

CURRENT NEWS

EARLY BIRD



January 11, 2008

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Story numbers indicate order of appearance only.

IRAQ

1. **Gates: Al Qaeda Almost Out Of Anbar**
(*Washington Times*)....Sara A. Carter
U.S. and Iraqi forces have nearly "cleared" the western Iraqi province of Anbar and Baghdad of al Qaeda terrorists and other insurgent groups, Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates said yesterday.
2. **U.S. Bombs Iraqi Insurgent Hideouts**
(*New York Times*)....Solomon Moore
American bombers and fighter aircraft dropped 40,000 pounds of bombs on suspected militant hide-outs, storehouses and defensive positions in the southern outskirts of Baghdad on Thursday, the United States military said.
3. **U.S. Airstrike In Iraq Reflects Targeted Efforts**
(*USA Today*)....Charles Levinson
A massive U.S. aerial bombing campaign launched in Iraq on Thursday attempted to strike a delicate balance — routing members of a newly resurgent al-Qaeda while trying to avoid civilian casualties that could alienate ordinary Iraqis.
4. **U.S. Planes Pound Area South Of Baghdad**
(*Washington Post*)....Joshua Partlow
In the span of 10 minutes Thursday, American warplanes dropped as much explosive south of Baghdad as they usually do in a month, a thundering barrage of more than 40,000 pounds of bombs intended to blow up stashes of insurgent weapons.
5. **A Sense Of Satisfaction, Then Anguish**
(*Washington Post*)....Amit R. Paley
U.S. troops on offensive pause to help a woman in labor, but diversion is fleeting.
6. **The Surge: A Status Report**
(*NBC*)....Jim Miklaszewski
It was a year ago tonight President Bush announced a change of strategy in Iraq. It was called the surge of 30,000 additional American troops. The war continues with a major new U.S. military push this week.
7. **U.S. Aircraft Launch Strike Against Al Qaeda In Iraq**
(*CNN*)....Barbara Starr
...U.S. war planes dropped 40,000 pounds of bombs in just 10 minutes on insurgent targets.

IRAN

8. **Iranian Boats May Not Have Made Radio Threat, Pentagon Says**
(*Washington Post*)....Robin Wright
The Pentagon said yesterday that the radio threat to bomb U.S. warships in the Persian Gulf last weekend may not

have come from the five Iranian Revolutionary Guard speedboats that approached them -- and may not even have been intended against U.S. targets.

9. **Iran Shows Its Own Video Of Vessels' Encounter In Gulf**

(New York Times)....Thom Shanker and Nazila Fathi

Iran released its own video Thursday of the encounter on Sunday between Iranian patrol boats and American naval vessels in the Strait of Hormuz in an effort to show that no confrontation occurred.

10. **UN Nuclear Chief Arrives In Iran**

(Seattle Times)....Nasser Karimi, Associated Press

The head of the U.N. nuclear watchdog began a two-day visit early Friday to discuss Iranian compliance with international demands over the country's nuclear program.

ARMY

11. **General Clears Army Officer Of Crime In Abu Ghraib Case**

(New York Times)....Reuters

The only United States Army officer to face a court-martial over the scandal at Iraq's Abu Ghraib prison has been cleared of any criminal wrongdoing in the case, the Army said Thursday.

12. **Army's Logistics Branch Is Inaugurated At Fort Lee**

(Richmond Times-Dispatch)....Peter Bacque

...Yesterday, Allen and about 100 other Army officers pinned on the emblem of the service's newest branch: Logistics, symbolically uniting historically separate Quartermaster, Ordnance and Transportation soldiers.

NAVY

13. **Two Years Later, 40,000 Strong**

(Norfolk Virginian-Pilot)....Louis Hansen

As he welcomed the Navy's newest cadre of bomb-disposal technicians Thursday, Rear Adm. Donald K. Bullard had words of thanks – and warning.

AIR FORCE

14. **Air Force Indefinitely Grounds Many F-15 Jets**

(Washington Post)....Josh White

The Air Force will keep more than 40 percent of its older model F-15 fighter jets grounded indefinitely after discovering that critical support beams have manufacturing flaws dating back nearly 30 years that could lead to catastrophic damage to the aircraft.

15. **Air Force Seeks To Trace Liability For Fatal F-15 Flaw**

(Los Angeles Times)....Julian E. Barnes

The Air Force is reviewing decades-old contracts to determine whether manufacturers of U.S. fighter jets bear responsibility for a defect that caused one of the planes to break apart in flight late last year, officials said Thursday.

16. **TV News Coverage From Pentagon Correspondents**

(ABC, CBS, CNN)....Jonathan Karl; David Martin; Jamie McIntyre

Three Thursday evening news reports on issues surrounding the combat readiness of the F-15.

MARINE CORPS

17. **Marine Shooter Seeks Immunity In Afghan Case**

(Los Angeles Times)....David Zucchino

A Marine who fired at least 200 machine-gun rounds during a March incident that left as many as 19 Afghans dead will not testify before a special court of inquiry unless he is granted immunity, his civilian lawyer said Thursday.

DEFENSE DEPARTMENT

18. **Inside The Ring**
(*Washington Times*)....Bill Gertz
Coughlin backed; Analysts threatened; CIFIUS update; Wrong signal.

ASIA/PACIFIC

19. **U.S. Satellites Dodge Chinese Missile Debris**
(*Washington Times*)....Bill Gertz
Two orbiting U.S. spacecraft were forced to change course to avoid being damaged by the thousands of pieces of space debris produced after China carried out an anti-satellite weapon test one year ago today.
20. **Japan Revives Mission Aiding U.S. Ships**
(*Los Angeles Times*)....Associated Press
Japan's ruling coalition forced a bill through parliament today to revive a U.S.-backed anti-terrorism mission in the Indian Ocean, clearing the way for Japanese ships to return to the region.
21. **North Korea: U.S. Suggests A New Nuclear Deadline**
(*New York Times*)....Choe Sang-Hun
Christopher R. Hill, the State Department's point man on North Korea, urged it to give a full accounting of its nuclear weapons programs before Lee Myung-bak, the new president of South Korea, who is inclined to offer the North more sticks and fewer carrots, takes office on Feb. 25.
22. **'I Challenge Anybody Coming Into Our Mountains'**
(*Singapore Straits Times*)....Anthony Paul
Mr Pervez Musharraf, Pakistan's embattled president, warned that any unilateral intervention in his country by coalition forces fighting in Afghanistan would be treated as an invasion.
23. **Musharraf On Bhutto And Taleban**
(*Singapore Straits Times*)....Anthony Paul
Pakistan's President Pervez Musharraf speaks to Straits Times senior writer Anthony Paul in a wide-ranging interview at his office in Rawalpindi on Wednesday.

EUROPE

24. **Putin Names Nationalist To NATO Post**
(*Washington Post*)....Peter Finn
President Vladimir Putin on Thursday appointed a prominent nationalist and political gadfly as Russia's new permanent representative to NATO, a decision that signals the Kremlin's determination to confront the military alliance across a host of divisive issues.
25. **Poland And Czech Republic Will Coordinate Negotiations On Missile Defense Shield**
(*International Herald Tribune*)....Judy Dempsey
The Polish and Czech governments agreed Thursday to coordinate negotiations with the United States over deploying elements of a shield against ballistic missiles, a change of strategy aimed at obtaining better conditions at meetings next week in Washington and at easing tensions with Russia, Polish officials said.

AMERICAS

26. **U.S. Counter-Drug Aid Sought**
(*Miami Herald*)....Pablo Bachelet
Dismayed at being perceived as an afterthought to a massive counter-drug aid package for Mexico, Central American nations are asking for hundreds of millions for themselves, according to diplomats and U.S. government officials.

GUANTANAMO

27. **Photo Reverberates 6 Years Later**
(*Miami Herald*)....Carol Rosenberg
The first surprise may be that the most damning, enduring images of the prison camps at Guantánamo were taken by a U.S. sailor doing his job.

BUSINESS

28. **Defense Giants May Resume Bidding War**
(*Washington Post*)....Unattributed
Lockheed Martin of Bethesda may bid against Northrop Grumman for the Army's Aerial Common Sensor surveillance aircraft in a rematch of a competition four years ago, a Lockheed spokesman said. Lockheed won the \$879 million contract for the aircraft in 2004, but the program was terminated in 2006 due to cost and other factors.
29. **BAE Wins \$2.3 Bn US Order For Bomb-Disposal Vehicles**
(*Financial Times*)....Alistair Gray
BAE Systems has won a deal with the US government to supply bomb-disposal vehicles, easing concerns about the prospects for its armoured vehicle business in the event of a troop reduction in Iraq.
30. **New Budget Favors Boeing's Top Rivals**
(*Chicago Tribune*)....Edmond Lococo and Tony Capaccio, Bloomberg News
The last defense budget the Bush administration will present to Congress showers more money on Lockheed Martin Corp. and Northrop Grumman Corp. than any of the previous seven, at the expense of Chicago-based Boeing Co.
31. **MRAP Builders Deliver 1,187 Trucks In December, Short Of Gates' Goal**
(*InsideDefense.com*)....Jason Sherman
Armored truck builders produced 1,187 Mine Resistant Ambush Protected vehicles in December, according to an internal Pentagon document, just shy of the year-end monthly production target of 1,280 vehicles that Defense Secretary Robert Gates set in July.

BASE REALIGNMENT AND CLOSURE

32. **Navy's Hospital Road Aid Is Faulted**
(*Washington Post*)....Steve Vogel
A frustrated Montgomery County Planning Board called on the federal government yesterday to pay more for transportation improvements needed for the expansion of the naval hospital in Bethesda, saying the Navy has provided too little information and promised too little help.

OPINION

33. **The Surge At One**
(*New York Post*)....Ralph Peters
...So here we are: The surge worked. It achieved all that we can expect of our military. 2008 will tell us whether the politicians and diplomats, US and Iraqi, can do their part. And a final note: The Post had over a week's advance warning of Operation Phantom Phoenix, but didn't publish it. We don't share our nation's secrets with our enemies.
34. **Needed: Strategy For Space Protection**
(*Washington Times*)....Terry Everett
A year ago this week, the People's Republic of China launched one of its ballistic missiles and destroyed a satellite orbiting overhead, creating a field of debris expected to stay in orbit for decades to come. It should have been a call to action, yet a year later, our policies and strategies do not reflect our increasing dependence on space. We need a comprehensive space protection strategy.
35. **Foul Play**
(*Washington Times*)....Diana West
...When such advice brings the military's woefully belated education on jihad to a halt, it becomes shockingly clear that the Pentagon is more concerned with political correctness than protecting the nation.
36. **North Korea's True Colors**
(*Wall Street Journal*)....John Bolton
There's more positive news from the Democratic Peoples Republic of Korea: Its leaders have refused to make any further disclosure concerning its nuclear programs.

Washington Times
January 11, 2008
Pg. 1

1. Gates: Al Qaeda Almost Out Of Anbar

By Sara A. Carter

U.S. and Iraqi forces have nearly "cleared" the western Iraqi province of Anbar and Baghdad of al Qaeda terrorists and other insurgent groups, Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates said yesterday.

Mr. Gates stopped short of announcing when control of Anbar would be returned to Iraqi forces during a press conference at the Pentagon, but the Associated Press reported yesterday that Marine Maj. Gen. Walter E. Gaskin said the transfer would be ready by March, adding that violence there dropped significantly.

Under a plan accepted by the Iraqi government, U.S. Ambassador Ryan Crocker and Gen. David H. Petraeus, who is the commander of the multinational force in Iraq, the transfer will occur in March, followed by a ceremony in April, Gen. Gaskin told the AP.

Anbar had been considered a stronghold of al Qaeda and was where much of the Sunni Arab insurgency occurred during the first years of the war.

During yesterday's press conference, Mr. Gates said that in the past year "Iraqi security forces have grown in capability, confidence and size, expanding by more than a 100,000."

The most recent province to be put back under Iraqi control was Basra, which reverted in December. So far nine of the nation's 18 provinces are under Iraqi security forces.

Mr. Gates said he "expects this transfer [of provinces] to continue" in the future.

The continuing gains in securing the region "are on track to carry out the reductions that General Petraeus talked about and that the president approved last September" in regard to U.S.

troops, Mr. Gates said.

Iraqi Defense Minister Abdul-Qader al-Obeidi, who appeared with Mr. Gates at the Pentagon, said extensive cooperation between U.S. and Iraqi forces to regain control of the nation have proved successful in driving terrorists out of their former strongholds.

"The American people stood by us and the American government stood by us, so that we can achieve real victory against the terrorists, especially in 2007," Mr. al-Obeidi said through an interpreter.

He said he thought Anbar could now be transferred into Iraqi control.

"I can say that Anbar province, which was the hottest area of Iraq, does not now need any [U.S.] forces," Mr. al-Obeidi said, adding that he thinks Iraqis may be capable of taking over security from U.S. troops by 2009.

Mr. Gates was more cautious, saying that work in the region is still not complete and that U.S. forces will continue to work with their Iraqi counterparts to ensure continued progress.

"As significant as the progress has been, the deaths of nine U.S. servicemen announced [Wednesday] is a stark reminder of the work that remains to be done and of the risks that coalition and Iraqi troops take every day," Mr. Gates said.

He added that, under Mr. al-Obeidi's leadership, the Iraqi military has played "a crucial, indeed, indispensable role in this effort," adding that last year's initiative by the president to increase U.S. forces in Iraq — have aided in reducing violence in Iraq and securing the provinces.

"Security gains from this effort have been notable," he said. "The number of IED attacks per week has declined by half."

According to the Department of Defense, high-profile attacks, car bombs and suicide attacks are down 60 percent since March.

Civilian deaths are down 75 percent from a year ago.

Iraqi civilian death toll since the war began is estimated to be at 151,000, according to a World Health Organization (WHO) report released yesterday. The data were gathered with the cooperation of the Iraqi government and WHO organizers who went door to door conducting surveys of 10,000 homes.

The WHO figures are significantly lower than in the 2006 Johns Hopkins University study, which estimated 600,000 Iraqi deaths since the war began in 2003.

New York Times
January 11, 2008

2. U.S. Bombs Iraqi Insurgent Hideouts

By Solomon Moore

BAGHDAD — American bombers and fighter aircraft dropped 40,000 pounds of bombs on suspected militant hide-outs, storehouses and defensive positions in the southern outskirts of Baghdad on Thursday, the United States military said.

In one of the largest airstrikes in recent months, two B-1 and four F-16 aircraft dropped 38 bombs within 10 minutes near the Latifiya district south of Baghdad, the military said. The airstrikes were accompanied by a large Iraqi and American ground assault.

The air attack was part of a nationwide joint offensive that includes a continuing sweep in Diyala Province, north of Baghdad, and raids Thursday in Salahuddin Province, northwest of the capital, between Samarra and Ramadi.

The offensive took place as attacks against Iraqi security forces, American soldiers and Sunni Arab militias allied with the United States increased in the last few weeks. A series of suicide bombings, assassinations and car bombings has threatened to reverse the downward trend in

violence, especially in Baghdad, where dozens of people have been killed since the new year.

Sixteen Americans have died this year, nine of them on Tuesday and Wednesday as soldiers tried to drive Sunni Arab insurgents out of their sanctuaries in Diyala Province. Despite the high death toll, American soldiers have met surprisingly little overall resistance during the sweep, and military officials suspect that insurgents were tipped off beforehand.

The American airstrikes on Thursday took place in an area densely blanketed with tall grasses and palm trees and rutted with irrigation canals. United States military officials have identified it as a haven for militants linked to Al Qaeda in Mesopotamia, the largely homegrown Sunni insurgent group that American intelligence says is foreign-led and now represents a serious threat to stability in Iraq.

The air attacks hit more than 40 targets, the military said.

Iraqi Army officials said they were certain that the airstrikes had killed many insurgents but added that they were unable to conduct an official body count by nightfall. Dozens of suspected insurgents were detained during the assault, Iraqi Army officials said.

Residents of the area said they saw other insurgents speeding along remote roads on motorcycles, and trucks with mortar rocket launchers and rifles.

Several days of sporadic bombing around Latifiya and Arab Jabour culminated around 8 a.m. Thursday in concentrated airstrikes near the two towns, according to Abu Amna, a tribal chief who lives in the area.

"There was a big sound of explosions," he said in a phone interview. Mr. Amna is a leader of one of hundreds of groups known as Concerned Local Citizens, a Sunni Arab

tribal movement that has turned against Al Qaeda in Mesopotamia. "People began to flee the area after the air assault," he said, because joint forces began a comprehensive raid after the bombing.

Col. Terry Ferrell, commander of the Second Brigade, Third Infantry Division, said that an extraordinary amount of firepower was necessary to clear areas that American forces had long neglected.

During a house search in Diyala on Wednesday, six American soldiers and an interpreter of unknown nationality were killed when insurgents detonated a bomb inside the structure.

Thursday's bombing run was intended to avoid that kind of trap. Colonel Ferrell said that insurgents near Latifiya and Arab Jabour had built elaborate defenses, including roads lined with powerful bombs, booby-trapped houses and ambush positions.

"Specifically, we were looking to clear the ground against known targets and threats that could harm our soldiers, the Concerned Local Citizens and the Iraqi security forces," Colonel Ferrell said. "We were targeting caches and improvised explosives devices."

The bombing run was also intended to dislodge insurgents from their hiding places, said Maj. Gen. Uthman Al-Ghanimi, commander of the Eighth Division of the Iraqi Army, which provided the bulk of the ground forces for the attack. The general said that about 850 Iraqi soldiers and 150 American soldiers took part in the assault.

One measure of the sophistication of the insurgents, many of whom are former Iraqi military officers, is that their hide-outs and weapons caches were placed in a remote area between two Iraqi Army divisions, General Ghanimi said.

American and Iraqi officials said that the airstrikes

destroyed several weapons caches, a car bomb and two houses rigged with explosives.

