

CURRENT NEWS

EARLY BIRD

October 11, 2012

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Item numbers indicate order of appearance only.

AFGHANISTAN

1. **Obama Nominates New Commander For U.S., NATO Forces In Afghanistan**
(*Washington Post*)....Rajiv Chandrasekaran
A Marine general with extensive combat experience in Iraq who sped up the ranks upon returning to the Pentagon has been nominated by President Obama to lead U.S. and NATO forces in Afghanistan.
2. **Panetta: Mission On Track**
(*Philadelphia Inquirer*)....Lolita C. Baldor, Associated Press
Defense Secretary Leon E. Panetta said Wednesday the NATO coalition has turned an important corner in Afghanistan, and has come too far and spilled too much blood to let insider attacks or anything else undermine the mission there.
3. **Panetta Promises Action Against Afghan Insider Attacks**
(*Reuters.com*)....David Alexander, Reuters
U.S. Defense Secretary Leon Panetta sought to reassure NATO allies on Wednesday effective action was being taken to stop "insider" attacks on their soldiers that have undermined trust between coalition and Afghan forces.
4. **U.S. Winds Down Afghanistan Aid Program**
(*Wall Street Journal*)....Nathan Hodge
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5. **Afghan Officials Denounce Western Group's Report On Country's Future**
(*New York Times*)....Alissa J. Rubin
The Afghan government and some politicians and local news outlets denounced Western research organizations and news media, blasting them as spies and political agents in the wake of a report that suggested it was possible the Afghan government would collapse after 2014.
6. **NATO Must Have U.N. Mandate For Post-2014 Afghan Mission: Russia**
(*Reuters.com*)....Adrian Croft, Reuters
Russia will stop cooperating with NATO over Afghanistan after 2014 unless the alliance gets U.N. Security Council authorization for its new training mission in Afghanistan, a senior Russian diplomat said on Wednesday.
7. **US Soldier In Afghanistan Survives Grenade Direct Hit**
(*Agence France-Presse*)....AFP
A US soldier has described how he survived a direct hit from a rocket-propelled grenade on his first patrol in Afghanistan, after the projectile bounced off his leg.

DEMPSEY SPEECH

8. **Dempsey: Insider Attacks Won't Break Bond With Afghans**
(*Stars and Stripes*)....Leo Shane III
Joint Chiefs Chairman Gen. Martin Dempsey called the insider attacks by Afghan forces against NATO trainers a “very serious threat” but said the problem will not derail the U.S. relationship with the Afghan military, nor will it slow plans to withdraw troops in the coming years.
9. **Dempsey Says Partners Make U.S. Strategy Work**
(*Defense Daily*)....Ann Roosevelt
Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Army Gen. Martin Dempsey said yesterday relationships are critical to face current and future challenges in the global environment.
10. **Dempsey Says Not Time For Military In Syria**
(*The E-Ring (e-ring.foreignpolicy.com)*)....Kevin Baron
Gen. Martin Dempsey, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, put the brakes on any momentum for U.S. military intervention in Syria, saying on Wednesday that the U.S. military should not be the leading instrument by which to influence Syria.

SYRIA

11. **Panetta: US Sends Forces To Jordan**
(*Yahoo.com*)....Lolita C. Baldor and Pauline Jelinek, Associated Press
The United States has sent military troops to the Jordan-Syria border to bolster that country's military capabilities in the event that violence escalates along its border with Syria, Defense Secretary Leon Panetta said Wednesday.
12. **British And US Military Sent To Prevent Chemical Weapons Grab**
(*London Times*)....James Hider; Deborah Haynes, Michael Evans and Hugh Tomlinson
Britain has sent military personnel to Jordan, where US army experts are helping to contain the fallout from the war in Syria, as well as being ready if the Syrian regime loses control of its large chemical weapons stockpile.
13. **Syrian Conflict Grows On Two Fronts**
(*Wall Street Journal*)....Julian E. Barnes, Stephen Fidler and Joe Parkinson
...After a meeting of North Atlantic Treaty Organization defense ministers in Brussels, Defense Secretary Leon Panetta said the troops had been deployed to help Amman manage the impact from the Syria conflict. He said the U.S. is helping Jordan deal with refugees and working with Jordanian authorities to monitor chemical- and biological-weapons sites in Syria.
14. **Turkey, Seeking Weapons, Forces Syrian Jet To Land**
(*New York Times*)....Anne Barnard and Sebnem Arsu
Turkey sharply escalated its confrontation with Syria on Wednesday, forcing a Syrian passenger plane to land in Ankara on suspicion of carrying military cargo, ordering Turkish civilian airplanes to avoid Syria’s airspace and warning of increasingly forceful responses if Syrian artillery gunners keep lobbing shells across the border.

LIBYA

15. **Official Tells Panel A Request For Libya Was Denied**
(*New York Times*)....Michael R. Gordon
The former chief security officer for the American Embassy in Libya on Wednesday told a House committee investigating the fatal attack last month on a diplomatic compound in Benghazi that his request to extend the deployment of an American military team were thwarted by the State Department’s Bureau of Diplomatic Security.

PAKISTAN

16. **Pakistanis Outraged Over Girl's Shooting**

(*Washington Post*)....Richard Leiby

In a country where militant attacks occur almost daily, the Taliban's attempted assassination of a 14-year-old education rights activist in northwestern Pakistan united Pakistanis from across social divides Wednesday in a remarkable and rare display of collective outrage against extremism.

RUSSIA

17. Russia Won't Renew Pact On Weapons With U.S.

(*New York Times*)....David M. Herszenhorn

The Russian government said Wednesday that it would not renew a hugely successful 20-year partnership with the United States to safeguard and dismantle nuclear and chemical weapons in the former Soviet Union when the program expires next spring, a potentially grave setback in the already fraying relationship between the former cold war enemies.

18. Putin Says Iraq Arms Deal Shows Trust In Russian Weaponry

(*Bloomberg.com*)....Ilya Arkhipov, Bloomberg News

President Vladimir Putin said a multi-billion-dollar arms contract with Iraq, making Russia the second-biggest weapons supplier to the Middle Eastern state after the U.S., showed trust in Russian military equipment.

MIDEAST

19. Dane Says He Led CIA To Awlaki

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

His story is the stuff of spy fiction: an undercover agent who used guile and technology to help the CIA find a top al-Qaeda leader. But if true, newly published claims by a self-professed Danish double agent could complicate efforts by U.S. and European spy agencies to penetrate terrorist groups in the future, intelligence experts say.

AMERICAS

20. Canadian Officer Pleads Guilty To Leaking Data

(*Wall Street Journal*)....Alistair MacDonald

A Canadian naval officer pleaded guilty to leaking military-communications intelligence, a surprise ending to a spy scandal that embarrassed Canada's military and briefly caused a rift between Canadian and U.S. security officials.

ASIA/PACIFIC

21. North Korea Says A Long-Range Missile Test Is Now More Likely

(*New York Times*)....Choe Sang-Hun

North Korea said on Wednesday that it felt freer to test a long-range missile now that Washington has agreed to let South Korea nearly triple the reach of its ballistic missiles, putting all of the North within its range.

ARMY

22. Fort Hood Suspect's Beard Case At Appeals Court

(*Yahoo.com*)....Angela K. Brown, Associated Press

An Army appeals court will hear arguments Thursday about an issue that has indefinitely postponed the murder trial for the suspect in the worst mass shooting on a U.S. military installation: his beard.

23. New General At JBLM Pledges Care For Soldiers

(*Tacoma News Tribune*)....Adam Ashton

Joint Base Lewis-McChord's newest general took command Wednesday, pledging to care for soldiers as they return from Afghanistan while reorienting the Army's focus in the South Sound to the nation's challenges on the Pacific Rim.

24. **Army Prepares For Workforce Cuts, But Not Sequestration Specifically**

(*GovExec.com*)...Eric Katz

Army Undersecretary Joseph Westphal said Wednesday the service is not planning any contingencies for sequestration and warned the cuts would threaten the Army's stability.

NAVY

25. **U.S. Navy Secretary Says Biofuel Technology Has Arrived**

(*Aerospace Daily & Defense Report*)...Michael Fabey

Despite continued opposition from lawmakers like U.S. Sen. John McCain (R-Ariz.), the U.S. Navy will continue its efforts to leverage biofuels technology for its ships and aircraft, service Secretary Ray Mabus says.

AIR FORCE

26. **Woman Just Named First Female Leader Of 5,000-Strong Fighter Wing**

(*ABC*)...Martha Raddatz

...It is one of the most fearsome fighter jets in the skies -- the F-15 Strike Eagle. And I could not be in more capable hands. Colonel Jeannie Flynn Leavitt is not only a decorated fighter pilot, she has broken through gender barriers few thought possible.

LEGAL AFFAIRS

27. **Oregon Guardsmen Say Were Knowingly Exposed To Toxic Chemicals In Iraq**

(*Reuters.com*)...Teresa Carson, Reuters

Lawyers for 12 Oregon National Guardsmen suing contractor KBR Inc for negligence and fraud told a jury in Portland, Oregon on Wednesday that the soldiers were knowingly exposed to toxic chemicals in Iraq that made them ill.

28. **Court Poses Hurdle To WikiLeaks Case File Access**

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

The U.S. military's highest court is asking WikiLeaks to explain why the military justice system, rather than civilian courts, is the proper venue for seeking routine judicial documents in the court-martial of an Army private charged with giving classified information to the secret-spilling website.

BUSINESS

29. **Government Discord Derails Massive European Merger**

(*Wall Street Journal*)...Daniel Michaels, David Gauthier-Villars, Dana Cimilluca and Marcus Walker

A deal to create the world's biggest aerospace company, three months in the making, died in a three-minute phone call.

30. **Boeing Gets \$2 Billion Contract For Plane Maintenance**

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

The Boeing Co. said Wednesday that it has been awarded a \$2 billion contract from the Defense Department to help the Air Force maintain its fleet of 246 C-17 cargo planes.

COMMENTARY

31. **Soldiers' Mental Health: An Emergency**

(*New York Daily News*)...Arnold Fisher And Bill White

Anyone who believes that our country's methods are adequate for helping veterans re-adapt to society as the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan wind down need look no further than at the following data: In the year 2012, 211 members of the United States Armed Forces took their own lives.

32. **Romney's Syria Plan: Easier Said Than Done**

(Washington Post)....Walter Pincus

Does Mitt Romney understand the implications of his campaign pledge to “ensure” that Syrian opposition members “who share our values” will “obtain the arms they need” to defeat President Bashir al-Assad’s “tanks, helicopters and fighter jets”?

33. **Never Mind About Those Jobs Cuts**

(ForeignPolicy.com)....Gordon Adams

...Although industry has said that the WARN Act requires it to issue layoff notices 60 days before sequestration takes effect -- i.e., on November 2, just days before the election -- in reality, no such notification is necessary. As the Department of Labor explained in a July 30, 2012 advisory guidance, such notices are not required because it is not certain that sequestration will actually happen and because there is no certainty that existing contracts will be affected if it does.

34. **State Department Misses On Libya**

(USA Today)....Editorial

Cut through the highly charged politics of Wednesday's congressional hearing into the attack that killed four Americans in Libya a month ago, and one conclusion seems inescapable: The State Department underestimated the danger.

35. **Botched In Benghazi**

(Wall Street Journal)....Editorial

At Wednesday's House oversight hearings into the attack on the U.S. diplomatic mission in Libya, Democrats protested loudly about a GOP political witch hunt. If only such alleged partisanship were always so educational. The Congressional investigation has in a few hours brought greater clarity about what happened before, during and after the events of 9/11/12 than the Obama Administration has provided in a month. Among the revelations:

36. **Malala Yousafzai's Courage**

(New York Times)....Editorial

If Pakistan has a future, it is embodied in Malala Yousafzai. Yet the Taliban so feared this 14-year-old girl that they tried to assassinate her. Her supposed offense? Her want of an education and her public advocacy for it.

37. **The Taliban's Terror**

(Washington Post)....Editorial

On Tuesday, Pakistani Taliban thugs tried to assassinate a 14-year-old girl. You read that correctly: Masked gunmen from the ultra-purist Islamist group stormed a van full of schoolchildren in an effort to kill Malala Yousafzai, who has won international acclaim for going to school in defiance of Taliban edicts against educating girls in her home region of Swat.

38. **The Taliban's Dark Vision**

(Los Angeles Times)....Editorial

It's appalling enough that 14-year-old Malala Yousafzai, who publicly championed the cause of education for girls in Pakistan, was shot in the head and neck and critically injured by gunmen who boarded her school bus in the Swat Valley. Even more horrendous is that a Taliban spokesman declared that she had been singled out for attack because of her support of girls' education in defiance of Taliban edict. "Let this be a lesson," the spokesman told the New York Times.

Washington Post
October 11, 2012
Pg. 13

1. Obama Nominates New Commander For U.S., NATO Forces In Afghanistan

*Marine general expected
to replace Allen, who'd get
European Command*

By Rajiv Chandrasekaran

A Marine general with extensive combat experience in Iraq who sped up the ranks upon returning to the Pentagon has been nominated by President Obama to lead U.S. and NATO forces in Afghanistan.

Gen. Joseph F. Dunford, who has not served in Afghanistan, would replace a fellow Marine four-star general, John R. Allen, who has been selected as the next supreme allied commander in Europe. Both moves, which are expected to occur early next year, require confirmation by the Senate and the North Atlantic Council, the principal decision-making body within NATO.

Speaking before a meeting of NATO defense ministers in Brussels, Defense Secretary Leon E. Panetta called Dunford "an exceptionally gifted strategic leader."

If confirmed, Dunford will preside over the war in Afghanistan at a challenging juncture. Although allied forces have improved security in some parts of the country, the Taliban insurgency remains resilient. Efforts by the U.S. military and its NATO partners to train the Afghan army and police have been hampered by a wave of attacks on allied forces by members of the Afghan security forces, many of which are the result of Taliban infiltration.

Dunford, who would be the fifth top allied commander in Afghanistan in five years, almost certainly would have to deal with a further reduction

of U.S. and NATO forces. The specific number of U.S. troops to be withdrawn next year will depend, in part, on who wins the presidential election next month, but military leaders are expecting a substantial drawdown to meet U.S. and NATO commitments to end conventional combat operations by the close of 2014. The United States has about 68,000 combat troops in Afghanistan.

If confirmed, Obama said in a statement, Dunford "will lead our forces through key milestones in our effort that will allow us to bring the war to a close responsibly as Afghanistan takes full responsibility for its security."

Dunford is the assistant commandant of the Marine Corps. In 2003, he led a Marine regiment in the invasion of Iraq. He later served as a chief of staff and as an assistant commander of the 1st Marine Division in Iraq.

After serving as the Corps's director of operations, he vaulted from a one-star brigadier general to a three-star lieutenant general in less than three months — a highly unusual move — when he was selected for a senior Marine Corps job by then-Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates. A year later, in May 2009, he was given command of the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force, but in less than 12 months, he was promoted again — to the assistant commandant post.

The change of top commanders in Kabul is not the result of any dissatisfaction with Allen at the White House or Pentagon. Allen, who arrived in Kabul in July 2011, has had a grueling schedule and often sleeps less than four hours a night. The move to Europe is seen as a promotion.

The selection of another Marine general to lead the war had led to grumbling

among some top Army officers, who wanted one of their own, Gen. David M. Rodriguez, to get the assignment. But senior White House and Defense Department officials concluded that Rodriguez, who has spent more than three years in Afghanistan in senior command roles, lacked Dunford's strategic acumen. Rodriguez is expected to be nominated to lead the military's Africa Command next year, according to military officials.

Philadelphia Inquirer
October 11, 2012
Pg. 13

2. Panetta: Mission On Track

By Lolita C. Baldor,
Associated Press

BRUSSELS, Belgium - Defense Secretary Leon E. Panetta said Wednesday the NATO coalition has turned an important corner in Afghanistan, and has come too far and spilled too much blood to let insider attacks or anything else undermine the mission there.

While he and other ministers refused to provide details of the expected withdrawal of troops in the coming two years, he said that from mid-2013 onward the United States and its allies would operate from fewer bases and the flow of military supplies and material out of Afghanistan would grow.

Panetta also used his time during the closed session of the NATO conference here Wednesday to urge the other defense ministers to help fill the shortfall of military training teams in Afghanistan. The teams, he said, are critical to building the capabilities of the Afghan forces so they can take control of their country's security by the end of 2014.

