

# CURRENT NEWS

## EARLY BIRD



January 9, 2008

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### IRAN

1. **President Calls Action Of Iranian Boats 'Provocative'**  
(*Washington Post*)....Robin Wright  
President Bush warned Iran yesterday that its confrontation with three U.S. warships in the Persian Gulf on Sunday was a provocative act, as the Pentagon released audio and video recordings of the dawn showdown.
2. **Bush Castigates Iran, Calling Naval Confrontation 'Provocative Act'**  
(*New York Times*)....Sheryl Gay Stolberg and Thom Shanker  
...Mr. Bush made his comments, his first on the event, during an appearance intended to put a spotlight on the first anniversary of his speech announcing a troop buildup in Iraq.
3. **TV News Coverage From Pentagon Correspondents**  
(*NBC, ABC, CBS, CNN*)....Jim Miklaszewski; Jonathan Karl; Kimberly Dozier; Jamie McIntyre  
Four Tuesday evening reports on video of the naval confrontation between Iranian speedboats and U.S. ships.

### IRAQ

4. **Major Offensive Targets Insurgents**  
(*Washington Post*)....Amit R. Paley  
The U.S. military launched a major offensive early Tuesday against one of the largest known redoubts of al-Qaeda in Iraq, part of a new nationwide campaign to destroy remaining pockets of the Sunni insurgency.
5. **U.S. Attack In Iraq Is No Surprise To Many Insurgents**  
(*New York Times*)....Stephen Farrell  
With extraordinary secrecy, and even an information blackout aimed at most of their Iraqi Army comrades, American troops began a major offensive on Tuesday to drive Sunni insurgents from strongholds in Diyala Province. But many insurgents still managed to flee the first villages the Americans went into, showing just how difficult it is to trap the elusive militants.
6. **Fear Was Their Guide Out Of Iraq**  
(*Los Angeles Times*)....Anna Gorman  
Salam has a target on his back because he aided the U.S. military. A smuggler starts him and his family on a harrowing journey.
7. **Bush Gets Updates On Reconstruction From Team Leaders**  
(*San Diego Union-Tribune*)....Jennifer Loven, Associated Press  
President Bush often jokingly tells mayors to fix the potholes to keep constituents happy. Yesterday it was Bush's turn to hear about such mundane matters, as the president focused an hour on trash pickup and other pedestrian concerns in Iraq.
8. **Suicide Vests Rise As Threat To Troops**

(*Washington Times*)....Richard Tomkins

First came the rocket-propelled grenades, mortars and land mines, then the improvised explosive devices. More recently, U.S. forces in Iraq find themselves battling the growing use of perhaps the most horrific of al Qaeda's weapons, the suicide vest.

9. **48% Of U.S. Diplomats In Poll Oppose Iraq Policy**  
(*San Diego Union-Tribune*)....Matthew Lee, Associated Press  
Nearly half of U.S. diplomats unwilling to volunteer to work in Iraq say one reason for their refusal is they don't agree with the Bush administration's policies in the country, according to a survey released yesterday.
10. **Iraq Developments**  
(*Atlanta Journal-Constitution*)....Alison Young  
The director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is in Iraq this week as part of a small U.S. delegation assessing the public health and medical issues in the war-torn country, officials said Tuesday.
11. **Retired Military Officials Disagree On Impact Of Surge**  
(*NPR*)....Guy Raz  
Retired military officers discuss the anniversary of the surge.

## ARMY

12. **Retiring General Aims To Create A Culture Of U.S. Preparedness**  
(*Arizona Daily Star (Tucson)*)....Associated Press  
The gruff, cigar-chomping general who led federal troops into New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina is convinced America hasn't learned its lesson from the storm.
13. **Carson GI: Civilians Shot At**  
(*Colorado Springs Gazette*)....Dennis Huspeni  
A Fort Carson soldier told Army investigators he and another soldier routinely shot at Iraqi civilians while on patrol in Baghdad, according to court records filed in a Colorado Springs homicide case.
14. **Accused Winder Soldier To Face Trial Next Month**  
(*Atlanta Journal-Constitution*)....Moni Basu  
A Georgia soldier accused of killing an Iraqi detainee will go on trial next month, the Army has announced.

## AIR FORCE

15. **Air Force May Shrink Its F-15 Fleet**  
(*Los Angeles Times*)....Julian E. Barnes  
The Air Force will probably order dozens of its F-15 fighter jets permanently grounded because of crucial structural flaws, significantly reducing the number of planes available to protect the United States, officials said Tuesday.

## MARINE CORPS

16. **Afghan Civilians Were Killed Needlessly, Ex-Marine Testifies**  
(*New York Times*)....Paul von Zielbauer  
A former member of an elite Marine combat unit that operated last year in eastern Afghanistan testified Tuesday that his comrades appeared to have needlessly killed civilians after their convoy was attacked by a suicide car bomb.
17. **Marine Ex-Recruiters Say Higher-Ups Share Blame**  
(*Houston Chronicle*)....Dane Schiller  
Five former Marine recruiters punished for fraudulently enlisting recruits from the Houston area said they were part of a web operating with tacit approval of some superiors.

## WHITE HOUSE

18. **Bush Endorses Ankara's EU Aspirations**  
(*Washington Times*)....Associated Press

...White House spokeswoman Dana Perino said a key item on Mr. Bush's agenda is encouraging Turkish leaders to pursue a "long-term political solution" to the PKK problem, cooperating with Iraqi leaders who also are concerned about the group's activities.

## ASIA/PACIFIC

19. **Afghanistan Seen Ripe For Faith Healing**  
(*Washington Times*)....Willis Witter  
A Washington-based group that helped negotiate the release of 21 Korean hostages last summer hopes to build on that experience by promoting reconciliation between Afghanistan's political and religious leaders.
20. **Some Fear Pakistan Could Splinter Apart**  
(*USA Today*)....Paul Wiseman  
Qadir Magsi, a doctor before he entered politics, says the prognosis for Pakistan is grim: He gives it a decade to live as a united country.
21. **China Planning To Secure North Korea's Nuclear Arsenal: Report**  
(*Yahoo.com*)....P. Parameswaran, Agence France-Presse  
China has contingency plans to dispatch troops into North Korea and secure nuclear weapons in the event of instability in the hardline communist state, according to US experts who have talked to Chinese military researchers.
22. **S. Korea To Call For Review Of Military Accord With U.S.**  
(*Wall Street Journal (wsj.com)*)....Agence France-Presse  
South Korea's next government will review a security deal pushed by outgoing President Roh Moo-Hyun to reduce the role of U.S. troops on the Korean peninsula, officials said Tuesday.

## AFRICA

23. **U.S. Troops Wait For Kenya Violence To Calm**  
(*Mideast Stars and Stripes*)....Zeke Minaya  
The small contingent of U.S. servicemembers on a humanitarian mission in Kenya has all but ceased operations as they wait for the violence triggered by a disputed presidential election to subside.

## VETERANS

24. **Vets Miss Out On Benefits, Liaisons Say**  
(*USA Today*)....Judy Keen  
Many veterans never receive the federal and state benefits to which they're entitled because they're unaware they qualify for health care, tax breaks and other compensation, local liaisons to former troops say.

## BUSINESS

25. **Release Of Rape Evidence To KBR Raises Questions**  
(*Houston Chronicle*)....David Ivanovich  
The Defense Department's Inspector General is trying to learn why Army hospital personnel in Iraq who examined a former KBR worker after an alleged gang rape apparently turned the physical evidence over to KBR security officials.
26. **Oshkosh, Partner To Bid For Military Vehicle Contract**  
(*Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*)....Rick Barrett  
Oshkosh Truck Corp. has entered into a partnership with defense contractor Northrop Grumman Corp. to compete for a multibillion-dollar contract to build lightweight military vehicles that could replace or augment the current fleet of Humvees.
27. **Lockheed Gets \$556 Million Pact**  
(*Baltimore Sun*)....Unattributed  
Lockheed Martin Corp. said yesterday that the Army awarded it a \$556 million contract to provide hardware and other equipment for the Patriot missile defense system.

## CONGRESS

28. **Rep. Rob Wittman Stages Town Hall Meeting From Iraq**  
*(Norfolk Virginian-Pilot)*....Dale Eisman  
 More than 60,000 Virginians from Fredericksburg to the Peninsula got an unusual phone call early Tuesday afternoon: Their congressman was on the line from Baghdad.

## TERRORISM

29. **Britain: Prison For Would-Be Jihad Fighter**  
*(New York Times)*....John F. Burns  
 Sohail Qureshi, a London dental technician who was arrested at Heathrow Airport in 2006 boarding a flight to Pakistan, was sentenced to four and a half years in prison in the first conviction under a new law against planning terrorism. The prosecutor said Mr. Qureshi, originally from Pakistan, planned a "two- to three-week operation" either in Pakistan or Afghanistan, possibly against Western troops.

## BASE REALIGNMENT AND CLOSURE

30. **Hearings Set On Hospital Expansion**  
*(Washington Post)*....Steve Vogel  
 The Navy is holding public hearings tonight and tomorrow night on its plans to expand the National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda. The expansion is part of the Pentagon's plan to close Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington in keeping with the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure recommendations.

## VIETNAM WAR

31. **Declassified Study Puts Vietnam Events In New Light**  
*(Christian Science Monitor)*....Peter Grier  
 US signals intelligence – the much-vaunted ability of American military and spy units to eavesdrop on the radio calls and other electronic communications of an adversary – failed at crucial moments during the Vietnam War, according to a just-declassified National Security Agency history of the effort.

## OPINION

32. **We Still Need The Big Guns**  
*(New York Times)*....Charles J. Dunlap Jr.  
 THE relative calm that America's armed forces have imposed on Iraq is certainly grounds for cautious optimism. But it also raises some obvious questions: how was it achieved and what does it mean for future defense planning?
33. **A Surge Against Maliki**  
*(Washington Post)*....David Ignatius  
 A new movement to oust Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki is gathering force in Baghdad. And although the United States is counseling against this change of government, a senior U.S. official in the Iraqi capital says it's a moment of "breakthrough or breakdown" for Maliki's regime.
34. **Fear And The Nuclear Terror Threat**  
*(USA Today)*....Michael Levi  
 ...Here's the reality. The nuclear threat is real and deserves our utmost attention. An atomic bomb detonated in the heart of a major American city could kill hundreds of thousands. But it would be tougher for terrorists to pull off a nuclear attack than many people assume.

## CORRECTIONS

35. **Correction: For the Record**  
*(New York Times)*....The New York Times  
 A Military Memo article on Monday, about the current relationship between the military and the news media, referred incorrectly to Rear Adm. Greg Smith, director of communications for the top military command in Iraq, who commented on coverage of the war.

Washington Post  
January 9, 2008  
Pg. 2

## 1. President Calls Action Of Iranian Boats 'Provocative'

*Peril Posed by Tehran a Theme of His Mideast Trip, Bush Says*

By Robin Wright, Washington Post Staff Writer

President Bush warned Iran yesterday that its confrontation with three U.S. warships in the Persian Gulf on Sunday was a provocative act, as the Pentagon released audio and video recordings of the dawn showdown.

"It is a dangerous situation, and they should not have done it, pure and simple," Bush told reporters at the Rose Garden, hours before departing for a seven-leg tour of the Middle East. "I don't know what their thinking was, but I'm telling you what I think it was: I think it was a provocative act."

A four-minute video, shot from the bridge of the USS Hopper, shows five small patrol boats racing toward the American ships in apparent defiance of repeated warnings. "Inbound small craft: You are approaching a coalition warship operating in international waters. Your identity is unknown; your intentions are unclear," a U.S. radio transmission warned the Iranian vessels.

Bush said one of the three themes of his Middle East trip will be the menace posed by Iran, particularly because it has not complied with two U.N. resolutions telling it to suspend its uranium enrichment, a process that can be used both for peaceful nuclear energy and for developing a weapon.

The president acknowledged, however, that a "mixed signal" had been sent by a National Intelligence Estimate, released last month, that concluded that Iran suspended its nuclear weapons program in 2003. During his trip, he said, he will remind

allies that "Iran was a threat. Iran is a threat. And Iran will continue to be a threat if they are allowed to learn how to enrich uranium."

Bush discussed Iran, Iraq and terrorism yesterday with new Turkish President Abdullah Gul. The meeting was designed to strengthen relations strained by the U.S. invasion of Iraq and a House Foreign Affairs Committee resolution last year calling the Ottoman Empire's treatment of Armenians a "genocide."

Appearing before reporters with Gul, the president called the only predominantly Muslim member of NATO a "constructive bridge" between East and West, adding that the European Union would benefit from adding Turkey as a member.

"Turkey sets a fantastic example for nations around the world to see where it's possible to have a democracy coexist with a great religion like Islam, and that's important," Bush said.

Washington and Ankara have increased cooperation on counterterrorism over the past month, with the United States providing increased intelligence on bases operated by the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) in northern Iraq. The PKK, seeking autonomy or independence in southeast Turkey, is the largest security threat to Turkey.

Bush yesterday urged Turkey to increase economic development in the disputed area and to attempt a broad political solution for the region. "You have to provide an alternative so terrorists are not as attractive to groups of people," said a senior administration official in a telephone briefing for reporters.

Bush also met yesterday with his national security team and members of Iraq's Provisional Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) to assess what he called the "civilian surge" to accelerate development in Iraq's 18 provinces. The

president said Iraqis are beginning to see economic and political progress, which complements recent security improvements.

All 24 teams are now embedded with military units, Bush said, up from 10 a year ago when he announced the buildup in military and diplomatic personnel. In northern Kirkuk, the local PRT helped broker a settlement bringing Sunnis back into the provincial council after a year-long boycott, while the PRT in southern Najaf has worked with the local government to build a modern airport to facilitate pilgrimages to that Shiite holy city, he said.

"There's still work to be done, but it was a very hopeful conversation," said Bush, who also held a videoconference yesterday with Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki.

New York Times  
January 9, 2008

## 2. Bush Castigates Iran, Calling Naval Confrontation 'Provocative Act'

By Sheryl Gay Stolberg and Thom Shanker

WASHINGTON

President Bush chastised Iran on Tuesday for committing a "provocative act" by confronting United States Navy warships in the Persian Gulf over the weekend. The Pentagon released video showing Iranian speedboats maneuvering around the American convoy.

"We viewed it as a provocative act," Mr. Bush told reporters in the Rose Garden, just hours before he left for a weeklong trip to the Middle East. "It is a dangerous situation, and they should not have done it, pure and simple."

The episode took place Sunday in the strategic Strait of Hormuz and was initially described by American officials on Monday. They said five armed Iranian speedboats approached three United States

Navy warships in international waters, then maneuvered aggressively as radio threats were issued that the American ships would be blown up.

The confrontation ended without shots fired or injuries.

The video runs just over four minutes and, according to Pentagon officials, was shot from the bridge of the guided missile destroyer Hopper. It supported the American version of events, by showing Iranian speedboats maneuvering around and among the Navy warships, quite close to the convoy.

"I am coming to you," a heavily accented voice says in English. "You will explode after a few minutes."

Navy officials said the voice was recorded from the internationally recognized bridge-to-bridge radio channel.

An American sailor then is heard repeating the threat, stating, "He says, 'You will explode after a few minutes.'" The American is also heard identifying the Navy vessel as a "coalition warship" and announcing: "I am engaged in transit passage in accordance with international law. I intend no harm."

Iranian officials have played down the encounter, but administration officials say they believe that Iran was trying to provoke the United States on the eve of the president's visit to the Middle East. Mr. Bush said pointedly on Tuesday that he would use the trip to remind American friends and allies in the region that Iran poses a danger.

"I'm going to remind them what I said in that press conference when I sat there and answered some of your questions," Mr. Bush said.

"Iran was a threat, Iran is a threat, and Iran will continue to be a threat if they are allowed to learn how to enrich uranium," he added. "And so I'm looking forward to, you know, making it clear that the United States of America sees clearly the threats of this world, and we intend to work

with our friends and allies to make that part of the world more secure.”

Mr. Bush made his comments, his first on the event, during an appearance intended to put a spotlight on the first anniversary of his speech announcing a troop buildup in Iraq.

After conducting a videoconference with combat commanders and members of civilian “provincial reconstruction teams,” he sounded upbeat about progress in Iraq, saying that 2007, particularly the end of the year, had been “incredibly successful beyond anybody’s expectations.”

Mr. Bush has repeatedly said he will not tolerate a nuclear-armed Iran. But his efforts to convince the world that Iran is, in fact, a nuclear threat, have grown more complicated since the release of a new National Intelligence Estimate, or N.I.E., that concluded that Iran had abandoned its efforts to enrich uranium.

Mr. Bush conceded that the report had complicated his efforts. “One of the problems we have is that the intelligence report on Iran sent a mixed signal,” he said.

Mr. Bush will visit three Gulf states — Kuwait, Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates — during his stay in the Middle East. Experts on Iran said the episode in the Strait of Hormuz gave Mr. Bush an opening to press his message that Iran is a danger.

“I think he’s realized that a lot of the international steam on Iran has been lost in the wake of the N.I.E.,” said Michael Jacobson, an expert on Iran at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, a research organization in Washington. “I think he’s doing what he can to try to refocus the international community on the dangers that Iran poses.”

The video may also help Mr. Bush make his case.

While it is difficult to judge exact distances,

Pentagon officials said at least one Iranian boat came within about 200 yards of the Hopper, a distance that could have been covered in a matter of seconds at top speed.

In the tape, horns are sounded, and the American crew member also radios to the Iranian vessels: “Inbound small craft: You are approaching a coalition warship operating in international waters. Your identity is not known. Your intentions are unclear.”

