

CURRENT NEWS

EARLY BIRD

October 17, 2012

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Item numbers indicate order of appearance only.

LEGAL AFFAIRS

1. **Court Overturns Conviction Of Bin Laden's Driver**
(*Washington Post*)....Del Quentin Wilber and Ernesto Londono
A federal court Tuesday threw out the terrorism conviction of Osama bin Laden's former bodyguard and driver, ruling that he was improperly prosecuted before a military tribunal for a war crime that did not exist at the time he was accused of having committed it.
2. **Hicks Demands Investigation After US Court Ruling**
(*Agence France-Presse*)....AFP
Former Guantanamo Bay inmate David Hicks on Wednesday demanded a full investigation into his jailing after a landmark US court decision, as lawyers said his conviction should be quashed.
3. **Three 9/11 Suspects Opt Out Of Attending Pretrial Hearing**
(*Los Angeles Times*)....Richard A. Serrano
Three of the five alleged Sept. 11 conspirators, including purported mastermind Khalid Shaikh Mohammed, refused to attend a pretrial hearing Tuesday where lawyers argued over one of the significant overlying issues in their case -- whether potential evidence of torture and other classified material will be discussed publicly in their trial at the U.S. naval base on Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.
4. **Terror Suspect Critical Of Heat's James**
(*Miami Herald*)....Carol Rosenberg
In a bid to illustrate the absurdity of knee-jerk secrecy at Guantánamo, a Navy defense lawyer on Tuesday invoked none other than Miami Heat superstar LeBron James.
5. **Britain Refuses To Extradite Computer Hacker Sought In U.S.**
(*New York Times*)....Alan Cowell and John F. Burns
British authorities on Tuesday blocked a longstanding demand for the extradition of Gary McKinnon, a computer hacker wanted in the United States to face charges of intruding into Pentagon computer networks in a case that has become a touchstone of the delicate jurisdictional balance between the two countries since the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001.

AFGHANISTAN

6. **Suicide Blast Hits US-Afghan Base; 10 Afghans Hurt**
(*Yahoo.com*)....Heidi Vogt and Rahim Faiez, Associated Press
A suicide car bomber blew up his vehicle near the gate of a U.S.-Afghan combat outpost in eastern Afghanistan on Wednesday morning, wounding 10 Afghan soldiers, officials said.

7. **C.I.A. Officer Among Dead In Bombing By Afghan**
(*New York Times*)....Michael R. Gordon
An officer for the Central Intelligence Agency was killed on Saturday in a suicide bombing in southern Afghanistan, American officials said Tuesday.
8. **State Department Official: Negotiations To Extend U.S. Troop Presence In Afghanistan Starting Soon**
(*The Cable (thecable.foreignpolicy.com)*)....Josh Rogin
Despite statements by Vice President Joe Biden, the State Department is about to begin formal negotiations over the extension of U.S. troops past 2014, a top State Department official said Tuesday.
9. **Nerves And Distrust Underpin Afghan Insider Threat**
(*Agence France-Presse*)....Joe Sinclair, Agence France-Presse
The Afghan policeman walked into the room without introducing himself, sat down with his rifle in his lap, and stared at the US soldier with a strange look in his eyes.

ASIA/PACIFIC

10. **Arrests Of 2 U.S. Sailors In Rape Case Threaten To Fan Okinawa's Anger**
(*New York Times*)....Martin Fackler
Two United States Navy sailors were arrested on Tuesday on suspicion of raping a woman in Okinawa, local news reports said, an episode likely to fan anger on an island increasingly outraged over the presence of a large American base.
11. **Japan Protests Rape Incident, Okinawa Seeks Stern U.S. Response**
(*Kyodo News*)....Kyodo
...Regarding the incident, a Pentagon official said Tuesday the U.S. Defense Department is taking the rape allegations seriously and that the U.S. Navy in Japan "is focused on cooperating and supporting the Okinawa police investigation."
12. **Islands Clash Tests Beijing For Role On World Stage**
(*Financial Times*)....Kathrin Hille
Whenever a Japan coast guard patrol close to the Senkaku islands scans the horizon these days, Chinese ships are likely to appear.

LIBYA

13. **Militant Suspected In Attack In Libya Remains At Large**
(*Wall Street Journal*)....Margaret Coker
The founder of Libya's Islamist militia Ansar al-Sharia was at the U.S. consulate compound during the deadly attack here, Libyan officials say, but he remains free a week after those allegations were disclosed to Libyan political leaders and U.S. investigators in Tripoli.

SYRIA

14. **Diplomats See Kurds, Not Assad, As Likely Target Of Turkish Border Buildup**
(*McClatchy Newspapers (mcclatchydc.com)*)....Roy Gutman, McClatchy Newspapers
Turkish tanks are deployed on hilltops overlooking Syria and additional combat aircraft have been moved to bases close to that war-torn country in an escalation that began Oct. 3, when a Syrian artillery round landed in the border town of Akcakale, killing five Turkish civilians.
15. **90 Killed In Attacks By Syrian Military**
(*Washington Post*)....Zeina Karam, Associated Press
The Syrian military unleashed heavy airstrikes and artillery bombardments targeting rebel strongholds in the north Tuesday, killing at least 90 people, according to activists.

MIDEAST

16. **Middle East: Antiaircraft Missile Is Fired From Gaza, Israeli Officials Say**

(New York Times)....Associated Press

Israeli defense officials say that Palestinian militants in the Gaza Strip have for the first time fired an antiaircraft missile at Israeli aircraft. The officials say the militants fired a Strela shoulder-fired missile at an Israeli helicopter operating over Gaza last week but missed their target.

17. **Sanctions Hurting Iran's Oil Exports, New Data Show**

(Washington Post)....James Ball

Stringent new sanctions imposed by the United States and European Union against Iran have curbed the country's oil exports by more than 1 million barrels a day, according to new data released by the International Energy Agency.

PAKISTAN

18. **Despite Outrage Over Girl's Shooting, Pakistan Still Split Over Confronting Taliban**

(McClatchy Newspapers (mcclatchydc.com))....Saeed Shah, McClatchy Newspapers

The horrific shooting of a teenage girl by the Pakistani Taliban to silence her campaign for schooling for girls has forced a battered Pakistan to consider how it can tackle violent extremism after years of equivocation and toleration, analysts and politicians say.

RUSSIA

19. **Friendly Foes: U.S.-Russia Military Relations Soaring**

(The E-Ring (e-ring.foreignpolicy.com))....Kevin Baron

As the final two presidential debates turn toward foreign policy, starting tonight, one major divergent point between President Obama and Mitt Romney still not fully explored by the candidates is Romney's claim that Russia is America's "number one geopolitical foe." So the E-Ring reached out to the top U.S. military officer in charge of the vast majority of U.S.-Russian military interactions, Rear Admiral Mark C. Montgomery, deputy director for plans, policy, and strategy at U.S. European Command (EUCOM), to see what he thinks.

DEFENSE DEPARTMENT

20. **DoD Says It's At Turning Point In Sexual Assault Battle**

(Politico Pro)....Leigh Munsil

After months of blistering criticism from Congress over sexual assault in the military, the Pentagon wants lawmakers to see it's getting tough - now.

ARMY

21. **Robert Bales Back At JBLM For Hearing In Afghan Killings**

(Tacoma News Tribune)....Adam Ashton

For the first time since he was taken into custody seven months ago, Staff Sgt. Robert Bales is back at Joint Base Lewis-McChord awaiting a pretrial hearing on charges that he murdered 16 Afghan civilians during his deployment with a local Stryker brigade.

NAVY

22. **Four Truman Sailors Injured During Refueling At Sea**

(Norfolk Virginian-Pilot)....Laura King

Four sailors aboard the Harry S. Truman were injured Tuesday during the aircraft carrier's replenishment at sea.

AIR FORCE

23. **Hotline Seeks To Uncover More Lackland Misconduct**

(*San Antonio Express-News*)...Sig Christenson

Hundreds of thousands of people who have been through basic training during the past decade in San Antonio were asked this week to tell the Air Force if they were victims of sexual assault or misconduct.

24. **Air Force Cyber Summit Set To Craft Service Requirements, Roles**

(*AOL Defense (defense.aol.com)*)...Henry Kenyon

For years the Air Force has claimed to be the service most suited to understanding and operating in cyberspace and the service fought hard to be the Pentagon's lead on cyber issues. But top officers recently admitted that the service has never answered key questions such as how it works with the other services or whether it has legal standing to run global cyber missions.

NATIONAL GUARD/RESERVE

25. **Inquiry Targets Troops**

(*Los Angeles Times*)...Michael Muskal

Officials are investigating the Arizona National Guard after news reports disclosed that military recruiters engaged in repeated misbehavior, including sexual abuse, firearms violations and shooting homeless people with paintball guns in "bum hunts."

POLITICS

26. **Military Personnel Campaign Funds Favor Obama Over Romney**

(*Bloomberg.com*)...Laura Litvan, Bloomberg News

President Barack Obama has received almost twice as much in campaign contributions from U.S. military and Defense Department personnel as his Republican challenger Mitt Romney, despite Romney's promises to boost defense spending and his criticism of military cuts set to take place in January.

OBITUARY

27. **S. Ward Casscells, Pentagon Medical Chief, Dies At 60**

(*New York Times*)...Douglas Martin

Dr. S. Ward Casscells, a nationally prominent cardiologist who astonished himself and those who knew him by joining the Army Reserve at 54 and volunteering to go to Iraq before being appointed the Pentagon's top medical officer, died on Sunday in Washington. He was 60.

POLL

28. **Survey Paints Picture Of War-Weary America**

(*Chicago Tribune*)...Bob Sexter

...The survey, conducted by the Chicago Council on Global Affairs, shows a public weary of war, eager to collaborate with other nations to resolve crises, wary of entanglements in Syria, preferring diplomacy over military action to stop Iran's nuclear ambitions and ready to embrace defense budget cuts.

BUSINESS

29. **Boeing Opens Seattle Plant To Build Tanker Booms**

(*Seattle Times*)...Dominic Gates

Boeing this week begins assembling the first refueling boom for the Air Force's new aerial tanker aircraft, the KC-46, which is a modified 767-200ER and will be produced in Everett.

30. **Navy Approves \$1 Billion For Alliant Missile Tester Calls Flawed**

(*Bloomberg Government (bgov.com)*)...Tony Capaccio, Bloomberg News

The U.S. Navy approved an Alliant Techsystems Inc. anti-radar missile for full production valued at as much as \$1.1 billion, even though the Pentagon's chief tester says the weapon's performance flaws "largely negate" its "ability to accomplish its mission."

COMMENTARY

31. **Learning Nothing From Libya**
(*Philadelphia Inquirer*)....Jeffrey Goldberg
Many stupid things have been said by people who should have known better in the month since the attack on the U.S. consulate in Benghazi, Libya.
32. **100% Right 0% Of The Time**
(*ForeignPolicy.com*)....Micah Zenko
Two weeks ago, General Martin Dempsey, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, delivered the Landon Lecture to hundreds of U.S. servicemembers and students at Kansas State University. During the question and answer session, a cadet in the Air Force ROTC asked, "What [do] you see being the focus of our nation in 5 to 10 years, where I'll be serving?"
33. **Armored Vehicles That Save Lives**
(*New York Times*)....Editorial
Providing the best armored vehicles to protect our troops fighting in wars abroad is a moral imperative. Still, there has been argument among analysts over the high cost of mine-resistant ambush protected vehicles, or MRAPs.
34. **Cyber Security And Congress**
(*Los Angeles Times*)....Editorial
Speaking to a group of U.S. business leaders last week, Defense Secretary Leon E. Panetta issued a dire warning that foreign hackers are becoming increasingly sophisticated and that their online attacks on transportation systems, banks and other vital facilities are escalating. The worst-case scenario, he said, is a "cyber Pearl Harbor" perpetrated by state-sponsored hackers or terrorists that "would cause physical destruction and loss of life, paralyze and shock the nation and create a profound new sense of vulnerability."
35. **Russia Resets Obama's 'Reset'**
(*Wall Street Journal*)....Editorial
President Obama has lost much of his poll advantage on foreign policy, and in this case Mitt Romney's debating skills have nothing to do with it. The real world is doing the job, notably with the attacks in Benghazi but also in Russia, where Mr. Obama once vowed to "reset" relations for the better.
36. **We Must Stand Firm Against Nuclear Threat -- (Letter)**
(*Boston Globe*)....Alan Stein
Regarding the dueling Oct. 9 op-eds under the overline "Should Israel have a red line on Iran?": The headline should have been "Should the civilized world have a red line on Iran?," and the answer is a resounding yes.

Washington Post
October 17, 2012
Pg. 2

1. Court Overturns Conviction Of Bin Laden's Driver

Appellate panel faults material-support charge in Hamdan terror case

By Del Quentin Wilber and Ernesto Londono

A federal court Tuesday threw out the terrorism conviction of Osama bin Laden's former bodyguard and driver, ruling that he was improperly prosecuted before a military tribunal for a war crime that did not exist at the time he was accused of having committed it.

The unanimous decision by a three-judge appellate panel came in the case of Salim Ahmed Hamdan, who authorities say met bin Laden in 1996 at an al-Qaeda training camp.

Hamdan was tried in 2008 before a military commission at the U.S. prison at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. He was acquitted of conspiracy but convicted of material support of terrorism; he was sentenced to 5 1/2 years in prison and released in 2009 to his family in Yemen.

In seeking to overturn his conviction, Hamdan argued that material support of terrorism was not considered a war crime under international law when he was accused of aiding al-Qaeda. In a 28-page ruling, Judge Brett M. Kavanaugh of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit agreed.

"If the Government wanted to charge Hamdan with aiding and abetting terrorism or some other war crime that was sufficiently rooted in the international law of war ... it should have done so," wrote Kavanaugh, who was joined by Chief Judge David B. Sentelle and Senior Judge Douglas H. Ginsburg.

Joseph McMillan, an attorney for Hamdan, praised the decision, saying, "We are gratified that even in the midst of the perceived national emergency the American courts are prepared to uphold the rule of law in that way and insist that we proceed with accordance of law."

McMillan said Hamdan had not learned of the ruling as of Tuesday afternoon.

Dean Boyd, a Justice Department spokesman, said the government was reviewing the decision and declined to comment further.

The opinion hinged largely on the centuries-old "ex post facto" legal principle, which ensures that defendants are not charged retroactively with crimes that were not considered offenses at the time they were allegedly committed. Hamdan was charged under the 2006 Military Commissions Act, a law that authorized the government to try detainees before military tribunals for war crimes.

The appeals court determined that lawmakers were cognizant of the Constitution's prohibition on "ex post facto" laws and believed that material support of terrorism was "a pre-existing crime under the law of war" when they specified that offense and others in the 2006 act. But the legislators were wrong, the court found. "There is no international-law proscription of material support for terrorism," Kavanaugh wrote.

It is not clear how the ruling will affect other cases before military commissions. There are 166 detainees at Guantanamo. The Pentagon has cleared 87 for release or transfer abroad, and the rest could stand trial.

Among those facing charges before a military

commission is Khalid Sheik Mohammed, the alleged mastermind of the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks.

Robert Chesney, a University of Texas law professor who specializes in national security matters, said the decision would probably have a limited effect on future cases because it "only applies to pre-2006 conduct, and at the moment there are few cases involving material support charges in military commissions."

Even if detainees' cases fall apart before the commissions, it is unlikely that the government will be forced to free any prisoners. The U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit has granted authorities generous leeway in detaining prisoners, and Kavanaugh took pains to note that "our judgment would not preclude the detention of Hamdan until the end of U.S. hostilities against al Qaeda."