During the air assault, United States helicopters carried Iraqi and American soldiers into the area to conduct a ground sweep and to block fleeing suspected insurgents, according to another high-ranking Iraqi Army officer who declined to be identified because he is not allowed to speak to the news media.

American military officials praised the tribal militias for providing information on insurgent locations, weapons stores and ambush sites.

Sunni Arab militias, about 80,000 members strong throughout Iraq, have brought relative calm to many areas in western Anbar Province and Baghdad that had long resisted security operations by American and Iraqi forces.

Ammar Falah, another tribal militia member near Latifiya, said that he and his fellow tribesmen had been fighting Qaeda insurgents since last month.

"We clashed with Al Qaeda two weeks ago, and with American help we were able to regain control of two towns," Mr. Falah said. "We lost two of our men. After we took control of these towns, we held a celebration and we were able to bring back 150 out of 200 families that had been displaced by Al Qaeda."

Mr. Falah said that civilian casualties in his area were avoided Thursday because American forces instructed his group to warn residents to leave the area.

Mr. Falah said that Thursday's heavy bombardment followed days of more limited airstrikes.

"Ten days ago three women and two children were killed by mistake by American bombings targeting Al Qaeda," he said.

Um Yasir, a 50-year-old homemaker, said that several bombs landed about 500 yards from her home while she was

doing chores.

Um Yasir, who said that hers was one of only three families who had not been driven from her village by Al Qaeda in Mesopotamia, said she fled with her children and grandchildren to a relative's house and watched American bombs slam into nearby palm groves.

"I saw smoke coming from the bombed area and I saw gunmen moving out of the area," she said. "They were carrying their guns."

In other violence, improvised explosives killed two people in downtown Baghdad, and a car bomb killed one person in east Baghdad. At least 11 people were wounded in the two incidents.

Iraqi police officers found three bodies in Baghdad and one in the southern city of Hilla.

Iraqi police officials said they killed a suspected insurgent 50 miles north of Baquba and wounded another man as he tried to plant an improvised bomb.

In the northern city of Kirkuk a roadside bomb killed two Iraqi soldiers and wounded another soldier.

And in the holy city of Karbala, Shiite pilgrims continued to arrive for Ashura, an annual observance of the death of Imam Hussein Ali, a moment that cemented the birth of Shiism.

Khalid al-Ansary and Qais Mizher contributed reporting.

USA Today
January 11, 2008
Pg. 6

3. U.S. Airstrike In Iraq Reflects Targeted Efforts

By Charles Levinson, USA Today

BAGHDAD — A massive U.S. aerial bombing campaign launched in Iraq on Thursday attempted to strike a delicate balance — routing members of a newly resurgent al-Qaeda

while trying to avoid civilian casualties that could alienate ordinary Iraqis.

U.S. planes attacked a rural Sunni area southeast of Baghdad with 40,000 pounds of bombs during a 10-minute period. That surpassed the tonnage that previously had been dropped there during an average month, said Maj. Alayne Conway, a U.S. military spokeswoman.

The attacks targeted suspected al-Qaeda weapons caches, supply lines and bombmaking sites, Conway said. No civilian casualties were immediately reported, she said, reflecting a central focus of the U.S. military's year-old counterinsurgency strategy: winning the support of the local population.

U.S. commanders have repeatedly cited better cooperation from Iraqis as a main reason for a dramatic drop in violence since last summer.

"You saw a lot more damage to the civilian population in 2004 than you're seeing now. Even though you have a huge uptick in offensive operations, it looks like the military is taking greater care not to harm civilians," said Colin Kahl, a security studies professor at Georgetown University.

The airstrikes are part of a broad U.S. offensive launched this week to counter al-Qaeda in Iraq, which had been showing signs of a revival in Baghdad and elsewhere amid a spate of recent suicide bombings.

Iraqi casualty statistics are not regularly provided by the U.S. military or the Iraqi government and can be difficult for other groups to track with precision.

Iraq Body Count, a British non-governmental organization that has compiled casualty figures based primarily on media reports since the war started, says U.S. forces caused an average of 63 Iraqi civilian deaths per month in 2007 — down from 169 per month in

2004. The apparent decline in civilian casualties comes despite a greater U.S. troop presence in Iraq during the past year and an increase in the emphasis of air power.

There were 1,119 airstrikes through mid-December, according to U.S. Central Command Air Forces — about five times the number in 2006.

The U.S. military has become more selective in choosing its targets, taking care to avoid those that might cause heavy civilian casualties.

"The planning has gotten a lot better," said Maj. Joe Edstrom, a military spokesman. "A lot of people have taken past lessons to heart."

Edstrom said al-Qaeda has been pushed out of heavily populated urban areas and into more desolate rural hamlets, where U.S. forces run less chance of harming civilians.

The bombings also have become more accurate, thanks in part to cooperation from locals who help identify targets.

"We've developed much stronger bonds with the Iraqi populace than we had in 2004, and so we're getting better intelligence, and I think that helped to reduce the numbers of civilian casualties," Edstrom said.

The new anti-insurgent campaign, dubbed Operation Phantom Phoenix, has targeted areas immediately outside Baghdad, such as Diyala province, where al-Qaeda is still strong.

A scheduled withdrawal of some U.S. troops later this year has added urgency to efforts to root out remaining insurgents.

Brig. Gen. James Boozer said in an interview with CNN that al-Qaeda fighters relied on Diyala "as a sanctuary, a safe haven where they go refit, rearm and plan some of their spectacular attacks."

Even if Iraqi civilians are paying less of a price, U.S. soldiers have seen a flurry of casualties in recent days. At

least nine U.S. troops have been killed in two incidents since Tuesday, when the new campaign began.

"You're seeing an increase in casualties because we're at the front end of the operation, but as they gain control of the fighting area you'll see those casualties come down," Kahl said.

Washington Post
January 11, 2008
Pg. 10

4. U.S. Planes Pound Area South Of Baghdad *Huge Strike Aimed At Weapons Caches*

By Joshua Partlow,
Washington Post Foreign Service

BAGHDAD, Jan. 10 -- In the span of 10 minutes Thursday, American warplanes dropped as much explosive south of Baghdad as they usually do in a month, a thundering barrage of more than 40,000 pounds of bombs intended to blow up stashes of insurgent weapons.

The B-1 bombers and F-16 fighter jets dropped 38 bombs in the opening minutes of the operation, which was aimed at three main areas of Arab Jubour, a rural district on the outskirts of the capital that became a focal point of the U.S. military troop buildup last year.

"This is al-Qaeda in Iraq, one of their last safe havens in our area of operations," said Sgt. 1st. Class Randal Maynard, a U.S. military spokesman. "And we're going in, choking them out from our region."

The bombing campaign, which targeted caches of roadside bombs first identified by surveillance drones, was the most intensive aerial bombardment in the southern region. It came as part of the military's overall offensive, known as Phantom Phoenix, underway now in several parts of the country. While ground forces continued to pursue insurgents in Diyala province

north of Baghdad, the warplanes tried to clear the southern territory of the bombs that have regularly destroyed American armored vehicles.

"These were some big IEDs buried in the ground," Maynard said, using the military abbreviation for improvised explosive device, or roadside bomb. "Had the soldiers drove up on these IEDs it could have caused six to eight deaths."

Maynard said there was no immediate estimate of how many people died in the bombings, because the U.S. military has not yet explored the area on the ground to "validate any kills."

Arab Jubour lies along the Tigris River amid lush tracts of palm groves, fields and grasslands. Before the American military troop buildup last year, it had become an essentially ungoverned enclave, devoid of Iraqi policemen and dominated by Sunni insurgents. As U.S. soldiers attempted to crack down on the rural lands around Baghdad, they erected a makeshift base there and sent regular patrols down the often bomb-riddled roads.

These operations, along with the rise of Sunni volunteer forces aligned with U.S. soldiers here, have been followed by a sharp drop in violence. But commanders regularly say that al-Qaeda in Iraq still keeps a foothold in the area, and the bombing operation was a sign that they are still seen as a threat to the American military.

Special correspondent Zaid Sabah contributed to this report.

Washington Post
January 11, 2008
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5. A Sense Of Satisfaction, Then Anguish

U.S. Troops on Offensive Pause to Help a Woman in Labor, but Diversion Is Fleeting

By Amit R. Paley, Washington Post Foreign Service

TAIYEH, Iraq -- The distress call rang out over the radio. In the midst of one of the largest current military operations in Iraq, Capt. Mike Stinchfield recognized this was, so far, his most urgent mission of the day.

A captured insurgent? A fallen comrade? Not quite. A local woman had gone into labor, and within minutes about 18 U.S. soldiers endeavored to help.

"That's a lot of men to secure a baby," said Stinchfield, 37, of Vancouver, Wash., the commander of Company H, 3rd Squadron of the Army's 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment. "But that's what this war is like. It's slow and boring most days, and not much happens."

Thousands of U.S. soldiers are moving against one of the largest known concentrations of fighters from the group al-Qaeda in Iraq here in a 50-square-mile pocket of Diyala province known as the Bread Basket. Company H expected resistance from 40 to 50 fighters from the Sunni insurgent group, but most of them appeared to have fled by the time the unit rolled in.

In the end, Company H didn't fight a single person. What had been envisioned as a combat mission instead became a day of emergency-service work, hours of boredom and finally tragedy as word of fallen comrades reached them over the radio inside their Strykers, eight-wheel armored vehicles.

"I'm sitting here eating Cheez Whiz and Cheez-Its, which I realize might seem weird," Stinchfield said. "But I'd rather be doing things like delivering a baby than shooting people."

It was just past noon Wednesday, Day 2 of this offensive in the fertile Diyala River valley. The soldiers had been given the location of a suspected local leader of al-Qaeda in Iraq in the village

of Al Ali.

But when they arrived at the home of the man, known as Abu Ayeesha, he was nowhere to be seen. His wife refused to answer questions.

The village was quiet. A teenager rode past on a bicycle carrying a lumpy sack on the back. Stinchfield stopped him.

"It's flour! Just flour!" the boy pleaded in Arabic to the military interpreter.

Stinchfield didn't respond. He looked at the boy's black coat, with the name Oscar embroidered in gold.

"Is your name Oscar?" he asked.

"No, Fouad!" the boy said.

"Well, that says your name is Oscar," Stinchfield said with a laugh. "It's an American name."

The boy looked confused, then pedaled furiously down the street.

Stinchfield returned to his Stryker, passing through a door bearing the soldiers' graffiti: "SHOW NO MERCY TO A MAN WHO SHOWS YOU NONE." They moved out and drove along a small canal that cut through several tiny villages.

Staff Sgt. David Rozmarin delivered a Catskills-in-combat shtick, with Stinchfield the straight man to the 26-year-old from Omaha.

"When are you people gonna learn it's called crick, not creek?" Rozmarin said, referring to the canal. "That's C-R-I-C-K. Crick."

"I've got a crick in my neck from all this," said Spec. Aaron Bacon, 21, of Noblesville, Ind.

Inside the Stryker, the soldiers scoured a map for areas where insurgents could hide. Then they called in mortar strikes.

A few minutes later: Thud. Thud. The mortar shells landed nearby. And then the radio came alive with news of the pregnant woman.

"This lady's about to pop!" someone yelled.

Sgt. Levar Scott, 28, of New Orleans, the company

medic, rushed to the site along with more than a dozen men. Scott had assisted in only one previous delivery -- that of his son, now 5.

"A baby in combat," Scott said, shaking his head. "This is just crazy."

The woman lay on a mattress on the floor. She screamed occasionally through a piece of black cloth stuffed in her mouth.

The soldiers quickly discovered that her last delivery had been by Caesarean section, meaning she probably needed surgery and hospital care for this delivery, too. After some frantic scrambling, the soldiers arranged safe passage for the woman and her family, despite a ban on car traffic during the offensive.

"So has the war started yet?" Rozmarin asked when he returned to the Stryker.

Lunchtime. The soldiers tore open their MREs, standard military-issue food packets called Meals Ready to Eat.

"It can be very deceptive," Stinchfield said. "The enemy is out there. They just don't want to tangle with us in a direct manner."

The radio crackled with a new alarm -- a booby-trapped house, U.S. soldiers hurt. Six casualties.

Rozmarin put down his Dan Brown novel, which he said he found in a dumpster. The casualties were from another company. H Company had a platoon assigned to it.

Suddenly, another distress signal. The pregnant woman was trying to cross the river on her way to the hospital, but U.S. soldiers would not let her through. Stinchfield looked concerned.

He got on the radio to ask for help. "I know you're dealing with these casualties, but I've still got this situation with the pregnant woman."

The radio gave the next update on the soldiers' status: "Three are urgent."

Then came word that the pregnant woman had crossed

U.S. lines.

As a voice on the radio announced that four casualties had been airlifted from the site of the house bomb, Stinchfield left the Stryker to talk to villagers. He walked past Pfc. Cameron Houston, 22, of Silver City, N.M., who muttered a few obscenities.

"We've been walking around doing nothing today," Houston said.

Stinchfield asked locals about al-Qaeda in Iraq. But he worried that few of them were answering honestly because they felt intimidated.

He asked Yasin Hamed Awad al-Jabour, a 68-year-old farmer in Taiyeh, about masked men seen running through the neighboring town of Himbuz as U.S. soldiers entered. Jabour said they were not part of the insurgency.

His 6-year-old grandson, Yasin Khalid, joined in. "No, no, no. We haven't seen any al-Qaeda."

"Who told you to say that?" Stinchfield asked.

The boy looked confused, and his father ushered him away.

Stinchfield sighed. "There is not black and white," he said. "That's what I learned. There's a lot of gray here in Iraq."

"In no way is this war going to be solved militarily," he added.

In a call to his platoon commanders just before 4 p.m., Stinchfield said he didn't know yet what platoon had been hit by the bombing.

"Watch your guys," he said, enunciating each syllable slowly. "Make sure they are not complacent just because it's quiet."

At 4:30 p.m., the company received an update. The pregnant woman had reached a hospital in the city of Muqdadiah. Stinchfield said he would check on her status that night.

But soon the radio sounded with three grim initials: KIA. One of their squadron members had been

killed in action. Six were seriously wounded, two others lightly.

Standing on the dusty street as the sun set, Stinchfield had trouble finding his voice. "I knew all the guys in that group," he said after a long pause.

He stopped talking and shook his head, over and over.

Back in the Stryker about 6 p.m., Rozmarin wasn't joking anymore. He provided the updated numbers that had come over the radio. "Six KIA?" Stinchfield asked in disbelief. "Damn. Are you sure?"

"They still haven't said if they were yours," Rozmarin said.

Silence.

"Okay," Stinchfield finally replied.

NBC

January 10, 2008

6. The Surge: A Status Report

NBC Nightly News, 7:00 PM

BRIAN WILLIAMS: It was a year ago tonight President Bush announced a change of strategy in Iraq. It was called the surge of 30,000 additional American troops. The war continues with a major new U.S. military push this week. Our Pentagon correspondent, **Jim Miklaszewski**, has a status report.

JIM MIKLASZEWSKI: U.S. troops on the offensive today against al Qaeda south of Baghdad, where Air Force bombers pounded al Qaeda targets with 40,000 pounds of bombs in 10 minutes, one of the biggest air strikes of the war. All this one year after President Bush laid out a series of benchmarks he predicted would turn around the war.

PRES. GEORGE W. BUSH: The new strategy I outline tonight will change America's course in Iraq.

MIKLASZEWSKI: Today, security has improved dramatically. Overall attacks

against Iraqis and Americans are down 60 percent. But can it be sustained?

DEFENSE SECRETARY ROBERT GATES: Although there has been extraordinary success in improving the security situation, there will continue to be tough days and tough weeks.

MIKLASZEWSKI: In fact, serious obstacles remain. President Bush said Iraqi security forces would take over all 18 Iraqi provinces by now, but today control only nine. It will be at least another year before the Iraqis take over security nationwide.

GEN. BARRY MCCAFFREY (RET.) [U.S. Army]: What will happen when we do? Can the Iraqi police and the army now maintain internal security? I'm optimistic today, but the jury is out.

MIKLASZEWSKI: On the political front, the Iraqi government has failed to meet any of the benchmarks laid down by President Bush. Instead, Sunni and Shi'a factions are gaining their political power at the local level.

JON ALTERMAN [Foreign Policy Analyst Ctr. for Strategic and Intl. Studies]: One of the things that's happening is that the national government seems to me to be getting weaker and weaker and local warlords are getting stronger and stronger.

MIKLASZEWSKI: Still, military officials predict that 50,000 American troops may come home by the end of this year, leaving 100,000 troops and the rest of the Iraq war to the next administration.

Jim Miklaszewski, NBC News, the Pentagon.

CNN
January 10, 2008

7. U.S. Aircraft Launch Strike Against Al Qaeda In Iraq

Lou Dobbs Tonight (CNN), 7:00 PM

LOU DOBBS: Good evening, everybody. Tens of thousands of our troops and Iraqi troops are sweeping tonight through insurgent controlled areas of Iraq. The offensive comes exactly one year after President Bush announced plans to send five additional combat brigades to Iraq, the so-called surge strategy. Defense Secretary Robert Gates today said the job is not finished, there is more to do and one day after six of our troops were killed in a bomb explosion in northern Iraq, Secretary Gates warned there will be higher casualties. Barbara Starr reports from the Pentagon. She has dramatic new video of this offensive -- Barbara.

BARBARA STARR, CNN PENTAGON CORRESPONDENT: Lou, any way you cut it, major combat operations are under way once again in Iraq and a lot of questions about what is going on.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

STARR: These are the first pictures of punishing U.S. bombing runs on the southern outskirts of Baghdad near the town of Arab Jabour. U.S. war planes dropped 40,000 pounds of bombs in just 10 minutes on insurgent targets.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Go!

(SOUNDS)

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Go!

STARR: Nearby, soldiers from the 3rd Infantry Division were in a fierce firefight. It is part of a massive military offensive to clear out what the U.S. hopes are some of the last al Qaeda strongholds. Thousands of U.S. troops are involved, many in Diyala province. It was exactly one year ago when President Bush announced the troop surge that sent 30,000 additional forces into Iraq.