The American warns the Iranians that if they do not “alter course immediately to remain clear,” then the small boat will be “subject to defensive measures.”

Pentagon officials said the commander of the Hopper had been on the verge of issuing an order to fire on the Iranian speedboat with a high-powered machine gun when the Iranian craft suddenly steered away.

NBC, ABC, CBS, CNN  
January 8, 2008

### 3. TV News Coverage From Pentagon Correspondents

**NBC Nightly News, 7:00 PM**

**BRIAN WILLIAMS:** Speaking to reporters before he left, the president had stern words for Iran about that incident over this past weekend involving U.S. Navy ships in the Persian Gulf. It happened in the Straits of Hormuz in international waters off the coast of Iran. Apparently it stopped just shy of gunfire. Here is NBC’s Jim Miklaszewski.

**JIM MIKLASZEWSKI:** The three Navy warships were streaming through the Strait of Hormuz Sunday when five Iranian Revolutionary Guards speedboats appeared on a collision course and closing fast. The crew aboard the Navy destroyer Hopper got on the radio and sounded its horn to warn the Iranians to steer clear. But after darting in and out of the U.S. convoy for 30

minutes, the Iranians sent a threatening message.

**IRANIAN TRANSMISSION:** I am coming to you.

**MIKLASZEWSKI:** Military officials say the Hopper was within seconds of opening fire.

**USS HOPPER TRANSMISSION:** You are straying into danger and may be subject to defensive measures.

**MIKLASZEWSKI:** But the threat from the Iranians grew more ominous.

**IRANIAN TRANSMISSION:** You will explode in couple minutes.

**MIKLASZEWSKI:** The speedboats turned away at the last second and no shots were fired.

At the White House today President Bush called it a dangerous situation.

**PRES. GEORGE W. BUSH:** But I’m telling you what I think it was. I think it was a provocative act.

**MIKLASZEWSKI:** U.S. military officials believe the Iranians were testing the Navy’s defenses. Nevertheless, they warn that one miscalculation on either side could have been deadly. Jim Miklaszewski, NBC News, the Pentagon.

**World News With Charles Gibson (ABC), 6:30 PM**

**CHARLES GIBSON:** We got a look today at the remarkable video of the confrontation we told you about last night between five Iranian speedboats and three U.S. warships in the Persian Gulf. President Bush called it a provocative act and the Navy video would indicate that’s something of an understatement. Here’s ABC’s Jonathan Karl.

**JONATHAN KARL:** It was a little after 8:00 in the morning when the speedboats appeared, clearly visible to the sailors on the deck of the USS Hopper.

**USS HOPPER TRANSMISSION:** I am

engaged in transit passage in accordance with international law. I intend no harm. Over.

**KARL:** At first the radio intends to radio the Iranians.

**USS HOPPER TRANSMISSION:** Identify yourself and state your intentions. Over.

**KARL:** As the speedboats get closer, tensions mount. The Hopper’s crew radios the two other ships in its convoy.

**USS HOPPER TRANSMISSION:** Five unidentified small surface contacts inbound to coalition warships.

**KARL:** They sound a warning to the Iranians.

**USS HOPPER TRANSMISSION:** [Alarms sounding.] You’re approaching coalition warships.

**KARL:** The Iranians are so close they are inside the wake of the Navy ships. And then a finally eerie communication, apparently from the Iranians.

**IRANIAN TRANSMISSION:** I am coming to you.

**USS HOPPER TRANSMISSION:** You are straying into danger and may be subject to defensive measures. Request you alter course immediately to remain clear.

**IRANIAN TRANSMISSION:** You will explode after few minutes.

**USS HOPPER TRANSMISSION:** He said you will explode after a few minutes.

**KARL:** Senior Navy officials tell ABC News the Hopper’s gunners were within seconds of opening fire when the Iranians backed off and the showdown ended.

Jonathan Karl, ABC News, the Pentagon.

**CBS Evening News, 6:30 PM**

**COURIC:** Meanwhile, the Pentagon also released dramatic tapes today showing Iranian speedboats making a run at U.S. ships in the Strait of Hormuz on Sunday, and possibly threatening to blow up those ships. It was a dangerous

confrontation that almost led to a battle at sea. More now, from Kimberly Dozier.

**KIMBERLY DOZIER:** It was a high stakes test of nerves just off the coast of Iran.

**USS HOPPER TRANSMISSION:** This is coalition warship. I am engaged in transit passage in accordance with international law.

**DOZIER:** Five Iranian military fast boats tearing straight at three U.S. warships.

**USS HOPPER TRANSMISSION:** Identify yourself and state your intentions, over.

**DOZIER:** They just picked up speed.

**USS HOPPER TRANSMISSION:** Five unidentified small surface contacts inbound.

**DOZIER:** Setting off warning sirens and sending sailors running for weapons. At almost ramming distance, the Iranians finally broke radio silence, mocking the Americans.

**IRANIAN TRANSMISSION:** I am coming to you.

**DOZIER:** The Americans couldn't believe what they heard next.

**IRANIAN TRANSMISSION:** You will explode after couple minutes.

**USS HOPPER TRANSMISSION:** He says you will explode after a few minutes.

**DOZIER:** U.S. commanders were poised to open fire when the Iranians withdrew, meaning the U.S. came within about 500 yards of armed confrontation with Iran. Kimberly Dozier, CBS News, the Pentagon.

#### **The Situation Room (CNN), 4:00 PM**

**BLITZER:** President Bush is calling it "a provocative act". And today, the U.S. military released new images showing Iranian speedboats confronting U.S. Navy vessels in the Persian Gulf.

Let's turn to our senior Pentagon correspondent, Jamie

McIntyre.

He's watching all of this go on -- Jamie, take us through this.

How close of a call was it? **JAMIE MCINTYRE,** CNN SENIOR PENTAGON CORRESPONDENT: Well, Wolf, you know, after talking about this all day yesterday, it's really interesting to see the video taken from the USS Hopper, an Aegis destroyer. You can actually hear the alarm for general quarters to be sounded, for the sailors to arm their battle stations, as those Iranian patrol craft zip around and between the U.S. ships. The radio is crackling with an ominous threat from the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps that are manning those fast attack boats.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

**IRANIAN TRANSMISSION:** I am coming to you.

**USS HOPPER TRANSMISSION:** Your identity is not known. Your intentions are unclear. Request that you establish communications now or alter your course immediately to remain clear -- that you alter course immediately to remain clear.

**IRANIAN TRANSMISSION:** You will explode after a few minutes.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

**MCINTYRE:** At this point, after nearly 30 minutes of confrontation, the USS Hopper is about to unload its .50 caliber machine guns on the fast attack boats. But the Iranians give up the game.

You don't see on this video, by the way, those white boxes that the Pentagon says were dropped in the water. But you do see how close these boats are. If any one of them had turned and aimed directly for one of the U.S. warships, the sailors on board would have only had a matter of seconds to react -- Wolf.

**BLITZER:** Jamie, thanks very much for that -- a close call on the high seas.

Washington Post  
January 9, 2008  
Pg. 11

#### **4. Major Offensive Targets Insurgents**

*5,000 Troops in Diyala, Hunting Al-Qaeda in Iraq, Find Few Fighters Still There*  
By Amit R. Paley, Washington Post Foreign Service

ZAHMM, Iraq, Jan. 8 -- The U.S. military launched a major offensive early Tuesday against one of the largest known redoubts of al-Qaeda in Iraq, part of a new nationwide campaign to destroy remaining pockets of the Sunni insurgency.

The unusually large attack by 5,000 U.S. and Iraqi troops in volatile Diyala province reflects growing concern that success in rooting the group out of Baghdad and Anbar province to the west has driven its members to northern areas such as the Diyala River Valley and the city of Mosul.

U.S. officials said an estimated 200 fighters from al-Qaeda in Iraq created a mini-state here in what Americans call the Bread Basket, a 50-square-mile, shoe-shaped region northeast of Baghdad that stretches from the northern Diyala River to a parallel canal to the east. Residents said the fighters, whom some described as foreigners, imposed curfews and strict interpretations of sharia, or Islamic law.

The U.S. troop buildup that began last year and success in fighting al-Qaeda in Iraq elsewhere in the country have, for the first time in two years, freed up enough troops to wage a full-scale assault and establish a continued presence in this area, U.S. commanders said. They said the Iraqi military is sending up to a full battalion from Anbar in the coming days to help hold the territory.

The offensive was intended to surprise al-Qaeda in Iraq, a mostly Iraqi insurgent group that the U.S. military

contends is led by foreigners, and to prevent its fighters from escaping by deploying troops to surround the area.

But Lt. Col. Rod Coffey, 45, of Anne Arundel County, who leads the squadron that first attacked the area, said initial reports from villagers indicated that many of the Sunni insurgents, fearing a U.S. offensive, had left more than a week ago. He estimated that 50 to 75 fighters remained.

"They created a sharia anti-state that terrorized the Iraqi citizens here," Coffey said in Zahmm, a village where he and his men spent the night in a crumbling, unoccupied house enclosed by a mud wall.

Coffey's unit, the 3rd Squadron of the 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment, entered the Bread Basket at 3 a.m. Tuesday, but other units had been laying the groundwork for weeks. Early Monday morning, Special Operations forces started moving in from the northwest as two battalions began to circle the area like a closing noose.

U.S. troops killed at least four suspected insurgents and detained three, officers said.

"I think the enemy's preferred course of action right now is to escape," said Col. Jon S. Lehr, commander of U.S. forces in Diyala.

But the insurgents left deadly hazards for the Americans. At least a dozen roadside and car bombs have been discovered. One exploded Tuesday near a Stryker, an eight-wheel combat vehicle, injuring three soldiers, Coffey said.

More casualties were likely avoided because of tips from villagers, who identified explosives left by the insurgents. One man helped U.S. soldiers find and detonate a car bomb in Zahmm, which filled the night sky with dark smoke for hours. The man was promised a \$100 reward.

Villagers encountered on Tuesday told the Americans of mistreatment by the Sunni insurgents. In one town, locals

said al-Qaeda in Iraq imposed curfews from 5 p.m. to 7 a.m. every day.

"Al-Qaeda said, 'You must all work for us now,' " Sgt. Patrick Martin of Saratoga, N.Y., recalled villagers telling him.

Maj. Shawn Garcia, a spokesman for the U.S. military in Diyala, said al-Qaeda in Iraq was organized into companies, squadrons and possibly a brigade.

"They used to have free sanctuary in the Bread Basket because we never had enough combat power to rout them out," he said.

Last June, the military launched a campaign against Sunni insurgents in Baqubah, the Diyala provincial capital. But the fighters apparently learned of the offensive and most evaded capture.

The new offensive, known as Operation Raider Harvest, is showing how difficult it is to discern whether someone is an insurgent.

One of the Iraqis wounded and then detained on Tuesday was shot because U.S. soldiers said he refused to listen to their commands. "He just did the wrong thing at the wrong time," one soldier told Coffey over his radio. "But I don't know if we can call him a detainee. I don't think he has anything incriminating against him."

American officials said the goal of the mission was to hold the area and help it develop economically. Garcia said U.S. soldiers and diplomats will work to revive the area, once known as Green Diyala.

"Before the surge we just didn't have enough combat power to hold what we've now held," he said.

Military commanders also said the support of the Iraqi army will be crucial. But they concede that the Iraqi security forces are still rife with problems -- and have not been fully briefed on the operation.

"We didn't tell them about it until the day of, knowing they were probably infiltrated

by al-Qaeda," said Maj. Eddie Sedlock, an operations officer in Diyala.

Coffey and his men were planning to push Wednesday morning to a village where they believed the remaining al-Qaeda in Iraq fighters were clustered.

As he prepared to get a little rest just before midnight, Coffey said he wasn't sure whether his unit would encounter a bitter fight or an empty town.

"Our goal in this counterinsurgency isn't just to kill 20, 30, 40 people," he said. "It's holding the area and driving out bad guys. If we could just do that, then maybe these people can finally live in peace."

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New York Times

January 9, 2008

## **5. U.S. Attack In Iraq Is No Surprise To Many Insurgents**

By Stephen Farrell

ESAIWID, Iraq — With extraordinary secrecy, and even an information blackout aimed at most of their Iraqi Army comrades, American troops began a major offensive on Tuesday to drive Sunni insurgents from strongholds in Diyala Province. But many insurgents still managed to flee the first villages the Americans went into, showing just how difficult it is to trap the elusive militants.

Because at least half the insurgents escaped before an offensive last June, American planners deliberately kept most Iraqi units in the dark before this one, a tactic that suggests they cannot fully trust the allies who are supposed to pick up more of the fighting as American troops scale back their presence this year.

The militants may have been tipped by leaks or by the visible movements of troops and machinery that precede any operation.

American commanders say it is essential to hobble the

extremists to sustain recent security gains and ultimately pacify Iraq.

The offensive, in an area around this village 60 miles northeast of Baghdad, began just before dawn. Seven American battalions, accompanied by Iraqi Army units, pushed into a 110-square-mile area in the fertile northern Diyala River Valley in search of 200 insurgents with Al Qaeda in Mesopotamia, the largely homegrown Sunni insurgent group that American intelligence says is foreign led and now represents the principal threat to stability in Iraq.

The offensive is part of a wider operation across northern Iraq to drive extremists from the region, where many of the fighters and leaders of Al Qaeda in Mesopotamia are thought to have fled after military operations around Baghdad and in Anbar Province, as well in Baquba, the Diyala provincial capital 30 miles south of here.

Although the commander of the Iraqi Fifth Army Division in Diyala was aware of the intended target, American units in recent days and weeks carried out smaller decoy operations in other towns farther south, like Baquba and Wajihya, to mislead extremists about where the actual operation would take place.

"We have taken great strides to convince the enemy that we are not interested in the Breadbasket," the nickname for this fertile area, said Brig. Gen. James C. Boozer, the deputy commander in the north.

"What has been happening in Baquba and Wajihya specifically has been somewhat of a deception effort," said Maj. Gen. Mark P. Hertling, the commander of American forces in northern Iraq. "We have allowed the enemy to believe that Diyala has been wide open while we have been generating forces in here to

nail them."

Outlining details of the feint and other diversionary tactics used by American forces a few days before the attack, he added, "That's why if you were to go up to an Iraqi soldier on the street today, or even some of their senior leaders and say, 'So what's going on in Diyala?' they might tell you something that doesn't quite sync with this plan."

Nevertheless, some advance units noticed an unusual number of women and children fleeing south in cars in recent days, and residents of Esaiwid said Tuesday that the insurgent fighters left the village days ago, although some appear to have remained behind or returned to plant car bombs.

In any case, it is hard to conceal thousands of American soldiers and scores of armored vehicles, Iraqi military units, interpreters and support workers moving into place through highways and towns in central Diyala, even though their movements were staggered and mainly at night.

According to First Lt. Max Ferguson, of Company I, Third Squadron, Second Stryker Cavalry Regiment, residents reported that fighters with Al Qaeda in Mesopotamia were tipped off that the offensive was imminent "because of the increase in helicopter traffic overhead."

The current operation is larger than the one in June, when half or more of the estimated 300 to 500 insurgents escaped from Baquba before the offensive. The soldiers advancing Tuesday encountered numerous improvised roadside bombs and booby traps, barely detectable except for telltale filaments of copper wire glinting in the early-morning sun through the undergrowth and orange trees.

One unit called in a Hellfire missile strike to destroy a car parked beside a canal, after residents of



Esaiwid warned them it was rigged with explosives earlier that morning by fleeing insurgents. The car burned for hours.

Other units were not so fortunate. Commanders said three vehicles were hit by roadside bombs, though without causing serious injury.

American commanders say the area has long provided cover for Al Qaeda in Mesopotamia.

"This is a massive operation to really squeeze in the Breadbasket what we think is a major Al Qaeda logistics site, and to a lesser degree command-and-control operations," General Hertling said shortly before it started. "The intent of this operation is to hit them hard here, make them defend, and at the same time stop them from flowing to other places."

There would also be attacks in other areas, he said, "to make them look in several different directions, to affect not only their fighters but their leaders, their financiers and their support base."

The current operation is being led by the Fourth Stryker Brigade Combat Team, Second Infantry Division, with support from other units in the area around a town, Muqdadiya, to catch what American Special Forces term "squirters," insurgents trying to slip out of the area. Although American units ran into many concealed bombs, they encountered little or no direct contact with insurgent fighters.

American commanders say some of the intelligence on insurgent activities in the valley's palm and fruit groves has come from fighters captured during raids in December, including one near Muqdadiya that uncovered mass graves and a torture chamber with a metal bed frame attached to electrical wires, and chains on bloodstained walls.

The military said it killed 24 insurgents and detained 37 during that operation. It also

said that it had gleaned information from villagers, who until now had been intimidated by Al Qaeda in Mesopotamia, in areas recently taken by American and Iraqi forces.

The hazards are numerous, even outside the immediate area of the Breadbasket. During one Jan. 4 patrol with Third Squadron, Second Stryker Cavalry Regiment, in the buildup to the offensive, a photographer working for The New York Times snagged his foot on a copper filament hidden in undergrowth, which led to a bomb buried in a hole.

The filament was not a trip wire, but a command wire, the sort used to set off an explosive with an electrical current. The bomb did not explode and was safely disposed of.

Some American units have had to adapt quickly to the rural terrain, including Lieutenant Ferguson's unit, which spent two months in the urban environment of Dora, in southern Baghdad, during the American troop increase last year.