Kavanaugh also noted that the ruling would not preclude "appropriate criminal charges in a civilian court."

Agence France-Presse
October 17, 2012

2. Hicks Demands Investigation After US Court Ruling

By AFP

Former Guantanamo Bay inmate David Hicks on Wednesday demanded a full investigation into his jailing after a landmark US court decision, as lawyers said his conviction should be quashed.

Hicks was returned to Australia in April 2007 following a plea deal that saw him serve a nine-month sentence at home for providing material support for terrorism after nearly six years in Guantanamo.

But his conviction was cast into doubt after the US Court

of Appeals ruled that material support for terrorism was not a war crime, and could not in any case be applied to Hicks because the relevant law was passed only in 2006.

Hicks was captured in Afghanistan following the 9/11 attacks in the US and only in 2007 was he charged with providing material support for terrorism.

The ruling was made as the Washington appeals court threw out the conviction of Osama bin Laden's former driver Salim Hamdan -- also once jailed at Guantanamo -- on the same charge.

"We have always said the conviction was doubtful and shouldn't stand," Hicks told Fairfax Media.

"I want a full investigation. The Australian government knew for years that the system was not fair, but it put me up before it anyway."

Dan Mori, who represented Hicks at his Guantanamo Bay hearings, said the court decision meant his conviction was unlawful, although the US government is reviewing the ruling and could still appeal.

"It (the charge of material support for terrorism) is null and void for conduct prior to 2006," he told ABC television.

"The foundation is rotten and the house is starting to crumble."

Mori said it was now up to Hicks's current lawyers to decide if they would formally seek to have his conviction overturned.

"I think it would be great for some official recognition that what he was put through was not fair and was not just," he said.

Steven Glass, who currently represents Hicks, said he was examining the ruling and its implications for his imprisonment in Australia.

"He was detained in South Australia... after he returned, and of course if he was never convicted, there could be an argument that that detention was unlawful," he said.

Prime Minister Julia Gillard refused to be drawn on the case.

"It's important to remember Mr Hicks was convicted under US law and not Australian law," she said in New Delhi, where she is on a state visit.

"What Mr Hicks does in light of that (US) decision is a matter for him and whether or not that case is further appealed by US authorities is a matter for the US."

In his controversial memoir, Hicks describes "six years of hell" in Guantanamo, where he claimed he endured deprivation and witnessed acts of brutality.

He details paramilitary training in Afghanistan and Pakistan and involvement in conflicts in Kosovo and Kashmir, but claims he was a "political scapegoat" and said he never had extremist intentions.

Los Angeles Times
October 17, 2012
Pg. 8

3. Three 9/11 Suspects Opt Out Of Attending Pretrial Hearing

By Richard A. Serrano

FT. MEADE, MD. -- Three of the five alleged Sept. 11 conspirators, including purported mastermind Khalid Shaikh Mohammed, refused to attend a pretrial hearing Tuesday where lawyers argued over one of the significant overlying issues in their case -- whether potential evidence of torture and other classified material will be discussed publicly in their trial at the U.S. naval base on Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

The government wants a protective order prohibiting the release of material from CIA "black sites," the secret prisons where the defendants were held before being moved to Guantanamo Bay in 2006.

Defense lawyers complain that in addition to hampering them at trial, the restrictions block them from even discussing those events with their clients, including Mohammed, who was waterboarded 183 times.

The issue is crucial to both sides. Prosecutors do not want trial jurors hearing about torture or other "enhanced interrogation techniques," and argue it would be a "sideshow" distracting from whether the defendants are guilty of conspiracy and terrorism in the 2001 attacks that killed nearly 3,000 people.

But defense lawyers said that restriction would severely handicap them in strategizing on how best to defend the clients in the capital murder trial, tentatively scheduled to begin in May.

"They're holding our clients in isolation," said an exasperated Navy Lt. Cmdr. Kevin Bogucki, an attorney for Ramzi Binalshibh, who allegedly managed the terrorist cell that carried out the plane attacks at the Pentagon and in New York and Pennsylvania.

Cheryl Bormann, a lawyer for Walid bin Attash, an alleged Al Qaeda training camp steward, was equally frustrated with limited access to her client in the heavily guarded prison.

"He can't call me to say he's sick," she said. "We can't write to our clients. Now on top of it I have additional rules, and this protective order is completely unnecessary. It would be creating more difficulties."

But Joanna Baltes, a Justice Department lawyer and deputy trial counsel for

the prosecution, said the government must ensure against leaks of classified national security information. "We want to prosecute this case and go forward and not be constantly concerned about classified information being harmed," she told the judge.

"The government is not seeking to impose any restrictions on the accused themselves," she added. "The restrictions and the obligations are strictly on the attorneys who hold security clearances in this case."

The judge, Army Col. James L. Pohl, also heard from attorneys for news organizations and the American Civil Liberties Union who urged greater public access to the case.

Pohl did not rule on the matter.

He did allow Mohammed to wear camouflage clothing to future hearings that highlights his military experience, if it does not include U.S. military insignia or pose a security problem.

On Monday, Pohl ruled for the defense by allowing defendants to voluntarily choose not to attend each day's proceedings, an offer Mohammed and two others accepted Tuesday.

A Navy commander who was not identified by the military testified that Mustafa Ahmed Hawsawi and Ammar al Baluchi, a.k.a. Ali Abdul Aziz Ali -- two alleged Al Qaeda financiers -- signed waivers in the morning and were allowed to remain in their prison cells.

She said Mohammed at first said he wanted to attend. He was moved to a holding cell near the courtroom but, just before the hearing began, changed his mind and signed the waiver, the commander said.

Pohl said of the three detainees: "Tomorrow they can choose to come or not to come."

In a related matter, a federal appeals court in Washington overturned the conviction of Salim Hamdan, a driver for Osama bin Laden, and ruled that military tribunals were not authorized to try prisoners suspected of providing material support to terrorist groups before 2006.

Though it would not apply to Mohammed and the four others in the upcoming trial, the decision could significantly endanger other military commission cases, according to human rights lawyers.

The Guantanamo Bay hearings are being telecast via a secure video link to Ft. Meade.

Miami Herald
October 17, 2012

4. Terror Suspect Critical Of Heat's James

A Guantanamo detainee thinks the Miami Heat's LeBron James should apologize to Cleveland.

By Carol Rosenberg

GUANTANAMO BAY NAVY BASE, Cuba -- In a bid to illustrate the absurdity of knee-jerk secrecy at Guantanamo, a Navy defense lawyer on Tuesday invoked none other than Miami Heat superstar LeBron James.

In June, an Afghan captive here sent his lawyer a short note:

"LeBron James is very bad man. He should apologize to the city of Cleveland," it said. Nothing more.

Because the author, Muhammed Rahim, was previously held by the CIA, it was treated as presumptively classified, Navy Lt. Cmdr. Kevin Bogucki told the war court judge, Army Col. James Pohl, during a pre-trial hearing

in the Sept. 11 capital murder trial.

It took about two months for his lawyer, Carlos Warner, to receive it as safe for the public to see.

James let his contract with the Cleveland Cavaliers run out in 2010, and announced he was taking his talents to South Beach. On June 21, James led the Heat to the NBA championship, two days after the date scrawled on the alleged terrorist's letter.

Warner's a federal public defender in Ohio — Akron, not Cleveland. He and Bogucki are contesting Rahim's detention in federal court in Washington.

Rahim got to Guantanamo in March 2008 from secret CIA custody. The Defense Department said in a statement that he was "a close associate of Osama bin Laden" who "had ties to al-Qaida organizations throughout the Middle East. He became one of bin Ladin's most trusted facilitators and procurement specialists prior to his detention."

Warner told The Miami Herald that he took the letter, dated June 19, as an illustration of his captive client's character.

"Afghanistan is a region known for its poverty and hardship," he wrote the Herald in an email that provided a copy of the note.

"Families persevere through a tribal culture and a dedication to protecting their home and their neighbors' homes above all else. Loyalty and honesty are paramount in ancient tribal law. Betrayals are not tolerated or forgiven although an honest apology from an offending peer is valued."

5. Britain Refuses To Extradite Computer Hacker Sought In U.S.

By Alan Cowell and John F. Burns

LONDON — British authorities on Tuesday blocked a longstanding demand for the extradition of Gary McKinnon, a computer hacker wanted in the United States to face charges of intruding into Pentagon computer networks in a case that has become a touchstone of the delicate jurisdictional balance between the two countries since the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001.

Mr. McKinnon, 46, who has been facing the accusations for a decade, has Asperger syndrome and is prone to depression, British officials said.

In light of the "high risk" that the suspect would commit suicide if sent to the United States, Home Secretary Theresa May told Parliament she had "withdrawn the extradition order against Mr. McKinnon" to safeguard his human rights.

American prosecutors say that Mr. McKinnon gained unauthorized access to 97 government computers between February 2001 and March 2002, causing damage worth \$566,000. While he has admitted hacking into Pentagon networks, he insists that he did so to seek evidence about unidentified flying objects.

American officials have described his actions as "the biggest military computer hack of all time." American authorities sought his extradition under a 2003 treaty that, British critics of the legislation assert, was designed to help prosecute terrorists but that has been misused by American prosecutors as a catchall measure in less onerous cases unrelated to national security.

Ms. May's ruling was said by legal experts to be the first time that Britain had publicly thwarted an American demand made under the contentious treaty, which enables American authorities to seek extradition of suspects without providing substantive evidence of their purported crimes.

"Mr. McKinnon is accused of serious crimes," Ms. May said. "But there is also no doubt that he is seriously ill. He has Asperger syndrome, and suffers from depressive illness. The legal question before me is now whether the extent of that illness is sufficient to preclude extradition."

She continued, "After careful consideration of all of the relevant material, I have concluded that Mr. McKinnon's extradition would give rise to such a high risk of him ending his life that a decision to extradite would be incompatible with Mr. McKinnon's human rights."

A spokeswoman for the Department of Justice, Rebekah Carmichael, said Tuesday that "the United States is disappointed" by the decision not to extradite Mr. McKinnon but that "our extradition relationship with the United Kingdom remains strong."

British critics of the extradition treaty have said the pact effectively outsources British judicial responsibilities to the United States without securing reciprocal benefits or distinguishing between serious and lesser crimes.

David Blunkett, the former home secretary who signed the treaty, said in 2010 that he might have "given too much away" to American prosecutors when the pact was framed.

Last year British legislators urged the government to change the procedures. Dominic Raab, a lawmaker for the governing Conservatives, said at the

time that Mr. McKinnon should not be treated "like a gangland mobster or Al Qaeda mastermind."

Rights campaigners hailed the ruling. Shami Chakrabarti, the director of the civil rights group Liberty, called it "a great day for rights, freedoms and justice in the United Kingdom."

Mr. McKinnon was first arrested in 2002, and then again in 2005. An order for his extradition was made in July 2006 under the 2003 treaty, but Mr. McKinnon's family, his lawyers and rights campaigners began a series of legal battles.

The case has generated such intense interest in Britain that Prime Minister David Cameron has discussed it with President Obama, British officials said.

Since 2006, three of Ms. May's predecessors as home secretary have supported extradition, prompting both a public outcry and further legal moves to prevent Mr. McKinnon's removal.

His immediate fate in the British justice system remained unclear.

In 2009, the Crown Prosecution Service said that while the evidence against Mr. McKinnon justified charges of "unauthorized access with intent," it "does not come near to reflecting the criminality that is alleged by the American authorities."

The ruling on Tuesday came days after the British authorities ended another long-running extradition battle by sending five terrorism suspects, including the firebrand cleric Abu Hamza al-Masri, to face trial in the United States on an array of charges. The men had been resisting extradition for many years.

British authorities are still locked in a protracted effort to send another prominent Muslim cleric to Jordan to face charges.

The preacher, who is known as Abu Qatada but whose real name is Omar Mahmoud Mohammed Othman, has been opposing extradition for seven years and has spent long periods in detention or under restriction in Britain for more than a decade.

Yahoo.com
October 17, 2012

6. Suicide Blast Hits US-Afghan Base; 10 Afghans Hurt

By Heidi Vogt and Rahim Faiez, Associated Press

KABUL, Afghanistan -- A suicide car bomber blew up his vehicle near the gate of a U.S.-Afghan combat outpost in eastern Afghanistan on Wednesday morning, wounding 10 Afghan soldiers, officials said.

The blast in Paktiya province's Zurmat district shattered windows on village homes three kilometers (nearly 2 miles) away but no one was killed in the attack, said provincial government spokesman Rohullah Samon.

He said it appeared the bomber detonated his car before reaching the actual gate of the camp. Many of the injured soldiers were in rooms inside the base that collapsed from the force of the explosion, Samon added.

There were no casualties among international forces at Combat Outpost Zurmat, said NATO forces spokesman Maj. Adam Wojack. He said the bombing was followed by indirect fire by mortars or rockets aimed at the base.

Taliban spokesman Zabiullah Mujahid claimed responsibility for the attack and said that insurgents had breached the outpost's perimeter defenses.

Wojack said he had no reports of attackers on foot and

that the outpost was secured soon after the blast.

The attack appeared to be in keeping with a gradual switch in Taliban tactics to increasingly target Afghan security forces as the international coalition continues the drawdown until a planned withdrawal of combat troops in 2014.

According to latest NATO statistics, the Afghan army has grown to 184,676 soldiers, and the country's police force now numbers 146,339 officers. The security forces are just short of the planned 352,000 troops.

NATO still has 104,000 troops — 68,000 of them Americans — in Afghanistan, down from nearly 140,000 last year.

However, the number of Afghans leaving the army has remained stubbornly high, with 27 percent of troops either deserting or not re-enlisting despite the higher salaries offered. And though the number of volunteers is still high, the army needs to train about 50,000 recruits each year just to compensate for the loss.

Associated Press Writer Slobodan Lekic contributed to this report from Kabul.

New York Times
October 17, 2012

7. C.I.A. Officer Among Dead In Bombing By Afghan

By Michael R. Gordon

WASHINGTON — An officer for the Central Intelligence Agency was killed on Saturday in a suicide bombing in southern Afghanistan, American officials said Tuesday.

The attack, which was carried out in a remote area of Kandahar Province, occurred when a guard working for the Afghan intelligence service detonated a suicide vest as a delegation of American

coalition members and Afghan intelligence officials arrived at the intelligence office in the Maruf District.

The blast killed Ghulam Rasool, the deputy intelligence director for Kandahar Province, two of his bodyguards, another Afghan intelligence official, and some Americans, including the C.I.A. officer.

An official with the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force said that the Americans did not appear to have been the principal targets but were "in the wrong place at the wrong time." A spokeswoman for the C.I.A. declined to comment.

Insider attacks have been a persistent problem for the international forces and are responsible for about 15 percent of all the deaths of coalition troops this year. There are no public statistics on insider attacks that involve the Afghan intelligence force, the National Directorate of Security, which the C.I.A. has trained and financed.

But this is the first instance this year in which an insider attack by an Afghan intelligence employee is known to have resulted in a death of a member of the NATO-led coalition. The role that American intelligence officials have played in assisting their Afghan counterparts in distant areas of the country exposes them to insurgent attacks. "It was an N.D.S. attack on N.D.S.," the official from the NATO-led command said.

In December 2009, the C.I.A. suffered a setback in Khost, Afghanistan, when a Jordanian double agent, whom the C.I.A. had escorted into a base, blew himself up. That blast killed seven C.I.A. employees, including contractors.

The tradition at the C.I.A. is to put a star on the wall

in the lobby at the agency's headquarters to recognize fallen employees.