GEORGE W. BUSH, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES: The new strategy I outline tonight will change America's course in

Iraq.

STARR: The surge was supposed to improve security and buy time for the Iraqi government to get its act together. So why a year later are there still al Qaeda strongholds, especially deep in northern Iraq and south of Baghdad?

DEFENSE SECRETARY ROBERT GATES: General Petraeus anticipated this in the sense that they would move, and the key is to do in these provinces and where this offensive is underway what he has accomplished elsewhere, and that is to clear and then hold.

STARR: But it's been tough going. In Diyala, six U.S. soldiers were killed and four wounded Wednesday, when a booby-trapped house exploded. More heavy casualties are likely but Gates is hoping this offensive will turn a corner against al Qaeda.

GATES: Frankly, after these places, there's not much else -- not many places they can go.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

STARR: But Lou, there aren't any U.S. military commanders just yet ready to declare light at the end of the tunnel -- Lou.

DOBBS: At the same time, it has undeniably been a strategy and we have been extremely critical on this broadcast of the conduct of this war. But there is no question that this strategy over the course of the past four months has been successful, correct?

STARR: Oh, I think by any measure in terms of combat operations, most certainly. The really unexpected thing for the U.S. military was the extent to which security would really bubble up from local towns and villages and tribal leaders that perhaps one of the most unexpected benefits of the surge -- Lou.

DOBBS: Barbara, thank you, Barbara Starr reporting tonight from the Pentagon.

Washington Post
January 11, 2008
Pg. 13

8. Iranian Boats May Not Have Made Radio Threat, Pentagon Says

By Robin Wright, Washington Post Staff Writer

The Pentagon said yesterday that the radio threat to bomb U.S. warships in the Persian Gulf last weekend may not have come from the five Iranian Revolutionary Guard speedboats that approached them -- and may not even have been intended against U.S. targets.

The communication Sunday was made on radio channel 16, a common marine frequency used by ships and others in the region. "It could have been a threat aimed at some other nation or a myriad of other things," said Rear Adm. Frank Thorp IV, a spokesman for the Navy.

In the radio message recorded by the Navy, a heavily accented voice said, "I am coming to you. You will explode after a few minutes." But Farsi speakers and Iranians told The Washington Post that the accent did not sound Iranian.

In part because of the threatening language, the United States has elevated the encounter into an international incident. Twice this week, President Bush criticized Iran's behavior as provocative and warned of "serious consequences" if it happens again. He is due to head today to the Gulf area, where containing Iran is expected to be a major theme of his talks in five oil-rich sheikdoms.

Pentagon officials insist that they never claimed Iran made the threat. "No one in the military has said that the transmission emanated from those boats. But when they hear it simultaneously to the behavior of those boats, it only adds to the tension," said Pentagon spokesman Geoff

Morrell. "If this verbal threat emanated from something or someone unrelated to the five boats, it would not lessen the threat from those boats."

The warning was picked up on a bridge-to-bridge communication received by many ships in the region about seven minutes after the five Iranian patrol boats first appeared on the horizon, Thorp said. The main threat, Pentagon officials said, was the way the five patrol boats swarmed erratically around the USS Port Royal, an Aegis cruiser, and its accompanying frigate and destroyer, and then dropped small, white, box-like items in the water.

"When you get a bridge-to-bridge call, you have no way of knowing where it came from," Thorp said. "Nobody ever, with any certainty, knew it was from them. But it did escalate it up a notch as it was happening at the same time" that the patrol boats manned by Revolutionary Guards engaged in menacing behavior, Thorp said.

Yet the Pentagon had consistently given the impression that the threat was linked to the Iranian boats.

"This is more serious because of the aggregate of the actions, the coordinated movement of the ships, the boats, the aggressive maneuvering, the more or less simultaneous radio communication, the dropping of objects... . So, yes, it's more serious than we have seen," Vice Adm. Kevin Cosgriff, head of U.S. Naval Forces Central Command, said at a briefing on Monday.

The Pentagon's audiotape of the warning was released Tuesday, with the videotape, in an abridged four-minute package of the incident, which U.S. officials said lasted between 20 and 30 minutes. The U.S. ships were within seconds of opening fire on the five Iranian speedboats when the boats turned and headed toward Iran, Pentagon officials

said.

The radio threat was merely a "sideshow" to the physical threat, a senior U.S. official familiar with the incident said. "What was the command-and-control mechanism here? Was Tehran aware of what they were doing? They made these provocative moves. The radio was a sideshow to the event," he said.

To further challenge the U.S. version, Iran yesterday released what it asserted was an abridged video of the same incident, which shows a calm exchange. "Slowly get a little closer ... can't make out the ship number," says a Revolutionary Guardsman on a small Iranian patrol boat, speaking in Farsi. "I hear something being announced from its loudspeakers, what is it saying? I think they're talking to us."

"Which channel?" says a second Iranian. "Coalition warship 73," he says, speaking in English through his radio mike. "This Iranian navy patrol boat. Request side number ... operating in the area this time."

A U.S. ship radios back. "This is coalition warship 73. I read you loud and clear."

The five-minute video, released by Iranian television yesterday, offers no indication of the tensions that supposedly sparked the encounter between U.S. and Iranian vessels in the Strait of Hormuz -- and no indication of an intention to attack. The Pentagon said it does not dispute anything in the Iranian video.

In Tehran, Revolutionary Guards Brig. Gen. Ali Fadavi charged that the United States was creating a "media fuss," the Fars News Agency reported. He said the Iranian objective was to obtain registration numbers that were unreadable.

The U.S. presence in the Gulf's international waters is a sensitive issue in Iran because the USS Vincennes, another Aegis cruiser, shot down an Iranian passenger plane in

1988, killing all 290 people on board. The United States at first contended that it was a warplane and then said that it was outside the civilian air corridor and did not respond to radio calls. Both were untrue, and the radio calls were made on military frequencies to which the airliner did not have access. A subsequent investigation showed that the U.S. ship was off-course.

Pentagon spokesman Bryan Whitman said the Iranian video does not refute the U.S. version. "Simply choosing not to reveal the careless and reckless actions in this video does not change the facts from what took place," he said in an e-mail.

The United States yesterday sent an official protest to Tehran through Switzerland, while Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates charged that Iran had acted aggressively. "What concerned us was, first, the fact that there were five of these boats and, second, that they came as close as they did to our ships and behaved in a pretty aggressive manner," he said at a news conference.

Quoting former defense secretary William S. Cohen, Gates said, "Are you going to believe me or your lying eyes? I think that aptly characterizes and appropriately characterizes the Iranian claim."

Staff writer Ann Scott Tyson contributed to this report.

New York Times
January 11, 2008
Pg. 3

9. Iran Shows Its Own Video Of Vessels' Encounter In Gulf

By Thom Shanker and Nazila Fathi

WASHINGTON -- Iran released its own video Thursday of the encounter on Sunday between Iranian patrol boats and American naval vessels in the Strait of Hormuz in an effort to show that no

confrontation occurred.

But Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates immediately dismissed the idea that the Iranian sailors had behaved in a fully proper manner, and the State Department announced that it had formally protested the actions of Iranian patrol boats.

The new video, broadcast by Iran's English-language satellite channel, Press TV, showed a member of Iran's Revolutionary Guard standing on one of the small patrol boats and sending a radio message to the American vessels.

"Coalition warship No. 73, this is an Iranian patrol," the Iranian sailor is heard to say in English, asking the American ship to confirm its number.

"This is coalition warship No. 73. I am operating in international waters," an American voice replies.

The tape was intended to show that what happened was a routine exchange in which Iranian boats tried to identify the warships.

It came in response to a video released Tuesday by the Pentagon showing what President Bush has labeled "a provocative act": Iranian speedboats maneuvering around and between three United States Navy warships passing from the Strait of Hormuz into the Persian Gulf.

The Iranian clip shows the American convoy after it has already passed, while the American video clip begins with five speedboats approaching. Both nations now have released only a few minutes of what the Pentagon says was a half-hour encounter, part of a lengthy passage through the strait.

The two clips do not necessarily contradict each other, as both sides would have had enough time for a number of encounters of varying tenor.

Asked during a Pentagon news conference to respond to statements from Tehran that the new video clip proved Iranian boats behaved properly, Mr. Gates said, "Well, with

respect to the latter and the charges of fabrication, I think that the most appropriate answer is actually the one that I heard on television last night from former Secretary of Defense Bill Cohen, who said, 'Are you going to believe me or your lying eyes?'"

Mr. Gates added, "I think that aptly characterizes and appropriately characterizes the Iranian claim."

He said he had "no question whatsoever" that the Iranian speedboats acted recklessly and aggressively. He said his information came from the captains of the American ships and the Pentagon's video of the encounter.

"I think that what concerned us was, first, the fact that there were five of these boats, and second, that they came as close as they did to our ships and behaved in what appeared to be a pretty aggressive manner," Mr. Gates said.

Pentagon and Navy officials said they had no additional information on the source of a radio transmission threatening the American naval convoy during the encounter.

An audio portion of the clip released by the Pentagon includes a voice saying, "I am coming to you," and adds, "You will explode after a few minutes."

The Pentagon said the audio clip was recorded from the internationally recognized channel for ship-to-ship communications. The channel is open to all at sea or even on land within range of vessels.

Pentagon officials said they could not rule out that the broadcast had come from shore, or from another ship nearby. They said it might have come from one of the five speedboats even though it had none of the expected ambient noise of motor, wind or sea.

In the Iranian video released Thursday, three American ships could be seen, with a helicopter hovering over one of them.

The sound of the horn of

an American vessel is heard at one point when one of the speedboats gets close to the ship. "Get closer slowly," says one Iranian sailor, instructing his pilot in Persian as the boat approaches the American vessel. "We cannot see the number," he added.

Iran has dismissed the American video as fabricated and has insisted that its patrol boats made no radio threats.

At the State Department on Thursday, Tom Casey, the deputy spokesman, said the United States had prepared a diplomatic note formally protesting the incident. The protest will be transmitted to Iran via Switzerland, the usual channel for such communications between the nations.

Thom Shanker reported from Washington, and Nazila Fathi from Tehran.

Seattle Times
January 11, 2008

10. UN Nuclear Chief Arrives In Iran

By Nasser Karimi, Associated Press

The head of the U.N. nuclear watchdog began a two-day visit early Friday to discuss Iranian compliance with international demands over the country's nuclear program.

EIBaradei was to meet Iranian leaders including President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, Foreign Minister Manouchehr Mottaki and Saeed Jalili, the country's top nuclear negotiator, according to earlier reports by Iranian news agencies.

As head of the International Atomic Energy Agency, EIBaradei has spearheaded more than four years of international efforts to press Iran for full disclosure of its nuclear activities.

The Tehran talks will be the basis for a report on Iran by the U.N. agency's chief that was supposed to be wrapped up by December, but apparently was postponed to

March at Iran's request.

The U.S. State Department said Thursday it was important for EIBaradei to try to persuade the Iranians to meet international demands, but stressed it had no great hopes the visit would accomplish that.

"I don't think we have any particular expectation that all those answers will be forthcoming," deputy spokesman Tom Casey said.

Iran is under two sets of U.N. Security Council sanctions for its refusal to freeze uranium enrichment, a potential pathway to nuclear arms, and Washington is pushing for additional U.N. penalties.

But a recent U.S. intelligence assessment that it probably shut down a clandestine weapons program three years ago have led to increased resistance to such a move from permanent Security Council members Russia and China, which have strategic and trade ties with Tehran.

The IAEA has been investigating Iran's nuclear programs since revelations in 2003 that the country had conducted nearly two decades of secret atomic activities, including developing enrichment and working on experiments that could be linked to a weapons program. The U.S. intelligence assessment concludes that Iran stopped direct work on creating nuclear arms that year.

Under a plan agreed to earlier this year with the IAEA, Iran committed itself to answering all lingering questions about its past nuclear activities. That, by implication, included programs that could have weapons applications. But it refuses to suspend enrichment, insisting it has the right to the activity for what it says are purely peaceful purposes — generating electricity.

Low enriched uranium is a source of nuclear fuel. But at high levels, it becomes the fissile material of bombs and

warheads.

EIBaradei's trip also comes at a time of heightened tension between Washington and Tehran following an incident Sunday in the Persian Gulf between the countries' respective navies.

Iran has denied its boats threatened the U.S. vessels, and has accused Washington of fabricating a video.

The United States has lodged a formal diplomatic protest with the Iranian Foreign Ministry through the Swiss Embassy in Tehran, Casey told reporters. The Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman could not be reached for comment on the diplomatic protest because it was a weekend day in Iran.

New York Times
January 11, 2008

11. General Clears Army Officer Of Crime In Abu Ghraib Case

WASHINGTON (Reuters) — The only United States Army officer to face a court-martial over the scandal at Iraq's Abu Ghraib prison has been cleared of any criminal wrongdoing in the case, the Army said Thursday.

A court-martial convicted Lt. Col. Steven Jordan in August of disobeying an order not to discuss the investigation of abuse at the jail and issued him a criminal reprimand as penalty.

But Maj. Gen. Richard Rowe, commanding officer for the Army Military District of Washington, on Tuesday disapproved of both the conviction and the reprimand, the Army said. The decision by General Rowe wipes Colonel Jordan's record clean of any criminal responsibility.

"In light of the offense Jordan has been found guilty of committing, and the substantial evidence in mitigation," an Army spokesman, Col. James Yonts, said in a statement, "Rowe determined that an administrative reprimand was a fair and appropriate disposition

of the matter.”

Colonel Jordan had once faced a maximum punishment of five years in prison and dismissal from the Army over the Abu Ghraib scandal, which unleashed a wave of global condemnation against the United States when images of abused prisoners surfaced in 2004.

The photos included scenes of naked detainees stacked in a pyramid and other inmates cowering in front of snarling dogs.

Colonel Jordan, who was in charge of an Abu Ghraib interrogation center, said he had played no part in the abuse and complained that the military was trying to make him a scapegoat.

His defense team also argued that he held no command authority at the prison.

The judicial panel of 10 officers that convicted him in August of disobeying the order also acquitted him of any responsibility for the cruel treatment of Abu Ghraib detainees.

The letter of administrative reprimand that Colonel Jordan will now receive is a document used by military commanders to correct conduct that fails to comply with established standards.

Eleven lower-ranking soldiers have been convicted in military courts in connection with the physical abuse and sexual humiliation of Abu Ghraib detainees.

Two other officers have been disciplined by the Army, but neither faced criminal charges or dismissal.

Richmond Times-Dispatch
January 10, 2008
Pg. B2

12. Army's Logistics Branch Is Inaugurated At Fort Lee

By Peter Bacque,
Times-Dispatch Staff Writer

FORT LEE -- Col. Jeffery Allen was thinking ahead.

Even before Maj. Gen. Mitchell H. Stevenson gave the order, Allen loosened the shiny Quartermaster Corps emblems on his lapels, ready to pin on a new insignia and think a new way.

Yesterday, Allen and about 100 other Army officers pinned on the emblem of the service's newest branch: Logistics, symbolically uniting historically separate Quartermaster, Ordnance and Transportation soldiers.

And for an Army at war, the change is shaping the service's logistics organization to match the way the Army fights.

"In the 21st century," Stevenson said in his remarks to about 170 soldiers and civilians, "what we need are logistics officers who are multifunctional.

"No longer is it adequate or in the best interests of the Army for logistics officers to be skilled or focused in only one area," said Stevenson, commanding general for both the service's Combined Arms Support Command and Fort Lee.

Logistics is supplying, maintaining and moving military forces, and Fort Lee -- home of the Army's traditionally supply-oriented Quartermaster Corps -- is becoming home for the Army's logistics efforts.

One military maxim says that amateurs talk about strategy while professionals talk about logistics.

While the Quartermaster Corps is the Army's oldest branch, Stevenson said after the ceremony, "The old way doesn't make any sense any more."

"Today and into the foreseeable future," he said, "logistics officers must be able to operate effectively amidst uncertainty and unpredictability in the full spectrum of operations."

The Army's Transportation and Ordnance schools are moving to Fort Lee as part of the nation's base realignments.

By 2013, Fort Lee's military and civilian population will grow by about 60 percent and its economic impact will almost double to about \$1.4 billion, according to Fort Lee officials.

Yesterday's Logistics Branch inauguration will directly affect about 10,000 Army officers from captain to colonel in rank, Stevenson said.

More than 270,000 soldiers -- about one-third of the Army -- serve in logistics specialties.

Meanwhile, the Army's traditional Quartermaster, Transportation and Ordnance organizations will not disappear, Stevenson said.

"We will preserve the unique heritage of each," he said. "The career fields will still exist for our enlisted soldiers and warrant officers."

Norfolk Virginian-Pilot
January 11, 2008

13. Two Years Later, 40,000 Strong

By Louis Hansen, The
Virginian-Pilot

VIRGINIA BEACH -- As he welcomed the Navy's newest cadre of bomb-disposal technicians Thursday, Rear Adm. Donald K. Bullard had words of thanks -- and warning.

The country is fighting a long, "generational war," he said, and homemade bombs have become the weapon of choice in a growing number of conflicts worldwide.

The sailors' bomb-disposal unit, part of Navy Expeditionary Combat Command, will continue to play a large and vigorous role.

"Whether we pull out of Iraq or Afghanistan tomorrow," Bullard told the audience, "we will still be involved."

It was a familiar sight. Since its inception two years ago this month, NECC has established several new units, sending sailors into ground and coastal missions around the world.

Bullard, who retires today, and his staff have taken the command from a handful of planners to a force of 40,000 sailors.

Many of them have joined the fight in Afghanistan and Iraq.

But Bullard said the command is not just about Iraq. It sent sailors to 41 countries last year.

These forces have bolstered the Navy's network of land and coastal security commands in port security, and coastal and inland waters.

Three riverine squadrons -- designed for rivers and inland waterways -- have been built from scratch, and two have been deployed to Iraq. It's the first active-duty foreign deployment of Navy river rats since the Vietnam War.