In Baghdad they had to deal with bombs set off by metal pressure plates or buried cables that leave only a small bump in a road surface. Now they encounter bombs buried so deep beneath the orchards that they are almost impossible to spot in advance.

After one recent explosion, said Lieutenant Ferguson, it took his men half an hour to find the wire leading to the device, even though they knew exactly where the bomb had gone off.

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Los Angeles Times  
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## **6. Fear Was Their Guide Out Of Iraq**

*Salam has a target on his back because he aided the U.S. military. A smuggler starts him and his family on a harrowing journey.*

By Anna Gorman, Los Angeles Times Staff Writer

Salam knew the risks.

As a Christian in Iraq, he already faced persecution by extremist Muslim insurgents. Working for the U.S. military placed him in even more danger.

But the contract his family's company had to supply water for the U.S. base at Ramadi was lucrative. Salam also respected the Americans for helping the Iraqi people and wanted to support the effort.

On Feb. 1, 2006, Salam was leaving the base, beginning his seven-hour drive home after 17 days away. He rode in one car with two co-workers while two colleagues rode in another. About five minutes down the road, two cars pulled out from a side street and tried to block them.

The car in which Salam was riding escaped, but the car behind didn't. Two days later, back in his village, Salam's cellphone rang. The caller told him that they would find him and kill him.

Then Salam received the news that the two co-workers who were in the other car had been killed.

Salam decided that he and his family had to flee. He contacted a smuggler who had guided friends and neighbors out of Iraq. Salam told the man that he, his wife, Jehan, and their two sons needed to get to Athens, where her parents had already relocated. They agreed on a price: \$10,000.

They hoped life in Athens would work out. But if it didn't, the family would set their sights on America, where Jehan's brother lived. The journey to either destination presented enormous risks. But there would be no turning back.

"I had to leave Iraq," Salam said. "I had no other choice."

More than 2 million Iraqis are believed to have escaped since the U.S.-led invasion in 2003. Many are waiting in Syria and Jordan, hoping to be admitted to the United States

as refugees. But in the last five fiscal years, the U.S. government has resettled only 2,372 refugees from Iraq. Most are Christian.

Other Iraqis have taken matters into their own hands, paying smugglers tens of thousands of dollars to travel to the United States, where they hope for asylum.

"These people have lost everything," said Joseph Kassab, executive director of the Chaldean Federation of America, a nonprofit group that helps Eastern Rite Catholics outside of Iraq. "People are desperate. They will do anything to be resettled and to be safe."

On March 31, 2006, Salam and Jehan, whose last name is being withheld for the safety of their relatives in Iraq, packed one bag each, small enough to carry on their shoulders. They only took clothing, warned by a smuggler that the journey would be muddy and dirty. They tried to explain to their sons, Stavro and Paolo, who are now 3 and 8, that they all had to flee.

After saying goodbye to their relatives, the family met the smuggler at an arranged spot in the city of Duhok. They rode in a car for a few days to the Turkish border, pretending to sleep when they passed checkpoints. Stavro cried all the time. Paolo couldn't stop shaking. Once across the border, the family boarded a bus to Istanbul. There, they stayed in a safe house until the smuggler came for them.

Because the Greek-Turkish border is closely watched, a crucial part of their journey would have to be on foot. Over one long night, the family walked for hours through a mosquito-infested forest, watching for police and bandits. They didn't eat, but food was the last thing on their mind.

"We knew it was dangerous," Salam said through a Chaldean interpreter. "I was thinking, 'I have to do it

to save my life.' "

In the darkness, the smuggler, Ahmed, led them through hidden routes and past check stations. When they came to a deep, narrow waterway, the smuggler pulled out a small raft and inflated it. Salam, Jehan and their sons got in and Ahmed led them across. The water wasn't deep at the crossing, but Salam still worried. He was the only one in the family who knew how to swim.

"I had my hand on my heart," Jehan said. Each part of the trip was worse than the other. "When I was in the water, I was afraid I might drown with the kids," she said. "In the forest, I was scared of animals and police."

Salam tried not to think about the dangers. He knew Iraqis trying to cross illegally into Greece had been shot, that others had drowned or been abandoned by their guides.

"The smuggler was ahead of us," he said. "We were following him, because if something happened, the smuggler would be the first one to run."

Finally, Ahmed told them they had reached Greece. He took them to an abandoned house. The boys, who were exhausted, slept on the cold floor. Salam and Jehan kept quiet, knowing that if anyone heard or saw them, the family could be discovered and sent back.

Later that afternoon, they were led onto a bus, then a train, and another. They made it to Athens on April 9.

Upon the family's arrival, Jehan's parents celebrated with a feast of soup, stuffed grape leaves and rice.

"There was a lot of crying, happy tears," Salam said. "When you get to a country like Greece and you see the spring in that country and no more Christian-Muslim issues, you feel good."

Salam and Jehan turned themselves in to authorities, but were denied documents entitling them to live and work

in Greece. So Salam worked illegally as a day laborer, mixing cement, moving furniture and laying brick.

Some weeks, he worked nearly every day. Others, he was hired for only a couple of days. He ran when he saw police.

The family rented a house, but Salam's earnings barely covered their bills. They felt safe but unsettled.

"Life in Greece is good, but you cannot work, you cannot make a living," Salam said.

After about eight months in Athens, Salam and Jehan decided to leave. Jehan's brother had received asylum the previous year and was living in El Cajon, near San Diego. They knew of America only from his descriptions, and from movies.

"We had an impression that everything was perfect," Salam said of the U.S.

Without documents and unsure of how to make the journey alone, the family hired another smuggler to get them passports and guide them on their trip. The cost to get to the United States was much higher, \$35,000 for the whole family. Salam would have to borrow from relatives.

Again, the family said their farewells. With fake Greek passports, the family boarded a flight west.

The destination was Guatemala, where entry documents could be obtained. Once they arrived, Jehan felt better knowing that they were closer to their final destination, but anxious about what was to come.

"It was hard to believe that we would make it," she said. "When you are on a journey like this, you are scared every step."

Over the next few weeks, they spent hours on buses and passenger vans traveling through Guatemala and Mexico.

They passed through cities they had never heard of -- Flores, Palenque and Mazatlan.

They tried to blend in as tourists, feeling lucky that their features weren't too Arabic. They avoided police for fear that they would be arrested and deported.

"These countries are good for tourists, but not for us," Salam said. "We feel we are different from everybody else."

The smuggler had advised them on how to behave at hotels and restaurants: Be quiet, but polite. Occasionally, they had to say "Hello" or "Good morning." But most of the time, he spoke for them.

The stops at hotels helped break up the journey. They could shower and sleep, and speak in their own language. When they arrived in Mazatlan, a ferry took them to La Paz and the bus rides resumed. One lasted more than 20 hours. Paolo became motion sick. Stavro often cried.

"The younger one, we had a lot of trouble taking care of him," Jehan said. "For a little kid who is dreaming about being able to play, to eat in a timely manner, he would cry a lot. And I would be afraid they might find out we were here illegally."

The family arrived in Tijuana on Jan. 3, 2007. The smuggler took them to the U.S.-Mexico border. He pointed toward a line of people waiting to cross.

Jehan held a blue-beaded rosary and a small book of prayers. Salam carried one of his sons and clasped the other's hand.

"I said, 'Thank God we are here,'" Jehan recalled.

When the family reached the front of the line, a man in uniform said something in English they didn't understand.

Salam held out his hands and uttered three words: "Asylum. From Iraq."

The family knew there was one last step -- proving to the U.S. government that they weren't terrorists, but rather Christians brutalized by Islamic extremists.

U.S. Border Patrol took them into custody, separating

Salam from his family. Authorities searched them and took their fingerprints. Salam said there were no windows, so they didn't know whether it was day or night.

Stavro's temperature rose sharply. Jehan couldn't tell authorities what was wrong but put her hand to her son's forehead to let them know he needed a doctor. They let her give him a cool bath.

A few days later, U.S. immigration officials escorted the family onto an airplane. Salam and Jehan didn't know where they were going. Everyone was speaking English.

"I was thinking, 'My God, I hope they are not taking us back,'" Jehan said.

Instead, the plane landed in Pennsylvania, and U.S. officials took them to a detention center for families in Berks County. They were separated again. During their four months there, Salam said, guards were "watching you every step of the way."

They met with an asylum officer, telling him their story through a Chaldean interpreter. Through Iraqi friends, they found an attorney, Michele R. Pistone, a law professor at Villanova University.

Pistone tracked down copies of the couple's Iraqi passports through Jehan's brother and she filed their asylum applications.

After two court hearings, a judge granted Salam, Jehan and their sons asylum.

"I felt like I was born again," Salam said.

They were released April 23 and flew to San Diego the next week.

"All this journey, out of jail, and I see my own brother," she said. "Imagine. It was a very happy moment."

The family settled into a neighborhood in El Cajon, filled with other Chaldeans, many of whom left Iraq years earlier. They joined a church, where the sermons are in Chaldean.

They enrolled Paolo in

school, where he is already excelling, his father said. Salam found a job at a liquor store and Jehan enrolled in English classes. They lived with her brother, but recently moved out on their own.

They get by on the little English they know, but Salam said they still don't know what to do with all the mail they get.

"We don't know which ones to tear up and which ones to keep," he said.

The couple often watch news of Iraq on Arabic and English news stations.

They call their family members back home every few weeks. "This is a shame that this is happening to our country," Salam said.

Salam doesn't blame America for what has become of Iraq. He blames the terrorists. He and Jehan fear for relatives back home. Salam is one of 10 brothers and sisters, all of whom are still in Iraq.

"We keep praying they will come one day," he said. "We are always worrying about them."

Jehan continues to hold on to her rosary and her book of prayers, which she believes helped watch over her family during the long trip.

Salam said he wishes there were an easier way out for Iraqi Christians, especially those who work for Americans. To smuggle the rest of his family out of Iraq would cost a fortune, he said. He is still paying off his smuggling debt to relatives.

"I wish [the Americans] had helped me get out," he said. "But what can I do? The important thing is that I have my freedom."

San Diego Union-Tribune  
January 9, 2008

## 7. Bush Gets Updates On Reconstruction From Team Leaders

By Jennifer Loven, Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Bush often jokingly

tells mayors to fix the potholes to keep constituents happy.

Yesterday it was Bush's turn to hear about such mundane matters, as the president focused an hour on trash pickup and other pedestrian concerns in Iraq.

The White House allowed a reporter from The Associated Press to sit in on a briefing for Bush by leaders of provincial reconstruction teams in Iraq. Bush calls the teams a "political surge" that goes along with the military surge he ordered a year ago.

The teams are integrated units of U.S. civilian, military and diplomatic workers deployed as mentors to help local Iraqis govern, boost their economies and restart basic services still missing in much of Iraq.

The situations the leaders reported ranged from the dire to the celebratory.

John Jones, the provisional reconstruction team leader in Diyala province northeast of Baghdad, gaped in awe at the report from another team leader, Angus Simmons.

Simmons had talked about all the ways his team was helping boost tourism in the southern province of Najaf, home to holy sites, including assisting the Iraqis' dream of a new airport. It was a situation unimaginable to Jones in his area, which has become a messy new stronghold for extremists who have been pushed out of Anbar province by the increased U.S. troop presence there.

"We're still struggling," Jones said. "The key thing for us is we're making small steps." The biggest victory Jones reported was getting access from the provincial governor, a Shiite Muslim in a predominantly Sunni area.

The hourlong session involved three team leaders talking via videoconference from Iraq and three others ("on vacation" back in the States) in the Roosevelt Room. Those watching the giant screen with them and Bush included Vice

President Dick Cheney, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and Adm. Mike Mullen, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Bush talked little, asking a few questions, making a couple of jokes and giving a brief pep talk.

Bush had a separate teleconference yesterday with Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki. With al-Maliki's government achieving little progress on legislative reforms seen as key to tamping down sectarian violence, Bush and his team are counting on fostering changes in the provinces that could spur the central government to act.

There are 24 provincial reconstruction teams now operating, up from 10 a year ago, said Lt. Gen. Doug Lute, Bush's White House point man on Iraq and Afghanistan.

Bush did not hear all rosy news. Some team leaders talked about violence remaining an overarching problem.

But Col. David Paschal, commander of the 1st Brigade Combat Team from the 10th Mountain Division, which works in the Kirkuk area, reported that Iraqi policemen now wear their uniforms to work, no longer so scared that they wait to put them on until they get there.

In Ramadi, the capital of Anbar, team leader Kris Haegerstrom said garbage collection is back up to 80 percent of prewar. "Even better than that," she said, "the cell phone number of the guy who's supposed to pick up garbage in your neighborhood is posted in your neighborhood."

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January 9, 2008  
Pg. 12

## 8. Suicide Vests Rise As Threat To Troops

*U.S. offensive starts*  
By Richard Tomkins, The Washington Times

BAQOUBA, Iraq — First came the rocket-propelled grenades, mortars and land

mines, then the improvised explosive devices. More recently, U.S. forces in Iraq find themselves battling the growing use of perhaps the most horrific of al Qaeda's weapons, the suicide vest.

Fourteen persons died Monday in the latest suicide attack, a double bombing that killed the leader of a Concerned Local Citizen (CLC) patrol in the Adhamiya district of Baghdad.

A day earlier in Baghdad, an unidentified person detonated an explosive-laden vest during a ceremony honoring the Iraqi army, killing more than a dozen Iraqis including four soldiers.

The attacks have not been confined to the capital. In Baqouba, 35 to 40 miles further north, four persons were killed and 19 wounded on Christmas Day when a suicide bomber attacked a funeral procession for two CLC volunteers who had been killed by al Qaeda the previous day. A second explosion on Christmas Day killed or injured dozens more.

More recently, two persons were killed when a bomber jumped onto a parked police vehicle near a Baqouba bridge and detonated his charge.

U.S. forces yesterday announced the start of a new offensive against al Qaeda and its suicide bombers, dubbed Operation Phantom Phoenix.

Lt. Gen. Raymond Odierno said the offensive would involve a "series of joint Iraqi and coalition division- and brigade-level operations to pursue and neutralize remaining al Qaeda in Iraq and other extremist elements."

The operation will include "nonlethal" elements "designed to improve delivery of essential services, economic development and local governance capacity," the military said in Baghdad.

In Baqouba, Lt. Col. Ricardo Love said the pace of al Qaeda suicide attacks "took off" about a month and a half

ago.

"The first suicide bombing we had was at an Internet cafe — a suicider on a bicycle," said Col. Love, an intelligence officer with the 1st Battalion, 38th Infantry Regiment, 4th Stryker Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division.

Al Qaeda in Iraq "are on their heels right now, I think. I see these attacks as acts of desperation to break the will of the people to reject them," he said.

Col. Love said the suicide bombers in Baqouba, capital of Diyala province, are generally male and between 13 and 25 years old. Some are willing to die for the Islamist cause; others do it because of threats against their families or even for money.

Informants have said al Qaeda pays \$5,000 to \$20,000 to the families of successful suicide attackers.

"They are targeting the CLCs heavily, together with the police and Iraqi army, tribal and government leaders and, of course, targets of opportunity — us."

The CLCs, whose members are paid \$10 a day by the U.S. military to patrol their neighborhoods, pose a major problem for al Qaeda, Col. Love said.

Some are made up of former militia members who had aligned themselves with al Qaeda early in the insurgency but later were revolted by the group's wanton violence and cruelty, including several high-profile beheadings.

Yesterday's start of Operation Phantom Phoenix was the most forceful response to the wave of suicide bombings but far from the first.

In many districts of Baqouba, all private vehicle traffic has been banned since August. The only exceptions are food trucks and other essential service vehicles that must use prescribed roads and must pass through security checkpoints.

Citizens must use an established public

transportation system, or else walk or use a bicycle or donkey cart.

Pedestrians with suicide vests are harder to guard against, but troops on patrol routinely insist that civilians remain at a distance of about 150 feet.

"Get back — now," yelled one U.S. soldier to an Iraqi civilian during a patrol in the Khatoon district of Baqouba. "Stay away."

First Lt. James Cleary, a fire support officer with the 1st Battalion, said the distancing is necessary to protect the troops as well as civilians, who inevitably suffer in such indiscriminate attacks.

"We and the Iraqi forces get information on these people, and we're certainly disrupting the [suicide] cells," he said. "But they still can do a lot of damage."

San Diego Union-Tribune  
January 9, 2008

## **9. 48% Of U.S. Diplomats In Poll Oppose Iraq Policy**

By Matthew Lee, Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Nearly half of U.S. diplomats unwilling to volunteer to work in Iraq say one reason for their refusal is they don't agree with the Bush administration's policies in the country, according to a survey released yesterday.

Security concerns and separation from family ranked as the top reasons for not wanting to serve in Iraq. But 48 percent cited "disagreement" with administration policy as a factor in their opposition, said the survey conducted by the American Foreign Service Association, the union that represents U.S. diplomats.

In addition, nearly 70 percent of U.S. diplomats who responded to the survey oppose forced assignments to Iraq, a prospect that sparked a storm of controversy last year when

the State Department announced it might have to require such tours under penalty of dismissal in the largest diplomatic call-up to a war zone since Vietnam.

The results suggest the State Department may be facing a far more serious revolt over Iraq among its ranks than previously thought, and call into question its ability to fully staff diplomatic missions in Iraq, as well as those in Afghanistan and other dangerous posts deemed critical to the administration's foreign policy goals.

The survey was conducted late last year among the 11,500 members of the U.S. diplomatic corps and found deep frustration among more than 4,300 respondents over Iraq, safety and security issues elsewhere, pay disparities and the leadership of Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and her top deputies.

