

CURRENT NEWS

EARLY BIRD



January 15, 2008

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Item numbers indicate order of appearance only.

AFGHANISTAN

1. **Allies Feel Strain Of Afghan War**
(*Washington Post*)....Karen DeYoung
The U.S. plan to send an additional 3,200 Marines to troubled southern Afghanistan this spring reflects the Pentagon's belief that if it can't bully its recalcitrant NATO allies into sending more troops to the Afghan front, perhaps it can shame them into doing so, U.S. officials said.
2. **Pentagon Moves To Deploy More Troops To Afghanistan**
(*Wall Street Journal*)....Yochi J. Dreazen
...When considering the military proposal to send fresh forces to Afghanistan, Mr. Gates told associates that he was deeply concerned about "letting NATO allies off the hook," according to a Pentagon official who works closely with the defense secretary. "He didn't want to give them a free ride," the official said. "But there really isn't a choice, unfortunately."
3. **U.S. Army Chief In Europe To Run NATO Afghan Unit**
(*New York Times*)....Michael R. Gordon
Gen. David D. McKiernan is expected to be appointed as the next commander of NATO forces in Afghanistan, American military officials said Monday.
4. **Assault On Kabul Hotel Kills At Least 6**
(*Los Angeles Times*)....M. Karim Faiez and Laura King
Assailants with rifles and explosives stage a bold attack in the Afghan capital. The Taliban claims responsibility. One American is among the dead.
5. **3,200 Marines To Be Sent To Afghanistan In March**
(*CNN*)....Jamie McIntyre
The decision to dispatch U.S. reinforcements to Afghanistan comes as the latest Taliban attack against a swanky Kabul hotel frequented by Westerners provides a grim reminder the war is far from won.

IRAQ

6. **Iraq Defense Minister Sees Need For U.S. Security Help Until 2018**
(*New York Times*)....Thom Shanker
The Iraqi defense minister said Monday that his nation would not be able to take full responsibility for its internal security until 2012, nor be able on its own to defend Iraq's borders from external threat until at least 2018.
7. **Raid Shows Risks In New Tactic To Hunt Al-Qaeda**
(*USA Today*)....Tom Vanden Brook
Rangers recall 17-hour fight that signaled effort in Mosul.
8. **Rice Makes Unannounced Visit To Baghdad**

(*New York Times*)....Steven Lee Myers

Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice flew to Baghdad on Tuesday, peeling off a trip to the region by President Bush to give momentum to legislative and political reconciliation, the White House said.

9. **U.S.: 60 Insurgents Killed In Offensive**

(*Washington Post*)....Amit R. Paley

American and Iraqi troops have killed 60 Sunni insurgents and captured nearly 200 during a week-long offensive in northern Iraq against al-Qaeda in Iraq fighters, U.S. military officials said Monday.

10. **Kirkuk Referendum Needed, Kurdish Leader Says**

(*Los Angeles Times*)....Ned Parker

The president of Iraq's Kurdish region warned Monday that Kurdish leaders would resist efforts to scrap plans for a referendum on the fate of the multiethnic city of Kirkuk.

11. **Judge And U.S.-Linked Sunni Fighters Are Killed In Iraq**

(*New York Times*)....Richard A. Opiel Jr. and Abeer Mohammed

Gunmen in two cars assassinated a respected and high-ranking Iraqi appellate court judge and his driver in western Baghdad on Monday morning, Iraqi officials said. Hours later, in Diyala Province, three American-backed Iraqi militiamen died after they entered a building that blew up and collapsed on them, the Iraqi police said.

12. **U.S. Pushes Iraq To Clear More 'Benchmarks'**

(*Christian Science Monitor*)....Howard LaFranchi

Signs of political reconciliation are emerging in Iraq, raising US hopes that a logjam has broken.

DEFENSE DEPARTMENT

13. **Commanders Prep For African Mission**

(*Newport News Daily Press*)....Stephanie Heinatz

The U.S. Joint Forces Command's war-fighting center in Suffolk was filled last week with more than 80 military officers, who were completing their last round of training before deploying to the Horn of Africa.

