn't be surprised to see the pay comparisons lead to smaller raises for a while. If someone wants to claim he is overpaid, the staff sergeant concedes, well he might be. Because even if his pay were frozen for the rest of his career, he told me, he'd still stay a Marine.

"They will have to pull me away, kicking and screaming," said the married father of two. "The Marine Corps has allowed me to provide for my family ... I appreciate that. I know they're not going to cut my pay. As long as they don't do something crazy like that, they could pay me the same amount forever."

And if he were still on recruiting duty, he'd tout that 90th percentile on pay — not to prospective recruits but to their parents. If recruits are swayed by it, Gallagher said, the Corps probably doesn't want them.

At War (NYTimes.com) June 29, 2012

# 49. In Military Justice System, An All-Powerful Arbiter

By Rachel Natelson

In the criminal justice system, the people are represented by two separate, yet equally important, groups: the police, who investigate the crime, and the district attorneys, who prosecute the offenders.

Sound familiar? Even in the absence of "Law & Order" and its signature

introduction to the dramatis criminal personae of the justice system, most Americans would probably identify their local district attorney figure responsible prosecuting individuals accused of committing crimes. Equally well established, particularly in this era of perpetually TV courtroom unspooling drama, are the agents assigned to decide on convicting and sentencing offenders: the jury and judge.

But for Kori Cioca, Ariana Klay and others profiled in a new documentary about sexual assault in the military, "The Invisible War," the criminal justice system failed to feature these stock characters. Instead of having a prosecutor decide how to dispose of their sexual assault cases, this determination left to the women's supervisors at work, junior managers with no legal training who were authorized to take account of the perpetrators' work performance in deciding on how to punish them for their crimes.

Why? The explanation is simple: they were victims of crimes perpetrated against them by their brothers in arms while they were serving in the United States military. Unique among employers, the military maintains its own criminal justice system, separate from, not equal to, the one see on TV. In this parallel system, the distinct investigative, prosecutorial and sentencing functions known to civilians are vested collectively in the officer commanding the unit in which the offender and the victim work.

Since crimes in the military are perceived first and foremost as matters of unit discipline, the Uniform Code of Military Justice endows the commander with control over almost every stage of criminal case disposition, beginning with the investigation of charges. While the commander may appoint other agents to conduct investigations and may seek guidance from legal advisers, he alone has the authority to decide whether to dismiss the charges, adjudicate them within his level of authority, or forward them to a superior commander for disposition.

In addition, the U.C.M.J. gives the commander significant authority to conduct nonjudicial punishment as an alternative to trial. Under Article 15 of the U.C.M.J., the commander may serve as the sole adjudicator of charges against a service member without the intervention of a court-martial, deciding upon the guilt or innocence of accused and imposing punishment. Should he elect to do so, the commander may also exercise the authority to convene summary, general or special courts-martial. If the accused wishes to enter into a guilty plea, this pretrial agreement is negotiated not with a prosecutor but with the commander.

If the accused elects be tried by a military panel members panel, not drawn randomly, as in the civilian system, but are personally selected by commander. It is also convening authority, rather than counsel, who decides whether to order depositions, approve and authorize financing for witness travel, approve the employment and financing of expert witnesses, or grant immunity for witnesses. the accused is found guilty, the convening authority must approve both the findings and the sentence of the court-martial before they become final. In this capacity, the commander may set aside findings of guilt, limit findings of guilt to a lesser included offense, lessen a sentence or order a rehearing.

Granting such unfettered authority to an interested party can and does lead to abuse. Unlike in civilian criminal where evidence cases, good character is introduced in the sentencing phase of trial, defendants in courtsmartial may submit their professional record as evidence of their innocence of alleged offense, on the theory that "good soldiers" unlikely to commit crimes. For every example of reasonable clemency toward "good soldiers," however, there are just as many instances of unjust penalization of service members perceived to disrupt the morale of the unit. Too often, commanders exercise their discretion not simply to relieve offenders, but also to retaliate against victims for rocking the boat, especially where allegations of sexual assault are concerned.

Command discretion, moreover, affects offenders as well as victims, leaving those of lower rank and achievement vulnerable outsize punishment. to fact, it was to protect the rights of defendants from misguided prosecution that Canada, Britain Australia successively and transferred authority over criminal cases from the commanding officer to independent prosecutor, on premise that courtsmartial were not sufficiently separated from the military command chain of considered impartial tribunals by constitutional and international treaty standards.

American courts, by contrast, continue to uphold the constitutional validity of the current military justice system, leaving reform to the will of Congress. While such reform

has historically been slow to arrive, Defense Secretary Leon E. Panetta recently announced a plan to vest case disposition authority over sex crimes in senior ranking officers instead of untrained junior commanders. Moreover, a number of Congressional offices have introduced bills that would go beyond this measure, transferring criminal disposition authority case to military prosecutors and allowing access to federal courts for civil tort discrimination claims.