"The results of this survey raise serious questions about the long-term health of the foreign service and, with it, the future viability of U.S. diplomatic engagement," said union president John Naland. "This argues for immediate action to deal with the concerns highlighted in the survey."

State Department spokesman Sean McCormack dismissed the findings, noting that the poll was "self-selective" and not necessarily reflective of the entire foreign service.

The 4,311 respondents ranked Iraq staffing and security concerns and compulsory service in war zones as their fourth and fifth most serious concerns, behind only pay issues, fairness in assignments and family friendliness.

The survey found that 44 percent of respondents are "less likely to remain" in the foreign service until retirement due to developments in those areas over the past few years.

Of the respondents, 68 percent, or 2,778, said they

would either "oppose" or "strongly oppose" mandatory assignments to Iraq. Only 34 percent said they would "support" or "strongly support" such a move.

The State Department last year began identifying candidates for so-called "directed assignments" to Iraq but shelved the plan after enough volunteers came forward to fill nearly 50 vacant posts. The move had triggered an outcry among diplomats, one of whom drew applause at a town hall meeting when he likened such tours to a "potential death sentence."

Of respondents who said they were unwilling to serve voluntarily in Iraq, separation from family was identified as a reason by 64 percent, security concerns by 61 percent and policy disagreement by 48 percent. The other main factor, difficulty in doing the job, was identified as a factor by 42 percent.

McCormack declined to comment on the implications of the percentage who said they had policy differences, but noted that "when we signed up for these jobs, we signed up to support the policies of the American government. If people have a problem with that, they know what they can do."

Atlanta Journal-Constitution  
January 9, 2008  
Pg. 7

## **10. Iraq Developments**

By Alison Young

The director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is in Iraq this week as part of a small U.S. delegation assessing the public health and medical issues in the war-torn country, officials said Tuesday. CDC Director Julie Gerberding left Atlanta on Monday as part of a trip organized by the U.S. Department of Defense. The four-person delegation, led by Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs S. Ward Casscells, also includes the

surgeon general for the military's Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Navy's surgeon general. The delegation will observe U.S. military and Iraqi military health care and examine Iraqi public health issues, said Defense Department spokeswoman Cynthia Smith.

NPR

January 8, 2008

## 11. Retired Military Officials Disagree On Impact Of Surge

Morning Edition (NPR), 7:10 AM

RENEE MONTAGNE: One year ago, violence in Iraq appeared to be spiraling out of control. It prompted President Bush to come up with a new strategy. He ordered 30,000 additional troops to Iraq.

One year on, supporters and even some detractors have hailed the surge as an unqualified success. Violence is down to levels not seen since 2004 and Iraqis are back out on the streets.

As part of our series assessing the new White House strategy, NPR's Guy Raz reports on how that happened.

GUY RAZ: The surge wasn't so much a strategy as it was a Hail Mary, a prayer. By the end of 2006, the situation in Iraq was so bad that even supporters of the administration like the editors of the neo-conservative magazine, *The Weekly Standard*. Even they acknowledged that failure was just around the corner, and the magazine's key military writer, Frederick Kagan, was clearly distressed when he appeared on C-SPAN.

FREDERICK KAGAN [The Weekly Standard]: The American people have become very frustrated with the course of this war. They should be frustrated. We're losing.

RAZ: So Kagan, who also works at the neo-conservative American Enterprise Institute, along with retired Army

General Jack Keane, presented the White House with a plan to change its strategy in Iraq. It called for a surge of troops. The two men also pushed for a change in leadership and Keane suggested his protégé, General David Petraeus, an ambitious officer with a Princeton pedigree to boot.

The White House listened and agreed to roll the dice, but during the first six months of the surge, violence in Iraq reached an all-time high. Retired Army Colonel Douglas MacGregor was following events closely.

COLONEL DOUGLAS MACGREGOR [Retired, U.S. Army]: Up until that point, the surge was simply providing more targets for the insurgents to shoot at.

RAZ: But then around June, almost too fast for anyone to absorb, the violence began to plummet, a decline that continues up to this moment and has turned one time Iraq skeptics like former General Barry McCaffrey into believers.

GENERAL BARRY McCAFFREY [Retired, U.S. Army]: The real debate in my mind and I think the issue at stake is not whether things are better in Iraq; they are unquestionably like night and day change in the level of violence. The real question is what caused it.

RAZ: What caused it is open to debate. General Petraeus credits the surge.

GENERAL DAVID PETRAEUS [U.S. Army]: The improvements in security are a result of the greater number of coalition and Iraqi security forces and the strategy that guides the operations we conduct.

RAZ: But some current and former military officers I spoke with disagree, including Virginia Senator Jim Webb, whose own son, a Marine, served in Iraq before the surge was implemented.

SENATOR JIM WEBB [D-VA]: My son was there fighting in Ramadi when the

situation began to turn around and I don't believe that it would be appropriate for people to say that that was even a part of the surge.

RAZ: Barry McCaffrey and other former officers explain that a surge of 30,000 more troops into a country of 30 million could never have enough of an impact alone to turn things around.

McCAFFREY: The least important aspect of the so-called change in strategy was a surge.

RAZ: So if it wasn't just the surge, how did it happen? Well, part of it was exhaustion among Sunnis, tired of fighting and dying. Another part was a cease-fire declared by the largest Shiite militia, but the other part, possibly the most significant can be traced to the end of last May. That month, 126 U.S. troops died, the second deadliest month for U.S. forces during the war.

General Petraeus was under pressure to reduce those casualties.

MacGREGOR: And Petraeus seems to have concluded that it was essential to cut deals with the Sunni insurgents if he was going to succeed in reducing U.S. casualties.

RAZ: The deals, Colonel MacGregor is talking about, is what the military now calls the Concerned Local Citizens Program or, simply, CLCs. It's a somewhat abstract euphemism. The CLC program turns groups of former insurgents, including fighters for al Qaeda in Iraq into paid, temporary allies of the U.S. military.

Barry McCaffrey is just back from a five-day trip to Iraq where –

McCAFFREY: I went to a couple of these CLCs and it was five awkward looking guys with their own AKs standing at a road junction with two magazines of ammunition and they are there as early warning to protect their families in that village. I think that's good.

RAZ: Some 70,000 former insurgents are now being paid \$10 a day by the U.S. military. It costs about a quarter billion dollars a year. It's a controversial strategy, and Colonel MacGregor warns that its creating a parallel military force in Iraq, one made up almost entirely of Sunni Muslims.

MacGREGOR: We need to understand that buying off your enemy is a good, short-term solution to gain a respite from violence, but it's not a long-term solution to creating a legitimate political order inside a country that, quite frankly, is recovering from the worst sort of civil war.

RAZ: That civil war has subsided, for now. It's diminished because of massive internal migration, a movement of populations that has created de facto ethnic cantons.

MacGREGOR: Segregation works is effectively what the U.S. military is telling you. We facilitated whether on purpose or inadvertently the division of the country. We're capitalizing on that right now and we are creating new militias out of Sunni insurgents. We're calling them concerned citizens and guardians. These people are not our friends. They do not like us. They do not want us in the country. Their goal is unchanged.

RAZ: MacGregor, himself a decorated combat veteran and a former administration advisor, articulates a view that is privately shared by several former and current officers. It's not that they believe the plan isn't working; it's that they see it as a dangerous one, one with potentially destructive consequences. But General Barry McCaffrey argues the gamble is worth taking.

McCAFFREY: \$10 a day? We can pay them that for ten years if we had to. Better we provide an infusion of cash where we're keeping a local night watchman force on duty than we conduct combat

operation. The money isn't a factor; we don't even take into account.

MacGREGOR: People desperately want to see success.

RAZ: Again, Colonel Douglas MacGregor.

MacGREGOR: They want to believe that we have done something positive for the population of Iraq, that we are helping them to become something positive. The thing that worries me most of all is what happens over the next 12 to 24 months in Iraq. Could we not have actually made matters worse in the long term? Are we not actually setting Iraq up for a worse civil war than the one we've already seen?

RAZ: Iraq can be seen as a conflict temporarily frozen. The largest Shiite militia group has, for the time being, sworn off attacking both the U.S. military and Sunni Muslims. Sunni groups are, for now, aligning themselves with the United State for a fee, and in the north, Kurdish militants are focused on Turkey rather than Iraq. It is a waiting game and still quietly, each group builds its own armory. They are all preparing for the inevitability now fighting another day.

Guy Raz, NPR News, Washington.

Arizona Daily Star (Tucson)  
January 9, 2008

## 12. Retiring General Aims To Create A Culture Of U.S. Preparedness

By Associated Press

FOREST PARK, Ga. — The gruff, cigar-chomping general who led federal troops into New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina is convinced America hasn't learned its lesson from the storm.

As Lt. Gen. Russel Honore gets ready to retire from the Army and hand over his command on Friday, he says he wants to spend the rest of his life creating a "culture of preparedness" to prevent

another post-disaster disaster.

"There's an attitude everywhere else that people are smarter than they are in New Orleans and in Mississippi. They're not," the 60-year-old general said at his office at Fort Gillem, just outside Atlanta. "What happened in New Orleans could have happened anywhere on the Eastern Seaboard."

During his 37-year Army career, Honore commanded troops in South Korea and prepared soldiers to fight in Iraq. After Katrina, the native of Lakeland, La., led the vast relief convoy that rolled into New Orleans during its darkest hour. The 22,000-member force was one of the largest federal deployments in the South since the end of the Civil War.

With a beret cocked to one side, a crisp, take-charge attitude (at news conferences, he ended sentences with the word "over," as if transmitting over military radio) and biting one-liners — "Don't get stuck on stupid!" he snapped at reporters — he impressed politicians and ordinary folks alike.

New Orleans Mayor Ray Nagin, for one, famously called him a "John Wayne dude."

Honore returned to Atlanta after the storm to focus on his main job as commander of the First Army, training National Guardsmen and reservists for duty in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The devastation in his home state — the stranded residents, destroyed neighborhoods and bloated corpses — "left a passion in me to be a champion of something," he said.

His next project is still taking shape, but he wants to see civil defense classes for young people that would teach first aid and survival basics, such as how to purify water. He wants to lobby drugstores and other businesses to keep generators in case of a long power failure. He wants cities to stockpile food and water so they don't have to rely on the

federal government.

And he wants to pressure every family to have an emergency plan, right down to backpacks with food, water, essential documents and medicine.

Although he hopes someday to return to Louisiana — he hasn't ruled out a try at politics — he plans to use Atlanta as a launching pad for the project. He said he has discussed the idea with Georgia Gov. Sonny Perdue's staff and plans to meet business and political leaders.

"In this new normal, with the possibility of terrorist attacks, natural disasters and industrial accidents, we need this culture of preparedness," he said. "A vast part of America still thinks, 'That couldn't happen where I live.' And they are dead damn wrong."

Colorado Springs Gazette  
January 9, 2008

Pg. 1

## 13. Carson GI: Civilians Shot At

*Man facing murder charge talks of violence in Iraq*

By Dennis Huspeni, The Gazette

A Fort Carson soldier told Army investigators he and another soldier routinely shot at Iraqi civilians while on patrol in Baghdad, according to court records filed in a Colorado Springs homicide case.

The U.S. Army's Criminal Investigation Command is investigating the alleged war crimes.

Pfc. Bruce Bastien Jr., who faces a first-degree murder charge in the December shooting death of Spc. Kevin Shields, told a Criminal Investigation Command agent "about potential crimes which occurred in Iraq during these soldiers' deployment there."

Fort Carson officials referred calls about the investigation to the Criminal Investigation Command headquarters in Virginia. Calls

to the Virginia office were not returned Tuesday.

Shields was found dead early Dec. 1 on the sidewalk in the 200 block of South 16th Street near Old Colorado City.

Also charged in the Shields homicide are former soldiers Louis Edward Bressler, 24, of Charlotte, N.C., and Kenneth Eastridge, 24, of Louisville, Ky.

After Bastien was arrested in the Shields investigation, he talked to Fort Carson Special Agent Kelly Jameson on Dec. 10.

"Bastien told S.A. Jameson that he was often on patrol with Kenny Eastridge while stationed in Baghdad. Patrol consisted of a caravan of military vehicles moving through the neighborhood he was stationed in. Mr. Bastien said while he drove, Mr. Eastridge would shoot at Iraqi civilians who happened to be along the street.

"Bastien said that he knows that an Iraqi civilian was struck on at least one occasion," according to the motion.

The soldiers used stolen AK-47 military rifles when shooting at civilians, Bastien told Jameson.

"The sound of an AK-47 is very distinctive," the motion states. "So if there were any questions when the shooting was heard, Bastien said they could claim they were taking on hostile fire."

Fort Carson records show that Shields, Bressler, Eastridge and Bastien served together in Iraq with the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division. The soldiers were in the same platoon of C Company, 2nd Battalion of the 12th Infantry Regiment. All four came home this spring and summer, months earlier than other soldiers in the unit.

The arrest affidavit in Shields' killing was unsealed Tuesday.

Shields, an Illinois native, was killed on the night he was celebrating his 24th birthday. He was shot three times, in the

neck, face and groin, according to the affidavit. He still had his identification and money in a jacket pocket.

Bastien at first told police he didn't know what happened to Shields, whom he said they were drinking with at Rum Bay nightclub downtown.

But when investigators confronted him with information they had verified by looking at Shields' cell phone records, Bastien admitted seeing Bressler and Shields getting into a fight that night.

Shields had found out that the suspects traveled around Colorado Springs with a duffel bag with a Taurus .38-caliber revolver — purchased by Bressler's wife, Tira — “3 Gerber brand knives, 3 small flashlights, three neck gators, and two pairs of black gloves which Louis and Kenny were going to use for robberies,” the affidavit states.

After seeing Bressler fire five shots at Shields, Bastien helped him go “through the victim's pockets and took out a few things to make it look like a robbery,” the affidavit states.

Tira Bressler said after the shooting her husband was being “set up.”

“I talked to my husband today (Dec. 6). He said, ‘Why would I harm a good friend from Iraq?’” Tira Bressler told a Gazette reporter.

The men burned their clothes and tossed the revolver off a bridge south of Fillmore Street off I-25. Police later recovered the weapon, according to the affidavit.

While serving search warrants on the home where Eastridge and Bressler lived, they found the bag with ski masks and the other items, according to the affidavit. They also found a receipt for Tira Bressler's purchase of the .38-caliber revolver from a local gun shop.

Bressler and Bastien have also been charged with first-degree murder in connection with the Aug. 4 shooting death of Pfc. Robert

James, whose bullet-riddled body was found in a car in a Lake Avenue parking lot.

Colorado Springs police suspect the trio in other “shootings and a stabbing and aggravated robbery,” according to court documents.

Deputy 4th Judicial District Attorney Robin Chittum filed a motion in Bressler's case Tuesday to join the cases together under the same judge.

“These are not two separate homicide cases,” the motion states. “The evidence, witnesses, statements and investigations are so interrelated that they cannot be separated.”

Chittum's motion also contained details about the Aug. 4 James homicide.

James begged for his life before being shot with the same .38 caliber and robbed, Bastien told police.

After they drove him to the Bank at Broadmoor parking lot, they demanded he give them all his money.

“Robert James then gave him cash from his pockets and asked them not to hurt him,” the motion states. “Bastien saw Bressler shoot Robert James. The first shot brought Mr. James to his knees, then other shots followed.”

The men got \$45 from James and used it to buy marijuana, “which they smoked later that morning,” according to the motion.

James served with Fort Carson's 43rd Area Support Group and was also an Iraq veteran.

Bressler and Eastridge were trained by the Army to be infantry riflemen, experts in tactics from camouflage to marksmanship.

Eastridge was wounded in combat and received the Purple Heart and Army Achievement medals, Army records show.

A medic, Bastien's job in Iraq was to save lives. He had earned the combat medical badge for rendering aid under enemy fire.

The men are due back in

court Jan. 25. All three are being held at the El Paso County Criminal Justice Center without bond.

### **10 accused of abusing Iraqis**

Ten Fort Carson soldiers have been accused of killing or abusing Iraqis since the war began in 2003:

Chief Warrant Officer Lewis Welshofer, 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment -- Charged in October 2005 with murder in death of Iraqi Maj. Gen. Abed Hamed Mowhoush. A court-martial jury convicted Welshofer on a lesser charge of negligent homicide. He was reprimanded and fined \$6,000.

Chief Warrant Officer Jefferson L. Williams, 3rd ACR -- Charged with murder in Mowhoush's death. Williams was given noncriminal administrative punishment in exchange for testimony against Welshofer.

Spc. Jerry Loper, 3rd ACR -- Charged with murder in Mowhoush's death. Charge dismissed in exchange for testimony at Welshofer's trial. Faced discipline at summary courtmartial. It's unknown what punishment, if any, was ordered.

Sgt. 1st Class William Sommer, 3rd ACR -- Charged with murder in Mowhoush's death. Charge dropped, given administrative punishment.

Staff Sgt. Shane G. Werst, 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team -- Charged in November 2004 with killing Naser Ismael, Iraqi prisoner taken into custody during a house-to-house search in Balad, north of Baghdad. Acquitted by Fort Hood, Texas, courtmartial jury.

Capt. Shawn L. Martin, 3rd ACR -- Charged in October 2004 with eight counts of assault for allegedly abusing Iraqis and one of his own soldiers in series of incidents in Rutbah, Iraq. Court-martial jury convicted Martin of two assault counts, sentenced him to 45 days in jail and fined him \$12,000.