MARINE CORPS

14. **'Wanted' Billboards Go Up For Suspect In Slaying Of Marine**

(*USA Today*)....Mike Baker, Associated Press

Federal authorities planned to post billboards nationwide with the picture of a Marine wanted in the slaying of a pregnant colleague, and the sheriff announced a \$25,000 reward Monday for information leading to his arrest.

15. **Dereliction Reduces Senior Marine DI**

(*Arizona Daily Star (Tucson)*)....Unattributed

A senior Marine Corps drill instructor convicted of dereliction of duty but acquitted of maltreating recruits has been sentenced to a reduction in rank and 90 days of hard labor without confinement.

NAVY

16. **Fourth Fleet May Sail Again**

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

The Navy is considering restoring the Fourth Fleet in the Atlantic Ocean, a bureaucratic change that would raise the prominence of Pentagon maritime activities in Latin America and Caribbean.

17. **Warning: Updating US Fleet Is Pricey**

(*Boston Globe*)....Bryan Bender

The US Navy's top officer has warned that the skyrocketing costs of designing and building cutting-edge warships - a problem that has plagued some shipbuilding programs in recent years - could hamper the service's ability to obtain the fleet it needs to defend American interests as well as deter China and other rising naval powers.

18. **Judge Stands By Ban On Sonar**

(*Los Angeles Times*)....Kenneth R. Weiss

The Navy is expected to appeal the decision, meant to protect marine mammals, affecting upcoming training

exercises.

19. **Pilot Error Cited In Blue Angels Crash**

(*Atlanta Journal-Constitution*)....Unattributed

A Navy Blue Angels pilot killed in a crash in Beaufort, S.C., last April apparently had become disoriented after failing to properly tense his abdominal muscles to counter the gravitational forces of a high-speed turn, according to a report.

AIR FORCE

20. **Changing Warfare Prompts AFA To Bring Back Resistance Training**

(*Denver Rocky Mountain News*)....Associated Press

A program to train Air Force Academy cadets how to resist enemy forces will be reinstated this summer, 13 years after officials discontinued the program over claims that simulated sexual abuse crossed into actual abuse.

CONGRESS

21. **With '07 Vetoes To Confront, The House Returns To Work**

(*New York Times*)....Carl Hulse

Congress opens its 2008 session Tuesday by returning to a crucial bill lingering from 2007, a major Pentagon policy measure that was rejected in a surprise move by President Bush late last year.

22. **Wolf Urges Safety Probe Of Baghdad Embassy**

(*Washington Post*)....Glenn Kessler

The Government Accountability Office should "initiate a full and thorough investigation" of allegations that the firefighting systems at the new U.S. Embassy complex under construction in Baghdad have potential safety problems, a senior lawmaker said yesterday.

ASIA/PACIFIC

23. **U.S. Commander Searches For More Openness In China**

(*Los Angeles Times*)....Mark Magnier

The growing range of Chinese submarines and other weapons systems, recent tensions over canceled Hong Kong port calls and heightened sensitivities over Taiwan's upcoming presidential election underscore the importance of improved relations between the Chinese and U.S. militaries, a high-ranking American commander said today.

24. **U.S. Admiral, Chinese Discuss Port Calls**

(*Washington Post*)....Maureen Fan

...In remarks to reporters Monday, Chinese Gen. Chen Bingde, chief of general staff, suggested that the Kitty Hawk had not followed the correct procedures.

25. **China: Military Buildup Poses No Threat To U.S.**

(*USA Today*)....Unattributed

China defended its growing military prowess, saying it is not a threat to the United States, and urged Washington not to sell weapons to Taiwan.

26. **China, India OK Military Exercises**

(*Atlanta Journal-Constitution*)....Unattributed

Chinese and Indian leaders agreed at a summit in Beijing to a second round of joint military exercises and raised their target for two-way trade by billions, underscoring growing interaction between the two Asian giants and rising economic powers.

PAKISTAN

27. **Militants Escape Control Of Pakistan, Officials Say**

(*New York Times*)....Carlotta Gall and David Rohde

Pakistan's premier military intelligence agency has lost control of some of the networks of Pakistani militants it has nurtured since the 1980s, and is now suffering the violent blowback of that policy, two former senior intelligence officials and other officials close to the agency say.