The Cable
(thecable.foreignpolicy.com)
October 16, 2012

8. State Department Official: Negotiations To Extend U.S. Troop Presence In Afghanistan Starting Soon

By Josh Rogin

Despite statements by Vice President Joe Biden, the State Department is about to begin formal negotiations over the extension of U.S. troops past 2014, a top State Department official said Tuesday.

Last week, U.S. and Afghan negotiators met in Kabul to talk about the Bilateral Security Agreement that will govern the extension of U.S. troops past 2014, when President Barack Obama said the combat mission in Afghanistan will end and the U.S. will complete the transition of the entire country to Afghan government control.

Also last week, Biden told Americans during his Oct. 11 debate with Republican vice-presidential nominee Paul Ryan that U.S. troops were leaving Afghanistan by 2014.

"We are leaving in 2014, period, and in the process, we're going to be saving over the next 10 years another \$800 billion," Biden said. "We've been in this war for over a decade. The primary objective is almost completed. Now all we're doing is putting the Kabul government in a position to be able to maintain their own security. It's their responsibility, not America's."

Marc Grossman, the State Department's special representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan, explained today that's not the whole story.

Grossman said Tuesday that the point of the upcoming negotiations is to agree on an extension of the U.S. troop presence well past 2014, for the purposes of conducting counterterrorism operations and training and advising the Afghan security forces.

In May, Obama and Afghan President Hamid Karzai signed a Strategic Partnership Agreement that promised an ongoing U.S. commitment to Afghanistan through 2024. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton announced Oct. 3 that Grossman's deputy, James Warlick, will be the lead U.S. negotiator for the Bilateral Security Agreement that will follow. Karzai's Ambassador to Washington Eklil Hakimi will lead the negotiations for the Afghan side.

Grossman said that while meetings on "how we will manage our forces going forward in Afghanistan," have already taken place, formal negotiations have not yet begun. Once the negotiations formally start, the Bilateral Security Agreement must be completed within one year, according to the Strategic Partnership agreement, Grossman explained.

Some U.S. military officials have said the plan is to keep 25,000 American troops in Afghanistan past 2014, but Grossman insisted that there is no number yet and the 25,000 figure quoted in reports is speculative. NATO announced Monday that it will also keep international troops in Afghanistan past 2014 alongside U.S. troops, not for combat but strictly for the mission of training and advising the Afghans.

Grossman was speaking on a panel at the annual summit of the International Stability Operations Association in Washington. Also on the panel

was Under Secretary of State for Management Patrick Kennedy, who said that the State Department would need U.S. military troops in Afghanistan to protect them and help them well past 2014.

"Rather than developing our own capabilities, we will be depending on DOD support for functions such as a quick reaction force, personnel recovery, fuel support, explosive ordinance disposal, and medical assistance, by 2015," Kennedy said.

The Cable also asked Kennedy why he testified in a hearing last week that he was "inclined" to support the requests for more security in Libya before the Sept. 11 attack in Benghazi that killed Amb. Chris Stevens and three other Americans. Kennedy declined to comment.

Agence France-Presse
October 16, 2012

9. Nerves And Distrust Underpin Afghan Insider Threat

By Joe Sinclair, Agence France-Presse

The Afghan policeman walked into the room without introducing himself, sat down with his rifle in his lap, and stared at the US soldier with a strange look in his eyes.

"It was the most nervous I've been here," said 24-year-old Second Lieutenant Alex Panosian. The surge in insider attacks, in which more than 50 foreigners have been killed by their Afghan colleagues this year, was playing on his mind.

Panosian had been playing cards with Afghan army and police commanders in an attempt to improve sometimes difficult relations at their base in Baraki Barak, Logar province, when the low-ranking officer entered the room.

Panosian told the commanders the situation was making him nervous, at which point they yelled at the Afghan officer to put his weapon away. They then explained that the officer was high on drugs, an all-too-common affliction.

"To them that explained his behaviour, but it made me a little bit more nervous," Panosian said. "It did remind me that even if you're with the chiefs, it only takes one guy."

The unprecedented number of insider killings comes at a critical moment in the 11-year war, as US-led NATO forces try to hand security responsibility to the Afghans ahead of the withdrawal of combat forces by the end of 2014.

Panosian put his nerves down to his "senses being overly alert" because of the attacks. He was at pains to point out the Afghans took the threat seriously and had assured the Americans nothing like that would happen under their watch.

And for the most part in Logar, south of Kabul, US troops say the insider threat is "just another danger of the job", but not one they are particularly concerned about.

Interactions take place mostly at the officer level and joint patrols, scaled back in the wake of the insider attacks, have not restarted in Baraki Barak, a Taliban stronghold.

US soldiers do take precautions, however, with so-called guardian angels keeping a close eye on their local partners when visiting the Afghan side of the base -- trying to be as inconspicuous as they can while carrying a loaded automatic rifle.

On September 30, a firefight in neighbouring Wardak province between NATO troops and their Afghan allies killed five people, including one US soldier

and a civilian contractor, in a suspected insider incident which is still under investigation.

The psychologist for the 173rd Airborne Brigade Combat Team, Captain Julie Welch, who travelled to the base in Sayedabad the next day to provide counselling, said such attacks made the soldiers question the Afghan-US partnership.

"It affects them a little differently from an IED (improvised explosive device) blast, gunshot wound or suicide blast, because it comes along with trust issues, questioning partnership and questioning trust in other people.

"Trust issues lead more to them relying on each other. It brings them closer together as a unit and it leads them into a very close-knit group. They turn more to each other."

She insisted the soldiers were professional, able to grieve and then re-focus on the mission, but said: "When you're constantly alert, constantly on guard, that can lead to more anxiety.

"Out here it leads to more hyper-vigilance, alertness, which can sometimes manifest in sleep issues, because when you're alert all the time it's hard to calm yourself down before bedtime."

One civilian police trainer, who did not want to be named, said despite having a good relationship with the Afghans, he always kept a hand on his gun and practised drawing his pistol in his bedroom.

"I respect them but I'm ready. When I go into a room I'm always going through it in my mind what to do, use this one as a shield, shoot that one," he said.

"I had a good relationship with them but I didn't ever know what damage was done elsewhere. It's unpredictable, so

I always kept my gun ready with one (bullet) in the pipe."

The NATO force has suggested 25 percent of the attacks stem from the Taliban insurgency and the rest from arguments and cultural misunderstandings.

"If you're the enemy it's a good tactic," said Colonel Andrew Rohling, the commander of the 173rd Airborne Brigade Combat Team. "From the enemy standpoint it can drive a wedge between us and the Afghan army which is significant."

The Afghans are trying to address the threat themselves, with intelligence agents in the ranks and a brochure telling soldiers not to be offended if, for example, a US counterpart blows his nose in front of them.

"It's hard to completely not be American," Rohling said.

"Guys aren't doing it to make the Afghans mad. But the difference sometimes here in Afghanistan is you resolve issues with a gun instead of resolving them by talking."

New York Times
October 17, 2012

10. Arrests Of 2 U.S. Sailors In Rape Case Threaten To Fan Okinawa's Anger

By Martin Fackler

TOKYO — Two United States Navy sailors were arrested on Tuesday on suspicion of raping a woman in Okinawa, local news reports said, an episode likely to fan anger on an island increasingly outraged over the presence of a large American base.

The news agency Jiji Press said the two sailors, both 23, were arrested before dawn on Tuesday. One admitted to the rape, the agency said, while the other denied involvement. The Okinawan police refused to comment on the report, but

the American ambassador to Japan, John V. Roos, said the United States government was "extremely concerned."

"These allegations, given their seriousness, will continue to command my full personal attention," Mr. Roos said in a statement.

The case comes two weeks after the arrival of 12 new Marine Corps transport aircraft touched off huge protests among islanders. This type of new aircraft, the MV-22 Osprey, has experienced crashes in development, and islanders fear for the packed city where the American base is situated. The small tropical island hosts more than half of the roughly 50,000 United States military members stationed in Japan.

Crimes by American servicemen have been a longstanding complaint of Okinawans, who, like residents of the rest of Japan, enjoy crime rates that are far below those in the United States. The rape of a 12-year-old schoolgirl in Okinawa by three Americans in 1995 set off mass protests against the United States military presence.

NHK, Japan's national broadcaster, said the woman in the new case was attacked on a roadside as she was walking home, resulting in injuries to her neck. It said that she later identified the two Americans when the police took her to an off-base housing area.

NHK quoted Okinawa's governor, Hirokazu Nakaima, as saying that he felt shock and anger, and he called the crime "hard to forgive." He said he protested directly to the United States military in Okinawa, the American Consulate and the prime minister's office in Tokyo.

One question now is whether the arrests will touch off a new round of protests by

Okinawans, whose frustrations rose three years ago when the prime minister at the time, Yukio Hatoyama, promised to move one base, the Futenma air station, off the island, only to renege. The Ospreys, which take off like a helicopter and fly like a plane, were deployed at Futenma, leading activists to stage sit-ins to block gates to the base and even fly kites in an effort to interfere with flights.

Local newspapers in Okinawa, which are strongly anti-base, give intense coverage to crimes by American military personnel and their families. NHK reported that the new rape case was the seventh to result in the arrest of American servicemen since the United States returned Okinawa to Japan in 1972.

Kyodo News
October 17, 2012

11. Japan Protests Rape Incident, Okinawa Seeks Stern U.S. Response

By Kyodo

TOKYO -- Japan lodged a protest Wednesday with the United States over the alleged rape of a Japanese woman by two U.S. Navy sailors in Okinawa, demanding the enforcement of stricter discipline and implementation of preventive measures.

As the incident further heightens anti-U.S. sentiment in the southern prefecture aggravated by the U.S. military's recent deployment of Osprey aircraft there despite fierce local opposition, Okinawa Gov. Hirokazu Nakaima urged Defense Minister Satoshi Morimoto to seek a stern response to the matter by the U.S. government.

"It's madness," Nakaima said of the incident in his talks with Morimoto, their second meeting in as many days, and

urged the central government to strongly ask the United States to cooperate in the investigation of the case and to take a stern response that goes beyond simply enforcing stricter discipline.

The governor had just visited Morimoto a day earlier to request the easing of the burden on Okinawa of hosting the majority of U.S. military bases in Japan, in the hope of decreasing the number of accidents and crimes involving U.S. military personnel in the prefecture.

Nakaima also expressed anger that such an incident occurred only a few months after the United States promised to enforce stricter discipline following the arrest in August of a U.S. Marine for allegedly molesting and assaulting a woman in Okinawa.

Morimoto told Nakaima the latest incident is "extremely heinous and despicable. It hurts the Japan-U.S. security arrangements and the Okinawa people's trust in the U.S. military. The situation is serious."

The minister said he would demand that the United States take stricter measures to make sure its military personnel follow its codes of discipline.

The two sailors, both belonging to the Fort Worth Naval Air Base in Texas, were arrested Tuesday on suspicion of raping and injuring the Japanese woman in her 20s in Okinawa early that day and local police sent them to prosecutors in Naha on Wednesday.

According to the police, Seaman Christopher Browning, 23, has denied the allegations while Petty Officer 3rd Class Skyler Dozierwalker, 23, has admitted to them.

The incident comes after the U.S. Marine Corps deployed 12 MV-22 Ospreys at its

Futenma Air Station located in the densely populated city of Ginowan earlier this month despite the locals' strong opposition.

The deployment has become a hot-button issue in Japan, as many people are concerned about the safety of the Osprey, especially after two overseas accidents involving the tilt-rotor aircraft earlier this year.

Also Wednesday, Japanese Senior Vice Foreign Minister Shuji Kira summoned U.S. Ambassador to Japan John Roos to the Foreign Ministry and lodged a protest over the incident, while strongly urging the U.S. side to impose stricter discipline and preventive measures, according to the ministry.

After meeting Kira, Roos told reporters, "It is the full intent of the U.S. government to provide full and complete and unequivocal cooperation with Japanese authorities in their investigation of this matter."

The ambassador, who described the incident as "a very serious matter," said he understands "the anger many people feel" and that he shares some of that anger.

Nakaima said Roos offered him an apology over the alleged rape case when he met with the envoy at the U.S. Embassy in Tokyo on Wednesday.

Regarding the incident, a Pentagon official said Tuesday the U.S. Defense Department is taking the rape allegations seriously and that the U.S. Navy in Japan "is focused on cooperating and supporting the Okinawa police investigation."

Meanwhile, Foreign Minister Koichiro Gamba told reporters in Paris, where he was visiting, "We must think of a more drastic measure" than dealing with the issue through just enforcing stricter discipline or taking preventive measures.

In Tokyo, Prime Minister Yoshihiko Noda expressed outrage over the incident, saying it cannot be accepted, while Chief Cabinet Secretary Osamu Fujimura said the case was "extremely regrettable."

In 1995, the U.S. military refused to transfer custody of servicemen involved in the rape of a Japanese schoolgirl, enraging people in Okinawa.

Financial Times
October 17, 2012
Pg. 6

12. Islands Clash Tests Beijing For Role On World Stage

Leaders are playing a game of cat and mouse with Japan as the nation learns to be a great power, says Kathrin Hille

Whenever a Japan coast guard patrol close to the Senkaku islands scans the horizon these days, Chinese ships are likely to appear.

Almost every day for the past two weeks Beijing has sent maritime surveillance vessels into waters close to the disputed archipelago.

This is a very public exercise in displaying its fury over Japan's move to nationalise some of the islands, which Tokyo controls but over which Beijing also claims sovereignty.

Yesterday, Japan's defence ministry said seven Chinese warships were sailing in waters close to Okinawa, not far from the disputed islands.

This dangerous game of cat and mouse is the latest example of China's bickering with other nations near and far. It is a state of affairs that illustrates that the new leaders of the Communist party who take power after its congress in November will inherit a country ill at ease with its place in the world.

Earlier this year Beijing was in a stand-off with the

Philippines over Scarborough Shoal, a spit of sand in the South China Sea, and before that with Vietnam and the Philippines over fishing and drilling rights in those disputed waters.

Beijing is at odds with Washington, as well. Xi Jinping, the vice-president who is widely expected to take over as party chief and state president after Hu Jintao steps down, warned the US in September to keep out of the Japan dispute.

More than 20 years ago Deng Xiaoping, the architect of China's market reforms, advised: "Hide your brightness, bide your time."

The economic miracle sparked by his reforms has helped transform the country into a global power, a role in frequent collision with Mr Deng's maxim.

"We are the 800lb gorilla in the room," says Zhu Feng, a security and international relations expert at Peking University. "China needs to undergo a process to change and deal with that. We are learning to be a great power."

China's size, growing influence and military power have raised fear and suspicion among its neighbours.

The expression of nationalist sentiment and expansionist views domestically has fed such fears and undermined Beijing's official assurances that its rise will not pose a threat to anyone. The disconnection between official rhetoric and more hostile comments often found in state media has led many foreign observers to suspect a split between a "moderate" civilian leadership and a more "hawkish" military.

However, there is little evidence for that. "Even within an organisation generally seen as possessing 'hardline' preferences, such as the PLA [People's Liberation Army],

different points of view can be identified," says Taylor Fravel, an expert on Chinese foreign policy and security at MIT.

"Whether one is a hawk or not might depend on the specific issue at stake. I see very little difference between the preferences of civilian and military leaders on sovereignty disputes, as this is an issue over which there is broad agreement at a strategic level."

But the ruling Communist party has yet to come up with a doctrine to replace Mr Deng's formula.

"There is a debate at the top," says June Teufel Dreyer, a professor at the University of Miami. "Some leaders, typically in the more developed coastal provinces, argue that China must assert its interests in a more straightforward way, for example to get its hands on the resources it needs to power its economy."