The land-based sailors' missions have grown so rapidly that the Navy has ordered 540 new heavy-duty, mine-resistant vehicles to operate in combat zones.

One of the busiest communities within the new command has been explosive ordnance disposal.

Their ranks have expanded because of the demands of the Iraqi war. Technicians have disarmed thousands of bombs in Iraq. Several have been wounded or killed in combat.

They are in such demand that EOD units have been spending more time training and deployed than at home -- sometimes with as little as six months between deployments.

The establishment at Little Creek of the new unit -- Mobile EOD unit 12, dubbed the "Dirty Dozen" -- on Thursday may be able to make sailors' schedules more predictable and allow more time at home.

For sailors, belonging to a larger command has paid benefits.

Senior Chief Petty Officer Jack Brisbin enlisted in the Navy 22 years ago. As a young EOD technician, he said, his unit received plenty of assignments but little equipment or support.

Brisbin scrounged for second-hand equipment at navy salvage yards to supplement gear for his platoon.

The relatively small EOD community – with about 1,200 working sailors worldwide – is dwarfed even by the crew of a single aircraft carrier.

“We’re not a ship, we’re not a submarine,” Brisbin said. “That’s a small number for the big Navy.”

Being part of the new command has meant better equipment and training facilities, he said. It’s made a “tremendous difference,” he said.

The command has also developed enhanced cultural and language training for boots-on-the-ground sailors. Bullard believes that will help the Navy establish long-term relationships with struggling countries and prevent them from becoming harbors for terrorism.

Bullard began his career 35 years ago as a naval aviator, and he went on to help establish a Navy presence in the Horn of Africa.

He was at the Pentagon during the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, and he lost several friends. The attacks came to define his focus. The Navy, he said, can stabilize failing countries with a steady presence, military exchanges and cultural awareness.

The command, Bullard said, “has a good vision for the future.”

Washington Post
January 11, 2008
Pg. 3

14. Air Force Indefinitely Grounds Many F-15 Jets

At Least 40% of Older Models Have Defects

By Josh White, Washington Post Staff Writer

The Air Force will keep more than 40 percent of its older model F-15 fighter jets grounded indefinitely after

discovering that critical support beams have manufacturing flaws dating back nearly 30 years that could lead to catastrophic damage to the aircraft.

Air Force officials announced yesterday that the metal beams on 162 of the fighter jets have flaws -- such as being too thin, too rough or improperly cut -- adding that high-stress flight over the past three decades has exposed the problem. The discovery came after an F-15C ripped into two large chunks on a training mission over Missouri in November, leading investigators to pore over the wreckage and order inspections of the 450 other F-15 A-D models. The planes were initially grounded that month.

Air Force officials announced yesterday that they are investigating possible liability on the part of Boeing, which purchased the original manufacturer of the airplanes -- McDonnell Douglas -- in 1997. The planes that have been found to have defects were built from 1978 to 1985.

The Air Force's 224 newer F-15E fighter jets do not have the same flaws and have been returned to service. This week, the Air Force returned 261 F-15 A-Ds to service after they were cleared for flight.

Although some of the flawed beams -- known as longerons -- have been deemed just millimeters off of their blueprint specifications, Air Force officials said they are not taking chances with aircraft that could be susceptible to the same cracks that led to the dramatic crash last year. Nine of the F-15 A-D models have been grounded because of actual cracks in the aircraft; Air Force officials said yesterday that they are weighing the possibility of replacing the longerons on the other defective planes or giving up on the aircraft in favor of \$132 million F-22s, a cutting-edge fighter that the Air Force prefers.

Lt. Gen. Donald J.

Hoffman, a military deputy in the Air Force acquisition office, said the Air Force is beginning to investigate potential liability on the part of the manufacturer, but Air Force officials also said they are having difficulty locating the original contracting paperwork and are unsure whether McDonnell Douglas made the specific part that is failing or whether it was made by another vendor for inclusion in the airplanes.

Paul Guse, a Boeing spokesman, said yesterday that any potential issues of liability will be dealt with by "the appropriate parties" and that "it would be inappropriate for Boeing to speculate or discuss those issues at this time."

Boeing officials said they have been working with the Air Force to determine the extent of the problem, and the Air Force said Boeing tests led to the discovery of the manufacturing defect after the November crash. By failing to conform to blueprint specifications, the metal beams in some cases weakened and cracked after years of experiencing high speeds and G-forces, according to the accident investigation. Guse said Boeing is gathering data from its F-15 inspections and expected it to take about four weeks to determine a course for fixing the aircraft.

Gen. John D.W. Corley, head of Air Force's Air Combat Command, told reporters at the Pentagon yesterday that the F-15 problems amount to a "crisis" affecting the nation's "workhorse" fighter jet responsible for defending U.S. airspace. Corley said there is no pattern connecting the apparent manufacturing defects, as they span different production years, and that there is no way to detect the problem without pulling the aircraft apart for close inspection.

"This is not isolated," Corley said. "This is systemic."

Animated videos released yesterday show how the F-15 that crashed last year

experienced its cockpit sway and then shear off in mid-flight during a simulated dogfight, sending the two pieces of the jet crashing to the Missouri farmland about half a mile apart.

In an interview with The Washington Post last month, the jet's pilot said it felt as though the airplane fishtailed before sending him tumbling in the cockpit at more than 500 mph. Radio transmissions played at a Pentagon news conference yesterday suggested how dramatic the incident was, with the pilot's wingman urging him to eject after witnessing the plane breaking up. The pilot ejected from the cockpit after it separated from the rest of the plane, and he parachuted to safety.

Los Angeles Times
January 11, 2008

15. Air Force Seeks To Trace Liability For Fatal F-15 Flaw

Blame for a November crash is hard to assign, officials say, because of the jet's age and contracting history.

By Julian E. Barnes, Los Angeles Times Staff Writer

WASHINGTON —The Air Force is reviewing decades-old contracts to determine whether manufacturers of U.S. fighter jets bear responsibility for a defect that caused one of the planes to break apart in flight late last year, officials said Thursday.

An investigation of the November crash of an F-15 showed that one of several support beams in the plane was thinner than design specifications required. That faulty part caused a failure that split the plane in two.

The downed plane was built in 1980 by McDonnell Douglas Corp., which merged with Boeing Co. in 1997. Boeing officials participated in the crash investigation and helped identify the structural failure that led to the mishap, Air Force officials said.

Patricia Frost, a spokeswoman for Boeing's F-15 business, declined to comment on the crash investigation. The company is waiting for the final analysis of the approximately 180 F-15s that remain grounded.

Air Force officials said Boeing's potential liability was difficult to determine because of a complex contracting history and the age of the aircraft.

"Our question will be: What was the contractual arrangement at the time, and is there still residual liability?" Lt. Gen. Donald Hoffman, the Air Force's top acquisition officer, told reporters Thursday. "We have to prove that the flaw had significance."

F-15s originally were designed to last 4,000 flight-hours, then were upgraded to last 8,000 flight-hours. The F-15 that crashed had 6,000 flight-hours.

The Air Force grounded all of its F-15s after the crash. The newest planes, Model E, were quickly returned to service, but 441 older models remained grounded until Wednesday, when the Air Force returned about 260 of them to service.

The Air Force said the planes that remained grounded had flaws in a crucial part called a longeron, a structural beam that serves as part of the spine of the aircraft. F-15s have four longerons around the cockpit.

Some of the longerons are too thin, or have ridges or rough surfaces that put too much stress on the structure, officials said. Some longerons diverge a bit from design specifications; others have larger flaws.

The Air Force expects to complete the structural analysis of the planes in about four weeks.

Gen. John D.W. Corley, the head of Air Combat Command, emphasized that age as well as the defective part contributed to the crash.

"Don't lose sight of the

fact this is not just a bad part, it is a bad part that has been under stress for 25, 26, 27 years," Corley said. "It is the interaction between the fatigue, stress and that part that causes the crack."

Corley said it would cost about \$250,000 to replace each faulty longeron. But the repairs could prove more expensive than that, and many Air Force officials question whether all of the planes should be repaired.

"We have to ask ourselves: Can they be replaced? Is it smart to replace them?" Corley said.

Some of the planes, Corley said, may be so close to the end of their service life that it would not make sense to repair them.

Replacing them may not be a popular option with Air Force officials either. They hope to replace the F-15s with new, faster and more sophisticated F-22s.

ABC, CBS, CNN
January 10, 2008

16. TV News Coverage From Pentagon Correspondents

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

GIBSON: We learned today about a major problem with a vital component in the nation's homeland security system. One-third of the fleet of a plane critical to the Air Force has been grounded because of structural problems. Here's ABC's Jonathan Karl at the Pentagon.

JONATHAN KARL: The F-15 is the military's homeland security workhorse, or at least it was. This shocking animation, a recreation of an actual crash last fall, shows the problem. The pilot was flying over Missouri when the front of his plane snapped off in a matter of seconds.

WINGMAN: Eject, eject.

KARL: From the black box, you can hear the

wingman.

WINGMAN: Mick 2's airplane just broke in half. Mick 2, eject, eject.

KARL: The pilot was hurt but survived. Today, the Air Force said the problem was a faulty support beam and that at least 163 other F-15s have the same problem.

GEN. JOHN CORLEY [Commander, Air Combat Command]: This is huge. We are in crisis right now with this fleet of airplanes.

KARL: It may be too costly to fix. The Air Force has indefinitely grounded the planes, 40 percent of the F-15 homeland security force.

Right now, the Air Force is flying those missions with a patchwork of other planes that were being used for training. But, Charlie, they can't do that for long without jeopardizing their missions and the readiness of their pilots.

GIBSON: Jonathan Karl at the Pentagon tonight.

CBS Evening News, 6:30
PM

COURIC: The Air Force released dramatic audiotape today from the cockpit of an F-15 fighter jet as it broke apart in midair last fall. All F-15s were grounded after that incident, and now an investigation has turned up a major flaw that could keep many of them grounded for good.

From the Pentagon, here's David Martin.

DAVID MARTIN: It was a catastrophic failure. As shown in this slow-motion recreation, the F-15 was just coming out of a turn when –

WINGMAN: Eject, eject. Mick 2's airplane just broke in half. Mick 2, eject, eject.

MARTIN: The voice is that of another pilot who could scarcely believe his eyes. That was last November. Here today is the man who somehow survived that crash.

MAJ. STEVE STILLWELL [F-15 Pilot]: I knew something very violent was happening to the airplane. I had to get out. There was no

doubt. That was a no-doubter.

MARTIN: There he is ejecting, his arm badly broken.

MAJ. STILLWELL: After my parachute opened, my instincts took over and I knew that I was going to live at that point.

MARTIN: The midair breakup of a frontline fighter jet was an accident like no other.

GEN. JOHN CORLEY [Commander, Air Combat Command]: To have this airplane literally snap like a twig, to break in half, and nearly lose this pilot – unprecedented from what I've seen in my 34-plus years.

MARTIN: According to Gen. John Corley of the Air Combat Command, the accident investigation concluded a key structural part had been manufactured incorrectly, and 27-years of wear and tear finally broke it in half.

This is the part that failed. The same bad part was found in 160 other F-15s. That amounts to 40 percent of this country's F-15 fighters out of commission indefinitely. Some may never fly again. Other aircraft can fill the gap, but training has been drastically reduced.

GEN. CORLEY: It will take us months and months to recover, if we're ever able to recover.

MARTIN: This crash is only the most dramatic instance of a growing problem: aging, imperfect aircraft wearing out from nonstop operations.

David Martin, CBS News, the Pentagon.

The Situation Room
(CNN), 5:00 PM

WOLF BLITZER: They've been grounded since a horrifying midair disaster. Now we're learning more about the 175 F-15 fighter jets that may never return to service. The reason -- a potentially deadly manufacturing flaw. The ramifications of this story very significant, especially during a time of war.

Let's go straight to our CNN senior Pentagon correspondent, Jamie McIntyre -- what are we learning, Jamie?

JAMIE MCINTYRE, CNN SENIOR PENTAGON CORRESPONDENT: Well, Wolf, we've known for a while that there are big problems with the F-15. But what we learned today is that some of these old war birds may have their wings clipped for good.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Eject! Eject! Mick 2, Eject! MIG 2, Knock it off! Knock it off!

MCINTYRE: The Air Force never knew it had a problem until two months ago, when an F-15 snapped in two during an aerobatic turn in the skies over Missouri.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Mick 2's jet plane just broke in half.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: (INAUDIBLE). Eject! Eject!

MCINTYRE: Mick 2 was Major Stephen Stilwell. The veteran pilot was almost cut in two himself by the jet's canopy, but escaped with a dislocated shoulder and crushed left arm after punching out at 18,000 feet.

MAJ. STEPHEN STILWELL, AIR NATIONAL GUARD: It was very violent. I initially got slammed forward to the right side of the cockpit between the HUD and the wind screen. Then I got slammed back over to the left. And that's when I broke my arm.

MCINTYRE: Stilwell's F-15 was one of 442 older models that were immediately grounded. Sixty percent have since been cleared for takeoff. But 40 percent -- about 170 planes -- have a manufacturing defect that may be too expensive to fix.

This is the fatal flaw -- a key piece of the fuselage called a longeron. The problem is some of these were made too thin or, in some cases, too rough. It was a defect built into the plane that took 30 years to show up.

GEN. JOHN CORLEY,

U.S. AIR FORCE: You may be able to fix a part of it, Jamie. You will not be able to fix all of these airplanes.

MCINTYRE: So some of these airplanes will never return to flight?

GEN. CORLEY: Some of these airplanes will never return to flight.

MCINTYRE: Air Force General John Corley is the commander in charge of defending America's skies.

GEN. CORLEY: Right now, with the absence of that 40 percent of the fleet, we're using F-15Es. We're using F-16s. We're using F-22s to cover for the 40 percent that's lost. But those airplanes, too, have missions they have to accomplish. Those F-15Es are in preparation to go to places like Afghanistan and Iraq.

MCINTYRE: What Corley says he needs now is F-22s -- the most expensive fighter plane ever, at somewhere around \$200 million a copy.

GEN. CORLEY: I would look for an F-22.

MCINTYRE: But isn't that really expensive?

GEN. CORLEY: Jamie, some things are priceless. Defense of the homeland is. America needs to have its skies defended.

MCINTYRE: But suggest the Air Force is using the F-15 crisis to win funding for the gold-plated F-22 and the general's blood begins to boil.

GEN. CORLEY: Jamie, that one makes me angry. That makes me just outraged.

(END VIDEO TAPE)

MCINTYRE: One unanswered question is whether Boeing will have any liability in this. Boeing took over for McDonnell Douglas, which built the F-15s back in the '70s and '80s. In a statement, the company says it's working with the Air Force and has not yet seen the final accident report -- Wolf.

BLITZER: Jamie McIntyre reporting for us from the Pentagon. Thanks.

Los Angeles Times

January 11, 2008

17. Marine Shooter Seeks Immunity In Afghan Case

His lawyer says Sgt. Joshua Henderson 'has nothing to hide' but should be protected from prosecution in the March incident that left up to 19 dead.
By David Zucchini, Los Angeles Times Staff Writer

CAMP LEJEUNE, N.C. —A Marine who fired at least 200 machine-gun rounds during a March incident that left as many as 19 Afghans dead will not testify before a special court of inquiry unless he is granted immunity, his civilian lawyer said Thursday.

Fellow Marines have testified that, after a car bomb attack on their convoy in eastern Afghanistan, Sgt. Joshua Henderson fired his M240 in response to what U.S. forces believed was enemy small-arms fire.

Henderson "has nothing to hide," attorney Charles W. Gittins said, but "he's in the zone of people who could be prosecuted."

Six Marines who have testified this week before the military fact-finding panel have been granted immunity. Once the court completes its inquiry, a special operations commanding general will decide whether to bring charges.

The Marines have told the panel that Henderson fired his machine gun as many as 10 times during the incident, but that they could not see what he was firing at or what he hit. They testified that they did not see any gunmen or feel any rounds strike their vehicles.

Because Henderson was in a turret atop his Humvee, fellow Marines said, he had a better view of events along Highway 1 near Jalalabad as the convoy rushed back to its base after the attack.

The Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission has accused the special operations Marines of firing

indiscriminately over a 10-mile stretch -- killing civilian men, women and children. This week, a Marine counterintelligence officer on the convoy testified that the shooting had been "excessive."

But six Marines from the 28-person convoy have testified that the firing was "controlled" and that it adhered to Marine rules of engagement. Defense lawyers have also disputed the casualty total.

Two other turret gunners and a Marine who reportedly fired during the incident have been advised not to testify, defense lawyers said.

The actions of the gunners -- part of Marine Special Operations Company F -- and their commanders have been a point of inquiry during the first three days of testimony.

Henderson previously told the Naval Criminal Investigative Service, which is also looking into the incident, that he had positively identified at least three gunmen who were firing on the convoy after his vehicle was struck by a car bomb. He said he returned fire at two "MAMs" -- military-age males -- on the left side of the highway and another on the right side.

"I know that my life and the lives of the [convoy members] were at risk when we were ambushed," said Henderson, who was wounded in the arm. "Everyone I fired at ... I positively identified firing at the ... convoy with a gun."

Henderson said he also fired warning rounds into the pavement and into the engine blocks of approaching cars that did not heed his hand signals to pull to the side of the road.

"I was threatened constantly with oncoming traffic failure to slow down and pull off the road," he told investigators in a statement.

Sgt. Heriberto Becerra-Bravo, the driver of Henderson's Humvee, told the court of inquiry Thursday that he heard Henderson fire at least 10 different times. Asked whether he thought Henderson

fired wildly or indiscriminately,

Becerra-Bravo replied, "No."

And former Marine Cpl. Don J. Davis, who drove the Humvee just behind Henderson's, testified that the company's commander, Maj. Fred C. Galvin, had stressed strict adherence to the rules of engagement and that Galvin had said identified attackers should be responded to with proportional force.