In Washington, President Obama nominated Marine Gen. John Allen, the top U.S. commander in Afghanistan, to be the next NATO supreme allied commander.

Allen is to replace Adm. Jim Stavridis in the spring, and Marine Gen. Joseph Dunford, the assistant Marine commandant, would take the top Afghanistan job. The changes must be confirmed by the Senate.

Dunford has been assistant commandant since October 2010. Allen took over the Afghanistan job in July 2011, after serving as the acting commander of U.S. Central Command for a short time.

During the NATO meeting, Allen and Panetta assured the ministers that commanders have come up ways to reduce the insider attacks.

Reuters.com
October 10, 2012

3. Panetta Promises Action Against Afghan Insider Attacks

By David Alexander, Reuters
BRUSSELS -- U.S. Defense Secretary Leon Panetta sought to reassure NATO allies on Wednesday effective action was being taken to stop "insider" attacks on their soldiers that have undermined trust between coalition and Afghan forces.

Panetta also told a meeting of alliance defense ministers the 11-year-old Afghan war had "reached a critical moment" after the pullout of 33,000 U.S. "surge" troops brought in two years ago to help counter a strengthening Taliban insurgency.

He said the coalition's response to attacks by Taliban insurgents disguised as Afghan policemen or soldiers and its efforts to improve its partnership with Afghan

security forces would be critical to the success of the war with the Taliban.

Panetta and NATO Secretary-General Anders Fogh Rasmussen told the gathering in Brussels there was no move to speed up the planned withdrawal of international forces.

"The handover to Afghan security responsibility is unfolding as planned. And as transition takes hold, you will see some of our forces redeploying or drawing down as part of the strategy we have all agreed. This is not a rush for the exit, but the logical result of transition," Rasmussen said.

At least 52 members of the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force have been killed this year by Afghans wearing police or army uniforms, eroding confidence between the sides.

"Whatever motivates these attacks, the enemy intends to use them to undermine mutual trust and cohesion, driving a wedge between us and our Afghan partners," Panetta said.

"We can only deny the enemy its objective by countering these attacks with all of our strength."

He outlined steps the coalition and Afghan officials are taking to counter the attacks. They included enhanced training, better cultural awareness, continual review of partnering arrangements and expanded vetting of forces.

Panetta also announced changes in the top military ranks in Afghanistan and Europe.

General Joseph Dunford, assistant commandant of the U.S. Marine Corps, has been chosen to lead U.S. and international forces in Afghanistan, Panetta said.

The current head of the International Security Assistance Force, Marine Corps General John Allen,

will become the head of U.S. European Command and NATO Supreme Allied Commander Europe, taking over from Admiral James Stavridis, Panetta said.

Both positions require U.S. Senate confirmation and the changes are expected to take place early next year. Panetta said President Barack Obama had decided to nominate the two.

The defense ministers gave military experts the go-ahead on Wednesday to start detailed planning for the NATO-led training and advisory mission that will start after NATO ends combat operations in Afghanistan at the end of 2014.

Panetta said a decision to send 33,000 extra U.S. troops into Afghanistan nearly two years ago had made a "decisive difference," sharply reducing casualties and forcing Taliban insurgents farther away from population centers.

The United States completed the withdrawal of the so-called "surge" forces in September, leaving 68,000 U.S. troops plus their coalition partners to carry on the mission. The coalition has trained some 350,000 Afghan forces and plans to hand over full security control to Kabul by the end of 2014.

With the pullout of surge forces, "we've reached a critical moment for this alliance and for this war," Panetta said.

To build the skill and capacity of the Afghan army and police, the coalition must "ensure they have the embedded trainers and mentors needed to assist them as they take security lead".

He said the coalition faced a shortfall of 58 security assistance teams to advise the forces and urged the NATO allies to help fill the gap.

Panetta said the size and composition of the NATO

force that would remain in Afghanistan after 2014 had not been decided but its presence should be "steadfast and effective".

British Defense Secretary Philip Hammond said on Tuesday evening he expected Britain would be able to make a "significant reduction" in its troop levels in Afghanistan in 2013.

Any enduring British presence after 2014 would be modest and targeted on "specific niche capabilities", he said.

Additional reporting by Adrian Croft and Sebastian Moffett.

Wall Street Journal
October 11, 2012
Pg. 11

4. U.S. Winds Down Afghanistan Aid Program

Military Pulls Out Development Teams That Had Been Central to War Strategy
By Nathan Hodge

JALALABAD, Afghanistan—The U.S. military is ending a massive nation-building experiment in Afghanistan, shutting down teams that have poured hundreds of millions of dollars into roads, schools and administrative buildings in the country's hinterlands.

The shutdown, part of the withdrawal of U.S. and coalition forces over the next year, will mark the end of a hearts-and-minds campaign that has been central to the military's strategy.

As part of an effort to improve the reach and reputation of Afghanistan's central government, the U.S. and its allies set up over two dozen Provincial Reconstruction Teams around the country to dispense development aid and advise

local officials. At least five of these have closed in recent months, and most of the remainder will shut down over the next year.

The U.S. agreed to end the program in a partnership agreement reached in May with the Afghan government, which sees the program as undercutting the effectiveness of local institutions.

The shift is effectively turning off the money flow to Afghanistan's provinces. Many U.S. and Western officials say they are doubtful that provincial administrations are ready to fill in the void. "No one has a clue how much is being spent in province A or B" by provincial governments, said a senior Western official. "It's a serious national-security threat to the country."

Each of the reconstruction teams usually includes some 100 troops, is led by a military officer, and draws on civilian aid expertise, often with representatives from the State Department, the U.S. Agency for International Development and the Department of Agriculture.

With most U.S. forces slated to leave in 2014, commanders at the remaining PRTs are preparing the drawdown. "We're pretty much in the business of finishing these projects," said Air Force Lt. Col. Grant Hargrove, who commands the PRT overseeing Nangarhar province in eastern Afghanistan.

In 2010, at the height of the U.S. troops surge, the Nangarhar PRT spent around \$24 million on projects in the province through the Commander's Emergency Response Program, a fund given to military commanders to invest in reconstruction projects. The work included \$5.5 million for street repair in the provincial capital of

Jalalabad, \$300,000 for the pediatric wing of a hospital and several high schools that cost around \$200,000 each. Civilian agencies also channeled money through the PRT.

That CERP money has all but dried up as part of a planned phaseout. The Nangarhar PRT now oversees around half a dozen projects with a total budget of \$750,000. Col. Hargrove said the team still has "bulk CERP" available, but the small-scale funds—capped at \$5,000 per project—can only pay for a well or a modest irrigation project.

The U.S. has already closed at least four PRTs in eastern Afghanistan, closing teams most recently in Laghman and Kapisa provinces near Kabul. In parallel, the U.S. is winding down the work of smaller district support teams, which provide similar aid to the equivalent of municipal and county governments.

The June closure has "badly affected" the local economy, said Sarhadi Zwak, a spokesman for the governor of Laghman. "There are no more projects," he said. "When the PRT was here they would implement several projects and create job opportunities for the people."

The closing of PRTs will put pressure on provincial governments and local offices of central ministries, said Farid Mamundzay, deputy minister for policy at Afghanistan's Independent Directorate of Local Governance, a central government agency overseeing local administrations. "Whenever I visit the provinces, I hear from provincial governments that when the PRTs leave, they'll leave behind a big gap," he said. "We're working from Kabul to fill this...but it needs to be done quickly."

The creation of the PRTs, with uniformed troops taking on the work of aid workers, was controversial. In the program's early years, international aid groups criticized the military for invading their territory.

At a conference in Germany last year, Afghan President Hamid Karzai railed against the PRTs and district teams, calling them "parallel structures" that have "undermined the development of institutions in terms of strength and credibility."

Afghan negotiators demanded the a clause calling for the shutdown of PRTs in the strategic partnership agreement with the U.S., which was signed in May. The deal opens the door to a long-term U.S. military presence, but with a significantly smaller footprint than the 68,000 currently in the country. Talks on that long-term presence are set to begin in the coming days.

Afghan National Security Adviser Rangin Dadfar Spanta, who was involved in negotiations over the strategic partnership pact, said the exit of the PRTs would have an upside, because citizens would have to turn to the government for services instead of the PRTs, shoring up local administrations' authority.

As a result, he added, Afghans would "take the government of Afghanistan much more seriously."

The PRTs served as centers of gravity in the provinces, with the directors of local ministries turning to the military instead of the central government for project funds.

In Nangarhar, monthly meetings at the provincial governor's office until recently were a forum for the directors to pitch their proposals.

"All these local line ministries used to come to the PRT for everything,"

said Army Lt. Col. Lawrence Shea, who works on economic development issues for the team.

After the withdrawal of most U.S. and international troops in 2014, U.S. civilian agencies talk of maintaining a presence in many parts of Afghanistan to continue development work and provide advice and assistance to the provincial government.

U.S. officials describe Nangarhar, on the Highway 7 corridor that is the prime trade conduit between Afghanistan and Pakistan, as a promising location. But security restrictions and attacks on coalition forces have already severely impeded their work.

"If you look at the PRT for that capacity-building, we're almost like a consulting company," said Col. Shea. "And to be a consultant, you've got to be with your client, and that's probably one of the more difficult things to do. Some good work's taking place, but we've moved the ball a lot slower."

—*Habib Khan Totakhil and Maria Abi-Habib contributed to this article.*

New York Times
October 11, 2012

5. Afghan Officials Denounce Western Group's Report On Country's Future

By Alissa J. Rubin

KABUL, Afghanistan — The Afghan government and some politicians and local news outlets denounced Western research organizations and news media, blasting them as spies and political agents in the wake of a report that suggested it was possible the Afghan government would collapse after 2014.

Setting off the firestorm was a paper released Monday

by the International Crisis Group titled "Afghanistan: the Long, Hard Road to the 2014 Transition." In it, the group, which is based in Brussels and Washington, detailed obstacles to holding the next presidential election in a way that would satisfy a majority of the people; the report outlined several chains of events that could lead to disarray and civil war.

Under a photograph of the group's senior analyst in Afghanistan, Candace Rondeaux, the headlines in the newspaper Weesa screamed: "The head of the International Crisis Group in Kabul is doing espionage here."

The paper is supported by expatriate Afghans, and its editor, Mohammad Zubair Shafiqi, describes himself as independent.

In the upper house of Parliament, lawmakers on Tuesday denounced the group. "The I.C.G. report is shameless interference in the internal affairs of Afghanistan, and they want to start a psychological war against our people," said Senator Gulalai Akbari from Badakhshan Province in the country's north.

Some lawmakers demanded an apology from the organization; another said that "the hands working behind the scenes to devastate and destroy Afghanistan must be cut off," according to a rough transcript of the session by the United Nations.

While the group's report was bleak in tone, it was hardly different from other reports that have been released over the years that trace the enormous difficulties that the Afghan government needs to overcome for the country to hold together. A report released in September by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, titled "Waiting for the Taliban in Afghanistan," predicted at least

as desolate a future, including the return of Taliban control in large swaths of the country and the likelihood they soon would be able to muster substantial forces and wrest control of some district centers from the government.

Many diplomats and Westerners were scratching their heads on Wednesday, trying to figure out why the International Crisis Group's report had set off such outrage right now. "We're trying to play it very low-key here," said one Western diplomat, who said his government had considered putting out a statement that disagreed with the report's conclusion but then decided it was best to deal with it privately.

Others saw it as potentially menacing. "It will be important to see if this kind of vitriol is only targeted against Western media and Westerners, or will it be targeted against any government critics or opposition," said a diplomat in Kabul. "Is this part of a wider problem of trying to control criticism in the run-up to the elections?"

Comments by cabinet ministers that were endorsed by President Hamid Karzai and reported by Afghan news agencies made clear that the most proximate concern for the government and especially Mr. Karzai is the negotiation of a bilateral security agreement with the United States for after 2014. The Afghan government appears to believe that there is a plot by the United States to weaken Afghanistan's standing in order to gain leverage in the negotiations.

"The U.S., by using the press, is waging a psychological war to attain the security agreement, and the published report and views of the International Crisis Group is part of this effort, and it is

fully against existing realities in the country," said a report on the cabinet comments by the semiofficial government news service Bakhtar.

The cabinet believes that Western news and research organizations "are aiming at creating concern and distrust among the people of Afghanistan," the Bakhtar report said.

A former spokesman for Mr. Karzai, Waheed Omar, said that many ministers believe that "the Western media is a tool of their governments' foreign policy and that the I.C.G. is not independent and that they are depicting Afghanistan's situation as grim so as to put the Afghan government in a position where it has to accept a security agreement that is more in America's interest than in the interest of Afghanistan."

The tone echoed Mr. Karzai's news conference last week, in which he made similar accusations.

These reports in part are seen by Mr. Karzai as an affront, and that narrative has been taken up by many others in the government, Afghan and Western analysts said. It is also an expression of frustration with the West's frequent criticism of the Afghan government.

Martine Van Bijlert, one of the directors of the Afghanistan Analysts Network, a research organization based in Kabul, said: "The reports basically say, 'You are presiding over a country that cannot take care of itself.' And beyond that, there is the feeling from some Afghans that, 'We are just fed up with being told we cannot take care of ourselves and we are not accepting that anymore.'"

Some Afghan analysts said they thought the government was overreacting rather than taking concrete steps to try to avert the worst predictions.

"I don't think that this or any other report which follows it will have any negative impact on the self-confidence of the people of Afghanistan," said Jawid Kohistani, a political analyst in Kabul.

"The Afghan people already knew about the things which are described in the I.C.G. report," he said. "Unless the Afghan government brings the necessary reforms and gets a national and international agreement on peace talks, the transfer of power and elections, Afghanistan will descend into chaos."

Reuters.com
October 10, 2012
6. NATO Must Have U.N. Mandate For Post-2014 Afghan Mission: Russia

By Adrian Croft, Reuters

BRUSSELS -- Russia will stop cooperating with NATO over Afghanistan after 2014 unless the alliance gets U.N. Security Council authorization for its new training mission in Afghanistan, a senior Russian diplomat said on Wednesday.

A NATO official said only that it would be "helpful" to have a U.N. Security Council resolution authorizing the post-2014 training mission, but stopped short of saying it was essential.

Nikolay Korchunov, Russia's acting ambassador to NATO, did not specify what any halt to Russian cooperation with NATO on Afghanistan after 2014 would mean, but Russia will be an important transit route for NATO as it ships out billions of dollars of equipment from Afghanistan in the next few years.

NATO defense ministers meeting in Brussels gave military experts the go-ahead on Wednesday to begin detailed planning of the post-2014

training and advisory mission that will start after NATO ends combat operations in Afghanistan.

"Let's proceed from the assumption that any such mission should be based on an international mandate," Korchunov said in written emailed replies to questions sent by Reuters.

"It is a pre-condition both for carrying on the operation and for our cooperation with NATO on that issue post-2014."

Korchunov told Reuters that by international mandate he meant a new United Nations Security Council resolution.

The current mission of the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan is endorsed by the U.N. Security Council.

But the nature of the mission will change after 2014, when ISAF is due to hand over security duties in the whole country to Afghan forces, possibly requiring a new resolution.

The new training and advisory mission is expected to be much smaller, but NATO has given no details yet.

Responding to Korchunov's comments, a NATO official said it would be "helpful" to have a U.N. Security Council resolution in support of NATO's planned post-2014 mission.

Pressed on whether NATO could go ahead with the post-2014 without a U.N. resolution, the official said: "NATO of course takes its decisions autonomously based on the consensus of its allies. All its missions are based and conducted according to the principles of the United Nations charter."

"Clearly it is in the interest of the whole international community and of countries in the region, including Russia,

to have a stable Afghanistan with the right training, advice and assistance for the Afghan security forces," the official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said.

German Defence Minister Thomas de Maiziere told reporters that an invitation from the Afghan government was a "pre-condition" for the post-2014 NATO mission.

"And we would want to have a U.N. resolution, a resolution of the U.N. Security Council, too," he told reporters at the NATO meeting on Tuesday evening.

Russian President Vladimir Putin is a regular critic of NATO. But he has backed cooperation with NATO on Afghanistan, allowing the use of Russian territory for transit and supplies.

However, any wrangling involving the Security Council could prove problematic. International pressure on Syria's president, Bashar al-Assad, has been curbed after by Russia and China blocking Western-backed draft U.N. resolutions.

