

CURRENT NEWS

EARLY BIRD

June 9, 2012

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Item numbers indicate order of appearance only.

AFGHANISTAN

1. **Commander Apologizes For Afghan Airstrike**
(*New York Times*)....Alissa J. Rubin
The NATO and United States troop commander in Afghanistan flew to the eastern part of the country on Friday to apologize personally to surviving family members for a coalition airstrike earlier this week that local officials said killed 18 civilians.
2. **Allen Apologizes For NATO Airstrike**
(*Washington Post*)....Joshua Partlow
...Allen told an Associated Press reporter traveling with him that the troops did not know there were civilians inside the house at the time of the airstrike.
3. **China Shows Interest In Afghan Security, Fearing Taliban Would Help Separatists**
(*New York Times*)....Jane Perlez
...In a joint statement, China and Afghanistan said they would step up cooperation in security and the fight against terrorism, as well as increase intelligence sharing. No specifics were given. A modest \$23 million grant for unspecified projects that accompanied the new partnership indicated that despite concerns about the stability of Afghanistan after 2014, when most United States and allied troops are expected to be gone, China had no immediate plans to play a major development role.
4. **Parting Gift For Afghans: A Military McMansion**
(*Wall Street Journal*)....Michael M. Phillips
In a dusty valley here, construction workers are racing to finish a fiber-optic-equipped military base for a wood-burning army.

MIDEAST

5. **Syria Army Kills 17 Civilians Amid Massacre Anger**
(*Yahoo.com*)....Agence France-Presse
A Syrian army bombardment of the southern city of Daraa killed 17 civilians, most of them women and children, on Saturday, a human rights watchdog said, as anger grew over a massacre in a central village.
6. **U.N. Monitors In Syria Find Grisly Traces Of Massacre**
(*New York Times*)....Rick Gladstone
Confronting a scene of congealed blood, scattered body parts, shelled buildings, bullet holes and the smell of burned flesh, United Nations monitors in Syria quietly collected evidence on Friday of a mass atrocity in a desolate hamlet, more than 24 hours after Syrian forces and government supporters blocked their first attempt to visit the site.

7. **U.N. Team Views Site Of Syrian Massacre**
(*Washington Post*)....Colum Lynch and Liz Sly
...Diplomats said that no one has formally produced a draft negotiating text but that Britain and France are weighing several possible measures, including an arms embargo, a travel ban and asset freeze on key regime figures, the establishment of a commission of inquiry to probe crimes, and a referral to the International Criminal Court for possible prosecution of regime leaders.
8. **'No Progress' In Iran Nuclear Talks, U.N. Inspectors Report**
(*New York Times*)....Alan Cowell
After a brief spurt of optimism, impetus toward resolving the nuclear dispute with Iran slowed further on Friday as senior inspectors from the United Nations nuclear watchdog said they had made "no progress" toward gaining access to restricted sites they suspect of being used to test potential triggers for nuclear warheads.
9. **Deal With Iran Has Collapsed, IAEA Says**
(*Washington Post*)....Joby Warrick
...On Friday, China unexpectedly added to the pressure on Iran by publicly calling on its leaders to compromise. While hosting Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad in Beijing, Chinese leader Hu Jintao urged Tehran to take practical steps to ease international tensions over its nuclear program.

PAKISTAN

10. **Notions Of Honor Color High-Stakes Haggling Over NATO Supply Routes**
(*New York Times*)....Declan Walsh
...Peter Lavoy, a senior Defense Department official, arrived in Islamabad on Friday in a bid to inject momentum into the bargaining. But though the stakes are high, optimism that a deal may be struck is in short supply on both sides.
11. **Pakistani Leader Remains Optimistic Over Ties With US**
(*China Daily*)....Wu Jiao
..."I think the US is an important country in the world and so is Pakistan. We have mutual interests," Zardari said in an exclusive interview with China Daily on Friday in Beijing. "Slowly but surely, we will get back to normal relations," said Zardari.
12. **Deadly Bombing Strikes Police Bus In Pakistan**
(*New York Times*)....Declan Walsh
An explosion ripped through a police bus on the edge of Peshawar on Friday, killing at least 19 people and wounding dozens in the deadliest attack in months in the northwestern city.

DEFENSE DEPARTMENT

13. **Suicides Outpacing War Deaths For Troops**
(*New York Times*)....Timothy Williams
...Suicide rates of military personnel and combat veterans have risen sharply since 2005, as the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan intensified. Recently, the Pentagon established a Defense Suicide Prevention Office. On Friday, Cynthia Smith, a Defense Department spokeswoman, said the Pentagon had sought to remind commanders that those who seek counseling should not be stigmatized.
14. **Pentagon Suspends Part Of Military Surplus Supply Program**
(*Arizona Republic (Phoenix)*)....Dennis Wagner
...Michelle McCaskill, the agency's chief of media relations, said Friday that a recent review of the program had raised questions about compliance. "There was not a total cessation of the program, and the only items not being issued now are weapons," McCaskill said in an e-mail.
15. **GAO: Costs Of Europe Force Changes Unknown**
(*Stars and Stripes*)....Jennifer H. Svan

The Department of Defense has yet to fully calculate the cost of significant force posture changes in Europe, including the withdrawal of two combat brigades and a plan to permanently station four Aegis-class destroyers in Spain, a Government Accountability Office report concludes.

16. **Questions About Biofuels**

(*CNN; NPR*)....Chris Lawrence; Audie Cornish

Some members of Congress are having sticker shock and may try to force the Defense Department to save money by scrapping more expensive bio-fuels. Is it the right move for now or is it short-sighted?

17. **Lockheed F-35 Scrap Rate At 16 Percent - Pentagon**

(*Reuters.com*)....Andrea Shalal-Esa, Reuters

The rate of scrap, rework and repair on production of Lockheed Martin Corp's F-35 fighter jet is currently around 16 percent, higher than on other military aircraft programs at similar stages of production, the Pentagon said on Friday.

MILITARY COMMISSIONS

18. **Guantanamo Defense Lawyers Seek National Broadcasts Of Cole Trial**

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

The lawyers are asking the military commissions judge to authorize feeds to television networks; the Pentagon says federal trials aren't broadcast and war crimes cases shouldn't be either.

ARMY

19. **Judge Refuses To Dismiss Any Manning Charges**

(*ArmyTimes.com*)....David Dishneau, Associated Press

A military judge refused Friday to dismiss any of the 22 counts against an Army private charged in the biggest leak of government secrets in U.S. history.

20. **Army To Send 3,000 Soldiers To Safe Areas Of Africa Next Year**

(*Arizona Republic (Phoenix)*)....John Ryan, Army Times

An Army brigade will deploy to Africa next year in a pilot program that rotates brigades to regions around the globe, the Army said. Roughly 3,000 soldiers, possibly more, are expected to serve tours across the continent in 2013, training foreign militaries and aiding locals.

MARINE CORPS

21. **Keeping Marines Ready To Fight**

(*CNN*)....John Zarrella

For more than a decade U.S. Marines have been steadily rotating in and out of war zones. Ever wonder what happens to all their banged-up, bullet-riddled military hardware when it comes back from the front lines?

22. **Marine's Survival**

(*CNN*)....Barbara Starr

We want to update you on a remarkable story of survival of a young Marine in Afghanistan. An unexploded rocket propelled grenade became lodged in his leg. Thanks to some risky decisions by fellow Marines he lived to tell about it.

AIR FORCE

23. **U-2 Pilot Francis Gary Powers, Downed By USSR, To Get Silver Star**

(*Los Angeles Times*)....Richard Simon

Fifty-two years after his U-2 spy plane was shot down over the Soviet Union, famed Cold War pilot Francis Gary Powers will be posthumously awarded the Silver Star. The medal will be presented by Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Norton Schwartz to Powers' grandson and granddaughter at a Pentagon ceremony attended by other family members next Friday.

LAW OF THE SEA TREATY

24. Ex-Defense Chief Rumsfeld To Face Off With Military Brass Over Law Of The Sea

(*TheHill.com*)....Julian Pecquet

Donald Rumsfeld is returning to Capitol Hill next week to testify against the United States joining the United Nations's Law of the Sea treaty, pitting him squarely against the military brass that he used to command as former President George W. Bush's secretary of Defense.

CONGRESS

25. Alaska Sen. Begich May Hold Up Air Force Chief Of Staff's Promotion To Stall F-16 Move

(*Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*)....Sam Friedman

...Putting a hold on the military leaders is one of several strategies Alaska's congressional delegation is using to stall or stop the movement of the F-16s and more than 1,500 Air Force and civilian jobs from Eielson Air Force Base to Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson in Anchorage.

26. Iraq Ambassador Nominee's Ties To Reporter Questioned

(*Wall Street Journal*)....Naftali Bendavid

Senate Republicans are raising concerns about emails apparently exchanged between President Barack Obama's nominee to be U.S. ambassador to Iraq and a Wall Street Journal reporter who was covering Iraq while the nominee was assigned there.

ASIA/PACIFIC

27. Manila Is Seeking Closer Ties To The U.S.

(*Washington Post*)....Craig Whitlock

The president of the Philippines made a direct pitch to the White House Friday to help bolster his country's relatively weak defenses as the island nation increasingly finds itself tangled in territorial conflicts with China.

28. Obama Expresses Support For Philippines In China Rift

(*New York Times*)....Mark Landler

A festering quarrel that began over rare coral, giant clams and sharks in a distant sea made its way to the Oval Office on Friday, as President Benigno S. Aquino III of the Philippines sought the backing of President Obama in a maritime dispute with China.

29. Chinese Break Arms Embargo On N Korea

(*London Daily Telegraph*)....Julian Ryall

CHINESE companies are breaking a United Nations embargo by supplying North Korea with key components for ballistic missiles including launch vehicles, according to evidence provided by an intelligence agency in the region.

30. China Plans Manned Space Launch This Month, Reports Say

(*NYTimes.com*)....Associated Press

China will launch astronauts this month to dock for the first time with an orbiting experimental module, the country's space program announced Saturday.

31. Myanmar's Military 'Backs Reforms'

(*Singapore Straits Times*)....Tan Hui Yee

MYANMAR'S powerful military supports the country's reforms and has no plans to turn back the clock, says a senior political aide.

RUSSIA

32. In Its Unyielding Stance On Syria, Russia Takes Substantial Risks In Middle East

(*New York Times*)....Ellen Barry

...Having positioned itself as a key player in the conflict, the Kremlin is under pressure to present alternatives. Moscow faces frustration in Western capitals, where it is seen as complicit in the killing of civilians by forces loyal to Mr. Assad, and a deepening alienation among Russia's partners in the Arab world, who see Moscow as coming to the aid of dictators.

EUROPE

33. Cutting Missile System Leaves Warships At Risk

(*London Daily Telegraph*)....Thomas Harding

THE Royal Navy's warships will be vulnerable to enemy attack after a key project that allows ships to fire each other's weapons was dropped.

34. Talks Could End UK Rule Over Diego Garcia

(*The Guardian (UK)*)....Richard Norton-Taylor

...He is travelling to Washington soon where he is likely to reassure the US that its base would remain on the island under Mauritian sovereignty. Diego Garcia was used as a base for US bombers targeting Iraq and Afghanistan and would almost certainly be used in any attack on Iran.

JUSTICE DEPARTMENT

35. Holder Directs U.S. Attorneys To Track Down Paths Of Leaks

(*New York Times*)....Charlie Savage

Attorney General Eric H. Holder Jr. on Friday assigned two United States attorneys to lead separate criminal investigations into recent disclosures to the news media of national security secrets, saying they were authorized to "follow all appropriate investigative leads within the executive and legislative branches of government."

MILITARY

36. U.S. Veterans Oppose Return Of Philippine Bells

(*Honolulu Star-Advertiser*)....Mead Gruver, Associated Press

Military veterans are stirred up and speaking out against the possibility that the U.S. might return three church bells seized as spoils of war from the Philippines more than a century ago.

37. Ex-Iowa Sailors Salute The Ship As It Makes Its Final Port Call

(*Los Angeles Times*)....Steve Chawkins

John Wolfenbarger, 88, and others will be on hand as the biggest U.S. battleship ever built is towed to its permanent home in San Pedro, where it will become a museum.

SELECTIVE SERVICE SYSTEM

38. Selective Service Not Equipped To Handle A Draft, Watchdog Finds

(*GovExec.com*)....Andrew Lapin

After years of Defense Department neglect, the Selective Service System doesn't have enough personnel or resources to induct service members in the event the military draft is reinstated, according to a Government Accountability Office investigation.

LEGAL AFFAIRS

39. Aberdeen Proving Ground Workers Indicted For Theft

(*Baltimore Sun*)....Tricia Bishop

Four civilians working at Aberdeen Proving Ground were indicted Friday on charges they stole more than 50,000 pounds of government copper and aluminum, worth \$212,000, from the U.S. Army facility.

COMMENTARY

40. **Afghan Cat Has Been Let Out Of The Bag**
(The Weekend Australian)....Greg Sheridan
 THE Gillard government has quietly declared defeat in Afghanistan, while its public rhetoric preposterously claims the opposite.

41. **Daniel Klaidman On The Mind Of A Drone Strike Operator**
(TheDailyBeast.com)....Daniel Klaidman
 ...But I think there's another factor at play in the psychology of drones: their remoteness. The fact that a CIA or military operator can take out a target from the comfortable confines of their cubicle, far removed from the battlefield, without subjecting themselves to any risk, troubles people. The suggestion is that the ability to kill remotely dulls one's moral sensibilities. But is that true?

42. **An Arms Race America Can't Win**
(SmallWarsJournal.com)....Robert Haddick
 In my Foreign Policy column, I explain that while the U.S. can't win an arms race against China, it still has some decisive trump cards to play.

43. **Decline Of American Satellites Is A Matter Of National Security**
(Christian Science Monitor (csmonitor.com))....Frank Muller-Karger
 ...The loss of our space capabilities is not just a matter of pride, nor is it hysteria. It's a matter of national security. Our nation cannot depend on critical information and technology from other countries, especially when we know that the data are not as good as that from our sensors. And this is only if we can get the data from our international colleagues at all – a well-known bone of contention for US scientists.

44. **A Fateful Fight That Boosted Military-Industrial Complex**
(Bloomberg.com)....Tim Heffernan
 You don't hear much about the battle of the Machine Tool Reserve anymore, and that's a shame. Fought inside the Beltway in the mid-1950s, it was a defining tussle over the nature of postwar national defense.

45. **In Praise Of Cyberwar**
(National Journal)....Michael Hirsh
 It's better than the alternative. How malware could actually help keep the peace.

46. **Why Is The Military Giving Stuff Away?**
(Arizona Daily Star (Tucson))....Robert Robb
 The attention has been on Pinal County Sheriff Paul Babeu's misuse of a Pentagon program to give away surplus equipment, but the program itself raises questions. If this stuff is so valuable, why is it surplus?

47. **Surplus Telescopes?**
(Houston Chronicle)....Editorial
 Overspending on military budgets suggests NASA deserves a higher priority in D.C.

48. **Ideal Location: Eielson Is Right Place For Refueling Tankers**
(Fairbanks Daily News-Miner)....Editorial
 Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta knows the United States is a Pacific nation. It's sometimes hard to tell whether the department he leads also knows it.

COMMENTARY -- SYRIA

49. **Assad, The Butcher**
(New York Times)....Editorial
 In the latest horrors from Syria, United Nations monitors are investigating a massacre in the hamlet of Qubeir, where some 78 people reportedly were shot, garroted or burned alive. If formally confirmed, it would be the fourth massacre in two weeks.

50. **The U.N.'s Syria Disaster**

(*Washington Post*)....Editorial

THIS MAY BE remembered as the week in which the illusion that the bloodshed in Syria could be stopped by United Nations diplomats was destroyed once and for all.

51. **Syrian Bloodbath**

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

As violence in Syria worsens and international efforts to stop it stall, Syrians and the rest of the world are badly in need of a new approach to the problem.

CORRECTIONS

52. **Corrections**

(*New York Times*)....The New York Times

An Op-Ed article on Thursday about counterinsurgency misstated the year President John F. Kennedy warned West Point graduates about the dangers of such warfare. It was 1962, not 1961.

New York Times
June 9, 2012
Pg. 9

1. Commander Apologizes For Afghan Airstrike

By Alissa J. Rubin

KABUL, Afghanistan — The NATO and United States troop commander in Afghanistan flew to the eastern part of the country on Friday to apologize personally to surviving family members for a coalition airstrike earlier this week that local officials said killed 18 civilians.

The apology by the commander, Gen. John R. Allen, was the first admission by coalition forces that the strike on Wednesday had killed civilians, and his rare decision to meet with families close to the site of the attack, in Logar Province, was a sign that his command took the episode seriously. President Hamid Karzai has condemned the strike in strong terms and cut short a trip to China to press forward an investigation.

A joint Afghan and coalition investigation into the circumstances that led to the strike, the number of civilians killed and the procedures that were used is still under way, said Lt. Cmdr. Brian T. Badura, a coalition spokesman.

The airstrike, which occurred in the early morning, targeted a Taliban commander who was taking shelter with some of his men in a home where a wedding had taken place, according to locals, in the village of Sagawand in the Baraki Barak district of Logar Province, a Pashtun area in eastern Afghanistan.

The civilian casualties, which appear likely to be the worst so far this year involving international forces, come two months after the primary responsibility for night raids was handed to

the Afghans as part of a memorandum of understanding between Afghanistan and the United States. The transfer of responsibility to the Afghans was meant in part to diminish situations like this one. The episode raised new questions about procedures and criteria for airstrikes, human rights advocates said.

During Friday's trip to Logar Province, General Allen said: "I am here not only as the commander of the coalition forces but also as a father, to apologize for the tragedy that occurred two days ago. Additionally, I am committed to ensuring we do the right thing for the families of those we inadvertently harmed, as well as for the community in which they lived."

In comments to The Associated Press, General Allen said that the joint Afghan-NATO force carrying out the operation had come under fire and that the troops did not know there were civilians in the house.

"They were taken under fire," he said. "A hand grenade was thrown. Three of our people were wounded. We called for the people who were shooting to come out, and then the situation became more grave and innocent people were killed."

According to a doctor who spoke to some women who survived the bombing, the Taliban prevented the civilians from leaving the house when the joint force shouted for the civilians to come out. A United Nations human rights team that has been investigating the circumstances surrounding the attack said its researchers had also heard that civilians were prevented from leaving the house, but with two versions of the details. In one, the Taliban told the women, elderly men and children that if they walked

outside, they would be shot. In the other, the Taliban fighters prevented their going.

"You will never know for sure what motivated people to stay inside," said James Rodehaver, the acting head of human rights for the United Nations team.

"All you can go on is whether they say they felt coerced or threatened, and that's standard in a situation where you have fighters taking cover with civilians," he said. "Could you seriously expect that a civilian would flee their home when armed men are awaiting them outside?"

The larger question the episode raises for human rights advocates is whether killing these particular Taliban fighters justified the use of air power, which always poses risks to any civilians who are nearby.

"You have to ask: what was the value of these Taliban that the military would risk using something as indiscriminate as air power on a civilian house?" said Mr. Rodehaver. "It's a matter of proportionality and distinction of targets, and it was fully apparent that this was a civilian residence."

In northern Afghanistan on Friday, the Taliban detonated an explosive device at a security wall around the jail in Sar-i-Pul Province, allowing those inside to escape through the hole. Several people, including three police officers and four prisoners, were killed in the blast and ensuing fighting, said Abdul Jabar Haqbeen, governor of Sar-i-Pul. More than a dozen escaped, Mr. Haqbeen said.

The Taliban claimed responsibility for the jail break in a statement posted on their Web site.

Habib Zahori contributed reporting from Kabul.

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2. Allen Apologizes For NATO Airstrike

U.S. commander offers condolences in deaths of Afghan civilians

By Joshua Partlow

KABUL — The top American commander in Afghanistan apologized to Afghans on Friday for a coalition airstrike that killed women and children in Logar province earlier in the week.

Marine Gen. John Allen flew to Logar province, just south of Kabul, to meet with villagers and offer his condolences for the bombing Wednesday that Afghan officials said killed 18 civilians. The airstrike was called in by U.S. troops after they came under fire while pursuing a Taliban fighter in a village in the Baraki Barak district.

"I know that no apology can bring back the lives of the children or the people who perished in this tragedy and this accident, but I want you to know that you have my apology and we will do the right thing by the families," Allen told the Afghans, according to the Associated Press. NATO troops often make condolence payments to the families of victims in civilian casualty incidents.

Allen told an Associated Press reporter traveling with him that the troops did not know there were civilians inside the house at the time of the airstrike.

"They were taken under fire. A hand grenade was thrown. Three of our people were wounded. We called for the people who were shooting to come out, and then the situation became more grave, and innocent people were killed," he told the AP.

"Our weapons killed these people," Allen said.

Washington Post
June 9, 2012

The house that came under fire reportedly was full of civilians who had attended a wedding the night before. An Afghan doctor who examined the bodies told the AP that a group of Taliban fighters were taking cover among the members of the wedding party and that four women, two elderly men, three teenage boys and nine young children were among the dead.

U.S. military spokesman Lt. Col. Jimmie Cummings said that the insurgents who were firing refused a call by coalition and Afghan troops to stop and come outside and that "things escalated" until the troops called in air support. He said a NATO investigation was still underway.

After reports of civilian deaths emerged, President Hamid Karzai called a relative of the victims and cut short a trip to China, where he was participating in a summit in Shanghai.

"NATO operations that inflict human and material losses to civilians can in no way be justifiable, acceptable and tolerable," Karzai said in a statement Thursday while Defense Secretary Leon E. Panetta was visiting Kabul. Karzai has voiced concerns about the war's collateral damage for years.

Also Friday, Afghan officials said inmates in a prison in the northern city of Sar-e-Pul used a remote-controlled bomb to shatter the prison's mud walls and escape into the night. The outbreak occurred about 8:30 p.m. Thursday and left at least three prisoners dead and more than 25 wounded, according to Gen. Mohammed Yaqub Zabuli, the provincial police chief.

Zabuli said that "one or two" prisoners escaped, but other provincial officials put the number as high as 25.

"The prison was too old, and the walls were too weak," Zabuli said, adding that the remaining inmates had been transferred to another prison in northern Afghanistan.

*Special correspondent
Javed Hamdard contributed to this report.*

New York Times

June 9, 2012

Pg. 6

3. China Shows Interest In Afghan Security, Fearing Taliban Would Help Separatists

By Jane Perlez

BEIJING — In a sign of China's growing interest in neighboring Afghanistan after the departure of the United States and NATO-led forces, President Hu Jintao met the Afghan president, Hamid Karzai, in the Great Hall of the People on Friday and announced a new strategic partnership between the two countries.

Mr. Karzai was given special attention this week at the summit meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, a group of six countries organized by China that includes Russia and Central Asian nations bordering Afghanistan. China is trying to ensure that a Muslim separatist group in a western Chinese region does not benefit from the Taliban when Western forces leave Afghanistan.

In a joint statement, China and Afghanistan said they would step up cooperation in security and the fight against terrorism, as well as increase intelligence sharing. No specifics were given.

A modest \$23 million grant for unspecified projects that accompanied the new partnership indicated that despite concerns about the stability of Afghanistan after 2014, when most United States

and allied troops are expected to be gone, China had no immediate plans to play a major development role.

This was Mr. Karzai's fifth, and most prominent, visit to China. No Chinese leader has been to Afghanistan since the 1958 visit of Prime Minister Zhou Enlai.

China's major worry is the prospect of a Taliban-dominated Afghanistan lending sanctuary to the separatist group, the East Turkestan Islamic Movement, led by ethnic Uighurs, a Turkic-speaking, largely Muslim people in the autonomous western region of Xinjiang. The group wants a breakaway homeland in Xinjiang.

In official statements, the Chinese government refrains from specifying the threat of Afghanistan's harboring Uighur separatists, but an orderly transfer of power that would stop short of a Taliban takeover appears to be of uppermost importance for China.

At a Foreign Ministry news briefing shortly after the warm welcome for Mr. Karzai, a spokesman said China supported a "step by step" process that allowed for a role by other countries after the withdrawal of Western troops.

In efforts to work toward some semblance of stability in Afghanistan after the Americans leave, Chinese and American diplomats have been talking for more than a year about the shape of the post-2014 political landscape, American officials and China analysts say.