Galvin was very clear "about what you can and cannot do," Davis said.

Pending the outcome of the inquiry, Henderson -- who, Gittins pointed out, has not yet been awarded a Purple Heart for his combat injury -- is scheduled to deploy overseas in August.

"He's good enough to deploy, but not good enough to get a Purple Heart?" Gittins said.

Washington Times
January 11, 2008
Pg. 6

18. Inside The Ring

By Bill Gertz

Coughlin backed

Some Pentagon and military leaders, along with lots of working-level officials, are quietly rallying to support ousted Joint Staff counterterrorism analyst Stephen Coughlin.

Pentagon officials said a number of generals and admirals who share Mr. Coughlin's well-reasoned assessment of the Islamic law underpinnings of Islamist terror are voicing support for the lawyer and former military intelligence official.

Mr. Coughlin was fired as a Joint Staff contractor after his confrontation with Hasham Islam, a special assistant to Deputy Defense Secretary Gordon England, was reported here last month.

Mr. Islam, a Muslim, referred to Mr. Coughlin as a "Christian zealot with a pen" during the meeting several weeks ago, a slur rejected by

Mr. Coughlin's supporters.

Critics of Mr. Coughlin are spreading word — falsely — that he is being let go because he talked out of school to the press. One official suggested the action was due to budget cuts.

But defense and military officials supportive of Mr. Coughlin said the real reason is that critics, like Mr. Islam, want him sidelined because they oppose his hard-to-refute views on the relationship between Islamic law and Islamist jihad doctrine. Those views have triggered a harsh debate challenging the widespread and politically correct view of Islam as a religion of peace hijacked by extremists.

"Steve Coughlin is the most knowledgeable person in the U.S. government on Islamic law," said retired Air Force Lt. Gen. Thomas McInerney. "The secretary of defense should ensure that he stays at DOD."

Another booster is Marine Corps Lt. Gen. Samuel Helland, commanding general of the 1st Marine Expeditionary Corps, who said in November that Mr. Coughlin's briefing for Marines bound for Iraq "hit the mark in explaining how jihadists use the Koran to justify their actions."

"Your presentation has armed service men and women with more intellectual ammunition to take the fight to the enemy," Gen. Helland said in a letter.

A U.S. Central Command analyst, Neal Harper, stated in an e-mail to friends, that if Mr. Coughlin is allowed to become a casualty in the war of ideas "then I'm deeply concerned about the future course of the war on terrorism."

"Ignoring Steve Coughlin's honest assessments and terminating his contract sets a dangerous and disturbing precedent," Mr. Harper stated. "We struggled for many years to get our heads around radical Islam, and Steve has been a

leader in the effort."

Mr. Harper said Mr. Coughlin should be promoted, but instead "Hasham Islam is allowed to insult him publicly."

"How is it that he is allowed to call anyone a Christian zealot?" he asked. "This alone exposes his bias, his poor perception of Christians, and a complete lack of professionalism, at best. Should we instead be asking who is this guy and how did he get inside? Is he representative of those who are leading this Muslim outreach? Does Muslim outreach mean that we are not allowed to question or confront those we are trying to communicate with and the doctrine upon which they stand? When speaking the truth gets one fired, we all should be concerned and at the very least need to ask why."

Army Lt. Col. Joseph C. Myers, commandant's Army adviser at the Air Force Air Command and Staff College in Alabama, said in a letter posted on the Internet that the Joint Staff is losing its only Islamic law scholar if the firing stands.

Col. Myers said Mr. Coughlin should continue to educate the military for the war on terrorism. "If we don't understand the war and the enemy we are engaged against, we remain vulnerable and we cannot win," he stated.

Unlike during the Cold War, when Soviet war-fighting doctrine dominated his education at West Point, "can anyone show me where the equivalent of the Soviet threat doctrine series for the global war on terror is published?" he asked. "It has not been done."

Col. Myers said the military is fighting a war that "from doctrinal perspective, we fundamentally do not understand."

Mr. Myers also stated that U.S. counterintelligence failures should lead people to "wonder and question the extent we are in fact penetrated in government and academia by foreign agents of influence, the Muslim Brotherhood,

Islamists and those who truly in essence do not share our social compact."

Analysts threatened

The firing of Joint Staff counterterrorism analyst Stephen Coughlin also is having a negative impact throughout the U.S. intelligence and counterterrorism community.

Analysts are watching closely to see if the firing of the Islamic law specialist over his views of the Islamist law basis for extremism will be allowed to stand and thus hamper the production of honest intelligence analysis of terrorist threats throughout the 16-agency community.

Officials critical of Mr. Coughlin's firing, following a verbal confrontation with Hasham Islam, a special assistant to Deputy Defense Secretary Gordon England, said he is being punished for telling the truth.

"The analyst now sees two threats to their work: the enemy and the uninformed policy-maker," said one analyst.

Officials said that if the situation had been reversed and an analyst who supported politically correct Muslim outreach programs by the U.S. government were fired, the hue and cry would have been loud inside government and within the press.

Instead, Mr. Coughlin, who has questioned whether such outreach programs are legitimizing extremist front groups and their supporters, has received little support from senior Bush administration policy-makers, the Congress, or the liberal news media.

CIFIUS update

Bush administration officials said the National Security Council staff is in the final stages of producing a new presidential order on the Treasury Department-led Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States. The latest draft was circulated late last month and is expected to be published

shortly.

One official said the latest draft is "not appreciably different" than a contentious version produced in October that was opposed by officials at the Justice Department, Homeland Security Department and the Pentagon because it lessened the clout of security agencies in reviewing foreign purchases of U.S. companies.

The new order grew out of congressional reform legislation and is supposed to strengthen the hand of the three security departments. Critics say instead, it's being watered down by pro-business officials who see the security review as hampering U.S. business interests.

White House spokesman Tony Fratto said he is "not sure" when the new order will be finished and disputed officials who said the order has not changed substantially from the October draft.

A multi-agency memorandum on the order in October stated that recently passed CIFIUS reform legislation was "security focused" but that the administration's draft order weakens the role of security agencies in reviews of foreign companies that seek to buy U.S. firms.

Wrong signal

While Navy officials are praising the restraint, discipline and training of U.S. Navy sailors on the warships passing the Strait of Hormuz that recently were approached by Iranian speedboats, other defense officials say privately that the Navy sent the wrong signal to Iran in not attacking and sinking the threatening craft.

"They should have taken action since there is no way of knowing what kind of threat those speedboats posed," said one official.

The officials said the failure to sink the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps boats was a missed opportunity to signal Tehran that such

threatening actions will be met with immediate action. The boats approached within 500 yards of the ships and were seen dropping things into the water, which officials said could have been high-technology mines designed to sink or damage the warships.

Instead, the boats were allowed to conduct a threatening action in the strategic strait with no penalty. One of the Iranian boats radioed the message to the Navy ships "I am coming to you ... you will explode."

An intelligence official said weapons operators on the three Navy warships were within seconds of firing shipboard guns on the five Iranian boats. But the sailors held fire after the boats turned away, apparently fearing the Navy would be accused of being aggressors by firing at retreating small boats.

Chief Navy spokesman Rear Adm. Frank Thorp said in the speed boat incident "commanding officers did not believe that the threat at hand warranted firing on the Iranian boats."

Bill Gertz covers national security affairs.

Washington Times

January 11, 2008

Pg. 1

Exclusive

19. U.S. Satellites Dodge Chinese Missile Debris

'07 space weaponry test a continuing problem

By Bill Gertz, Washington Times

Two orbiting U.S. spacecraft were forced to change course to avoid being damaged by the thousands of pieces of space debris produced after China carried out an anti-satellite weapon test one year ago today.

The maneuvering, ordered by ground controllers and conducted several months after the test, is an example of lingering problems caused by China's Jan. 11, 2007, missile

firing in a bold demonstration of space weaponry against a weather satellite, said Air Force Brig. Gen. Ted Kresge, director of air, space and information operations at the Air Force Space Command in Colorado.

Gen. Kresge, a F-15 fighter pilot, said the Chinese ASAT weapon test changed the equation for the military, which is working to better understand strategic threats posed by China's satellite-killing missiles, ground-based lasers, cyberwarfare and other ground station attack capabilities.

The Space Command is conducting a series of reviews to better identify threats and develop defenses for U.S. and allied military and commercial satellites against future attack.

"We have embraced the notion that we now operate in a contested domain," the one-star general said.

However, other defense officials said the test set off a debate within the Bush administration over how to respond. Officials who seek to minimize China's arms development within the U.S. intelligence and policy communities are said to be playing down the seriousness of the ASAT weapon test, arguing in interagency meetings that it was a one-time event that poses no strategic threat.

Military officials, including Gen. Kresge and Marine Corps Gen. James E. Cartwright, vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, see Chinese anti-satellite weapons as new threats that could cripple the U.S. militarily and economically in a future conflict. They said the U.S. needs to step up spying efforts to learn more about the secret Chinese weapons program and develop defenses against it.

Chinese military writings have revealed that space weapons should be built in secret and used for "shock and awe" attacks against U.S. satellites, said defense analyst

Michael Pillsbury who revealed the plans in a report to a congressional commission.

Gen. Cartwright testified before a Senate subcommittee last year that conventionally armed Trident missiles are needed to pre-empt space attacks through strikes on ASAT missile launchers in China.

But, Congress restricted funding for the program in the latest defense spending bill, and Pentagon civilians did not fight to keep the conventional Trident program going.

The White House opposed the curbs on the Trident conversion that are part of what the Pentagon calls "prompt global strike" weapons. The restrictions "limit the ability to field a near-term capability to strike globally, precisely, and rapidly with non-nuclear kinetic effects against high-priority, time-sensitive targets," the statement said.

The Chinese anti-satellite test used a ground-based mobile "direct ascent" missile that destroyed the orbiting Feng Yun-1C weather satellite by ramming into it.

By some estimates, China could produce enough space weapons to knock out all low-Earth orbit U.S. satellites by 2010.

China tried to carry out the test in secret but it was detected by U.S. intelligence agencies days before the launch. The Bush administration rejected State Department appeals to try and head off the test, fearing it would disclose U.S. spying capabilities. Instead, the administration organized a formal diplomatic protest to Beijing, that was joined by several other nations, including Britain, Japan and India.

China's government, which advocates a United Nations ban on space weapons, confirmed the test several weeks later, but Chinese officials have refused to reveal details of the arms program.

Beijing also is asserting

national sovereignty over all space above Chinese territory, setting up the potential for a future confrontation with the U.S., which operates intelligence and other satellites that pass over China.

Gen. Kresge said international treaties protect space from such claims of national control, "so from my perspective that is an illegitimate claim on their part."

"If their intent was to enforce that, then we run into a space protection problem, and that is why we are so aggressively working the issue," he said.

Options for countering China's space arms include dissuading China from attacks through political, economic and diplomatic means, and deterring attacks by threatening U.S. counterstrikes, Gen. Kresge said.

Developing international coalitions with nations that operate satellites is being considered to help share satellites in an emergency, and "provide an adversary with a targeting problem," he said.

Defensive measures include maneuvering satellites or shielding them from damage from ground-based lasers. China fired a laser at a U.S. satellite in December 2006.

The broad area of wreckage in space is called the "Feng Yun-1C debris" and threatens about 800 satellites in space, 400 of which are American.

According to the Joint Space Operations Center at Vandenberg Air Force Base in California, the commercial communication satellite Orbcomm FM 36 maneuvered to avoid passing within about 123 feet of the debris field on April 6. A NASA Earth observation satellite Terra was moved June 22 to avoid coming within about 90 feet of the debris.

Gen. Kresge said the Chinese ASAT weapon test, after two misses, "made a mess" in space. There are no

indications China is preparing more tests but doing so would create a "huge" problem, he said.

"Essentially what it did was increase the amount of space debris orbiting the Earth by about 20 percent," he said.

The debris threatens spacecraft for up to 100 years, he estimated.

Los Angeles Times
January 11, 2008

20. Japan Revives Mission Aiding U.S. Ships

By Associated Press

TOKYO —Japan's ruling coalition forced a bill through parliament today to revive a U.S.-backed anti-terrorism mission in the Indian Ocean, clearing the way for Japanese ships to return to the region.

Japan had refueled ships since 2001 in support of U.S.-led forces in Afghanistan, but was forced to abandon the mission in November when the opposition blocked its extension.

Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda's ruling bloc used a rare legislative procedure of winning a vote in the powerful lower house by a two-thirds majority to overrule the opposition-controlled upper house.

The measure will limit Japanese ships to refueling boats not directly involved in hostilities in Afghanistan.

New York Times
January 11, 2008

21. North Korea: U.S. Suggests A New Nuclear Deadline

By Choe Sang-Hun

Christopher R. Hill, the State Department's point man on North Korea, urged it to give a full accounting of its nuclear weapons programs before Lee Myung-bak, the new president of South Korea, who is inclined to offer the North more sticks and fewer carrots, takes office on Feb. 25.

North Korea missed a year-end deadline for declaring its nuclear activities. After meeting with Mr. Lee in Seoul, Mr. Hill said while there had been "bumps in the road," it would be "very desirable" if the process were finished by Mr. Lee's swearing-in. Unlike the departing president, Roh Moo-hyun, Mr. Lee intends to make aid and economic exchanges conditional on nuclear compliance.

Singapore Straits Times
January 11, 2008

22. 'I Challenge Anybody Coming Into Out Mountains'

By Anthony Paul

IN RAWALPINDI - Mr Pervez Musharraf, Pakistan's embattled president, warned that any unilateral intervention in his country by coalition forces fighting in Afghanistan would be treated as an invasion.

Unless agreed to by Pakistan, any entry by the United States or coalition forces into Pakistan's tribal areas would be resisted as a breach of Pakistan's sovereignty, Mr Musharraf told The Straits Times in his first interview with a newspaper since the assassination of Ms Benazir Bhutto on Dec 27.

Four American politicians, all Democrats contending for the party's nomination for the race to the White House, have called for US forces now in neighbouring Afghanistan to join the Pakistan Army's counter-insurgency campaign and to hunt down Al-Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden in Pakistan's tribal areas.

President Musharraf slammed the 'perception in the United States (that) what our army cannot do, they can do'.

Added the president: 'I challenge anybody coming into our mountains. They would regret that day.'

Mr Musharraf also took issue with US Senator Hillary Clinton's proposal, made on the

eve of her New Hampshire primary victory, to place Pakistan's nuclear weapons under supervision by the US and the UK. Her statement, the president said, was 'an intrusion into our privacy, into our sensitivity... She doesn't seem to understand how well-guarded these assets are'.

The interview took place in an elegant red-brick building that dates to the British Raj in Rawalpindi's presidential compound. Sentries in the red livery and towering, starched turbans of the Azad Kashmir (or Free Kashmir) regiment - a unit first raised among 'freedom-fighters' of the 1947-48 war with India - formed a fierce-looking guard.

During the interview, President Musharraf also said he would resign if a government that emerged from the coming election sought his impeachment.

Most observers expect a sympathy vote to trigger a landslide for the Pakistan People's Party (PPP), the political movement led by the Bhutto family.

A PPP-only government or a coalition between the PPP and the Pakistan Muslim League-N (for Nawaz group, headed by Nawaz Sharif, the prime minister deposed by then army chief Musharraf in 1999), could conceivably command the two-thirds majority that the constitution requires for an impeachment process.

In the interview, President Musharraf repeated his advice to Afghan President Hamid Karzai to negotiate with the Taliban.

Not all Taliban wanted to behave barbarously, he said, and military action could not, by itself, provide an ultimate solution. A solution would come by moving simultaneously on the socio-economic, political and military fronts.

The road would be long, and in Afghanistan, coalition forces - the US, Nato, Australia and others - would have to have the stamina to persist.

If coalition forces depart without some stable government in place that is strong enough to defend itself, that would 'affect the stability of the whole region and the world', he said.

In these efforts to counter subversion, India had not been helpful, he told The Straits Times - sending weapons, intelligence and money through Afghanistan to elements in Balochistan, and 'training terrorists'.

But he had praise for China and other East Asian nations, 'even Japan'.

These countries, unlike many Western media, understood Pakistan's problems, he said. The Western media 'want to impose their understanding of democracy and human rights on our developing countries, while China and other eastern countries don't'.

Added President Musharraf: 'We have to insure that Pakistan is secure. Everything else is secondary.'

Singapore Straits Times
January 11, 2008

23. Musharraf On Bhutto And Taleban

Pakistan's President Pervez Musharraf speaks to Straits Times senior writer Anthony Paul in a wide-ranging interview at his office in Rawalpindi on Wednesday

Straits Times: A headline in one of this morning's Pakistani papers puts very succinctly what seems to be on the world's mind at the moment: Are the Americans coming here? Will the intervention in Afghanistan spread to Pakistan?

President Musharraf: No. It will not. Nobody will come here until we ask them to come. And we haven't asked them.

But no fewer than four US presidential candidates have said that an intervention in search of Osama bin Laden is on the cards. If the Americans

came, would you treat that as an invasion?

Certainly. If they come without our permission, that's against the sovereignty of Pakistan.

But when you're talking about Osama bin Laden, any action against him will be free, if we know where he is, if we have good intelligence. The methodology of getting him will be discussed together and we'll attack the target together.

The United States seems to think that what our army cannot do, they can do. This is a very wrong perception. I challenge anybody to come into our mountains. They would regret that day. It's not easy there.

Are they operating well in southern Afghanistan?

They're having difficulties. Here it's (also) a mountainous terrain.

Minimal communications infrastructure. Every individual has a weapon and each tribe has its own armoury and they don't like intrusions into their privacy at all. That attitude has been the case for centuries. The British never went in. Unfortunately for Pakistan over 50 years (of independence), we didn't change that method of governing our FATA (Federally Administered Tribal Areas). It was only after we dealt with them and reached an agreement with them that we moved in the army in 2001.