For Ms. Cioca, the film subject, such reforms could well have prevented most egregious aspects of her experience as a victim of military rape, an episode that illustrates an especially dark side of reducing criminal conduct to a routine personnel matter. Left to the discretion of her commander, her case yielded only a minor loss of pay for the perpetrator, while resulting in a series of retaliatory measures against Ms. Cioca herself, capped by an involuntary discharge from the Coast Guard. Today, Ms. Cioca suffers from post-traumatic stress disorder, depression and anxiety, as well as bilateral disc displacement incurred during the assault. Her perpetrator continues to serve in the Coast Guard.

Rachel Natelson is the legal director of the Service Women's Action Network. She formerly developed and presided over the Veterans and Service Members Project at the Urban Justice Center in New York, and served as a staff attorney at the National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty. Ms. Natelson received her bachelor's degree from Yale University and her law degree from New York University School of Law.

Washington Post June 30, 2012 Pg. 16

## 50. The Right To Lie

The Supreme Court was right to strike down the Stolen Valor Act.

ON THURSDAY, the Supreme Court struck down, in a 6 to 3 ruling, the Stolen Valor Act of 2005, which declared it a federal misdemeanor to falsely present oneself as a decorated military officer. Likely to be overlooked in the wake of the Obamacare decision, the Court's ruling in *United States v. Alvarez* is nevertheless a commendable reinforcement of the First Amendment and its sanctity.

The case that became United States v. Alvarez began in 2007, when Xavier Alvarez, a California man, falsely and deliberately declared himself a retired Marine with 25 years of service and the "Congressional Medal of Honor." He was tried and convicted in a California court under the terms of the Stolen Valor Act, a decision the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 9th Circuit overturned. Ultimately, the issue before the Supreme Court was the legitimacy of content-based restrictions on speech, and the court was right to strike down a law that dangerously imposed on an individual's constitutionally guaranteed right to the freedom of speech, even to lie.

In the dissenting opinion, Justice Samuel A. Alito Jr. - joined by Justices Clarence Thomas and Antonin Scalia raised objections with which it is easy to sympathize. Lies like Mr. Alvarez's, they wrote, undermine "our country's system of military honors" at the same time they inflict "real harm actual medal recipients and their families." This is undeniable, but the lies the court has protected are, as Justice Anthony M. Kennedy noted in the majority opinion, a function of the "sometimes inconvenient principles of the First Amendment." But it is precisely in tolerating "inconvenient" speech that the First Amendment is tested and must be upheld.

Leaving the Stolen Valor Act in place would have essentially authorized the government to make a list of subjects about which false statements couldn't be said, even in private, even in a whisper. In a deft allusion to George Orwell's "1984," Justice Kennedy warned of the act's lack of any clear limiting principle: "Our constitutional tradition stands against the idea that we need Oceania's Ministry of Truth." As reprehensible as statements like Mr. Alvarez's may be, the court was correct: Criminalizing certain types of speech is not the answer. If, as Justice Kennedy began the majority opinion, lying was Mr. Alvarez's "habit," it must also be considered - albeit uncomfortably - his right.

This is not to say that Mr. Alvarez and others who lie about military service don't deserve rebuke for insulting those who serve and their families. They do. It's just best that such discipline come from the public, not the law, and that the freedoms for which real Marines fight continue to be treated as sacred.

Washington Post June 30, 2012 Pg. 16

## 51. A Time For More Than Talk

Mr. Annan gathers an 'action' group as the death toll in Syria spirals upward.

IN A RARE INTERVIEW broadcast this week, Syrian President Bashar al-Assad

vowed on Iranian television to "annihilate terrorists" and told the rest of the world to get lost. "No one knows how to solve Syria's problems as well as we do," he said. But judging by the protests Friday near the presidential palace in Damascus, where people chanted, "We will no longer kneel to anyone but God," and by the spiraling violence around the country, Mr. Assad is not solving anything. As he correctly noted on Wednesday, Syria is in a "state of war."

While Syrian forces shell towns and villages, and resistance forces battle government troops, the rest of the world is preparing to contribute more talk. Kofi Annan, the special envoy of the United Nations and the Arab League, says he is forming an "action" group that will meet in Geneva on Saturday, including diplomats from the five permanent members of the U.N. Security Council, the European Union, Turkey, Iraq, Kuwait and Oatar. The meeting comes after Mr. Annan's earlier peace mission fell apart.

If the participants Geneva do find a way to take "action," we would find it encouraging. But signs indicate that they remain stuck in irrelevancy. In the run-up to the Geneva meeting, they quarreled about whether Iran or Saudi Arabia should be at the table. Neither will be. Mr. Annan circulated a preliminary document that implied that Mr. Assad would have to step down in any Syrian transition, as the United States and others have sought, but it was met with opposition from Russia, Syria's ardent backer. It looks like the "action" group is coming to Geneva empty-handed. Let's hope we are wrong.