A new kind of Great Game, a competition for influence among Afghanistan's neighbors, many of whom belong to the Shanghai Cooperation Organization or play a role in it, is a likely outcome from the Western withdrawal, the analysts say.

China has already put down investment stakes in mineral-rich Afghanistan, signing an oil and gas deal late last year, and beginning development at a copper mine four years ago.

But from the discussions between the United States and China, it was clear that China would not play any significant security role inside Afghanistan, a decision consistent with its noninterference policies abroad, the American officials and analysts say.

The Chinese government has refused to contribute to a \$4.1 billion fund for sustaining the Afghan Army after 2014, but has offered to train a small number of Afghan soldiers, particularly in antiterrorism techniques.

In a show of cooperation with the United States, China admitted 15 young Afghan diplomats to the China Foreign Affairs University last month as part of a joint American-Chinese program. The State Department will also sponsor training for the Afghan diplomats.

China's main concern is about how post-2014 Afghanistan will affect China's internal security, the analysts said.

"China's first concern is national security and to make sure the Uighurs don't get more strength," said Yun Sun, a Washington-based analyst specializing in China's neighbors. "The official line is that the Uighurs get terrorist training in Afghanistan and Pakistan."

"China supports the international community in its efforts in Afghanistan, but stays away from direct military involvement," Zhao Huasheng, director of the Center for Russia and Central Asia Studies at Fudan University in Shanghai, wrote in a recent paper.

China dislikes the Taliban because of their close relations with the East Turkestan group, but deals with the Taliban on a pragmatic basis, he wrote.

Looking toward the uncertainties of post-2014 Afghanistan, China has already established some forms of communication with elements of the Taliban through the channels of the Pakistani military, said Sajjan Gohel, the international security director of the Asia-Pacific Foundation, a London-based group.

"Beijing wants guarantees that the Taliban will not give sanctuary or support to the Uighur terrorists should they develop an open presence in Afghanistan after the troop handover," Mr. Gohel said.

The prospects of instability in Afghanistan have not discouraged China's investments in big energy and mining projects.

The China National Petroleum Company signed a deal in December to explore oil and natural gas in the Amu Darya River Basin, an area where the Soviet Union held concessions during its occupation.

As part of the deal, the Chinese company pledged to build Afghanistan's first oil refinery within three years.

In 2008, the China Metallurgical Construction Company invested more than \$3.5 billion in the Aynak Copper Mine in Logar Province in Afghanistan, not far from the Chinese border.

Bree Feng contributed research.

Three Years Late, an \$89 Million Base for Afghan Troops May Be Too Complicated for Them to Operate; 'Deep Fryers? Really?'

By Michael M. Phillips

ZARGHUN SHAHR, Afghanistan--In a dusty valley here, construction workers are racing to finish a fiber-optic-equipped military base for a wood-burning army.

The \$89 million U.S.-funded forward operating base, called Super FOB, is being built to house the Afghan army brigade that patrols Paktika province, along the contentious Afghanistan-Pakistan border.

But Super FOB is being completed, and due to be expanded, after the U.S. and its allies have decided the Afghan security forces should be about a third smaller than envisioned when the base was conceived by U.S. and Afghan strategists.

The base, already more than three years behind schedule, is so elaborate it will require fuel and technical skills that many U.S. officers doubt the Afghan army will possess once American troops withdraw.

It is also being built to American specifications, with a huge, propane-powered kitchen whose stoves the Afghans say they won't use. Instead, they are getting wood stoves designed for their tastes.

"Deep fryers? Really?" said Lt. Col. Rafael Paredes, deputy commander of the 172nd Infantry Brigade, which inherited the five-year-old project from previous U.S. units. "The intention is good," he added. But the U.S.-led coalition "could have done the thing better."

The U.S. has funded dozens of bases for Afghan army units. The bill has come to \$6.7 billion in projects completed, under

way or planned since fiscal 2005.

Col. Edward Bohnemann, commander of the 172nd Infantry Brigade, tried last summer to kill a plan to spend an additional \$43 million to expand the capacity of the 300-acre Super FOB to house two more Afghan battalions, according to his spokesman. The troops would be better positioned elsewhere, Col. Bohnemann argued, according to his spokesman.

His entreaties went nowhere.

Super FOB will be finished in June, according to a spokesman for the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, which is in charge of the U.S.-funded base-building operation. The expansion project will be completed next spring, and is now expected to cost \$25 million, bringing the total base cost to roughly \$114 million, the spokesman said.

"Super FOB is no more unique" than any of the other 16 brigade bases now in various stages of construction, said Lt. Cmdr. Robert Wadsworth, a NATO engineering officer. Six corps-size bases are being set up, each with a \$300 million to \$350 million price tag.

Super FOB was conceived and contracted in the early stages of the decade-old war, when NATO envisioned an Afghan army based in garrisons built to Western standards.

In 2009, when Super FOB was supposed to be completed, the coalition lowered its ambitions for future bases to "austere standards" that meet the needs and abilities of Afghan soldiers, according to a NATO report. The new standards include using local materials and construction equipment, as well as wood-burning stoves.

Super FOB, however, was already under way.

The Afghans plan to move in about 2,000 men, about half of the base's pre-expansion capacity, said Afghan Brig. Gen. Zemaray Khan, commander of the 2nd Brigade, 203rd Corps.

Jocelyne Nassar, chief administrative officer of Nassar Group International, the Lebanese contractor building the base, blamed the three-year delay in completing Super FOB on logistical, political, weather and security issues.

Shipping containers filled with roofing and other material are stuck in Pakistan, according to officials familiar with the project, hampered by Islamabad's decision late last year to shut down U.S. supply routes.

In a written response to questions about the delays, Ms. Nassar said, "The project has been the target of many attacks both physically on the ground/roads and mentally through enormous pressure applied on NGI's management team by individuals or organizations hoping to either interrupt the works of this strategic project, or blackmail the owners in a country where this practice is unfortunately common." She didn't identify those individuals or organizations.

NGI has installed generators the Afghans seem unlikely to be able to maintain, fueled with 250,000-gallon diesel tanks the Afghans seem unlikely to have the fuel to fill because of lack of money and logistics.

"They'll use all of their fuel just heating the place" instead of fueling their vehicles, predicts a U.S. officer. "They won't be able to patrol."

At full capacity, the generators would create 33% more power than the base consumes, according to U.S. estimates.

The base contains 122 buildings, many with lowered ceilings that absorb sound, terrazzo floors and forced-air heating and cooling. Fiber-optic Internet service is on its way. The hand-built stone wall surrounding the base cost \$2.5 million.

There is a wastewater plant, a soccer field with bleachers, an underground sewer system and a fire station. The kitchen has separate fish-prep, chicken-prep and beef-prep areas. It also has deep fryers, a salad room and sneeze-guarded, stainless-steel service lines.

Afghan military cooks traditionally do their food preparation on the floor, and prefer to make large pots of rice and meat stew. When Afghan commanders inspected construction recently, they complained that the U.S.-supplied propane stoves are too small to hold such large pots. Now the contractor is installing a kitchen annex with 10 wood-burning stoves set into the ground that Afghan cooks can stand on as they stir.

"We require a different way of cooking," Gen. Zemaray says. He predicts the Defense Ministry will issue enough diesel fuel to run Super FOB's generators, and says he has asked Kabul to send him a 71-man technical team able to maintain the sewage-treatment facility, power grid and other advanced systems. NATO, meanwhile, is training Afghan technicians to maintain the new bases.

The Afghans and Americans agree the Afghan army will need a base in Paktika to stop the flow of insurgents. The U.S. has already begun scaling back its own bases in the province, even bulldozing some outposts.

Maj. Gen. Zahir Azimi, spokesman for the Defense Ministry, said the Afghan army

should have the capability to supply bases such as Super FOB after the U.S. coalition hands over security responsibilities. "By 2014, we expect that the Afghan army should be ready to supply and do everything they were doing, and be independent," he said.

The latest Super FOB dispute came when the Afghans demanded a 2,000-square-meter, or about 22,000-square-feet, mosque, built by Afghans. The Lebanese contractor and the Americans were reluctant to agree, worried about security and liability issues that might arise from allowing outside workers onto the unfinished base. But in the aftermath of the recent burning of Qurans by U.S. troops, which prompted riots around Afghanistan, U.S. commanders didn't want to be misinterpreted as forbidding a mosque on an Afghan base. They relented and negotiated an arrangement that would allow the mosque workers onto a secured part of the base.

--Maria Abi-Habib and Nathan Hodge contributed to this article.

Yahoo.com

June 9, 2012

5. Syria Army Kills 17 Civilians Amid Massacre Anger

By Agence France-Presse

A Syrian army bombardment of the southern city of Daraa killed 17 civilians, most of them women and children, on Saturday, a human rights watchdog said, as anger grew over a massacre in a central village.

UN observers who visited the village of Al-Kubeir said they witnessed blood on the walls and "a strong stench of burnt flesh," prompting Western governments to launch a push for tough new sanctions against Damascus.

Nine women and three children were among the dead in the pre-dawn bombardment of a residential neighbourhood of Daraa, the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said.

Dozens of people were also wounded in the city, cradle of the uprising against the regime of President Bashar al-Assad which erupted in March last year, the Britain-based watchdog said.

Mobile communications in Daraa were cut off on Saturday morning, it added.

Observatory chief Rami Abdel Rahman said that the bombardment might have been in reprisal for increased rebel attacks on government troops in recent days.

"Rebels have been attacking checkpoints in many areas across the country in the evenings," he said.

Diplomats in New York said Britain, France and the United States would quickly draw up a Security Council resolution proposing sanctions against Syria. "We will move fast to press for a resolution," one UN diplomat told AFP.

More than 20 unarmed UN observers were allowed into Al-Kubeir on Friday, a day after they were shot at and prevented from entering the village.

"Inside some of the houses, blood was visible across the walls and floors. Fire was still burning outside houses and there was a strong stench of burnt flesh," UN spokesman Martin Nesirky said in New York, delivering a grisly account of the visit.

At least 55 people were killed in Wednesday's assault on Al-Kubeir, according to the Syrian Observatory.

UN officials, unable to confirm that toll, have made it clear they believe government forces and allies were behind the attack on the mainly Sunni Muslim village surrounded by

an Alawite population loyal to Assad.

"Armoured vehicle tracks were visible in the vicinity. Some homes were damaged by rockets from armoured vehicles, grenades and a range of calibre weapons," Nesirky said.

UN chief Ban Ki-moon told the Security Council that according to preliminary evidence, troops had surrounded Al-Kubeir and militia entered the village and killed civilians with "barbarity".

Damascus denied responsibility and blamed foreign-backed "terrorists," as it has done repeatedly in the past.

Violence on Friday killed at least 68 people nationwide -- 36 civilians, 25 soldiers and seven rebel fighters, the Observatory said. More than 13,500 people have been killed since the start of the uprising.

International envoy Kofi Annan called for "additional pressure" in the wake of the latest killings.

The former UN chief said he would discuss with US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton "how we can put additional pressure on the government and the parties to get the (UN-Arab League peace) plan implemented".

A UN diplomat, speaking on condition of anonymity, said: "There will be action in the coming days to get a vote on a resolution which includes measures under Chapter VII of the UN Charter -- which would mean sanctions."

Chapter VII allows for sanctions and, in extreme cases, military action. Russia and China, infuriated by the NATO campaign in Libya last year, have vowed to oppose any military intervention.

Leaders of the armed opposition called on the international community to

provide them with better weaponry and support.

"Those who claim to support the Syrian opposition should begin by supporting people on the inside of Syria," said Hussein Sayyed, head of the Supreme Council for the Leadership of the Syrian Revolution, speaking by telephone to a meeting in Washington.

As the exiled Syrian National Council prepared to meet in Istanbul later on Saturday to choose a new leader, Sayyed denied that the opposition was too divided to merit foreign support.

"It is unacceptable for the international community to claim that it is withholding its support because of the fracturing of the opposition while the Syrian people continue to be slaughtered," he told the meeting organised by the Rethink Institute.

The SNC, the main exiled opposition umbrella group, has struggled to unite regime critics ranging from liberal academics to Islamists, or to gain full legitimacy with activists and rebels inside the country.

Its meeting in Istanbul on Saturday and Sunday follows the resignation of its first leader, Paris academic Burhan Ghalioun, last month in the face of criticism that he was monopolising decision-making and allowing the Muslim Brotherhood to play too strong a role.

flesh, United Nations monitors in Syria quietly collected evidence on Friday of a mass atrocity in a desolate hamlet, more than 24 hours after Syrian forces and government supporters blocked their first attempt to visit the site.

The monitoring team's journey to the hamlet, Qubeir, filmed and posted online, presented the outside world with the first visual proof from a neutral official source that a horrific crime had occurred there.

No corpses were found, and the team's officials said many of the facts behind the killings, which occurred Wednesday, had yet to be determined. But it seemed clear that the perpetrators had hastily sought to conceal what had happened, reinforcing suspicions that the government, by thwarting the monitors' efforts to reach the site on Thursday, had bought time for a cover-up.

Activist groups have accused President Bashar al-Assad of orchestrating the killings in a campaign to terrorize opponents in Syria's 16-month uprising against him, which has grown more violent and sectarian despite numerous diplomatic entreaties and the presence of United Nations monitors since April.

Mr. Assad's government, dominated by his minority Alawite sect, has denied responsibility for the killings in Qubeir, where the residents were part of the Sunni majority, and he has called the accusation a propagandist lie. But it remains unclear why the monitors were not permitted to visit the site much sooner.

"Some homes were damaged by rockets from B.M.P.'s, grenades and a range of caliber weapons," a spokeswoman for the monitors, Sausan Ghosheh, said in an e-mailed description of the

visit, using the abbreviation for a Russian-made armored personnel carrier used by the Syrian military. "Inside some of the houses, the walls and floors were splatted with blood. Fire was still burning outside houses, and there was a strong stench of burnt flesh in the air."

Amid the uproar over the Qubeir killings, the fourth massacre in Syria in two weeks, multiple clashes flared in other Syrian locales on Friday, including Damascus neighborhoods close to the center of the capital.

International efforts to find a way out of the Syrian crisis intensified in Washington, where Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton, an outspoken opponent of President Assad, met privately with Kofi Annan, the special envoy of the United Nations and Arab League. Mr. Annan, whose peace plan that placed the monitors in Syria is widely considered a failure, has insisted the plan can work if the big powers put more pressure on Mr. Assad.

Antigovernment activists who first reported the Qubeir mass killings on Wednesday night, which they blamed on government troops and plainclothes militiamen known as shabiha, said that as many as 78 people, half of them women and children, were slaughtered in the hamlet, a clutch of low-lying farmhouses with a population of 130 amid cornfields about 20 miles from the city of Hama.

But Ms. Ghosheh, the spokeswoman, who accompanied the monitors, said the number and names of the victims had not been confirmed, the community was empty of residents, and "thus the observers were not able to talk to anyone who witnessed Wednesday's horrific tragedy."

She said it would take time to sort out conflicting

information from residents of neighboring villages. "We need to go back, cross-reference what we have heard and check the names they say were killed, check the names they say are missing," she said.

The monitoring team's Qubeir video shows smoke outside homes, a large hole from an artillery shell, interior wreckage and bullet scarring, a bloodstained mattress, a congealed pool of blood and an unidentified man from a neighboring village holding a sheet with the remains of human flesh. Another unidentified man is seen pointing to a framed portrait, then breaking down in tears.

A third man is seen saying in Arabic: "Young children, infants, my brother, his wife and seven children, the eldest only sixth grade, all dead. I will show you the blood. They burned his house."

A few foreign journalists who were permitted to travel with the monitoring team also reported evidence of multiple killings and signs of attempts to hide the bloodshed. A BBC correspondent, Paul Danahar, said that neighboring villagers who approached the monitors blamed the shabiha for the killings, and that they said the militiamen trucked the bodies away. Another villager said sticks had been used to kill children.

"This has basically been a scorched-earth policy by whoever this was; they've killed the people, they've killed the livestock, they've left nothing in the village alive," Mr. Danahar said in an audio recording posted on the BBC News Web site. He called it "an appalling scene."

In one house, he said in his reporting, he saw "pieces of people's brains on the floor."

"There is a tablecloth covered in blood and flesh," he

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6. U.N. Monitors In Syria Find Grisly Traces Of Massacre

By Rick Gladstone

Confronting a scene of congealed blood, scattered body parts, shelled buildings, bullet holes and the smell of burned

continued, “and in the corner, the blood has been pushed into a pile by someone trying to clean it up and, frankly, giving up because there’s simply too much of it.”

The official Syrian account of what happened in Qubeir was starkly different. A report on the Syrian Arab News Agency Web site quoted witnesses as saying that terrorist groups, the government’s euphemism for the opposition, had attacked Qubeir with rocket launchers and machine guns, nine people had been killed, and the military and law enforcement authorities had been called in to protect the hamlet.

The report criticized unidentified “bloody satellite channels which are counterfeiting the truth to serve their interests,” an apparent reference to CNN, Al Jazeera and others carrying opposition accounts of the killings.

The Friday mayhem elsewhere in Syria included clashes between troops and activists in at least one restive district of Damascus, where explosions could be heard. The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, a British group with a network of informants in Syria, reported clashes in at least three Damascus neighborhoods, while in Homs, a center of antigovernment sentiment, the group reported “the most violent shelling” it had seen since the anti-Assad uprising began.

Some experts on Syria have described the Qubeir killings as part of a new stage in the conflict that has crossed dangerously into sectarian hatreds, fomented by Mr. Assad’s government, a situation for which efforts like Mr. Annan’s peace plan are too late.

“We’ve reached the point of no return,” said Salman Shaikh, director of the

Brookings Doha Center in Qatar and a former United Nations official. “Diplomacy has not kept up with the reality on the ground.”

Mohamed A. Alsiadi, a Syrian émigré who is the coordinator of the Arabic Language and Cultural Studies Program at Fordham University in New York, said that he had never had much faith in Mr. Annan’s peace plan, and that the Qubeir killings proved his skepticism. “Assad is very smart,” Mr. Alsiadi said. “He knows when to put pressure, ease pressure. They’re playing games with us.”

Mr. Annan, who spoke briefly with reporters in Washington before meeting with Mrs. Clinton, has fended off criticism that his plan cannot work and that the Syrian president has never intended to honor it.

“Some say the plan may be dead,” he said. “Is the problem the plan or the problem is implementation? If it’s implementation, how do we get action on that? And if it’s the plan, what other options do we have?”

Reporting was contributed by Alan Cowell from London; Neil MacFarquhar from Antakya, Turkey; Artin Afkhami from New York; and Helene Cooper from Washington.

Washington Post

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7. U.N. Team Views Site Of Syrian Massacre

Another push for sanctions; Villagers say they were warned not to cooperate

By Colum Lynch and Liz Sly

UNITED NATIONS — A team of U.N. monitors began the grim task of investigating a massacre in central Syria on Friday, as new evidence of horrific violence

gave momentum to calls for international sanctions to halt the bloodshed.

The visit to the village of Qubair, where at least 78 people were reported killed by pro-government militias earlier this week, came a day after the monitors had been blocked by Syrian security forces from reaching the site.

The U.N. personnel, accompanied by a handful of reporters, encountered a virtual ghost town inhabited by swarms of flies and reeking of charred flesh, according to U.N. officials. Video footage released by the United Nations showed a series of disturbing scenes, including one of blood-spattered walls and another of homes bearing the pockmarks that have become the signature of the Syrian government’s shelling campaigns.

A U.N. spokesman, Kieran Dwyer, said that the monitors were unable to talk to any witnesses of the attack but that they found evidence of fresh armored-vehicle tracks and homes damaged by rocket fire, grenades and a range of other weapons fire.

The “circumstances surrounding this attack are still unclear,” Dwyer said.

Surviving residents of the tiny village, a cluster of about 20 homes, said security forces visited them the night before and threatened them with death if they cooperated with the monitors. Nonetheless, one resident said he covered his face and led the monitors on a tour of the devastation.

“We took them to the graves where we buried the bodies, we showed them the burned houses and the bloodstains in the other houses,” he said, speaking on the condition of anonymity because he feared for his safety.

The evidence of what would be the second large-

scale massacre of Syrian civilians in three weeks has put additional pressure on the United States and its allies to scramble for a new strategy to contain the deepening sectarian violence. On Friday, in another indicator of the escalating violence, unusually fierce clashes broke out in Damascus, with residents reporting gunfire and explosions late into the night.

Diplomats at the United Nations said representatives of the United States, Britain and France planned to begin work next week on a legally binding resolution that would for the first time impose international sanctions on Syria if it fails to halt its crackdown on civilians.

The push to ratchet up pressure reflects deepening concern that the prospects for averting a full-fledged civil war — and possibly regional unrest — are slipping away.

U.S. officials, in particular, are pushing Russia, which has withheld support of international action in Syria, to abandon President Bashar al-Assad, tighten bilateral sanctions, and support efforts by the armed and political opposition to challenge Assad’s rule.

In Washington, after meeting with Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton, U.N. special envoy Kofi Annan acknowledged that his peace plan was not working and that curbing the violence in Syria was “a real, real challenge.” He said that he and Clinton had discussed “how we can put additional pressure on the government, on the parties to get the plan implemented.”

“Some say the plan may be dead. Is the problem the plan, or the problem is implementation?” Annan said as he stood next to Clinton. “If it’s implementation, how do we get action on that? And if it’s the

plan, what other options do we have?"

State Department officials said Annan's discussions with Clinton focused on getting countries to line up behind plans to both increase pressure on the Syrian government and create a blueprint for a peaceful transfer of power after Assad is gone.

Annan has met separately with Russian officials, and on a Friday, a special U.S. envoy held parallel meetings in Moscow, amid what U.S. officials termed a "constructive" effort to narrow differences.

Despite Russian resistance to adding new economic pressure against its ally, separate teams of diplomats were continuing to explore the possibility of new sanctions, "to both tighten them and look at how we can pile more on," unilaterally if necessary, said State Department spokeswoman Victoria Nuland.

She suggested that that a tougher U.N. resolution could be considered "when the moment is appropriate" but declined to elaborate. Both Russia and China have opposed any consideration of resolutions authorizing mandatory sanctions or military force against Syria.

Representatives from Britain and France said that they would begin pressing for the adoption of a legally binding resolution and that the United States would back that effort.

Diplomats said that no one has formally produced a draft negotiating text but that Britain and France are weighing several possible measures, including an arms embargo, a travel ban and asset freeze on key regime figures, the establishment of a commission of inquiry to probe crimes, and a referral to the International Criminal Court for possible prosecution of regime leaders.

It remained unclear whether all of those elements would be included in the draft, or whether the United States would support a referral to the criminal court, which it has never joined.

Annan, meanwhile, has floated a proposal to establish a new negotiating bloc — or contact group — that would include the United States, Russia, Iran, Turkey, Saudi Arabia and other key U.N. and regional powers.

Obama administration officials remained cool to the idea of including Iran in international talks. Clinton dismissed the idea in a news conference Thursday, suggesting that Iran's hands were too bloody.

"It's extremely hard to imagine that a country that has played such an extreme role in supporting and perpetrating and — supporting the violence that's going on could be constructive in this context," Nuland said. She said Iran had provided support not only for Syria's security forces but also for the pro-Assad "shabiha" militants accused of carrying out the recent massacres of civilians.

But Russia has warmly embraced the plan and has called for convening a meeting of the new group in Moscow as soon as possible.

Joshua Landis, director of the Center for Middle East Studies at the University of Oklahoma, said any plan for a negotiated solution is unlikely to succeed.

"There is no soft landing for this regime," Landis said. "Everything is built on loyalty to the Assad family. Once the Assads step down, this entire edifice of this regime is going to disintegrate into a giant cloud of dust."

Sly reported from Beirut. Special correspondent Suzan

Haidamous in Beirut and staff writer Joby Warrick in Washington contributed to this report.

New York Times

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8. 'No Progress' In Iran Nuclear Talks, U.N. Inspectors Report

By Alan Cowell

LONDON — After a brief spurt of optimism, impetus toward resolving the nuclear dispute with Iran slowed further on Friday as senior inspectors from the United Nations nuclear watchdog said they had made "no progress" toward gaining access to restricted sites they suspect of being used to test potential triggers for nuclear warheads.