We do operate in these areas. It's within the capacity of the Pakistan armed forces. And yet some people think US or coalition forces from Afghanistan will come in and they will hunt him down...This is a misperception. It's better if they ask some military or intelligence commander of their own whether their army, their people, coming into our mountains will operate better than our army.

The Pakistan People's Party now has another Bhutto at its head, a rather vulnerable-looking young man, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari. It would be truly

perilous for Pakistan if either he or his father (party co-chairman Asif Zardari) were to be killed. Are you taking any special security precautions for them?

There are security measures adopted for all political heads. But we are not here to protect everyone and guarantee their security. As far as Mr Zardari is concerned, let me tell you that he himself has provided his own security through his tribal people. Even during Benazir Bhutto's public address (on Dec 27), other than the police who were deployed and the superintendent of police who was hand-picked by her to manage her security, there were many of her own people around her. And I agree with you that these two may be under threat. I'm under threat. How can we blame the government as if we have to guarantee their security? No sir. There is no guarantee of security against a suicide bomber.

While we're on the subject of Benazir, what's your judgment of her? Was she brave? Foolhardy? Both?...

Well, she was brave. Certainly she was brave.

Foolhardy?

No. In the euphoria of public support at her fatal rally, when thousands of people are there to cheer you, you do get carried away. When people start waving, you do things that you might not otherwise do. But certainly I would say that getting out of the vehicle was an unwise thing to do at that time.

You've got Scotland Yard now investigating her murder, but there seems to be a lack of evidence. Is the world going to be left with yet another unsolved assassination, every bit as mysterious as President Kennedy's in 1963?

We hope that this can be solved through technical means with all the photographs coming in. So many people with mobile telephones

photographing everything. Hordes of people (are) sending photographs now.

So how did she die?

A lot of people talk of bullet wounds on the body and the neck. Obviously, I didn't see the body. But I know for sure what the doctors saw. One thing is very clear to me - and I'm sure our people are speaking the truth. There appeared to be no bullet wounds anywhere other than possibly in the right side of the skull. Now a lot of people are saying there are bullet wounds in the neck. The only possibility of establishing the truth is to exhume the body and see. Now, if that is not to be allowed by anyone her husband Mr Zardari has forbidden it, then we have to trust the photographs of the skull and other evidence that we have.

So photographs of the skull exist?

Yes. An X-ray.

External photographs taken at the hospital?

No. An X-ray of the head. Nobody was allowed to take photographs. Otherwise we must depend on freelance cameras. People are saying that I said it was a bullet wound. I have not said that. I've said that that there is a massive portion of the skull that has been pressed in and there was a chip, a broken piece. But whether a bullet (killed her)? I've been a soldier and I know bullet wounds. I know that a bullet wound (is) a small hole and it always comes out somewhere. Now here there is no small hole. So is it possible that a bullet just hit at such an angle that it ricocheted and went through...I don't know. I can't say that. So I can't say whether it was a bullet or anything else.

But you're suggesting an injury likely to have come from something that's a lot worse than being slammed against a vehicle's sunroof lever, as early government versions had it?

No. It depends on with what force. An explosive has a

tremendous force. The body can get blown apart. So it's not as simple as if she was going down inside moving down through the vehicle's sunroof. It's not like that.

A question about the current situation within Pakistan. I'm somewhat astonished by the change towards a ferocity in the public debate since I came here to interview you for The Straits Times in 2004 ('Musharraf seeks radical solution for Kashmir', Review Page S11, Oct 27, 2004.) A writer in Dawn (a prominent national newspaper) said last Saturday that Pakistan has 'a President who cannot now walk, unescorted, across any busy street of his own country for fear of being lynched'. Does such ferocity concern you?

Nonsense! Absolute nonsense! I go to hotels, restaurants. I wish you could come with me once and you'll see what happens there. People come and want photographs with me. They cheer me. You must come with me once. Maybe I will take you to a restaurant. You'll see the people in the restaurant. This is absolute nonsense! I go to play tennis. I go to opening ceremonies. My security people are very upset with me that I keep escaping from them. I'm going to Karachi to inaugurate a big industrial estate and there'll be hundreds if not thousands of people. The other day I went to the beach near Clifton Park in Karachi and a lot of people came to surround me.

A think-tank, the Pakistan Institute for Peace Studies, says there were as many as 1,442 terrorist attacks, incidents of political violence and border clashes last year. The result: a record 3,448 persons dead and 5,353 injured, 492 per cent higher than the 2005 figure. Can Pakistan survive this level of turmoil?

It has to survive. It can

survive. We have to defeat these people - through unity, national consensus and political reconciliation.

Are you concerned about the economy? My hotel, normally popular with visiting foreign businessmen, has 35 per cent occupancy this morning. Foreign direct investment is clearly drying up. Does this worry you?

Yes, it does. The hotels used to have over 90 per cent occupancy. I've asked the Prime Minister to see that a strong macro economy is maintained. I'll be personally chairing a conference after the Prime Minister has studied the problem to see what corrective measures can be taken.

On dealing with the Taliban

There's a widespread perception in and outside Pakistan that your Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) - like the CIA often during the Cold War - contains rogue elements who don't really answer to you and your administration. Just how much control do you have over the ISI?

That is absolutely wrong. The ISI is manned by military officers. Military officers come under military law. A person can be fired today and out of a job tomorrow. The ISI is a very disciplined force. They do what we tell them to do. There are no rogue elements. If at all, with a stretch of the imagination, there is one odd person in the whole of the organisation who is following his own agenda, we'd trace him and remove him. I don't think that anyone conscious of his career progression can show disloyalty to government policy. That would be a very serious charge.

But are there any ISI personnel officially helping the Taliban operate?

Not at all. Absolutely incorrect.

You're on record as having advised Afghan President Hamid Karzai to negotiate with the Taliban.

Do you still think that's a good idea?

Yes, it is a good idea. Anyone who is for militancy is a dangerous person. When we talk of negotiating with the Taliban, (we mean that) if there are senior elements within the Taliban who are for a negotiated political settlement, we should try to make inroads with them. If there are people that want coalition forces out for no rhyme or reason, without any solution of the main political issues...no, that's not the way. But we have to gain access to the population to find some kind of political solution.

But to many people, negotiation with elements of the Taliban guilty of what most of the world views as barbaric behaviour is all but unthinkable. I refer to such things as the burning alive of homosexuals, gross limitations of women's rights, destruction of World Heritage artefacts. In Peshawar in your north-west, we learn of the burning of barbershops because they offer shaves...

Well, what are we doing in regard to such Taliban behaviour? We are also following up on this. The military cannot provide the ultimate solution. The military can buy you time. The military can create an environment. But I think that a solution in such a crisis is a political solution.

But these people are terrible people. They have imposed their will on (many tribes). In tribal culture, for centuries it was the tribal malik (inherited or appointed leader) who held sway over the tribe. They were the people who held the tribe together. It was only in 1995 that the Taliban emerged. And these Taliban were clerics, who never had had a position of authority. Now they are dominating the scene. Where are those tribal maliks? Have they vanished? No, they are there. So therefore, political interaction, reaching out to the population,

wearing away the population through interaction with those people who are against militant Taliban. Help those people (who are for peace) stand up to the Taliban. This is the overall political strategy.

The problem unfortunately is that, in the West and the United States, if you are talking to the Taliban you immediately hear the accusation, 'You are with the Taliban!' But we should try to talk. Even if you can reach 25 per cent success, even if there are double-crossers, it does not mean that we should not move forward. So there is a total misunderstanding of what my strategy offers. My strategy is very clear: we are to move on the military front, on the political front and the socio-economic front. All three. Parallel.

Sounds like the classic CPM (a civil-police-military formula that evolved during the Malayan Emergency)?

Yes. You have to do it. We deal with people whom we think are for peace, including maulvis (mullahs). Not every maulvi is with the Taliban. Let's think of some way of shutting the foreigners, Al-Qaeda out.

Now and then, maybe we're talking to the wrong man. We'll find out soon enough. We'll correct course. But if someone says, 'Don't do that at all. Don't talk to anyone', and keep to military action alone? No. That is not possible.

Do you think that the US-led coalition's intervention in Afghanistan was premature after the Sept 11 attacks in 2001?

It was not premature. We knew Osama bin Laden was involved in attacking the World Trade Center. I sent a delegation to (Taliban leader) Mullah Omar (asking him) to surrender Osama bin Laden, to expel him. But he would not agree. So the action against Osama bin Laden in Afghanistan took place (Oct 7, 2001, attack on Al-Qaeda's Tora Bora redoubt).

Let me disclose one more thing. We were criticised before Sept 11 because we were the only ones who had a relationship with the Taleban. When I came on the scene in 1999, I spoke to the Saudis, to the United Arab Emirates...they had also recognised the Taleban but had removed their embassies from Kabul. I told President (Bill) Clinton, who was visiting Islamabad, that we should accept the reality (of the Taleban in power in Kabul), have diplomatic relations with them and then change them from within. Had that happened, some things might have been different today.

Washington Post
January 11, 2008
Pg. 13

24. Putin Names Nationalist To NATO Post

By Peter Finn, Washington Post Foreign Service

MOSCOW, Jan. 10 -- President Vladimir Putin on Thursday appointed a prominent nationalist and political gadfly as Russia's new permanent representative to NATO, a decision that signals the Kremlin's determination to confront the military alliance across a host of divisive issues.

Dmitry Rogozin, a former lawmaker who has been in and out of favor with the Kremlin, has harshly criticized NATO and U.S. policies, including the alliance's eastward expansion and American plans to install a missile defense system in Eastern Europe.

In an interview before his expected appointment, Rogozin said that he hoped to build a constructive relationship between Russia and NATO but that in the post-Cold War world, the alliance had lost its reason for being.

"NATO's problem is that it is trying to invent an enemy in order to keep the alliance together," Rogozin said last

month in an interview at the Russian parliament. "That is why people who are looking for a motivation for NATO need to present Russia as an enemy. Why is NATO expanding to the east and at the same time claims that the threat is coming from the south? If the threat is coming from the south, why don't they go to the south?"

Rogozin, 44, led the nationalist Rodina party into parliament in 2003 promising to protect the interests of "ethnic Russians." However, the party, which was created with the Kremlin's backing to siphon votes from the Communist Party, was reined in when Rogozin and other leaders began to strike an increasingly independent line.

Rodina was banned from contesting local elections in Moscow when the courts found that its political advertising was racist. In 2006, Rogozin was forced out of the party leadership.

Rodina was subsequently folded into Fair Russia, another Kremlin creation, which won seats in parliament in last month's elections.

Rogozin attempted to create another party, which was denied registration, and allied himself with some openly xenophobic groups. Analysts here said that the Kremlin remained wary of his appeal and that the appointment to NATO exports a potential rival and simultaneously pokes the alliance in the eye.

"Rogozin is a capable leader, and the first reason for the appointment is to get him out of Moscow," said Alexander Golts, a journalist who specializes in defense matters. "And of course there is a message. It's clear that Russia doesn't want any positive development in relations between the West and Russia... Rogozin will be very happy to annoy NATO. It will be his pleasure."

Rogozin said his rapprochement with the Kremlin came as no surprise

and dismissed any suggestion that he was being exiled.

"If they had appointed me a prima ballerina in the Bolshoi Theater or a tiger tamer in the circus, I would be surprised," he said with characteristic wit. "It means that at this point, people such as me are needed... NATO is not Antarctica, not even Siberia."

Rogozin has had particularly strained relations with the Baltic countries -- Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, all NATO members -- because of his allegations of mistreatment of ethnic Russians there. In 2004, he was refused a visa to visit Latvia after he said it had become a "country of hooligans and outlaws where they get even with our veterans as well as with our children by closing Russian-language schools." He accused the country of having Nazi leadership.

Rogozin said he will oppose any further eastward expansion of NATO, particularly into Georgia, where Mikheil Saakashvili, elected this month to another term as president, is seeking membership.

"Are you seriously ready to accept a country which has not been able to solve any of its serious problems, a country which does not comply with any of NATO's standards?" Rogozin asked. "Why does NATO need to create this kind of problems for itself?"

Russia supports the separatist leaders of two breakaway parts of Georgia, Abkhazia and South Ossetia.

Rogozin said Russia and NATO need to cooperate in such areas as the fight against terrorism, drug-trafficking and transnational crime. But relations are being spoiled by the alliance's fixation on expanding into the former Soviet Union and building up its military capability on Russia's borders, he said.

The Bush administration has said it wants to create a missile defense system in Eastern Europe to guard

against a potential threat from Iran. But Rogozin said he did not believe Iran was capable of developing missiles that could target either the United States or Western Europe.

He drew parallels to the Cuban missile crisis of 1962. "What if we put our missiles in Cuba and in Venezuela ... and say we intend to take down missiles coming from Haiti that represent a threat to our territory?"

Rogozin said Russia and NATO should create a common antimissile system and jokingly warned of the consequences of failing to do so. "Let's have common ears and eyes and a common fist," he said. "What is happening now? Just the opposite. Like in the worst script for 'The Terminator.'"

"To take down one Iranian missile, the antimissile system will have to use 10 antimissiles," he continued. "We may not detect one Iranian missile, but we will detect 10 or 100 antimissiles coming from Poland and the Czech Republic. It means that our machine immediately launches, and the ballistic missiles start turning towards Washington. Here is a brilliant example of a new blockbuster. I would call it 'TerminATOR.'"

International Herald Tribune
January 11, 2008

25. Poland And Czech Republic Will Coordinate Negotiations On Missile Defense Shield

By Judy Dempsey

BERLIN -- The Polish and Czech governments agreed Thursday to coordinate negotiations with the United States over deploying elements of a shield against ballistic missiles, a change of strategy aimed at obtaining better conditions at meetings next week in Washington and at easing tensions with Russia, Polish officials said.

Donald Tusk, the Polish

prime minister who was in Prague to meet his Czech counterpart, Mirek Topolánek, said they wanted "to coordinate our steps and proceedings in the course of negotiations." He added that the "pace and the cycle of the talks should also be agreed."

Tusk's announcement followed a series of statements in recent days by him and his foreign and defense ministers in which they have set out terms under which Poland would accept 10 interceptors that the United States wants to base on its territory.

The conditions are markedly different from the stance of the previous conservative-nationalist government led by Jarosław Kaczyński.

Kaczyński did not insist that the United States pick up the high costs of maintaining and protecting the system. Nor did he request that in return for having the system on Polish territory, the United States should modernize Poland's air defense capacities by providing its military with Patriot missiles.

"The new Polish government is prepared to drive a hard bargain because much is at stake if this system goes ahead," said Tomasz Valasek, director of defense at the Center for European Reform, an independent research institution in London. "Poland wants security guarantees from the U.S. since it is not convinced NATO would provide that guarantee. This means the U.S. putting boots on the ground in Poland but also helping Poland to upgrade its air defenses."

Poland is determined to link the negotiations to modernization of its air defenses, whether it be with Patriot missiles or with another system. Polish officials and security experts dismissed suggestions that a new air defense system would be designed to protect Poland against potential attack from Russia.

Russia has already threatened to move missiles closer to its western borders if Poland or the Czech Republic accepted the U.S. missile system.

"The point is that if Poland obtained the Patriot missile system, which is mobile, it would mean its troops in Iraq and Afghanistan would have better protection," Valasek said.

Poland's tougher negotiating stance stems from the Tusk government's belief that the United States has failed to acknowledge or sufficiently appreciate Poland's remaining a loyal ally during the height of the dispute between NATO and Washington in 2003, as the United States prepared to invade Iraq.

Several countries, led by Germany and France, managed to prevent NATO from providing military assistance or logistical support for the invasion.

But Poland sent thousands of soldiers to Iraq and hundreds more to Afghanistan, expecting in return some reward in the form of contracts for the reconstruction of Iraq or to improve its armed forces.

But there were few rewards. Officials at Poland's Defense Ministry in previous administrations frequently complained that the United States had provided little in the way of financial assistance. If anything, they said, the Pentagon expected Poland itself to foot the heavy bill for sending its troops to Iraq.

When negotiations over deploying parts of the U.S. missile shield began in earnest last year, Radek Sikorski, who was defense minister at the time, tried to adopt a strong position, only to be dismissed by Kaczyński.

Sikorski, who was appointed foreign minister by Tusk, had requested security guarantees from the United States for having the interceptors on its territory. When he wanted to set out the

terms for financing and protecting the bases, there was little support from Kaczyński and little interest from Washington, according to Polish diplomats.

Sikorski and Bogdan Klich, the current defense minister, said in interviews this week that none of those issues had been properly negotiated by the Kaczyński government.

Another new approach being taken by Tusk is to seek talks with Russia, whose president, Vladimir Putin, has adamantly opposed the deployment of any parts of a missile shield in Central Europe, saying that a shield so close to Russia would pose a threat to Moscow's security.

The Kaczyński government did not consult Russia, Germany or its other NATO allies. In contrast, Tusk has already arranged a visit to Moscow next month to discuss the issue with the Kremlin. On Thursday, the first high-level meeting between Poland and Russia took place in Warsaw. Witold Waszczykowski, the vice foreign minister, met his Russian counterpart, Sergei Kislyak.

"This is about establishing a much more balanced relationship with Russia," a senior Polish diplomat said. "We want to consult with our neighbors over this matter. At the same time, we do not see the need to rush the negotiations with the U.S."

Sikorski said last week that Poland did not expect to conclude negotiations until after the U.S. presidential elections.

Deployment of the shield in Central Europe is not a certainty. Congress, now controlled by the Democrats, has questioned the need for the shield.

Miami Herald
January 11, 2008

26. U.S. Counter-Drug Aid Sought

Central America is pushing the United States for more money

to combat drug trafficking.

By Pablo Bachelet

WASHINGTON -- Dismayed at being perceived as an afterthought to a massive counter-drug aid package for Mexico, Central American nations are asking for hundreds of millions for themselves, according to diplomats and U.S. government officials.

Under a new \$550 million aid program for Mexico known as the Mérida Initiative, the Bush administration is proposing \$50 million for counter-drug assistance to Central American nations.