NATO must send home or dispose of 200,000 shipping containers and vehicles as it scales down its combat mission in Afghanistan over the next few years and the Russian route is important to lessen its dependence on Pakistan.

Pakistan re-opened NATO transit lines through its territory in July after months of closure over a NATO air strike that killed 24 Pakistani soldiers.

Additional reporting by Angelika Stricker.

Agence France-Presse
October 11, 2012

7. US Soldier In Afghanistan Survives Grenade Direct Hit

By AFP

A US soldier has described how he survived a direct

hit from a rocket-propelled grenade on his first patrol in Afghanistan, after the projectile bounced off his leg.

Specialist Devin Hagar's brush with death came during a patrol in Logar province south of Kabul. His platoon retreated along a river after coming under attack, and were about to cross when his squad leader decided they were in a bad spot.

"I turned and put one foot up on the riverbank and that's when I saw the back-blast of the RPG and the guy's silhouette and a silver thing with a red tip coming at me," the 22-year-old from Kansas told AFP.

"I just looked at it and thought, 'What's that?' Then it hit me in the leg. I looked down and just thought, 'Awesome, my leg is still here'.

"It was like a big dude hitting you in the leg with a baseball bat. It was a pretty good thump."

The impact made Hagar, of 1st Squadron (Airborne) 91st Cavalry Regiment, 173rd Airborne Brigade Combat Team, drop his rifle. After crawling up the riverbank, he lay in a ditch trying not to get hit as the battle raged around him.

He was given his weapon back and, still under fire, crawled and hobbled across the terrain, using his rifle as a crutch, until a medivac helicopter picked him up along with a colleague who had been shot.

One of the other men said he saw the rocket bounce off Hagar's leg and blow up, according to the specialist.

After the incident on July 6, Hagar spent a few days in the medical centre, with the bruise swelling up and spreading across his thigh.

He is now back on duty with his battalion, with only a small patch of scar tissue to show for his remarkable escape.

"It was pretty surreal, like it wasn't happening," he said. "I couldn't stop smiling, I was laughing the whole time, thinking 'That was awesome'. I'm just glad I wasn't blown into a hundred pieces."

Stars and Stripes
October 11, 2012
Pg. 4

8. Dempsey: Insider Attacks Won't Break Bond With Afghans

By Leo Shane III, Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON – Joint Chiefs Chairman Gen. Martin Dempsey called the insider attacks by Afghan forces against NATO trainers a "very serious threat" but said the problem will not derail the U.S. relationship with the Afghan military, nor will it slow plans to withdraw troops in the coming years.

"This is not jeopardizing our objectives, just making it a little tougher," he said at an event at the National Press Club on Wednesday. "The bond between our forces and the Afghan forces will be ultimately what gets [the Taliban] defeated."

Dempsey's comments came as Defense Secretary Leon Panetta pressed European allies in Brussels to supply more trainers for the Afghan war effort, despite the growing threat of inside attacks. More than 50 coalition troops have been killed by their Afghan trainees this year.

The chairman said military leaders can't eliminate the threats of the attacks but are working to mitigate them through better vetting of trainees, better cultural training for all troops and by establishing closer relationships between the trainers and the novice security forces.

"We know one of the ways we can mitigate the risk is by getting closer to [the trainees]," he said. "You can't commute to work, just show up for four or six hours a day and leave. You have to be part of their lives."

Dempsey said troops he has talked to in Afghanistan understand the threat, but also the need to prepare the new forces to take over security in their country.

The military is scheduled to withdraw all combat troops from Afghanistan in 2014, although Dempsey said a detailed timeline won't be established until next year.

The chairman also said he has talked to Afghan military officials about the problem, both to find solutions and to reassure them of the U.S. commitment to a long-term partnership.

"They suffer losses in these incidents, too," he said.

Defense Daily
October 11, 2012

9. Dempsey Says Partners Make U.S. Strategy Work

By Ann Roosevelt

Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Army Gen. Martin Dempsey said yesterday relationships are critical to face current and future challenges in the global environment.

"We need them to make our strategy work," he told a National Press Club luncheon.

Marking his first year in the position, Dempsey said he has met with 57 of his counterparts in 22 countries.

Mutual respect is built on trust, he said, and part of that is building direct person-to-person relationships.

For example, when something plays out in the media, he can pick up the phone and directly call his counterpart, and have discussions.

He was very clear that he does “not communicate with that person through the media.”

As chairman, he visited Afghanistan six times in his first term, and learned something each time, he said. Discussions have ranged from campaign plans to tactical discussions.

From troops at the leading edge, Dempsey said he gets insights into what’s going on—such as the insider threat.

“We can’t let it dissuade us from our objectives,” he said. “I can’t prevent it, but I can continue to work to mitigate the risk.”

Part of that risk mitigation is to establish a level of trust with Afghans, he said. “You can’t commute to work.” Or work 9 to 5 and then go home. Trainers have to be part of the trainee’s lives to build that trust.

NATO, he pointed out, for more than 60 years “exists on a basis of shared values.” The challenge is to keep those bonds strong.

Also yesterday, NATO welcomed the nominations of Marine Gen. John Allen to be the new Supreme Allied Commander—Europe, and commander of U.S. European Command, replacing Navy Adm. James Stavridis, and the selection of Marine Gen. Joseph Dunford to succeed Allen as ISAF commander. Dunford is assistant Marine commandant. Both require Senate confirmation.

“Both are talented, courageous and thinking officers,” Dempsey said.

Hitting a historical note, Dempsey noted that Oct. 10 was the day in 1913 that President Woodrow Wilson opened the Panama Canal, an event that redefined geography and power.

This year, 17 nations participated in the annual Panamax exercise, an event

with the scenario of defending the canal from invasion.

There are challenges ahead, Dempsey said.

With partners, “globally integrated operations” can be conducted, a concept that would quickly combine joint forces postured worldwide with partners to integrate capabilities.

This is a concept discussed in the September release of the Capstone Concept for Joint Operations: Joint Force 2020, and is still being fleshed out.

The E-Ring (e-ring.foreignpolicy.com)
October 10, 2012

The E-Ring: Inside the Pentagon's Power Corridors **10. Dempsey Says Not Time For Military In Syria**

By Kevin Baron

Gen. Martin Dempsey, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, put the brakes on any momentum for U.S. military intervention in Syria, saying on Wednesday that the U.S. military should not be the leading instrument by which to influence Syria.

“I think Syria is probably the most complex issue...of all,” Dempsey said, speaking to the National Press Club.

“It’s in many ways a crucible for all of the other factors and influences related to the Arab spring, the conflict among different sects among Islam, ethnic issues, major power interventions, non-state actors -- honestly there’s a catalogue of complexity that we could share on Syria,” he said. And major powers outside of Syria are trying to predict what will happen “on the other side.”

In that context, Dempsey appeared to bluntly reject calls for increased military involvement in the conflict.

“We continue to plan for a number of contingencies. We’re prepared to provide options if those options are required,” he said, including working through NATO. “But the military instrument of power, at this point, is not the prominent instrument of power that should be applied in Syria.”

Dempsey gave the press corps a rare open forum with which to pepper him with questions, although written and handed up to the dais. The chairman in his first year has built a reputation for, frankly, ducking the press by rarely taking reporters on overseas travels or giving in-depth interviews with major media outlets.

In January, Dempsey said that he intended to be a quieter chairman, at least when compared with his predecessors and other more publicly prominent general officers of recent years, like Adm. Mike Mullen or CIA Director David Petraeus. Indeed, Dempsey has kept his relationships with the Joint Chiefs, combatant commanders and Afghanistan field commanders, as well as his dealings with the White House and President Obama, all in close confidence.

At the National Press Club, the chairman recapped his first year in office, focusing on his travels abroad and building one-on-one relationships with foreign militaries.

Dempsey said he wants to expand his foreign travel with visits to China, India, and Russia after giving heavy initial focus to Afghanistan (six times) and the Middle East (five times), including Turkey, Israel, Jordan and Iraq. He also has traveled to Latin America, Colombia and Brazil, and made three trips to the Asia-Pacific region in support of the “pivot.”

“As you can tell, I’m working hard on my friends list,” he said.

But Dempsey also said he recognizes concerns that the increased use of the military abroad has led to a “militarization of foreign policy.”

“I’m sure there’s places and parts of the world where that’s true,” he said. “We are very prominent, we are very -- we have great access because we build relationships, and we’re just a lot bigger.”

“I have the opposite fear in some ways, meaning I think that the notion that the military is too prominent in foreign affairs right now is probably focused on the Mideast. The rest of the world, I think that it is a pretty careful and pretty thoughtful balance.”

Dempsey said he was a colonel in his 40s before meeting his first Department of State counterpart, but that experience has vastly changed, as young captains work with civilians abroad. Some relationships with foreign countries abroad will have to change, he said, as the military pulls back from some spots.

“We have to be careful that doesn’t create a vacuum.”

Yahoo.com
October 10, 2012

11. Panetta: US Sends Forces To Jordan

By Lolita C. Baldor and Pauline Jelinek, Associated Press

BRUSSELS -- The United States has sent military troops to the Jordan-Syria border to bolster that country’s military capabilities in the event that violence escalates along its border with Syria, Defense Secretary Leon Panetta said Wednesday.

Speaking at a NATO conference of defense ministers

in Brussels, Panetta said the U.S. has been working with Jordan to monitor chemical and biological weapons sites in Syria and also to help Jordan deal with refugees pouring over the border from Syria. The troops are also building a headquarters for themselves.

But the revelation of U.S. military personnel so close to the 19-month-old Syrian conflict suggests an escalation in the U.S. military involvement in the conflict, even as Washington pushes back on any suggestion of a direct intervention in Syria.

It also follows several days of shelling between Turkey and Syria, an indication that the civil war could spill across Syria's borders and become a regional conflict.

"We have a group of our forces there working to help build a headquarters there and to insure that we make the relationship between the United States and Jordan a strong one so that we can deal with all the possible consequences of what's happening in Syria," Panetta said.

The development comes with the U.S. presidential election less than a month away, and at a time when former Massachusetts Gov. Mitt Romney, the Republican nominee, has been criticizing President Barack Obama's foreign policy, accusing the administration of embracing too passive a stance in the convulsive Mideast region.

The defense secretary and other administration officials have expressed concern about Syrian President Bashar Assad's arsenal of chemical weapons. Panetta said last week that the United States believes that while the weapons are still secure, intelligence suggests the regime might have moved the weapons to protect them. The Obama administration has said

that Assad's use of chemical weapons would be a "red line" that would change the U.S. policy of providing only non-lethal aid to the rebels seeking to topple him.

Pentagon press secretary George Little, traveling with Panetta, said the U.S. and Jordan agreed that "increased cooperation and more detailed planning are necessary in order to respond to the severe consequences of the Assad regime's brutality."

He said the U.S. has provided medical kits, water tanks, and other forms of humanitarian aid to help Jordanians assist Syrian refugees fleeing into their country.

Little said the military personnel were there to help Jordan with the flood of Syrian refugees over its borders and the security of Syria's stockpiles of chemical and biological weapons.

"As we've said before, we have been planning for various contingencies, both unilaterally and with our regional partners," Little said in a written statement. "There are various scenarios in which the Assad regime's reprehensible actions could affect our partners in the region. For this reason and many others, we are always working on our contingency planning, for which we consult with our friends."

A U.S. defense official in Washington said the forces are made up of 100 military planners and other personnel who stayed on in Jordan after attending an annual exercise in May, and several dozen more have flown in since, operating from a joint U.S.-Jordanian military center north of Amman that Americans have used for years.

He spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not

authorized to talk about the mission on the record.

In Jordan, the biggest problem for now seems to be the strain put on the country's meager resources by the estimated 200,000 Syrian refugees who have flooded across the border — the largest fleeing to any country.

Several dozen refugees in Jordan rioted in their desert border camp of Zaatari early this month, destroying tents and medicine and leaving scores of refugee families out in the night cold.

Jordanian men also are moving the other way across the border — joining what intelligence officials have estimated to be around 2,000 foreigners fighting alongside Syrian rebels trying to topple Assad. A Jordanian border guard was wounded after armed men — believed trying to go fight — exchanged gunfire at the northern frontier.

Turkey has reinforced its border with artillery guns and deployed more fighter jets to an air base close to the border region after an errant Syrian mortar shell killed five people in a Turkish border town last week and Turkey retaliated with artillery strikes.

Turkey's military chief Gen. Necdet Ozel vowed Wednesday to respond with more force to any further shelling from Syria, keeping up the pressure on its southern neighbor a day after NATO said it stood ready to defend Turkey.

London Times
October 11, 2012

12. British And US Military Sent To Prevent Chemical Weapons Grab

By James Hider; Deborah Haynes, Michael Evans and Hugh Tomlinson

Britain has sent military personnel to Jordan, where US army experts are helping to contain the fallout from the war in Syria, as well as being ready if the Syrian regime loses control of its large chemical weapons stockpile.

The United States has special forces stationed close to the Syrian border in Turkey as the civil war threatens to spill over and draw in its regional allies.

The presence of an initial contingent of 150 US planners and a very small number of British personnel could raise the possibility of "mission creep" as the Syria conflict becomes a regional proxy war, with Damascus supported by Iran and Russia and the rebels backed directly by Saudi Arabia, Qatar and indirectly by the US.

Britain's National Security Council, chaired by David Cameron, is due to meet next week, with Syria high on the agenda amid growing concern over the situation.

As part of a US-led "containment strategy", the American troops have set up base north of the Jordanian capital Amman, only 35 miles from the Syrian border. It is understood that the British element is trying to establish what more could be done to help.

One of the main concerns in Whitehall and Washington is that some of President Assad's chemical warheads will fall into the hands of hardline Islamist groups that have joined the fight against the regime.

Meanwhile, Israel has threatened to intervene if the regime tries to transfer chemical weapons to Hezbollah, its enemy in neighbouring Lebanon.

"We are working with international partners and countries neighbouring Syria

to improve border controls to reduce the risk of weapons proliferating to third parties," a Foreign and Commonwealth Office spokesman said. "We have made clear to Assad, directly and through other parties, that any use or proliferation of CBW [chemical and biological weapons] would be completely unacceptable."

A spokesman for the Ministry of Defence said that Jordan was a key partner in Britain's regional policy for the Middle East, which included efforts to curtail the war in Syria. "This work and relationship includes the deployment of UK military personnel to Jordan on a regular basis," he added.

There is also mounting concern about the stability of Jordan, one of the last pro-Western bastions in a region where uprisings have swept away the old order. Facing protests from an Islamist opposition, King Abdullah appointed a new prime minister yesterday and charged him with organising parliamentary elections, the first since the Arab Spring began. It is feared that any external pressure on the Kingdom, similar to the cross-border artillery exchanges in which Turkey has engaged, could make the monarchy vulnerable as it struggles with the economic impact of the war next door and at least 100,000 refugees.

The initial focus of the US deployment has been on helping Jordan to cope with the expanding number of refugees, but they are also working on "unilateral" American contingency plans, US officials said. Although they would not be more specific, the planning includes possible US military intervention to prevent extremist militant groups from seizing chemical weapons

located in more than 30 sites across the country.

In May US troops joined units from Jordan and 17 other countries in an exercise called Eager Lion 12, which rehearsed scenarios involving conflict in the region, and included chemical warfare drills. More than 100 senior US planners stayed on in Jordan and were later joined by other specialists to continue contingency planning.

American and French special forces have been at Incirlik airbase in southern Turkey for weeks, according to security sources. Since early summer, the Nato base has been a nerve-centre for Western nations and regional allies. Agents for Saudi Arabia and Qatar are also at the site, working to channel weapons and cash to the rebels.

Wall Street Journal
October 11, 2012
Pg. 10

13. Syrian Conflict Grows On Two Fronts

Turkey Forces Damascus-Bound Jet Suspected of Carrying Arms to Land; U.S. Confirms Military Team on Jordan Border

By Julian E. Barnes, Stephen Fidler and Joe Parkinson

By JULIAN E. BARNES in Washington, STEPHEN FIDLER in Brussels and JOE PARKINSON in Istanbul

Turkey escalated its conflict with Damascus on Wednesday by forcing down a Syrian passenger plane it suspected was delivering arms to the regime from Moscow, while the U.S. disclosed that it has stationed a team of military personnel along Jordan's border with Syria.

Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu and Turkish officials confirmed that the plane, a civilian aircraft, was

being searched on the runway at the capital's Esenboga Airport and said Turkey had banned its own civilian aircraft from Syrian airspace effective immediately amid fears of mounting insecurity.