"Others say the country must continue to give priority to domestic development and solving internal social challenges."

Analysts say whatever Mr Xi's personal preferences, he will have to balance all interests carefully and drastic change in China's foreign policy is, therefore, unlikely. Still, the party is searching for better ways to explain those goals to the outside world and containing the negative fallout.

*The US military commander in the Asia-Pacific region has played down tensions between China and its neighbours over rival territorial claims in the South China Sea and stressed the need for long-term military co-operation between Washington and Beijing.

Admiral Samuel Locklear, chief of the US Pacific Command (Cincpac), stressed the importance of building a "longer-term" security

relationship with China, saying he had visited the country twice since he assumed his post this year.

One idea floated in the run-up to the party congress is for Li Keqiang, who is expected to succeed Wen Jiabao as premier, to take on responsibility for the South China Sea issue. Also being discussed is the creation of a vice-premier post in charge of foreign policy.

Wall Street Journal
October 17, 2012
Pg. 1

13. Militant Suspected In Attack In Libya Remains At Large

By Margaret Coker

BENHAZI, Libya—The founder of Libya's Islamist militia Ansar al-Sharia was at the U.S. consulate compound during the deadly attack here, Libyan officials say, but he remains free a week after those allegations were disclosed to Libyan political leaders and U.S. investigators in Tripoli.

Ahmed Abu Khattalah—who current Libyan officials and former Islamic militants describe as propagating an al Qaeda-style ideology—was seen during the Sept. 11 attack at the diplomatic mission where two of the four Americans died, said two senior Libyan security officials familiar with the investigation.

The officials' allegations provide the most direct link so far between the assaults and Mr. Khattalah's militia. They also may fuel a political controversy in the U.S., where the Obama administration faces questions over security at the consulate and its response to the attack.

The U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation declined to comment, citing the continuing probe. Ansar al-Sharia has denied it orchestrated or participated in the violence.

The new disclosures underscore how complicated it will be to fully investigate the killings and bring the perpetrators to justice, as President Barack Obama has vowed to do. The U.S. has sent a team of FBI agents to probe the case, but they are operating mostly out of the capital city, Tripoli, which is 400 miles away. Any move by Libya's ramshackle police force against radical Islamists or al Qaeda sympathizers in Benghazi might create an unpredictable backlash, according to security officials here.

"Tripoli is far away, and we aren't going to start a civil war here by ourselves," said one of the Libyan officials in Benghazi.

Ansar al-Sharia has been a focus of the joint U.S.-Libyan investigation after U.S. intelligence officials disclosed that they had intercepted phone calls between members of the group and al Qaeda leaders in Northern Africa, made immediately after the Sept. 11 consulate attack, bragging about the incident. The Americans haven't released the identities of the Libyans involved in that conversation, and it isn't known whether Mr. Abu Khattalah was among them.

Americans are stepping up counterterrorism efforts in North Africa, hoping to target the offshoot known as al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb, which has increased operations in Mali. U.S. officials working with militaries in North Africa have considered adding unmanned aircraft in the region and haven't ruled out unilateral U.S. strikes, but hope to work through individual governments and regional organizations.

Analysts have begun compiling potential targets, said one civilian expert in Mali, but

U.S. officials said they don't yet have adequate intelligence to mount a strike on militants connected to the Benghazi assault or to broader al Qaeda activities.

"It's not like strikes are in the cards right now," said a U.S. official.

In Libya, the Americans have only a threadbare presence and thin security ties. The FBI team in Tripoli is interacting primarily with the nascent Libyan intelligence agency headed by former U.S. citizen Salem al-Hasi, a veteran Libyan political dissident who for decades lived in the Atlanta area and taught Arabic to U.S. soldiers, according to several Libyan officials.

Mr. Hasi has no direct control over the existing security bodies in Benghazi, whose commanders have forces to make arrests there. In Tripoli, meanwhile, civilian leaders are struggling to form a new government, leaving the nation without strong ministers of the interior or defense. Other aspects of the American investigation, including the treatment of witnesses, are also generating criticism among Libyans.

Some witnesses from Benghazi have traveled at their own expense to meet with FBI investigators and share information with them. Three of these witnesses say the Americans have offered them no protection in exchange for their cooperation, prompting two of them to say they are trying to dissuade other Libyans from talking to the bureau. The FBI team has spent only a handful of hours on the ground in Benghazi, saying the city is too insecure.

U.S. officials in Washington didn't immediately comment on the complaints.

The two Libyan officials who alleged Mr. Abu Khattalah

was present at the consulate during the attack don't report to Mr. Hasi. They say they have received no orders to arrest the militia leader since turning over their evidence on his presence to the Americans and their superiors in Tripoli more than a week ago.

The two Libyan officials say their evidence of Mr. Abu Khattalah's presence at the consulate came from witness statements as well as recent raids against Ansar al-Sharia members' homes.

"There's no doubt the sheik was there," said one of these officials, referring to the religious title Mr. Abu Khattalah's followers use for him. "If the sheik was there, then the sheik was giving commands. That's how the group operates."

Requests to interview Mr. Abu Khattalah, sent through his militia, a former prison cell mate and a neighbor, were unanswered.

The organization played no role in the Benghazi incident, a spokesman for the group told reporters on Sept. 13. The spokesman described the events of Sept. 11 as a public protest against the anti-Islamic video that turned violent due to shots fired at the demonstrators from inside the consulate. Other Ansar al-Sharia members have repeated this account in later press statements.

There are conflicting accounts of Mr. Abu Khattalah's current whereabouts.

One of the two Libyan security officials said Mr. Abu Khattalah wasn't at his home when a Libyan security team raided it about two weeks ago.

However, a neighbor interviewed over the weekend said that in recent days, he has seen Mr. Abu Khattalah several times at the home in the Leithi neighborhood, a Benghazi district known

for his religious piety and high percentage of political prisoners jailed by former dictator Moammar Gadhafi.

Mr. Abu Khattalah, believed to be in his mid-40s, grew up in the working-class district. He trained as an auto mechanic as a teenager but spent most of his adult life in Libya's notorious Abu Salem prison, part of an institutionalized roundup by Gadhafi's security police of thousands of religious men deemed a threat to the former authoritarian regime, according to a neighbor and a former jailmate.

He was released in February 2011, when Gadhafi was trying to quell public unrest in the early days of Libya's uprising, according to former fellow prisoner Faraj Mejbeiry, who along with Mr. Abu Khattalah and several other former Abu Salem prisoners formed fighting groups to help overthrow Gadhafi.

He was a marginal figure during the revolution until the assassination of a senior rebel commander last July. The commander, Abdel Fattah Younis, was an interior minister under Gadhafi who had switched allegiances at the start of the uprising.

Mr. Abu Khattalah and his militia had arrested the commander and were escorting him to Benghazi when Mr. Fattah Younis and two other aides were shot to death, according to several Libyan officials. Many rival commanders speculated that Mr. Abu Khattalah had approved the killing to avenge Gadhafi-era persecution of men like himself.

The militia leader wasn't arrested and has denied having any part in Mr. Fattah Younis's death. The murder remains unsolved.

Last fall, after Gadhafi's death, most of Libya's veteran Islamist militants, men who had previously fought in Afghanistan and Iraq, renounced violence and said they would pursue their goals of building a conservative Islamic state by participating in Libya's new political scene.

Mr. Abu Khattalah refused to join them. He renamed his brigade Ansar al-Sharia, or the "Followers of Islamic Law," and gained a reputation for al Qaeda-style religious views, say several local commanders and former jihadis.

His militia, which until last month was headquartered in a former Gadhafi-era police compound in central Benghazi, routinely flew the black flag favored by Islamic militants instead of Libya's revolution-era tricolor.

Mr. Abu Khattalah has also denounced people with rival religious views as unbelievers, a judgment that al Qaeda adherents use to condone murder, Islamic scholars in the city say.

"There are only a few Muslims here with deviant ideas, and one of them is Ahmed," says Fawzi Waniss, a former Islamist fighter who now heads Benghazi's Supreme Security Council, which is in charge of policing the city.

—Ayman al-Kekly in *Benghazi and Drew Hinshaw*, *Evan Perez and Siobhan Gorman contributed to this article.*

McClatchy Newspapers
(mcclatchydc.com)
October 16, 2012

14. Diplomats See Kurds, Not Assad, As Likely Target Of Turkish Border Buildup

By Roy Gutman, McClatchy Newspapers

ISTANBUL — Turkish tanks are deployed on hilltops overlooking Syria and additional combat aircraft have been moved to bases close to that war-torn country in an escalation that began Oct. 3, when a Syrian artillery round landed in the border town of Akcakale, killing five Turkish civilians.

But while the developments have all the appearance of two countries heading for a major clash, the Turkish government's moves may relate not so much to the civil war now raging across Syria, but to what is for Turkey a far deadlier conflict: The long-running war against militant Kurdish separatists, whom the Turkish government sees as a threat to the existence of the state itself.

Since July, when the outlawed Kurdistan Workers' Party, or PKK by its Kurdish initials, launched its latest offensive, at least 112 Turks have died, 99 of them from the army and other security forces and 13 civilians, according to a McClatchy compilation of Turkish news accounts. Government forces claim to have killed 325 separatists, and casualties mount.

One of the most serious assaults occurred early last month, when some 70 PKK guerrillas stormed the center of Beytussebab in southeastern Sirtak province, blew up the town's only bridge and opened rifle and rocket fire from four different directions on the governor's office, a military barracks and police offices. They killed 10 security personnel. The army deployed a special commando unit and claims to have killed 50 of the attackers. Continuing incidents have rattled the country.

Turkey also sees a growing PKK threat immediately across the border.

In apparent retaliation for Turkey's backing of the rebellion against Syrian President Bashar Assad, Syria has transferred control of many Kurdish towns in northern Syria to the Syrian affiliate of the PKK, causing alarm in Ankara. Moreover, the PKK is said to have deployed a sizable number of fighters – possibly 2,000 or more – into Kurdish Syria to bolster its local affiliate there, the Democratic Union Party.

Turkey, the United States and the European Union all view the PKK as a terror organization whose aim is to break up the Turkish state. Turkish leaders say they will not permit a PKK-led entity to be set up on its border.

In the view of many diplomatic observers here, if Turkey does use force in or around Syria, it will not be seeking the overthrow of Assad, which is not a core security concern for Turkey, but the demise of the PKK, whose hope to set up an independent Kurdish state would impinge on the sovereignty of Turkey, Iran, Syria and Iraq.

The war against the PKK, which began in 1984 and has claimed as many as 40,000 lives, became a good deal more complex as a result of the Arab Spring. Assad not only has refused to curb PKK activities within his borders, but there are signs he has actively encouraged the PKK's latest offensive.

A defector, who broke with the PKK in late June, told Turkish officials that "large amounts of money" flowed from Syria into PKK coffers in the first half of 2012, according to documents that McClatchy was allowed to read.

Additionally, Turkish officials now believe the commander of the current PKK assaults in Turkey is Fehman Huseyn, who's also known as

Bahoz Erdal, a Syrian Kurd who is based in northern Iraq.

Meanwhile, Syria's close ally, Iran, has done nothing to discourage the use of its territory by PKK guerrillas.

Compared with Turkey, which has the second biggest army in NATO – more than 500,000 active forces – the PKK is tiny, with an estimated 1,500 to 2,500 armed insurgents inside Turkey, and 5,000 to 6,000 in the neighboring countries, Iraq, Iran and Syria. They are augmented by a significant number of unarmed local militants, ethnic Kurdish sympathizers who provide logistics, support and recruits. Despite its small numbers, the PKK has managed to deny the government control over hundreds of square miles of territory in southeast Turkey.

For the past two months, Turkish aircraft have been pounding PKK bases in the Qandil mountains of northern Iraq, at times sending bombers up almost every night, according to diplomatic sources. Last week, it moved a squadron of U.S.-supplied F16s to Diyarbakir, in southeastern Turkey, and while this was widely seen as a precautionary move after the exchange of shells with Syria, the base in question is the primary launching pad for attacks against PKK bases in Iraq.

PKK forces dive into their bunkers when the flights take off, thanks to a primitive but effective warning system. According to defectors, the PKK rank-and-file all stay tuned to a Kurdish radio station called Radio Mezopotamya, and when flights take off, listeners phone in coded song requests.

The Turkish military also has deployed specially trained forces as in Beytussebab and high tech equipment such as drones, while the country's

ruling Justice and Development Party has pursued a strategy of economic development with political concessions responsive to Kurdish demands to restore their cultural identity. Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan has even hinted recently that he might start talks with jailed PKK leader Abdullah Ocalan, who spent the past 14 months in solitary confinement in a Turkish prison. Ocalan's brother was allowed to visit him and quoted him as condemning the PKK's offensive as "irresponsible."

Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al Maliki, now in a growing public dispute with Turkey over a variety of issues, has demanded that Turkey stop all intervention in northern Iraq's Kurdistan region, a demand that Turkey has ignored.

On Oct. 4, when the Turkish Parliament gave the government a green light for retaliation against Syria following the killing of the five Turkish civilians, it explicitly approved the use of force abroad, without specifying against which countries.

Three days later, the Turkish military's general staff announced that it had established 15 zones of operation in Kurdish areas, covering some 611 square miles, where all entry is forbidden until Jan. 7, 2013. At least two of those exclusion zones extend into neighboring countries – Syria and Iraq, according to the coordinates posted on the military's website.

All are miles from the areas where Syrian shells have been falling inside Turkey.

Washington Post

October 17, 2012

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15. 90 Killed In Attacks By Syrian Military

Airstrikes, artillery target rebel areas; U.N. warns of food shortages

By Zeina Karam, Associated Press

BEIRUT -- The Syrian military unleashed heavy airstrikes and artillery bombardments targeting rebel strongholds in the north Tuesday, killing at least 90 people, according to activists.

The barrage came as the U.N. food agency warned that more and more Syrians are depending on assistance from the World Food Program to stay alive as the civil war worsens.

The airstrikes hit Idlib and Aleppo provinces, both bordering Turkey. Activists described the attacks as some of the worst since rebels fighting to topple President Bashar al-Assad took over the key city of Maarat al-Numan in Idlib on Oct. 10. The city lies along the main highway connecting Aleppo with cities to the south, including Homs and the capital, Damascus.

Assad's government has increasingly relied on warplanes in its struggle to crush the rebels, who have taken over large swaths of territory in the north.

Rami Abdulrahman, who heads the Britain-based activist group Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, said warplanes carried out 12 raids in Maarat al-Numan within an hour. The group relies on a network of activists on the ground.

Abdulrahman, using a pseudonym, said at least 90 people were killed in airstrikes and artillery shelling, adding that it is often difficult immediately after a strike to determine "what hit a town or a village." The Local Coordination Committees, another activist group, put the death toll from the airstrikes and artillery attacks at 96.

In addition to the air bombardment, Human Rights Watch on Sunday cited allegations that Assad's government has been using cluster bombs, which are banned by most nations. The U.S.-based group cited amateur video and testimony from the front lines. The Syrian military denied the reports.

Fighting also continued in Aleppo, Syria's largest city and its former business capital. Activists reported airstrikes in the town of al-Bab in Aleppo province.

In Geneva, officials with the World Food Program said that about 1.4 million people required its assistance in September in many parts of Syria, adding that aid workers cannot reach all those in need because of the fighting.