1st Lt. Jack Saville, 3rd

HBCT -- Charged with manslaughter in 2004 drowning death of Zaidoun Fadel Hassoun, who the Army said was forced to jump into Tigris River near Samarra. Saville took plea deal and was sentenced to 45 days in jail after agreeing to testify against co-defendant Sgt. 1st Class Tracy Perkins.

Sgt. 1st Class Tracy Perkins, 3rd HBCT -- Charged with manslaughter in Hassoun's drowning. Fort Hood court-martial jury acquitted Perkins of murder but convicted him of two counts of assault. Sentenced to six months in jail.

Sgt. Reggie Martinez, 3rd HBCT -- Charged with manslaughter in Hassoun's death. Charges against Martinez were dropped after evidence hearing. Given administrative punishment.

Spc. Terry Bowman, 3rd HBCT -- Charged with assault in Hassoun's drowning. Charges dropped. Given administrative punishment.

### **Crimes linked to Carson veterans**

Some notable criminal cases involving Iraq war veterans stationed at Fort Carson:

\*Former soldier Anthony Marquez, 23, admitted last month he shot and killed a 19-year-old Widefield resident and suspected drug dealer Oct. 22, 2006, during a robbery attempt. Marquez's public defenders attempted to introduce PTSD as a possible defense but dropped the effort when a judge ruled against them, court records show. According to the plea agreement, Marquez will spend 30 years in prison when he is sentenced in February.

\*In November, Pueblo police arrested Spc. Olin “Famous” Ferrier, 22, on suspicion of shooting taxi driver David Chance, 52, on Oct. 30. No charges have been filed.

\*Former Pfc. Johnathon Klinker, 22, was sentenced to 40 years in prison in July for

killing his 7-week-old daughter, Nicolette. Klinker blamed the baby's October 2006 death, in part, on "war-related stress."

\*Former Pvt. Timothy Parker of the 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, was convicted by court martial of manslaughter for beating Spc. Piotr Szczyпка to death in a November 2005 fight at an apartment complex near the base. Both men had been drinking before Parker hit Szczyпка with a fireplace poker, trial testimony showed. Parker was sentenced to seven years in a military prison.

\*Nine days after 2nd Brigade Combat Team Pfc. Stephen S. Sherwood, 35, came home from Iraq in August 2005, he drove to Fort Collins and shot and killed his wife of seven years, Sara E. Sherwood, 30. The soldier, described by his commanders as a hero who fought bravely in Iraq, then turned the gun on himself and committed suicide.

Atlanta Journal-Constitution  
January 9, 2008  
Pg. 5B

## 14. Accused Winder Soldier To Face Trial Next Month

By Moni Basu

A Georgia soldier accused of killing an Iraqi detainee will go on trial next month, the Army has announced.

Army Spc. Christopher P. Shore, 25, of Winder will face judge and jury Feb. 19 in a court-martial in Honolulu, where his 25th Infantry Division unit is based.

He faces a maximum sentence of life in prison.

Shore's attorney, Michael Waddington of Augusta, said his client asked to be tried by a panel of his peers.

In a court-martial, a soldier can choose between trial by jury or judge alone.

Shore, who maintains his innocence, said by telephone from Hawaii that he is doing as well as can be expected. He

said he is eager to put the trial behind him.

He had hoped the case would have been put to rest after an investigating officer's report in November recommended the Army drop murder charges against him.

However, Lt. Gen. Benjamin Mixon, commander of the 25th Infantry Division, disagreed with the results of the Article 32 hearing, the military's equivalent of a grand jury investigation, and referred the case to court-martial.

The Army accuses Shore of killing an Iraqi man who was detained during a nighttime raid in June in a village near the northern Iraqi city of Kirkuk.

At the Article 32 hearing in October, Shore said the detainee already had been shot and was bleeding on the ground when his platoon leader, Sgt. 1st Class Trey A. Corrales, 35, ordered Shore to "finish him."

Shore said he fired his rifle but intentionally missed the man.

The next day, Shore reported the incident to his supervisors.

Corrales, who waived his right to an Article 32 hearing, still stands accused of premeditated murder and now faces two additional charges that Army prosecutors filed based on testimony at Shore's Article 32 hearing, said Maj. Gary Johnson, command judge advocate for the division's 3rd Brigade.

The Army accuses Corrales of asking Shore to kill the Iraqi and planting an AK-47 rifle near the dead man's body, Johnson said.

Waddington said the Army was contradicting itself in tacking on additional charges against Corrales.

"It doesn't make any sense," he said. "If they think Shore was lying at the Article 32 hearing, then they probably shouldn't have relied on his testimony to add charges to Corrales."

Waddington said he was

frustrated by the Army's pursuit of murder charges against Shore, which goes against the recommendations of Lt. Col. Raul Gonzalez, the Article 32 investigating officer. Gonzalez said the charges against Shore should be reduced to aggravated assault.

He also asked Mixon to launch an investigation into Lt. Col. Michael Browder, who was relieved of command of Shore's battalion after the detainee was killed. But Johnson said the Army had no plans for an investigation.

"I simply don't think there is any evidence of criminal conduct that would warrant an investigation," Johnson said.

In his report, Gonzalez said no evidence existed that linked the shots fired by Shore to the detainee's death.

He said that "overwhelming evidence" showed that Corrales "did with intent to kill, shoot at and hit the detainee multiple times with an M-4 rifle."

But last month, Mixon referred the case to trial.

"There can't be any reality about this," said Shore's father, Brian Shore of Lawrenceville, who plans to fly to Honolulu for the trial. "It's got to be political. I have no idea what they are really after."

Shore served 15 months in Iraq before returning to Hawaii in October.

In August, 10 of his platoon buddies were killed in a Black Hawk helicopter crash.

"Most average citizens would have cracked just under the stress of the combat tour by itself," Waddington said. "He's doing very well under the circumstances."

Los Angeles Times  
January 9, 2008

## 15. Air Force May Shrink Its F-15 Fleet

*Dozens of the older fighter jets, which are used to protect the U.S., may be permanently grounded because of suspected structural flaws.*

By Julian E. Barnes, Los

Angeles Times Staff Writer

WASHINGTON —The Air Force will probably order dozens of its F-15 fighter jets permanently grounded because of crucial structural flaws, significantly reducing the number of planes available to protect the United States, officials said Tuesday.

After one of the jets broke apart during a simulated dogfight in November, Air Force officials grounded the entire F-15 fleet, nearly 700 planes in all, fearing such a defect. The newest versions of the fighter jets were allowed to resume flying shortly afterward, but 440 of the older model F-15s have remained out of service.

The Air Force plans to allow about 260 of the remaining grounded planes to return to duty today. But about 180 more will remain idle because of suspected structural flaws.

"Many of them may never fly again," a senior Air Force officer said. The officer, like others interviewed for this article, spoke on condition of anonymity because results of the investigation are not due to be made public until today.

Long the nation's most sophisticated front-line fighters, the F-15 are gradually being replaced; many are up to 30 years old. The Air Force still relies on F-15s to protect the continental U.S. and to fly combat missions abroad. Newer model F-15Es are used in combat in Iraq and Afghanistan and were the first of the grounded planes to resume flying after the mishap in November.

The problems with the F-15, Air Force officials argue, have increased the need to purchase more F-22s, swift and stealthy but expensive new fighter planes. Air Force officials characterized the grounding of the F-15s as even more serious than if the Army had to take a large portion of its battle tanks out of service in Iraq.

"This is grave; we've had a



heart attack," said a senior Air Force official. "Two hundred of our air superiority aircraft are on the ground, and we are acting like it is business as usual."

An investigation of the Nov. 2 crash shows the F-15 that broke apart over eastern Missouri had a fault in a crucial support component called a longeron, a structural beam that serves as part of the spine of the aircraft. F-15s have four longerons around the cockpit.

Air Force officials have not yet learned how a defective beam came to be installed in the plane, which was manufactured in 1980. But Air Force officials emphasized that the age of the airframe, combined with the faulty part, puts the older F-15s at risk.

"This airplane broke in half because of a fatigue crack," the officer said.

The Air Force has found cracks in nine of about 180 planes that remain grounded, but it thinks more have faulty structural beams.

The newer F-15Es are used in Iraq and Afghanistan, and the 440 older fighters -- models F-15A through F-15D -- are used for domestic patrols.

Since the fleet was grounded, the Air Force has used F-16s for patrols. Starting today, the Air Force will use a combination of F-16s and F-15s.

On average, the F-15s are 25 years old and have encountered other structural problems that have forced redesign programs.

Another senior Air Force official said the problems with the F-15 showed an "enhanced imperative" to purchase additional F-22 aircraft. The Air Force has said it needs 381 F-22s, although the Pentagon has approved the acquisition of only 183.

"We have to examine not only if we need the full 381 aircraft, but do we need them faster?" the Air Force official said.

The F-22 has cost billions to develop since it was conceived in the 1980s and remains a controversial plane. Critics have long charged that it is overpriced and was designed for a Cold War threat that no longer exists.

But Air Force officials say the plane is required to retain control of the air and protect American ground forces.

Skeptics of military spending have accused the Air Force of using the F-15's problems as a justification for purchasing more F-22s. The Air Force, these critics contend, should do more to examine whether the F-15s can be effectively repaired.

But in an interview, Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates said he thought the Air Force faced genuine issues because of its aging fleet. Gates said that replacing the fleet of in-air refueling tankers should be addressed first but that new fighters are a legitimate need.

"The Air Force's top priority has to be the replacement of the tanker fleet, but I think the notion that the Air Force is somehow pumping up the F-15 problem, I just don't believe that for a second. I think it's a real concern," Gates said.

Air Force officials said they thought some of the F-15s that remained grounded might be able to return to duty after repairs. But some senior officials have raised questions about how effective the F-15s will be after they are fixed. Some officials believe that repairs to stiffen the aircraft could reduce its capability as a fighter plane.

"Do you try to patch a 25-year-old airplane that has been patched and patched and patched?" another senior Air Force official asked. "After the repairs, it will not be the same aircraft it was before."

*Times staff writer Peter Spiegel at Nellis Air Force Base, Nev., contributed to this report.*

New York Times  
January 9, 2008

## 16. Afghan Civilians Were Killed Needlessly, Ex-Marine Testifies

By Paul von Zielbauer

CAMP LEJEUNE, N.C.

— A former member of an elite Marine combat unit that operated last year in eastern Afghanistan testified Tuesday that his comrades appeared to have needlessly killed civilians after their convoy was attacked by a suicide car bomb.

Nathaniel Travers, a former Marine intelligence sergeant assigned to the 30-man Special Operations convoy that was patrolling on March 4 last year, testified in a military court here that a few marines fired at civilians and other unarmed noncombatants after the suicide bomber struck.

No marines have been charged with a crime in the episode. The hearing was held to determine whether troops had violated the laws of war.

The three judges on the Marine Corps court of inquiry are examining the actions of two officers who led the elite unit, Company F, Second Battalion, Marine Corps Forces Special Operations Command. They are Maj. Fred C. Galvin, the company commander, and Capt. Vincent J. Noble, the platoon leader.

Shortly after the March 4 shootings near Jalalabad, Company F was ordered to leave Afghanistan by Lt. Gen. Frank Kearney of the Army, the commander at the time of all Special Operations in the Middle East and Afghanistan.

Weeks later, an Army Special Operations commander in Afghanistan publicly apologized to the families of 19 people who he said had been unjustifiably killed by members of the Marine unit.

But the Army apology, given before military investigators had concluded their inquiry, was later condemned by senior Marine

commanders as inappropriate and premature.

Mr. Travers, the first witness to testify, said the unit's trip from its base at Jalalabad to the Pakistani border and back was uneventful until a minivan detonated near the convoy's second Humvee. After the blast, Mr. Travers said, he heard gunfire and saw bodies in at least two vehicles as the Marine convoy sped away.

Only a few gunners in the heavily armed convoy fired, he said, until Captain Noble radioed a command to the entire convoy to stop firing.

The account by Mr. Travers, who left the Marines last year, contrasts sharply with those given by the American military and the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission.

The commission, which conducted its own inquiry, said marines had fired indiscriminately at pedestrians and people in cars, buses and taxis over a 10-mile stretch of road after the attack. No marines were seriously wounded in the suicide bombing.

Houston Chronicle  
January 9, 2008  
Pg. 1

## 17. Marine Ex-Recruiters Say Higher-Ups Share Blame

*5 men say use of stand-ins to take tests was an established tactic*

By Dane Schiller, Houston Chronicle

Five former Marine recruiters punished for fraudulently enlisting recruits from the Houston area said they were part of a web operating with tacit approval of some superiors.

The men confirmed they helped would-be recruits sneak past an exhaustive test by using a tactic established before they'd joined the Corps, served in Iraq or hit the streets as

recruiters.

"I love the Marine Corps; I don't want to be spitting on the Marine Corps," said a former sergeant, who said he left the service after seven years to avoid facing military justice and the possibility of a bad-conduct discharge.

Eight others were removed from recruiting duty, according to Marine Corps officials, and were handed punishments including fines.

"The people in charge of me while on recruiting duty didn't stand up for me," he continued.

The scandal comes as the Marine Corps and other military services are under increasing pressure to find recruits as wars continue in Iraq and Afghanistan. The Marines are aiming to bulk up from about 184,000 troops to 202,000 by September.

The former sergeant acknowledged his own actions were improper but insisted higher-ranking Marines share the blame.

The Marine Corps said late Tuesday that a Marine with supervisory responsibilities over some of the disciplined recruiters was recently removed from recruiting duties, but it remains to be seen whether he will face any charges.

A staff sergeant "has been relieved of his recruiting duties and has been assigned administrative duties," said Capt. Beatriz Yarrish, a spokeswoman for the 8th Marines Corps District, which is based in Fort Worth and includes all of Texas and other areas.

"The investigation with regard to (the sergeant) has been completed, and the commanding officer is currently deciding what course of action he will pursue."

Yarrish wouldn't share details of the case.

#### **Not implicated at first**

All were apparently snared in an investigation that began in the spring and was made public in November after the

Houston Chronicle learned nine Marine recruiters were snared for using stand-in substitutes to take a military entrance exam for potential recruits who might not otherwise qualify for service.

During the initial inquiry none of the nine disciplined recruiters implicated their superiors in the scam, said Capt. Carlos Sotomayor, who investigated the recruiters last April through June.

Any violation of the rules was unacceptable, Sotomayor said, and the recruiters had the chance to tell what they knew.

"We teach them the right way," he said. "If they choose to do it the wrong way, the Marine Corps will hold them accountable."

The Marine Corps punished four recruiters nationwide in 2006 for testing irregularities, said Maj. Wesley Hayes of the Marine Corps Recruiting Command in Virginia.

"It is extremely rare that these incidents happen," said Hayes.

The Marines are not alone in such problems.

In an entrance-exam scandal involving the Army National Guard in Arizona, test examiner Christine Thomas was sentenced to probation in July 2007 for a scam in which she conspired with recruiters to falsify results for about 70 applicants, according to court documents.

The Department of Defense is developing a system relying on electronic fingerprint readers as part of an effort to prevent potential recruits from using test takers to stand in for them.

The original investigation that snared the nine Houston-area recruiters was launched when someone noticed a signature on a test form didn't match with a signature on other recruiting documents, Sotomayor said.

Marine officials would not disclose the time period during which the stand-in test takers were used.

The Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery, known as the ASVAB, is a lengthy test used to place recruits in military jobs to which they are best suited.

Results could determine whether a person meets a minimum threshold to enter the service, as well as whether that person marches and fires a weapon, sits at a desk or takes up other duties.

#### **Unsure how widespread**

The Marine Corps declined to release the names of the recruiters or discuss specific details of the scheme, which resulted in eight recruiters being disciplined, a ninth leaving the service, and an unclear number of people entering the military based on test scores that weren't their own.

Although officials said they are unsure how widespread the practice was or where the recruiters learned of the technique, the fraud was traced to at least 15 incidents that went through the Military Entrance Processing Station in downtown Houston.

Of the nine recruiters, four worked at the Memorial City substation; two in Baybrook; two in Houston; and one in Lake Jackson, according to the Marines.

"We have pursued all individuals involved in the incident," said Sgt. Robert Jones, a public affairs spokesman for the Marine Corps Recruiting Station headquarters in Houston, which includes the men's superiors.

Yarrish said Marines who served as enlisted supervisors at the recruiting substations and their supervisory office when stand-in test takers were used have been advised not to talk to the news media at this time. A Chronicle request to interview them was denied.

#### **'Wink, wink, nod, nod'**

Five former recruiters contacted by the Chronicle confirmed stand-in test takers were used with the approval of higher-ups. Two who spoke at

length asked their names not be published to avoid possible retribution.

Interviewed separately, they said they wanted to make it clear they didn't act alone or without approval.

The man who left the Marine Corps said he was a recruiter for more than two years and put about 65 people in the service but used test takers six times.

"It was one of those, 'wink, wink, nod, nod' — they knew," he said. "It was not an isolated thing — it is something that was going on for years and they all knew about it."

He said loyalty stopped him from reporting other Marines. The Marine Corps has declined to release any portion of its investigative report.

The other person who spoke with the Chronicle at length said he was fined and removed from recruiting duties but stayed in the service.

He recalled an incident in which a higher-ranking enlisted Marine said a "tester" was needed to get a recruit into the Corps.

When looking for a tester, sometimes they would find someone who had already been recruited and previously passed the test, or a friend or family member of a potential recruit, he said.

"I wouldn't say it was ordered, but it was like, 'Hey, this is the way things are done,'" the former recruiter said.

"If you are out there recruiting a lot, you are going to come across kids that this is the only push they need, and it is easy to do something," said the Marine, noting that anyone who enters the Corps still has to complete boot camp and an advanced training school.