The assessment came after a day of talks at the Vienna headquarters of the group, the International Atomic Energy Agency, that were led by Herman Nackaerts, its chief nuclear inspector, and Ali Asghar Soltanieh, the Iranian ambassador to the body.

Coming after inconclusive, broader negotiations between Iran and world powers on its disputed nuclear program in Baghdad last month, the outcome of Friday's encounter suggested that momentum had been further diminished, even as Tehran faces an array of more onerous economic sanctions on its oil and banking sectors next month.

The outcome seemed likely to deepen suspicions among Iran's critics that Tehran is using its contacts with outsiders to buy time as it continues nuclear enrichment efforts and possibly conceals evidence sought by international inspectors.

The I.A.E.A. inspectors had been hoping to secure Iran's agreement to what they

call a "structured approach" permitting scrutiny of sites that they suspect of having military uses, I.A.E.A. officials said. After a visit to Tehran in May, the I.A.E.A. director general, Yukiya Amano, said he believed Iran was close to agreeing to the terms of an inspection of contentious sites, including one at Parchin, 20 miles south of Tehran.

In a statement on Friday, Mr. Nackaerts said his negotiators had arrived at the meeting with Mr. Soltanieh in a "constructive spirit," hoping to complete an agreement.

"We presented a revised draft which addressed Iran's earlier stated concerns," Mr. Nackaerts said. "However, there has been no progress and, indeed, Iran raised issues that we have already discussed and added new ones. This is disappointing."

Mr. Soltanieh, the Iranian representative, sought to portray the discussions in a more positive way, saying that after eight hours of negotiations, the talks would continue at an unspecified date "in order to finalize the particularities of the talks and reach a conclusion," Iran's official Islamic Republic News Agency reported. It quoted him as saying that "because the talks concern a very sensitive and complicated subject, all dimensions of the talks must be reviewed carefully by our team."

But Mr. Nackaerts said no date had been fixed for the next meeting. Iran says its nuclear program is for peaceful purposes, but Western leaders say they suspect it is intended to achieve the capability to build nuclear weapons.

The talks in Vienna had been closely watched by the six world powers negotiating on wider issues with Iran to try to halt its enrichment of uranium,

which Iran has said it will never do. Those talks are set to resume in Moscow on June 18, after last month's inconclusive round in Baghdad. But the seeming stalemate at the Vienna talks cast a pall over the prospects for the discussions in Moscow, diplomats said.

The I.A.E.A. talks unfolded after a series of signals from Iran that a breakthrough was unlikely.

"I'm not optimistic," Robert Wood, the acting United States envoy to the I.A.E.A., said as the talks were held on Friday. "I certainly hope that an agreement will be reached, but I'm not certain Iran is ready."

In Beijing, President Hu Jintao of China urged the visiting Iranian president, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, on Friday to be "flexible and pragmatic" at the talks scheduled for Moscow and to cooperate with the I.A.E.A., news reports said. China is one of the six powers along with the United States, Russia, Britain, France and Germany conducting talks.

In the run-up to Friday's talks, Western officials had detected signs that seemed to show Iranian attitudes hardening. On Monday, Mr. Amano had expressed concern about satellite images taken last month that showed the Iranians had demolished buildings at the Parchin site that inspectors have been pressing to visit, despite repeated Iranian refusals to permit access.

The I.A.E.A. said in November that it believed the Iranians might have carried out testing of explosives at Parchin that could be used in triggering mechanisms for nuclear warheads. Iran has denied that accusation and has described reported efforts to cleanse the Parchin site as absurd propaganda by its Western adversaries and Israel.

Iran has also suggested that before allowing any inspection at Parchin, it wants to see the documents used by the atomic agency as the basis for its suspicions.

Then, on Wednesday, Iran raised the possibility of delaying or canceling the resumption of nuclear talks with the big powers because of what it called dithering by the other side in holding preliminary meetings aimed at ensuring some success.

The warning came from President Ahmadinejad and the office of Saeed Jalili, Iran's chief negotiator in the talks, even as Mr. Soltanieh, Iran's ambassador to the I.A.E.A., cast further doubt over Tehran's intentions by accusing United Nations weapons inspectors of espionage.

Artin Afkhami contributed reporting from New York.

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9. Deal With Iran Has Collapsed, IAEA Says

U.N. agency had sought access to suspected atomic research sites

By Joby Warrick

The U.N. nuclear agency said Friday that it had failed to reach agreement with Iran on gaining access to suspected atomic research sites, dampening hopes for a breakthrough during high-level nuclear talks scheduled this month.

In an unusually blunt statement, officials of the International Atomic Energy Agency called the outcome of Friday's meeting "disappointing" and said Iran appeared to retreat from commitments it had made during earlier meetings in the Iranian capital.

"There has been no progress, and indeed Iran raised issues that we have already discussed and added new ones," Herman Nackaerts, the IAEA deputy director general, said after the talks concluded in Vienna.

No date was set for future negotiations, which were aimed at clearing up a years-long dispute over allegations of secret nuclear weapons research conducted by Iranian scientists nearly a decade ago.

The IAEA has been particularly eager to visit Iran's Parchin military base, where Iranian scientists are alleged to have tested explosive triggers for nuclear weapons inside a large, tanker-shaped test chamber.

Iran says such experiments--detailed in documents obtained by Western spy agencies--never occurred, but it has refused to allow IAEA officials near the site since 2005. Satellite photos in recent weeks have shown major renovation underway at the site, with several buildings razed and soil removed near the place where the alleged test chamber once stood. Iran has consistently said that its nuclear program is for peaceful purposes, not making weapons.

The setback in negotiations occurred less than three weeks after IAEA officials claimed success in persuading Iran to grant its inspectors access to key facilities and scientists said to have been involved in the weapons research. IAEA chief Yukiya Amano, after traveling to Iran on May 20, said the agency expected to sign a formal agreement within days spelling out the terms of the deal.

Since then, nuclear diplomacy with Iran has taken a negative turn. On May 24, Iran balked at a plan offered by six world powers that called

for strict limits on Iran's nuclear activities, in part to assuage concerns that Tehran is seeking a nuclear weapons capability. And Iranian leaders have struck a defiant tone this week in public statements about an upcoming round of negotiations set to begin June 18 in Moscow. The talks will be the third this year between Iran and the P5-plus-1 block, which consists of the United States, Britain, China, France, Germany and Russia.

"Their policies of pressure and intimidation are futile," Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Salehi said Wednesday at a news conference in Tehran. "They have to adopt policies to show goodwill to solve this issue."

The six powers are pressing Iran to halt production of a more purified type of enriched uranium that can be easily converted into weapons-grade uranium for bombs. But Iran has insisted that it must be granted immediate relief from economic sanctions as part of any agreement.

On Friday, China unexpectedly added to the pressure on Iran by publicly calling on its leaders to compromise. While hosting Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad in Beijing, Chinese leader Hu Jintao urged Tehran to take practical steps to ease international tensions over its nuclear program.

"China hopes the Iranian side can weigh up the situation, take a flexible and pragmatic approach, have serious talks with all six related nations, and enhance dialogues and cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency so as to ensure the tensions can be eased through negotiations," Hu said, according to a statement released by China's Foreign Ministry.

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News Analysis

10. Notions Of Honor Color High-Stakes Haggling Over NATO Supply Routes

By Declan Walsh

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan — Early in the negotiations to reopen NATO supply routes through Pakistan, a senior American official suggested to his Pakistani counterparts that they should engage in “carpet haggling.”

“I give you a figure, you give me a figure, and then we’ll sit down and have tea and agree on a figure,” was how one participant in the meeting remembered the suggestion.

The remark annoyed some of the Pakistanis, who viewed it as a crude characterization of a politically delicate process; others took it more phlegmatically. But as the talks between Pakistan and the United States drag into their seventh week, a haggle is what they have become — over money, certainly, but also over roads, drone strikes and, the trickiest of all, intangible notions of honor and pride that play into electoral politics in both nations.

Peter Lavoy, a senior Defense Department official, arrived in Islamabad on Friday in a bid to inject momentum into the bargaining. But though the stakes are high, optimism that a deal may be struck is in short supply on both sides.

Until November, about 5,000 NATO trucks trundled up the bumpy road from Karachi to the Afghan border each month, carrying fuel and other nonlethal supplies for American and coalition troops. But then an American airstrike killed 24 Pakistani soldiers in a disputed

episode at the border; since then not a single truck has traversed the route.

The dispute has slowed the flow of supplies to American troops, but what will soon matter more is its effect on traffic in the opposite direction. As the United States starts to withdraw troops from Afghanistan this fall, a huge quantity of military equipment will have to be extracted by road.

On the face of things, money could settle the argument. Pakistani officials initially demanded \$5,000 per truck on each trip; after talks between the American deputy secretary of state, Thomas R. Nides, and the Pakistani finance minister, Abdul Hafeez Shaikh, the figure has dropped to a “much more realistic level,” according to a senior American official who spoke on the condition of anonymity. The precise figure remains secret, and the Pakistanis have not indicated whether they will accept it.

The Americans are trying to close the deal with sweeteners, offering, for example, to repave the highways the trucks use from Karachi to the Afghan border, a distance of 1,000 miles on one of the routes used. That could be an elegant solution, allowing the Pakistanis to claim a major concession while the Americans write off the cost as a transportation expense.

But in these complex talks, money and asphalt only go so far. Both President Obama and President Asif Ali Zardari face elections in the next nine months, and neither can afford to cede too much at the negotiating table.

Officials from both sides say that this week, Mr. Zardari has been sticking doggedly to his demand that the United States apologize for

the November airstrike; without that, they say, his group, the Pakistan People’s Party, will be vulnerable to defeat by ultranationalists in the elections scheduled for early next year.

“There will be a crater the size of Jupiter in the P.P.P.’s electoral prospects if they don’t sell this to the people of Pakistan,” a senior Pakistani official said. “And for that, they need an apology — or something that looks like an apology, smells like an apology, tastes like an apology.”

A senior American official said, “We’ve been several times very close, until ‘ghairat’ intervened,” using the Urdu word for honor.

Political calculations also loom on the American side. A visit to Afghanistan and India this week by Defense Secretary Leon E. Panetta had the diplomatic effect of a baseball game in a tea shop. In New Delhi, Mr. Panetta stridently defended drone strikes, and he chuckled publicly about excluding the Pakistanis from the raid that killed Osama bin Laden on their soil, still a sore point here. In the Afghan capital, Kabul, Mr. Panetta warned that American officials were reaching “the limits of our patience” with Pakistan.

Mr. Panetta’s blunt talk may reflect genuine frustration in the Pentagon, said Maleeha Lodhi, a former Pakistani ambassador to Washington, but “it won’t exactly create a rush to get things resolved around here.”

The character of the Pakistan-United States relationship has changed profoundly over the last five years. When Gen. Pervez Musharraf governed, relations were warm and friendly in public, and any frictions were kept behind closed doors. Since the Bin Laden raid, though, the relationship has become

more transactional, measured in dollars and cents, inflected by every public utterance, and largely conducted in the cold light of publicity.

If the talks over the supply lines fail, the United States has a Plan B in place. On Monday, NATO concluded agreements with several Central Asian nations allowing tens of thousands of vehicles and other military equipment to traverse their territory by road, bypassing Pakistan as they carry matériel northward out of Afghanistan.

But the political cost would be high: It would give a great deal of leverage to President Vladimir V. Putin of Russia, who wields influence over the countries, former Soviet republics, that the trucks would pass through. The Pakistanis think that the Plan B may be a bluff by the Americans, like a prospective carpet buyer threatening to walk out of the shop.

“The northern route costs so much more, that if we don’t do a deal this week, the Americans will happily do it one month, or three months, from now,” a senior Pakistani official said.

Both sides say that whatever the outcome, the tough bargaining may ultimately drive them further apart, with negative repercussion for a diplomatic relationship that is already strained.

“The real danger is that this could become the new normal for an extended number of years,” the senior American official said. “And we have to get past that.”

China Daily

June 9, 2012

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11. Pakistani Leader Remains Optimistic Over Ties With US

Remarks come despite scathing complaints from Washington

By Wu Jiao

Pakistani President Asif Ali Zardari on Friday expressed confidence over the country's relationship with the United States despite recent complaints from Washington.

"I think the US is an important country in the world and so is Pakistan. We have mutual interests," Zardari said in an exclusive interview with China Daily on Friday in Beijing.

"Slowly but surely, we will get back to normal relations," said Zardari.

The remarks come as US Defense Secretary Leon Panetta said in Kabul on Thursday that Washington is "reaching the limits of patience" with Pakistan on the issue of militant safe havens on the Pakistani side of the border.

Panetta said on Wednesday in New Delhi that the US will continue to battle militants in Pakistan's tribal regions despite complaints from Islamabad that the drone strikes violate its sovereignty and create a sense of anti-Americanism.

Analysts say Panetta's statement shows the mistrust between the two close allies in their war on terror.

Asked about his opinion on Panetta's remarks, Zardari said: "I think sometimes politicians speak for political reasons. It is an election year in the US. Most of the comments coming from the US are based on their internal political condition."

Pakistan has been blamed by some Western countries, including the US, for "not doing enough" to counter terrorism.

"Nobody understands the effects of the war on Pakistan. We have lost 40,000 people and ... economic growth from

terrorist attacks and activities," said Zardari.

"We are victims of terror ... It seems like Pakistan is abetting terrorists, but it is the wrong perception."

Zardari attended the annual leaders' summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization in Beijing, of which Pakistan is an observer - along with India, Iran, Afghanistan and Mongolia.

The bloc reached several landmark agreements on political, economic and security cooperation during the SCO Beijing summit, which also set the blueprint for the bloc's future.

The SCO is going to be the region's economic engine in the future, Zardari said, adding that he has "high expectations" for the organization.

"The SCO is very young, and obviously it is taking its own time to grow. But it shows the world that this is the path we're taking," Zardari said.

"Today, the economic and financial stability of nations is the way forward. In this way, the region can benefit from each others' strengths and come to the aid of each others' weaknesses," he said.

"I expect all of us to come to a common understanding over political views and the challenges that face our nations."

Pakistan has been in close cooperation with the SCO and China in recent years over security and economic cooperation.

Xinhua contributed to this story.

New York Times

June 9, 2012

Pg. 5

12. Deadly Bombing Strikes Police Bus In Pakistan

By Declan Walsh

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan — An explosion ripped through a police bus on the edge of Peshawar on Friday, killing at least 19 people and wounding dozens in the deadliest attack in months in the northwestern city.

The provincial information minister, Mian Iftikhar Hussain, said the bus was traveling to Charsadda, carrying private passengers and employees of the Khyber Pakhtunkwa government, when a bomb went off.

"The bomb was planted under the bus," Mr. Hussain told reporters, adding that he was not sure how many of the passengers worked for the government. A senior police official said that six women and one child were among the dead.

Television footage from the scene showed the twisted wreckage of a bus under a line of trees, and the bloodstained belongings of its passengers scattered across the road.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility. Peshawar has been a flash point for several different Islamist groups during the past five years.

The army is currently battling the forces of Mangal Bagh, an Islamist warlord based in neighboring Khyber tribal agency, one of the several tribal agencies stretched along the border.

Farther west, in North Waziristan and South Waziristan, lies the headquarters of the Pakistani Taliban. The area is also a target of Central Intelligence Agency drones, one of which killed the Al Qaeda deputy leader, Abu Yahya al-Libi, on Monday, American officials say.

"The militants want to terrorize people through such acts," said Noor Alam Khan, a lawmaker representing the Peshawar suburb where the

bombing took place, speaking by phone.

The security situation had worsened in recent months, amid a rise in kidnappings and extortions, Mr. Khan added, but the police appeared helpless to respond. Some people blamed an influx of refugees from the tribal belt, he said.

"A large number of outsiders have settled in the area including include people from Waziristan and Mohmand. It is very difficult to identify who is who now," he said.

Peshawar is also a major transit point for NATO supply trucks headed for Afghanistan, although the Pakistani government halted that traffic last November after American warplanes killed 24 Pakistani soldiers along the border.

Negotiations to reopen the NATO supply line are currently under way in Islamabad. NATO has already signed an alternative, albeit more expensive, transit agreement with Central Asian states if the Pakistan talks fall through.

On Thursday, a remote-controlled bomb in the western city of Quetta killed at least 15 people.

Salman Masood contributed reporting.

New York Times

June 9, 2012

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13. Suicides Outpacing War Deaths For Troops

By Timothy Williams

The suicide rate among the nation's active-duty military personnel has spiked this year, eclipsing the number of troops dying in battle and on pace to set a record annual high since the start of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan more than a decade ago, the Pentagon said Friday.

Suicides have increased even as the United States

military has withdrawn from Iraq and stepped up efforts to provide mental health, drug and alcohol, and financial counseling services.

The military said Friday that there had been 154 suicides among active-duty troops through Thursday, a rate of nearly one each day this year. The figures were first reported this week by The Associated Press.

That number represents an 18 percent increase over the 130 active-duty military suicides for the same period in 2011. There were 123 suicides from January to early June in 2010, and 133 during that period in 2009, the Pentagon said.

By contrast, there were 124 American military fatalities in Afghanistan as of June 1 this year, according to the Pentagon.

Suicide rates of military personnel and combat veterans have risen sharply since 2005, as the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan intensified. Recently, the Pentagon established a Defense Suicide Prevention Office.

On Friday, Cynthia Smith, a Defense Department spokeswoman, said the Pentagon had sought to remind commanders that those who seek counseling should not be stigmatized.

"This is a troubling issue, and we are committed to getting our service members the help they need," she said. "I want to emphasize that getting help is not a sign of weakness; it is a sign of strength."

In a letter to military commanders last month, Defense Secretary Leon E. Panetta said that "suicide prevention is a leadership responsibility," and added, "Commanders and supervisors cannot tolerate any actions that belittle, haze, humiliate or ostracize any individual, especially those who require

or are responsibly seeking professional services."

But veterans' groups said Friday that the Pentagon had not done enough to moderate the tremendous stress under which combat troops live, including coping with multiple deployments.

"It is clear that the military, at the level of the platoon, the company and the battalion, that these things are not being addressed on a compassionate and understanding basis," said Bruce Parry, chairman of the Coalition of Veterans Organizations, a group based in Illinois. "They need to understand on a much deeper level the trauma the troops are facing."

Paul Rieckhoff, executive director of Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America, called suicides among active-duty military personnel "the tip of the iceberg." He cited a survey the group conducted this year among its 160,000 members that found that 37 percent knew someone who had committed suicide.

Mr. Rieckhoff attributed the rise in military suicides to too few qualified mental health professionals, aggravated by the stigma of receiving counseling and further compounded by family stresses and financial problems. The unemployment rate among military families is a particular problem, he said.

"They are thinking about combat, yeah, but they are also thinking about their wives and kids back home," he said.

Thom Shanker contributed reporting.

Arizona Republic (Phoenix)
June 9, 2012
Pg. 1

14. Pentagon Suspends Part Of Military Surplus Supply Program

Decision comes after potential abuses in Pinal County

By Dennis Wagner, The Republic

A Pentagon agency that provides surplus military gear to police agencies nationwide suspended some services Friday and called for an accounting of previously issued merchandise valued in the hundreds of millions of dollars.

The Defense Logistics Agency's announcement comes less than three weeks after an *Arizona Republic* investigation spotlighted possible abuses of the federal program by the Pinal County Sheriff's Office.

About 12,000 U.S. law-enforcement agencies are able to obtain excess military gear -- from Humvees and helicopters to computers, clothing and firearms -- at no charge under the federal 1033 Program. During fiscal 2011, the Pentagon distributed nearly \$500 million in equipment.

But the agency said Friday that it was temporarily halting requisitions of weaponry pending a review and sent letters to 49 state coordinators, instructing them to verify the locations of much of the surplus equipment already in possession of police agencies. New Hampshire did not get a letter because it recently completed a thorough accounting.

Michelle McCaskill, the agency's chief of media relations, said Friday that a recent review of the program had raised questions about compliance.

"There was not a total cessation of the program, and the only items not being issued now are weapons," McCaskill said in an e-mail.

She did not say whether the agency was considering a broader suspension of the program.

This is the latest action by the agency since *The Republic* published its special report May 20 showing that Pinal County Sheriff Paul Babeu was lending surplus military gear, designated only for law-enforcement agencies, to private organizations not involved in fighting crime.

Last week, the DLA announced that it was developing new policies and would be instituting a new accounting method to keep track of gear that law-enforcement agencies are able to requisition for free. The week before that, it requested from the Pinal County Sheriff's Office an accounting of vehicles and other equipment that the Sheriff's Office lent to non-police organizations.

Kenneth MacNevin of the DLA's Law Enforcement Support Office told the Associated Press that the military is conducting a "clean sweep" in the aftermath of *The Republic's* investigation and in the face of parallel inquiries by the wire service.

"Leadership decided to make sure we have a good, full accounting for all of this," he said. "We're not doing this based on any thought there's a problem. We're doing it because accountability is accountability."

The distribution of unused gear, known in military jargon as DRMO, was authorized by Congress as a way to enhance U.S. policing and save tax dollars.

During fiscal 2011, the Pentagon distributed gear valued at \$498 million to law enforcement. That sum, based on original purchase prices, was a record that more than doubled the 2010 total.

Program rules require agencies to utilize items for at least one year for a law-enforcement purpose.

Regulations prohibit police from requisitioning gear to sell to balance budgets.

Last month, using e-mails and other documents obtained via Public Records Law, *The Republic* disclosed that Babeu has requisitioned hundreds of thousands of dollars worth of military-surplus gear and then lent it to non-law-enforcement organizations.

For example, the Sheriff's Office provided a 5-ton truck, a Humvee and medical equipment to a for-profit ambulance company and a \$175,000 pumper truck to a fire department that serves customers on a fee basis.

The newspaper also found evidence that Babeu was acquiring military supplies for planned auctions. In March, he told the Pinal County Board of Supervisors that he would help balance his budget by grossing up to \$500,000 in six months from the sale of surplus items.

The Sheriff's Office requisitioned five tractor trucks, six trailers and a forklift with the stated law-enforcement purpose of hauling other military surplus.

In just two years, Babeu's office obtained DRMO merchandise with a value listed at \$7 million. Most of that was acquired after a sheriff's employee was placed in charge of approving requisitions from Arizona's 101 participating agencies.

Tim Gaffney, the sheriff's communication and grants director, reacted to the DLA announcement in an e-mail Friday: "The Pinal County Sheriff's Office was audited seven months ago by the Department of Defense and were found to be in full compliance and today we are still in full compliance regarding our use of the 1033 program. This decision to temporarily suspend the

issuance of weapons has nothing to do with us."

Gaffney previously confirmed that Babeu has requisitioned dozens of items for "loan" to public-safety partners. He said the practice benefits Pinal County residents, places equipment in strategic locations for emergency use and does not violate rules of the 1033 Program. Gaffney disputed allegations that Babeu planned to supplement his budget by improperly selling items.

Payson police Officer Matt Van Camp, the state's program coordinator, said suspending weapons distribution will not have a major impact in Arizona because most police agencies that needed firearms obtained them already.

Van Camp said he supplies the Pentagon agency with an inventory verification from law-enforcement agencies at the end of each fiscal year. In response to the agency's recent letter, he said, Arizona participants have been asked to submit a certified midyear report.

"It's just the normal course of business for us," Van Camp said. "I know Arizona is compliant. We know where all of our stuff is."

In late 2011, Pinal County's use of the program received a clean audit by agency, which filmed a demonstration video of Babeu's operation. After *The Republic* began raising questions, the Pentagon agency gave the Sheriff's Office a national award for "fiscal stewardship."

However, following a series of news articles last month, the Pentagon agency announced that policy reforms are being developed to clarify that police agencies may not "loan" military surplus to other organizations.

A spokesman said the Defense Logistics Agency also

intends to monitor the Pinal County Sheriff's Office to see that the items are not sold for budgetary enhancement.

Babeu's opponents in the sheriff's campaign questioned whether he had jeopardized a program that helps fight crime across America.

"What I hope does not happen is that because of the professional immaturity and incompetence of Sheriff Babeu that this entire program is ended," said Derek Arnson, a Republican challenger. "That's what I fear."

Jack McClaren, a longtime law officer who also is running in the GOP primary, expressed concern that Babeu distributed military surplus to benefit his campaign. "I believe he did it for political favor because he knew the election year was coming up."