What is clear is the deteriorating situation. Syrian opposition groups reported

Friday that the previous day's death toll was 190, the worst of any single day this year. While the estimates are not easily verified, it appears the lion's share of the deaths occurred in Douma, a suburb northwest of Damascus that has resisted the Assad regime and was subject to more shelling by government forces Friday. Tensions with Turkey have flared after the Syrian downing of a Turkish fighter jet, and Syrian defectors continue to abandon the military, including an air force pilot who flew his MiG to Jordan.

When they meet in Geneva, diplomats should ponder what violent twist might come next week or next month if Mr. Assad remains in power. Which suburb like Douma will be under the shells? Which busy market will be targeted for another bomb, like the one that detonated in Damascus this week near the main justice complex? Can the war within Syria remain within? The diplomats need to go beyond the jabberwocky so far and join forces behind a real endgame for Mr. Assad and this spreading war.

Norfolk Virginian-Pilot June 30, 2012

# **52.** A New Month In The Armed Forces

Not so long ago gay military members feared revelation of their sexual orientation as a cataclysmic event that would lead to losing their jobs.

Now, less than a year after the repeal of "don't ask, don't tell," the Pentagon celebrates Gay Pride Month as part of the spectacular diversity that constitutes the United States armed forces.

The Pentagon's decision to honor gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender service members matters not because of their sexual orientation. It's because, finally, their sexual orientation does not matter to their jobs.

It is one more indication that the civil rights of homosexuals, including marriage, must now be recognized in all parts of the United States.

Last Barack month, Obama the first became sitting president to support gay marriage. Last week, former Vice President Dick Cheney's daughter, Mary, married her longtime partner in Washington, D.C. Dick Cheney, who once supported a constitutional ban on same-sex marriages, now says he supports the right of gay couples to marry. Also last week, an Air Force enlisted airman and his civilian partner were joined in the first same sex civil union ceremony on a U.S. military base in New Jersey.

While it took the military decades to recognize its gay service members as equals, it moved quickly once the repeal of "don't ask, don't tell" passed. Worries that acceptance of openly gay members in the military would disrupt "unit cohesion" and impede readiness proved unfounded. Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta said the repeal scarcely caused a ripple in military operations.

"I am very proud of how we implemented repeal," Panetta said in a video statement to those gathered for a formal event at the Pentagon. "Going forward, I remain committed to removing as many barriers as possible to make America's military a model of equal opportunity."

Among those who spoke at the ceremony was M. Matthew Phelps, a gay Marine captain who said he rode into work the day following the repeal worried about who and how many would ask him: Are you gay? Not one person asked. His fear evaporated.

And Phelps, who had long worried about losing his job if anyone discovered his sexual orientation, found himself drinking champagne with the president at the event.

"I happen to be gay, but more importantly, I'm a Marine," Phelps told the crowd.

Homosexual service members have long been willing to fight and die for the ideals and principals of our nation. Now they no longer fear court martial over an issue that is irrelevant to that mission.

That alone is cause for a Pentagon celebration.

New Lenox (IL) Patch June 28, 2012

# 53. Soldier Deployed In Afghanistan Comes Home To 'Set Tone' For Bronco World Series

U.S. Army soldier Nick Santefort threw out the first pitch at the New Lenox Bronco division baseball World Series on Wednesday, June 27.

By David Hansen

Before the 12-year-olds on the Rays and Brewers started their World Series game Wednesday night, they took time to thank an American soldier. Without the sacrifices he made to protect our country, this contest might not have been possible.

Mokena native Nick Santefort, 22, pitched a strike, right down the heart of the plate and into the catcher's mitt, while throwing out the ceremonial first pitch at field 10 of the Tyler-Bentley Field Complex.

"It sets the tone for the evening," said Mayor Tim Baldermann, who was in attendance for the toss. "Baseball is America's pastime, and to have an American hero here to throw out the first pitch - that's just a great example for the kids."

Santefort's parents watched as he received a round of applause after successfully making his throw to the Brewers catcher's mitt.

"I have a lot more appreciation for my family," Santefort said about how he has changed thus far, two years into his service.

Brewers coach Rick Nelson set up the heart-warming event.

"I thought it would be a cool way to honor him coming back by throwing out the first pitch at a World Series game," said Nelson, whose daughter's softball team was coached by Santefort.

When asked what advice Santefort would like to give to the boys before their World Series game, the previous Lincoln-Way East baseball player responded, "Just have fun. Enjoy it."

Santefort has one more year left of duty in the Army, and then has plans to go to college.

Mayor Baldermann is open to the idea for having local heroes either throw out the first pitch or do the coin toss before little league sporting events in the future.

"We've got a lot of role models in this community that I'm sure would be happy to come out and set an example for these kids," he said.