New York Times

October 17, 2012

16. Middle East: Antiaircraft Missile Is Fired From Gaza, Israeli Officials Say

By Associated Press

Israeli defense officials say that Palestinian militants in the Gaza Strip have for the first time fired an antiaircraft missile at Israeli aircraft. The officials say the militants fired a Strela shoulder-fired missile at an Israeli helicopter operating over Gaza last week but missed their target. The officials said Israeli intelligence has long believed that militants in Gaza possessed these weapons, but this was the first time they were fired. They said the air force had taken special precautions for several years assuming that the threat existed. Israel believes that the weapons originated in Libya and were smuggled through tunnels along the Egyptian border. Palestinian militant groups have never

acknowledged possessing the weapons.

Washington Post
October 17, 2012
Pg. 13

17. Sanctions Hurting Iran's Oil Exports, New Data Show

By James Ball

Stringent new sanctions imposed by the United States and European Union against Iran have curbed the country's oil exports by more than 1 million barrels a day, according to new data released by the International Energy Agency.

The IEA data, released late last week as part of a little-noticed annual report, paint the first detailed picture of how hard the sanctions have hit Iran: The agency estimates that the country's oil exports have fallen by almost a third in the past three months, representing a substantial loss of income for the government.

The effect has been compounded, the agency said, because Iran's government was apparently caught off-guard by buyers' strict compliance with the sanctions and by new restrictions preventing shipping insurance for vessels delivering Iranian goods. Actual deliveries of oil from the country dropped to a new low of 860,000 barrels a day in September.

The sanctions are only getting tighter. On Monday, the E.U. voted to expand measures already in place, targeting banking institutions, energy companies and shipping. It said in a statement that the measures were aimed at the regime and "not aimed at the Iranian people."

Despite the severe toll taken by the sanctions, regional analysts warn that the measures are unlikely to persuade Iran to abandon its uranium-enrichment program, even as

it faces a deepening economic crisis at home.

Turkey, a key ally of Western nations in the region, has proved crucial to keeping Iran's economy afloat. Turkey relies heavily on Iranian oil and was granted an exemption to new U.S. sanctions in return for voluntary efforts to reduce its imports from Iran. Some Ankara-based analysts said Turkey is unlikely to be willing or able to cut off Iranian oil imports entirely.

"Turkey is moving based on goodwill, but as being a neighbor of Iran and bounded with some legal engagements, [it] cannot act in a radical way as the E.U. countries did this summer," said Hasan Selim Ozertem of Turkey's International Strategic Research Organization. "Looking at the cumulative data, Iran has a dominant share in Turkey's crude oil imports. Thus, it is not easy to change position overnight."

Turkey's primary refinery equipment is also engineered to handle Iranian oil, Ozertem added, making a shift difficult.

The country has proved willing to aid Iran's trade situation in other ways: Iran is increasingly sourcing its imports through Turkey as other trading partners become unwilling to deal with it. Iran imports substantial amounts of food, as well as manufacturing materials and consumer goods.

Earlier in 2012, Ozertem said, Turkey exported \$8.5 billion worth of goods to Iran — up from just \$3.9 billion the year before.

Elsewhere in the region, Iran still appears able to aid its allies financially. Documents obtained by the Syrian opposition suggest that Iran's Export Development Bank is still providing financial support to the regime of President Bashar al-Assad,

even though that government has also been targeted by sanctions. The bulk of Iranian support to Syria, however, is non-financial, comprising both resources and technical assistance.

One U.S.-based economist said the broad picture is that sanctions against Iran are proving effective but not decisive.

"I think this is a long-haul thing," said Djavad Salehi-Isfahani, professor of economics at Virginia Tech and a non-resident fellow at the Brookings Institution. "The government has some maneuverability to shift the pain around and make sure that the people who are more likely to support it suffer less, while people who have both means to withstand the sanctions and are less supportive of the government will bear a greater proportion of the pain."

Salehi-Isfahani said that some Iranians are going to increasingly question the logic of sanctions.

"They didn't vote for Iran's nuclear program; they don't think the West is justified in pressuring them to stop the program — the whole idea of Iran as the worst enemy of the West does not sell in Iran," he said. "This is not the equivalent of the one good example of sanctions having an effect, which was South Africa, where the majority of the population, even if they suffered, identified with the cause."

McClatchy Newspapers
(mcclatchydc.com)
October 16, 2012

18. Despite Outrage Over Girl's Shooting, Pakistan Still Split Over Confronting Taliban

By Saeed Shah, McClatchy Newspapers

ISLAMABAD — The horrific shooting of a teenage girl by the Pakistani Taliban to silence her campaign for schooling for girls has forced a battered Pakistan to consider how it can tackle violent extremism after years of equivocation and toleration, analysts and politicians say.

Pakistanis, almost obsessively, have followed the news of 14-year-old Malala Yousafzai since Taliban assailants shot her in the head a week ago. The shock has jolted Pakistanis to resolve that the country can no longer live with an organization and an ideology in its midst that would attack a girl who only wanted to be allowed to go to school — and then brazenly promise to hunt her down again if she survived.

"Malala is Pakistan right now. This is not the Taliban's Pakistan. This is our Pakistan," said Asma Shirazi, the host of a popular nightly political show. "We have created this problem. Now the fire has reached our house. This is a question of our survival."

Pakistan President Asif Zardari even addressed the subject Tuesday at an economic summit in Baku, the capital of Azerbaijan. "The Taliban attack on the 14-year-old girl, who from the age of 11 was involved in the struggle for education for girls, is an attack on all girls in Pakistan, an attack on education, and on all civilized people," he said.

Still, there is no consensus on whether fighting or talking is the answer to the militant challenge, leading to dangerous fractures in society. Thousands of Pakistanis have died in what people here call America's "war on terror," and many are reluctant to embrace a fresh military offensive against the Pakistani Taliban, which is based in North Waziristan along the border with Afghanistan.

On Tuesday, writing in the same newspaper, *The News*, a Pakistani daily, two columnists drew opposite conclusions, one pushing for immediate military action, the other opposed.

Maleeha Lodhi, a former ambassador to Washington, warned that “the window of public consent” for an operation against the Pakistani Taliban could close rapidly if not seized now. Ansar Abbasi, an influential conservative commentator, argued that such an operation would be a trap. “They (the West) want to use the poor girl’s case to further chaos and anarchy in Pakistan,” he said.

The military and the civilian government have given conflicting signals about whether an operation is being planned. With winter setting in, which would make conditions tough in the mountainous North Waziristan terrain, and an election due in the next six months, action would need to begin within weeks.

Malala was shot on Oct. 9 as she waited in a school van for the ride home. A gunman approached the van, asked who was Malala and then shot her when another schoolgirl pointed her out. This week, she was taken by air ambulance for treatment in England, where it is said that she will require weeks or even months of treatment and rehabilitation.

Malala had earned the Taliban’s enmity in 2009 when a diary she’d written chronicling life under brutal Taliban rule in her home district of Swat became the basis for a series of BBC news reports. A military operation subsequently reclaimed Swat, a former tourist resort that lies in northern Pakistan. The Taliban made it clear after Malala’s shooting that they had not forgotten her role, saying she deserved death

because she promoted Western ways.

The rest of Pakistan, however, condemned the attack in an unprecedented moment of national outpouring and oneness. The tragedy forced the country to open its eyes to the nature of the Pakistani Taliban, which is more extreme and more closely linked to al Qaida, in operations and ideology, than the original Afghan Taliban.

Apparently seriously rattled by the public revulsion since the assault on the teenager, Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan, the coalition of jihadists known usually as the Pakistani Taliban, issued a new seven-page defense of its actions Tuesday, this time in the national language, Urdu. Previous defenses have been in English.

“For this espionage, infidels gave her (Malala) awards and rewards. And Islam orders killing of those who are spying for enemies,” the TTP said. “We targeted her because she would speak against the Taliban while sitting with shameless strangers and idealized the biggest enemy of Islam, Barack Obama.”

For years, Pakistan’s powerful military has supported jihadist groups as its proxy warriors in India and Afghanistan. In the 1980s, that policy was backed and funded by Washington as it helped to battle the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.

In the 1990s and 2000s, the Pakistani military, through its Inter-Services Intelligence spy agency, continued to rely on the jihadists, though a 2007 military assault on a radical mosque in Islamabad that turned into a bloodbath, followed by the assassination of Benazir Bhutto months later, prompted made many Pakistanis begin to question the wisdom of that policy.

But zeal to confront the extremists soon dissipated then, and there are signs it may be doing so now.

Some religious conservatives even are trying to smear Malala, calling her an “American agent” and suggesting that the assassination bid was either a deliberate conspiracy to justify future military operations or that the event has somehow been “hijacked” by the West or pro-Western elements in Pakistan. As “proof” of this conspiracy, pictures have been circulated online of Malala meeting Richard Holbrooke, the late former U.S. special envoy to Pakistan and Afghanistan.

On Sunday, the Muttahida Qaumi Movement, a political party, staged a rally attended by thousands for Malala in the southern port of Karachi. Its leader, Altaf Hussain, speaking to the gathering by telephone from exile in London, said, in remarks directed at the military: “Move ahead and crush the Taliban and 180 million people will be standing behind you.”

“You are either with the Taliban or you are against them. There is no third option,” he said.

But such talk is not universal. On Tuesday, Imran Khan, a cricket superstar who’s turned populist politician and urges negotiations with the Taliban, warned at a news conference against military action.

“If, in anger at this tragedy, we do a military operation, our problems will only increase,” he said. “If military action were the solution, this issue would have been solved by now.”

Shah is a McClatchy special correspondent.

The E-Ring (e-ring.foreignpolicy.com)
October 16, 2012

The E-Ring: Inside the Pentagon's Power Corridors **19. Friendly Foes: U.S.-Russia Military Relations Soaring**

By Kevin Baron

As the final two presidential debates turn toward foreign policy, starting tonight, one major divergent point between President Obama and Mitt Romney still not fully explored by the candidates is Romney’s claim that Russia is America’s “number one geopolitical foe.”

So the *E-Ring* reached out to the top U.S. military officer in charge of the vast majority of U.S.-Russian military interactions, Rear Admiral Mark C. Montgomery, deputy director for plans, policy, and strategy at U.S. European Command (EUCOM), to see what he thinks.

As it turns out, the U.S. military interacts almost daily with Russian forces -- in training, exercising, building personal relationships, and performing real-world national security missions side-by-side. According to Montgomery, things have never been better between the old Cold War foes.

“We did about 50 events last year, and this year we’ve already accomplished more than that. I imagine we’ll be somewhere north of 70 events by the end of the year. So, a very robust, cooperative effort between our militaries,” Montgomery said.

Beyond those specific events, Montgomery said Russia is cooperating extensively with the U.S. in other tangible ways that benefit U.S. security, including allowing war supplies into Afghanistan via the Northern Distribution Network and joining counterterrorism efforts and counter-piracy operations off the Horn of Africa.

And that's just in European Command. Other regional commands have their own events and relationships, including Pacific Command, North American Aerospace Defense Command, and Northern Command.

Montgomery has a decent idea of how far the U.S.-Russian relationship has come. His father was the U.S. naval attaché to Moscow in the early 1980s and Montgomery has lived there.

"I find that the relationship is significantly improved since 1981," he said, tongue-in-cheek.

So does the rhetoric from President Vladimir Putin, American politicians or candidates resonate amid the actual ongoing military relations between Russia and the United States?

"Generally at our level it's all business," Montgomery said.

Indeed, the week of the Republican National Convention in Tampa, as Mitt Romney was again hitting hard on Russia, Russian officers were encamped in NORAD headquarters in Colorado Springs, Colo., training for an airline hostage scenario over Russian and U.S. airspace.

So much of Montgomery's job is about promoting what military folks call "key leader engagement." From the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff on down the ranks, officers regularly meet with Russian counterparts, he said, "because this is personal."

"One of the reasons we have our combatant commands like EUCOM forward deployed is so we can build and maintain these relationships, and it allows these kind of military-to-military engagements to operate -- I wouldn't say below the radar, but it operates on a constant drumbeat."

Montgomery has seen a "strong personal relationship" between Joint Chiefs Chairman Martin Dempsey and his counterpart, Gen. Nikolay Makarov.

In the last two and half years, as Obama pressed the "reset" button with Russia and conservatives have sounded alarms at Putin's less-than-receptive response, the number of military-to-military engagements has increased steadily, if quietly. More importantly, Montgomery argued, so has their depth.

"The maritime ones tend to be fairly deep in their level of technical engagement," he said, reflecting the long Cold War history of naval relations, "where say, the ground ones and [special operations forces] ones are still fairly young exercises that do a lot more walk-thru than detailed exercising. But as they go year to year, they get more complicated."

Despite the rhetoric out of Moscow indicating less cooperation than Washington wants on Iran, Syria, nuclear weapons, or missile defense, Montgomery said he has seen no intent from either side to slow down military exercises.

Not all exercises are they same. They can range from six officers in a schoolhouse, table-top war game to a full-scale naval drill involving 5,000 sailors and officers from several countries, in which hundreds of U.S. officers get face-to-face time with Russian counterparts.

Most recently, the exercise "Northern Eagle" involved Russia, Norway, and the U.S., including some arctic cooperation and basic naval skills, maritime intercepts, and search and rescue exercises. Another event, called "Atlas Vision" is considered "a building block" tabletop exercise for military staffers planning how U.S. and Russian

forces can work together. The U.S. special operations command at EUCOM also recently conducted an airborne exercise in Colorado this year, and Russia is expected to reciprocate by hosting a similar event next year.

Where the rhetoric could affect reality is if the U.S. or Russia decided to pull out of some engagements.

"The principle behind a lot of these exercises is building our interoperability and our ability to rapidly deploy together to do a mission," Montgomery said. "So if you were to have a significant reduction in your interaction, your ability when you decide to do something for a global security purpose, such as a counter-piracy patrol or a counterterrorism event, you'll have reduced your ability to rapidly integrate forces and demonstrate your interoperability in a combat or operational environment."

Montgomery said the ability to work with the Russian navy on the counter-piracy mission off of Africa directly traces back to years of performing six or seven exercises a year and more events of other kinds.

"My experience is that our both day-to-day and exercise interactions with the Russians led to a much more fluid and effective integration of the Russians into the counter-piracy efforts," he said.

Pentagon officials declined several *E-Ring* requests to interview the Defense Department's top Russia policy official, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense Evelyn Farkas, for this article.

Politico Pro
October 16, 2012

20. DoD Says It's At Turning Point In Sexual Assault Battle

By Leigh Munsil

After months of blistering criticism from Congress over sexual assault in the military, the Pentagon wants lawmakers to see it's getting tough - now.

Army Maj. Gen. Gary Patton, who oversaw the implementation of the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" repeal, has just taken the helm of the Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office, charged with the most serious push yet to crack down on one of the military's most corrosive problems.

"What I want to say upfront is we recognize that we have a problem with sexual assault in the military," Patton told POLITICO. "There is no silver bullet in terms of solving this issue; it really comes down to a combination of programs."

Patton, who takes the reins from retiring Air Force Maj. Gen. Mary Kay Hertog, said that in order to make real progress, military leaders need to confront systemic and cultural failures.

"I don't see this as necessarily a female issue. This is a leadership issue," he said. "It's about enforcing standards of behavior. Every sexual assault is an affront to our military values. It's against the values we defend and it's against the cohesion that all of our units demand."

In 2011, there were 2,723 reports of sexual assault by victims in the military, but officials say they think the crime is drastically under-reported. Another Department of Defense estimate put the total at about 19,000 per year.

From the Hill's perspective, Patton's emphasis is a step in the right direction.

"We see in the upper leadership ... the beginning of

some real accountability both in prevention, protection of victims and prosecution," Rep. Mike Turner (R-Ohio) told POLITICO. "Congress is really looking very closely to see whether or not their efforts can lead to real turnaround."