As evidence, McClaren noted that Regional Fire & Rescue Department Inc. received a new firetruck and medical equipment.

Steve Kerber, the department chief, defended those donations in an interview last month and volunteered that the sheriff never requested political favors in return for merchandise. Kerber recently signed Babeu's nominating petition for re-election.

Republic reporter Rebekah L. Sanders contributed to this article.

Stars and Stripes

June 9, 2012

Pg. 5

15. GAO: Costs Of Europe Force Changes Unknown

By Jennifer H. Svan, Stars and Stripes

KAISERSLAUTERN, Germany--The Department of Defense has yet to fully calculate the cost of significant force posture

changes in Europe, including the withdrawal of two combat brigades and a plan to permanently station four Aegis-class destroyers in Spain, a Government Accountability Office report concludes.

The GAO reviewed the two DOD decisions affecting forces in Europe at the request of the Senate Armed Services Committee, according to the report, examining the extent to which the Defense Department analyzed the associated costs and savings.

In reviewing the Army reductions in Europe, the GAO report said the full cost savings from eliminating two combat brigades in Germany can't be determined until the Defense Department better defines its plans for rotating forces to the region from the United States.

"The general sense is, if you bring forces home, it saves the government money over time," said John Pendleton, GAO Defense Capabilities and Management director and a lead author of the report, released this week. But DOD officials have told Congress that "there are costs associated with bringing troops home," such as the need for more troop rotations overseas, he said.

"I think it's fair to say the department made the decision to return forces from Europe before they worked out the details on how they're going to do the rotations," Pendleton said.

GAO staffers aren't saying those details should have been worked out ahead of time, Pendleton said, but it's important "they start to decide now," for transparency, planning and budgeting purposes. "You don't want to give an installation back," and then not have a place to house rotating troops, for example, he said.

"It's certainly expensive to have people forward-stationed. It's also expensive to pick them up from the United States and carry them forward to do training," he said.

The review comes as the Pentagon looks to rebalance its forces overseas, to reflect new strategic priorities and save money in the face of budgetary pressures. Some lawmakers in Washington have expressed a desire to see more base closures abroad, particularly in Europe.

In addition to the troop drawdown, the Defense Department announced last year that the U.S. will permanently station four Aegis-equipped ships at Naval Station Rota – two ships in fiscal 2014 and two in fiscal 2015, the GAO report notes. The ships are to support President Barack Obama's phased, adaptive approach for missile defense in Europe.

The Navy considered two other options: deploying ships to the region from U.S. bases, or deploying ships to the region and rotating crews from U.S. bases, according to the report.

"The Navy concluded that forward stationing ships was the most efficient option, but GAO found that it did not fully consider the option to rotate crews from U.S. bases and, in a classified analysis, it used different assumptions for forward stationing versus deploying from the United States," the report says.

The review found the Navy's analysis to be "inconsistent and incomplete."

Basing ships in Rota may be the "most straightforward, expeditious way" to support the Navy's ballistic missile defense mission in the region, Pendleton said, but "they could not show us the full costs over the long term."

The Navy said keeping forces and ships in Rota requires significantly fewer ships overall

in the fleet to meet European missile defense requirements, Pendleton said. But the Navy's analysis didn't account for the long-term maintenance costs of keeping ships at a forward location, which can be higher than for ships stateside, he said.

The GAO report also said the Navy provided little documentation for its analysis of the rotational crews' option, one that avoids permanently relocating ship crews and their families.

"GAO recommends that DOD conduct a comprehensive cost analysis associated with the Navy's decision to station ships in Rota, assess options and costs related to rotating forces in Europe, and clarify roles and responsibilities" for collecting cost data, the agency said in a summary of its recommendations.

In a response, attached to the GAO report, DOD officials disagreed with the study's recommendation "that additional analysis is required to evaluate ballistic missile defense requirements in the Mediterranean."

"The Navy is implementing the most cost effective option – forward basing ships in Rota – to provide ballistic missile defense and to meet the demand for large surface combatants' presence," DOD said.

"There are no plans for any changes or delay with regard to our ships to Rota, Spain, as part of the European Phased Adaptive Approach," Pentagon spokeswoman Cmdr. Wendy Snyder said in an email Friday.

Regarding the Army's planned force reduction in Europe, the DOD concurred with the agency's recommendation that it identify and assess options to rotate forces in Europe and their associated costs. DOD noted that the Army is currently studying costs and options

for rotating personnel and equipment through Europe for training and exercises with allies and partners.

The GAO report said the planned Army reductions in Europe – including the removal of two heavy brigade combat teams, a corps headquarters and various combat support and service support units – will likely save money, but to what extent is uncertain.

A 2010 Army analysis found \$2 billion in savings over 10 years by returning forces from Germany, but assumed that facilities estimated at \$800 million would need to be built in the United States to house them.

But in February, it was announced that the 170th Infantry Brigade in Baumholder and the 172nd Separate Infantry Brigade in Grafenwöhr and Schweinfurt would be eliminated from the Army's force structure as part of larger end-strength reductions.

"Given this force structure reduction, the savings to the Army and DOD could be billions more because the costs of manning and equipping two brigade combat teams (with approximately 4,000 personnel each), among other units, would no longer be incurred," the report says.

But the same 2010 Army analysis said it could potentially cost the Army about \$1 billion over 10 years to rotate two brigade combat teams to Europe twice a year. Army officials told the GAO team, however, that they are considering rotating smaller formations, such as companies or battalion-size elements, the report says.

Decisions about the size and frequency of those rotations "will be a key cost driver," the GAO report says. "Costs will be incurred not only to pay for the rotations, but assumptions about these rotations will also

be used to decide which Army installations in Europe to retain."

CNN; NPR

June 8, 2012

16. Questions About Biofuels

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

WOLF BLITZER: Some members of Congress are having sticker shock and may try to force the Defense Department to save money by scrapping more expensive bio-fuels. Is it the right move for now or is it short-sighted? Here is our Pentagon correspondent Chris Lawrence.

CHRIS LAWRENCE: The military can fuel a fighter jet for under \$4 a gallon.

So congressional critics were shocked when the Navy paid \$26 a gallon for bio-fuel.

REPRESENTATIVE MIKE CONAWAY (R-TX): It is huge back home. It's huge to the taxpayers who had to fund that.

LAWRENCE: Representative Mike Conaway inserted a provision into the new defense bill. It says the Pentagon must buy the cheapest available fuel, especially while planning to cut 100,000 troops from the payroll.

CONAWAY: We ought to be saving every single dollar we can everywhere else in the budget to protect the people.

LAWRENCE: But every day, the Pentagon burns through 300,000 barrels of oil. If the price goes up just \$1, it costs the military well over \$100 million.

SHARON BURKE [Assistant Defense Secretary]: We've got to get out from under the oil markets.

LAWRENCE: The military has been testing ships, planes and vehicles to accept alternative fuel. The Pentagon wants future flexibility

especially as it shifts focus to Asia Pacific.

BURKE: It is really important because when you are talking about projecting and sustaining troops, forces that far from your own country. So we're opposed to any efforts that restrict our options in this area.

LAWRENCE: The secretary of the Navy has argued that bio-fuels are a young industry. Of course they can't compete price wise with fossil fuels that have been around for centuries.

CONAWAY: Well is it the federal government's responsibility to start that industry? If he can find it at \$4 a gal, terrific, buy it, but he can't. And it is not the Department of Defense's role to build that fuel market.

LAWRENCE: Bio-fuel advocates say that ignores the billions meant to ensure the free flow of oil.

PHYLLIS CUTTINO [Pew Charitable Trusts]: We keep those shipping lanes open for countries that are oftentimes hostile to our interests like Iran.

LAWRENCE: But Congress is poised to drop an economic anchor on the Navy's great green fleet.

Is this the time to pour this money into bio-fuels?

CUTTINO: Absolutely. You know, it is really about investment today for payoff tomorrow. How much did the first pair of night you know vision goggles cost us, a lot more probably than they cost now.

LAWRENCE: It is a good point and Pentagon officials say this over-reliance on foreign oil is a matter of national security. But it looks like these restrictions are going to go into effect because enough members of Congress say the alternative just isn't affordable. Wolf?

BLITZER: Chris Lawrence, thanks for that report.

All Things Considered (NPR), 4:10 P.M.

ROBERT SIEGEL: From NPR News, this is All Things Considered. I'm Robert Siegel.

AUDIE CORNISH: And I'm Audie Cornish. The U.S. military consumes hundreds of thousands of barrels of oil every single day. And we've reported previously on the Pentagon's effort to cut back and go green from running convoys on biofuels to sending Marines in the field with solar-powered battery packs. Defense officials say the green programs decrease their dependence on foreign oil and will save money in the long run.

Well, the Senate Armed Services Committee recently voted to put a stop to it, banning the military from spending money on alternative fuels when such fuels cost more than coal, natural gas or oil. Here to talk more about this battle is Juliette Kayyem. She's the foreign affairs columnist at the Boston Globe and on the faculty of Harvard's Kennedy School of Government. And Juliette, to start, put this in context. How big a consumer of fossil fuels is the Defense Department, and how are the fuels and other green measures actually used day to day?

JULIETTE KAYYEM: Well, the Defense Department is the largest consumer of oil in the entire world, and so it has spent over a decade trying to figure out how it can wean itself off of oil for a variety of reasons, environmental being one of them, but also cost being a factor. So it's invested in a number of programs related to biofuel or solar. It has invested in what's called the Great Green Fleet with the Navy to try to

have more independence from oil.

Those are ships that run on half biofuel and half diesel blends. And so it's been sort of pushing the envelope on all these, what we call, alternative energy sources, to essentially sort of drive the engine of the military.

CORNISH: Now, one of the program's biggest critics is Senator John McCain. He argues that the president is using the military to pursue a green agenda. And we should be clear that you served President Obama as assistant secretary for intergovernmental affairs at the Department of Homeland Security, so you were with the administration.

But what's your response to these arguments?

KAYYEM: Well, McCain is technically, absolutely right that what is happening here is an effort to have the Pentagon, like most of the world, try to wean itself off of oil. This is -- I mean, Wal-Mart is doing this, you know? Target, the big supply chain, private sector companies are doing it. This is not a surprise. And so McCain thinks he's sort of criticizing, you know, sort of some green agenda of the Obama administration.

But what's sort of lost in his criticism is that this is actually being driven by the military, not simply for sort of, you know, Birkenstock-wearing environmental reasons, but actually the oil price volatility is a huge cost driver for the Pentagon, so it's trying to decrease its budget. It's at the whim of oil prices.

CORNISH: But essentially, people are arguing that right now, in the budget situation, the country is in the days of austerity, that this is simply too expensive.

KAYYEM: Right. It is a compelling argument. It's one

that motivated much of the Senate committee in terms of their vote. I'm just putting this in perspective that this sort of green or the clean initiatives for the Pentagon are about \$170 million annual investment. But the more sort of essential long-term thinking aspect of this is that the military is an unbelievable driver of innovation in American society.

Businesses and the private sector innovate because they need clients, and they need big clients, and that has often included the Pentagon.

CORNISH: At this point, is this a done deal, what lawmakers are doing?

KAYYEM: No. I think there'll be, you know, sort of a full Senate vote. Susan Collins did not vote in the committee hearing. There's pressure --

CORNISH: She's the Maine Senator.

KAYYEM: Yeah, the Senator from Maine. So her vote will -- she has said that she will vote with -- for the Pentagon. There is pressure on the Democrats who voted with the Republicans on this to switch their votes. Senator Scott Brown, who's here in Massachusetts, is in a tough fight with Elizabeth Warren and may reconsider his vote. So while the Pentagon was surprised by the committee and what they did, they're clearly going to make this a priority as the budget battles go forward.

CORNISH: Juliette Kayyem, thank you.

KAYYEM: Thank you so much.

CORNISH: Juliette Kayyem is at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government and is a foreign affairs columnist for The Boston Globe.

17. Lockheed F-35 Scrap Rate At 16 Percent - Pentagon

*Pentagon working with
Lockheed to improve quality;
Company said rate to improve
as program matures*

By Andrea Shalal-Esa, Reuters

WASHINGTON--The rate of scrap, rework and repair on production of Lockheed Martin Corp's F-35 fighter jet is currently around 16 percent, higher than on other military aircraft programs at similar stages of production, the Pentagon said on Friday.

Both the Pentagon's F-35 program office and Lockheed Martin Corp "recognize this is an area that needs improvement, and are working together to achieve world-class levels of quality," said Navy Commander Kyra Hawn, a spokeswoman for the program office.

Hawn said the other military programs had scrap, rework and repair rates in the mid to high single digits when they reached a production level of 100 aircraft. The F-35 is nearing production of its 100th jet.

Lockheed spokesman Michael Rein said the company's scrap, rework and repair rate was "commensurate with historical programs at the same stage of production" and should continue to improve as the program continues to mature.

The Senate Armed Services Committee said this week it was troubled by the quality of production on the \$396 billion F-35 Joint Strike Fighter program, but did not provide any details.

The committee questioned the overall quality of production on the program and cited a "potentially serious issue" with the plane's electronic warfare capability.

Questions over the quality of production of the F-35 will

compound the mounting woes of the program, which has already been restructured three times to extend the development phase and slow production.

The quality concerns are being raised as a strike by 3,300 union workers at the company's Fort Worth, Texas, plant over pension and healthcare benefits is moving into an eighth week.

Lockheed has hired about 200 temporary workers to keep production of its F-35 and F-16 fighters on track at the plant.

Lockheed says the new workers are being carefully trained, but union officials have questioned whether the quality of production - already an issue - would be maintained by workers with less experience on the complex weapons system.

Lockheed is building the new radar-evading fighters for the U.S. military and eight foreign countries helping to fund its development: Britain, Norway, Canada, Denmark, the Netherlands, Turkey, Australia and Italy.

Japan and Israel have also ordered the fighters for their militaries. The U.S. government expects to finalize the sale with Japan this month.

Lockheed also will soon submit a proposal to sell the aircraft to South Korea, with Seoul officials due to visit the United States this summer for F-35 simulator flight testing and visits to various production, flight test and training sites.

The Senate committee noted in a report accompanying its fiscal 2013 budget bill that a potentially serious issue had been discovered with an aperture on the aircraft that was critical to its electronic warfare capability.

The committee said the full extent of the problem was not known, but it underscored the need for the Pentagon and Lockheed to "rigorously

manage production quality," it said.

Sources familiar with the program said the issue centered on the placement of a sensor at the tip of the plane's wing and was a design matter and nothing to do with production quality.

They said the previous placement had reduced the sensitivity of a small part of the electronic warfare sensor, but affected only jets in the first three production batches and had already been resolved in jets now under production.

Retrofits would be done as needed, but only a small number of aircraft would be affected, the sources added.

Miami Herald
June 9, 2012

18. Guantanamo Defense Lawyers Seek National Broadcasts Of Cole Trial

*The lawyers are asking the
military commissions judge to
authorize feeds to television
networks; the Pentagon says
federal trials aren't broadcast
and war crimes cases shouldn't
be either*

By Carol Rosenberg

In a war court first, defense lawyers for the accused architect of al Qaida's USS Cole bombing are asking the military judge to broadcast the Guantanamo death-penalty trial to the world — not just to Pentagon-controlled viewing rooms in suburban Washington, D.C., and Virginia

Broadcasts would let the public "decide for themselves if this is truly a legitimate proceeding entitled to respect as the prosecutor argues, or is it a sham, a kangaroo court as the defense and many observers suggest," the lawyers argued in their 14-page brief filed Friday.

They ask the judge, Army Col. James L. Pohl, to order the Pentagon to provide video

feeds of the Guantanamo trial of Abd al Rahim al Nashiri to C-SPAN, FOX, CNN, ABC, NBC and CBS. Pohl has authorized closed-circuit broadcasts to a viewing room for the public and media at Fort Meade in Maryland and for families of the USS Cole victims at the U.S. Navy base in Norfolk, Va.

Suicide bombers blew up a bomb-laden skiff alongside the warship in the port of Aden, Yemen, in October 2000, killing 17 U.S. sailors. CIA agents captured Nashiri in the United Arab Emirates in 2002 and then moved him to Guantanamo for trial in 2006, after secret interrogations using waterboarding, a revving power drill and the cocking of a pistol near his hooded head to break him.

In earlier war crimes trials at Guantanamo, only Pentagon-approved reporters, legal observers and victims could watch by taking military flights to the remote U.S. Navy base. The Defense Department decided to widen the viewership by setting up the special viewing rooms and getting a court order from Pohl to beam the proceedings to U.S. soil.

Defense Department workers control the sites and forbid photography and audio recording, under rules that are meant to mirror military commission decorum at the legal compound in Guantanamo.

At the Pentagon, lawyers said they patterned the system after a remote viewing room for victim family members that U.S. District Judge Leonie Brinkema set up in the Eastern District of Virginia for the federal trial of so-called 20th hijacker Zacarias Moussaoui, convicted as an al Qaida accomplice in the Sept. 11 terror attacks.

"To date, it has been the department's position that a

version of the federal courts standard is the appropriate one, in terms of access for the media and members of the public," said Army Lt. Col. Todd Breausseale.

Nashiri's lawyer, Richard Kammen, a veteran of federal court cases, said the rules are different enough at Guantánamo that the world should be watching rather than relying upon a speaking tour by the chief prosecutor trying to rehabilitate the image of military commissions in the U.S. legal community.

"If the evidence against Nashiri is hearsay or double hearsay or triple hearsay, the world ought to at least know that," Kammen said Friday.

"Why should only people on the East Coast be able to see this?" he added. "If we really believe this system is so fair and is upholding American ideals, why should we try and hide it?"

At C-SPAN Friday, general counsel Bruce Collins said there has been a precedent in his organization of broadcasting military legal proceedings — a July 1991 session of the United States Court of Military Appeals involving a challenge to a death penalty case.

At the time, he said, the chief judge, Robinson Everett, approved the broadcasts at what is now called the Court of Appeals for the Armed Forces.

C-SPAN mostly airs policy discussions, Collins noted, adding for example that while other organizations did broadcast the O.J. Simpson murder trial, his organization did not.

The editorial directors of C-SPAN would decide how much if any of a Nashiri commission to air, he said.

But, "as a person who is concerned about the right of the news media to gain access to public proceedings, I would tell you that we'd want the right to

broadcast," Collins said. "We would probably do some big chunks of it. Others would do standard news package use of the video, maybe short clips. To the extent it's like a trial, I know that historically it's hard for us to do whole trials."

ArmyTimes.com

June 8, 2012

19. Judge Refuses To Dismiss Any Manning Charges

By David Dishneau,
Associated Press

FORT MEADE, Md. — A military judge refused Friday to dismiss any of the 22 counts against an Army private charged in the biggest leak of government secrets in U.S. history.

Col. Denise Lind also indicated she will postpone Pfc. Bradley Manning's trial, currently set to start Sept. 21, to November or January because of procedural delays.

Manning is charged with knowingly aiding al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula by causing the online publication of hundreds of thousands of classified State Department diplomatic cables and Iraq and Afghanistan war logs, along with some battlefield video clips. Authorities say the 24-year-old Crescent, Okla., native downloaded the files from a Defense Department network and sent them to the secret-sharing website WikiLeaks while working as an intelligence analyst in Baghdad in 2009 and 2010.

He hasn't entered a plea to the charges.

On Friday, the third day of a pretrial hearing, Lind rejected a defense argument that the government used unconstitutionally vague language in charging Manning with eight counts of unauthorized possession and

disclosure of classified information. The defense targeted the phrases, "relating to the national defense" and "to the injury of the United States or to the advantage of any foreign nation."

Lind disagreed with a defense argument that the phrases are too broad to provide fair warning of what conduct is prohibited.

The judge also refused to dismiss two counts alleging Manning exceeded his authority to access computers linked to SIPRNet, the Defense Department intranet system.

The government alleges Manning used the computers to obtain information that was then transmitted to a person not entitled to receive them. The defense argued that Manning's job description clearly entitled him to use the computers, and that his purpose in using them was irrelevant to the charge.

Lind agreed with the defense's interpretation of the law but said she hadn't seen enough evidence to decide whether to dismiss the charge. Her ruling raises the bar for what prosecutors must prove to win convictions on those counts.

Manning faces the possibility of life in prison if convicted aiding the enemy. He has been in pretrial confinement since he was charged in May 2010. He has been held since April 2011 at Fort Leavenworth, Kan.

His purported motivation for the leaks, according to logs of his alleged online chats with a confidant-turned-government-informant, was that he wanted to expose the truth after becoming disillusioned about American military policies.

In previous proceedings, the defense, led by civilian attorney David Coombs, has highlighted Manning's

frustration with being a gay soldier at a time when homosexuals were prohibited from serving openly in the U.S. armed forces. Defense lawyers also have contended that Manning's apparent disregard for security rules during stateside training and his increasingly violent outbursts after deployment were red flags that should have prevented him from having access to classified material. They also maintain that the material WikiLeaks published did little harm to national security.

Arizona Republic (Phoenix)

June 9, 2012

20. Army To Send 3,000 Soldiers To Safe Areas Of Africa Next Year

By John Ryan, Army Times

WASHINGTON - An Army brigade will deploy to Africa next year in a pilot program that rotates brigades to regions around the globe, the Army said.

Roughly 3,000 soldiers, possibly more, are expected to serve tours across the continent in 2013, training foreign militaries and aiding locals.

As part of a "regionally aligned force concept," soldiers will live and work among Africans in safe communities approved by the U.S. government.

Tours could last a few weeks or months and include multiple missions at different locations. The Army has not announced which brigade would deploy or where the soldiers would come from.

As the Afghanistan war winds down, the new program affords Army units more time to learn regional cultures and languages and train for specific missions.

Africa in particular has emerged as a greater priority for

the U.S. government because terrorist groups there have become an increasing threat.

Although U.S. soldiers have operated in Africa for decades, including more than 1,200 soldiers now stationed at Camp Lemonnier, Djibouti, the region in many ways remains the Army's last frontier.

CNN

June 8, 2012

21. Keeping Marines Ready To Fight

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

WOLF BLITZER: For more than a decade U.S. Marines have been steadily rotating in and out of war zones. Ever wonder what happens to all their banged-up, bullet-riddled military hardware when it comes back from the front lines?

CNN's John Zarrella has an inside look at a massive maintenance facility that keeps Marines ready to fight. John, show our viewers what you're seeing.

JOHN ZARRELLA: Wolf, most of us probably don't even think about what happens to all these thousands upon thousands of pieces of equipment coming back from Iraq and Afghanistan now with the drawdown. A lot of it ends up on an island.

Think of it like an auto repair shop.

WILBUR SCOTT [Honeywell Senior Mechanic]: One thing we found is it has a fuel leak.

ZARRELLA: But not any you've been to.

SCOTT: It's not like you take your car to the dealership and say it's skipping. They say what this will do if they can go fix it.

ZARRELLA: What are they fixing? Thousands of pieces of beat-up Marine Corps equipment and armor

used to fight in Iraq and Afghanistan. This cavernous maintenance facility sits on Blount Island near Jacksonville, Florida. When Marine hardware returns from anywhere in the world, it comes here. It's cleaned and repaired, upgrades are made, the kind that save lives.

This truck had aluminum doors, little protection against shrapnel from IEDs.

BOB CAMPBELL [Honeywell Site Leader]: You would see a hole in that door and you would see it embedded in the actual seat and you know someone was injured.

ZARRELLA: Now the entire cab of the Marines' seven-ton trucks are armored. Wow.

When the maintenance contracted to Honeywell is complete, every piece must be combat ready. Why? Because it's headed right back out.

This is the 900-foot long climate-controlled Fred Stockham. Six decks are filled with armored personnel carriers, amphibious assault vehicles, Humvees, road building equipment, everything the Marines would need to fight or handle a humanitarian mission.

It will take seven days working 24 hours a day to completely load this ship and lash everything down for the trip. When they're done, there will be more than 51,000 tons on board.

The Stockham is headed to a rendezvous with four other ships in Diego Garcia in the Indian Ocean. It's one of three Marines staging areas around the world. The Marines say that in less than a week, they and their equipment can be anywhere in the world.

LT. COL. RICK STEELE [USMC]: Nobody else in the world can get there the way we

can. People have tried it. We've proven it.

ZARRELLA: The Stockham will stay on station in Diego Garcia for up to three years. It might just sit there, never needed.