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Washington Times

January 9, 2008

Pg. 4

**18. Bush Endorses  
Ankara's EU**

## Aspirations

*Turkish leader told U.S. backs the fight against Kurdish rebels*  
By Associated Press

President Bush gave Turkey's bid to join the European Union a glowing endorsement yesterday and called the Islamic nation a "constructive bridge" between the West and the Muslim world, offering a much-needed boost to U.S.-Turkish relations.

"I think Turkey sets a fantastic example for nations around the world to see where it's possible to have a democracy coexist with a great religion like Islam, and that's important," he said.

Mr. Bush spoke to reporters after a meeting with Turkish President Abdullah Gul. The two appeared together on the South Lawn, where Mr. Bush said he supports Turkey's efforts to fight the rebels of the Kurdistan Workers Party, or PKK, as it is known by its local acronym, in northern Iraq.

Mr. Bush called the PKK an enemy to Turkey, Iraq and "to people who want to live in peace."

Mr. Gul's visit to the White House is seen as a major sign of improved relations between the two NATO allies after five years of acrimony over the Iraq war and U.S. policy on Turkey's fight against Kurdish rebels.

It follows a visit by Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan two months ago that resulted in a commitment by Mr. Bush to share intelligence on the PKK and not to object to Turkish airstrikes against the Kurdish guerrillas' installations in northern Iraq.

White House spokeswoman Dana Perino said a key item on Mr. Bush's agenda is encouraging Turkish leaders to pursue a "long-term political solution" to the PKK problem, cooperating with Iraqi leaders who also are concerned about the group's activities. She said the U.S. doesn't have any particular

solution or process in mind, but wants to play a constructive role in ending a longstanding dispute.

The PKK has fought for two decades to win a Kurdish homeland in eastern Turkey.

The meeting with the Turkish leader took place as Mr. Bush prepared to leave later in the day on his first major trip to the Mideast to try to build momentum for peace in that troubled region.

Mr. Gul told reporters at the White House that Turkey will continue to work alongside the United States toward peace, stability and prosperity.

"We share a common vision," he said.

In the months leading to Mr. Erdogan's Nov. 5 White House appearance, however, U.S.-Turkish relations were at their lowest point in many years.

In 2003, during the buildup to the Iraq war, the Turkish parliament rejected U.S. requests to send troops into Iraq through Turkish territory. And a poll last summer showed just 9 percent of Turks perceived the U.S. favorably.

Despite pleas from the Bush administration and personal appeals from Mr. Gul — then foreign minister — and other prominent Turks, the House Foreign Affairs Committee passed a nonbinding resolution last year that described as genocide the World War I-era deaths of Armenians during the final years of the Ottoman Empire. Turkey reacted by withdrawing its ambassador from Washington.

Washington Times  
January 9, 2008  
Pg. 13

## 19. Afghanistan Seen Ripe For Faith Healing

*Group laid foundation to free hostages*

By Willis Witter, Washington Times

A Washington-based group that helped negotiate the

release of 21 Korean hostages last summer hopes to build on that experience by promoting reconciliation between Afghanistan's political and religious leaders.

With roots in the U.S. religious and diplomatic communities, the group thinks it can help prepare the ground for reconstruction efforts in Afghanistan, where more traditional government efforts have fallen short.

"It is supremely ironic that the United States, one of the most religious nations on the planet, should find it so difficult to deal with religious differences in hostile settings or to counter demagogues like [Osama] bin Laden, who manipulate religion for their own purposes," said Douglas Johnston, president and founder of the International Center for Religion and Diplomacy (ICRD).

"U.S. diplomacy suffers from a proclivity to use our separation of church and state as a crutch for not doing our homework to understand how religion informs the worldviews and political aspirations of others," said Mr. Johnston, a Naval Academy graduate and former executive vice president of the Washington-based Center for Strategic and International Studies.

In terms of reconstruction, little has been accomplished in Afghanistan. Militants have killed Western aid workers, and many of the simplest projects — like rebuilding one-room schoolhouses and repaving roads chewed into rubble by Soviet tanks in the 1980s — remain unfinished.

Mr. Johnston, author of "Religion, the Missing Dimension of Statecraft," has managed to contact and speak with the leaders of some of the most militant madrassas in Pakistan.

His goal, he said, is to encourage these religious schools to expand their curriculum beyond mere memorization of the Koran by

emulating the madrassas from the early days of Islam.

Not only did Muslim religious schools keep classical learning alive during Christendom's Dark Ages, they ultimately served as models for the university system developed later in the West.

"Wherever we go, we always partner with an indigenous institution that has credibility with, and commands the respect of, the people with whom we will be working," Mr. Johnston said.

"Our project director, who is the point of the spear in our madrasa effort, is a Pakistani-American who grew up in Karachi and who attended a madrasa himself. He is a superb trainer and educator and also one of the more likable gents you will ever meet." Mr. Johnston asked that the Pakistani partner not be further identified for his own safety.

Growing out of the madrasa effort, Mr. Johnston, an evangelical Christian, met in April with 57 Taliban leaders in the mountains of Pakistan to explain why the U.S.-led war on terrorism is not a war against Islam — an idea widely accepted throughout the Muslim world.

He began by pointing out the obvious: The U.S. went to war to help Muslims in Bosnia, Kosovo and Somalia.

But he also explained U.S. policies in terms typically missing from U.S. statecraft — hospitality, loyalty and revenge — that are integral to Afghanistan and the Taliban's tribal culture.

"Before certain al Qaeda members were recognized as a threat," Mr. Johnston said, "the U.S. offered them hospitality by accepting them into the country."

He was referring to the September 11 hijackers.

"Then, without warning, they struck on 9/11. Because of this violation of hospitality, the United States wanted revenge and asked the Taliban government to turn over al

Qaeda's leadership so they could be brought to justice. When they refused, the U.S. attacked Afghanistan.

"But it did so with a heavy heart," he added, "because many Americans feel great respect and admiration for the Afghan people, stemming from our common struggle against the former Soviet Union."

For his work with the madrassas, Mr. Johnston received an award at The Washington Times' 25th anniversary dinner in May.

What has yet to be publicly reported is his group's role in winning the release of the Christian missionaries held captive by the Taliban last summer.

Because of his center's earlier involvement with the Taliban, a Christian friend asked Mr. Johnston whether his group could help resolve the hostage situation.

By then, two of the 23 Christian aid workers from Seoul, who had been captured nearly two weeks earlier, had been executed.

Mr. Johnston provided details for the following narrative, which was confirmed by a U.S. State Department official. The ICRD contacted one of its Pakistani partners who enjoyed considerable influence in the Pakistani border province of Baluchistan to see what he could do. The partner agreed to help and contacted 15 religious leaders who agreed to participate in a makeshift jirga, a decision-making body of elders.

Most of the participants knew the two Afghans, Mawlawi Nasrullah and Mullah Qari Bashir, who had been appointed by the hostage-takers to serve as their spokesmen.

By Aug. 3, the jirga had traveled to Ghazni province in Afghanistan and established contact with the captors. With open Korans in hand, religious discussions began.

During six days of negotiations, the captors agreed

that no further harm would come to the hostages while negotiations were under way.

They also agreed to meet with a Korean delegation that had been sent to the area and to release four or five of the female hostages as a "sign of good intent."

Subsequent negotiations between South Korean officials and the captors led to the release of two women on Aug. 13. But six days later, the negotiations collapsed.

At that point, the ICRD reconstituted the original jirga and added several influential former Cabinet-level officials from the ousted Taliban government.

The new jirga then re-engaged with the captors, and a week later, all the hostages were freed.

In the wake of their release was widespread speculation that the Korean government had paid a ransom.

The full truth may never be made public, but in any case, one key negotiator said that had it not been for the religious intervention, the hostages would never have been released unless their full demands had been met — demands that included a prisoner swap that the government of Afghan President Hamid Karzai was unwilling to carry out.

The lessons learned from the whole episode, Mr. Johnson said, were "the wisdom of talking with one's enemies" and that "policies of isolation and demonization almost never bear the intended fruit."

The recently released movie "Charlie Wilson's War" weighed heavily on Mr. Johnston's mind as he explained the Korean hostage episode, especially the U.S. abandonment of Afghanistan once the Soviets were gone.

In an oblique reference to the rise of al Qaeda and the Taliban and global terrorism that followed, Mr. Johnston said: "As far as I'm concerned, there would be no aftermath to

deal with had the Congress supported the proposed endgame of helping the Afghans get back on their feet after the Soviets left."

USA Today  
January 9, 2008

Pg. 7

## 20. Some Fear Pakistan Could Splinter Apart

*After slaying of Benazir Bhutto, separatists in her native province pose yet another crisis in country*

By Paul Wiseman, USA Today  
HYDERABAD, Pakistan — Qadir Magsi, a doctor before he entered politics, says the prognosis for Pakistan is grim: He gives it a decade to live as a united country.

The assassination of opposition leader Benazir Bhutto on Dec. 27 removed "the last hope for Pakistan to stay intact," Magsi says. He expects Bhutto's native Sindh province will emerge as an independent nation unless the military establishment surrenders more power to the country's four provinces.

Others' predictions aren't so dire, but the threat of separatism is rising in a country reeling from Bhutto's murder, a wave of terrorist attacks and insurgencies along the border with Afghanistan. Sindh isn't likely to break away, says Pakistani political analyst Ikfram Sehgal, but he warns that separatism could further destabilize a key ally in the U.S. war on terror.

"Unless it is handled carefully, it is something to be concerned about," he says.

Bhutto's death reignited separatist sentiment that has fomented for decades, sending thousands of Sindhi rioters into the streets last month. They torched cars, ransacked shops and attacked outsiders from other provinces. Dozens died.

Bank manager Sharaf Uddim Soomra, whose branch in the farming community of Tando Jam was burned by looters, cites a popular saying: Bhutto was the chain that

linked Pakistan's four provinces — Punjab, Sindh, Baluchistan and the Northwest Frontier — thanks to her unique nationwide political clout.

Now that Bhutto is dead, Soomra worries that the chain is broken.

Sindh reflects the extremes of poverty and prosperity that have made Pakistan so difficult to govern. The seaside provincial capital of Karachi is home to 15 million people and one of Asia's hottest stock markets. The interior is a backwater of sugar cane plantations and mango groves where many farm laborers earn barely a dollar a day.

The rural areas are dominated by powerful land-owning families — the Bhuttos prominent among them — who oversee what Stephen Cohen of the Brookings Institution has called "one of South Asia's most repressive" social systems.

Tariq Azim, a spokesman for President Pervez Musharraf's ruling party, dismisses the threat of separatism and notes that many of Sindh's problems are homegrown. "These people by tradition never allowed the peasants to go to school," he says.

Many Sindhis blame outsiders for their problems. Among their complaints:

• **A distant military-bureaucratic elite**, dominated by natives of neighboring Punjab province. Pakistan's army, which is largely Punjabi, has ruled the country for more than half its 60-year existence.

Sindhi nationalists such as Magsi say the Punjabi elites ignore their grievances and refuse to share power. "They treat us as occupied territory, as a slave nation," he says.

A specific gripe: Punjabi irrigation projects diverted waters from the Indus River before they got downriver to Sindh.

"Punjab takes all the

water. We get the leftovers," says Ibrahim Magsi, a farmer and village leader outside Tando Jam.

The army also allotted Sindh land to retired officers and bureaucrats. As a result, Cohen writes in his book *The Idea of Pakistan*, as much as 40% of Sindh's prime agricultural land is held by non-Sindhis.

•**New arrivals** who have squeezed Sindhis out of jobs and political power. The tensions are highest in Karachi, ruled by the Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM), a party that represents immigrants from India known as Mohajirs. "The Sindhis have reason to feel disenfranchised," Sehgal says. "The MQM has been calling the shots."

•**The deaths of their leaders.** Sindh nationalists say they would have more political clout if their leaders stopped getting killed. They say Bhutto was not the first Sindh leader to die in Rawalpindi, a garrison city in the heart of Punjab. Her father — prime minister until he was ousted in a coup — was executed there by the military in 1979. Pakistan's first prime minister, Liaquat Ali Khan — who migrated to Sindh from India — was assassinated in 1953 at almost the exact spot where Benazir Bhutto was attacked

"The establishment always kills our leaders," says Hajan, a Tando Jam political leader who goes by one name. "Why would we want to live in this country?"

Azim notes that Sindh nationalist political parties such as Qadir Magsi's haven't won much support at the polls. Sehgal says Sindh separatists are unlikely to rally much support from the ethnically diverse population of Karachi, limiting their movement to the countryside.

Cohen wonders whether Sindh could survive by itself. Because of Sindh's dependence on water from the north, Cohen writes, its independence "could only come about with Punjabi

acceptance."

Pakistan's army has crushed Sindh separatist movements, but Sindh street power can still be frightening. Nasir Khan, 32, had to cower overnight in a Tando Jam mango grove while a mob torched his truck, which carried a cargo of red chili peppers to Karachi. Khan, an ethnic Pashtun born and raised in Sindh, had always gotten along with his neighbors. "I've never seen anything like it," he says of the rioting.

Punjabi engineer Zaheer Rajput, 31, was trapped at a gas station for two nights when rioters blocked a bus taking him from an assignment in rural Sindh to the Punjabi city Lahore. They demanded that all Punjabis and Pashtuns be turned over to them.

The station's Sindh owner, backed by security guards, fended off the crowd with his pistol until army patrols arrived. Rajput was shaken.

"They have such hatred for Punjabis," he says. "I don't see how this country can survive."

#### **Country's ethnic groups maintain tenuous bond**

Pakistan has been in danger of falling apart since it came together in 1947. The country, intended as a Muslim alternative to predominantly Hindu India, was formed from provinces with distinct languages and cultures, bound loosely by a common religion.

After a bloody fight for secession, East Pakistan broke away in 1971 and became Bangladesh. The remaining ethnic groups in Pakistan have often clashed and flirted with separatism.

Among the players:

•**Punjabis.** The Punjabis account for 44% of the population. They occupy the best farmland; run the nation's cultural capital, Lahore; and enjoy predominant roles in the military and civil service, something that has stirred resentment among other ethnic groups. Politically, the Punjabis are represented by

two factions of the Pakistan Muslim League — one loyal to former prime minister Nawaz Sharif, the other to President Pervez Musharraf.

•**Sindhis.** The Sindhis make up about 14% of Pakistan's population. Their province is divided between an impoverished countryside, dominated by feudal landowning families, and the port city of Karachi. Migrants have made their way to Karachi, leaving Sindhis a minority in their own capital. Sindhis gave Benazir Bhutto's Pakistan Peoples Party its base.

•**Mohajirs.** The Mohajirs take their name from the Arabic word for immigrant. They left India for Pakistan and now are about 8% of the population. Many settled in Karachi, where they became a force in local commerce and government. Musharraf is a Mohajir. They are represented politically by the Muttahida Qaumi Movement, which has been cited by the U.S. State Department for its willingness "to use violence and intimidation to further its ends."

•**Pashtuns.** The Pashtuns, more than 15% of the population, formed the ranks of the fundamentalist Taliban, who ruled Afghanistan for five years before being overthrown by U.S.-led forces in 2001. Pashtun nationalists hope to create their own homeland. About 1.5 million Pashtuns now live in Karachi, the largest Pashtun community in the world.

•**Baluch.** Baluchistan is the largest and least populated of Pakistan's four provinces. The native Baluch account for less than 4% of the population. They live in a remote area rich in oil and natural gas but are the country's poorest people. They have rebelled against the central government in Islamabad repeatedly.

## **Secure North Korea's Nuclear Arsenal: Report**

By P. Parameswaran, Agence France-Presse

WASHINGTON (AFP) - China has contingency plans to dispatch troops into North Korea and secure nuclear weapons in the event of instability in the hardline communist state, according to US experts who have talked to Chinese military researchers.

Any intervention by Beijing would be done as far as possible after consultations with the United Nations, but unilateral action was not ruled out, the experts said in a report published on the websites of two US think tanks.

"If deemed necessary, PLA troops would be dispatched into North Korea," the report said, referring to the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA).

"China's strong preference is to receive formal authorization and coordinate closely with the UN in such an endeavor," it said.

"However, if the international community did not react in a timely manner as the internal order in North Korea deteriorated rapidly, China would seek to take the initiative in restoring stability."

The report was compiled by experts from the Center for Strategic and International Studies and the US Institute of Peace -- which published the report -- and Asia Foundation following their visit to China in June last year.

A spokeswoman for China's foreign ministry on Tuesday said she was unaware of any Chinese strategy to send troops into North Korea to secure nuclear weapons, but did not outright deny that such a plan existed.

"I have never heard of nor seen the so-called plan mentioned in the report," spokeswoman Jiang Yu told reporters in Beijing, without commenting further.

North Korea, which reportedly has up to 10 nuclear

Yahoo.com  
January 8, 2008

**21. China Planning To**

bombs, is involved in a de-nuclearization program in return for energy aid and diplomatic and security guarantees under a six-party mechanism involving also the United States, China, Russia, South Korea and Japan.

The program hit a snag recently after Washington accused Pyongyang of not meeting a December 31 deadline for a full declaration of its nuclear programs.

"According to PLA researchers, contingency plans are in place for the PLA to perform three possible missions" in North Korea -- humanitarian and peacekeeping missions and "environmental control" measures, the report said.

The measures are intended "to clean up nuclear contamination resulting from a strike on North Korean nuclear facilities" near the Sino-North Korean border and "to secure nuclear weapons and fissile materials."