Turner co-chairs the House's military sexual assault prevention caucus with Rep. Niki Tsongas (D-Mass.), which has been active in the investigation into the sexual abuse of more than 40 women by as many as 19 instructors at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas.

Patton said Defense Secretary Leon Panetta and Air Force leaders will be briefing members of Congress in upcoming weeks on what the investigation has unearthed, and Turner said there will be congressional hearings into the scandal.

Tsongas cited looking into the Air Force scandal as a top priority on the Hill for when Congress returns.

"The events at Lackland really do show that there is still much work to be done, that the military has not made acceptable progress and there is significant and immediate action that they need to take," she told POLITICO. "The Air Force really has an opportunity now to prove with actions rather than words that they're serious about addressing sexual assault."

Likewise, Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand (D-N.Y.) told POLITICO that "We ... need a drumbeat of leadership coming across the highest military chain of command, so the secretary's leadership and a new SAPRO commander are important steps in that direction. But more needs to be done," she said, "to ensure that there is no tolerance for sexual assault, and there is appropriate prevention,

punishment and services for victims."

DoD has a congressional mandate to submit an annual report in April on sexual assault and every December on sex assault at the military service academies, Patton said.

Sen. Kay Hagan (D-N.C.) told POLITICO that with the growing number of women in the ranks, the brass owes the troops and the Hill its increased diligence about sexual assault.

"Women now represent over 15 percent of our armed forces, and they deserve a basic guarantee of safety," she said in a statement. "While I am pleased that the services have admitted that there is a problem and that DoD has established more stringent procedures for investigating and handling allegations of sexual assault, there is still more to be done. It is critical that we figure out how to break the cycle of sexual assault in the military. Any instance of assault is one too many."

To that end, "assessment" is one of SAPRO's five focus areas when combating sexual assault, Patton said, along with prevention, investigation, accountability and victim assistance.

DoD's strategy includes standardizing sexual assault prevention training across all branches and encouraging "bystander intervention" - or enlisting troops to step in if they worry that fellow service members are getting out of line. Patton also said the Pentagon is adding special victims' investigator and prosecutor training, "building victim confidence" that reports will be taken seriously, allowing victims to request to be reassigned from their units and getting national credentials for victims' advocates.

In his more than 33 years of military service, Patton said

he saw several instances of sexual assault and harassment, most memorably while in South Korea and Iraq.

"I found that it was important to address sexual harassment, sexist behavior and all those types of related gender-focused, degrading acts and language and so forth," Patton said. "As a commander it's important to not allow an environment or a climate that is permissive or accepts or condones or tolerates sexual harassment and sexual assault. There is a correlation in the units that may be tolerant of harassment, of sexist behavior and that sort of thing - those units correlate to higher incidence rates for sexual assault."

Patton, Turner and Tsongas all agreed that the DoD is at a turning point in its battle against sexual assault.

"We're really at a critical juncture. This whole issue has become so visible. There are fewer taboos associated with talking about it," Tsongas said. "I'll remain concerned about the issue until we have a dramatically reduced incidence of assault."

Turner added: "It's impossible to quantify the point at which DoD needs to arrive, but we know that they're not there."

Tacoma News Tribune
October 16, 2012

21. Robert Bales Back At JBLM For Hearing In Afghan Killings

By Adam Ashton, Staff writer

For the first time since he was taken into custody seven months ago, Staff Sgt. Robert Bales is back at Joint Base Lewis-McChord awaiting a pretrial hearing on charges that he murdered 16 Afghan civilians during his deployment with a local Stryker brigade.

Bales, a former Lake Tapps resident and father of two, had been in confinement at Fort Leavenworth, Kan. since the Army moved him out of Afghanistan following the March 11 killings. An Army spokesman confirmed that he arrived at Lewis-McChord's Regional Confinement Center Monday evening.

He is expected to have a two-week pretrial hearing beginning Nov. 5 at Lewis-McChord where his defense attorney can interview all of the prosecution's witnesses, including Afghan civilians from the rural Panjwai District in Kandahar Province. That's where Bales allegedly slipped out of his combat outpost and massacred noncombatants, including women and children, in two villages.

His confinement at Lewis-McChord will allow him to communicate more easily with his family in the Puget Sound area and with his defense team.

"He can see his wife, he can see his children on a more regular basis," Emma Scanlan, one of his attorneys, told Northwest News Network. "He's going to have much better access to his counsel, which is important in terms of his case going forward, so we are very happy that he is coming out here."

Bales also is accused of using alcohol and steroids during his deployment. His attorney has said he obtained the mood-altering substances from other service members at his combat outpost.

Bales faces the death penalty if he's convicted of murder. That offense carries a mandatory minimum of a life sentence under the Uniform Code of Military Justice.

John Henry Browne, his lead defense attorney, has some 5,000 pages of evidence from the Army. The Seattle attorney

is preparing to fly to Kandahar Air Field to cross examine the Army's Afghan witnesses during the pretrial hearing. That testimony will be shown in court at Lewis-McChord.

Some Afghan witnesses have told international media that they saw more than one shooter the night of the killings. The Army and official Afghan government sources have discredited that testimony.

Browne on Monday would not say whether the witness statements in his possession suggest that more than one person was involved in the killings.

Bales grew up in Norwood, Ohio and enlisted in the Army in 2001. He served his Army career at Lewis-McChord and deployed with the base's 3rd Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division on all three of its combat tours to Iraq. He and the brigade were deployed to Afghanistan for the first time.

On one Iraq deployment, Browne has said that Bales suffered a concussive injury in a roadside bomb blast.

Bales is still assigned to the 3rd Brigade, though at the time of the massacre he was assigned to a unit that was splintered off for a mission working with Special Forces at outposts across Southern Afghanistan.

Norfolk Virginian-Pilot
October 17, 2012

22. Four Truman Sailors Injured During Refueling At Sea

By Laura King, The Virginian-Pilot

Four sailors aboard the Harry S. Truman were injured Tuesday during the aircraft carrier's replenishment at sea.

Off the coast of Florida, a line parted during a refueling between the Norfolk-based Truman and the Military Sealift Command fleet oiler Patuxent,

a news release from the Navy said. The Truman was conducting training operations.

Two of the injured sailors were flown to Jacksonville Naval Air Station for treatment. One was listed in stable condition, and the other was treated and released Tuesday evening, said Lt. Cmdr. Brian Badura, a spokesman for the Navy's Fleet Forces Command. Another sailor was to be flown to Norfolk Naval Station for evaluation, and the fourth sailor was treated onboard the Truman. None of the injuries was considered life-threatening.

A safety investigation into the incident has begun.

The incident came days after two Norfolk-based vessels, the submarine Montpelier and the guided missile cruiser San Jacinto, collided during exercises Saturday as part of the Truman strike group.

The Navy said the submarine's nuclear reactor was unaffected by the collision and no personnel aboard either ship were injured. Both were able to reach port under their own power.

San Antonio Express-News
October 17, 2012

23. Hotline Seeks To Uncover More Lackland Misconduct

By Sig Christenson

Hundreds of thousands of people who have been though basic training during the past decade in San Antonio were asked this week to tell the Air Force if they were victims of sexual assault or misconduct.

The Air Force's top training commander, Gen. Edward Rice Jr., sent the message Monday as the service expanded its efforts to learn the extent of illicit activities by instructors at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland.

A 24-hour hotline at Joint Base San Antonio-Randolph, 210-652-0008, began fielding calls Monday afternoon, with many of those responding wanting to be sure it was legitimate.

"The email is part of our outreach efforts to current and former airmen to encourage them to help us uncover alleged unprofessional relationships, sexual misconduct and sexual assault in basic and technical military training," Rice said in the message.

"The hotline gives graduates from the past 10 years the opportunity to help (the) Air Education and Training Command dissuade, deter, detect and prevent this type of behavior from happening again."

The scandal at Lackland, home of Air Force basic training, has focused on improper relationships between 20 basic training instructors and 45 women. Five instructors have gone to trial so far, with one getting 20 years in prison.

A two-star general, Margaret Woodward, probed instructor misconduct last summer, conducting a survey that went back four years.

The effort Rice launched this week will look at sexual misconduct in instructors' ranks, including assaults and rapes, as well as unprofessional activities such as making Internet contact with basic and technical school trainees.

Maj. Carla Gleason, a spokeswoman for the command, said Rice wanted to reach back to active-duty troops, those in the Guard and Reserves, and people who have retired or separated from the service, she said.

Rice wants to know if instructors in basic or technical training violated rules or laws prohibiting sexual relationships or even attempts to call, email,

text or start of friendships on social networking sites. The leader of Protect Our Defenders, an advocacy group that has been highly critical of the way the armed services have dealt with rape, sexual assault and sexual harassment, said Rice's effort is a "good start" but not enough.

"Hotlines are good but they have limited effect," Nancy Parrish said in a prepared statement. "The Air Force needs to do a thorough review of military sexual assault and harassment case files and then go to the Department of Veterans Affairs and ask the VA to contact all Air Force (military sexual trauma) survivors who have come to the VA for care."

AOL Defense
(defense.aol.com)
October 16, 2012

24. Air Force Cyber Summit Set To Craft Service Requirements, Roles

By Henry Kenyon

WASHINGTON: For years the Air Force has claimed to be the service most suited to understanding and operating in cyberspace and the service fought hard to be the Pentagon's lead on cyber issues. But top officers recently admitted that the service has never answered key questions such as how it works with the other services or whether it has legal standing to run global cyber missions.

A lack of internal cohesion has stymied the Air Force on this issue, Gen. William Shelton, commander of Air Force Space Command said at AFCEA's Air Force IT Day conference. Shelton noted that definitions of cyberspace as a place for military operations are vague and must be refined. Getting a sharper picture of what the domain means from an Air Force perspective will also help the service to better

understand its place in it, he said.

Ongoing Congressional and White House attempts to hammer out cybersecurity legislation are also forcing the Defense Department to pin down its own missions and the roles that the individual services play. This is the major reason behind the Air Force's need to get its house in order, Air Force chief information officer Lt. Gen. Michael Basla said. "We have talked about this for too many years," he explained.

Top Air Force officials will meet in November to formally work out the service's mission and role in cyberspace, Basla said. The service needs to answer a couple of key questions: what is the underlying military mission in cyberspace, what is the Air Force's role in cyberspace, what distinguishes the Air Force from the other services in Cyberspace, and how should the Air Force train and equip itself to operate in this domain.

The Air Force hopes to create an officially defined set missions and requirements during the summit, Basla said. Several working groups are already laying out operational requirements, joint operations needs and identifying operational or capability gaps that need to be addressed before the rule making meeting kicks off.

How the Air Force defines itself also has important national security considerations because the service's cyberspace operations will have to take into account into Title 10 and Title 50, laws that define military and intelligence roles and missions. "We have to figure out cyberspace now, or at least get on a common vector," Shelton said.

No matter what rules the service works out for itself

in the coming month, both generals agreed the Air Force will have to pay special attention to training, educating and retaining a core of highly skilled personnel well versed in defensive and offensive cyberspace operations.

The Air Force is developing a basic six-month cyber training course, to be backed up by additional professional development training, Basla said. For example, a cyber weapons instruction course is being set up at Nevada's Nellis Air Force Base. The class is designed to produce officers and airmen capable of working with the other services and in the many areas that touch on cyberspace, such as space and intelligence gathering systems and platforms, he said.

Los Angeles Times
October 17, 2012
Pg. 15

25. Inquiry Targets Troops

By Michael Muskal

Officials are investigating the Arizona National Guard after news reports disclosed that military recruiters engaged in repeated misbehavior, including sexual abuse, firearms violations and shooting homeless people with paintball guns in "bum hunts."

Gov. Jan Brewer ordered an inquiry after the Arizona Republic reported on the paintball shootings, allegedly staged by noncommissioned officers to harass homeless people in Phoenix. The newspaper reported that 30 to 35 such hunts took place involving troops shooting at the homeless with paintball guns.

Based on interviews with officers and citing various investigative records, the newspaper reported a pattern of improprieties over the last

decade, including questionable enlistments, forgery, embezzlement and assaults. The problems had not been previously reported, but military investigators substantiated some of the allegations, concluding that a culture of corruption permeated the recruiting office because of command leadership failures.

Brewer's office said the governor would seek a National Guard officer from outside the state to lead the investigation.

"She would like the inquiry to begin as quickly as possible so that she is provided credible information with which to judge the conduct of the Arizona National Guard and its leaders," spokesman Matthew Benson said in a statement.

The guard said it needed time to look at the newspaper's findings. "It would be inappropriate to comment until we have digested what is out there," Sgt. Edward E. Balaban, a spokesman, said by telephone.

Bloomberg.com
October 16, 2012

26. Military Personnel Campaign Funds Favor Obama Over Romney

By Laura Litvan, Bloomberg News

President Barack Obama has received almost twice as much in campaign contributions from U.S. military and Defense Department personnel as his Republican challenger Mitt Romney, despite Romney's promises to boost defense spending and his criticism of military cuts set to take place in January.

Obama has received \$536,414 from such donors, compared with Romney's \$287,435, according to research by the nonpartisan Center for Responsive Politics in Washington. The group's study, which includes data through

August, looked at donations from individuals who listed their employment as the Defense Department or one of the branches of the military.

Defense Department personnel led the list, giving \$176,121 to Obama and \$71,043 to Romney. Army personnel came in next with \$165,646 for Obama and \$87,218 for Romney.

Obama's advantage probably comes in part because some of the personnel are political appointees of his administration, said Peter Feaver, a political science professor at Duke University in Durham, North Carolina, who has studied military personnel and their impact on elections.

"One party owns the executive branch right now, so the impact could be potentially quite large," he said. Obama may also be winning a broader battle for support in an election that has seen both candidates "assiduously" court the military, he said.

"It appears that he does have a small but energetic supporter base in the military," Feaver said.

The pro-Obama tilt comes even though Romney promises to boost defense spending to 4 percent of gross domestic product and to build 15 new Navy ships per year. He also is attacking Obama over \$500 billion in across-the-board cuts to military programs over 10 years that begin January 2 unless a budget impasse with Congress is resolved in time.

Earlier in the election cycle, military personnel donations were overwhelmingly tilted toward Republican hopeful Ron Paul, who called for less government and opposed the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, until Obama began to overtake him in March, the Center for Responsive Politics found.

In the 2008 election cycle, the center found that Senator John McCain of Arizona, the Republican presidential nominee, took in slightly more in donations from military and Defense Department personnel, collecting \$461,350 to Obama's \$450,950 through August of that year.

Defense issues have taken on added importance in the presidential election this year, in part because Virginia -- the state most heavily reliant on defense dollars -- is a swing state that can go either way in presidential elections. An Oct. 12-14 American Research Group poll of 750 likely Virginia voters showed Romney barely ahead in the state, 48 percent to 47 percent. That's well within the poll's margin of error of plus or minus 4 percentage points.

New York Times
October 17, 2012

27. S. Ward Casscells, Pentagon Medical Chief, Dies At 60

By Douglas Martin

Dr. S. Ward Casscells, a nationally prominent cardiologist who astonished himself and those who knew him by joining the Army Reserve at 54 and volunteering to go to Iraq before being appointed the Pentagon's top medical officer, died on Sunday in Washington. He was 60.

The cause was complications from prostate cancer, his family said.

Dr. Casscells said his military adventure had begun when he and his 8-year-old son were examining the uniform his father had worn as a combat surgeon in World War II. Dr. Casscells said he had been "filled with shame" when the boy asked him if he, too, had fought for his country, and had to answer no. He had been

a student during the Vietnam War.