STEELE: If everything worked out perfectly, we would bring the gear back, never having touched it. That's the desire.

ZARRELLA: But Steele says it hasn't worked out quite that way in recent years.

Now one of the things they do, Wolf, is they fumigate all of that equipment before it comes home and then they fumigate it again before it leaves. On the boat, they fumigate it – well, it doesn't always work. They were telling me that back in 2009 on one of the ships they ended up with an infestation of spiders.

They got rid of them all eventually, but it wasn't a good place to be, they say, if perhaps, you had arachnophobia, Wolf.

BLITZER: And I think I have that, so I wouldn't have been happy to be there – (inaudible) – the reasons as well.

John Zarrella, as usual. Excellent work. Thank you.

ZARRELLA: Sure.

CNN

June 8, 2012

22. Marine's Survival

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

WOLF BLITZER: We want to update you on a remarkable story of survival of a young Marine in Afghanistan. An unexploded rocket propelled grenade became lodged in his leg. Thanks to some risky decisions by fellow Marines he lived to tell about it. Our Pentagon correspondent Barbara Starr has now spoken to the corporal himself about the rescue. She's joining us with the latest – Barbara.

BARBARA STARR: Wolf, you know you saw that video just there of help coming to Corporal Winder Perez who had a rocket-propelled grenade about a foot long embedded in his body. I was finally able to sit down and chat with him. Let's get right to it. I want you to hear what he had to say.

CPL. WINDER PEREZ [U.S. Marine Corps]: All of a sudden just – I just saw the RPG coming toward me, and it hit me and, you know, I was hit and my boys they knew exactly what to do and they came down. No hesitation, no nothing. The RPG had struck the battery in my radio, so I tried calling it in and I'm like what the hell? The radio wasn't working and thank God Corporal Perrera (ph), he came right away. He called it in. The helicopter was already inbound and it was coming in for a little girl that got injured and thanks to Corporal Perrera, you know, he redirected the helicopter. Obviously, they had I guess – they had their issues. I don't know. You know, I did have a live rocket in my leg so eventually they did come. They got me in there.

STARR: So the Marines on the ground, the helicopter crew, the medics on the ground all risking their own lives to help this young Marine and pull a live grenade out of his body. He just finished his last surgery yesterday. I want to tell you, Wolf, I had an e-mail from Winder Perez this morning, 23-year-old Marine saying he was feeling just fine. And that everything was okay. You can watch the full interview with him on Sanjay Gupta's show this weekend. That's 6:30 on Saturday, 7:30 – pardon me – 4:30 on Saturday – I don't want to make a mistake – and 7:30 Sunday morning. A young 23-year-old Marine who had a death-defying experience and says he is just fine.

BLITZER: 4:30 p.m. Eastern, 7:30 a.m. Sunday morning Eastern. Don't forget the Eastern.

STARR: You bet.

BLITZER: You got people in a lot of different time zones out there. Thanks very much, Barbara.

Los Angeles Times
June 9, 2012

23. U-2 Pilot Francis Gary Powers, Downed By USSR, To Get Silver Star

By Richard Simon

WASHINGTON — Fifty-two years after his U-2 spy plane was shot down over the Soviet Union, famed Cold War pilot Francis Gary Powers will be posthumously awarded the Silver Star.

The medal will be presented by Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Norton Schwartz to Powers' grandson and granddaughter at a Pentagon ceremony attended by other family members next Friday.

Powers, who died in 1977 at age 47 in a helicopter crash in Los Angeles, will be recognized for his "indomitable spirit, exceptional loyalty" and "sustained courage in an exceptionally hostile environment," according to the citation.

"We're honored," his son, Gary Powers Jr., said from his Virginia home, noting the medal is being awarded on this year's 50th anniversary of his father's release by the Soviets. "It's just a wonderful thing to have happen for my father."

Powers' plane was shot down on May 1, 1960, about 1,300 miles inside Soviet territory. The pilot bailed out and was captured, heightening Cold War tensions. Powers was convicted of espionage and sentenced to 10 years in prison but was freed after serving

nearly two years, in a dramatic trade for Soviet spy Rudolf Abel on Berlin's Glienicke Bridge.

Powers later was a test pilot, then an airborne traffic reporter for Los Angeles radio and television. He died when his television station helicopter ran out of fuel and crashed in a field in Encino. He is buried at Arlington National Cemetery.

His son, 47, founder of the Cold War Museum in Vint Hill, Va., last year petitioned the Air Force Board of Correction of Military Records to award his father a Silver Star. He'd read about the awarding of Silver Stars in 2004 to two Air Force officers whose reconnaissance plane was shot down by a Soviet fighter over the Barents Sea two months after Powers' plane was shot down.

"For almost 107 days, Captain Powers was interrogated, harassed, and endured unmentionable hardships on a continuous basis by numerous top Soviet Secret Police interrogating teams," the citation says. "Although greatly weakened physically by the lack of food, denial of sleep and the mental rigors of constant interrogation, Capt. Powers steadfastly refused all attempts to give sensitive defense information or be exploited for propaganda purposes, resisting all Soviet efforts through cajolery, trickery, and threats of death to obtain the confessions they sought as part of the pretrial investigation."

"As a result of his indomitable spirit, exceptional loyalty, and continuous heroic actions, Russian intelligence gained no vital information from him."

In 2000, Powers was posthumously awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross, a Department of Defense Prisoner of War Medal and a National Defense Service Medal two years after government records

were declassified showing that Powers was part of a joint Air Force-CIA program.

"It's a great honor for us in the Air Force to be able to openly and proudly honor Powers' service as one of our own," said Dick Anderegg, director of Air Force History and Museums.

Powers, when asked how high he was flying on May 1, 1960, would often respond, "Not high enough," according to his son.

TheHill.com

June 8, 2012

24. Ex-Defense Chief Rumsfeld To Face Off With Military Brass Over Law Of The Sea

By Julian Pecquet

Donald Rumsfeld is returning to Capitol Hill next week to testify against the United States joining the United Nations's Law of the Sea treaty, pitting him squarely against the military brass that he used to command as former President George W. Bush's secretary of Defense.

Rumsfeld's testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee is especially relevant because he was former President Reagan's emissary against the treaty back in 1982, when international momentum was for it. Proponents of the treaty have been trotting out former Reagan officials — former Secretary of State George Shultz, former Deputy National Security Adviser John Negroponte — to argue that changes to the treaty would have met with Reagan's approval, but Rumsfeld's appearance throws a wrench in that strategy.

Critics say it would curtail the U.S. military's freedom of navigation while allowing a UN agency to directly tax U.S. oil-and-gas companies.

Rumsfeld wasn't available to comment.

"The so-called United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea was designed to codify navigation rights in international waters," he writes in his memoir, *Known and Unknown*. "But it had grown into something considerably more ambitious, with a proviso that would put all natural resources found in the seabeds of international waters ... into the hands of what was ominously called the International Seabed Authority."

Reagan's attorney general, Edwin Meese, has also been leading the charge against ratification of the treaty.

"With the treaty again under consideration by the Senate," Meeks wrote in the *Los Angeles Times* this week, "it's important to note that Reagan's objections to it were anything but trivial."

Rumsfeld was invited to speak by committee Chairman John Kerry (D-Mass.), who has vowed to invite witnesses on all sides of the issue despite his personal support for the treaty. Rumsfeld will be testifying next Thursday afternoon along with Negroponte and John Bellinger, a former legal adviser to the State Department under Bush, who supported ratification.

Kerry's committee is also holding another hearing Thursday morning with current military officials, who argue for rapid ratification as China expands into the South China Sea, where the treaty recognizes the sovereignty of the Philippines, a U.S. ally, and other countries.

Fairbanks Daily News-Miner
June 7, 2012

25. Alaska Sen. Begich May Hold Up Air Force Chief Of Staff's

Promotion To Stall F-16 Move

By Sam Friedman

FAIRBANKS — U.S. Sen. Mark Begich may extend his hold on a military advancement to the Air Force's top uniformed officer because of frustration with the service's plan to move a squadron of F-16 fighter planes from Eielson Air Force Base.

For more than a month, Begich has already held up the advancement of Lt. Gen. Herbert J. Carlisle, who is up for promotion to four-star general.

According to his spokesman Julie Hasquet, the Democratic senator is now considering putting a hold on the advancement of Gen. Mark A. Welsh, President Obama's candidate to be the next Air Force chief of staff. Any senator can put a hold on a military advancement, which halts the nomination until the hold is lifted.

Putting a hold on the military leaders is one of several strategies Alaska's congressional delegation is using to stall or stop the movement of the F-16s and more than 1,500 Air Force and civilian jobs from Eielson Air Force Base to Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson in Anchorage.

Another approach uses congressional control of the military's purse strings. In a joint letter sent Wednesday to leaders of the Senate Appropriations Committee's defense panel, both Begich and Alaska Republican Sen. Lisa Murkowski ask for language in the 2013 budget ordering the Air Force not to spend money to move the F-16s.

The Air Force announced the move in February as part of a larger plan to cut expenses across the service.

Alaska's congressional delegation has been skeptical

and demanded Air Force explain exactly how the move would save money. The Air Force argues the plan will save money by eliminating the need for 81 duplicate possessions at Alaska air bases.

Some of the Air Force's numbers came out last week in a 46-page report. In that report, the Air Force said keeping the F-16s in Anchorage would save \$227 million over five years but would cost \$5.65 million in the first year because of moving and construction costs.

Alaska's congressional delegation questioned the thoroughness of the report, arguing it overlooked the cost of providing housing for airmen in Anchorage and of creating a report on the environmental effects of basing the F-16s in Anchorage. Representatives of the congressional delegation and a group of local business and government leaders known as the Tiger Team spent two hours questioning the Air Force general who created the report last week and are planning to hold another teleconference this morning.

Wall Street Journal
June 9, 2012
Pg. 5

26. Iraq Ambassador Nominee's Ties To Reporter Questioned

By Naftali Bendavid

WASHINGTON—Senate Republicans are raising concerns about emails apparently exchanged between President Barack Obama's nominee to be U.S. ambassador to Iraq and a Wall Street Journal reporter who was covering Iraq while the nominee was assigned there.

The emails, which were sent between June and December 2008 and recently posted anonymously on Flickr and other websites, suggest that

Brett McGurk, who served as an adviser to several ambassadors and as a member of the National Security Council, and Journal correspondent Gina Chon were romantically involved. Republicans say this raises questions about the nominee's maturity and judgment, particularly regarding whether inappropriate access was offered to the reporter.

Mr. McGurk, 39 years old, couldn't be reached for comment. Ms. Chon, 36, declined to comment.

They are now married.

The State Department is standing by Mr. McGurk, saying he is highly qualified and was carefully vetted. But Sen. James Inhofe (R., Okla.), a member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, has canceled a scheduled meeting with Mr. McGurk.

"In regards to this nominee, Sen. Inhofe has heard some concerning issues, and until those issues are cleared up, he will not meet with Mr. McGurk," said Inhofe spokesman Jared Young.

Mr. McGurk was the lead U.S. negotiator on agreements with the Iraqi government in 2007 and 2008 that set conditions for a U.S. troop withdrawal. The emails consist partly of banter between a reporter and a potential source, and the exchange is flirtatious. Mr. McGurk married Caroline Wong in 2006, and reports have suggested he was still married when the emails were sent, but that couldn't be confirmed.

A spokeswoman for Sen. John Kerry (D., Mass.), chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, said Mr. Kerry had no comment. That committee leads the confirmation process.

An aide said Republicans have been discussing the matter, exploring whether Mr. McGurk was inappropriately

discussing access to officials or information with Ms. Chon even as the two were embarking on a romantic relationship. Mr. McGurk has never headed an embassy, and some Republicans said the emails underline questions about his suitability to lead what is now the largest U.S. embassy.

For now, senators are waiting to see what else unfolds—whether any further revelations emerge, as well as how forcefully the administration continues to back Mr. McGurk, who also served under President George W. Bush. State Department spokeswoman Victoria Nuland said the administration continues to support Mr. McGurk.

"He spent the better part of the last decade serving our country in and out of Iraq, working for a Republican administration, a Democratic administration," Ms. Nuland said. "He is, in our view, uniquely qualified to serve as our ambassador, and we urge the Senate to act quickly on his nomination."

The Journal said in a statement that it is looking into the matter.

"Ms. Chon, currently a reporter in Money & Investing, asked for a formal leave of absence from The Wall Street Journal in March when it appeared her then-fiancé might be nominated as ambassador to Iraq," the statement said. "The request was granted at the time, and the leave is scheduled to begin later this summer."

Washington Post
June 9, 2012
Pg. 8

27. Manila Is Seeking Closer Ties To The U.S.

Uneasy about China, Philippines wants assurances on defense

By Craig Whitlock

The president of the Philippines made a direct pitch to the White House Friday to help bolster his country's relatively weak defenses as the island nation increasingly finds itself tangled in territorial conflicts with China.

The Philippines, a former colony and longtime ally of the United States, has been seeking reassurances that Washington would come to its defense in a confrontation with China. The two Asian countries assert overlapping claims in the mineral-rich South China Sea and have been engaged in a two-month standoff over a rocky outcropping there.

China claims sovereignty over much of the South China Sea, alarming countries such as the Philippines, Vietnam and Malaysia, whose coastlines are much closer to some of the disputed territories.

That has led to a rapid souring of relations between Beijing and Manila, with Philippine leaders expressing concern about China's strategic ambitions in the region.

"If you're asking me to discern their intentions, frankly we're still analyzing what their intentions are," Philippine President Benigno Aquino III said in an interview with editors and reporters of The Washington Post on Friday prior to his visit to the White House, where he met with President Obama.

China has the most powerful military in Asia and is boosting its spending on defense. The Philippines, in contrast, lacks a single fighter jet. Its navy is so weak that its biggest warship is an aging former U.S. Coast Guard cutter it acquired as surplus from the Pentagon last year.

Aquino's government has intensified talks this year with the Obama administration about

expanding the U.S. military presence in the Philippines. Among the options under consideration are operating Navy ships from the Philippines, deploying troops on a rotational basis and staging more frequent joint exercises.

The welcome mat from Manila represents a turnaround. In 1992, the Philippines evicted the U.S. military from its sprawling naval base at Subic Bay, a year after the Pentagon had abandoned nearby Clark Air Base. Together, the two bases had served as a cornerstone of the U.S. military presence in Asia for nearly a century.

In the interview with The Post, Aquino said his government wanted the Pentagon's help to upgrade its maritime surveillance capabilities so the Philippines — which has 7,107 islands — can better patrol its extensive coastlines.

He said the U.S. deployment of surveillance aircraft, such as Navy P-3C Orion planes and Global Hawk drones, would be "a welcome development." But he said the Philippines was particularly interested in acquiring a land-based radar that could enable it to monitor the wide expanses of the South China Sea.

Felix K. Chang, a senior fellow at the Foreign Policy Research Institute in Philadelphia, called a radar "a significant step in improving the Philippines' situational awareness off its coasts." He said Manila's defenses are so poor that often it has "only learned about foreign activities after the fact."

Rick Fisher, an Asian security expert at the International Assessment and Strategy Center in Alexandria, said a powerful land-based radar could be used jointly by the Philippines, the United

States and other allies to quickly detect Chinese military movements in the region. That would fill a void that has existed since the U.S. military was evicted from Subic Bay and Clark two decades ago.

Such a radar could provide "an almost instant way of keeping the Chinese honest," Fisher said.

New York Times

June 9, 2012

Pg. 9

28. Obama Expresses Support For Philippines In China Rift

By Mark Landler

WASHINGTON — A festering quarrel that began over rare coral, giant clams and sharks in a distant sea made its way to the Oval Office on Friday, as President Benigno S. Aquino III of the Philippines sought the backing of President Obama in a maritime dispute with China.

The Philippines and China have been locked in a tense standoff for two months over rights to a triangular cluster of reefs and rocks in the South China Sea known as Scarborough Shoal. While Mr. Aquino said he did not want to drag the United States into the conflict, he clearly hoped for Mr. Obama's diplomatic support.

And he got it, if obliquely, on Friday. Mr. Obama told reporters after the meeting with Mr. Aquino that the United States and the Philippines would "consult closely together" as part of "the announced pivot to Asia," which he said should serve as a reminder that "in fact, the United States considers itself, and is, a Pacific power."

Mr. Obama did not mention China or the standoff at Scarborough Shoal, but he

said that he and Mr. Aquino discussed the need for "a strong set of international norms and rules governing maritime disputes in the region."

Still, his message was aimed at China, which has asserted sweeping claims over the South China Sea, touching off disputes with several other countries that border the sea. The Obama administration has countered China's muscle-flexing by shoring up alliances with old partners like the Philippines and Australia and cultivating ties with new ones like Myanmar.

In the case of the Philippines, that has included American help in upgrading aging military equipment to improve its ability to defend itself, as well as a Philippine agreement to allow more American troops and ships to rotate through the country, though not to re-establish Americans bases there.

At a lunch on Friday, Mr. Aquino got an expression of support from Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton, who reiterated that the United States had an interest in the "maintenance of peace and stability" and "freedom of navigation" in the South China Sea. She encouraged Mr. Aquino to resolve the dispute with Beijing peacefully, and she warned that the United States would oppose "the use of force or coercion."

After steering clear of the issue for years, the United States has recently urged China and its neighbors to work out a mechanism for resolving disputes over the sea. Beijing has rejected American involvement, saying, in the words of Gen. Ma Xiaotian, the deputy chief of general staff of the People's Liberation Army, that "the South China issue is not America's business."

Mr. Aquino — the son of a former Philippine president, Corazon C. Aquino, and the slain opposition leader Benigno S. Aquino Jr. — thanked Mr. Obama for his expression of support. On Thursday, Mr. Aquino told an audience that the Philippine government was engaged in a dialogue with China to find a way to resolve the dispute. "It is not our intention to embroil the United States in a military intervention in our region," he said.

The dispute could put the United States in an awkward position, because of the mutual defense treaty it has maintained with the Philippines for 60 years. But American officials said that neither side was likely to invoke the treaty in this case because Manila's confrontation with Beijing is over disputed territory.

Bonnie Glaser, an expert in Asian security at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, said Philippine officials were not happy with the mixed signals they got from Washington in a recent meeting of the two countries' defense and foreign ministers.

Some experts said that whatever the legitimacy of its claims, the Philippines was to blame for provoking the standoff. It started when the Philippines sent a frigate to board Chinese fishing boats near the shoal, which is called Panatag in the Philippines and Huangyan in China. Philippine officials said they found illegally harvested corals, clams and live sharks on the boats. China then sent two surveillance ships.

"We could have a long-term problem with China in the South China Sea," said Jeffrey A. Bader, a former adviser to Mr. Obama on China policy. "The Filipinos did not contribute to solving the

long-term problem by falling into a short-term confrontation with the Chinese, in a bid to quickly resolve an unresolvable territorial issue."

The immediate threat of conflict has ebbed with both sides pulling back their ships. Still, Mr. Aquino's visit was a reminder that countries in the region will increasingly turn to America to help them face down China.

The chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Gen. Martin E. Dempsey, who just returned from a tour of Southeast Asia, told reporters that the Philippine military needed help to defend the country's waters because it has been focused on fighting a radical insurgency. "We think that they need some of that, particularly in maritime security," he said.

London Daily Telegraph
June 9, 2012
Pg. 24

29. Chinese Break Arms Embargo On N Korea

By Julian Ryall, in Tokyo

CHINESE companies are breaking a United Nations embargo by supplying North Korea with key components for ballistic missiles including launch vehicles, according to evidence provided by an intelligence agency in the region.

Classified documents seen by The Daily Telegraph show that Beijing has failed to act when confronted with evidence that Chinese companies are breaking UN Resolution 1874 and helping North Korea to build long-range missiles.

This measure, passed with China's support on June 12, 2009, strengthens an arms embargo by urging all UN members to inspect North Korean cargoes and destroy any items linked to the country's missile or nuclear programmes.

But a study compiled by the intelligence agency of a country in the region shows how North Korean companies are continuing to buy banned materials in China. These entities "have been smuggling in or out controlled items by either setting up and operating a front company in China, or colluding with Chinese firms to forge documents and resorting to other masking techniques", says the report.

The companies include the Korea Mining Development Trading Corporation, known as KOMID, which deals in weapons and military equipment and has been singled out for UN sanctions.

Launch vehicles for long-range missiles are among the items illegally purchased inside China. North Korea is trying to develop an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) that would be able to reach the United States. It has already built a handful of nuclear bombs.

"The North Korean entities subject to UN sanctions are known to have been deeply involved in the North Korean procurement of Chinese ICBM transporter-erector launcher vehicles," says the report. In August 2011, Changgwang Trading Corporation, a front company for KOMID, bought four lorries in China that were then altered into ICBM launchers and displayed in Pyongyang to celebrate the centenary of the birth of North Korea's founder, Kim Il-sung.

In addition, the Korea Ryonbong General Corporation bought two tons of vanadium, which is used in the manufacture of missiles, from a Chinese company in May 2011.

Much of the equipment was shipped to North Korea from the Chinese port of Dalian.

"The UN North Korea sanctions committee has frequently asked China for clarification of North Korea's weapons transport through the port of Dalian, but China is said to have been shifting the responsibility to shipping companies of other nations or refusing to answer," says the report.

Sometimes, a bribe of between £40,000 – £60,000 is paid to a customs official to send each 40ft container filled with illegal missile components through Dalian, according to the report. North Korea also conceals its shipments. "To hide its trade, North Korea has been using all available means, including falsely describing the contents of the shipments, forging the country of origin as China and purchasing the materials in the name of Chinese firms," adds the report.

Personnel from North Korean banks and trading companies regularly meet at Beijing International Airport to deliver large sums of money earned from weapons deals. This happens with the "connivance of Chinese authorities and the customs office", says the report.

China is North Korea's oldest and most committed ally. Beijing has propped up the bankrupt state with fuel and food supplies, while providing diplomatic support in the Security Council. China's aim is to guarantee the presence of a friendly state on its north-eastern border instead of a united Korea that might fall into America's orbit.

NYTimes.com
June 9, 2012

30. China Plans Manned Space Launch This Month, Reports Say

BEIJING (AP) — China will launch astronauts this

month to dock for the first time with an orbiting experimental module, the country's space program announced Saturday.

A rocket carrying the Shenzhou 9 spacecraft was moved to a launch pad in China's desert northwest in preparation for the mid-June flight, according to an unidentified space program spokesman cited by the official Xinhua News Agency.

Xinhua said earlier the flight will carry three astronauts who will dock with and live in the Tiangong 1 orbital module.

China's space program has made steady progress since a 2003 launch that made it only the third nation to put a man in space on its own. Two more manned missions have followed, one including a space walk.

China completed its first space rendezvous last year when the unmanned Shenzhou 8 docked with the Tiangong 1 by remote control.

China has scheduled two space docking missions for this year and plans to complete a manned space station around 2020 to replace Tiangong 1. At about 60 tons, the Chinese station will be considerably smaller than the 16-nation International Space Station.

Beijing launched its independent space station program after being turned away from the International Space Station, largely due to U.S. objections. Washington is wary of the Chinese program's military links and of sharing technology with an economic and political rival.

Singapore Straits Times
June 9, 2012
Pg. 12

31. Myanmar's Military 'Backs Reforms'

Everyone is on board, says top adviser to President Thein Sein

By Tan Hui Yee

MYANMAR'S powerful military supports the country's reforms and has no plans to turn back the clock, says a senior political aide.

Mr Ko Ko Hlaing, the chief political adviser to Myanmar's President Thein Sein, yesterday dismissed suspicions that military hardliners are baulking at its rapid political and economic liberalisation. He was speaking on the sidelines of a forum organised by the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, held at the Mandarin Orchard Hotel yesterday.

"There is no way to go back. There are no actual powerful hardliners who can roll back the reform this time. Everyone is on board," he told The Straits Times later.

While some in the military-backed government may differ in opinion on the pace of reforms, everyone agrees on the need for them, he said.

Myanmar, run for decades by a military junta and isolated through international sanctions, has stunned the world in recent months with bold changes on several fronts.

Led by the reformist President Thein Sein, who took power last year, it has released political prisoners and held a by-election that swept opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi and her National League for Democracy party into Parliament.