"We are determined to control weapons transfers to a regime that carries out such brutal massacres against civilians. It is unacceptable that such a transfer is made using our airspace," Mr. Davutoglu said on Turkish television, adding, "Today, we received information that this plane was carrying cargo of a nature that could not possibly be in compliance with the rules of civil aviation."

Hours later, Mr. Davutoglu said the plane would be allowed to leave, but its cargo had been confiscated, the Associated Press reported.

Turkish television channels offered mixed reports of what the airliner's cargo contained. NTV reported that Turkish officials had seized "material deemed to be parts of missiles," while CNN Turk reported the detection of "military communications devices." Neither report could be independently confirmed.

The news came as Turkey's top military commander warned that Ankara would launch a tougher response if Syrian shells continued to land on Turkish territory.

"We responded but if it continues we will respond with greater force," state television channel TRT quoted Chief of General Staff Necdet Ozel as saying during a visit to the southern border town of Akcakale, where Syrian shells killed five Turkish civilians a week ago.

Turkish news channels reported that 35 passengers and two crew members were on the plane, an Airbus A320. It wasn't immediately clear

whether the passengers were Syrian nationals and whether they were civilians. Turkish television showed images of the plane on the runway and carried testimony of witnesses who said they saw two Turkish F-16 jets accompanying the plane when it landed.

Neither Damascus nor Moscow had an immediate comment.

U.S. defense officials said about 150 U.S. military personnel have been stationed in Jordan to help draft plans to secure Syria's weapons of mass destruction in the event of the collapse of the Bashar al-Assad regime and to assist Amman with refugee flows.

The team began arriving about six months ago, military officials said. The planning effort with Jordan on securing Syria's chemical-weapons sites, should the Syrian president fall, began even earlier, officials said.

Despite the U.S. military presence, officials dismissed suggestions of a deepening involvement in the 19-month-old conflict.

"These guys are not door-kickers or shooters," a military official said. "They are planners."

Some Republicans, including Mitt Romney, have criticized the Obama administration for its handling of the Syrian crisis, although the GOP presidential nominee hasn't said he would directly provide arms or lethal aid to the rebels.

At the White House, press secretary Jay Carney said the military deployment wasn't a signal of a change in the U.S. position, adding the administration would continue to provide only nonlethal aid.

"It's not an escalation," he said. "It's us working with a partner as part of our contingency planning to deal

with the impacts of Assad's brutality."

Syria, which blames Arab and Western countries for financing and arming the antigovernment insurgency, characterized reports of the U.S. presence on Jordan's border as evidence of "scandalous American involvement in the crisis."

Damascus accused the Obama administration of carrying out a "secret agenda... to destroy Syria and destabilize its security and stability."

Rebel fighters, meanwhile, have criticized the U.S. in particular for not providing them military aid, and Turkey for not taking unilateral action against its neighbor.

The deployment of the 150 military personnel was reported Wednesday by the New York Times. The U.S. work with the Jordanians on plans to secure Syria was first reported by The Wall Street Journal in March.

After a meeting of North Atlantic Treaty Organization defense ministers in Brussels, Defense Secretary Leon Panetta said the troops had been deployed to help Amman manage the impact from the Syria conflict. He said the U.S. is helping Jordan deal with refugees and working with Jordanian authorities to monitor chemical- and biological-weapons sites in Syria.

Mr. Panetta, who said the U.S. is also working with Turkey to monitor weapons sites, is seeking to make sure security of the locations is maintained. "We want to make sure that these [biological] and chemical weapons don't fall into the wrong hands," he said, adding that the U.S. was also providing nonlethal support to the Syrian opposition and seeking to provide humanitarian aid.

Lt. Col. Wesley Miller, a spokesman for the Department of Defense, said the U.S. has provided a variety of humanitarian assistance, including medical kits and water tanks to help Jordan deal with the flow of refugees. But he said the U.S. and Jordan were planning for a range of scenarios, including regarding the security of Syria's chemical-weapons stockpile.

Jordan has a long history of dealing with refugees from the West Bank, Iraq and other areas. Some experts said the presence of U.S. military planners shows efforts to step up preparations for Mr. Assad's fall.

"It is a plausible assessment that this is about preparations for total-regime-collapse scenarios," said Joseph Holliday, an expert on the Syrian conflict at the Institute for the Study of War, a nonpartisan Washington think tank. "It would make sense for us to do that in concert with the Jordanians."

Jordan has been more eager to work with the U.S. on planning efforts, said military officials and defense experts—more so than Turkey, which has been more reticent to conduct intensive planning or coordination with Washington.

Jordanian officials declined to comment. U.S. officials have said Amman had requested the U.S. not publicly discuss the size of the military deployment.

U.S. officials said they believe the Jordanian government would be unwilling to enter Syria as long as the Assad regime remains in power.

Mr. Holliday said because of Jordan's hesitancy to get involved in the Syria conflict, it was unlikely that the deployment of U.S. planners would lead to a greater U.S. involvement in Syria. "I don't see this deployment dragging us into the conflict, for the

simple reason that Jordanians aren't eager at all," Mr. Holliday said.

—*Nour Malas, Carol E. Lee and Ayla Albayrak contributed to this article.*

New York Times
October 11, 2012

14. Turkey, Seeking Weapons, Forces Syrian Jet To Land

By Anne Barnard and Sebnem Arsu

BEIRUT, Lebanon — Turkey sharply escalated its confrontation with Syria on Wednesday, forcing a Syrian passenger plane to land in Ankara on suspicion of carrying military cargo, ordering Turkish civilian airplanes to avoid Syria's airspace and warning of increasingly forceful responses if Syrian artillery gunners keep lobbing shells across the border.

NTV television in Turkey said two Turkish F-16 warplanes had been sent to intercept a Syrian Air jetliner, an Airbus A320 with 35 passengers en route from Moscow to Damascus, and had forced it to land at Esenboga Airport in Ankara, the capital, because it might have been carrying a weapons shipment to the Syrian government. Inspectors confiscated what NTV described as parts of a missile and allowed the plane to resume its trip after several hours. The Turkish authorities declined to specify what had been found.

"There are items that are beyond the ones that are legitimate and required to be reported in civilian flights," Turkey's foreign minister, Ahmet Davutoglu, said in remarks reported by the country's semiofficial Anatolian News Agency. "There are items that we would rate as troublesome."

There was no immediate comment from Syria. Turkish transportation authorities said earlier in the day that all Turkish aircraft should avoid flying over Syrian territory, possibly in anticipation of retaliatory action by Syria.

The steps taken by Turkey added ominous new tensions to its troubled relationship with Syria, where a nearly 19-month-old uprising against President Bashar al-Assad has evolved into a civil war and threatened to touch off a regional conflict. Turkey is the host for main elements of the anti-Assad insurgency and for roughly 100,000 Syrian refugees, who have been fleeing in greater numbers as violence has increased along the 550-mile border in recent days. Several mortar rounds have landed on Turkish soil, prompting Turkish gunners to return fire.

News reports on Wednesday described intensified fighting close to Azamari, a Syrian border settlement, with mortar and machine-gun fire clearly audible from the Turkish side. Wounded civilians, some in makeshift boats filled with women and children, could be seen crossing the narrow Orontes River, which demarcates part of the Syrian border with Hatay Province in Turkey.

The Turkish chief of staff, Gen. Necdet Ozel, who visited parts of the border area on Wednesday, was quoted by Turkish news media as saying that military responses to Syrian shelling would be "even stronger" if the shelling persisted.

The rising tensions between Turkey and Syria are seen as especially troublesome because Turkey is a member of NATO, which considers an attack on one member an attack on all, and this implicitly raises

the possibility that NATO will be drawn into a volatile Middle East conflict.

On Tuesday, the NATO secretary general, Anders Fogh Rasmussen, emphasized that NATO had “all necessary plans in place to protect and defend Turkey if necessary.”

The fighting in Syria has touched all other neighbors of the country as well, with fighting reported recently in villages near a border crossing to Lebanon in the west, while in the east, Syrian authorities have lost control of some crossing points on the border with Iraq. Tens of thousands of Syrians have sought refuge in Lebanon and Jordan, straining resources in those countries. Last month several mortar shells fired from Syria landed in the Golan Heights near Israel’s northern border.

Skirmishes have been reported between Syrian troops and Jordanians guarding their northern border, and Jordan is worried that the porous frontier could become a conduit for Islamic militants joining the anti-Assad struggle.

At the same time, Mr. Assad’s government appears to have hardened its position over the already remote possibility of a truce with the rebels. On Wednesday the government rejected a proposal made a day earlier by Ban Ki-moon, the United Nations secretary general, that Mr. Assad take the first step by declaring an immediate unilateral cease-fire, to be followed by a matching step from his armed opponents.

Jihad Makdissi, a spokesman for the Syrian Foreign Ministry, said in response that the insurgents must stop shooting first. In a statement reported by the official Syrian Arab News Agency, Mr. Makdissi said his government had told Mr. Ban he should send emissaries

to the countries arming the insurgents, and urge them “to use their influence to stop the violence from the other side, then informing the Syrian side of the results.”

Anne Barnard reported from Beirut, and Sebnem Arsu from Hatay, Turkey. Reporting was contributed by Christine Hauser and Rick Gladstone from New York, Alan Cowell from Paris, and Hwaida Saad from Beirut.

New York Times
October 11, 2012

15. Official Tells Panel A Request For Libya Was Denied

By Michael R. Gordon

WASHINGTON — The former chief security officer for the American Embassy in Libya on Wednesday told a House committee investigating the fatal attack last month on a diplomatic compound in Benghazi that his request to extend the deployment of an American military team were thwarted by the State Department’s Bureau of Diplomatic Security.

But a senior State Department official said after the hearing by the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform that keeping the team would not have changed the bloody outcome in Benghazi because it was not based there but in Tripoli.

The clashing perspectives of witnesses was echoed in the partisan sparring of lawmakers, with Republicans accusing the State Department of shortchanging security at the compound and Democrats countering that the vast majority of security requests from there had been met.

The hearing never established what it might have taken to repel the Sept. 11 attack

on the compound in Benghazi that killed Ambassador J. Christopher Stevens and three other Americans, or even if the American military team might have played a role in defending the compound if it had been in Libya.

The former security officer who testified, Eric A. Nordstrom, said he was told in a phone call in July that the deployment of the site security team, a 16-member American military unit based in Tripoli, could not be prolonged.

The military command that oversaw the unit, the Africa Command, was willing to extend it. But the State Department decided that it was not necessary.

“It was abundantly clear: we were not going to get resources until the aftermath of an incident,” Mr. Nordstrom said. “And the question that we would ask is, again, how thin does the ice have to get before someone falls through?”

The account of Mr. Nordstrom, who served as the regional security officer for the embassy from September 2011 to July 2012, was supported by Lt. Col. Andrew Wood of the Utah National Guard, the leader of the team, which wrapped up its deployment in August. Colonel Wood said that the team’s specialized military training and weapons made it far more effective than the Libyan militiamen the United States was trying to use to protect its diplomatic compounds.

“The security in Benghazi was a struggle and remained a struggle throughout my time there,” Colonel Wood said. “Diplomatic security remained weak.”

The State Department’s position was presented by Patrick Kennedy, its under secretary for management, who suggested that none of the

steps Mr. Nordstrom or Colonel Wood had proposed would have altered the outcome. The attack, he said, was “an unprecedented assault by dozens of heavily armed men,” a characterization that Mr. Nordstrom acknowledged was accurate.

The cantankerous tone of the hearing was evident during the testimony of Mr. Kennedy, who was frequently interrupted by Representative Darrell Issa of California, the committee chairman, and other Republicans. After the hearing, Mr. Kennedy called a news conference at the State Department in an effort to rebut allegations that the department had neglected security at the Benghazi compound. He acknowledged that the State Department did not give Mr. Nordstrom exactly what he wanted, but said, “Nobody takes this more seriously than we do to find the right solution.”

Charlene Lamb, a deputy assistant secretary in the Bureau of Diplomatic Security, insisted that Mr. Nordstrom’s request to extend the military team was only a recommendation and that the State Department had been right not to heed it. The broader strategy was to phase out the American military team and rely more on the Libyan militiamen who were protecting the compound along with a small number of American security officers.

At the time of the attack in Benghazi, Ms. Lamb said, the outer wall had been raised and external lighting had been installed, along with a network of camera and security grills on windows.

Five American security agents were at the compound at the time of the assault, Ms. Lamb said, though it was later noted that only three were based at the compound and that two had accompanied Mr. Stevens

from Tripoli. "There were also three members of the Libyan 17th February Brigade," she said, referring to the militia that had been retained to help protect the compound. In addition, a well-trained American quick reaction security team was stationed at a nearby annex.

For all that, it was clear that there was a large gap between what the security officers in the field believed was needed and what the State Department officials in Washington assessed was required. Under questioning, Mr. Kennedy and Ms. Lamb acknowledged that they had not visited Libya. Mr. Nordstrom said he tried to improve security by asking for 12 agents, only to be told by a State Department official that he was asking for the "sun, moon and the stars."

Mr. Nordstrom, who continues to work for the State Department, said he had responded that the most frustrating part of his assignment was not the turmoil in Libya. "It's not the hardships," Mr. Nordstrom said he had replied. "It's not the gunfire. It's not the threats. It's dealing and fighting against the people, programs and personnel who are supposed to be supporting me. And I added it by saying, 'For me, the Taliban is on the inside of the building.'"

After declining for weeks to provide details about the assault on Sept. 11, the State Department on Tuesday night arranged with little notice a conference call in which a spokesman gave new details on what had happened.

The account provided by a State Department official, whom the agency declined to identify, differed from the initial Obama administration reports in some important respects. Susan E. Rice, the American ambassador to the

United Nations, had said that the attack on the compound began with an angry protest about an anti-Islamic film that was "hijacked" by extremists.

But the new account provided by the State Department made no mention of a protest. In this account, Mr. Stevens met with a Turkish diplomat during the day of the attack and escorted him to the main gate of the compound around 8:30 p.m. At that time, there were no demonstrations, and the situation appeared calm.

Little more than an hour later, there was gunfire and explosions. American agents, watching the compound through cameras, saw armed men moving into it. The barracks for a militia that was protecting the compound was set on fire, and the attack unfolded.

Washington Post
October 11, 2012
Pg. 11

16. Pakistanis Outraged Over Girl's Shooting

Award offered for leads in attack on activist

By Richard Leiby

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan — In a country where militant attacks occur almost daily, the Taliban's attempted assassination of a 14-year-old education rights activist in northwestern Pakistan united Pakistanis from across social divides Wednesday in a remarkable and rare display of collective outrage against extremism.

The shooting Tuesday of Malala Yousafzai, who remains in critical condition in a Peshawar military hospital, brought condemnation from conservative clerics, secular politicians, the military and media figures at a time when Pakistanis had seemed almost numb to rising extremism.

More than 3,000 people died last year in extremist attacks here, but images of the bandaged, unconscious teenager prompted a national debate about the corrosive impact of Talibanization.

"The world image of Pakistan is, to put it mildly, not very good," said Ijaz Khattak, a professor at the University of Peshawar who knows Yousafzai and her father, an educator and peace activist in Swat. "Society is seen as increasingly sympathetic to these terrorists. What this incident can prove to be is a catalyst, because the outrage can turn the tide against the religious fundamentalism."

Yousafzai was already a national hero for her fearless opposition to the Taliban, which closed her father's school and other girls' schools in Swat when the militants imposed harsh Islamic law there from 2007 until 2009. In conversations Wednesday, Pakistanis referred to her as "that brave girl" and tuned into television networks' constant updates on her condition after surgeons removed the life-threatening bullet.

Doctors said her prognosis had improved.

An editorial Wednesday in the News, an English-language daily, seemed to capture the national mood: "Malala Yousafzai is in critical condition today, and so is Pakistan," it said. "We are infected with the cancer of extremism, and unless it is cut out we will slide ever further into the bestiality that this latest atrocity exemplifies."

Police said they have identified a suspect but have not apprehended him. Akbar Khan Hoti, chief of police for Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, told a television news channel that the attacker traveled from eastern Afghanistan.

The provincial administration, meanwhile, announced a \$100,000 reward for information leading to the suspect's capture.

The country's top military leader, Chief of Army Staff Gen. Ashfaq Parvez Kayani, visited the girl's hospital bedside and declared her shooting "inhuman" and a "heinous act of terrorism."