"This is one heck of a midlife crisis," his wife said when he announced his plan to join the military, in Dr. Casscells's telling. "But in fairness, I realize you can't afford a Maserati, and you don't have the nerve to take a mistress."

So in 2006, Dr. Casscells became a colonel in the Army Reserve. His first assignment was to look for ways to protect troops from avian flu, then a worldwide epidemic. Transferred to Iraq, he was shelled and caught in an ambush. In 2007, President George W. Bush appointed him an assistant secretary of defense, and he went on to lead a \$45 billion health and education system with 10 million patients in 100 countries.

Taking office at the Pentagon when evidence was surfacing of shameful conditions at Walter Reed Army Medical Center, Dr. Casscells made unannounced visits to the center's wards as part of a campaign to correct the problems. (It closed in 2011.) He started programs to use stem cells to help treat wounds with patients' own tissue.

Before his time in uniform, Dr. Casscells had held a prestigious chair in medicine and public health at the University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston, where he was also the vice president of external affairs and public policy. He was also a senior scholar at the Texas Heart Institute in Houston.

To join the Army, he had to convince doctors that he was able: he had just gone through five years of chemotherapy and radiation treatment for prostate cancer. Once approved, he traveled to Cairo, Beijing and

Bangkok to study avian flu, a disease he had researched.

After going through what he called the "shock and awe" of basic training for reserve officers at Fort Sam Houston — "I haven't been this tired and intimidated since I was an intern," he said — he shipped out to Iraq. There he was medical liaison to the United States' commanding general and ambassador.

"Some people as they get older get more conservative," Dr. Casscells said in 2007. "For whatever reason, I just seem to be getting more adventurous."

Samuel Ward Casscells III was born in Wilmington, Del., on March 18, 1952. He graduated from Yale and Harvard Medical School. His father, S. Ward Casscells, was an orthopedic surgeon who had helped invent arthroscopic surgery.

In Houston, Dr. Casscells established ties to the Army when he helped lead disaster preparedness efforts. He helped direct humanitarian relief efforts for Hurricane Katrina and the 2004 Asian tsunami.

Dr. Casscells helped invent medical devices and new techniques in detecting heart attacks and started companies to sell them. He founded a company to compile health data for policy makers. And he was well-published, producing papers on heart attack and stroke, medical ethics, and nanotechnology and writing "When It Mattered Most" (2009), a tribute to medics killed in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Dr. Casscells is survived by his wife, the former Roxanne Bell; his sons, Samuel Ward IV and Henry; his daughter, Lillian; his brother, Christopher; and his sisters, Anne Casscells and Margaret Casscells-Hamby.

Chicago Tribune
October 16, 2012
Pg. 13

28. Survey Paints Picture Of War-Weariness In America

Results appear to skew toward Obama's stances on foreign policy

By Bob Sexter, Tribune reporter

CHICAGO -- The addition of foreign policy questions to the mix in Tuesday's presidential debate gives Mitt Romney a chance to convince voters that his views of world affairs align with their own, but a recent authoritative survey of public attitudes illustrates what a challenge that might be.

The survey, conducted by the Chicago Council on Global Affairs, shows a public weary of war, eager to collaborate with other nations to resolve crises, wary of entanglements in Syria, preferring diplomacy over military action to stop Iran's nuclear ambitions and ready to embrace defense budget cuts.

In other words, positions more in line with those of President Barack Obama, whom Romney accuses of timid leadership that has undermined U.S. influence in the world and imperiled the nation's safety.

Americans "definitely think the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan were not worth the cost," said Dina Smeltz, study director for the survey. "They don't think we are any safer today from terrorism because of the wars, and they generally prefer to address delicate situations with diplomacy rather than military action."

Among key findings:

- * 67 percent of those surveyed said the Iraq War was not worth fighting, and 69 percent said the war in Afghanistan has either made the U.S. less safe from terrorism or made no difference.

* 78 percent said the U.S. has played the role of world policeman more than it should.

* A majority of Americans oppose keeping long-term military bases either in Afghanistan or Iraq, where last year's total pullout of American troops has been criticized by Romney.

* 67 percent of those surveyed opposed working with allies to send arms and supplies to anti-government groups in Syria, 72 percent opposed bombing Syrian air defenses and 81 percent opposed a commitment of U.S. troops.

* Just 27 percent favored a U.S. military strike on Iran's nuclear facilities without authorization from the United Nations, and 59 percent said the U.S. should not intervene militarily on behalf of Israel if it bombed Iran and that nation retaliated. At the same time, only 16 percent thought economic sanctions had been "very effective" in changing the behavior of nations that violate international law.

* 68 percent said the U.S. defense budget should be cut along with other programs to address the deficit.

The Chicago-based organization, one of the nation's most prominent international affairs groups, has conducted similar surveys every few years dating to the 1970s.

The surveys provide a more thorough measurement of attitudes toward questions of foreign affairs than do typical polls.

The 2012 survey, released last month, measured opinions of 1,877 adults nationwide, with a sampling error of 2.8 percentage points.

Questioning was conducted in the late spring, but the answers provide an intriguing benchmark for an issue category that has been a strong suit

for Obama in national voter surveys.

When it comes to the global arena, Romney has aimed perhaps his most sustained criticism at Obama's navigation of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, accusing the president in a recent foreign policy address of trying to put "daylight" between the traditionally close relationship of the U.S. and Israel.

"This is a dangerous situation that has set back the hope of peace in the Middle East," Romney charged at the Virginia Military Academy.

The council survey suggests such sentiments may have been in sync with Republican primary voters but not necessarily with the political independents, whom Romney seeks to woo in the general election. Slightly more than half of Republicans surveyed said the U.S. should openly side with Israel against the Palestinians, but 69 percent of independents said the U.S. should not pick a side.

The Republican nominee also has criticized the administration's handling of last month's deadly attack on a U.S. Consulate in Libya, seeking to use the incident as a wedge to portray himself as decisive and Obama as inept.

Romney has also accused Obama of favoring defense spending cuts, which the Republican says would imperil U.S. security.

But the survey found that a slight majority of Republicans, 54 percent, favored some reductions in military spending. More than 3 in 4 Democrats said the defense budget should take a trim as part of deficit-cutting efforts, while that sentiment was also shared by more than 7 in 10 independents.

"Republicans view the world in terms of power and security to a greater degree than

Democrats and Independents," the council wrote in a summary of its survey findings. "Accordingly, Republicans see greater threats in nearly all areas tested in the 2012 survey. They are more likely than Democrats and Independents to view U.S. debt to China, immigration, terrorism, Islamic fundamentalism, Islamist groups in Afghanistan and Pakistan, and Iran's nuclear program as critical threats."

Seattle Times
October 17, 2012

29. Boeing Opens Seattle Plant To Build Tanker Booms

By Dominic Gates, Seattle Times aerospace reporter

Boeing this week begins assembling the first refueling boom for the Air Force's new aerial tanker aircraft, the KC-46, which is a modified 767-200ER and will be produced in Everett.

The boom, which is deployed in flight to connect the tanker aircraft to the gas tank of the aircraft it is refueling, will be built at a new Boom Assembly Center that opened Tuesday at Boeing Field in Seattle.

Maj. Gen. John Thompson, the U.S. Air Force Tanker Program Executive Officer, said the opening marked "a big day" for the tanker program and for the Air Force.

The start of boom assembly marks a shift from design activities to production.

"Boeing continues to make good progress toward delivering the KC-46 Tanker on schedule," Thompson said in a press release.

Assembly of the first KC-46 aircraft is slated to begin next summer in Everett. Testing of the new boom is scheduled to begin at a systems integration lab in the third quarter of 2013.

Boeing is contracted to build a total of 179 tanker aircraft to replace the Air Force's aging KC-135 tankers. It must deliver 18 combat-ready tankers by 2017.

The company didn't disclose any details about the boom facility's size or employment.

Bloomberg Government
(bgov.com)
October 17, 2012

30. Navy Approves \$1 Billion For Alliant Missile Tester Calls Flawed

By Tony Capaccio, Bloomberg News

The U.S. Navy approved an Alliant Techsystems Inc. anti-radar missile for full production valued at as much as \$1.1 billion, even though the Pentagon's chief tester says the weapon's performance flaws "largely negate" its "ability to accomplish its mission."

While the missile "has the potential to eventually provide some improved combat capability against enemy air defenses, the weapon as tested has multiple deficiencies," Michael Gilmore, the Pentagon's director of operational testing, said in an e-mailed statement.

Gilmore's position that earlier problems with the Advanced Anti-Radiation Guided Missile haven't been remedied wasn't known publicly when the Navy on Aug. 20 approved full-rate production, the most profitable phase for a defense contractor. Arlington, Virginia-based Alliant Techsystems may see sales to the Navy and the Italian Air Force of almost 2,000 missiles through 2020.

The criticism raises the question of whether ineffective missiles may be deployed to the Navy's Boeing Co. F/A-18

model aircraft and Italian jets, requiring costly improvement upgrades later. The missiles could be used to attack ground radar used by adversaries fielding sophisticated integrated air defenses, such as those of Syria, China and Iran.

The Navy said 600 hours of testing, including 12 live firings, showed the missile was ready for deployment.

Sean Stackley, the Navy's assistant secretary for research and acquisition, "made the call based on what the tests demonstrated and the fact that this weapon is a significant improvement on what's in the field," Captain Cate Mueller, a Navy spokeswoman, said in an e-mailed statement.

Fixes for the issues that led to Gilmore's assessment are already in the works, with upgrades scheduled for delivery in 2015, Mueller said.

The Advanced Anti-Radiation Guided Missile was designed as an improvement on the HARM missile made by Raytheon Co. The Alliant Techsystems missile is equipped with a more modern homing receiver and navigation system to detect the radar signals of stationary and mobile air-defense systems.

The Navy has budgeted as much as \$770 million through 2017 for the missile, with the remaining dollars after 2018.

Testing was halted in 2010 after six software and circuit-card failures in the first 12 trials. A new round of combat testing with upgraded missiles was completed this year.

While the missile's performance "has improved relative to that experience," it "is not operationally effective," Gilmore said. Details of its remaining deficiencies are classified, he said.

Gilmore said he presented his conclusions to the Navy, and

its subsequent decision "is up to the discretion of the service."

The test office was established by Congress in 1984 to provide independent oversight of military service testing of weapons systems. Its director is the defense secretary's principal adviser on weapons evaluation issues.

Philip Coyle, who headed the testing office from October 1994 through January 2001, said "it would be astonishing" for the Navy to go ahead with production over Gilmore's objections.

How would a Navy official "justify going into full-rate production on something that was not operationally effective?" Coyle, who serves as a consultant after working in the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy, said in an e-mailed statement. "I would think it would be a career-limiting decision" to "spend the taxpayer's money on something that didn't work."

The Navy's Fleet Forces Command, Marine Corps and Chief of Naval Operations support immediate deployment, Mueller wrote.

Alliant Techsystems spokesman Steve Cortese said in an e-mail the company fully supports the Navy's decision and it stands behind the missile's "readiness for operational use and full-rate production."

Specific testing concerns "have either been remedied or are being addressed as part of a planned block software upgrade we are currently under contract to deliver," Cortese said.

The missile is produced at the company's facilities in Woodland Hills and Ridgecrest, California.

The company stands by past projections of \$1.1 billion in revenue over a decade from full production, Cortese said, Revenue from the missile

may increase to \$100 million annually from \$30 million in the current development phase, the company said on a March 13 conference call with analysts.

The Pentagon test office doesn't have an official role in deciding whether a weapon proceeds to full production. It can block a weapon from moving to that stage by disapproving of its combat testing plan.

In the case of the Alliant Techsystems missile, Gilmore had approved the test plan and subsequently rendered an assessment required by law for any major production decision as to whether the weapon was "operationally effective" and reliable.

The test office also provides input to the Pentagon's Defense Acquisition Board when a weapon is under review to move forward in development or production. The office publishes an annual report and interim assessments for congressional staff that could use the information to mandate a program delay or prompt a hearing.

Ben Freeman, a military analyst with the Project on Government Oversight in Washington said, "It might make sense to push ahead with full production even though testing results weren't stellar if our military desperately needed to field an improved anti-radar missile -- but they don't."

"There's no area where this weapon will be immediately put to use," Freeman said. "So it makes little sense to go into full production of a weapon" the test office "says is not operationally effective."

"The numerous performance shortfalls" will cost "far more to fix after the missiles have been manufactured. In this fiscal environment I hoped the Pentagon was becoming

more cost-conscious, but this decision suggests otherwise," Freeman said.

Philadelphia Inquirer

October 17, 2012

Pg. 22

31. Learning Nothing From Libya

By Jeffrey Goldberg

Many stupid things have been said by people who should have known better in the month since the attack on the U.S. consulate in Benghazi, Libya.

The raid - in which heavily armed men with suspected links to al-Qaeda killed U.S. Ambassador Christopher Stevens and three other Americans - is being portrayed by some Republicans as approaching the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, in importance, and by some Democrats as an unfortunate little mishap that says absolutely nothing about President Obama's competence and credibility, or about the state of the war on al-Qaeda.

The attack could have been used to teach various useful lessons about al-Qaeda's resilience, human fallibility, and the limits of security and intelligence. Instead, in this pathologically politicized climate, our national leadership is most interested in identifying scapegoats to fire and points to score.

Two of the most foolish statements about the attack have come from the Obama campaign's deputy manager, Stephanie Cutter, and Rep. Darrell Issa (R., Calif.), who led a House committee hearing on it last week.

First up, Cutter, who said on CNN that "the entire reason that this has become the political topic it is, is because of Mitt Romney and Paul Ryan. It's a big part of their stump speech, and it's reckless and irresponsible." An ambassador

is killed, and Cutter thinks the "entire reason" it has become a political issue is Romney?

It is true that early in the crisis, Romney intervened prematurely and inappropriately. But members of the Obama administration have certainly opened themselves up to criticism, first by asserting that the attack on the consulate grew from a spontaneous demonstration against an offensive YouTube video, and then by continuing to make this assertion long after it had ceased to be credible.

A more subtle criticism not yet fully grasped by the Romney campaign is that the administration was predisposed to believe that an al-Qaeda-affiliated group couldn't have been behind the attack because the administration had already, according to its public-relations team, vanquished al-Qaeda. Obama has set al-Qaeda back substantially - doing more to dismantle its upper ranks than George W. Bush did - but administration partisans would have you think it's been reduced to three guys in a cave with a dial-up connection. It hasn't been.

Republicans, contra Cutter, have the right and the responsibility to ask what went wrong in Benghazi, especially because Democrats seem so uninterested. What Republicans shouldn't do is make statements like Issa's on CBS's *Face the Nation* Sunday. He argued that if security officials had repeatedly requested reinforcements for U.S. diplomatic outposts in Libya, "and that's not being heard, then it isn't just Ambassador Stevens who is now dead - it's everybody who works throughout the Middle East is at risk."

Eleven years after 9/11, and 12 years after the fatal raid on the USS Cole in

Yemen, Issa has just realized that assignments to the Middle East might pose risks for American personnel! In his desire to cast the administration as incompetent, Issa does an enormous disservice to diplomacy and engagement. American embassies are already fortresses; Issa would dig a moat around them. After a point, there's simply no reason to dispatch diplomats to hostile capitals if they can't engage with actual citizens.

The answer isn't to swaddle our overseas personnel in ever more elaborate layers of security. The answer is better intelligence and a willingness to talk straight about risk.