The government has also floated its currency to make the country more conducive for investment, in a bid to generate jobs for its people, who are among the poorest in Asia.

It is revising investment laws and slowly freeing up its media.

The changes have generated both optimism and scepticism. Some observers commented yesterday that the multi-faceted changes had an ad

hoc quality and needed more focus to be sustainable.

Yet the changes have also prompted foreign governments to ease decades-old sanctions and resume aid.

Many have remained cautious, though, with the United States choosing to suspend sanctions selectively as an "insurance policy" against Myanmar "backsliding" on its reforms.

But Mr Ko Ko Hlaing warned that this wary stance could undermine the reforms.

Major investors who have flocked to the country for a look-see have stayed on the sidelines as sanctions have not been lifted entirely, he said. Without their investments, Myanmar would not be able to create jobs needed to cement the support of ordinary people for these reforms. This could lead to a "backlash". For now, the government is not ruling out further political changes, including eventually reducing the clout of its military, which is guaranteed a quarter of all the seats in Parliament.

If the relationship between the military and civilian political groups improves, and the country becomes more stable, Myanmar's Constitution could always be amended to reduce military representation, he said.

Myanmar needs all the help it can get, including that of Ms Suu Kyi, he said. Detained for 15 years under the country's former military regime, the Nobel laureate was elected to Parliament in the April 1 by-elections and feted on her recent trip to Bangkok. It was her first trip out of Myanmar in 24 years.

Mr Ko Ko Hlaing said there was no rift between Ms Suu Kyi and Mr Thein Sein, despite talk that the President had stayed away from the World Economic Forum in Bangkok for fear of being overshadowed.

"She is now an international celebrity... if we can use her star power for the interest in our country, our people, it's very useful for us," he said.

Myanmar may be pulling out all the stops to attract investment, but insiders at yesterday's forum tried to manage investors' expectations. Decades of mismanagement have left the country with weak institutions and a flawed legal system. Mr Winston Set Aung, the economic adviser to the President, said the country faced a steep learning curve even as it sped up reforms to attract foreign funds.

Unlike China, for instance, Myanmar was embarking on a democratisation process alongside ambitious attempts to relook tax collection, establish a stock exchange and beef up its foreign investment laws.

The impending changes "are not going to be perfect", he said, pleading for patience.

New York Times
June 9, 2012
Pg. 8

News Analysis

32. In Its Unyielding Stance On Syria, Russia Takes Substantial Risks In Middle East

By Ellen Barry

MOSCOW — The international deadlock over Syria has, in a dreadful way, provided balm for old grievances in this city. After years of fuming about Western-led campaigns to force leaders from power, Russia has seized the opportunity to make its point heard.

This time, its protests cannot be set aside as they were when NATO began airstrikes in Libya or when Western-led coalitions undertook military assaults in Iraq and Serbia. Instead, the

international community has come to Russia's doorstep.

On Friday, a top State Department official visited Moscow, presumably seeking to persuade the Kremlin to reconsider its stance and contribute to an effort to engineer a transition from the rule of President Bashar al-Assad of Syria, a longtime Russian ally. In remarks after the meeting, Russia's top negotiator was implacable, telling a reporter that Moscow's position was "a matter of principle."

Russia's leaders have said repeatedly that their goal is to guard against instability, not to support Mr. Assad. They have signaled that Russia would accept a change of leadership in Syria, but only if devised by Syrians and not imposed from outside, an unlikely prospect in a country riven by violence.

Alongside the satisfaction of putting its foot down, Russia is incurring substantial risks. Having positioned itself as a key player in the conflict, the Kremlin is under pressure to present alternatives. Moscow faces frustration in Western capitals, where it is seen as complicit in the killing of civilians by forces loyal to Mr. Assad, and a deepening alienation among Russia's partners in the Arab world, who see Moscow as coming to the aid of dictators.

"In most Arab countries, the majority of the population, of course, supports the rebels and opposes the dictator, so our reputation has suffered badly," said Georgy Mirsky, a leading Middle East scholar at the Russian Academy of Sciences in Moscow. "If Bashar Assad manages to win the war, if he remains in power, the majority of the population in Arab countries will blame Russia for this, of course, and our reputation will suffer.

But if he is overthrown, also, many people will blame Russia anyway."

The uprisings in Egypt and Tunisia were portrayed in Russia as largely organic, driven by young people frustrated by their economic prospects. But the Syrian conflict is seen completely differently, as orchestrated by other countries in the West and the Arab world and aiding the rise of radical Islam. As the death toll has mounted in Syria — the United Nations estimates that more than 10,000 people have been killed — Russian officials have consistently argued that the fall of the Assad government would usher in something much worse.

"You know, when we had the war in Chechnya, what we heard was that we were using excessive force, that civilians perished," Aleksei K. Pushkov, the head of Russia's parliamentary committee on foreign affairs, said in a recent interview. "But what was at stake was whether we will follow the Yugoslav scenario or not, and the Yugoslav scenario was far more bloody."

However, a recent upsurge in violence by the government's security forces, frequently aimed at women and children, has put Russia on the spot to offer alternatives.

Friday's talks between a senior State Department envoy, Fred Hof, and the deputy foreign ministers, Mikhail Bogdanov and Gennady Gatilov, were an attempt to forge a consensus on a transition. One analyst recommended the model of the 1995 Dayton peace agreement, which ended a vicious ethnic war in the former Yugoslavia. Russia could serve an essential role in guaranteeing order during a political transition because it has deep connections with Syrian military officials,

many of whom were educated in the Soviet Union.

"What is needed for Syria is something like the Dayton agreement, not just to remove Assad but to work out a new model of rule in Syria, because democracy will not lead to a solution," said Fyodor Lukyanov, editor of Russia in Global Affairs. "Russia has more influence on Assad than anyone else. The question is whether anyone would be patient enough to try to implement this."

After emerging from the meeting on Friday, Mr. Bogdanov said he did not foresee moving beyond the six-point cease-fire plan of the former United Nations secretary general Kofi Annan, which does not call on Mr. Assad to leave power.

Mr. Bogdanov put the onus for the continuing violence on opposition forces and foreign countries, which, he said, "flirt with extremists and radicals of various kinds for the purpose of achieving their own goals." Asked what would happen if international forces intervened without a mandate from the United Nations Security Council, he said it would be "a disaster for the entire Middle East region."

If the costs to Russia are mounting, President Vladimir V. Putin also has compelling domestic reasons for refusing to budge. His predecessor, Dmitri A. Medvedev, lost face among hard-liners in the government for his decision not to block the Western intervention in Libya, setting into motion events that culminated in the killing of Col. Muammar el-Qaddafi, another Russian ally. Agreeing to a transition plan in Syria would risk consigning Mr. Putin to a similar fate. It would also mean backing down from a stand that is still being cheered in foreign policy circles here.

"Without Russia's support he would have been pulled down, and the intervention would have followed," said Vitaly V. Naumkin, director of the Institute of Oriental Studies at the Russian Academy of Sciences. "Without Russia's support he would have been toppled. Thus, Russia has proved that it can prevent certain events in the region, which, in our opinion, are not only not desired — not because we adore Assad — but because we want stability in this region, and we think this kind of political engineering may lead to catastrophic consequences."

London Daily Telegraph
June 9, 2012
Pg. 2

33. Cutting Missile System Leaves Warships At Risk

By Thomas Harding, Defence Correspondent

THE Royal Navy's warships will be vulnerable to enemy attack after a key project that allows ships to fire each other's weapons was dropped.

The revolutionary Cooperative Engagement Capability (CEC), which has taken 12 years to plan and already cost £45million, would have allowed ships tracking a low-flying jet or missile to pass the data to the targeted vessel, allowing it to launch defensive missiles, or for them to be launched by remote control.

The decision was criticised by a Navy commander who said it could mean placing the new billion-pound aircraft carriers in harm's way. "The Navy knows savings have to be made, but the Forces have been asked to do more with less," the commander said.

"Furthermore, with the coastal environment being the one more likely to operate in during future conflicts you need

to have as much reaction time as possible if you're putting £1billion ships in harm's way."

The system is vital because enemy warships and incoming missiles can sometimes be masked by hilly coastal areas--such as in the Falklands, where the terrain of San Carlos Water meant that an incoming Exocet would not have been seen before it was too late.

With CEC, a destroyer further out to sea could follow the missile's track then fire the threatened warship's defensive missiles by remote control. As early as January this year Peter Luff, the defence equipment minister, told Parliament that CEC would be fitted to the £1billion Type 45 destroyers in 2018 and then the estimated 13 future Type 26 Global Combat Ships. The system would cost just £24million to defend each ship.

CEC defences were also meant to mitigate the loss of reducing the Type 45 fleet from eight to just six ships.

"The effectiveness of such platforms would be significantly diminished if the CEC is not provided," a report by the National Audit Office said.

News that the £500million project has been dropped will also be a further blow to the ability of the Navy to operate alongside US ships.

"The decision to axe the CEC programme calls into question prior assumptions used to justify reductions in the Royal Navy's surface combatant force," said Richard Scott, the Navy expert for Jane's Defence Weekly.

"CEC would also have provided a significant improvement in the Navy's ability to undertake anti-air warfare operations in coalition with the US Navy."

A MoD spokesman said following a "comprehensive

assessment of CEC" it was "not necessary to commit to purchasing the capability at this stage".

But he added: "As the Defence Secretary made clear earlier this week, the MoD budget has headroom of £8billion over the next 10 years for potential new programmes."

The Guardian (UK)

June 9, 2012

Pg. 11

34. Talks Could End UK Rule Over Diego Garcia

Mauritius to reassure US over bomber base's future; Hope for Chagos islanders as treaty nears expiry

By Richard Norton-Taylor

Britain and Mauritius last night set the stage for talks that could end one of the most shameful episodes in recent British history, the seizing of the Chagos Islands, including Diego Garcia, used by the US as a long-range bomber base and by the CIA for secret rendition flights.

After meeting David Cameron in Downing Street, the Mauritian prime minister, Navinchandra Ramgoolam, told the Guardian that the aim of talks with the UK and US was to reassert Mauritian sovereignty over the islands.

If Mauritius achieves its longstanding aim - supported, it says, in international law - it will mean the end of the British Indian Ocean territory. The territory was established in 1965 when Britain expelled the islanders and allowed the US to set up a large base in a deal that included cutting the cost of Polaris missiles for the UK's nuclear submarines.

The agreement signed by the US and UK in 1966 expires in 2016. Both parties must agree to extend, modify or end it by December 2014. Ramgoolam said Mauritius wanted to be

an equal partner in talks. "The objective of 2014 is to reassert sovereignty," he said.

Ramgoolam described yesterday's meeting as "very cordial", adding: "It augurs well for the future". He said that "without question" there was a need for the west to have a base on Diego Garcia.

He is travelling to Washington soon where he is likely to reassure the US that its base would remain on the island under Mauritian sovereignty. Diego Garcia was used as a base for US bombers targeting Iraq and Afghanistan and would almost certainly be used in any attack on Iran.

Britain is under growing pressure in the courts over its treatment of the Chagos islanders. Next month the high court is due to rule on the UK's decision to impose a 200-mile marine protected area around the islands, a case the government is expected to lose. And the European court of human rights is due to rule soon on whether the islanders should have the right to return.

Ramgoolam is to report on his meeting with Cameron - the first between prime ministers of the two countries for 30 years - to the Mauritian parliament on Tuesday.

Downing Street and the Foreign Office would not comment on the talks. Foreign Office officials have been accused of undermining previous British ministerial promises.

David Snoxell, a former UK high commissioner to Mauritius and now the co-ordinator of parliament's all-party Chagos Islands group, said: "This was a unique opportunity for both sides to agree a way out of the Chagos maelstrom, which has for decades dogged UK-Mauritius relations. It is heartening that talks have been agreed but they

would be without substance unless sovereignty, Chagossian return and the marine protected area are included."

Ramgoolam also signed an anti-piracy agreement with the UK whereby Mauritius would prosecute and jail convicted pirates seized by the Royal Navy. Cameron was delighted to sign the agreement, according to a Downing Street statement, which made no reference to the talks on the Chagos Islands.

New York Times

June 9, 2012

Pg. 1

35. Holder Directs U.S. Attorneys To Track Down Paths Of Leaks

By Charlie Savage

WASHINGTON —

Attorney General Eric H. Holder Jr. on Friday assigned two United States attorneys to lead separate criminal investigations into recent disclosures to the news media of national security secrets, saying they were authorized to "follow all appropriate investigative leads within the executive and legislative branches of government."

Their appointment followed calls in Congress this week for a crackdown on leaks after disclosures on topics including drone strikes and a computer virus attack against Iran's nuclear program. Several of the revelations were published by The New York Times.

"The unauthorized disclosure of classified information can compromise the security of this country and all Americans, and it will not be tolerated," Mr. Holder said in a statement. "The Justice Department takes seriously cases in which government employees and contractors entrusted with classified

information are suspected of willfully disclosing such classified information to those not entitled to it, and we will do so in these cases as well.”

Several members of Congress from both parties this week expressed alarm about recent leaks, and some Republicans had called for the appointment of a special prosecutor with greater independence from day-to-day supervision by the Obama administration to investigate.

But Mr. Holder instead assigned two prosecutors — Ronald C. Machen, the United States attorney for the District of Columbia, and Rod J. Rosenstein, his counterpart in Maryland — to take over direction of existing investigations by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, elevating the stature of the cases but not giving them any special powers.

Earlier Friday, President Obama declared that the White House had not been behind the recent leaks and vowed to prosecute the people responsible for disclosing classified information if they could be identified.

“Since I’ve been in office, my attitude has been zero tolerance for these kinds of leaks and speculation,” Mr. Obama said at a news conference. “Now we have mechanisms in place where, if we can root out folks who have leaked, they will suffer consequences. In some case, it’s criminal. These are criminal acts when they release information like this. And we will conduct thorough investigations, as we have in the past.”

The Obama administration has already compiled an aggressive record of prosecuting people accused of leaking national security secrets. It has brought six such

cases, compared with three under all previous presidents combined.

The recent disclosures included the revelation that a plot by the Yemen branch of Al Qaeda to bomb an airliner had been foiled because of penetration by a double agent, details about the joint American-Israeli computer virus called Stuxnet that sabotaged Iran’s nuclear centrifuges, and an account of Mr. Obama’s role in approving a “kill list” of terrorism suspects for drone strikes.

They include reports published by The New York Times, The Associated Press, Newsweek and other news media outlets, some of which were derived from recently published books by reporters for The Times and Newsweek.

They followed previous disclosures about the operation that located and killed Osama bin Laden, both in the aftermath of the raid and then again around its anniversary this spring.

The Justice Department did not say which leaks in particular were now under investigation, apparently because doing so would implicitly confirm that certain reports contained accurate classified information.

Some Republicans have accused the White House of risking national security for political gain by deliberately disclosing secret information that makes Mr. Obama look tough — even as it prosecutes lower-level current and former officials for other leaks that did not confer any political advantage.

“It is difficult to escape the conclusion that these recent leaks of highly classified information, all of which have the effect of making the president look strong and decisive on national security in the middle of his re-

election campaign, have a deeper political motivation,” said Senator John McCain of Arizona, the ranking Republican on the Senate Armed Services Committee and Mr. Obama’s 2008 presidential campaign opponent, this week.

But Mr. Obama called such accusations wrong.

“The notion that my White House would purposefully release classified national security information is offensive,” he said, adding: “But as I think has been indicated from these articles, whether or not the information they’ve received is true, the writers of these articles have all stated unequivocally that they didn’t come from this White House, and that’s not how we operate.”

While still accountable to the attorney general, a special counsel has greater day-to-day independence. During the Bush administration, for example, Patrick J. Fitzgerald, the United States attorney in Chicago, was appointed special counsel to investigate the disclosure of the identity of Valerie Plame Wilson, a Central Intelligence Agency operative, and eventually charged Vice President Dick Cheney’s top aide, I. Lewis Libby Jr., with perjury.

While the two prosecutors are not special counsels, Mr. Holder said he had “every confidence in their abilities to doggedly follow the facts and the evidence in the pursuit of justice wherever it leads.”

But several Republican lawmakers said they were not satisfied. In a joint statement, for example, Mr. McCain and Senator Lindsey Graham of South Carolina said, “This investigation involves some of the most serious breaches of national security in recent memory and any investigation must be done

in a manner free and clear of political considerations. The recent decision of the attorney general falls far short of what is needed and is not an adequate substitute for an outside special counsel.”

Mr. Rosenstein was appointed in 2005 by President George W. Bush after holding several positions in the Justice Department under administrations of both parties; he also worked for the office of Kenneth W. Starr, the independent counsel who investigated the Whitewater affair during the Clinton administration. Mr. Machen was appointed in 2010 by Mr. Obama, after working as a partner at the WilmerHale law firm and serving as a career prosecutor in the 1990s.

In comments to several news outlets earlier this week, Dean Baquet, managing editor of The Times, said the newspaper’s reporters had come by the information through “tons and tons of reporting” over the course of months, not handouts. He also said the newspaper had told officials about its findings ahead of their publication and withheld some technical details about the Stuxnet operation at their request.

On Friday, Danielle Rhoades Ha, a spokeswoman for The Times, said the newspaper had nothing further to say.

“We do not discuss sourcing in articles,” she said.

Honolulu Star-Advertiser
June 8, 2012
Pg. 3

36. U.S. Veterans Oppose Return Of Philippine Bells

By Mead Gruver, Associated Press

CHEYENNE, WYO.-- Military veterans are stirred up

and speaking out against the possibility that the U.S. might return three church bells seized as spoils of war from the Philippines more than a century ago.

Such a simple gesture would go a long way toward demonstrating good will to an old and steadfast U.S. ally in the western Pacific.

The U.S. veterans' opinion on returning the bells? Don't even think about it.

"We oppose the return of the bells, period," said John Stovall, director of national security and foreign relations for the national American Legion.

Two of the three Bells of Balangiga are displayed at F.E. Warren Air Force Base in Cheyenne. They are part of a memorial to 46 U.S. troops killed by Filipino insurgents in 1901. A third bell is with a U.S. Army regiment in South Korea.

Last week the Defense Department sent U.S. Marines Brig. Gen. Richard Simcock to Wyoming to talk with veterans about the bells. The visit was the strongest indication that officials are giving serious consideration to returning the bells.

Filipinos revere the bells as symbols of their long struggle for independence. The bells gave the signal for insurgents to attack American soldiers who were occupying Balangiga after the U.S. took possession of the Philippines after the Spanish-American War.

The issue could come up at the highest levels as Philippine President Benigno Aquino III visits the U.S. this week and meets with President Barack Obama and others.

Messages left with the Philippine Embassy in Washington, D.C., weren't returned, but a senior White House official said the bells

are an important and emotional issue in both countries.

Los Angeles Times
June 9, 2012

37. Ex-Iowa Sailors Salute The Ship As It Makes Its Final Port Call

John Wolfinbarger, 88, and others will be on hand as the biggest U.S. battleship ever built is towed to its permanent home in San Pedro, where it will become a museum.

By Steve Chawkins, Los Angeles Times

When the big guns of the battleship Iowa pounded Japanese troops during World War II, John Wolfinbarger could feel it in the boiler room deep below decks.

It was 1944, and Wolfinbarger was 19. He was a Colorado boy who suddenly was in the sweltering Pacific, his ship shuddering with each blast. Every couple of days, he'd have to crawl into a hot boiler and scrape burnt fuel oil from its pipes. It was grimy, cramped, tedious work — and he treasures the memory of it, just like a legion of other former Iowa sailors who will salute the ship Saturday as it's towed two miles to its permanent home as a waterfront museum in San Pedro.

Wolfinbarger, 88, will be among the hundreds of Iowa veterans on hand.

Sailors often get misty over old ships, and those who served on the biggest U.S. battleship ever built are no different. The nearly 70-year-old Iowa played a crucial role in their lives, and its story can be told in the everyday experiences of unsung men like Wolfinbarger.

"I don't want to say I enjoyed it — war is never joyous — but it was an honor," he said.

Wolfinbarger first hauled his sea bag aboard the Iowa in the Marshall Islands.

His immediate impression was that of any other swabbie surveying a great, gray vessel 15 stories high and almost as long as three football fields.

"I thought, 'Oh, my achin' back!'" he said.

Wolfinbarger, who later went to work in coal mines and sawmills, slept outside on the teakwood deck instead of in the hot, crowded quarters below. For nearly two years, he rolled out a blanket under one of the ship's famous 16-inch cannons that could hurl 2,700-pound shells more than 24 miles.

When the Iowa was attacking the Japanese stronghold of Saipan, Wolfinbarger was stationed high in a crow's nest. It was the only battle he witnessed, and he hated it. Even worse was the aftermath, with broken bodies bobbing near the beach, families who hurled themselves off cliffs rather than endure what they thought would be American torture.

"It was horrible," Wolfinbarger said. He spent the rest of his tour down in the boiler room.

Four years after being present for the 1945 Japanese surrender in Tokyo Bay, the Iowa was decommissioned by a Navy trying to cut costs. It returned to duty in 1952 and soon was dubbed "the gray ghost of the Korean coast."

Richard Blair remembers it well. He had a number of jobs in his 45 months on the Iowa, including handling phones for its commanding officer during battles in the Korean War.

"I spent my 19th birthday in Wonsan Harbor and we were firing day and night, day and night," said Blair, a retired banker and medical office manager. "That day —

Aug. 19 — I spent about 12 hours on the bridge with the captain, and we blew up everything we possibly could."

The Iowa picked up downed fliers and came to the aid of ships that were hit. Blair, 78, of Lancaster, was helping to transfer wounded sailors from a stricken destroyer "when, suddenly, these bundles started coming over — bundles wrapped in rope with a tab that said something like 'Johnny Jones, 18.'"

"They were just bundles," he said. "That got to me."

Combat lasted eight months. The rest of the time there were plenty of spit-and-polish chores but also a world of new experiences at ports in the Caribbean, the Mediterranean and elsewhere.

Blair was on the USS Iowa swim team that won an Atlantic Fleet title. He remembers "The Ed Sullivan Show" broadcasting from the Iowa, with ventriloquist and acrobats. As a chaplain's assistant, he organized Christmas parties for orphans in Norfolk, Va.

"I was the lucky guy who got to go out and buy the toys," said Blair, who later ran a Scout troop in San Fernando for 25 years. "And I got to pick one of the big guys from the crew to be Santa."

The uneasy peace of the Cold War had taken root by the time Bernie Kopell, a 24-year-old novice actor from Brooklyn, hopped aboard in 1956.

"I don't like to talk about my heroism," said Kopell, "but what the hell: I was a librarian. I kept America safe from overdue books!"

Kopell, now 78 and living in Tarzana, went on to TV fame as Dr. Adam Bricker, the skirt-chasing ship's physician on "The Love Boat."

The Iowa was a looming presence at NATO exercises

and in ports around the world, but the world was changing.

At a bar on the naval base at Guantanamo Bay, Kopell and some buddies were talking politics.

"There were rumors going around about this guy in the hills who was planning to come down and take over the country," Kopell said.

The sailors, gazing down at the Iowa and other U.S. warships anchored in the bay, were incredulous.

"'Are you kidding?' one of them said. 'If he even tries it, we'll squash him like a bug.'" Fidel Castro took over Cuba in January 1959.

Meanwhile, the era of U.S. battleships was again declared over. The Iowa was decommissioned a second time in 1958 and stayed anchored off the Philadelphia Navy Yard for most of the next 26 years.

To beef up a dwindling Navy, President Reagan ordered the Iowa restored, rigged with Tomahawk and Harpoon missiles, and, at a cost of \$350 million, sent back to sea in 1984.

In 1986, Reagan stood on the Iowa's deck in New York Harbor for festivities marking the Statue of Liberty's 100th birthday. The battleship's guns were silent for fear of shattering windows in lower Manhattan.

In all its years at sea, the Iowa suffered only two minor hits by enemy fire. Its greatest tragedy was in peacetime, when a gun turret explosion in the Caribbean killed 47 sailors.

The Navy laid the blame for the 1989 accident on a sailor who was allegedly distraught over a failed relationship with another man. Officials backpedaled two years later, saying the blast's cause could not be determined.

Peter Sunshine, a 20-year-old Navy journalist, was supposed to be in Turret Two

that day. Instead he agreed to make chicken soup for a shipboard Seder and was heading up a ladder, chicken in hand, when the ship was rocked.