Reeling under some of the worst violence rates in the world, Central American countries argue they need more help and that traffickers might move into their countries as Mexico clamps down.

"We see the \$50 million as a positive initial first step," said René León, El Salvador's ambassador to Washington. "But clearly they are insufficient given the [security] needs of the region."

The Bush administration and many lawmakers are sympathetic to the Central American plight, though many consider the countries too small and poor to absorb vast quantities of sophisticated U.S. law-enforcement equipment. One U.S. official noted the economy of Nicaragua is the size of Lebanon, Pa.

Between 2000 and 2006, Central America received \$140 million in U.S. counter-drug aid -- a fraction of the more than \$4 billion provided to Colombia in the same span.

Some Central American diplomats are suggesting that at least \$500 million is needed from the United States.

Honduran Ambassador Roberto Flores said the Bush administration is expected to dispatch missions to the region in the coming months to determine security needs.

Flores said the countries are targeting organized crime, arms trafficking and gang violence. "In these three areas, Central America ... shares

interests with Mexico and the United States," he said.

Assistant Secretary of State for the Western Hemisphere Thomas Shannon traveled to a regional security summit in Honduras in October. Soon afterward, he said the administration would consider more money in future budget requests.

Under the Mérida Initiative, the Bush administration is proposing a three-year, \$1.4 billion program, to provide helicopters and other equipment plus training, mainly for Mexico. The initial \$550 million is to be included in an Iraq and Afghanistan funding bill that is expected to be debated by Congress in February or March.

Much of the attention in recent months has focused on Mexican President Felipe Calderón's unprecedented request for U.S. aid as he pushes against drug-trafficking organizations that have turned portions of his country into killing zones.

But drug-fueled violence is also pervasive in Central America, which suffers from a combustible mix of poverty, gangs, and vast rural areas with little police presence.

The Miami-based U.S. Southern Command estimates gang membership at 70,000, most of it in Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras. Homicide rates in Guatemala and El Salvador are among the highest worldwide, according to U.N. data.

Cocaine originates in Colombia and is shipped to places like Honduras, Belize, and Guatemala and then on to Mexico and the United States.

A Dec. 21 report to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee recommends more money for Central America. "Unfortunately, the U.S. financial response has not been commensurate with current Central American political will to come together and fight the drug trade," the report says.

Central America's biggest

need, experts say, is mobility so that police can quickly intercept drug shipments in remote areas.

Last fall, the State Department agreed to supply Guatemala with four Huey II helicopters originally intended for Bolivia, according to a congressional notification signed by Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice. The document was made public this week by Adam Isacson, a drug specialist with the Center for International Policy.

The State Department is redirecting \$16 million to Central America, including wiretapping and other training and equipment.

"With few exceptions (notably Costa Rica and Panama), the countries in Central America are ill-equipped to handle the threat of drug trafficking," the document says. "Weak economies, and even weaker institutions can exacerbate the challenges."

Gangs and their drug trafficking activities have reached "critical proportions" in El Salvador, Honduras, and Guatemala, it added. Prisons are "overwhelmed" and the Honduran police are "poorly trained and corrupt," while Guatemalan security forces lack the ability to intercept cellphone conversations.

Miami Herald
January 11, 2008

27. Photo Reverberates 6 Years Later

In 2002, a Navy photographer captured the first Guantánamo detainees in shackles on their knees, creating an iconic image that still inspires protests.

By Carol Rosenberg

WASHINGTON -- The first surprise may be that the most damning, enduring images of the prison camps at Guantánamo were taken by a U.S. sailor doing his job.

Second is that Navy Petty Officer Shane McCoy didn't look through a viewfinder to

capture the panorama of captives in shackles on their knees as Army guards hovered nearby.

He set a timer, hoisted his Navy-issue digital camera on a stick -- a monopod -- and it clicked.

"I've seen them in magazines, on television, on the Internet," said McCoy, 33, now ending a 14-year Navy career. "If I do a search for my name, there's like 16,000 hits on those photos. They're everywhere."

Six years ago today, McCoy took those now-iconic images of the first detainees to land at Guantánamo Bay, Cuba -- capturing a moment of men on their knees in orange jumpsuits behind barbed wire fences.

Much to the Pentagon's chagrin, the images won't go away.

They have been printed and reprinted across the globe, reenacted in protests expected to continue today from Europe to the steps of the U.S. Supreme Court, even in a film -- symbols of the United States' war-on-terrorism detention and interrogation policy.

"Iconic photographs cut through ambiguity," says Michael L. Carlebach, professor emeritus of art history and photography at the University of Miami. "They resolve things. They explain things. And it cuts through a lot of rhetoric; you can see for yourself."

Other famous photos

Some examples:

- The naked girl fleeing napalm in Vietnam, debunking the Pentagon line that civilians weren't caught up in the war.

- The Chinese protester stopping a tank's advance in Tiananmen Square.

"They can't spin it," Carlebach said. "Is it fair? Is it representative? All photographs take things out of context. They stop time -- just one little split second, and you can get very philosophical and say they're not real. But that's irrelevant."

The date was Jan. 11, 2002, and homemade snapshots of guards tormenting nude detainees in Abu Ghraib, Iraq, were two years away. News photographers in Baghdad had yet to swarm around the toppling Saddam Hussein statues.

In Guantánamo, Marine Brig. Gen. Michael Lehnert told a handful of reporters the nascent prison project was getting "the worst of the worst" of Taliban and al Qaeda prisoners from Afghanistan, 8,000 miles away.

McCoy was assigned to Combat Camera, an elite unit that took secret pictures not for the public but the Pentagon brass. He was the only photographer allowed that day at Camp X-Ray, the first of a series of prison camps that across six years would hold and interrogate more than 750 captives, leaving 275 there today.

He was outside a makeshift, open-air holding compound where the captives were kept on their way to registration -- now defunct after housing 300 men and boys in the earliest days.

The sailor said it was just another job: Take pictures. Choose some. Write captions. Send them to Washington.

A week later, they were on CNN.

Spirit of Geneva

That's because at the Pentagon, the Bush administration was debating how to reassure the world that its evolving detention strategy was humane -- if not exactly in keeping with the Geneva Conventions by policy, then in keeping with what commanders would come to call "its spirit."

So, as then-spokeswoman Torie Clarke wrote in her memoirs, *Lipstick on a Pig*, releasing pictures that didn't show detainees' faces seemed like the smart thing to do.

Pentagon policy to this day dictates that shielding a Guantánamo detainee's face from view -- blurring it,

chopping him off at his beard, or in that instance, hidden beneath a cap, surgical mask and blindfold -- spares a captive humiliation banned by the Geneva Conventions.

"Did I ever misread what was in those photos," Clarke wrote. "The problem wasn't that we released too much, it was that we explained too little ... which allowed other critics to say we were forcing the detainees into poses of subjugation."

The reaction was swift, and furious.

In England, The Mirror tabloid slapped the photo on its cover and questioned the post 9/11 alliance Prime Minister Tony Blair had forged with the United States with this screaming headline:

What the hell are you doing in OUR name, Mister Blair?

Recalls McCoy, sheepishly: "I actually called my mother right after it happened and told her that my photos had caused an international incident."

Not unreasonable

Lost in the furious reaction, said McCoy, was that detainees "simply weren't kept like that."

"They were wearing gloves because it was cold," he said. "I mean, they were flying at 30,000 feet in an unheated back part of the plane; they were wearing hats for the same reason. They did say the goggles were blacked out so they couldn't communicate and plan to attack a guard. It made sense to me."

U.S. military officials won't name the first 20 men who arrived at the base -- captured in the photo.

The Miami Herald tried unsuccessfully through lawyers and intermediaries to speak with some of the men in the photo who have been released.

One, Australian David Hicks, just completed a nine-month sentence as an al Qaeda foot soldier and is free in his hometown Adelaide -- but under a U.S. gag order that

forbids him to talk about his treatment at Guantánamo.

Policy change

Meantime, it is hard to pinpoint the moment when the pictures became so prevalent.

Soon after their release, the Pentagon took them off its own websites and labeled them "For Official Use Only," to prevent further distribution.

Military escorts let civilian news photographers take pictures of detainees -- but only out of focus, from behind, or if they cropped a captive's face from the photo.

And Guantánamo commanders bemoan their use as anachronistic. The Pentagon's visitors tour now stops at the abandoned processing cage where escorts encourage picture-taking to show that weeds grow where Guantánamo detainees once knelt.

But over at the prison camps, they can't get the kind of intimacy that McCoy photographed that first day.

Ground rules dictate that journalists taking pictures submit them for censorship -- and destroy any that show a captive's face.

The Pentagon has also tried to discourage news organizations from using the photographs. But Carlebach says the military's efforts overlook the point of what makes a photo iconic.

Time moves on but the instant comes to tell a larger story. "They're kneeling with that anti-personnel barbed wire in the foreground, and it does not describe bloody-thirsty jihadists. These guys are pathetic-looking in their bright orange pajamas."

For those who want to see a captive bowed, it provides a certain satisfaction. For those who believe the policy swept up innocents, it tells another story.

Too busy

McCoy never saw it either way. He was too busy.

He's now winding up a career that took him across the globe, and more recently saw

him doing a desk job -- editing video commercials for All Hands magazine.

But, no, just in case anyone is wondering, he never got into trouble for making those pictures.

A few weeks later, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld toured the prison camp. "I told him, 'Hey, I'm sorry my photos caused all these problems.'"

"He told me not to worry about it, I was doing my job. And that was about it."

Washington Post
January 11, 2008
Pg. D4

28. Defense Giants May Resume Bidding War

Lockheed Martin of Bethesda may bid against Northrop Grumman for the Army's Aerial Common Sensor surveillance aircraft in a rematch of a competition four years ago, a Lockheed spokesman said. Lockheed won the \$879 million contract for the aircraft in 2004, but the program was terminated in 2006 due to cost and other factors.

Financial Times
January 10, 2008

29. BAE Wins \$2.3 Bn US Order For Bomb-Disposal Vehicles

By Alistair Gray

BAE Systems has won a deal with the US government to supply bomb-disposal vehicles, easing concerns about the prospects for its armoured vehicle business in the event of a troop reduction in Iraq.

Britain's biggest defence manufacturer beat four other bidders to win an agreement worth a potential Dollars 2.3bn to supply the US defence department with up to 2,500 mine-protected vehicles by 2015.

An initial Dollars 20m order of nine vehicles will be delivered later this year.

The shares rose 16p to

508p on the news. The contract comes after BAE's Dollars 4.1bn takeover of Armor Holdings, a US armoured vehicle maker, in June.

The deal made BAE the world's leading armoured vehicle business.

Designed for use by US forces, BAE's "medium mine-protected vehicles" are built to clear routes littered with mines and improvised explosive devices, which, according to the defence department, are responsible for almost two-thirds of US casualties in Iraq.

Orders for standard counter-insurgency vehicles, supplied currently by BAE, are likely to fall, said Colin Crook, a UBS analyst.

But he said that the deal suggested "the sustainability of BAE's military vehicle work is much better than many commentators may fear".

Confirmation of the deal by BAE yesterday follows the sale last month of its surveillance and attack business to Cobham for Dollars 240m.

BAE recently agreed to acquire MTC Technologies, which offers support and maintenance to the US military, in a deal valued at Dollars 450m.

Jeremy Batstone, an analyst at Charles Stanley, said the MMPV contract was a further sign BAE could secure orders from the US in spite of a justice department investigation into whether its Al Yamamah arms deal with Saudi Arabia broke anti-corruption laws. BAE denies any wrongdoing.

Chicago Tribune
January 10, 2008

30. New Budget Favors Boeing's Top Rivals

Less money for transformation plan

By Edmond Lococo and Tony Capaccio, Bloomberg News

WASHINGTON -- The last defense budget the Bush administration will present to

Congress showers more money on Lockheed Martin Corp. and Northrop Grumman Corp. than any of the previous seven, at the expense of Chicago-based Boeing Co.

The spending plan will include \$2.7 billion through 2013 to increase by almost 90 percent purchases of Lockheed's C-130J transports, which former Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld tried to kill in 2005.

Northrop would gain \$2 billion through 2011 for Virginia-class nuclear submarines, according to an unpublished Nov. 19 directive from Deputy Defense Secretary Gordon England. The company has said 2007 sales will total \$31.5 billion.

Rumsfeld championed a lighter, mobile force linked by satellite communications. His "transformation" strategy lifted Boeing, which won many programs, including the \$161 billion Future Combat Systems of armored vehicles.

With Rumsfeld gone, "we are beginning to see the initial signs of a weakening in enthusiasm for military transformation," said Loren Thompson, a defense analyst with the Lexington Institute in Arlington, Va.

"The companies that will fare well are the ones that have programs that predated the Bush administration and will be around long after it departs," Thompson said.

Lockheed's C-130J transport and F-35 fighter are the types of programs that will prosper, Thompson said. Northrop, the Navy's largest shipbuilder, and Raytheon Co., the world's largest missilemaker, also are most likely to gain, he said.

The defense budget for fiscal 2008, which began Oct. 1, is \$471.2 billion, or 12 percent more than 2007, excluding the cost of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Boeing stock gained 39 cents to close at \$80.30 Wednesday. Shares of Lockheed rose \$2.23 to close at

\$108.53, while Northrop stock gained \$3.48 to \$79.89. All trade on the New York Stock Exchange.

InsideDefense.com
January 10, 2008

31. MRAP Builders Deliver 1,187 Trucks In December, Short Of Gates' Goal

Armored truck builders produced 1,187 Mine Resistant Ambush Protected vehicles in December, according to an internal Pentagon document, just shy of the year-end monthly production target of 1,280 vehicles that Defense Secretary Robert Gates set in July.

According to a Jan. 9 Pentagon tally of MRAP production, the \$22 billion appropriated for a "surge" in MRAP production resulted in the manufacture of 3,498 MRAPs in all of 2007 and the first week of January -- 10 percent lower than the Defense Department's target.

That funding is intended to buy more than 15,000 bombproof trucks though fiscal year 2008; the Pentagon, however, may revise that procurement goal in the coming weeks.

John Young, the Pentagon's acquisition executive, on July 18 said he believed industry could produce 3,900 vehicles by Dec. 31, a goal he subsequently acknowledged was based on pledges by vehicle makers who, at the time, were vying for additional MRAP orders.

The Pentagon's industrial policy shop subsequently examined the capacity of the vehicle builders, as well as key suppliers, and in September concluded that the four primary MRAP vehicle makers supporting the Pentagon at that point would be capable of collectively cranking out between 989 and 1,308 trucks a month in December.

In the wake of that assessment, Young told

Congress on Nov. 2 that the year-end monthly goal was "more than 1,000" per month, a mark considerably lower than 1,280 vehicles -- a figure that Gates provided leaders of the four congressional defense committees in a closed-door meeting July 17, according to a source familiar with details of the discussion.

According to the Pentagon tally, there are more than 1,700 MRAP vehicles in Iraq, 371 of which are in the process of being handed over to operational units. This figure, however, includes roughly 500 MRAP-like vehicles acquired by the Army outside the MRAP program.

-- Jason Sherman

Washington Post
January 11, 2008
Pg. B1

32. Navy's Hospital Road Aid Is Faulted

Montgomery Wants Reconsideration for Expansion Program

By Steve Vogel, Washington Post Staff Writer

A frustrated Montgomery County Planning Board called on the federal government yesterday to pay more for transportation improvements needed for the expansion of the naval hospital in Bethesda, saying the Navy has provided too little information and promised too little help.

Plans released by the Navy last month project more than 950,000 visitors a year, almost double the current number, at the National Naval Medical Center after 2011, when the Pentagon closes Walter Reed Army Medical Center in the District.

Planning commissioners criticized the Navy's draft environmental impact statement as vague and inadequate and questioned its contention that \$70 million in road improvement projects outside the base -- among them a proposed widening of already congested Wisconsin Avenue -- do not meet criteria for

military funding.

"This is not a Montgomery County challenge, nor a Maryland challenge. This is a national challenge," said Commissioner Jean Cryor. "It needs national money."

The expansion, creating a state-of-the-art military hospital, is part of the national base realignment and closure recommendations.

Local officials believe that the road projects should qualify for the Defense Access Roads Program, under which the military pays for a share of the cost of road improvements to mitigate "an unusual impact of a defense activity" that results from base realignment.

At Fort Belvoir, which is in the midst of growth expected to bring 19,000 jobs to the Fairfax County post, the Army has certified several road projects improving access to the Engineer Proving Ground as eligible for military funds.

But the Navy report said the planned expansion at Bethesda does not meet the definition of "unusual impact." The staff there, which numbers 8,000, is expected to grow by no more than 2,500, and so traffic is not expected to double, as required by the definition.

A county planning report called it "curious" that the Navy "does not consider this merger of primary elements of two major military medical facilities in a densely populated urban setting to be unusual... . While traffic may not be doubled, it is difficult to understand why this criterion does not take into account the existing level of traffic congestion."

John Carman, chairman of the county's BRAC Implementation Committee, told the planning commission yesterday that the definition "makes no sense" in an urban area.

"I don't think anyone wants to be the first patient of the doctor who waited 40 minutes to take a left turn to get into work," he said.

"The limited traffic analysis that's been done to date is not adequate."

The commissioners' complaints about the Navy report were echoed by representatives of neighborhood groups who spoke at the board's meeting yesterday. A Navy representative monitored the meeting but did not speak.

The planning commissioners forwarded recommendations for road improvements to the County Council, including adding turn lanes at several intersections and widening Wisconsin Avenue. But they acknowledged that there is little the county can do to force the Pentagon or Congress to pay for more infrastructure improvements.

"We're responding almost as if we're powerless, and we are, to a certain extent," said Commissioner Allison Bryant, who nonetheless said the county should urge "bold" action in the hopes that it "might in fact stimulate others who do have control."

Commissioners also said that the Navy's draft statement provided few answers about the amount of traffic that will be generated and other effects of the doubling of the number of visitors.