The general, rarely in the public eye, was the first national leader to visit the teenager — upstaging civilian politicians in a symbolic show of where power truly lies in Pakistan. In a news release, Kayani sought to draw a sharp line between Islam and the Taliban, saying, "Islam guarantees each individual — male or female — equal and inalienable rights to life, property and human dignity."

Those who attacked Yousafzai and her fellow students, he said, "have no respect even for the golden words of the prophet ... that 'the one who is not kind to children, is not amongst us.'"

Interior Minister Rehman Malik used Twitter to make the same distinction: "I am proud of my nation as we always stand united together in all our difficult moments. Terrorists are [neither] Pakistani nor Muslim."

The Lahore-based Islamic group Jamaat-ud-Dawa — which describes itself as a charity but is considered a terrorist front by U.S. officials — also took to Twitter to condemn what it called the "shameful, despicable, barbaric attempt" to kill Yousafzai.

"Curse upon assassins and perpetrators," the group tweeted.

Although Islamist parties hold few seats in Parliament, their influence has been outside in recent years. Liberal-minded politicians, who recognize the

sway that clerics hold over an increasingly conservative public, have been loath to challenge the power of reactionary groups and leaders who claim to speak for Islam.

The ruling Pakistan People's Party bowed to the clerics' influence last month by calling a public holiday so people could peacefully protest an anti-Islamic video on YouTube. The decision backfired when hard-liners hijacked rallies and an estimated 30 people died in riots in several cities.

The global condemnation of the attack on Yousafzai shared overtones with the disgust voiced internationally in August over the jailing of a 14-year-old Pakistani Christian girl on anti-blasphemy charges. A mob had threatened to burn the girl alive for allegedly desecrating the Koran, but the case gradually fell apart amid allegations that she was framed by a local cleric.

Pakistani politicians rallied around the girl at first, although they were wary of speaking too forcefully: Two political leaders were assassinated in 2011 for advocating reform to the country's law against blasphemy.

After the outcry over the anti-Islam video last month, any talk of amending the law seems to have abruptly ended.

"We feel that extremism is rising at an unchecked rate now," said Xavier William, a Christian who leads the nondenominational tolerance group Life for All in Pakistan.

But William said the two teenagers have challenged extremism in a way few others have. "These two 14-year-old girls are icons now," he said. "They gave the people a reason to think, and they basically started a change."

October 11, 2012

17. Russia Won't Renew Pact On Weapons With U.S.

By David M. Herszenhorn

MOSCOW — The Russian government said Wednesday that it would not renew a hugely successful 20-year partnership with the United States to safeguard and dismantle nuclear and chemical weapons in the former Soviet Union when the program expires next spring, a potentially grave setback in the already fraying relationship between the former cold war enemies.

The Kremlin's refusal to renew the Nunn-Lugar Cooperative Threat Reduction Program would put an end to a multibillion-dollar effort, financed largely by American taxpayers, that is widely credited with removing all nuclear weapons from the former Soviet republics of Ukraine, Kazakhstan and Belarus; deactivating more than 7,600 strategic nuclear warheads; and eliminating huge stockpiles of nuclear missiles and chemical weapons, as well as launchers and other equipment and military sites that supported unconventional weapons.

"The American side knows that we would not want a new extension," a deputy foreign minister, Sergey Ruabkov, told the news agency Interfax. "This is not news."

In a statement on its Web site, the Russian Foreign Ministry said that the Obama administration had proposed renewing the arrangement but that Washington was well aware of Russia's opposition. "American partners know that their proposal is not consistent with our ideas about what forms and on what basis further cooperation should be built," the statement said.

Russian officials, meanwhile, noted that their country's financial situation is far improved from the days after the collapse of the Soviet Union, raising the possibility that Russia would be willing to continue initiatives started under the Nunn-Lugar agreement, but with its own financing and supervision. The Foreign Ministry, in its statement, noted that Russia has increased its budget allocation "in the field of disarmament."

American officials, including one of the original architects of the program, Senator Richard G. Lugar, Republican of Indiana, have said they still have hope of reaching some form of new agreement with Russia.

But the prospects seem bleak.

President Vladimir V. Putin, while expressing a willingness to cooperate on nonproliferation issues, has said that a more pressing priority is to address Russia's opposition to United States plans for a missile defense system based in Europe. President Obama has shown little willingness to make any concessions, other than to offer repeated reassurance that the system is not intended for use against Russia. And the Republican presidential nominee, Mitt Romney, seems even less likely to compromise on the missile defense issue.

The plan to end the Nunn-Lugar program appears to be the latest step by the Russian government in an expanding effort to curtail American-led initiatives, and especially the influence of American money, in various spheres of Russian public policy.

Last month, the Kremlin directed the United States Agency for International Development to halt all of its operations in Russia, which similarly entailed two decades

of work, but in support of nonprofit groups like human rights advocates and civil society and public health programs.

The Russian government had made no secret of its unhappiness with some programs financed by the Agency for International Development, like Golos, the country's only independent election-monitoring group, which helped expose fraud in disputed parliamentary voting last December.

Mr. Lugar, who is leaving the Senate at the end of this year, visited Moscow in August to begin pressing for renewal of the program and found Russian officials resistant. "The Russian government indicated a desire to make changes to the Nunn-Lugar Umbrella Agreement as opposed to simply extending it," he said Wednesday. "At no time did officials indicate that, at this stage of negotiation, they were intent on ending it, only amending it."

But Mr. Lugar, the senior Republican on the Foreign Relations Committee, lost a primary election this year in his bid for a seventh term, and he has acknowledged that there are few lawmakers who seem willing to carry on his efforts, which began in partnership with Senator Sam Nunn, Democrat of Georgia.

During his August visit to Moscow, Mr. Lugar said he hoped that the United States and Russia could use their past successes as a basis for expanding their efforts to reduce the threat of unconventional weapons in other countries. He raised the idea of trying to eliminate chemical weapons in Syria.

Russian officials, however, seem increasingly unwilling to let the United States set the agenda in global diplomacy — blocking demands, for

example, for more aggressive intervention in Syria.

Bloomberg.com
October 10, 2012

18. Putin Says Iraq Arms Deal Shows Trust In Russian Weaponry

By Ilya Arhipov, Bloomberg News

President Vladimir Putin said a multi-billion-dollar arms contract with Iraq, making Russia the second-biggest weapons supplier to the Middle Eastern state after the U.S., showed trust in Russian military equipment.

“We are restoring military cooperation,” Putin said today after talks outside Moscow with Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki. “Iraqi specialists know Russian weapons very well, and we will find mutual understanding in this sphere that will increase not only trade volumes but confidence.”

Iraq will purchase more than \$4.2 billion of weapons from Russia under contracts signed in recent months, the Russian government said yesterday, in a challenge to the Middle Eastern country’s military ties to the U.S. If fulfilled, the contracts would lead to Russian military advisers and technicians working in Iraq as they did during the Soviet era, according to Alexei Malashenko, an analyst at the Carnegie Moscow Center.

Iraq is buying 30 Russian MI-28 attack helicopters, worth \$2 billion, along with 42 Pantsir short-to-medium-range surface-to-air missile and anti-aircraft artillery weapon systems, worth \$2.3 billion, according to Russian state broadcaster RT. The country may also purchase Russian MiG fighter jets as well as armored vehicles, RT said.

The deals are the biggest military contacts since the 2003

U.S.-led overthrow of Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein. Since then, the country spent about \$300 million on Russian Mi-17 military transport helicopters.

Washington Post
October 11, 2012
Pg. 13

19. Dane Says He Led CIA To Awlaki

Former jihadist claims role in U.S. attack that killed al-Qaeda figure

By Joby Warrick

His story is the stuff of spy fiction: an undercover agent who used guile and technology to help the CIA find a top al-Qaeda leader. But if true, newly published claims by a self-professed Danish double agent could complicate efforts by U.S. and European spy agencies to penetrate terrorist groups in the future, intelligence experts say.

Morten Storm, an admitted former jihadist, sparked a controversy in his native country this week with a newspaper interview claiming he helped the CIA target Anwar al-Awlaki, the al-Qaeda leader who was killed in a drone strike last year. The 36-year-old Dane offered a detailed account of how he cultivated a years-long relationship with the U.S.-born propagandist in Yemen, and then helped the CIA plant the tracking device that led to Awlaki’s death.

Both the CIA and the Danish intelligence service declined to confirm or deny the account. But Storm has buttressed his version of events by supplying a Danish newspaper with copies of purported e-mail exchanges with Awlaki, as well as what he says is a secret audio recording of a meeting with a CIA officer last year in which the targeting of Awlaki was discussed.

Storm did not reply to e-mails and phone messages

requesting comment. But several U.S. and European analysts — including former intelligence officers — have described his account as broadly plausible while acknowledging that it may be impossible to verify many of the specific claims.

Whether true or not, analysts say, Storm’s boast of undercover service for the Danish and U.S. intelligence agencies could exacerbate security concerns in Denmark, a country that has been repeatedly targeted by al-Qaeda in recent years.

Moreover, his detailed depiction of the Awlaki manhunt could make it harder for Western governments to place moles inside terrorist groups, spy agency veterans and terrorism experts say. Of particular concern is Storm’s description of the use of ordinary-looking USB thumb drives as a homing device for CIA missiles.

“This is worrying, and it should be,” said Magnus Ranstorp, a Swedish scholar and former adviser on counterterrorism to the European Union. “At the very least, it is operationally embarrassing, and one has to wonder what will come out next.”

Storm’s “outing” of himself as an informant began this week with the posting of an interview on the Web site of Jyllands-Posten, a Danish newspaper. In the interview and accompanying articles, the former motorcycle gang member describes his evolution in the past decade from an anti-American Islamic radical to an undercover spy intent on destroying Awlaki, a Muslim cleric he once admired.

“He was my sheikh, he was my teacher, he was a friend of mine,” Storm says of Awlaki in the recorded conversation

with a purported CIA officer identified only as “Michael.” He adds that, because of “the evil in him,” Storm agreed to help the Americans find and kill Awlaki, then a top leader in the al-Qaeda affiliate in Yemen.

By his own account, Storm’s association with radical Islamic causes and figures drew the attention of European investigators in the mid-2000s. But in 2006, he agreed to become an informant for the the Danish Security and Intelligence Service.

He claimed in the interview to have befriended Awlaki over several trips to Yemen, and says the al-Qaeda leader sometimes asked him to purchase perfume and other personal items for Awlaki’s wife. The two men sometimes exchanged messages using thumb drives delivered by couriers, a practice that would later make it easy for Storm to provide Awlaki with a cleverly disguised homing device.

Storm said he decided to go public with his story because he believed he had not been properly credited for helping the CIA eliminate Awlaki in September 2011. Experts speculated that the secretly recorded audio tape was Storm’s attempt to secure a CIA acknowledgment of his role in the agency’s hunt for Awlaki. In the recording, the individual identified as Michael thanks Storm for his contributions but also cites a “parallel” CIA effort that he says was more directly responsible for Awlaki’s slaying.

Former intelligence officers say Storm’s detailed description and supporting evidence suggest that he was working as informant, although he may have embellished certain details. Bruce Riedel, a former CIA officer and counterterrorism adviser to the White House, said the Dane appeared to be “the classic

model for penetrating al-Qaeda: a European convert to Islam married to a Yemeni Muslim with a fondness for jihad.”

But Storm’s willingness to go public illustrates the risks inherent in using double agents, said Robert Baer, a former CIA case officer who served in the Middle East.

“When they walk out the door, they can do a lot of damage,” Baer said. “It’s an utter nightmare.”

Julie Tate contributed to this report.

Wall Street Journal
October 11, 2012

Pg. 15

20. Canadian Officer Pleads Guilty To Leaking Data

By Alistair MacDonald

A Canadian naval officer pleaded guilty to leaking military-communications intelligence, a surprise ending to a spy scandal that embarrassed Canada’s military and briefly caused a rift between Canadian and U.S. security officials.

Sub-Lt. Jeffrey Delisle pleaded guilty on Wednesday to one count each of communicating safeguarded information and attempting to communicate safeguarded information and one of breach of trust, public prosecutors said.

The plea ends what many had expected to be a lengthy court trial. Lt. Delisle will be sentenced in January on charges that carry a maximum sentence of life.

Lt. Delisle’s arrest in January on espionage-related charges shocked Canadians, unaccustomed in recent years to the case’s Cold War-style narrative. Prosecutors and the defense have kept details of the charges from the public, but people familiar with the situation said Lt. Delisle leaked

a large cache of military-signals information data to Russia. A spokesman for the Russian Embassy in Ottawa didn’t return calls.

The violations occurred between July 2007 and January 2012, prosecutors have said. Lt. Delisle was paid by Russian military intelligence, including some monthly payments of around 3,000 Canadian dollars, or about \$3,060, according to a person with knowledge of the case.

At one stage, Lt. Delisle met with his Russian handlers in Brazil, this person said. It was when returning through customs with a large amount of cash that he first aroused the suspicions of Canadian authorities, this person said.

Lt. Delisle worked at the Royal Canadian Navy’s Trinity intelligence and communications center in Halifax, Nova Scotia, and previously at the headquarters of military intelligence in Ottawa. The Trinity facility mainly tracks naval traffic in the Atlantic and analyzes Canadian and allied signals intelligence, or electronic communications, said people familiar with the facility.

Lt. Delisle downloaded intelligence from a number of databases including a system called Stone Ghost, which is open to the so-called Five Eyes, an intelligence alliance between the U.S., U.K., Canada, Australia and New Zealand, these people said.

Lt. Delisle’s attorney, Mike Taylor, speaking Wednesday after the guilty plea, said the amount of data his client compromised was “significant.”

The leaks caused a temporary breach between Canadian military intelligence and U.S. counterparts, according to people familiar with the matter. Though U.S. and Canadian officials came

to terms on the issue, the rift underscored the seriousness with which Washington took the incident. Canadian officials at the time publicly insisted that allies weren’t overly concerned.

The leak alarmed American officials, in part, because of the large volume of data stolen, said a person familiar with U.S. government discussions of the matter.

“It’s a huge security breach and given [Lt. Delisle had] very easy access and exit from these sensitive facilities suggests Canada’s technological systems weren’t up to scratch,” said Wesley Wark, an expert in Canadian security and intelligence at the University of Toronto.

A spokesman for Canada’s Foreign Affairs department declined to comment, citing national security.

Lt. Delisle “just wants to get it done with,” said Mr. Taylor, Lt. Delisle’s attorney. “There are some personal issues that led up to this” crime, he said, without offering further comment. Lt. Delisle is a divorced father of four children.

New York Times
October 11, 2012

21. North Korea Says A Long-Range Missile Test Is Now More Likely

By Choe Sang-Hun

SEOUL, South Korea — North Korea said on Wednesday that it felt freer to test a long-range missile now that Washington has agreed to let South Korea nearly triple the reach of its ballistic missiles, putting all of the North within its range.

The warning, in a statement from a spokesman for the North’s Foreign Ministry, came a day after the North Korean government claimed to have missiles capable of striking

targets on the American mainland.

The American-South Korean missile agreement, which was announced on Sunday, “poured cold water on all efforts to stabilize the situation on the Korean Peninsula and in the region, including our restraint from launching long-range missiles,” the statement said. “Now, the United States will have nothing to say even if we launch a long-range missile for military purposes.”

Since 1998, North Korea has launched several rockets, saying that it was trying to put scientific satellites into orbit. But Washington and its allies said the North’s true purpose was to test intercontinental ballistic missile technology. The most recent such launching, of a rocket called the Unha-3 in April, led to the unraveling of a February agreement with the United States in which North Korea had promised a moratorium on nuclear and missile tests in return for food aid.

All the North Korean rockets have exploded in midair or failed to put satellites into orbit, according to American and South Korean officials, casting doubt on the North’s ability to deliver a warhead on a long-range missile.

On Wednesday, North Korea said that the South’s new agreement with the United States, which allows the South to increase the range of its ballistic missiles to 800 kilometers, or 500 miles, had hardened the North’s conviction that the United States plans to invade the North, and said it was “only natural for us to do everything we can to strengthen our capabilities of striking the base of aggression with missiles.”

Security analysts, citing satellite images, have reported

in recent months that North Korea was building a new launching pad at the Musudan-ri missile test site on the northeastern coast designed for rockets bigger than the Unha-3 tested in April. The analysts said the North was also refurbishing the site's existing launching pad.