"It was almost surreal at first," said Sunshine, 42, who runs a coupon website in Cleveland, Tenn. "Everyone was scrambling to suit up or help people suit up. We were listing a bit to one side and our concern was that the ship would become one big grenade."

Sunshine helped crews drag fire hoses into the blazing turret. He did triage, picking out the most seriously injured sailors for immediate treatment. He helped care for the dead.

"A big part of what I did," he said, "was to move bodies around."

Over a loudspeaker, a voice called out the names of the missing, ordering them to report. Sunshine's name was mistakenly among them.

"A lot of people knew me," he said. "I'd get a walking-ghost-type stare."

Sunshine enlisted right after high school in Queens, N.Y.

"I'm this 19-year-old kid meeting up with this amazing, awesome warship in New Orleans during Mardi Gras," he said. "I thought this was the life for me. It was amazing."

After the blast, the Iowa was more austere.

"If you were young, you grew up that day," he said.

In 1990, Pentagon budget cuts knocked the Iowa out of service for the third and final time, eventually sending it to the mothball fleet bobbing in Suisun Bay, near San Francisco.

Its commander called the decision "most painful."

"To a man," said Cmdr. John P. Morse, "we are reluctant to give up our ship."

GovExec.com
June 8, 2012

38. Selective Service Not Equipped To Handle A Draft, Watchdog Finds

By Andrew Lapin

After years of Defense Department neglect, the Selective Service System doesn't have enough personnel or resources to induct service members in the event the military draft is reinstated, according to a Government Accountability Office investigation.

The report, sent Thursday to the heads of the House and Senate Armed Services Committees, faults Defense for not re-examining its draft policies or taking a closer look at the Selective Service System since 1994. This is despite the fact the agency is charged with keeping an active record of all American males eligible for service. Selective Service's role has been significantly diminished since Defense established all-volunteer armed forces in 1973.

In the event of a draft, which would require Congress and the president to enact a law reinstating the practice, the agency would be required to hold a lottery to determine inductees according to age and birth date. All men between the ages of 18 and 25 are eligible for the draft.

The Selective Service System has cut personnel steadily since 1997. With a current staff budget for 130 full-time civilian employees and 175 part-time reserve forces officers, the agency would not be able to deliver the first draft inductees to Defense until 285 days after mobilization, according to GAO.

Selective Service's requested budget for fiscal 2013 was \$24.4 million. This is down significantly in adjusted dollars from \$22.9 million in fiscal 1997, which would equate to \$31.5 million today,

according to GAO. While the Selective Service System database contained 16.4 million names in 2010 and added 2.2 million in 2011, officials told GAO that a lack of personnel to set up area offices nationwide would make the actual induction process a difficult and arduous one.

In interviewing Selective Service System officials about potential alternatives to their agency, GAO found difficulties in replicating a database of eligible service members. Though other government agencies -- including the Social Security Administration, Department of Motor Vehicles and Census Bureau -- maintain similar databases of U.S. citizens, each has inherent flaws. A database of all Social Security participants, for example, would neglect immigrants with no Social Security number.

GAO recommended Defense once more evaluate its Selective Service requirements to account for the current state of national security and to "establish a process of periodically reevaluating these requirements." Though a Quadrennial Defense Review is issued every four years, the review does not include an analysis of the draft database.

Defense concurred with GAO's recommendations.

Baltimore Sun
June 9, 2012
Pg. 4

39. Aberdeen Proving Ground Workers Indicted For Theft

By Tricia Bishop

Four civilians working at Aberdeen Proving Ground were indicted Friday on charges they stole more than 50,000 pounds of government copper and aluminum, worth \$212,000, from the U.S. Army facility.

Electricians Timothy J. Bittner, 52, of Bel Air; Steven M. Coale, 33, of North East; and Robert W. Reynolds, 29, of Felton, Pa. are charged in one indictment with conspiracy and theft for allegedly stealing more than 25,000 pounds of copper fixtures and wire, then selling it to metal recyclers in Maryland and surrounding states for \$87,000.

Patrol boat operator Ronald Phillips Baker Sr., 62, of Havre de Grace, is charged in a separate indictment with two counts of theft. He's accused of swiping 2,700 pounds of aluminum--in the form of outriggers used to test "mine-resistant ambush-protected vehicles"--worth roughly \$110,000 in one instance, and more than 27,000 pounds of the metal, worth about \$15,000, on other occasions.

"The indictments should send a strong message that this type of egregious behavior--allegations of theft while supposedly working on the Government clock, to include even stripping active copper wire from an APG building--will not be tolerated," Robert Craig, Special Agent in Charge for the Mid-Atlantic field office of the Defense Criminal Investigative Service.

Bittner, Coale and Reynolds were all working at the Department of Public Works at Aberdeen, according to the indictment against them, and used their skills as electricians, along with government equipment, to pull wire out of buildings while on the job from March 2011 through November of that year.

Baker, who patrolled the Chesapeake Bay to make sure no one strayed into waters used for weapons testing, is accused of taking the outriggers in April of this year, and the remaining aluminum over a 19-month

period beginning in September 2010.

All four defendants face up to 10 years in prison for theft of government property. Bittner, Reynolds and Coale also face up to five years in prison for conspiracy.

The Weekend Australian
June 9, 2012

Pg. 22

40. Afghan Cat Has Been Let Out Of The Bag

A frank answer to a direct question shows we have admitted defeat in Afghanistan
By Greg Sheridan, Foreign editor

THE Gillard government has quietly declared defeat in Afghanistan, while its public rhetoric preposterously claims the opposite.

The truth came a week ago in Senate estimates committee testimony. Senate estimates hearings are the best of parliament. Senior officials answer detailed questions, at length, under oath and conscientiously.

The moment of crystalline clarity on Afghanistan came in the testimony of AusAID director general Peter Baxter.

Baxter said: "We ... take account of the fact that the government has always said publicly that the time for transition will come in 2014, when the Afghan national security forces take the lead for providing security throughout the country. When that happens in Oruzgan province, and if the Australian forces leave the province as is planned, we will run our programs from Kabul rather than retain a physical presence in Oruzgan province. Certainly, without the provision of force protection -- the physical presence of the Australian defence forces in Oruzgan province -- we will not

be able to continue to operate as we do now."

So there you have it, folks. We and the Americans and a vast international coalition have been at war in Afghanistan for 10 years. Julia Gillard and Defence Minister Stephen Smith tell us how well everything is going in transition to an effective Afghan government security capability by 2014.

But guess what?

We already know the security situation we leave behind will be so awful that we won't allow a single civilian to serve there.

Baxter's testimony is valuable because it provides an objective measure, free of spin.

This is no criticism of Baxter. AusAID has a duty of care to its employees and contractors.

But this is the bitter truth.

Afghanistan is shaping up as a failed war.

This week I have spoken to a number of the best-informed people on Afghanistan, most off the record. They are universally pessimistic. The best-case scenario is that the corrupt and ineffective government of Hamid Karzai and his successors will hold on for a bit, propped up by billions of dollars of aid coming from the Americans and others, including us.

The Americans plan to maintain an ongoing military presence in Afghanistan. This might be 20,000 or so soldiers, with a special forces contingent. It is likely that some Australian special forces will be there too.

What would this US presence guarantee?

They would probably keep something in Herat, near the Iranian border, mainly to annoy the Iranians. They would keep a big presence at Bagram, which allows them to move planes in and out and to send drones

on surveillance and targeted kill missions. And they would provide some security in Kabul. But they would almost certainly not be out in the provinces underpinning the authority of the central government.

It may be that for a few years the Afghan government could keep control of the main cities. Then again, maybe not. It is likely that the Afghans will revert to the low level, chronic tribal fighting and warlordism that has characterised much of its past. It is also equally likely that you could get full-scale civil war in Afghanistan.

One of the most discouraging signs is the total collapse of relations between the US and Pakistan, leading to US Defence Secretary Leon Panetta calling on India to do more in Afghanistan. Pakistan will certainly be one of the key determinants of a post-ISAF Afghanistan, and this move by Panetta can only reinforce Pakistan's inclination to keep the Taliban as a strategic asset to provide it strategic depth.

If Pakistan ramps up the Taliban after the US and Australia are gone, the prospects of the central government would be very dim. So the best prospect is the gradual ebbing of Kabul's authority, the middle prospect some kind of low-grade civil war, and the worst prospect control by a full-scale Taliban or neo-Taliban, perhaps disguised with a new name.

As one deeply experienced regional analyst put it to me: "It's likely that a few years after you've gone from Afghanistan, there will be very little evidence that you were ever there."

This is certainly no criticism of the Australian troops on the ground. They have been magnificent and have done everything asked of them. But we have lacked a strategy for Oruzgan, as Peter

Leahy, the former chief of the army and now head of the National Security Institute at the University of Canberra, argues: "From the redeployment to Afghanistan in 2006 our mission has been confused between eradicating al-Qa'ida, punishing the Taliban, providing security, mentoring the Afghan forces and providing civilian development. Because of that confusion, we haven't applied all of the national power available to us."

Oddly, one of the finest tributes to the Australian soldiers comes from an organisation called The Liaison Office. It was commissioned by the Dutch embassy and AusAID to write a report on Oruzgan, 18 months after the Dutch left and handed over reconstruction leadership to Australia. AusAID apparently didn't like what it said and withdrew its commission. But its report, of which I have a copy, is fascinating reading. It interviewed nearly 200 Oruzgan civilians and although polite, paints a picture of an extremely primitive province, with extremely primitive government, easily contested by the Taliban.

But what improved security the province enjoyed the report attributes heavily to the Australians. It says in part: "Overall, respondents in Oruzgan appreciated the clear stance of the Australian Defence Force vis-a-vis the insurgency. A tribal elder comparing the three militaries (Dutch, American and Australian) argued that the Dutch were kind of friends of the Taliban, while the Australians hate the Taliban and kill them."

That is an eloquent and deserved tribute to fine Australian warriors. But once we're gone, so is security.

Recently, the Gillard government made great play of Australia's taking over formal military leadership of coalition forces in Oruzgan. This is a very post-modern, very Gillard, kind of announcement because it means absolutely nothing.

The colonel in charge of the allied headquarters in Tarin Kowt used to be an American. He will now be replaced by the Australian colonel who was his 2IC.

None of the staffing of the headquarters, which was overwhelmingly Australian anyway, will change.

And there was something vague and dodgy about the way government spokesmen didn't quite guarantee that the US combat battalion would stay in Oruzgan while ever we are there.

For that matter, the Afghan brigade we are notionally training may not stay either. As soon as it is declared combat-ready, it becomes part of the Afghan National Army and can be deployed anywhere.

But now we are leaving Afghanistan. Not before time. Our presence there is only to show the Americans we are loyal allies, and perhaps to give the Gillard government cover for the radical destruction of our own defence forces at home.

TheDailyBeast.com

June 8, 2012

41. Daniel Klaidman On The Mind Of A Drone Strike Operator

As the U.S. takes out another high-value al Qaeda target, the debate over Obama's 'kill lists' continues. Daniel Klaidman offers a rare glimpse into what it feels like to pull the trigger.

On Wednesday, wire services reported that 18 civilians were killed in a pre-dawn airstrike in eastern Afghanistan. Afghan President

Hamid Karzai blasted the NATO strike, pointing out that the U.S. government would have a hard time explaining the vans filled with the dead bodies of women and children that local villagers displayed for reporters. This latest example of civilians caught in the crossfire of America's Long War got a few mentions in the papers and on TV, but it didn't inspire much outrage.

And yet it occurred in the middle of a heated debate in Washington and around the country about drone strikes and President Obama's personal involvement in the military's so-called "kill lists."

Why do conventional airstrikes seem to draw so little attention, while drone attacks arouse paroxysms of anger among war critics and many progressives? Is there a moral difference between dropping ordnance from a manned aircraft thousands of feet above a target and firing a Hellfire missile remotely from thousands of miles away in a CIA cubicle? It's hard to come by credible figures comparing casualties that result from these two methods of attack. But there's little doubt that drones, with their ability to linger over targets for hours and even days, are the more precise form of weaponry.

So why this "fetishization" of drones, as Bill Roggio, the editor of a website that tracks targeted killings, puts it? One reason may be that people feel uncomfortable targeting individuals for death. There's something particularly ghoulish about the specter of a president going over a hit list and personally choosing targets for execution. (The reality with Obama is far more complex and reassuring. He has acted more as a constraint on military killings than as a catalyst.) There are debates within

legal circles about the ethical propriety of carrying out these state-sponsored targeted strikes, and whether the U.S. should be developing norms for an emergent type of warfare whose popularity is only growing. Then there's the technology itself. People are fascinated by drones; the precision of their lethality makes them seem more sinister than conventional weapons.

But I think there's another factor at play in the psychology of drones: their remoteness. The fact that a CIA or military operator can take out a target from the comfortable confines of their cubicle, far removed from the battlefield, without subjecting themselves to any risk, troubles people. The suggestion is that the ability to kill remotely dulls one's moral sensibilities. But is that true? It's hard to know without talking to CIA drone operators themselves. Since the program is covert, that's not possible. But in reporting my book, *Kill or Capture: The War on Terror and the Soul of the Obama Presidency*, I was able to get a remarkable, if second hand, glimpse into the mind set of a CIA drone operator.

In the book, I report out a conversation between the State Department's legal adviser, Harold Koh, and a drone operator at CIA headquarters. Koh, perhaps the most forceful advocate of human rights law in the Obama administration, was preparing a speech in defense of targeted killing, and wanted to do his homework; he wasn't going to put his reputation in jeopardy without knowing the drone strike program and its protocols inside and out. He spent hours at Langley grilling agency lawyers and operators. The operators were naturally suspicious of Koh--a wariness only fueled by Koh's blunt demeanor. "I hear you guys

have a PlayStation mentality," he said.

The operators of the unmanned drones were civilians, but most were ex-Air Force pilots who took umbrage at the idea that they were "cubicle warriors" morally detached from killing. The lead operator lit into Koh. "I used to fly my own air missions," he began defensively. "I dropped bombs, hit my target load, but had no idea who I hit. Here I can look at their faces. I watch them for hours, see these guys playing with their kids and wives. When I get them alone, I have no compunction about blowing them to bits. But I wouldn't touch them with civilians around. After the strike, I see the bodies being carried out of the house. I see the women weeping and in positions of mourning. That's not PlayStation; that's real. My job is to watch after the strike too. I count the bodies and watch the funerals. I don't let others clean up the mess."

The conversation must have proved persuasive; Koh gave his speech, defending the legal underpinning of the job the drone operator and his colleagues do.

Klaidman, a former NEWSWEEK managing editor, is writing a book on President Obama and terrorism to be published by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt in 2012.

SmallWarsJournal.com
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This Week at War **42. An Arms Race** **America Can't Win**

By Robert Haddick

In my *Foreign Policy* column, I explain that while the U.S. can't win an arms race against China, it still has some decisive trump cards to play.

In a speech delivered on June 2 to the

Shangri-La Security Dialogue conference in Singapore, U.S. Defense Secretary Leon Panetta attempted to convince his audience that America's "rebalancing" strategy to the Asia-Pacific region -- previous called a "pivot" -- is serious and will be backed by expanded military power. Panetta announced that by 2020, 60 percent of the U.S. Navy will be positioned in the Pacific. He also openly discussed the controversial Air-Sea Battle concept, while denying that the reinforcements and new plans are a challenge to China. He also promised to step up the presence of U.S. military forces in the region, both through new basing arrangements and by an expanded list of training exercises with partner military forces.

Panetta likely hoped his remarks would bolster the credibility of the administration's strategy. On closer examination, there is less to Panetta's Pacific naval buildup than meets the eye. The U.S. Navy's intelligence office, by contrast, expects China's naval expansion this decade to be more substantial, especially when it comes to its submarine force. The reinforcements that Panetta discussed and new ideas like the Air-Sea Battle concept are necessary but insufficient responses to the worsening military trends in the region. The United States should not expect to win an arms race in the Western Pacific. Instead, it will have to find other more enduring advantages if it hopes to craft a sustainable strategy for the region.

Panetta's promise to base 60 percent of the U.S. fleet in the Pacific was not news -- Navy Secretary Ray Mabus announced this intention in a speech back in March. Panetta's assertion that there is currently

a "50/50 percent split between the Pacific and the Atlantic" is also not quite right. According to the department's website, of the Navy's 186 major conventional warships (aircraft carriers, cruisers, destroyers, amphibious ships, and attack and cruise missile submarines), 101, or 54 percent, currently have home ports on the Pacific Ocean. The Navy's latest 30-year shipbuilding plan forecasts 181 of these major combat ships in the fleet in 2020. A 60 percent allocation implies 109 major combatants in the Pacific in 2020, an increase of eight such ships from today.

On the other hand, the U.S. Office of Naval Intelligence (ONI) forecasts that China's navy will own 106 major warships in 2020, up from 86 in 2009. Seventy-two of these are expected to be attack submarines, compared to 29 for the United States in the Pacific in 2020, under the 60 percent allocation assumption. For the two decades beyond 2020, the U.S. Navy's shipbuilding plan projects no increase in the number of major warships. China's long-range shipbuilding plans are unknown; however, its defense budget has increased at an 11.8 percent compound annual rate, after inflation, between 2000 and 2012, with no indications of any changes to that trend.

Of course, counting ships does not tell the whole story. Even more critical are the missions assigned to these ships and the conditions under which they will fight. In a hypothetical conflict between the United States and China for control of the South and East China Seas, the continental power would enjoy substantial structural advantages over U.S. forces.

China, for instance, would be able to use its land-based air power, located at many

dispersed and hardened bases, against naval targets. The ONI forecasts China's inventory of maritime strike aircraft rising from 145 in 2009 to 348 by 2020. U.S. land-based air power in the Western Pacific operates from just a few bases, which are vulnerable to missile attack from China (the Cold War-era Intermediate Nuclear Forces Treaty prevents the United States from developing theater-based surface-to-surface missiles with ranges sufficient to put Chinese bases at risk). A comparison of ship counts similarly does not include China's land-based anti-ship cruise missiles, fired from mobile truck launchers. Nor does it account for China's fleet of coastal patrol boats, also armed with anti-ship cruise missiles.

The Air-Sea Battle concept began as an effort to improve staff coordination and planning between the Navy and the Air Force in an effort to address the structural disadvantages these forces would have when going up against a well-armed continental power like China. The concept is about creating operational synergies between the services. An example of this synergy occurred in last year's campaign against Libya, when U.S. Navy cruise missiles destroyed Libya's air defense system, clearing the way for the U.S. Air Force to operate freely over the country.

But Air-Sea Battle still faces enormous challenges in overcoming the "home court" advantage a continental power enjoys deploying its missile forces from hidden, dispersed, and hardened sites. In addition, the United States faces a steep "marginal cost" problem with an opponent like China; additional defenses for U.S. ships are more expensive than additional Chinese missiles. And China can acquire

hundreds or even thousands of missiles for the cost of one major U.S. warship.

Given these structural weaknesses, Air-Sea Battle's success will rely not on endlessly parrying the enemy's missiles, but striking deeply at the adversary's command posts, communications networks, reconnaissance systems, and basing hubs in order to prevent missiles from being launched in the first place. Such strikes would mean attacks on space systems, computer networks, and infrastructure, with implications for the broader civilian economy and society. Some critics of Air-Sea Battle reason that raising the stakes in this manner would make terminating a conflict much more difficult and would escalate the conflict into domains -- such as space and cyber -- that are particular vulnerabilities for the United States.

The United States won't be able to win an arms race against China and currently has no plans to do so. Nor can the Pentagon count on superior military technology; China already has impressive scientific and engineering capabilities, which are only getting better. Instead, U.S. policymakers need to discover enduring strategic advantages that don't require keeping a qualitative or quantitative lead in weapons. Geography may be one such benefit. In a conflict, the so-called First Island Chain that runs from Japan to Taiwan and then to the Philippines could become a barrier to the Chinese navy and provide outposts for U.S. and allied sensors and missiles. China would likely view such preparations as a provocation, but from the allied perspective, they will complicate Chinese military planning.

Second, the United States and its allies are far more experienced at planning and conducting complicated military operations that require coordination across countries and military services. With a long-established network of alliances and partnerships in the region, U.S. commanders and their counterparts have accumulated decades of experience operating together. One aspect of Air-Sea Battle is to further extend this advantage.

The most powerful U.S. advantage is the alliance network itself. Washington's long list of treaty allies and partners provides options for U.S. and allied policymakers and planners. The alliance network could also help convert the threat of escalation to a U.S. advantage. The more U.S. military forces are able to disperse across the region, at temporary or rotational basing arrangements, the more difficult it will be for China to gain an advantage with military power. In order to achieve such an advantage, China will have to attack a wider number of countries, bringing them into a war on the U.S. side. This prospect should deter conflict from beginning.

The more successful U.S. diplomacy is at building up a large network in the region, the stronger the deterrent effect and the less risk assumed by each member. With its outreach to ASEAN countries and others over the past decade, the United States seems to be on this path. New rotational basing deals with Australia, Singapore, and the Philippines are more evidence of this approach. But more diplomatic success will be required as the challenge from China increases.

U.S. military planners face unfavorable trends in the Western Pacific. Panetta and his lieutenants have sent

reinforcements to the region and are rewriting their military doctrines. Although these measures are necessary, U.S. policymakers will need another way. Good strategy requires finding enduring advantages. The alliance network in the region provides U.S. commanders with partner military forces, basing options, operational experience, and deterrence against escalation, advantages China won't match any time soon. In this sense, the solution to the challenging military problem U.S. forces face in the Western Pacific will be found as much with more diplomacy as with more firepower.

Robert Haddick is Managing Editor of Small Wars Journal. He writes the "This Week at War" column for Foreign Policy. Haddick was a U.S. Marine Corps officer, served in the 3rd and 23rd Marine Regiments, and deployed to Asia and Africa. He has advised the State Department and the National Intelligence Council on irregular warfare issues.

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.

43. Decline Of American Satellites Is A Matter Of National Security

America's scientific satellites are in rapid decline, with few plans to replace them. The United States depends on satellites to track storms, monitor disasters, and build the economy. The US and private industry must work together to rebuild the satellite fleet.

By Frank Muller-Karger

St. Petersburg, Fla.-- SpaceX's Dragon vehicle and its recent blast into space have gotten plenty of press. Many see the shift to privatized space travel as the nail in the coffin for the United States government's space exploration. But you likely haven't heard about another critical deficiency in the US space program: America is quickly losing its scientific satellites and the capabilities to launch them. Can we get industry and the US government to work together to get us back on track?

The United States was the first nation to deploy satellites to understand the Earth and its environment. In 1978, the NASA-NOAA SeaSat mission pioneered a number of technologies still good today to monitor the ocean. These space-based observations are critical for forecasting weather accurately, for scientific research, and for managing our natural resources.

We depend on these amazing eyes in the sky to build our economy, contain oil spills, monitor flooding, track storms, forecast local and global weather, and even put fish on our dinner tables. I know because as a biological oceanographer I use them every day. But I may not be able to do so for long.

A new report from the National Academies of Science entitled "Earth Science

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(csmonitor.com)
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and Applications from Space: A Midterm Assessment of NASA's Implementation of the Decadal Survey" tells us what we have known for more than five years: US satellites are in rapid decline, with few plans to replace them. Several of the oceanographic satellites that we have depended on for the past decade are no longer operating, and there are no plans to replace them.

The problem started in the mid-1990s, when the US government decided to drastically scale back NASA's Earth Observing System. A misguided program was then started to merge all weather and Earth research satellite capabilities. The new program seriously downgraded entire series of satellites and resulted in huge cost overruns and minimal government oversight.

But guess who paid the bill? You and I did. Did the government learn a lesson? No. As we started the new millennium, NASA still had not provided a vision for continuing the measurements that its own scientists had proven are needed to understand our planet and to sustain our American way of life.

When the science community was finally asked to help, the National Academies of Science put together the Decadal Survey in 2007, which was then largely ignored by the US government.

According to the Academies' newest reports, the US has now lost its wind sensors, an ocean color sensor, and a carbon observatory that did not reach space because of a rocket failure. The NASA Earth imaging sensors are now approaching 14 years in operation – more than twice their expected lifetime, and their cameras are degrading. We now have no US sensors

capable of measuring ocean currents.