Our leaders - of both parties - have systematically infantilized Americans with the notion that perfect security is attainable. This is one reason the White House reacts so defensively to any intimation that its conduct of the war on al-Qaeda is less than perfect. It's one reason Republicans cynically argue that the administration is incompetent in its prosecution of the war, and in its mission to keep U.S. personnel alive.

So long as both parties react so small-mindedly and opportunistically to terrorist threats, we won't be able to have a rational, adult conversation about the best ways to wage this war.

Jeffrey Goldberg is a Bloomberg View columnist and a national correspondent for the Atlantic.

ForeignPolicy.com
October 16, 2012

32. 100% Right 0% Of The Time

Why the U.S. military can't predict the next war.

By Micah Zenko

Two weeks ago, General Martin Dempsey, chairman

of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, delivered the Landon Lecture to hundreds of U.S. servicemembers and students at Kansas State University. During the question and answer session, a cadet in the Air Force ROTC asked, "What [do] you see being the focus of our nation in 5 to 10 years, where I'll be serving?"

Paraphrasing a quote by hockey legend Wayne Gretzky, Dempsey replied: "Somebody said to him once, you're not really a physically imposing guy, how come you're such a great hockey player? He said, 'I skate to where the puck is going to be, not to where it's been.' That's what we're trying to do."

In May, Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta echoed this sentiment with even greater conviction when he described Pentagon priorities in an era of slightly reduced defense spending and a leaner military: "We've got to focus on where the main threats are. That means we continue a major focus on the Pacific region and we continue a major focus on the Middle East, because that's where the potential problems are for the future."

This forward-looking approach from the Pentagon's senior leadership is admirable, in that it attempts to counter the old adage that "generals fight the last war." There is just one glaring problem with this degree of certainty: The U.S. military has a terrible record of predicting where conflicts will emerge and where they will be deployed to fight. The next time you hear lists of emerging threats and future conflicts, bear in mind the following observations from senior military officials over past few years:

1. In October 2010, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Admiral Michael Mullen acknowledged: "We're pretty

lousy at predicting where we'll go. We're pretty lousy at predicting the kind of warfare we'll be in, if the last 20 years, or so, serve as an example."

2. In February 2011, Secretary of Defense Robert Gates told West Point cadets: "When it comes to predicting the nature and location of our next military engagements, since Vietnam, our record has been perfect. We have never once gotten it right, from the Mayaguez to Grenada, Panama, Somalia, the Balkans, Haiti, Kuwait, Iraq, and more -- we had no idea a year before any of these missions that we would be so engaged."

3. In March 2011, General James Mattis, commander of U.S. Central Command, testified before the Senate Armed Services Committee: "I think, as we look toward the future, I have been a horrible prophet. I have never fought anywhere I expected to in all my years."

4. In May 2012, Major General H.R. McMaster admitted: "We have a perfect record in predicting future wars -- right? ... And that record is 0 percent."

Given the acknowledged certainty of uncertainty from these officials, it is safe to say that the Pentagon does not possess an armed conflict crystal ball. This is especially the case if you believe that the world is becoming "a more unpredictable and dangerous security environment." Given this inherent unpredictability, how does the Pentagon plan for the future?

To think about the problem facing military planners of predicting future U.S. military engagements, I spoke to Colonel Kevin Benson (ret.), whose distinguished 30-year career in the U.S. Army culminated with his appointment as the director

of the School of Advanced Military Studies (SAMS) at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. Graduates of SAMS are referred to as "Jedi Knights" for their rigorous education in preparation for becoming the elite planners of U.S. military operations wherever they are deployed. (Colonel Benson subsequently earned a PhD from the University of Kansas for his outstanding dissertation chronicling the history of SAMS from 1983 to 1994.)

Benson, who is still involved in concept development exercises for the Army, told me that "it is important to study the force you might actually fight against, rather than do generic planning for nonspecific scenarios, like against 'Orange Land' or the 'Krasnovians,'" which is how U.S. military referred to the Soviets during the Cold War. Benson said that modeling future adversaries helps planners ask important questions, such as: "Are there forward staging bases nearby? If not, what would it take to get there? What type of forces would be required?" Despite the necessity of using specific scenarios for the concept development and operational planning process, Benson noted, "I have deep doubts about the ability to predict where the U.S. military would fight."

Over the past two decades, rather than guessing the geographic location of a fight, the military developed and maintained the two-war construct for defense planning. In 1993, Secretary of Defense Les Aspin initially proposed a "win-hold-win" construct, but eventually shifted to the goal of "maintain[ing] sufficient military power to be able to win two major regional conflicts that occur nearly simultaneously." In 1997, the

Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) sought a military that was "able to deter and defeat large-scale, cross-border aggression in two distant theaters in overlapping time frames." In 2001, it became "capable of swiftly defeating attacks against U.S. allies and friends in any two theaters of operation in overlapping timeframes." In the 2006 QDR, "wage two nearly simultaneous conventional campaigns (or one conventional campaign if already engaged in a large-scale, long-duration irregular campaign)." Finally, in 2010, the Pentagon drove a stake through the two-war construct, and instead embraced "the importance of fielding forces that are versatile and that, in aggregate, can undertake missions across the full range of plausible challenges."

Governor Mitt Romney criticized this shift in Pentagon planning last month, when he told a seemingly puzzled and subdued crowd: "This president has done something I find very hard to understand. Ever since FDR, we've had the capacity to be engaged in two conflicts at once. He's saying, no -- we're going to cut that back to only one conflict." Romney did not make any predictions about what two wars the military should be prepared to fight, nor has he repeated this line of attack against President Obama. Apparently, prospective voters do not want to consider if the United States should be prepared to fight one or two wars, when two-thirds of Americans opposed the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

What politicians and generals rarely say (on the record) is that the primary rationale for having an oversized military is not because of a balanced and carefully deliberated grand strategy, but to overcome the

Pentagon's dismal record at forecasting conflict. In 1979, Lieutenant Colonel Robert McFarlane, who would become President Ronald Reagan's national security advisor, summarized this approach with refreshing honesty: "Having superior strategic military might has provided an enormous hedge for flabby thinking. We could afford less than optimal strategic planning because push was never going to come to shove. We have had the luxury of being able to be foolish."

The surest way to manage the uncertainty of flabby thinking is to organize, maintain, train, and equip an armed force that can undertake a range of potential requirements regardless of the international security environment or location. Even after it has withdrawn from Afghanistan by the end of 2014 -- under the Pentagon's current projections -- the United States will retain an Army of 490,000 active-duty soldiers, 18 divisions, 65 brigade combat teams, and 21 combat aviation brigades; a Navy of 285 ships, featuring 11 carrier battle groups that includes 10 air wings, 82 guided missile cruisers and destroyers, and 48 nuclear-powered attack submarines; an Air Force consisting of 54 combat-coded fighter squadrons, 453 air-refuelers, 150 bombers; a Marine Corps of 182,000 active-duty Marines; and a nuclear triad with 1,550 operationally deployed nuclear weapons and perhaps an additional 4,000 in reserve.

In short, that is plenty of military capability, especially in an era when the United States faces no plausible significant security challenges, and the world enjoys fewer violent conflicts, increased political freedom, and greater economic opportunity than at virtually

any other point in human history. The U.S. military has what General Mattis described as "a built-in shock absorber, basically can go anywhere and do anything." However, there are tremendous economic and human costs to sustaining such an enormous, latent warfighting capacity. By having a defense budget (\$525 billion, not including Afghanistan costs) that is more than 11 times that of the State Department budget, USAID budget, and all foreign assistance combined (\$47 billion), you arrive at the "militarization of foreign policy" that senior military officials constantly lament.

Days after Dempsey told the Air Force ROTC cadet that the U.S. military would "skate to where the puck is going to be," he was asked a similar question by a submariner at the Naval Base Kitsap-Bangor in Maine. This time, Dempsey replied: "Here's my promise, you're not going to be bored. We'll find you something to do." Whether the something that the submariner is doing is strategically wise, it is a near certainty that the U.S. military will not know what it is -- or where it will take place -- beforehand.

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New York Times
October 17, 2012

33. Armored Vehicles That Save Lives

Providing the best armored vehicles to protect our troops fighting in wars abroad is a moral imperative. Still, there has been argument among analysts over the high cost of mine-resistant ambush protected vehicles, or MRAPs.

An analysis from Pentagon officials last week cited evidence from the battlefield and from tests at a proving ground that MRAPs had saved "a significant number of lives" compared with their lightly armored alternatives, known as up-armored Humvees. The report, published in Foreign Affairs, was a rebuttal to an earlier analysis, also published in Foreign Affairs, by academic economists at Syracuse University, which argued that the vehicles were not worth the \$600,000-per-vehicle price tag.

The question of appropriate armor for the battlefield has a rocky history. The Pentagon was unconscionably slow in getting armored vehicles to its troops in Iraq eight years ago and was also slow to respond to requests for better vehicles. Incredibly, the Pentagon told Army and Marine divisions headed to Iraq in early 2004 to leave their tanks and armored personnel carriers behind.

Defense officials mistakenly assumed the conflict was under control and left American soldiers to ride in thin-skinned Humvees that provided no protection against lethal roadside bombs. When field commanders urgently requested shipments of MRAPs, which have heavy armor and V-shaped bottoms to deflect blasts from below, they were largely ignored for more than two years. It took persistent prodding by then-Senator Joseph Biden Jr. and others in Congress and an effort under former Defense Secretary Robert Gates to speed up production in 2007 and get the vehicles deployed. Since then, more than 24,000 MRAPs have been sent to Iraq or Afghanistan. The program has cost more than \$47 billion.

From the start, there has been concern that the vehicles

were too costly. In July, the analysis by an economist and graduate student at Syracuse concluded that vehicles given a medium amount of armor substantially reduced fatalities in a military unit compared with thin-skinned Humvees, but replacing those upgraded Humvees with MRAPs did not appreciably reduce casualties further. The \$600,000 vehicle, they concluded, was no better than a \$170,000 vehicle.

Now the new Pentagon report, by Ashton Carter, the deputy defense secretary, and another department expert, has analyzed fatalities per roadside bombing. Using classified material not available to the academic researchers, it concluded that MRAPs save a significant number of lives. Mr. Carter said recently that the MRAP is "singularly responsible for saving the lives and limbs of thousands of service members in Iraq and Afghanistan." Protecting the troops is paramount, and, clearly, these vehicles are better equipped to do the job.

Los Angeles Times
October 17, 2012
Pg. 16

34. Cyber Security And Congress

Speaking to a group of U.S. business leaders last week, Defense Secretary Leon E. Panetta issued a dire warning that foreign hackers are becoming increasingly sophisticated and that their online attacks on transportation systems, banks and other vital facilities are escalating. The worst-case scenario, he said, is a "cyber Pearl Harbor" perpetrated by state-sponsored hackers or terrorists that "would cause physical destruction and loss of life, paralyze and shock the nation and create a profound new sense of vulnerability."

Panetta wasn't lobbying for more defense spending or expanded powers to respond to threats. Instead, he was trying to break a vexing logjam in Congress over legislation to beef up cyber security in the private sector. In particular, business groups have resisted a Senate proposal that would give the private operators of critical infrastructure -- water plants, electrical grids and the like -- an incentive to meet new cyber-security goals.

That measure, S 3414, was blocked in August by a Republican filibuster after the U.S. Chamber of Commerce declared its unstinting opposition. The measure would allow the government and businesses to share more information about cyber attacks and potential defenses, which the chamber supports. But it would also call for the private sector to develop voluntary "best practices" for protecting critical infrastructure, which the chamber argues would become mandatory, burdensome and insufficiently responsive to the dynamic nature of the threat.

The chamber's opposition didn't square with the actual provisions of the bill, which addressed most of its stated concerns. The best practices it promoted would have set security goals, but businesses would have decided what techniques to use to meet them. Any business that complied with these practices would have been immune to punitive damages if customers sued them in the event of a successful cyber attack, which is a sensible incentive to participate.

Business groups are backing a bipartisan House bill that deals only with information-sharing among companies and the federal government, not the vulnerability of critical

infrastructure, which is at least as large a problem. Panetta's speech makes it clear the private sector isn't doing enough to gird itself against the threats it faces, and that the potential consequences could be devastating. Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-Nev.) has pledged to take up the cyber-security bill again in November, after the election, and lawmakers should enact a bill along the lines of S 3414. Failing that, President Obama should issue an executive order to promote voluntary cyber-security standards and information-sharing within the limits of current law. That's not the ideal approach, but it's a start.

Wall Street Journal
October 17, 2012

35. Russia Resets Obama's 'Reset'

Maybe this is why Putin wants the President re-elected

President Obama has lost much of his poll advantage on foreign policy, and in this case Mitt Romney's debating skills have nothing to do with it. The real world is doing the job, notably with the attacks in Benghazi but also in Russia, where Mr. Obama once vowed to "reset" relations for the better.

Last week, the Russian government unilaterally pulled out of a two-decade old partnership with the U.S. to safeguard nuclear and chemical weapons. The so-called Nunn-Lugar program, named after its Senate authors, was a genuine post-Cold War success. It nudged Ukraine, Belarus and Kazakhstan to give up their atomic missiles and ensured that loose Soviet nukes didn't fall into terrorist hands. Well, so much for that.

This slap in the face follows Moscow's decision last month to close the U.S. Agency

for International Development mission to Russia. USAID helped feed Russia in the darkest days after the Soviet collapse. But its recent support for local vote monitors and other Russian NGOs—as part of a modest democracy-building effort—cramped Vladimir Putin's authoritarian style. Then this week the Washington Free Beacon reported that Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty is shutting down its Russian broadcasts after six decades because of a new law restricting foreign-owned media.

Meanwhile, Russia continues to obstruct international action to end the Syria crisis. Moscow has vetoed three U.N. resolutions on Syria while arming a Damascus regime that has killed 30,000 in 19 months. On Wednesday, Turkey intercepted a Syrian passenger jet coming from Moscow. Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan said the plane was carrying Russian military equipment and ammunition.

President Obama may not wish to publicly bury this part of his foreign policy, but Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov is happy to oblige. Last week, he told the Moscow daily *Kommersant*: "If we talk about the 'reset,' it is clear that, using computer terminology, it cannot last forever. Otherwise it would not be a 'reset' but a program failure." Failure about sums it up.

Boston Globe
October 17, 2012
Pg. 16

36. We Must Stand Firm Against Nuclear Threat

Regarding the dueling Oct. 9 op-eds under the overline "Should Israel have a red line on Iran?": The headline should have been "Should the civilized

world have a red line on Iran?," and the answer is a resounding yes.

Contrary to the arguments of Seyed Hossein Mousavian ("No, here are Netanyahu's real objectives"), former spokesman for Iran's nuclear negotiators, the world does not agree that "Tehran ...

has not decided to build" a nuclear bomb; knowledgeable people understand that the Iranians have indeed decided to build a nuclear bomb, but have not yet finalized their timetable, as they try to lull the world until they can present the bomb as a fait accompli.

In the news pages of the same edition, the article "Iran said to near goal on uranium" reported on the Institute for Science and International Security's determination that Iran is much closer to stockpiling sufficient weapons-grade uranium than previously believed.

This further demonstrates the unreliability of our intelligence, and how dangerous it would be to depend on it to save the world from catastrophe.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's real objective is to do for the world regarding the Iranian nuclear program what Winston Churchill tried, but failed to do, when Hitler was building toward World War II.

Alan Stein, Natick

The writer is president emeritus of PRIMER-Connecticut (Promoting Responsibility in Middle East Reporting).

Editor's Note: The op-eds by Michael Oren and Seyed Hossein Mousavian appeared in the *Current News Early Bird*, October 9, 2012.