"The questions are just extraordinary," Cryor said. "All we seem to know is, they're coming."

Chairman Royce Hanson, supported by the board, asked the Navy to provide a more comprehensive analysis of the impact of the expansion on roads and the availability of housing.

band of allies out of their few remaining safe havens in Iraq.

Iraqi troops fight beside us against a common enemy. Vast swaths of the country enjoy a newborn peace. Commerce thrives again. At the provincial and local levels, the political progress has been remarkable.

As for Operation Phantom Phoenix, our commanders expected terrorist dead-enders to put up a fight. Instead, they ran, leaving behind only booby traps and disgust among the Iraqis they tormented far too long.

Well, they can run, but they can't hide. We dropped 20 tons of bombs on 40 terrorist targets yesterday, including safe houses, weapons caches and IED factories. In a late-afternoon exchange with The Post, Gen. David Petraeus characterized our current ops as "executing aggressively, pursuing tenaciously."

The headlines at home? "Nine American Soldiers Killed." No mention of progress or a fleeing enemy on the front pages. Just dead soldiers.

Determined to elect a Democrat president, the "mainstream" media simply won't accept our success. "Impartial" journalists find a dark cloud in every silver lining in Iraq. And the would-be candidates themselves continue to insist that we should abandon Iraq immediately - as if time had stood still for the past year - while hoping desperately for a catastrophe in Baghdad before November.

These are the pols who insisted that the surge didn't have a chance. And nobody calls 'em on it.

Meanwhile, "Happy Birthday, Surge!"

One year ago, "the surge" kicked off as a forlorn hope, our last chance to get it right.

The odds were against us. Terrorist violence was out of control. Baghdad was a toxic wreck. Militias ruled, with ethnic cleansing rampant. And Iraq's leaders couldn't even

agree about which day of the week it was.

We had never applied a coherent military or political policy in Iraq. Dithering leaders, civilian and in uniform, squandered American and Iraqi lives. A unique opportunity to jumpstart change in the Middle East had collapsed amid ideological fantasies, a looting orgy for well-connected contractors and Washington's simple unwillingness to really fight.

Even the new US *jefe maximo* for Iraq, Petraeus, was a dark horse. He'd just signed off on a counterinsurgency manual suggesting that the key to defeating terrorists is to learn to pronounce *Salaam aleikum* (Peace be with you) properly.

And then it all went right. Confounding Dems who expected him to preside over a retreat, Petraeus took the fight to the enemy like a rat terrier on meth. Jettisoning all the p.c. dogma, he turned out to be the first true warrior we put in command in Iraq.

Luck turned our way, too - and luck matters in war. Al Qaeda had managed to alienate its erstwhile Sunni Arab allies in record time. Former insurgents decided that the Great Satan America made a better dancing partner than Osama & Co.

Although analysts have missed it completely, the execution of Saddam Hussein helped, too: It took away the rallying figure for Sunni hardliners and made it easier for former insurgents to switch allegiance. The shock of Saddam's hanging jarred Iraq's Sunni Arabs back to reality: Big Daddy with the mustache wasn't coming back.

Meanwhile, the rest of the population was just sick of the violence. The merchant class wanted to get back to business. Tribal sheiks felt betrayed by foreign terrorists. And *mashallah!* We had veteran commanders on the ground who recognized the shifts underway in Iraqi society and

capitalized on them.

Petraeus manifested two stages of military genius: 1) He recognized exactly what had to be done. 2) He didn't imagine he could do it all himself.

Our new man in Baghdad had the wisdom to give subordinate commanders a long leash when they caught a good scent.

Without in any way detracting from Petraeus, the indispensable man, our success this past year rested heavily upon field commanders far from the flagpole having the savvy to realize that the local sheik just needed one last bit of encouragement to jump sides.

Oh, and the left turned out to be dead wrong, as usual. We *hadn't* created an unlimited supply of terrorists. In fact, the supply turned out to be very finite, to al Qaeda's chagrin. And killing them *worked*. (One of the great untold stories of 2007 was the number of al Qaeda corpses.)

And our former enemies have been killing them for us.

Iraq still faces massive problems, of course. Thirty years of murderous tyranny under Saddam followed by four years of Coalition fumbling left the country a shambles. But Iraqis *want* it to get better.

The military situation is well on the way to being under control. Now the question is whether Iraq's leaders, especially those from the newly empowered Shia, can put their country above their personal and parochial interests (something that we don't expect of our own politicians these days).

On our side, the immediate problem is that we lack diplomats as visionary and capable as our soldiers. After almost a century, the Foggy Bottom fops still can't see beyond a world gerrymandered by their European idols at Versailles.

So here we are: The surge worked. It achieved all that we can expect of our military. 2008 will tell us whether the

New York Post
January 11, 2008

33. The Surge At One

'Forlorn hope' a big success

By Ralph Peters

As you read these lines, our troops are in the midst of Operation Phantom Phoenix, a "mini-surge" to squeeze al Qaeda and its fast-dwindling

politicians and diplomats, US and Iraqi, can do *their* part.

And a final note: The Post had over a week's advance warning of Operation Phantom Phoenix, but didn't publish it. We don't share our nation's secrets with our enemies.

Ralph Peters' latest book is "Wars Of Blood And Faith."

Washington Times
January 11, 2008
Pg. 19

34. Needed: Strategy For Space Protection

China's anti-satellite efforts pose danger

By Terry Everett

A year ago this week, the People's Republic of China launched one of its ballistic missiles and destroyed a satellite orbiting overhead, creating a field of debris expected to stay in orbit for decades to come. It should have been a call to action, yet a year later, our policies and strategies do not reflect our increasing dependence on space. We need a comprehensive space protection strategy.

Why should we care? Space has become essential to our way of life, even if its role is not fully understood. As we have come to depend on water, electricity — or even the Internet — Americans have increasingly taken for granted what we get from satellites. Every time we turn on the television, refuel our cars using a credit card or visit an ATM, we are using satellite technology.

In the last year alone, more than \$200 billion of the world economy was tied to satellites, and this figure will continue to grow in the future. For example, we are looking to satellite technologies to transform and modernize our aging air traffic control system. In addition to increased economic activity, satellites have become a military necessity, as our armed forces use them to command and communicate among dispersed

ground forces, navigate through unfamiliar terrain, gather intelligence data from a number of sources and conduct armed unmanned aerial vehicle missions.

Second, we have long viewed the use of space as a privilege for all nations so long as that access is peaceful. This policy has existed since the Eisenhower administration and has been reinforced through subsequent international agreements. It is therefore unacceptable for any nation or non-state actor to have the power to "hold at risk" American satellite systems or any other nation's systems, thereby placing all of the commercial, civil and military uses of space at risk.

China's anti-satellite (ASAT) weapon test was a stark reminder of a growing threat that we do not fully understand. The debris created from the test will have to be monitored in the future (the Air Force currently watches over 8,000 objects in space) and Chinese intent is unknown.

Their actions are at odds with their assertion that the test was "peaceful." China continues to increase its ASAT inventory and expand its counterspace capabilities beyond ballistic missiles, according to the Pentagon's annual China military report. We can't assume satellites would be attacked only in times of war or only for military gains. Both Libya and Iran have disrupted satellite operations because they did not agree with TV broadcasts carried over communications satellites.

Less than four percent of our nation's budget for national security space capabilities goes toward protection. This did not change after the ASAT test. Congress called for the secretary of defense and director of national intelligence to develop a comprehensive space protection strategy. Its purpose would be to guide what investments the nation should make to better

understand the space environment and take specific actions to defend our satellites and our national security interests in space. I hope the president's budget for fiscal 2009 will request increased investment and a coherent strategy for space protection.

Beyond the necessary budget increases, the Department of Defense must prepare for future challenges to our use of space and our available strategic options if China, or another nation, threatens our space capabilities. We need to understand the consequences of our space capabilities being destroyed or debilitated, and how we would adapt. Have we communicated our possible responses should the Chinese threaten our space systems? More importantly, do we know our own procedures should there be an attack in space? Our national space policy was written before this ASAT test occurred and it needs revision.

Like other issues of the day, space protection demands international cooperation. The best pressure we can apply to China, and any others who might threaten our space capabilities, is multilateral pressure. We should be engaging the international community — our NATO allies are a good start — to put more pressure on China to explain its test and its intentions. This is an opportunity for the United States and our allies to lay claim to the peaceful use of space and put pressure on those who might have different intentions.

It is frankly unacceptable that a year after this test, we still do not have a coherent explanation from China on why they destroyed the satellite in space. Given our reliance on space, we have no choice but to prepare for the worst-case scenario, particularly if China continues to refuse to engage and disclose its intentions.

Rep. Terry Everett, Alabama Republican, is

ranking member on the House Armed Services Subcommittee on Strategic Forces.

Washington Times
January 11, 2008
Pg. 19

35. Foul Play

PC forces Defense scholar out the door

By Diana West

The year is 1942. The place, the Pentagon. A Berlin-born aide to the U.S. deputy secretary of defense has learned that a military intelligence officer has not only read Hitler's *Mein Kampf*, but is lecturing senior officers about Hitler's heretofore unexamined goals of world domination.

This schweinhunt must go. At least, that's what the German-born staffer thinks. Did I mention he's fluent in German? That's partly why the Deputy SecDef relies so heavily on his aide's judgment on all things German, particularly when it comes to the War on Nazism's German outreach program. This program brings Nazi apologists into the inner sanctum of the American war machine...

Sound crazy?

Travel forward to 1973. The Deputy SecDef's Soviet-born, Russian-speaking aide is gunning for the one intelligence officer who has boned up on Marx, Engels and Soviet military doctrine. Why? Because the officer refuses to "soften" his brief on communist ideology, and is presenting it to the military leadership — now hearing it for the first time since the Cold War began. If communist plans for global domination become common knowledge, the aide realizes, gazing thoughtfully at a poster-size photo of Soviet mouthpiece Vladimir Posner on his office wall, the Pentagon will change strategy and halt the U.S.S.R. outreach program, which gives commie symps Pentagon access...

Totally outlandish, right?

Once upon a time, yes. But

this month, this newspaper's Bill Gertz reported on a not entirely dissimilar real-life version of such fictions, the termination of Maj. Stephen Coughlin (USAR). Mr. Coughlin, a lawyer and reserve military intelligence officer, has been the Pentagon's sole specialist on Islamic law charged with lecturing senior officers on jihad doctrine — military leaders who have been fighting the so-called war on terror for years without an inkling of Islamic ideology. His contract with the Joint Staff will end in March, Mr. Gertz wrote, because Mr. Coughlin "had run afoul of a key aide" to the Deputy Secretary of Defense Gordon England.

That "key aide" is Cmdr. Hesham Islam (USN ret.), an Egyptian-born, Arabic-speaking Muslim whom Gordon England describes as "my interlocutor" and "personal, close confidante." According to Mr. Gertz, Mr. England's interlocutor and confidante confronted Stephen Coughlin seeking "to have Mr. Coughlin soften his views of Islamist extremism." Note the irony in this choice of words. "Islamist" and "extremism" — like "Islamofascism" and other euphemisms — are words that draw a PC curtain over mainstream Islam. They effectively shield the religion and its tenets from the scrutiny necessary to assess the ideology driving our jihadist enemies. Of course, lifting that PC curtain on Islam and its jihadist tenets is precisely the effect of Stephen Coughlin's Pentagon brief. It goes against what political correctness tells us; it also goes against what Islamic advocacy groups tell us.

For example, Ingrid Mattson, president of the Islamic Society of North America (ISNA), is someone who advocates decoupling the word "Islamic" from the word "terrorism" for discussions of, well, Islamic terrorism. Why

mention this? ISNA is a group that has been strenuously "outreached" by Mr. England's Pentagon even as the Justice Department has officially labeled it a branch of the Muslim Brotherhood. Wonder if Mr. England ever thought much about the large picture of Miss. Mattson — head of ISNA, an unindicted co-conspirator in a federal terrorism trial last year — hanging amid the photos on Hesham Islam's office wall

What Hesham Islam wanted from Stephen Coughlin was a softer interpretation of Islamic law and jihad, and, as Mr. Gertz reported, in the process he slurred Mr. Coughlin as "a Christian zealot or extremist 'with a pen.'" Now Mr. Coughlin is out.

This high-level effort to, in effect, deny the connection between Islamic law and what the military calls the "enemy threat doctrine" should ring bells, not just in the military, but in Congress, which obviously has Pentagon oversight responsibilities. And what about the FBI? When a citizen is denounced as a "Christian zealot or extremist" shortly before his government contract is dropped, has a civil rights violation occurred?

More questions. Why is the deputy secretary of defense engaged in Muslim "outreach"? And how good (safe) is his "outreach" advice if, for example, it brings ISNA into a bizarre relationship with the Pentagon, and sends a longtime apologist for assorted terrorists, Muslim Public Affairs Council's Salam Al-Marayati, on a Pentagon-sponsored trip to Guantanamo Bay? When such advice brings the military's woefully belated education on jihad to a halt, it becomes shockingly clear that the Pentagon is more concerned with political correctness than protecting the nation.

Diana West's column for The Washington Times appears on Fridays.

Wall Street Journal
January 11, 2008
Pg. 11

36. North Korea's True Colors

By John Bolton

There's more positive news from the Democratic Peoples Republic of Korea: Its leaders have refused to make any further disclosure concerning its nuclear programs.

How is this umpteenth violation of the Feb. 13, 2006, agreement in the Six-Party Talks positive? Because at a critical moment on a gravely important issue, North Korea has again shown its true colors, thus providing the United States an opportunity to extricate itself from this unwise and dangerous deal.

Troubles in the six-party talks on Korea emerged long before this most recent public manifestation of Pyongyang's unwillingness to give up anything of consequence concerning its nuclear program. Israel's Sept. 6 raid against a likely Syrian-North Korea nuclear project was a fire bell in the night that the regime was up to its old tricks -- at least for anyone willing to listen. The administration's continuing refusal to allow Israel to make public the true nature of this facility will only come back to haunt it, not only on North Korea, but also on its Middle East policy. If no North Koreans were involved, why not shout it out? If the facility was not nuclear, why not do the same? The significance of the Sept. 6 attack has not faded in Congress, nor will the demands for more public disclosure.

In the aftermath of the Feb. 13 agreement, North Korea had to develop a cover story for its uranium-enrichment activities, as well a way to conceal its stock of plutonium and actual nuclear weapons. And yet -- despite the seemingly active and continuing collaboration

by the U.S. State Department in coming up with a convincing line of patter -- Pyongyang still insists it never engaged in uranium enrichment, producing as evidence melted-down tubes. Melting the tubes was curious in and of itself, suggesting that in their original form they appeared much more like centrifuge equipment than artillery barrels. The regime made a fatal mistake, however, because the metal showed unmistakable traces of highly-enriched uranium (HEU).

Perhaps even the State Department's East Asia Bureau was shocked at this evidence of North Korean duplicity. In any event, the "dual use" dodge was now out of play, and Pyongyang had to be persuaded to come up with a more convincing cover story. Even this they have now refused to do.

The timing is important, because elements within the U.S. intelligence community were questioning the community's 2002 assessment that North Korea had launched a production-scope procurement effort for enrichment equipment. This effort, similar in origin and intent to the recent National Intelligence Estimate on Iran's nuclear program, may well have been sidetracked by the findings of HEU, which at least in part reinforced the 2002 conclusions.

Moreover, whatever the North Korean declaration says about its nuclear activities -- assuming just for sport that we actually get a declaration -- it was always only a first step in a long process of verification, and not even the most important one. If North Korea and the State Department, working together, can come up with something they think will pass the public smile test once it is released, we still need to verify the accuracy and completeness of the declaration. Here is where State has failed most

obviously: There has yet to be, 11 months after the Feb. 13 agreement, even a hint of what specific mechanisms will verify a declaration. Unless and until this vacuum is filled, we are going nowhere fast in denuclearizing North Korea.

So, as Kim Jong Il's hero, Lenin, used to say, "what is to be done?"

President Bush can now argue without fear of contradiction that he has done more than anyone could expect to give fantasy a chance, and therefore make a policy course correction. North Korea has dragged out its performance for nearly a year, has less and less incentive to make Mr. Bush look good, and has in sight the possibility of a resumed Clinton administration, or something even weaker. By resuming a tough line on North Korea, Mr. Bush can at least make a future administration's retreat from a tougher, more realistic course, more difficult to explain.

Given the recent South Korean presidential election results, Mr. Bush will soon have a willing ally in Lee Myung-bak, who will be inaugurated on Feb. 25. After 10 years, a realist will once again occupy Seoul's Blue House, one who will support a tougher American line rather than oppose it.

Mr. Bush should meet with Mr. Lee as soon as practicable, and urge South Korea to join the Proliferation Security Initiative, a genuinely important Bush administration legacy. This will help squeeze the North, by adding South Korea's considerable knowledge and capabilities in the waters around the Korean Peninsula.

It will also reinforce Japan's continuing tough line under Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda -- given president-elect Lee's apparent willingness to confront North Korea on its horrifying oppression of its own citizens and its international record of kidnappings. If South Korea

now joins with Japan in pressing the North hard on the kidnappings, Japan is less likely to bend under State Department pressure. This should certainly provide ample reason for the U.S. not to remove North Korea from the list of state sponsors of terrorism for the remainder of the Bush administration.

Aligning Japan and South Korea with the U.S. will allow President Bush to increase the pressure on North Korea internationally by resuming financial sanctions and other "defensive measures." It would also help put the spotlight back on China, which has the real economic leverage to force a change in North Korea's nuclear policy, if it chose to exert it.

We are long past the point of allowing China to cover for Kim Jong Il without any cost in its relations with the U.S. Getting China to take concrete steps against North Korea's nuclear capabilities through increased economic and political pressure would be a true diplomatic success for the Bush administration in its waning days.

Mr. Bolton, a senior fellow at the American Enterprise Institute, is the author of the recently published "Surrender Is Not an Option: Defending America at the United Nations," (Simon & Schuster/Threshold Editions, 2007).