And while the United States plans to launch a replacement of the Landsat remote sensing satellite by 2013 to replace the one that broke 10 years ago, there is still no plan for how to continue this mission. Yet maintaining the US satellite program is mandated by The Land Remote Sensing Policy Act of 1992.

Our entire strategy to look at our own planet from space looks like this.

The new Academies report alerts us again that the number of in-orbit and planned NASA and NOAA Earth observing missions will decline from 23 in 2012 to only six in 2020. And the number of Earth observing instruments mounted on such satellites will fall from about 110 in 2011 to fewer than 30 in 2020.

NASA has now also lost the capability to launch mid-sized satellites. The rockets to launch this class of satellites for NASA have all failed since 2009. Today the US can only launch very small or very big satellites – but not the class of satellites that we need to look at our own planet for science and good management of resources.

Because we are not building satellites, we are rapidly losing the best engineers to design satellite systems, while our scientists and graduate students no longer have access to the raw data we had only a year or two ago – or even 10 years ago. This means loss of expertise and technology with long-term implications for national security.

The loss is not just for scientists. The satellite data we use translates into managing everything from fisheries and shipping lanes to tracking red tides off Florida, Texas, California, and Mexico. At universities,

scientists and students work with all levels of government agencies to measure water quality conditions of the estuaries and coasts of our entire country as well as other nations.

Satellites were a key means to track oil during the Deepwater Horizon disaster and to help prevent more oil from reaching our coasts. Satellites also monitor the effects on the ocean from Mississippi River flooding, track storms, and estimate whether hurricanes will strengthen in warmer sea temperatures.

Today, China, India, Russia, South Korea, Japan, European nations, and several other countries are aggressively developing oceanographic satellite sensors. Yet our own country frequently delays new missions, cancels on-going missions, and suffers from launch failures, disorganization, and changes in mission design and scope. The American science community is often told by NASA managers to go look elsewhere for information and to use the foreign sensors if they can get the data.

The loss of our space capabilities is not just a matter of pride, nor is it hysteria. It's a matter of national security. Our nation cannot depend on critical information and technology from other countries, especially when we know that the data are not as good as that from our sensors. And this is only if we can get the data from our international colleagues at all – a well-known bone of contention for US scientists.

The US needs an immediate plan put together jointly by all relevant US agencies, working with industry, to bring down satellite costs, fix our launch capabilities, and lay out a series of affordable and high-quality missions

that give the best possible data to the US taxpayer. Such a partnership between government, researchers, and private industry is our best and only way forward.

Of course, these are challenging fiscal times, but as Congress tightens belts, America needs to keep continued activity in space science and engineering as a top national priority. Launching, maintaining, and improving satellites, whose data are vital to everyone dependent on a healthy and productive planet, is a priority that we cannot ignore.

Frank Muller-Karger is a professor of biological oceanography and remote sensing at the University of South Florida and the director of the Institute of Marine Remote Sensing.

Bloomberg.com

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Bloomberg View

44. A Fateful Fight That Boosted Military-Industrial Complex

By Tim Heffernan

You don't hear much about the battle of the Machine Tool Reserve anymore, and that's a shame. Fought inside the Beltway in the mid-1950s, it was a defining tussle over the nature of postwar national defense.

On one side were Harry Truman and Charles E. "Electric Charlie" Wilson, the ex-head of General Electric. On the other were Dwight Eisenhower and Charles E. "Engine Charlie" Wilson, the ex-head of General Motors. The former wanted to stockpile industrial equipment and raw materials that could be used to jumpstart arms production in the event of war. The latter wanted to stockpile the arms themselves, continuously

replacing and upgrading them even in times of peace.

Ultimately, Eisenhower and Engine Charlie won, and their model for defense production is the one followed by the Pentagon to this day. They got no laurels, but it's arguable that no single debate did more to shape the modern military.

It's certainly true that no other conflict involved a fight over the fate of 10 million pounds of government-owned goose down.

M-Day

The story begins immediately after World War II, as military planners sought to prepare for the battle everyone was sure was coming -- the one with the Soviet Union. (It even had a name: M-Day. "M" for mobilization.)

One of the first vulnerabilities identified was in the supply of machine tools -- things like hydraulic forges, lathes and drill presses -- that were needed to make tanks, artillery and airplanes. The Great Depression had sapped the country's machine-tool stock, leaving its arms-production capacity weak at the outset of World War II. Planners feared that the enormous drop-off in arms production after the war would lead to a similar shortage. As early as October 1945, Congress was hearing proposals for a government-owned machine tool reserve. The initial target was 65,000 units.

The sudden onset of the Korean War in 1950 pushed politicians and planners to take action more quickly than expected: Production of vital war materiel was delayed by as much as 18 months by a shortage of machine tools. Truman felt compelled to mention the emergency in his State of the Union address.

Electric Charlie Wilson, chief of the all-powerful Office of Defense Mobilization -- a man whose direct control of the U.S. wartime economy earned him the nickname "the co-president" -- desperately commandeered raw materials and ordered price controls to bring tool production rapidly up to speed.

It felt like the opening years of World War II all over again, even as war with the Soviets appeared ever closer. An arms shortage then could prove fatal to Western democracy.

And so throughout 1952, Truman and Electric Charlie pressed the Pentagon to make the stockpiling of arms-making tools its official policy. They succeeded in the final days of the administration.

Incoming president Eisenhower and his choice for secretary of Defense, Engine Charlie, opposed the move. Nevertheless, in July 1953 Congress passed a \$500 million appropriation bill for initial funding of the tool stockpile. Although it was essentially a piece of Truman legislation, Eisenhower signed it into law. The stockpilers had won the opening round.

More Weapons

Engine Charlie, however, still had options as secretary of Defense. The Air Force promptly "discovered" that its tooling inventory was sufficient for the moment. The money sat unused. And when the appropriation bill came up for renewal in 1954, it was cut to \$100 million. Meanwhile, funds flowed freely into weapons purchases and research. The shift to the Engine Charlie model of defense preparedness -- the constant replacement of materiel with newer, more advanced models -- had begun.

Still, inertia worked in the stockpilers' favor for a while. In the latter half of the

1950s, under various defense programs, the government built up vast reserves of "strategic" material: metals (including basics like aluminum and titanium, but also exotics like platinum and niobium); minerals (including asbestos and diamonds); rubber and various plastics; and 10,220,000 pounds of goose down (in the event of a winter war with the Soviets). By the time Eisenhower left office, the value of these stocks was estimated at nearly \$9 billion.

With the advent of ICBMs, nuclear submarines, and increasingly fast and deadly aircraft, however, the old demand for sheer weight of weaponry was being rendered obsolete, and the stockpiling faction was clearly in decline. War no longer hinged on the quantity, but rather on the quality, of weapons.

Moreover, the military-industrial complex Eisenhower warned about in his famous final address had emerged. Defense contractors weren't interested in stockpiling; they embraced a world in which constant spending on new weaponry would keep industry rolling. Innovation, not stability, was their goal.

Although it now seems quaint, stockpiling had been seen as a way of keeping up the traditional wall between government spending and private industry. Only in a public emergency would the government's materials be called upon. By contrast, uniting public and private interests in a "permanent armaments industry" -- the phrase is Eisenhower's -- was a revolutionary departure. (And Eisenhower, who oversaw that revolution, worried at its reach. "We must never let the weight of this combination endanger our liberties or democratic processes," he warned.)

When John F. Kennedy took office in January 1961, one of his first orders was a review of the government stockpile. It was found to be bloated, expensive and full of increasingly obsolete stuff. The dismantling began. Most of the raw materials found buyers, but the machine tools were actually a hard sell. The equipment was now hopelessly outdated for defense production.

What it was good for was vocational training. Over the next three decades, a sort of military-educational complex formed around the remaining machine tools, which found their way, through various Defense, Labor and Education Department programs, into technical and engineering schools. From more than 200,000 pieces of machinery in 1965, the stockpile had been reduced to about 30,000 by 1994, when the last warehouses were closed, a final disbursement conducted and the machine-tool reserve came, almost unremarked, to its end.

Tim Heffernan writes about heavy industry for the Atlantic and Popular Mechanics. The opinions expressed are his own.

National Journal

June 9, 2012

Need To Know: Technology

45. In Praise Of Cyberwar

It's better than the alternative. How malware could actually help keep the peace.

By Michael Hirsh

For most of the Cold War, the threat of mutually assured destruction kept the peace between the West and the Soviet bloc, despite the occasional proxy war (e.g., Vietnam) on the sidelines. It wasn't a pretty or pleasant peace -- it depended on the threat of nuclear extinction -- but it worked, especially after the

1962 Cuban missile crisis. The Cold War stayed cold.

Well, what if you could have a new form of MAD without the really scary, nuclear-extinction part? And what if, instead of an Israeli air attack on Iran's nuclear facilities that could turn an already volatile region into a frightening conflagration, you were able to mount a more peaceful, if no less aggressive, intrusion into the activities of rogue states such as Iran? Introducing American cyberwarfare.

Since The New York Times reported recently that U.S. and Israeli governments were behind the famous Stuxnet virus that disabled Iranian centrifuges, many experts have fretted publicly about the many hazards of cyberwar. "Cyberweapons are the most dangerous innovation of this century," said Eugene Kaspersky, the founder of Europe's largest antivirus company, which benefits from the perception of growing cyberthreats. The divulgence of the classified U.S. program is so controversial because it seems likely that other countries will now work harder to develop their own programs. Left unchecked, the advances could follow a Cold War pattern -- an unrestrained arms race accompanied by the risk of faulty, hair-trigger decisions in the face of an unknown cyberthreat, says James Steinberg, who retired last year as deputy secretary of State. "If you got an ambiguous warning, like satellites going blind, and didn't have a lot of time to respond, you would be pressured to respond. Use it or lose it."

But the prospect is not as grim as it looks. Steinberg admits that the use-it-or-lose-it threat is less pressing when the outcome is not nuclear

Armageddon. And if there were certain restraints in place between major powers such as the United States, China, and Russia -- for example, a cyber-risks reduction center, complete with early-warning systems -- that lessened the likelihood of accidental conflict, then growing cybercapabilities could actually reduce the overall risk of war between major states in the long run.

The reasoning is an updated version of MAD thinking, albeit without the scorched-earth, World War III aspect. In a hypothetical moment of tension between Washington and Beijing, would China be as likely to attack U.S. carriers in the South China Sea if it suspected that the U.S. could disrupt its GPS targeting? Conversely, would Washington be as ready to attack if it feared that China might shut down its satellites? The threshold for pushing the button would be higher.

It is true that "the U.S. is probably more dependent on computer systems for more of its infrastructure than any other country," says Matthew Bunn, a nuclear expert at Harvard University. "So it has an especially large amount to lose from a world of frequent cyberattacks." Attribution -- knowing who is breaking into your grid and where they are if you wish to retaliate -- is also difficult. "Today, hackers, terrorists, and crooks can attempt to be cyberpowers -- and it will be hard to distinguish among them," The Washington Post wrote in an editorial. "The concept of deterrence rests on the certainty of retaliation, but that certainty may not exist against a determined and elusive cyberfoe, so deterrence may not work at all in cyberspace."

Other experts, however, say those fears are exaggerated.

When it comes to the most sophisticated capabilities, evidence generally points to governments, not private hackers. As far as we know, rogue actors such as terrorist groups don't have anything close to the technical sophistication to infiltrate the U.S. defense or intelligence systems. Even if they did, their ability to act as more than an annoyance, temporarily disrupting servers, is doubtful. It is also difficult to develop a realistic mass-casualty scenario for cyberattacks: The nightmare scenarios involve a disruption of the nation's power grid or banking system.

Above all, cybertactics could supply a new way out of an old conundrum -- a kind of halfway house between the only two effective options that nations trying to resolve conflicts have known: diplomacy and war. "Having a tool that can slow certain programs you're worried about that's short of war may make war less likely," Bunn says. David Sanger, who reveals the U.S. role in Stuxnet in his new book, *Confront and Conceal: Obama's Secret Wars and Surprising Use of American Power*, writes that in designing Stuxnet with Israel, American officials were seeking in part "to dissuade the Israelis from carrying out their own preemptive strike against the Iranian nuclear facilities. To do that, the Israelis would have to be convinced that the new line of attack was working."

It's unclear whether Israel would have attacked had Stuxnet and other covert programs, such as the targeting of Iranian scientists, not been available. But Mark Hibbs, a nuclear expert at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace in Germany, says that the intensity of the U.S.-Israeli covert war indicates

that this is where Israel is putting its energy for now. He points out that Israel's 1981 attack on Iraq's Osirak nuclear reactor was preceded by attempts to assassinate Iraqi scientists. In the present case, it's possible that Stuxnet and other cyberweapons may have tipped the balance in Israel against taking a similar course.

Arizona Daily Star (Tucson)
June 9, 2012

46. Why Is The Military Giving Stuff Away?

By Robert Robb, Columnist

The attention has been on Pinal County Sheriff Paul Babeu's misuse of a Pentagon program to give away surplus equipment, but the program itself raises questions. If this stuff is so valuable, why is it surplus? Does the military buy more than it needs, or is it disposing of equipment too quickly? And why is it given away? Why not auction it off and raise some bucks to relieve the burden on taxpayers?

Houston Chronicle
June 8, 2012
Pg. B8

47. Surplus Telescopes?

Overspending on military budgets suggests NASA deserves a higher priority in D.C.

Call it giving hand-me-downs to a younger brother, or charity to the needy, but we're glad to see NASA get some help from the Department of Defense, which donated two unused space telescopes to the cash-strapped space agency ("Defense agency's junk now NASA jewel," Page A1, Tuesday).

NASA likely will use the Hubble-like telescopes, which were originally built for the National Reconnaissance Office, to study dark energy--the theoretical force that

explains why the universe seems to be expanding faster, rather than being slowed by gravity.

But these telescopes are also a study in another kind of unexpected expansion: that within the military budget. While NASA has suffered from budget woes over the last several years, the National Reconnaissance Office has two space satellites it doesn't need. Something is wrong with the way Congress is funding projects, and it doesn't take an infrared telescope to see it.

This isn't the only military expansion worth some study. For example, the House of Representatives has approved an extra \$100 million funding for a missile defense program on the East Coast that the Pentagon has said is unnecessary.

The military budget all too often seems to be driven not by what our armed forces actually need but by senators and representatives trying to win elections or push their agendas.

And when the Government Accountability Office tried to audit the military budget in 2010, the result was that "serious financial management problems at the Department of Defense" made its budget unauditable.

The United States should have the world's strongest military, but that is no excuse for irrational budget choices and fiscal waste.

While the military seems to be force-fed funds that it cannot track, NASA relies on Russia to transport astronauts to the International Space Station and our plans to go to the moon or mars have generally stalled. NASA's acting deputy director for astrophysics, Michael Moore, sums up the problem succinctly: "We have no money."

The universe is teeming with questions begging to be answered, and NASA, which has long launched humanity's forays into the unknown, has to rely on the military's leftovers.

NASA'S decades of exploration and discovery have been a light to the world of a more hopeful future, and that is a future worth funding.

Fairbanks Daily News-Miner
June 9, 2012

48. Ideal Location: Eielson Is Right Place For Refueling Tankers

Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta knows the United States is a Pacific nation. It's sometimes hard to tell whether the department he leads also knows it.

"I was born and raised in a coastal town in California called Monterey, and have spent a lifetime looking out across the Pacific Ocean," Panetta said Saturday at a conference in Singapore. That ocean is wide, but "I've always understood that America's fate is inexorably linked with this region," Panetta said.

Given this perspective, a recent bit of news from Panetta's department seems incongruous. Of the 11 bases expected to receive new aerial refueling tankers, only one is in the Pacific, according to a U.S. Air Force plan being questioned by Alaska's congressional delegation.

That base will not necessarily be in Alaska, where the Air National Guard anchors the refueling work from Eielson Air Force Base southeast of Fairbanks. The new KC-46A tankers could go to Hawaii instead.

"It is my view that the new technology and capability brought to the table by the KC-46A should be placed at the forward edge where its use

can be maximized," Sen. Lisa Murkowski, R-Alaska, wrote in a May 24 letter to Air Force officials. "Siting a single KC-46A unit in the Pacific does not achieve this goal."

Murkowski also noted Alaska has a unique geographic location that makes it ideal for refueling tankers. A person can see that by wrapping a string across a globe to find the shortest route between the Lower 48 and any nation in eastern Asia. That string will pass much closer to Alaska than Hawaii. In fact, in most cases it will pass over Alaska.

That's because the shortest distances between two points on the globe are not found by following the horizontal lines of latitude. Rather, they're found along the great circle routes, which run diagonally to the lines of latitude unless one is traveling between two points on the equator. Aircraft must follow the great circle routes to get places in the shortest amount of time while burning the least amount of fuel.

It's a little hard to believe until one sees it, but the great circle route between Los Angeles and Bangkok, Thailand, for example, actually crosses Alaska's Aleutian Islands. For any destination north of Bangkok, the route is only more firmly centered in Alaska airspace.

Secretary Panetta, in his speech Saturday, said his department has a detailed budget plan to support the new focus on the Pacific. It includes "investing in new aerial-refueling tankers," he said.

Our congressional delegation's efforts to ensure that those tankers are placed where they can best serve the nation appears to be both timely and necessary, especially as the Air Force seems bent upon discounting Eielson's value.

New York Times
June 9, 2012
Pg. 20

49. Assad, The Butcher

In the latest horrors from Syria, United Nations monitors are investigating a massacre in the hamlet of Qubeir, where some 78 people reportedly were shot, garroted or burned alive. If formally confirmed, it would be the fourth massacre in two weeks. Activists said an assault on the town of Hiffeh that began on Monday included the first use of missiles fired from helicopter gunships since the anti-Assad protests began 16 months ago.

Despite his claims that the violence is the work of "terrorists," President Bashar al-Assad has a lot to hide. On Thursday, Syrian troops and pro-government supporters barred the monitors from Qubeir, and the monitors were fired upon. The team was finally permitted to enter the hamlet on Friday, and journalists and a spokeswoman for the monitors reported chilling evidence of multiple killings, including congealed blood and scattered body parts. Villagers said militiamen had trucked bodies away.

This is only the latest proof of the failure of the peace plan promoted by Kofi Annan, the special envoy to Syria for the United Nations and the Arab League. All it has done is give Russia, China and some other members of the United Nations Security Council six more weeks to excuse their inaction.

On Thursday, Mr. Annan told the Security Council that the savagery will increase without concerted international pressure. He's right. But there is no sign that Russia and China — complicit in more than 12,000 Syrian deaths — are ready to seriously cooperate.

A Chinese foreign ministry spokesman was still in a fantasy world on Friday, calling on both sides in the conflict to stop the fighting.

The Obama administration is making more of an effort to try to bring the Russians on board. A senior American official was in Moscow this week. Washington needs to marshal all of the pressure and shaming it can find.

Sanctions imposed by the United States, the European Union and others are pinching Mr. Assad's cronies. But they are not enough. A United Nations arms embargo — Russia and Iran are both still selling arms to Damascus — and the toughest possible comprehensive economic sanctions are long overdue. So are formal charges against Mr. Assad and his lieutenants for crimes against humanity.

With every new atrocity, calls for military action grow. We understand the desire to protect innocents. Intervention would be costly and could widen the war. The best hope of avoiding that is for the Security Council to impose comprehensive punishments — and for Russia, China and Iran to stop enabling Mr. Assad's savagery.

Washington Post
June 9, 2012
Pg. 14

50. The U.N.'s Syria Disaster

What comes after the death of the 'Annan plan'?

THIS MAY BE remembered as the week in which the illusion that the bloodshed in Syria could be stopped by United Nations diplomats was destroyed once and for all. Inside the country, the killing sharply and sickeningly accelerated. In Washington, U.N. envoy

Kofi Annan finally had to acknowledge that his calamitous peace initiative, which has provided the United States and its allies with an excuse for inaction for the past 11 weeks, "may be dead."

Mr. Annan's concession was forced in part by the latest massacre by a government-backed militia. In a village near Hama, some 80 people were butchered and their homes burned. A BBC reporter who visited the scene tweeted: "You can see that a terrible crime has taken place." Like a massacre two weeks ago in another village, this was an instance of sectarian cleansing. The militia members came from the Alawite sect of Bashar al-Assad, while the victims were Sunni.

Even Mr. Annan has had to recognize the result of his initiative, which counted on voluntary compliance by Mr. Assad with steps that would doom his regime. "If things do not change, the future is likely to be one of brutal repression, massacres, sectarian violence and even all-out civil war," Mr. Annan told the United Nations on Thursday. The envoy at last hinted that "pressure" and "consequences" for the Assad regime were called for.

But Mr. Annan is mainly pushing a diplomatic initiative that is even more far-fetched: a "contact group" to settle on a plan for Syria that would include the permanent Security Council members as well as Saudi Arabia, Turkey... and Iran. Since Tehran is Mr. Assad's closest ally, its inclusion would ensure either a solution that favored his regime or a deadlock. No wonder the Russian government, Mr. Assad's other sponsor, has endorsed the idea and proposed a meeting in Moscow.

The Obama administration continues to oppose measures

that might head off the looming catastrophe, such as the creation of protected zones for the Syrian opposition. But it is at least resisting Mr. Annan's bad idea. Even before meeting him, Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton rejected the idea of including Iran in a contact group.

Ms. Clinton also laid out some specific and worthy parameters for a transition in Syria in a meeting Thursday with the Friends of Syria group in Istanbul. Ms. Clinton and a State Department briefer said these include Mr. Assad's "full transfer of power" and departure from Syria; a "representative and inclusive interim government" that leads to "free and fair elections"; and "civilian control of the military and security forces." It's hard to imagine Iran accepting those terms; for Russia, they would - install a political model in Damascus that Vladimir Putin is fighting to prevent in Moscow.

The administration must now face how it can realistically achieve those aims. As we've said before, there's a lot the United States could do, well short of invasion but well beyond the rhetoric-and-resolution approach it's taken for more than a year. In Istanbul, Ms. Clinton discussed greater coordination of international aid for the Syrian opposition and a tightening of economic sanctions. These are steps in the right direction; but the transition in Syria will begin only when Mr. Assad is confronted with irresistible force.

Pittsburgh Post-Gazette
June 9, 2012

51. Syrian Bloodbath

Iran could play a helpful role in U.N. initiative

As violence in Syria worsens and international efforts to stop it stall, Syrians and the rest of the world are

badly in need of a new approach to the problem.

Fighting has now gone on since March last year. The U.N. envoy to the conflict, former Secretary-General Kofi Annan, says that civil war in Syria is near. In fact, civil war is already an accurate description of the situation. Two recent massacres, at Houla and Qubayr, have claimed close to 200 lives, including numerous children.

The forces of President Bashar al-Assad's regime are showing the strain through defeats, defections and desertions. It is also increasingly using informal militias, militants and thugs from his religious sect, the Alawites, against its Sunni opponents. The Syrian opposition remains fragmented, divided into five or six groups, making the initiation of dialogue difficult.

In the meantime Mr. Annan's initial peace effort, which even included U.N. monitors, has failed. He is currently attempting to revive it, reporting to the U.N. Security Council. The U.S. contribution so far has been largely limited to stentorian statements from Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Susan E. Rice.

One idea that Mr. Annan has put forward is to broaden and deepen the appeal to Mr. Assad to step down or, at least, to stop killing and launch dialogue among the Syrians by adding other nations in the region to an effort to initiate a peace process. One new party would be Saudi Arabia, now financing Mr. Assad's Sunni opponents. Another party that Mr. Annan proposed was Iran, a strong supporter of Mr. Assad's government.

There is logic to involving Iran. It, with China and

Russia, but more than they, has influence with Mr. Assad and the Alawites. The United States has unhelpfully opposed involving Iran, intent on pursuing the U.S. campaign at Israel's behest to punish the Tehran regime through economic sanctions, cyber attacks and other measures. There is good reason to engage Iran in seeking to bring peace through negotiations to end the Syrian bloodbath, for humanitarian and political reasons.

New York Times

June 9, 2012

Pg. 2

52. Corrections

An Op-Ed article on Thursday about counterinsurgency misstated the year President John F. Kennedy warned West Point graduates about the dangers of such warfare. It was 1962, not 1961.

Editor's Note: The op-ed referred to by John A. Nagl appeared in the *Current News Early Bird*, June 7, 2012.