Yahoo.com
October 11, 2012

22. Fort Hood Suspect's Beard Case At Appeals Court

By Angela K. Brown,
Associated Press

FORT WORTH, Texas -- An Army appeals court will hear arguments Thursday about an issue that has indefinitely postponed the murder trial for the suspect in the worst mass shooting on a U.S. military installation: his beard.

Maj. Nidal Hasan, charged in the 2009 shooting rampage at Fort Hood in Texas, has appealed the trial judge's order that he will be forcibly shaved before his court-martial unless he shaves himself. The Army psychiatrist argues that the order violates his religious rights.

The American-born Muslim has said he grew a beard because his faith requires it, and that he believes dying without a beard is a sin.

Hasan, 42, faces the death penalty or life in prison without parole if convicted in the Nov. 5, 2009, attack that killed 13 people and wounded more than two dozen others at the sprawling Army post, which is about 130 miles southwest of Dallas. His court-martial was set for August, but all court proceedings in the case have been put on hold as the beard issue goes through the appeals process.

The U.S. Army Court of Criminal Appeals at Fort

Belvoir in Virginia will hear oral arguments. The court also will hear from government attorneys who have said forcibly shaving Hasan would not violate his religious rights, and that the judge has the authority to enforce the Army rule prohibiting beards.

Hasan will not be at the hearing, Fort Hood officials said. It's unclear when the court will make a decision, which could be appealed to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Armed Forces.

The Army has specific guidelines on forced shaving. A team of five military police officers restrains the inmate "with the reasonable force necessary," and a medical professional is on hand in case of injuries. The shaving must be done with electric clippers and must be videotaped, according to Army rules.

Hasan would not be the first military defendant forcibly shaved. The Army has done it to five inmates since 2005, including one person who was forcibly shaved twice, according to the Army's Office of the Chief of Staff.

The U.S. Army Court of Criminal Appeals said it also will consider whether the trial judge should be removed from Hasan's case. Defense attorneys claim that the judge, Col. Gregory Gross, exceeded his authority by issuing the shaving order. His attorneys also want the court to overturn the six contempt of court rulings issued against Hasan for having a beard at pretrial hearings this summer, when he first showed up in court with facial hair.

Gross has said Hasan's beard is a disruption and that defense attorneys have not proven that he is growing it for sincere religious reasons. Army prosecutors claim that Hasan grew the beard just before the trial was to start, so that

witnesses would not be able to identify him in court.

Tacoma News Tribune
October 11, 2012

23. New General At JBLM Pledges Care For Soldiers

By Adam Ashton, Staff writer
Joint Base Lewis-McChord's newest general took command Wednesday, pledging to care for soldiers as they return from Afghanistan while reorienting the Army's focus in the South Sound to the nation's challenges on the Pacific Rim.

Maj. Gen. Stephen Lanza will oversee that shift as the leader of the newly reactivated 7th Infantry Division. It's a command that gives him authority over nearly 18,000 soldiers in Lewis-McChord's Stryker, aviation and artillery brigades.

About 8,000 soldiers in his division are in Afghanistan today. Another 4,000 are preparing to go there this fall.

Lanza said they'll return home to different demands than they've known in the past 11 years of frequent deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan. His job will center on providing them with resources to adjust to life at home and to their changing assignments.

"To those we ask much, we owe much," Lanza said. "As leaders of the 7th Infantry Division, we must provide clear guidance, the tools and resources necessary for our soldiers to execute their tasks, and a high degree of care that is befitting our dedicated warriors."

The ceremony that marked the activation of his division concluded six months of work to build the command at Lewis-McChord.

Secretary of the Army John McHugh announced in April

that the division would be reactivated at the base to give Lewis-McChord a traditional Army command structure. It fills a missing layer of management that is standard at the Army's other largest posts.

The Army last had a division headquarters at then-Fort Lewis in 1991.

McHugh's announcement followed a bad run of news for Lewis-McChord, including the March slaying of 16 Afghan civilians, allegedly at the hands of one of its Stryker soldiers, and a string of war crimes in 2010 in which members of a Stryker platoon killed three Afghan noncombatants during patrols in Kandahar province.

Some defense experts at the time suggested that a division headquarters could have improved training and oversight for those brigades before they deployed.

Now, Lewis-McChord has the same command structure as Fort Hood in Texas and Fort Bragg in North Carolina: Brigades report to a two-star general in a division, and a division answers to a three-star general in a corps.

Until now, Lewis-McChord's brigades reported directly to I Corps.

Having a traditional number of layers is important to the Army because it frees up I Corps commander Lt. Gen. Robert Brown to focus on strategic decisions in the Pacific while requiring Lanza to pay close attention to the training, discipline and health of the base's largest combat brigades.

"I can think of no location that needs a division" more than Lewis-McChord, because of rapid growth at the base, Brown said.

Lewis-McChord had about 18,000 soldiers in 2003. It now has about 34,000 active-duty soldiers.

The 7th Infantry Division was created in 1917 and recorded a storied history in the Pacific Theater in World War II and in the Korean War. It was last active in 2006, when it was located at Fort Carson, Colo.

Some veterans who fought with the division decades ago traveled to the base south of Tacoma to see its "hourglass" flag unfurled again.

Gene Peeples, 77, put on his blue uniform as a retired Army master sergeant for the occasion. He's a Korean War veteran and the president of the 7th Infantry Division Association. Peeples traveled from Florida for Wednesday's ceremony.

"I thought it was pretty cool" that the Army chose his division for the command at Lewis-McChord, he said. His group has about 2,900 members and wants to recruit active-duty soldiers.

Dick Hazelmeyer, 80, of Spokane brought his camera and took close photos of Lanza receiving the division flag from Brown.

Hazelmeyer served more than 22 years in the military, including seven with the Air Force at McChord Air Field. He remains closest to the 7th Infantry Division because he fought with it in the Korean War between 1952 and 1953.

"I got a lot of pride. It's our combat division," he said.

cuts would threaten the Army's stability.

Speaking at an event the Government Executive Media Group hosted, Westphal said any systematic planning for sequestration -- automatic, governmentwide across-the-board cuts set to go into effect on Jan. 2, 2013 -- would create a "self-fulfilling prophecy" toward eliminating programs.

He added even if the cuts do not go into effect, there will be a reduction in the Army's civilian workforce due to outstanding budget constraints and the personnel buildup that resulted from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

"Now that were going back to a more balanced force," Westphal said, "were going to probably need to reduce our workforce."

He highlighted attrition, reduction in redundancies and a cutback on contractors as ways to decrease the number of Army employees.

The undersecretary discussed how the Army is modernizing and emphasized the need to train and educate its soldiers and civilian workers.

"I think we really have to focus on our people," Westphal said. "They are our tool, they are our instrument, they are our weapons, they are our strength. I think the first thing we have to do as we transition to a smaller force and into a force of a future ... is we have to invest in these individuals. We have to have the best educated army of any time, any place."

Focusing on educating and training Army personnel will allow the service as a whole to be more adaptable and mission ready, he added.

Part of that adaptability, according to Westphal, requires coordination among all branches of the military and across government.

"We're doing this in concert," he said.

A smarter, slimmer and more integrated workforce, as well as a focus on long-term strategies, will help the Army prepare for any impending event.

"You can't anticipate what a future president will require and what kind of situations will arise," Westphal said. "You have to be ready for any eventual situation in the future."

He added that things could be drastically different in the long term: "Maybe we'll be like starship troopers fighting insects in space."

Aerospace Daily & Defense Report
October 10, 2012
Pg. 3

25. U.S. Navy Secretary Says Biofuel Technology Has Arrived

Despite continued opposition from lawmakers like U.S. Sen. John McCain (R-Ariz.), the U.S. Navy will continue its efforts to leverage biofuels technology for its ships and aircraft, service Secretary Ray Mabus says.

Mabus disputes McCain's contention that the Navy is investing in unproven and costly technology by pursuing a course for biofuels. "The technology is there," he said Oct. 9 during a luncheon in Arlington, Va., hosted by the National Aeronautic Association.

Research shows that biofuels will be a viable alternative for fossil fuel between 2018 and 2024, according to Mabus. "What we can do is speed that up to make it more competitive," he says.

The Navy has been picking up plenty of steam with its biofuels efforts. The service has touted the use of biofuels in recent large-scale exercises and

it is putting together a so-called "Green Fleet" of ships that use alternative fuels while also developing a "Green Hornet" F-18 with the same concept.

One of the more interesting alternative fuel concepts being pursued by the Navy is the Office of Naval Research's program to hone the chemistry for producing jet fuel from renewable resources in theater.

The most promising process, the Navy says, would catalytically convert carbon dioxide hydrogen gas directly to liquid hydrocarbon fuel used as JP-5, a process being developed and honed by the Naval Research Laboratory (NRL).

NRL has successfully developed and demonstrated technologies for the recovery of carbon dioxide and the production of hydrogen gas from seawater using an electrochemical acidification cell, and the conversion of those gases to hydrocarbons that can be used to produce jet fuel, the Navy says.

"We don't have a favorite technology," Mabus says. The service is simply keen to develop alternatives.

McCain says Mabus should stick to building and operating ships, not developing fuel for them. "You are the Secretary of the Navy, not the Secretary of Energy," McCain says in a July 27 letter to Mabus.

In that same letter, McCain chastised Mabus for his "decision to buy 450,000 gallons of biofuels at over \$26 per gallon for a 'demonstration' using operations and maintenance funds provided by Congress" as well as the Navy's commitment of \$170 million to develop a commercial biofuels refinery. Both moves "will result in a real cost to the readiness and safety of our sailors and Marines," McCain said.

GovExec.com
October 10, 2012

24. Army Prepares For Workforce Cuts, But Not Sequestration Specifically

By Eric Katz

Army Undersecretary Joseph Westphal said Wednesday the service is not planning any contingencies for sequestration and warned the

The Navy sees fuel needs as a measure of readiness too. The Navy's Military Sealift Command, the primary supplier of fuel and oil to the fleet, delivered nearly 600 million gal. of fuel to Navy vessels under way in fiscal 2011, operating 15 fleet replenishment oilers around the globe.

-- Michael Fabey

ABC
October 10, 2012

26. Woman Just Named First Female Leader Of 5,000-Strong Fighter Wing

World News With Diane Sawyer (ABC), 6:30 PM

DIANE SAWYER, ABC ANCHOR: And finally tonight, we're going to take you to a place where the sky is only the limit. ABC's Martha Raddatz has been in war zones with four-star generals, covered the White House and questioned world leaders and presidents. And, of course, as you know, tomorrow, she'll spend moderating the first vice presidential debate tomorrow night.

But right now she's going to take us to meet one of America's most daring combat experts. The woman just named the first female leader of a fighter wing 5,000 strong.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

MARTHA RADDATZ, ABC SENIOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS

CORRESPONDENT (voice-over): It is one of the most fearsome fighter jets in the skies -- the F-15 Strike Eagle. And I could not be in more capable hands. Colonel Jeannie Flynn Leavitt is not only a decorated fighter pilot, she has broken through gender barriers few thought possible.

COL. JEANNIE LEAVITT, FIGHTER WING CMDR., SEYMOUR

JOHNSON A.F.B.: He said, you realize that if you go fly fighters, you will be the first and there will be some attention. And I said, well, I don't want the attention, but I want to fly fighters more than anything.

RADDATZ: That was more than 20 years ago when she entered a world dominated by male swagger.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE, ACTOR, "TOP GUN": The plaque for that alternates is down in the ladies' room.

RADDATZ: That attitude was not just in movies like "Top Gun." Pentagon brass argued male bonding was critical.

GEN. ROBERT BARROW (RET.), COMMANDANT OF THE U.S. MARINE CORPS.: If you want to make a combat unit ineffective, assign some women to it.

RADDATZ: But like it or not, they were ordered to change. Since then, the 46-year-old Leavitt has logged more than 2,700 hours, 300 in combat over Iraq and Afghanistan, dropping bombs on enemy targets and avoiding enemy fire. Leavitt now trains others for combat, commanding a 5,000 person fighter wing.

This day, a mock bombing raid in the skies over North Carolina.

RADDATZ (on camera): What the jets do first is a show of force. That's exactly what they would do if this was a real battle. The changes with women flying combat aircraft?

LEAVITT: There's pilots (INAUDIBLE) of all different skill levels.

RADDATZ: Girls don't stand out anymore?

LEAVITT: It's very true.

RADDATZ (voice-over): And the colonel and others have inspired a new generation.

CAPT. PATRICIA NADEAU, U.S. AIR FORCE: Regardless of your gender, I

think everyone's going to look up to her. Everyone does look up to her.

LEAVITT: The fact that, you know, gender, race, religion -- none of that matters. What matters is how you perform.

RADDATZ: And she has performed. One of the best of the best. So, take that, Maverick.

Martha Raddatz, ABC News, Seymour Johnson Air Force Base.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

Reuters.com
October 10, 2012

27. Oregon Guardsmen Say Were Knowingly Exposed To Toxic Chemicals In Iraq

By Teresa Carson, Reuters

PORTLAND, Oregon -- Lawyers for 12 Oregon National Guardsmen suing contractor KBR Inc for negligence and fraud told a jury in Portland, Oregon on Wednesday that the soldiers were knowingly exposed to toxic chemicals in Iraq that made them ill.

The Oregon Guardsmen said the exposure took place while they were in Iraq in 2003 following the U.S.-led invasion to provide security for civilian workers restoring an oil industry water treatment plant that was contaminated with sodium dichromate. KBR was contracted to run the project at the plant at that time.

The guardsmen, who ask for unspecified damages in the suit in federal court in Portland, have suffered various illnesses and disabilities and are at risk for various cancers, according to court filings in the trial that began on Wednesday.

"KBR knew what needed to be done ... before any employee went on this site," the guardsmen's lawyer Mike Doyle told a jury of six men and

six women, accusing the firm of rushing the work there despite knowing of the potential risks.

A lawyer for Houston-based KBR, which was contracted by the U.S. government to work on more than 200 facilities, including the water plant site, responded that "the evidence will show that KBR openly, honestly and repeatedly communicated" the risks of the sodium dichromate to the military.

"KBR did inform actual National Guard on the ground about the risk," KBR lawyer Geoffrey Harrison told the jury, adding that KBR was not in direct charge of the guardsmen at the site. "KBR was not allowed to direct the soldiers to do anything."

The chemical in question, sodium dichromate, contains hexavalent chromium, made famous in the film "Erin Brockovich," starring Julia Roberts, which depicts Brockovich's work to uncover pollution of the water supply of a California town.

The guardsmen described the compound in the court filings as "a highly potent carcinogen."

The guardsmen's lawyer Mike Doyle told jurors there were 700 bags of the chemical at the southern Iraq water facility. Court documents filed for the guardsmen said that much of the sodium dichromate was in powder form and blowing around the plant.

Court documents said that when the Oregon Guardsmen began showing symptoms such as nose bleeds, "KBR managers told soldiers on site that it was simply an effect of the dry desert air," the court documents said. The guardsmen say that in September 2003, when KBR managers inspected the plant, they wore protective gear and clothing.

Harrison questioned whether the guardsmen's ailments were caused by exposure at the site, noting an Army report that said long-term health effects were "very unlikely" from the amount of exposure that the Guards had. He also said that several of the Guardsmen were long-time smokers.

Yahoo.com
October 10, 2012

28. Court Poses Hurdle To WikiLeaks Case File Access

By David Dishneau,
Associated Press

WASHINGTON -- The U.S. military's highest court is asking WikiLeaks to explain why the military justice system, rather than civilian courts, is the proper venue for seeking routine judicial documents in the court-martial of an Army private charged with giving classified information to the secret-spilling website.

The jurisdictional issue was the first question raised by the Court of Appeals for the Armed Forces during an hour of oral arguments Wednesday in Washington. The panel of five civilian judges heard arguments on the main dispute but made it clear that the court must first be convinced it has jurisdiction.

Lawyers from the Center for Constitutional Rights and the government said they would submit briefs before the end of the month on that question. The New York-based civil-rights group is representing WikiLeaks, its founder Julian Assange and several left-leaning pundits and publications including The Nation magazine and the broadcast operation Democracy Now.

The Associated Press is among 30 news organizations supporting the appeal in a

brief filed by the Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press. They agree with the appellants that the First Amendment requires timely public access to written documents such as motions and rulings in Pfc. Bradley Manning's court-martial.