The report -- entitled "Keeping An Eye On An Unruly Neighbor: Chinese views of economic reform and stability in North Korea" -- said that in the event of instability in North Korea, China's main priority would be to prevent a flood of refugees.

This would be done by assuring supplies of food and strengthening border controls, it said.

"PLA officers maintain that they would attempt to close the border, but admit a lack of confidence that they could do so successfully, since the border extends 866 miles (1,394 kilometers) and can be easily penetrated," the report said.

US experts took pains to emphasize that nuclear concern was only one part of the US-China dialogue on North Korea issues among the think tank community.

"The range of issues discussed is comprehensive," Korea expert John Park of the US Institute of Peace told AFP. "Discussion of hypothetical

scenarios enables various parties to achieve a better understanding of nuanced views."

China's overall concerns about instability in North Korea, including on the nuclear issue, are not new as they share a long border, said China expert Bonnie Glaser of the Center for Strategic and International Studies.

"Just as the US is concerned about the possibility of instability in terms of nuclear weapons in Pakistan, the Chinese not surprisingly have concerns about control and security of nuclear facilities and nuclear weapons in the event of instability in North Korea," she said.

The US experts also discussed with Chinese specialists trends in North Korea's economy and prospects for reform, current trends in Sino-North Korean economic relations and China's policy toward North Korea in the wake of Pyongyang's October 2006 nuclear weapons test.

"I think the most important thing that has come out of it has really been increased understanding between experts on both sides about how we look at North Korea," Glaser said.

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Wall Street Journal (wsj.com)  
January 8, 2008

## **22. S. Korea To Call For Review Of Military Accord With U.S.**

SEOUL (AFP)--South Korea's next government will review a security deal pushed by outgoing President Roh Moo-Hyun to reduce the role of U.S. troops on the Korean peninsula, officials said Tuesday.

The alliance between Seoul and Washington faced drastic changes after Roh took office five years ago. Washington has agreed to return wartime control over South Korea's military in 2012.

"The issue of returning

wartime control needs a prudent review," the president-elect's transition team spokesman Lee Dong-Gwan told reporters after a session with the defense ministry.

"We should take a flexible approach on sensitive security issues," he said, citing North Korea's nuclear and missile programs.

He also said the incoming government of president-elect Lee Myung-Bak may revise plans to significantly reduce South Korean troop numbers.

The U.S. has stationed tens of thousands of troops in South Korea since the end of the 1950-1953 Korean War. But their numbers are being cut as part of a global realignment and they are being moved away from the heavily fortified border to assume a back-up role.

Currently, some 28,000 U.S. troops support the South's 680,000 soldiers against any threat from North Korea's 1.1 million-member military.

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Mideast Stars and Stripes  
January 9, 2008

## **23. U.S. Troops Wait For Kenya Violence To Calm**

*Servicemembers on humanitarian mission keep operations to minimum*

By Zeke Minaya, Stars and Stripes

The small contingent of U.S. servicemembers on a humanitarian mission in Kenya has all but ceased operations as they wait for the violence triggered by a disputed presidential election to subside.

The group of roughly 30 U.S. personnel has been hunkered down in a remote location in northeast Kenya since late December. No Americans have been hurt during violent clashes that have claimed nearly 500 lives.

"In Kenya we are keeping operations to a minimum as well as our movements throughout the country," said Air Force Maj. Jack Miller, a spokesman for the Combined

Joint Task Force—Horn of Africa. The task force, based in Djibouti, sent the group of American servicemembers to Kenya to dig water wells as part of wider humanitarian efforts through east Africa.

The task force is charged with building good will in the region in hopes of preventing anti-American extremism from spreading from the nearby Middle East.

Kenya was considered one of the more stable countries in eastern Africa before the results of the Dec. 27 elections ignited a wave of street clashes that included the burning of a church filled with villagers seeking sanctuary.

After the election, Kenyan President Mwai Kibaki remained in power and the U.S. State Department extended congratulations. But soon after, international observers reported ballot-counting irregularities and supporters of opposition leader Raila Odinga, a former Kibaki minister, took to the streets. European government leaders blasted the voting irregularities and pleaded for calm. The United States withheld any further recognition of the Kibaki victory as the dispute over the election unfolded.

CJTF—HOA leaders had been careful in the weeks leading up to the election to avoid any appearance of American involvement in Kenyan politics.

"We respect the sovereignty of Kenya, and we wanted to stay out of their affairs," Miller said.

Around Christmas Eve, the little more than 30 task force personnel based in two separate locations in the country consolidated into one camp. They have largely kept to themselves since, according to CJTF—HOA leaders.

Kenya has been one of the United States' staunchest allies in the region. It has provided military bases, communication networks and intelligence-sharing, officials

have said.

"For the eastern portion of Africa, Kenya is critical," retired Marine Lt. Gen. Michael DeLong, a former deputy commander of U.S. Central Command, told the Washington Times.

"They are strategically located in the area bordering Somalia," he said. "They were critical for us in Somalia in the early 1990s. Without them, we could not have operated. They allowed us to use their bases while we were conducting operations in and out of Somalia, and they still allow us to use those bases today."

"What we have here is one of the most promising countries in Africa on the brink," Michelle Gavin, an analyst at the Council on Foreign Relations, told the Times.

"Kenya is not peripheral to the struggle against terrorism."

USA Today  
January 9, 2008  
Pg. 3

## 24. Vets Miss Out On Benefits, Liaisons Say

*Many troops from all eras are unaware of financial, medical aid*

By Judy Keen, USA Today

CHICAGO — Many veterans never receive the federal and state benefits to which they're entitled because they're unaware they qualify for health care, tax breaks and other compensation, local liaisons to former troops say.

"They're entitled to these benefits. They just don't know they exist," says veterans service officer Darlene McMartin, who works in a county-funded office in Council Bluffs, Iowa. McMartin says she encounters veterans every day who don't know about her office and the services they provide.

There are 25 million veterans, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs says. In fiscal year 2006, it provided disability pay to 2.6 million of them, pensions to 320,000,

education benefits to 500,000, guaranteed home loans to 180,000 and health care to 5.5 million. It provided insurance to 4.5 million veterans and active-duty personnel.

The VA gives briefings and booklets about benefits to military personnel before they are discharged and sends each a "welcome home" packet with reminders and toll-free numbers. Even so, veterans often don't know they can get financial or medical help or increases in disability pay, says Jim Goltart, a veterans service officer in Le Center, Minn.

"A lot of veterans from all eras do not understand or know about their benefits," says John Scocos, secretary of the Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs. He wishes the federal VA would give outreach grants to state agencies.

Thirty states have county veterans service officers to provide information and help fill out applications; the rest have state or regional officers. Those advocates say reaching veterans is difficult:

•Many men and women who leave military service "put the green suit away and that's it," says Jim Lynch, veterans service officer in Valparaiso, Ind. Decades later, many develop health issues "and wonder what help they're entitled to." Long gaps can make it difficult to find records documenting injuries and illnesses during their service, he says.

•Ray Carroll, service officer in Panama City, Fla., says there are at least 22,000 veterans in Bay County. In 2007, his office saw 5,353 of them, including 441 new clients. Many more could qualify for benefits, he says. He runs ads in local media and holds an open house every Tuesday at a fire station.

•American Legion Post 266 in Tea, S.D., held its annual benefits forum Monday. "We're getting to some of the people ... but not all," district commander Richard Sievert

says.

•Mike Beard, service officer in Huntsville, Ala., hosted a "supermarket of benefits" at a shopping mall last month. Many widows of veterans of earlier wars never seek help, he says.

•In Fall River, Mass., Nagali Bouchard of the Veterans Association of Bristol County says most of the 15 new clients she sees each month have never sought medical care through the VA. "Sometimes," she says, "I guess they just fall through the cracks."

Legislation pending in the Senate would create a separate budget for VA outreach. The House of Representatives has passed a similar bill. "VA is conducting a very active outreach effort to recently returning veterans," federal VA spokesman Matt Smith says.

Houston Chronicle  
January 9, 2008

Pg. 1

## 25. Release Of Rape Evidence To KBR Raises Questions

*Army's role in turnover of items leads to inquiry by inspector general*

By David Ivanovich, Houston Chronicle Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON — The Defense Department's Inspector General is trying to learn why Army hospital personnel in Iraq who examined a former KBR worker after an alleged gang rape apparently turned the physical evidence over to KBR security officials.

Responding to an inquiry from Sen. Bill Nelson, D-Fla., Assistant Inspector General John Crane, in a Jan. 3 letter, said the Inspector General's office was looking into "whether and why Army officials turned the results of ... (the) rape examination over to company officials."

The Inspector General's office also is trying to learn how many other rape examinations have been

performed by U.S. military doctors in Iraq, as well as what steps federal departments are taking to ensure similar criminal cases are properly investigated.

Jamie Leigh Jones, 23, formerly of Conroe, told a House panel last month she was gang-raped in 2005, just days after arriving at Camp Hope in Baghdad's "Green Zone" to work for the Pentagon's largest military contractor.

Jones was taken to an Army support hospital for examination. The doctor took photographs and prepared what's known as a "rape kit," containing forensic evidence, and handed the materials over to KBR security personnel, Jones told the panel.

Officials for Houston-based KBR have said the kit was handed over to a company security coordinator and placed in a safe until investigators from the State Department's Bureau of Diplomatic Security — the department's law enforcement arm — arrived three hours later.

Jones testified that she spoke earlier this year with a special agent from the bureau, who was unaware of the rape kit's existence. Eventually, the agent found the kit, but the photographs and doctor's notes were missing, Jones said.

The bureau eventually turned over its evidence to the Justice Department, which has acknowledged it is conducting an investigation.

But questions about the chain of custody of the evidence could make prosecuting the case extremely difficult.

When turning over the evidence to the Justice Department, State Department officials did not make any formal recommendation regarding prosecution, Jeffrey Berner, assistant secretary of State for legislative affairs, told Nelson in a letter on Monday.

KBR spokeswoman Heather Browne declined to

comment Tuesday on the inspector general's probe.

Though the inspector general's office is looking into the chain-of-custody matter, Crane, in his letter to Nelson, noted that since Justice officials are investigating the alleged rape "no further investigation by this agency into the allegations ... is warranted."

On Capitol Hill, lawmakers are becoming increasingly frustrated with the slow pace of the investigation.

"Who is in charge here?" asked Rep. Ted Poe, R-Humble, who was instrumental in bringing Jones home from Iraq after the alleged attack.

"With a \$400 billion budget, you would think that the Defense Department would have the resources to protect Americans overseas and maybe even have a little left over to investigate allegations of criminal activity as well."

Since Jones went public with her story, her attorney Todd Kelly said last month, 11 women have come forward alleging sexual harassment while working for KBR in Iraq.

Neither Jones nor Kelly could be reached for immediate comment Tuesday.

*Chronicle reporter Michelle Mittelstadt contributed to this report.*

Milwaukee Journal Sentinel  
January 9, 2008

Pg. D1

## **26. Oshkosh, Partner To Bid For Military Vehicle Contract**

*Lightweight machines could replace Humvee*

By Rick Barrett

Oshkosh Truck Corp. has entered into a partnership with defense contractor Northrop Grumman Corp. to compete for a multibillion-dollar contract to build lightweight military vehicles that could replace or augment the current fleet of Humvees.

If selected for the Joint

Light Tactical Vehicle program, Oshkosh would design and manufacture the vehicles, while Northrop Grumman would be the prime contractor and systems integrator.

The duo joins a field of industry heavyweights that already have announced their intentions to compete for the contracts, potentially worth \$20 billion over the next decade. They include partnerships between Boeing Co. and Textron Inc., General Dynamics and Force Protection Inc., and Lockheed Martin Corp. and Armor Holdings Inc.

"We are going up against a bunch of heavy hitters in the defense industry," said Stephen Zink, Oshkosh Truck vice president of defense business.

Oshkosh has thousands of military trucks in Iraq and Afghanistan, where blast-resistant vehicles are needed to protect troops from roadside bombs and rocket-propelled grenades.

Insurgent attacks on vehicles have accounted for more than half the U.S. combat fatalities in Iraq, according to the military.

Humvees haven't fared well against attacks, even when the vehicles were equipped with armor. They were designed in the 1980s for a different type of tactical situation, said Ivan Oelrich with the Federation of American Scientists in Washington, D.C.

The latest requests for lightweight vehicles that provide better troop protection are the result of what's happened in Iraq, Oelrich said.

The Pentagon plans to release a request for proposals on Feb. 1, and award two or more contracts by June for the production of prototype vehicles. The prototypes will be due about 27 months after the contracts are awarded, according to the Army's Tank-Automotive and Armaments Command Web site.

Under another contract,

Oshkosh has already produced a concept vehicle that's bigger than a Humvee but smaller than some other trucks in the field.

The next generation of lightweight military vehicles are expected to be faster and more maneuverable than another line of combat trucks called mine-resistant ambush-protected vehicles, or MRAPs.

The new vehicles could be used for long-range surveillance purposes and as mobile command centers. They're expected to have features such as advanced weapons systems, night-vision capabilities, and diesel-electric hybrid engines that can run almost silently when necessary.

The new vehicles also could have electronic jamming devices and sophisticated communications equipment.

"Typically in the past, radios and communication gear were add-on systems. In today's requirements, they have to be integrated into the vehicle," Zink said.

Both the Army and Marines have said MRAPs are too heavy for their rapid response missions. But the needs of both services still have to be reconciled, since the Marines need vehicles capable of driving through water and the Army wants more emphasis placed on blast-proof armor.

The Humvee was designed as a vehicle to haul soldiers, but now the military is demanding more from it, said Ronald Hoffman, senior research physicist at the Aerospace and Mechanics Division of University of Dayton's Research Institute in Ohio.

The Army and Marines are looking at other vehicles because they realize the Humvee can't do everything, Hoffman said.

Baltimore Sun  
January 9, 2008

## **27. Lockheed Gets \$556 Million Pact**

Lockheed Martin Corp. said yesterday that the Army awarded it a \$556 million contract to provide hardware and other equipment for the Patriot missile defense system. The Bethesda-based company will produce 148 missiles and 17 launcher modification kits and provide program-management and engineering services.

Norfolk Virginian-Pilot  
January 9, 2008

## **28. Rep. Rob Wittman Stages Town Hall Meeting From Iraq**

By Dale Eisman, The Virginian-Pilot

WASHINGTON -- More than 60,000 Virginians from Fredericksburg to the Peninsula got an unusual phone call early Tuesday afternoon: Their congressman was on the line from Baghdad.

U.S. Rep. Rob Wittman took time out from a two-day visit with American troops and U.S. and Iraqi officials to conduct his first "tele-town hall" meeting and deliver an upbeat assessment of the war in Iraq.

"It really is going tremendously well here," he told them, citing "significant improvements" in security during the second half of 2007.

Wittman attributed the change to the addition of 30,000 U.S. troops and a new strategy that calls for the Americans to live in the Iraqi neighborhoods they're charged with protecting. He walked safely and saw children attending school Tuesday in areas that just a few months ago were ravaged by sectarian violence and attacks on U.S. troops, he said.

Wittman, a Republican, was elected Dec. 11 to succeed the late Jo Ann Davis in Virginia's 1st District. His office used an automated calling system to dial 67,000 numbers across his district shortly before 1 p.m. said Trainer Walsh, his



communications director. About 7,600 people listened in on at least part of the 75-minute session, Walsh said.

The format allowed participants to speak directly with Wittman by punching a number on their phone key pads and waiting to be called on.

While some constituents pressed him for more information about the situation in Iraq - "Have you heard anything go 'boom' lately?" one man wanted to know - others used the opportunity to bend his ear on issues ranging from illegal immigration to Social Security and prescription drug prices.

The residents who received the calls were selected from state voter registration records to represent a cross-section of the district, Walsh said, and the choice wasn't made based on party affiliation.

In addition to two days in Iraq, Wittman's trip includes stops in Jordan, where, he said, officials are struggling to deal with an estimated 400,000 Iraqi refugees, Lebanon and France.

New York Times  
January 9, 2008

## 29. Britain: Prison For Would-Be Jihad Fighter

By John F. Burns

Sohail Qureshi, a London dental technician who was arrested at Heathrow Airport in 2006 boarding a flight to Pakistan, was sentenced to four and a half years in prison in the first conviction under a new law against planning terrorism. The prosecutor said Mr. Qureshi, originally from Pakistan, planned a "two- to three-week operation" either in Pakistan or Afghanistan, possibly against Western troops. He was carrying nearly \$18,000, a telescopic night sight and a computer hard drive loaded with militant Islamic tracts, the court was told. Prosecutors said that he had trained with jihadist groups

in Pakistan linked to Al Qaeda and that his skills included encrypting e-mail messages. The court was also told of e-mail exchanges he had with Samina Malik, known as the "lyrical terrorist," who received a suspended sentence in November for keeping a library of terrorist material. Ms. Malik, a clerk at a Heathrow newsstand who wrote poetry limning her passion for Islamic militancy, received an e-mail message from Mr. Qureshi asking about security arrangements at Heathrow. According to the prosecution, she replied, "The airport security is as tight as ever."

Washington Post  
January 9, 2008

Pg. B2

## 30. Hearings Set On Hospital Expansion

The Navy is holding public hearings tonight and tomorrow night on its plans to expand the National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda. The expansion is part of the Pentagon's plan to close Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington in keeping with the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure recommendations.

The Navy released a draft environmental impact statement last month that offers two alternatives, each of which would add more than 1.6 million square feet of new and renovated space to the hospital. The plan can be reviewed at the Montgomery County Web site,

<http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov>

The hearings, from 6 to 8 each night at the Pooks Hill Marriott at 5151 Pooks Hill Rd., will offer opportunities to comment on the expansion, which has raised concerns that traffic congestion will worsen on Wisconsin Avenue.