28. **Will Iraq Playbook Work In Pakistan?**
(Christian Science Monitor)....David Montero
 Pitting Sunni tribes against Al Qaeda-allied tribes has worked in Iraq. Will it work against the Taliban in Pakistan?

MIDEAST

29. **U.S. Offers Saudis 'Smart' Arms Technology**
(Los Angeles Times)....James Gerstenzang
 President Bush began two days of talks with Saudi leaders Monday as his administration sent formal notice to Congress of a controversial U.S. sale of "smart bomb" technology to this desert kingdom.
30. **In Persian Gulf Incident, Some Suspect Hecklers**
(Washington Post)....Robin Wright
 The Navy has a monkey on its back.
31. **U.S. Uses Probe To Pressure Iran**
(Wall Street Journal)....Jay Solomon and Evan Perez
 As tensions between the U.S. and Iran persist, Washington and its allies are using an investigation into a 1994 terrorist attack in Argentina to maintain pressure on the Iranian regime.
32. **Olmert Hints That Strikes On Nuclear Facilities In Iran Are An Option**
(Boston Globe)....Mark Lavie, Associated Press
 Prime Minister Ehud Olmert warned yesterday that all options are open when it comes to keeping Iran from obtaining atomic weapons, his clearest sign yet that Israel could use force against a nation considered among its most serious threats.
33. **Navy Officials Say Iranian Threat Was Real**
(CNN)....Barbara Starr
 A Navy captain involved in last week's incident with Iranian speedboats in the Strait of Hormuz says he's convinced a threatening radio transmission was real and not a heckler. It came over an open channel monitored by all Mariners.

ESPIONAGE

34. **Sub Technology Revealed In Court During Spy Appeal**
(Washington Times)....Bill Gertz
 Details of U.S. Navy advanced engine-silencing technology for submarines were disclosed in court documents last week during an appeal hearing for convicted Chinese spy Chi Mak.

BUSINESS

35. **Airbus Adds Incentive In Bid For Air Force Contract**
(Los Angeles Times)....Peter Pae
 The competition for the Pentagon's biggest contract in years intensified Monday as European aircraft maker Airbus said it would assemble commercial jets in the U.S. if it won the \$40 -billion award to build aerial refueling tankers for the Air Force.
36. **Airbus's Military Project Misfires**
(Wall Street Journal)....Daniel Michaels
 When Airbus announces its 2007 sales tomorrow, it can boast of a record year for commercial-jetliner orders and deliveries, and progress in overcoming troubles with its A380 superjumbo. But the company stands to pay dearly for snags on another high-profile project: the A400M military-transport plane.
37. **Iraqi Oil Exports Still Not Gushing Forth**
(CQ Weekly)....Elaine Monaghan
 ...But even though recent reports within the oil industry suggest that the Iraqi oil supply has stabilized, bringing it to the global market remains a fairly daunting prospect, analysts say.

OPINION

38. **Smearing Soldiers**
(New York Post)....Ralph Peters
 THE New York Times is trashing our troops again. With no new "atrocities" to report from Iraq for many a month, the limping Gray Lady turned to the home front. Front and center, above the fold, on the front page of Sunday's Times, the week's feature story sought to convince Americans that combat experiences in Iraq and Afghanistan are turning troops into murderers when they come home.
39. **Iran Continues To Provoke**
(Washington Times)....James Lyons
 On Jan. 5, three U.S. Navy ships were transiting the Straits of Hormuz when they were encountered by five small high-speed crafts that were assessed to belong to the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Navy. The five boats broke into two groups, one on each side of the transiting U.S. Navy ships.
40. **Iraq, Anyone?**
(USA Today)....James Reston Jr.
 A year from now, no matter who is elected, this country will inaugurate a postwar president. Depending on the continued success of the troop surge, the growing confidence of Iraqi authority and the safety of the withdrawal, the details might be different. But essentially, the nightmare of Iraq will be over and a new era of U.S. history will begin.
41. **Toward A Nuclear-Free World**
(Wall Street Journal)....George P. Shultz, William J. Perry, Henry A. Kissinger and Sam Nunn
 The accelerating spread of nuclear weapons, nuclear know-how and nuclear material has brought us to a nuclear tipping point. We face a very real possibility that the deadliest weapons ever invented could fall into dangerous hands.
42. **Differences Of Opinion -- (Letter)**
(Washington Times)....Capt. Gordan E. Van Hook, USN
 I would like to make several points in the ongoing discussion by Bill Gertz, Frank Gaffney and now Diana West concerning the recent decision to allow Stephen Coughlin's contract with the Joint Staff to expire ("Coughlin sacked," Inside the Ring, Jan. 4; "A Purple Heart in war of ideas?" Commentary, Jan. 8; "Foul play," Op-Ed, Friday).