Such records are generally available in civilian courts on the day they are filed. The military is more restrictive. It contends that records of such proceedings are controlled not by the court-martial judge but by the Judge Advocate General's Corps, the military's legal branch.

Army Capt. Chad M. Fisher, representing the government at Wednesday's hearing, said anyone can request court-martial documents using the Freedom of Information Act. That can be a lengthy process, though, unless the request is quickly granted. In Manning's case, the military has denied such requests, including one by the AP, citing exemptions for disclosures that could interfere with law enforcement and the fairness of the proceedings.

The judges peppered the lawyers with questions Wednesday, rarely letting either side complete a sentence throughout the unusually long session. It was scheduled for 40 minutes.

Judge Margaret Ryan asked Fisher why the military doesn't take what she called a "commonsense" approach to disclosing routine court filings.

"Instead of making a constitutional issue out of it, why don't you just make it available?" she asked.

Appellants' attorney Shayana Kadidal said reporters' lack of access to written filings makes it hard for them to cover Manning's case, which is scheduled for trial in February.

"It's almost impossible to understand what's happening, even if you have access to the courtroom," he said.

The U.S. Supreme Court has held that the First Amendment mandates public access to criminal trials. The high court hasn't ruled that court records must be readily available but lower civilian court rulings favor that position.

Manning is charged with aiding the enemy, an offense punishable by life in prison, for allegedly sending hundreds of thousands of classified war logs and diplomatic cables to WikiLeaks while serving as an intelligence analyst in Iraq.

Wall Street Journal
October 11, 2012
Pg. 1

29. Government Discord Derails Massive European Merger

By Daniel Michaels, David Gauthier-Villars, Dana Cimilluca and Marcus Walker

A deal to create the world's biggest aerospace company, three months in the making, died in a three-minute phone call.

On Tuesday night, after days of intense negotiations among European government officials and executives over the proposed merger of Airbus parent European Aeronautic Defence & Space Co. and British defense giant BAE Systems PLC, German Chancellor Angela Merkel called French President François Hollande. Ms. Merkel told Mr. Hollande that Germany believed the deal's negatives outweighed its benefits for her country, and that she couldn't support it, according to several people familiar with the conversation.

On Wednesday, EADS and BAE said they were ending talks but defended the effort.

"We had an opportunity to test a very bold strategy," said BAE Chairman Dick Olver in an interview.

Now, the failure of merger talks raises uncertainty about the two companies' prospects and highlights European leaders' inability to put national interests aside to build continentwide institutions.

Germany's reluctance, in particular, surprised many people involved because the companies believed they had a plan that would turn government-controlled EADS into a more conventional company. "I completely underestimated the German opposition," EADS strategy chief Marwan Lahoud said in an interview.

EADS is 15% owned by the French government and 5.5% owned by Spain. Germany holds no direct stake in EADS, but German car giant Daimler AG owns 15% and was already in the process of selling much of that stake to a state-controlled German bank. People familiar with the thinking in Berlin said government officials there doubted a key part of the companies' pitch to them—that the merger would boost EADS's defense sales in the huge U.S. market.

Germany also feared being marginalized by France and Britain, which have bigger aerospace and defense industries. All three countries wanted to protect jobs and industrial sites. France wanted to keep its amount of shares, while Britain wanted to reduce political influence.

The governments' inability to agree comes against the background of much bigger issues facing European leaders, such as saving the euro and fixing struggling banks across the 27-nation European Union. Efforts to resolve those issues have faced a similar conflict

between politicians' statements of a desire to strengthen Europe and actions to pursue national interests.

Investors, meanwhile, had shown disapproval for the linkup by depressing both companies' share prices, and on Wednesday boosted EADS's stock price by more than 5% in Frankfurt. Shares in BAE, which is grappling with defense cuts in Britain and the U.S. and had seen the deal as a way to diversify, closed off 1.4% in London.

EADS Chief Executive Tom Enders, who took over the position in June, may now face tighter constraints. Mr. Enders, a German, has soured his already-testy relations with the German government, people familiar with thinking in Berlin said.

Mr. Enders said after the deal was revealed Sept. 12 that he hoped it would end government interference in EADS. Under the merger plan, governments would cut their stakes and have direct influence only over issues of national security. The companies had combined revenue of about \$90 billion last year and, when the deal was announced, a combined market value of \$49 billion.

Instead, observers noted, the failure of government talks on how much influence they should have over the combined entity only highlighted that EADS's future will be decided by politicians.

Amid intense negotiations over recent days, including frequent three-way video conferences last week, many political obstacles the deal faced were resolved, according to government officials and other people involved in the talks. Britain and France, for example, made progress toward an agreement on Britain's requirement that France limit its

stake in the new company to 9%, according to these people.

But in recent days, German opposition to the deal grew clearer, people involved in the talks said. German officials have said that they weren't convinced that the deal would be good for the country or its industrial base.

"It's further evidence of this constant gap between politicians' claim to be driving policy in one direction, while their actions demonstrate that their priorities are in another," said Nick Witney, a senior fellow at the European Council on Foreign Relations, a think tank in London.

Mr. Witney, a former British official who was the first chief executive of the EU's military-policy body, the European Defense Agency, said EADS and BAE's effort to integrate and strengthen Europe had "been sabotaged by government selfishness and shortsightedness."

Talks on the deal grew out of problems with the Eurofighter Typhoon fighter jet, an early effort to integrate European defense, which BAE and EADS build with Italy's Finmeccanica SpA. Eurofighter had lost a big Indian order in January to a competing French plane, and Mr. Enders and BAE Chief Executive Ian King felt the project needed help, officials at both companies have said.

In May, the two men met to discuss the Eurofighter, but talk soon shifted to the possibility of an outright merger, people familiar with the discussions have said. It was a brash idea, but the men had reason to think they could win political support. European political leaders for many years have talked of the need to consolidate the continent's defense-and-aerospace industry to better compete with U.S.

behemoths such as Boeing Co. and Lockheed Martin Corp. and to handle declining military spending.

After Mr. Enders took over as EADS chief on June 1, analysis of the possible deal intensified, according to people close to the talks.

In mid-July, senior officials from the two companies met at a hotel near Munich to hash out merger terms, the people close to the talks said. They settled on a 60%-40% split, with EADS taking the larger stake, the people familiar said.

"It will be like a steeple chase," one banker involved in the talks predicted. "We can fall at each fence."

Later in July, EADS provided the German government with more details.

EADS officials outlined what they thought was a good deal for Berlin. Germany, which has no direct influence over EADS, would gain a special share to protect its strategic interests in the enlarged entity, people familiar with the presentation said.

German officials predicted the tie-up would falter because France would likely reject the idea of limiting its involvement, according to people familiar with the talks. The French government takes an active role in managing companies it considers strategic. Meanwhile, France spelled out conditions: Paris would keep an equivalent stake in the new company and wanted headquarters to remain in Toulouse.

As talks appeared to be making progress, Germany also outlined its conditions, saying it would want to own a stake similar to France's 9% interest in the new company, people familiar with the talks said.

Over recent weeks, Berlin introduced another request, these people said. In particular, German officials demanded

a headquarters in their own country, they said.

While Britain and France narrowed the gap between their positions, Germany remained firm in its demands. On Tuesday night Ms. Merkel delivered her verdict to Mr. Hollande: Germany couldn't support the deal.

"We could not get agreement with the two European governments on our red lines," said BAE's Mr. King. "It is accurate to say that Germany was the main sticking point."

—Cassell Bryan-Low
contributed to this article.

Yahoo.com

October 10, 2012

30. Boeing Gets \$2 Billion Contract For Plane Maintenance

NEW YORK (AP) — The Boeing Co. said Wednesday that it has been awarded a \$2 billion contract from the Defense Department to help the Air Force maintain its fleet of 246 C-17 cargo planes.

Boeing said that the contract includes ensuring that spare parts are available for the planes as well as maintenance on the aircraft. It covers fiscal years 2013 through 2017.

Boeing shares fell 30 cents to end at \$70.34 amid a broad market decline.

New York Daily News

October 10, 2012

Pg. 32

Be Our Guest

31. Soldiers' Mental Health: An Emergency

Suicides are at a crisis level due to brain injuries and PTSD

By Arnold Fisher And Bill White

Anyone who believes that our country's methods are adequate for helping veterans re-adapt to society as the wars

in Iraq and Afghanistan wind down need look no further than at the following data: In the year 2012, 211 members of the United States Armed Forces took their own lives.

At least 53 of them committed suicide in July and August. That is more than the total number of battlefield deaths in those months. This is a crisis that has gone largely unaddressed in this political cycle, and it's unacceptable.

The numbers are a devastating wake-up call to a healthcare emergency that demands leadership and a new approach. Military brass, medical experts and elected officials are well aware of one cause of this epidemic: severe mental illnesses caused by Post-Traumatic Stress, often stemming from the unseen wound of this war, Traumatic Brain Injuries.

TBI occurs when the brain is subject to one or a series of concussive waves, such as those given off by a detonated roadside device, the most frequent attack against our soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan. The trauma suffered by the soldier's brain results most often in personality-altering depression, leading to a host of extreme mental health problems. The solutions — investments in research, proper diagnostic methods and evolving treatment measures — are well known.

What's missing is leadership.

Yes, both campaigns have indicated knowledge of a problem. During a recent campaign swing through the veteran- and military-rich state of Virginia, Mitt Romney pledged to reverse proposed cuts in defense spending and enhance the budget for greater psychological treatment for service members. President Obama addressed TBI directly

while campaigning in July. He also made the crises facing service members, from unemployment to the suicide epidemic, a part of his convention speech.

But neither candidate to date has put forth a concrete plan to immediately allocate the time and resources needed to save the lives of those who serve and have served this nation in uniform.

We are calling for leaders to immediately convene the Defense Department and others in the executive branch with legislators, medical researchers and providers, active duty service members, veterans and their families, to establish new protocols for research, treatment and diagnosis of Post-Traumatic Stress. Funding must follow: Congress should expedite the allocation of at least \$1 billion as a baseline.

We have spent over a trillion dollars on these two wars. It's time to now spend on those who risked their lives in battle.

This is not simply government's problem. The private sector stands at the ready to help, mindful of patriotism, responsibility and the fact that we live in a time of critical budget shortfalls. Several national non profits and private foundations have already raised billions in private sector dollars towards much-needed medical research, healthcare and social services for our veterans and active duty service members and their families.

Much more is needed. As we approach the final weeks of the presidential campaign, it is critical the candidates move beyond speeches to a new phase: action.

The horrifying psychological impacts of these wars mean that, according to the RAND Corporation,

a staggering 600,000 of the 1.7 million service members returning from active duty in Iraq and Afghanistan are suffering, their lives in danger.

If our leaders don't act now and we do not hold them accountable by demanding solutions, then we're losing a different kind of war — one that is entirely winnable. Each campaign must provide leadership, not words. Action. Our soldiers can't wait another day.

Fisher is honorary chairman of the Intrepid Fallen Heroes Fund (fallenheroes.org), which is building medical facilities at military installations to treat Traumatic Brain Injuries. White is the CEO of Constellations Group.

Washington Post
October 11, 2012
Pg. 17

Fine Print

32. Romney's Syria Plan: Easier Said Than Done

By Walter Pincus

Does Mitt Romney understand the implications of his campaign pledge to “ensure” that Syrian opposition members “who share our values” will “obtain the arms they need” to defeat President Bashar al-Assad’s “tanks, helicopters and fighter jets”?

It's quite easy for a speechwriter in Boston or Washington to put such promises on paper, and even easier for the candidate to make them in front of American flags to an audience of Virginia Military Institute cadets as he did on Monday.

Does he plan to add to the task of CIA and military intelligence officers who already are trying to identify the right Syrians to receive intelligence

and communications equipment along with humanitarian assistance? Sorting out which among almost 100 groups deserve even this non-military help is one of the reasons the Obama administration is holding back from doing even more.

What other test does Romney have in mind to make sure various militia leaders with forces of varied sectarian, religious, criminal and even jihadist backgrounds “share our values”? Does he plan to link U.S. military and other material assistance to militia leaders to pledges to respect responsibilities that he listed, such as the rights of “all their citizens including women and minorities ... space for civil society, a free media, political parties and an independent judiciary”?

Let's examine the harder tasks for the CIA and Pentagon that would emerge if they were tasked with carrying out the rest of Romney's pledge.

Start with his promise to “defeat Assad's ... fighter jets.” Setting up a no-fly zone, which Sen. John McCain (R-Ariz.) and others have been recommending for months, is the only practical way to accomplish Romney's proposal.

It requires attacks on a variety of targets, including Syrian air bases and aircraft, ammunition and fuel storage facilities, radar and command-and-control centers and surface-to-air missile batteries. The initial March 2011 attack on Libya to establish a no-fly zone required 112 Tomahawk missiles fired at 20 targets, followed by continuous air missions — and Moammar Gaddafi's air defenses were far less capable than Assad's.

The Pentagon has already drawn up contingency plans for such a step. On March

7, Joint Chiefs Chairman Gen. Martin Dempsey told the Senate Armed Services Committee that establishing a no-fly zone would have to be led by U.S. forces and take "an extended period of time and a great number of aircraft."

Dempsey noted: "They [Syria] have approximately five times more sophisticated air defense systems than existed in Libya. . . . All of their air defenses are arrayed on their western border, which is their population center."

Did Romney or his speechwriters read that testimony? Did they understand, as Dempsey and Defense Secretary Leon E. Panetta explained to the senators seven months ago, that suppressing Syria's air defenses would involve heavy civilian casualties, since Assad's forces were strategically deployed in and around cities?

Perhaps Romney did some reading since Monday. On Wednesday, at a campaign event in Mount Vernon, Ohio, he repeated that he would identify "reasonable and responsible" Syrian dissidents and "provide funding and weapons to them." But he said that "the active role" he planned "doesn't mean sending in troops or dropping bombs."

What happened to making sure the dissidents "share our values"? And how does Romney plan to defeat Assad's fighter jets without dropping bombs?

The two other elements of his Monday pledge involve arming the Syrian opposition to deal with Assad's helicopters and tanks. They are less dramatic, but worth reviewing.

The most probable weapon to deal with Syria's armed helicopters are shoulder-fired surface-to-air missiles. Assad's forces reportedly have large stocks of an old Russian

version called the SA-7, and there are reports the rebel forces have already been using them, probably after taking them during raids on Assad's ammunition dumps.

Gaddafi's military had stocks of these weapons, and U.S. and NATO intelligence have been trying to track down about 10,000 of the Libyan weapons that vanished when its military collapsed. As one former senior intelligence official said recently, this is one type of weapon that the U.S. will not distribute to any group in the Middle East, given its threat to commercial aircraft anywhere in the world.

As for tanks, Romney may be a bit behind the times. For almost a year, Syrian rebels have been using improvised explosive devices, the IEDs that have been the main cause of U.S. casualties in Afghanistan. In Syria, they have been used against Assad's battle tanks, to attack convoys, and even to blow up buildings. U.S. intelligence sees them as one sign that jihadists have entered the fight on the rebel side.

Al-Jazeera has reported that Syrian rebels have set up a buffer zone along the Turkish border. And reports have circulated since July about a clandestine facility near the southern Turkish city of Adana that is being used as a "nerve center" for Turkey and other nations aiding the rebels. Sixty miles from the Syrian border, the secret facility is near Incirlik Air Base, which is a communications and transportation hub as well as a site for NATO and U.S. military exercises. Some 1,500 U.S. personnel are there.

Romney said the U.S. should be working "vigorously with our international partners to support" the Syrian opposition "rather than sitting on the sidelines." Many of those

Americans at Incirlik already may be doing much more than sitting on the sidelines when it comes to Syria.

ForeignPolicy.com
October 10, 2012

33. Never Mind About Those Jobs Cuts

The defense industry has a Gilda Radner moment.

By Gordon Adams

For months now the defense industry has been making an impressive effort, in the midst of a general election campaign, to exempt the defense budget from going over the fiscal cliff -- sequestration -- set to take effect on January 2, 2013. At the heart of their advocacy has been the argument that a defense sequester would be devastating to employment, forcing the layoff of hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of workers.

The Aerospace Industries Association funded an impressive series of studies by economist Steven Fuller of George Mason University, purporting to show that more than a million jobs would be lost as a result of defense sequester.

And industry leaders lined up behind this message, announcing that they would have to let their workers know, just before the election, that their jobs were in jeopardy. Several, including Lockheed and European giant EADS threatened to send their entire workforces notifications, under the Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification (WARN) Act, that they were at risk of layoffs.