The Montgomery County Planning Board is also tentatively scheduled to review the plan at 1 p.m. during its meeting tomorrow at park and planning headquarters, 8787 Georgia Ave. in Silver Spring.

-- Steve Vogel

Christian Science Monitor  
January 9, 2008

## 31. Declassified Study Puts Vietnam Events In New Light

*US signals intelligence during the war came up short in major turning points, according to an NSA history.*

By Peter Grier, Staff writer of The Christian Science Monitor  
WASHINGTON -- US signals intelligence – the much-vaunted ability of American military and spy units to eavesdrop on the radio calls and other electronic communications of an adversary – failed at crucial moments during the Vietnam War, according to a just-declassified National Security Agency history of the effort.

The 10,000 cryptographers and other signals personnel in Southeast Asia at the time did not predict the start of the Tet offensive on Jan. 31, 1968. Prior to that, signals intelligence may have actually misled President Johnson and other top policymakers about the nature of the 1964 Gulf of Tonkin incident, in which a supposed North Vietnamese attack on US forces triggered a major escalation in the war.

US eavesdroppers had many successes during the war, according to the lengthy document, particularly in picking up the tactical communications of North Vietnamese and Viet Cong fighters in the field.

But when it comes to major events, signals intelligence is not magic, as the history makes clear. That is a point current policymakers would do well to remember as they struggle to interpret intelligence dealing with the complex modern problems of nuclear proliferation and Islamist extremism.

In both the Tet and Gulf of Tonkin cases, "critical information was mishandled, misinterpreted, lost, or

ignored," writes NSA historian Robert Hanyok in the agency history.

Yet both were major turning points of the Vietnam conflict. The Gulf of Tonkin led to open US involvement in the fighting. Tet, though a tactical military defeat for the North, was a surprise for a US public that had been led to believe victory might be imminent. It may have contributed to declining support for the American intervention.

The Gulf of Tonkin incident occurred in early August 1964. On Aug. 2, North Vietnamese patrol boats attacked a US destroyer, the USS Maddox, in the Gulf of Tonkin, an arm of the South China Sea off Vietnam's northeastern coast. Mr. Johnson warned the North that another such attack would bring "grave consequences." On Aug. 4, Johnson announced that another attack had occurred and asked Congress to vote him powers to respond. On Aug. 7, Congress gave him those powers in the Gulf of Tonkin resolution, which became the legal foundation for increased US involvement.

Even at the time, some doubted that the second attack had occurred. Yet the Johnson administration produced what seemed a key piece of evidence – a North Vietnamese Navy after-action report, intercepted by the NSA, which appeared to discuss the battle.

In fact, the intercept had been mistranslated, according to the just-released report. The Vietnamese word for "military operations" can also mean "long movement," and the intercept in reality referred to the towing of two North Vietnamese patrol boats some distance for repairs.

Furthermore, US intelligence intercepted no communications or radar emissions associated with the assumed attack. Mr. Hanyok, the NSA historian, cites Sherlock Holmes, who famously once solved a case

because a dog did not bark, proving something did not occur.

"As Holmes would come to conclude that no crime was committed, so we must conclude that, since [signals intelligence] never intercepted anything associated with an attack, none ever occurred," Hanyok writes.

The Tet offensive erupted on Jan. 30, 1968, in which North Vietnamese forces and their Viet Cong allies attacked major cities in South Vietnam. The attack demoralized the US public and many of its political and military leaders. Just days earlier, US commander in chief Gen. William Westmoreland had assured them the enemy was largely beaten.

In terms of signals intelligence, Tet may have been an example of what intelligence analysts call the "Ultra problem," after the famous Ultra code breakers of World War II: the tendency of military and political leaders to look at electronic intercepts as gold, magic, and the keys to victory rolled into one.

At that period in the war, the overwhelming bulk of radio intercepts came from North Vietnamese army units operating in the demilitarized zone between the two countries, and the Central Highland region. Thus, that was where General Westmoreland focused his attention, and where he believed the next major attack would come.

Yet communist units in the South had learned radio discipline to hide their movements. US intelligence did pick up communications talking of an attack on Saigon and other cities, and even heard reference to an "N-day" of the offensive's launch.

But no one date was named as N-day. "The exact date remained unknown, and the other indicators were never fully realized in the NSA reporting," says the agency history.

Thus a major turning point

in the war was not predicted in advance, at least by eavesdropping and other electronic means.

With both the Gulf of Tonkin and Tet "it is easy to see how ... crimped analytic capability, especially in cryptanalysis, and the lack of sufficient qualified linguists affected NSA reporting," concludes Hanyok.

The NSA history of signals intelligence during the Vietnam conflict, "Spartans in Darkness: American SIGINT and the Indochina War, 1945-1975" was written in 2002. It is posted on the website of the Federation of American Scientists Project on Government Secrecy.

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New York Times  
January 9, 2008

## 32. We Still Need The Big Guns

By Charles J. Dunlap Jr.

Washington -- THE relative calm that America's armed forces have imposed on Iraq is certainly grounds for cautious optimism. But it also raises some obvious questions: how was it achieved and what does it mean for future defense planning?

Many analysts understandably attribute the success to our troops' following the dictums of the Army's lauded new counterinsurgency manual. While the manual is a vast improvement over its predecessors, it would be a huge mistake to take it as proof -- as some in the press, academia and independent policy organizations have -- that victory over insurgents is achievable by anything other than traditional military force.

Unfortunately, starry-eyed enthusiasts have misread the manual to say that defeating an insurgency is all about winning hearts and minds with teams of anthropologists, propagandists and civil-affairs officers armed with democracy-in-a-box kits and volleyball nets. They dismiss as passe killing or capturing insurgents.

Actually, the reality is quite different. The lesson of Iraq is that old-fashioned force works. Add 30,000 of the world's finest infantry to the 135,000 battle-hardened troops already there, as we have done, and the outnumbered insurgency is in serious trouble. Detain thousands more Iraqis as security threats, and the potential for violence inevitably declines. Press reports indicate that the number of Iraqis in prison doubled over the last year, to 30,000 from 15,000; and while casualty figures are sketchy, military officials told USA Today last September that the number of insurgents killed was already 25 percent higher in 2007 than in all of 2006.

And while the new counterinsurgency doctrine has an anti-technology flavor that seems to discourage the use of air power especially, savvy ground-force commanders in Iraq got the right results last year by discounting those admonitions. Few Americans are likely to be aware that there was a fivefold increase in airstrikes during 2007 as compared with the previous year, which went hand in hand with the rest of the surge strategy. Going high-tech once again proved to be highly successful.

Regrettably, two other uncomfortable developments also helped suppress violence. First, the Iraqi population has largely segregated itself into sectarian fiefs. Second, supposedly "reformed" insurgents now dominate Anbar Province. While these Sunni partisans have for the moment sided with the United States, can we assume they've bought into the idea of a truly pluralistic and democratic Iraq?

Nonetheless, fans of the counterinsurgency manual are using it as a bludgeon against anyone who wants to plan to fight the next war rather than the last one. Their line of thinking holds that our next war will be a replay of Iraq,

and thus most of our armed forces should be structured for counterinsurgency.

But this ignores other potential threats. Should we simply wish away China's increasing muscle, or a resurgent Russia's plans for a fifth-generation fighter that would surpass our top of the line jet, the F-22 stealth fighter? Moreover, does anyone really believe that creating corps of civil affairs officers will deter North Korea or Iran?

Yes, there is always the possibility that we may again find ourselves battling an insurgency, and the manual has many great ideas. Furthermore, the proposal for a 20,000-strong adviser corps to help Iraqi local forces fight insurgents ought to be green-lighted.

The problem emerges when we consider pouring excessive resources into preparing for only one kind of conflict. Doing so would put us at real risk of losing the technological superiority that has kept America's vastly more dangerous threats at bay. Consider, for example, that our warplanes are on average more than 25 years old.

The enormous cost of the Iraq war, not to mention the loss of life on both sides, would seem to counsel against the idea of a similar operation elsewhere. Looking ahead, America needs a military centered not on occupying another country but on denying potential adversaries the ability to attack our interests. This is not a task for counterinsurgents, but rather for an unapologetically high-tech military that substitutes machines for the bodies of young Americans.

*Charles J. Dunlap Jr. is an Air Force major general and the author of "Shortchanging the Joint Fight?," an assessment of the Army's counterinsurgency manual.*

January 9, 2008

Pg. 15

### 33. A Surge Against Maliki

By David Ignatius

A new movement to oust Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki is gathering force in Baghdad. And although the United States is counseling against this change of government, a senior U.S. official in the Iraqi capital says it's a moment of "breakthrough or breakdown" for Maliki's regime.

The new push against Maliki comes from Kurdish leaders, who, U.S. and Iraqi sources told me, sent him an ultimatum in late December. "The letter was clear in saying we are concerned about the direction of policies in Baghdad," said a senior Kurdish official. He described the Dec. 21 letter as "a sincere effort from the Kurdish parties to help the government reform -- or else."

The Kurds are upset that Maliki hasn't delivered on promises they say he made to them last summer, when he was trying to stave off an earlier attempted putsch. Maliki pledged then that his government would pass an oil law and a regional-powers law, and that it would conduct a referendum on the future of Kirkuk. None of these promises has been fulfilled, and the Kurds are angry.

The strongest anti-Maliki voice is Massoud Barzani, the dominant political leader in Kurdistan. Barzani agreed to back Maliki last summer after a personal telephone call from President Bush. Now, fuming about Turkish attacks across the border last month and the delay on Kirkuk, Barzani is on the warpath.

Ryan Crocker, the U.S. ambassador in Baghdad, met after Christmas in Kurdistan with Barzani and Jalal Talabani, the Iraqi president and the region's other ruling warlord. In a telephone interview yesterday from

Baghdad, Crocker said his message to the Kurds was: "We think everyone should be placing emphasis on making the government more effective, not on changing the government."

Although U.S. officials are counseling against removing Maliki, they agree that the prime minister must govern more effectively and inclusively in coming months -- or suffer the "breakdown" described by the senior U.S. official. "Clearly there is a sense among the Kurds, Sunnis and Shiites that the government isn't doing what it's supposed to do," he explained. "It needs to get better quick."

The anti-Maliki forces would like to replace him with Adel Abdul Mahdi, one of Iraq's vice presidents and a leader of the Supreme Islamic Iraqi Council, headed by Abdul Aziz al-Hakim. Mahdi's supporters think they can muster the 138 votes needed for a no-confidence vote in parliament, by combining 53 votes from the Kurdish parties with 55 from Sunni groups and 30 from Hakim's Islamic Council. Add another 40 votes from supporters of former prime ministers Ayad Allawi and Ibrahim al-Jafari, and you're close to the two-thirds majority needed to form a new government.

The rumor mill in Baghdad is already floating the names of officials who would take cabinet posts in a new government. The Kurds are said to want key security portfolios, perhaps including control over intelligence through the Ministry of National Security. Various candidates have been proposed to take over the Energy Ministry -- and halt what is said to be massive smuggling of oil from the southern Iraqi pipeline across the border to Iran.

The biggest obstacle to removing Maliki is the Shiite religious leader, Grand Ayatollah Ali Sistani, who is said to be frustrated with

Maliki's poor performance but wary of dividing the Shiite alliance. "Najaf [Sistani's headquarters] is unhappy," said one top Iraqi leader. But the senior U.S. official said he was "certain" that Sistani had not yet blessed any change of government.

Though Bush administration officials share the Iraqi frustration with Maliki, they fear that a change of regime would add delay and distrust to the already chaotic political scene in Baghdad. "How long would such a transition take? How long before they would form a new government?" worries a second senior U.S. official.

Rather than dumping Maliki, the administration hopes to work around him, by operating through a coalition known as the "three plus one." That group includes, in addition to Maliki, President Talabani and vice presidents Mahdi and Tariq al-Hashimi. "Our message to Maliki is that you can't govern solo. You have to govern as part of a group," says the second senior U.S. official. With a push from this governing alliance, Crocker hopes the Iraqi parliament will pass a law easing de-Baathification as early as the end of this week, and a budget by mid-January -- finally breaking the political logjam.

For an America caught up in its own political drama, the Baghdad primary seems remote. But what happens in Iraq during the next several weeks will shape events there for the rest of 2008. For Maliki, just back in Baghdad after a visit to London doctors for treatment for exhaustion, it's "make or break" time.

*The writer is co-host of PostGlobal, an online discussion of international issues.*

USA Today  
January 9, 2008  
Pg. 9

### 34. Fear And The

### Nuclear Terror Threat

*The mushroom cloud scenario has become a political fixture, as myths seem to be driving the debate.*

By Michael Levi

Politicians love to scare the wits out of people, and nothing suits that purpose better than talking about nuclear terrorism. From President Bush warning in 2002 that the "smoking gun" might be a mushroom cloud, to John Kerry in 2004 conjuring "shadowy figures" with a "finger on a nuclear button" and Mitt Romney invoking the specter of "radical, nuclear jihad" last spring, the pattern is impossible to miss. Indeed the three-part political strategy is simple. Describe the havoc an attack would wreak. Suggest that without big changes to American strategy, a successful strike is pretty much inevitable. And now that you have people's attention, deliver the closer: You have a foolproof plan for eliminating the threat.

With every week seeming to bring another nuclear bombshell, the candidates have plenty of fodder. The assassination of former Pakistani prime minister Benazir Bhutto in late December has refocused attention on that fragile nuclear-armed nation. In November, a uranium smuggling operation was busted in Slovakia; barely a week later, a new intelligence report revealed that Iran had shuttered part of its nuclear program, but Tehran continued to push forward with its dangerous efforts to produce nuclear fuel. No wonder people are worried.

Here's the reality. The nuclear threat is real and deserves our utmost attention. An atomic bomb detonated in the heart of a major American city could kill hundreds of thousands. But it would be tougher for terrorists to pull off a nuclear attack than many people assume. (A dirty bomb would be easier to make and deliver, but its impact would be

far less severe.) Many intelligence professionals know that, but our political culture doesn't do moderation. The first step to getting smart about defense, then, is to bust some popular myths about nuclear terrorism.

Start at the beginning: To pull off a plot, a terrorist group needs to get its hands on a bomb or on the materials it needs to make one. It would probably target a nuclear facility directly, maybe a military base in the former Soviet Union or a civilian reactor in an obscure corner of the world. That's a big reason why we need to do a much better job of securing those sites. Our imagination, though, tends to focus just as much on a shadowy black market where nuclear materials from the former Soviet Union are bought and sold so long as the price is right. That fear is fueled by regular reports of intercepted nuclear materials and by the success of Pakistani engineer A.Q. Khan in building a genuine worldwide black market in nuclear technology — but not in nuclear materials like uranium and plutonium.

Indeed when it comes to loose nukes, the black market image is misleading, since underground deals are hard for terrorists to engineer. Buyers and sellers need to worry about being turned in — many illicit transactions have actually been stings. Terrorists should also be nervous about getting ripped off. When drug smugglers work with people they don't already know and trust, they tend to keep deals small, about \$10,000 or less. A nuclear weapon or the materials for it would be worth millions.

If a group got its hands on nuclear materials, it would still need to build a bomb. To the Internet! The place is littered with tutorials on how to build nuclear weapons, and while a lot of what's out there is nonsense, there are places that get the basics right. (Suggestion for policymakers: Hire students who failed

physics to make as many instructional websites as they can.) The problem for terrorists is that, as anyone who has ever tried programming a VCR can tell you, instructions are the easy part.

When it comes to nukes, it's the engineering and the dirty work — machining, metalworking, electronics — that's tough, something that the Ph.D. physicists who think about terrorism often forget. Let's not kid ourselves: With the right team, a terrorist group might pull the job off. But we have a lot more leverage here than a lot of people think. A group that made it this far would also need to get its bomb into the USA. Here the doom and gloom is a bit more justified. The United States has long, porous borders, and right now it only inspects a fraction of the cargo that comes in through its ports. Still, not everything is as bad as it looks.

In 2006, U.S. government agents tried to smuggle weapons-grade uranium across the Canadian border. They made it through on three of four tries. Border security must be pretty useless, right? Not necessarily. Those odds of failing seem terrible from where we sit. But put yourself in the shoes of a terrorist leader contemplating a nuclear strike, add up all the other ways you might fail, and you might easily come to a different conclusion — and perhaps not even start a plot in the first place.

Given the consequence of a successful attack, we'd be fools to convert from nuclear zealots who think the sky is falling to nuclear atheists who reject the existence of a real threat. But like a cop who leaves his Kevlar vest at home because he assumes that all bad guys have armor-piercing bullets, we'll miss opportunities to confront the threat if we exaggerate it. Better to be pragmatic agnostics: We should be skeptical if we're told that pulling off a nuclear attack is easy, but we should be

smart about making it even harder.

*Michael Levi, a fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations, is author of the new book On Nuclear Terrorism.*

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New York Times  
January 9, 2008

### **35. Correction: For the Record**

A Military Memo article on Monday, about the current relationship between the military and the news media, referred incorrectly to Rear Adm. Greg Smith, director of communications for the top military command in Iraq, who commented on coverage of the war. He is the first public affairs officer of such rank to hold this post; he is not the first one-star public affairs officer in Baghdad. (From mid-June to mid-November of 2004, a Navy Reserve officer, Rear Adm. Greg Slavonic, served in Baghdad and held that distinction.)

**Editor's Note:** The article by Thom Shanker appeared in the *Current News Early Bird*, January 7, 2007.