CORRECTIONS

43. **Corrections & Amplifications**
(Wall Street Journal)....The Wall Street Journal
 RETIRED Army Maj. Gen. Dan Mongeon, now at Public Warehousing Co. of Kuwait, was a commander of the Defense Supply Center from 1998 to 2000. A Dec. 17, 2007, page-one article on Public Warehousing's military dealings incorrectly dated his tenure at the office from 2000 to 2005. That was the period of his tenure at the supply center's parent office, the Defense Logistics Agency.
44. **For The Record**
(New York Times)....The New York Times
 An article on Monday about President Bush's visit to the Middle East, during which he heard Arab states' concerns about Iranian influence in the region, referred incorrectly to the composition of Bahrain's population. The majority of the people there are Shiite Muslims, not Sunni.

Washington Post
January 15, 2008
Pg. 1

1. Allies Feel Strain Of Afghan War

Troop Levels Among Issues Dividing U.S., NATO Countries

By Karen DeYoung,
Washington Post Staff Writer

But the immediate reaction to the proposed deployment from NATO partners fighting alongside U.S. forces was that it was about time the United States stepped up its own effort.

After more than six years of coalition warfare in Afghanistan, NATO is a bundle of frayed nerves and tension over nearly every aspect of the conflict, including troop levels and missions, reconstruction, anti-narcotics efforts, and even counterinsurgency strategy. Stress has grown along with casualties, domestic pressures and a sense that the war is not improving, according to a wide range of senior U.S. and NATO-member officials who agreed to discuss sensitive alliance issues on the condition of anonymity.

While Washington has long called for allies to send more forces, NATO countries involved in some of the fiercest fighting have complained that they are suffering the heaviest losses. The United States supplies about half of the 54,000 foreign troops in Afghanistan, they say, but the British, Canadians and Dutch are engaged in regular combat in the volatile south.

"We have one-tenth of the troops and we do more fighting than you do," a Canadian official said of his country's 2,500 troops in Kandahar province. "So do the Dutch." The Canadian death rate, proportional to the overall size of its force, is higher than that of U.S. troops in Afghanistan or Iraq, a Canadian government analysis concluded last year.

British officials note that

the eastern region, where most U.S. forces are based, is far quieter than the Taliban-saturated center of British operations in Helmand, the country's top opium-producing province. The American rejoinder, spoken only in private with references to British operations in both Iraq and Afghanistan, is that superior U.S. skills have made it so.

NATO has long been divided between those with fighting forces in Afghanistan and those who have restricted their involvement to noncombat activities. Now, as the United States begins a slow drawdown from Iraq, the attention of even combat partners has turned toward whether more U.S. troops will be free to fight in the "forgotten" war in Afghanistan.

When Canadian Foreign Minister Maxime Bernier visited Washington late last month, he reminded Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice that Canada's Afghan mandate expires in January 2009. With most of the Canadian public opposed to a continued combat role, he said, it is not certain that Ottawa can sustain it.

Bernier's message was that his minority government could make a better case at home if the United States would boost its own efforts in Afghanistan, according to Canadian and U.S. officials familiar with the conversation.

"I don't think he expected an express commitment that day that they would draw down in Iraq and buttress in Afghanistan," the Canadian official said. "But he certainly registered Canadian interest and that of the allies involved."

According to opinion polls, Canadians feel they have done their bit in Afghanistan. Prime Minister Stephen Harper last fall named an independent commission to study options -- continuing the combat mission, redeploying to more peaceful regions, or withdrawing in January 2009. The commission report, due this month, will

form the basis of an upcoming parliamentary debate.