Politicians have piled on, starting with Republican defense stalwarts like Senate Armed Services Committee members Sen. John McCain, Sen. Lindsey Graham, and Sen. Kelly Ayotte, and House Armed Services Committee Chairman

Rep. Buck McKeon, who has been running this theme for more than a year. Democrats, perhaps in self-defense, have joined the call, including Armed Services Chairman Sen. Carl Levin, Sen. Jeanne Shaheen, and Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse.

Now they all face the Emily Litella moment. Emily was Gilda Radner's character on *Saturday Night Live*, who would run through reams of erroneous commentary until someone told her that she had misunderstood the subject she was riffing on. Like talking about the "deaf penalty" when the subject was the "death penalty." "Never mind," Emily would say, ending the monologue.

The industry has now totally undercut the AIA and the politicians, because the government has explained the subject and the industry has said: "Never mind."

Although industry has said that the WARN Act requires it to issue layoff notices 60 days before sequestration takes effect -- i.e., on November 2, just days before the election -- in reality, no such notification is necessary. As the Department of Labor explained in a July 30, 2012 advisory guidance, such notices are not required because it is not certain that sequestration will actually happen and because there is no certainty that existing contracts will be affected if it does.

That was not enough for the industry; Lockheed President Robert Stevens continued to argue that he would send WARN Act notices. Then the Department of Defense and the Office of Management and Budget weighed in. On September 28, Richard Ginman, the Pentagon's director of defense procurement and acquisition policy, replied to an earlier letter from Lawrence P. Farrell, Jr., the head

of the National Defense Industrial Association, saying that sequester was very unlikely to have a serious, near-term impact on the industry.

Ginman's letter was very clear: "The Department does not anticipate having to terminate or significantly modify any contracts on or about January 2, 2013." He noted that most contracts are fully funded by previously appropriated funds, which are not affected by sequestration. Moreover, any impact of sequestration on "incrementally funded" contracts would occur several months after sequestration took effect and contract officers at DOD would have latitude to work out how that took place, including reprogramming funds to fix problems. That letter went to straight to the source of the lobbying campaign.

The same day, OMB weighed in with significant reassurance. The heads of the Office of Federal Financial Management and the Office of Federal Procurement Policy said that any legal costs contractors may incur as a result of layoffs caused by a sequester would likely be "allowable costs" under their defense contracts.

Seems like that was enough reassurance to the industry, or perhaps defense contractor CEOs realized they were a bit "out over their skis" in threatening layoffs before the election. The retreat on jobs turned into an instant rout. As the spokesman for General Dynamics put it: "We will not issue notices to our employees unless we have specific information about what the impact of sequestration will be on our programs, and we determine that we need to lay off employees as a result of the changes to our programs." And the leader of the layoff charge, Robert Stevens, announced that

Lockheed no longer had any plans to distribute such notices to their employees before the election.

Undercut in their "prevent a defense sequester" campaign, the politicians went ballistic. In an interview with Charles C.W. Cooke of *National Review*, Sen. Graham attacked the administration's interpretation of the law as "exhibit A in the march toward an imperial presidency," and attacked Lockheed for caving: "Lockheed Martin will give into the administration and ignore the law at their peril."

But the battle is over, even if the jobs war, writ large, continues. In reality, this is another indication that, while the sequester would be a miserable way to manage the budget, its impact may be a lot less significant than the rhetoric from all sides suggests.

As one defense program manager put it to me the other day: "You're telling me that if there is a sequester, I have to manage my program with 9.4 percent fewer resources than I thought I would have when I put in the budget request? I can do that; that's what they pay me to do, and I can do it without damage to the program."

Certainly, it can be done without a bundle of layoffs on January 2.

Gordon Adams is professor of international relations at the School of International Service at American University and Distinguished Fellow at the Stimson Center.

USA Today
October 11, 2012
Pg. 8

34. State Department Misses On Libya

Cut through the highly charged politics of Wednesday's congressional hearing into the attack that killed four

Americans in Libya a month ago, and one conclusion seems inescapable: The State Department underestimated the danger.

Whether it could have stopped the terrorist attack that claimed the life of Ambassador Chris Stevens, as Republican committee members tried to establish, is a far more dubious conclusion. But it certainly missed signs of escalating violence against Westerners, and a plea from within its own ranks to beef up security.

In a cable July 9 from Tripoli, State Department security officer Eric Nordstrom asked his bosses to continue temporary security support in Libya for an additional 60 days, citing unpredictable conditions, frequent clashes in major cities and an upcoming election that might spark more violence. Stevens signed the request.

Nordstrom told the committee that he was so frustrated with State Department rejections that he believed he would not get resources until "the aftermath of an incident."

Administration explanations of its actions, meanwhile, also pointed to a lack of awareness:

*The State Department raised the danger pay for diplomats in Libya days before turning down Nordstrom's request.

*It let a special security force on loan from the military leave Libya (though it was not specifically assigned to Benghazi).

*Most oddly, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Charlene Lamb, who's in charge of diplomatic security around the world, told the committee, "We had the correct number of assets in Benghazi." Given what happened, that's a breathtaking assertion, particularly in the wake of the administration's

baffling five-day insistence -- since abandoned -- that the attack was the product of a protest over an anti-Muslim video.

It seems fair to conclude that the State Department underrated the threat, but the evidence still falls far short of proving Republicans' claims that the Obama administration could have prevented the first killing of an ambassador in three decades.

Even if the warnings had been heeded, and the requested security personnel added, and if they'd been assigned to Benghazi, it's still a reach to assume that they could have fought off such a lethal attack.

And that's even allowing for the benefit of hindsight. In real time, Stevens himself thought Benghazi safe enough to visit on the anniversary of 9/11, and he opposed turning U.S. diplomatic posts into armed camps.

What's needed is a fast, cool-headed review that leads to appropriate security at American facilities abroad.

Instead, the Republicans are sniping and the administration is stonewalling. What's left is a blame game lacking much value.

Wall Street Journal
October 11, 2012
Pg. 18

35. Botched In Benghazi *New evidence on the Libya debacle and false White House spin.*

At Wednesday's House oversight hearings into the attack on the U.S. diplomatic mission in Libya, Democrats protested loudly about a GOP political witch hunt. If only such alleged partisanship were always so educational. The Congressional investigation has in a few hours brought greater clarity about what happened before, during and after the

events of 9/11/12 than the Obama Administration has provided in a month. Among the revelations:

- There was no public demonstration whatsoever against an anti-Islam video, or any other grievance, outside the consulate in Benghazi the night of the attack.

"There had been nothing unusual during the day *at all* outside [our emphasis]," a State Department official told reporters in a Tuesday night briefing hastily organized before the House committee session. Only at 9:40 p.m. on September 11 did a large pack of armed men storm the compound, firing guns and grenades and eventually setting buildings on fire. Ambassador Christopher Stevens and three other Americans were murdered.

For more than a week afterwards, Obama Administration officials said the attacks were the result of a demonstration triggered by anger over a YouTube video, as were protests earlier in the day in Cairo. "What happened in Benghazi was in fact initially a spontaneous reaction to what had just transpired hours before in Cairo, almost a copycat of the demonstrations against our facility in Cairo, prompted by the video," said U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Susan Rice on September 16 on NBC's "Meet the Press."

On Tuesday night, a State Department official said, "That was not our conclusion."

- The frontal attack by an extremist militia group with links to al Qaeda was recognized as such by some Obama Administration officials within 24 hours. Testifying on Wednesday, Lieutenant Colonel Andrew Wood, a Utah National Guard Green Beret who commanded a 16-member

security team in Tripoli, said the attacks were "instantly recognizable as a terrorist attack... I almost expected it to come."

- The State Department denied repeated requests to improve security at the Libyan mission. It kept the consulate in Benghazi open after Britain and the Red Cross had pulled out of the city after security deteriorated this year. No special security measures were in place for the anniversary of 9/11.

Lt. Col. Wood said he had argued to extend his team's tour in Libya but was pulled out in August. The State Department approved a 30% "danger pay" bonus for Americans working in Libya, but it turned down an Embassy request to keep a DC-3 plane in the country for security support.

Eric Nordstrom, a State official who was the regional security officer in Libya until June, told the committee about a "complete and total absence of planning" for security. The U.S. was relying on a Libyan government that was "overwhelmed and could not guarantee our protection," according to an October 1 memorandum written by Mr. Nordstrom.

Oversight and Government Reform Chairman Darrell Issa has forced the Administration to start to answer for this stunning and deadly assault on U.S. sovereign soil in Libya, but a lot of questions demand further investigation. Were warnings of an imminent threat ignored? Was incompetence or a systemic failure to blame for the security lapse?

The most immediate question concerns the Administration's response, and this is where electoral politics deserves to come in. Ms. Rice has defended her false and misleading statements

by saying she was reading off a script prepared by U.S. intelligence—apparently a script not shared with the State Department she formally reports to.

It'd be instructive to know who provided her this script, and whether or not she spoke to White House political aide David Plouffe or the Chicago campaign office as she prepared for her Sunday TV show appearances on September 16.

Ms. Rice's Sunday story happened to fit the narrative offered by White House spokesman Jay Carney two days earlier that a rogue video had caused the anti-American demonstrations, which also fit the Obama campaign narrative that the President has made the U.S. more popular and that terrorism is on the wane in the world. A terror attack that killed Americans in Benghazi blows up that happy tale.

In a campaign speech Monday night, President Obama kept at it, saying that "al Qaeda is on its heels and Osama bin Laden is no more." The second half of the sentence is true. But the more we learn about what happened in Benghazi, the more the first sounds like fantasy, and the less Americans can trust this White House to tell them the truth.

New York Times
October 11, 2012

36. Malala Yousafzai's Courage

If Pakistan has a future, it is embodied in Malala Yousafzai. Yet the Taliban so feared this 14-year-old girl that they tried to assassinate her. Her supposed offense? Her want of an education and her public advocacy for it.

Malala was on her way home from school in Mingora, Pakistan, in the Swat Valley, on Tuesday when a Taliban

gunman walked up to the school bus, asked for her by name and shot her in the head and neck. On Wednesday, doctors at a military hospital removed the bullet that lodged in her shoulder. She remains in critical condition.

Malala was no ordinary target. She came to public attention three years ago when she wrote a diary for the BBC about life under the Taliban, which controlled Swat from 2007 to 2009 before being dislodged by an Army offensive. Last year, she won a national peace prize.

The Pakistani Taliban was quick and eager to take credit for Tuesday's attack. Malala "has become a symbol of Western culture in the area; she was openly propagating it," a spokesman, Ehsanullah Ehsan, told The Times. If she survives, the militants would try again to kill her, he vowed.

Malala has shown more courage in facing down the Taliban than Pakistan's government and its military leaders. Her father, who once led a school for girls and has shown uncommon bravery in supporting his daughter's aspirations, said she had long defied Taliban threats.

Pakistan's founder, Muhammad Ali Jinnah, envisioned a democratic and moderate Muslim nation. But extremism is engulfing the country, and too many people are enabling it or acquiescing to it. This attack was so abominable, however, that Pakistanis across the ideological spectrum reacted with outrage, starting with the president and prime minister. Even Jamaat ud Dawa, the charity wing of the militant Islamist group Lashkar-e-Taiba, which waged its own violent campaigns against India, couldn't stay silent. "Shameful, despicable, barbaric

attempt," read a message on the group's official Twitter feed. "Curse b upon assassins and perpetrators."

The attack was an embarrassment for the Pakistani Army, which has boasted of pushing the Taliban from Swat. The army chief, Gen. Ashfaq Parvez Kayani, visited the hospital where Malala was being treated, and, in a rare public statement, he condemned the "twisted ideology" of the "cowards" who had attacked her.

Words only have meaning if they are backed up by actions. What will he and other leaders do to bring Malala's attackers to justice and stop their threat to ordinary citizens and the state?

In recent years, the Taliban destroyed at least 200 schools. The murderous violence against one girl was committed against the whole of Pakistani society. The Taliban cannot be allowed to win this vicious campaign against girls, learning and tolerance. Otherwise, there is no future for that nation.

Washington Post
October 11, 2012
Pg. 18

37. The Taliban's Terror

A sickening attack on a girl shows its true character.

On Tuesday, Pakistani Taliban thugs tried to assassinate a 14-year-old girl. You read that correctly: Masked gunmen from the ultra-purist Islamist group stormed a van full of schoolchildren in an effort to kill Malala Yousafzai, who has won international acclaim for going to school in defiance of Taliban edicts against educating girls in her home region of Swat.

With chilling pride, a Taliban spokesman announced that the attack was revenge for Malala's having generated

"negative propaganda" about Islam; he called her an "obscenity." That strikes us as an apt description of the attack itself; if anything is causing a negative view of Islam around the world, it is the Taliban's attempts to impose a medieval social order on Pakistan and Afghanistan.

At last check, Malala, though critically wounded, was expected to survive. The larger question, of course, is whether the progress she both embodied and sought to extend will prove lasting. The Taliban struck this brave youngster at least in part because it knows that she may represent the wave of the future. She enjoyed significant popularity in Pakistan, as shown by the condemnation that rained down on the Taliban from the highest levels of the government and from the country's media.

For all its woes, Pakistan has shown measurable progress in educating girls. Pakistani females ages 15 to 24 were half as likely as males to be literate in 1990; in 2009, that ratio had improved to three-quarters, according to the United Nations. Alas, the greatest obstacles to girls' schooling exist in rural areas where the Taliban and other extreme groups maintain a presence.

A similar drama is playing out across the border in Afghanistan. In May, the Ministry of Education said that 550 schools in 11 Taliban-plagued provinces had been forced to close their doors. And in 2011, 150 girls fell ill at a school near Kabul, in an apparent mass poisoning by foes of female education.

The Obama administration has repeatedly said that it is open to a negotiated settlement to the Afghan conflict — but only if the Taliban agrees to abide

by Afghanistan's constitution, including its protections of women's and minority rights. So far, of course, talks have not even begun. Taliban hard-liners seem content to wait until after 2014, when the United States is scheduled to finish withdrawing from Afghanistan.

In December, Vice President Biden publicly summarized the administration's rationale for negotiations, noting that "the Taliban per se is not our enemy." This was reasonable, to the extent Mr. Biden was simply saying that the United States could deal with the Taliban, or elements of it, that agrees to repudiate al-Qaeda and respect the constitution.

The vile attack in Pakistan, though, reminds us that enmity is a two-way street, and the Taliban still hates the United States and everything it stands for — whether we like it or not. According to the Taliban spokesman, one of Malala's worst sins was to "consider President Obama as her ideal leader." It might never be possible to strike a deal with such people. It should always be possible for the United States to help protect innocents from them.

Los Angeles Times
October 11, 2012
Pg. 14

38. The Taliban's Dark Vision

It's appalling enough that 14-year-old Malala Yousafzai, who publicly championed the cause of education for girls in Pakistan, was shot in the head and neck and critically injured by gunmen who boarded her school bus in the Swat Valley. Even more horrendous is that a Taliban spokesman declared that she had been singled out for attack because of her support of girls' education in defiance

of Taliban edict. "Let this be a lesson," the spokesman told the New York Times.

We hope it will be a lesson -- that such violence is barbaric and counterproductive. It has no place in today's world. Not in Pakistan or Afghanistan or anywhere else. As Islamic parties and politicians become increasingly influential across the region, now is the time to make it clear that the Taliban's brutal and backward version of Islam is neither the only one nor even the mainstream one.

Malala, who has said she hopes to become a doctor, is a national figure in Pakistan, admired for her courageous outspokenness against the Taliban's destruction of girls' schools and her insightful blog postings about what it's like to go to school in fear.

Since Tuesday's bus attack, which less seriously injured another girl as well, Malala has undergone surgery to remove a bullet in her neck and, as of Wednesday, was reportedly out of danger. Meanwhile, we're encouraged to see that a sense of outrage has swept across Pakistan. The shooting has been denounced by the country's president, its top military leader, as well as much of the media and the public.

Nevertheless, the Taliban's campaign continues against women and against anything it sees as smacking of Western influence. On Wednesday, the group issued a statement reiterating its ludicrous opposition to the education of girls and its promise to target anyone else "preaching secularism."

This incident was heart-rending, and the organization's on-the-record threat to carry out more such attacks is infuriating. Allowing girls to be schooled is not a Western eccentricity; it is a basic human right that should be protected across the globe.