With a Taliban offensive expected in the spring, along with another record opium poppy crop, the new Marines will deploy to the British area in Helmand and will be available to augment Canadian forces in neighboring Kandahar.

Both President Bush and Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates have toned down their public pressure on allies. When German Chancellor Angela Merkel visited Bush at his Texas ranch in November, U.S. and German officials said, she told him that while Bonn would step up its contribution in quiet northern Afghanistan, any change in Germany's noncombat role would spell political disaster for her conservative government.

"It's not an excuse; it's simply reality -- coalition reality and domestic reality," a German official said. Merkel came away with Bush's pledge to praise Germany's efforts and stop criticizing.

Although Gates began a meeting of NATO defense ministers late last year by saying he would not let them "off the hook" for their responsibilities in Afghanistan, he said in a news conference at the end of the session that further public criticism was not productive.

Still, the Defense Department hopes that increasing its own contribution -- nearly half of an additional 7,500 troops Gates has said are needed in Afghanistan -- will encourage the allies. "As we're considering digging even deeper to make up for the shortfall in Afghanistan," Pentagon spokesman Geoff Morrell said, "we would expect our allies in the fight to do the same."

Many Europeans believe that the United States committed attention and resources to Iraq at Afghanistan's expense. But U.S. officials say the problems of NATO countries in

Afghanistan have roots in not investing sufficiently in their militaries after the Cold War. Canada, U.S. officials say, needs American military airlift for its troops in Afghanistan because it got rid of a fleet of heavy lift helicopters.

At the same time that they want more from their partners, however, U.S. defense officials often disdain their abilities. No one, they insist, is as good at counterinsurgency as the U.S. military.

U.S. and British forces have long derided each other's counterinsurgency tactics. In Iraq, British commanders touted their successful "hearts and minds" efforts in Northern Ireland, tried to replicate them in southern Iraq, and criticized more heavy-handed U.S. operations in the north. Their U.S. counterparts say they are tired of hearing about Northern Ireland and point out that British troops largely did not quell sectarian violence in the south.

The same tensions have emerged in Afghanistan, where U.S. officials criticized what one called a "colonial" attitude that kept the British from retaining control over areas wrested from the Taliban. Disagreement leaked out publicly early last year when British troops withdrew from the Musa Qala district of Helmand after striking a deal with local tribal leaders. The tribal chiefs quickly relinquished control to the Taliban.

Britain, with a higher percentage of its forces deployed worldwide than the United States, is stretched thin in Afghanistan. Not only did the British have insufficient force strength to hold conquered territory, but the reconstruction and development assistance that was supposed to consolidate military gains did not arrive.

"It's worth reminding the Americans that the entire British army is smaller than the U.S. Marine Corps," said one sympathetic former U.S.

commander in Afghanistan.

After 10 months of Taliban control, Musa Qala was retaken in December in combat involving British, Afghan and U.S. forces. The new Marine deployments will supplement British troops, and both sides insist they have calmed their differences. "Whatever may or may not have been said between the two in the past," said one British official, "... we are now in the same place."

Now, he said, "the much more interesting question is where do we go from here, and can we sustain a cautiously positive picture in Musa Qala" and elsewhere.

British officials hope that new deployments and stepped-up Afghan security training by the Marines will address one of Helmand's biggest problems -- the expansion of the opium crop. Opium provides income for the Taliban and is a major source of corruption within the Afghan police and government, yet the allies are divided on how to stop its production.

U.S. officials in Afghanistan, led by Ambassador William B. Wood, have insisted that the current strategy of manually destroying opium fields is ineffective and have pressed to begin aerial spraying of herbicide. Wood is a former ambassador to Colombia, where the United States funds and operates the world's largest aerial effort to eradicate coca.

The British, in charge of NATO's anti-narcotics program in Afghanistan, strongly oppose spraying, as does Afghan President Hamid Karzai, who last month formally ruled it out over U.S. objections. But the government's preferred method of manual eradication -- sending Afghan troops and police to pull poppy plants out of the ground -- has faltered because of poor security.

More important, programs to provide rural Afghans with alternative income sources

remain underfunded and poorly coordinated. Each of NATO's regional Afghan commands operates its own provincial reconstruction teams, and scores of nongovernmental organizations work in the country. But with few exceptions -- such as Khost province under U.S. command in the east, where military and reconstruction resources are meshed -- they share no overriding strategy or operational rules.

The United States has pressed U.N. Secretary General Ban Ki-moon to appoint a high-level representative to coordinate non-military activities in Afghanistan. Karzai has resisted, and Ban is said to be worried about taking responsibility for what he sees as a worsening situation.

Staff writers Thomas E. Ricks and Colum Lynch contributed to this report.

Wall Street Journal
January 15, 2008
Pg. 2

2. Pentagon Moves To Deploy More Troops To Afghanistan

By Yochi J. Dreazen

WASHINGTON --

Defense Secretary Robert Gates has signed off on a proposal to send additional troops to Afghanistan, and a formal Pentagon announcement will be made as early as today, according to people familiar with the matter.

The decision effectively guarantees that 3,200 more Marines will deploy to Afghanistan to bolster the U.S.-led international force there. Mr. Gates will discuss the plan with President Bush before issuing final deployment orders, but an administration official said the president was certain to endorse the proposal when he returns from the Middle East this week.

The deployments, once finalized, will bring the total U.S. troop presence in

Afghanistan to about 30,000. That means that U.S. troop levels in both Iraq and Afghanistan will be at or near their highest levels since the start of the two wars.

The move comes amid mounting U.S. concern about deteriorating conditions in Afghanistan, which was rocked yesterday by a suicide bombing at a luxury hotel in Kabul that left at least seven dead, including one American. It also highlights the Bush administration's inability to persuade U.S. allies to send more of their own troops to Afghanistan.

The extra U.S. Marines will be used for two separate missions. About 1,000 will be training the fledgling Afghan national army, a cornerstone of the long-term U.S. exit strategy from the country, and the remaining 2,200 will deploy to southern Afghanistan to battle Taliban militants there, according to an official knowledgeable about the proposal.

The military has begun alerting Marines in North Carolina and California, the official said. The Marines will begin leaving for Afghanistan in coming weeks and should be fully in place by early April, the official said.

The decision to add fresh troops caps a striking shift in the military's thinking about the long wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. While conditions in Iraq were deteriorating in recent years, military commanders consoled themselves that Afghanistan was going fairly well. The U.S. forces that invaded the country in 2001 had managed to quickly topple the Taliban and install a relatively popular central government. Violence was low, especially compared to Iraq.

Today, military officials are increasingly positive about Iraq and increasingly worried about Afghanistan. Last year was the deadliest for U.S. and North Atlantic Treaty Organization forces in

Afghanistan since the start of the war. Taliban attacks are up sharply, exacting a growing civilian death toll and steadily degrading the reach and popularity of President Hamid Karzai's government.

Compounding the difficulties, the administration has been unable to convince foreign allies to shoulder more of the military burden. Gen. Dan McNeil, the American officer who commands the 41,000-person NATO force, has asked member nations to contribute at least 4,000 more combat troops, but none of the countries has signaled a willingness to do so.

That is forcing the U.S. to fill the void, which frustrates Mr. Gates. When considering the military proposal to send fresh forces to Afghanistan, Mr. Gates told associates that he was deeply concerned about "letting NATO allies off the hook," according to a Pentagon official who works closely with the defense secretary.

"He didn't want to give them a free ride," the official said. "But there really isn't a choice, unfortunately."

New York Times
January 15, 2008
Pg. 8

3. U.S. Army Chief In Europe To Run NATO Afghan Unit

By Michael R. Gordon

WASHINGTON — Gen. David D. McKiernan is expected to be appointed as the next commander of NATO forces in Afghanistan, American military officials said Monday.

General McKiernan oversaw the allied ground attack that toppled Saddam Hussein in 2003. He has held a variety of senior posts and is the commander of American Army forces in Europe. He is likely to assume his new command in June and is to replace Gen. Dan K. McNeill.

By all accounts, it will be a challenging assignment.

United States and allied forces face a resilient Taliban, as well as Qaeda militants, who have been operating from sanctuaries in northwestern Pakistan. But NATO nations have had to carry out their mission short of combat troops and trainers.

General McNeill recently requested that some 3,200 additional troops be sent, according to Defense Department officials. The Pentagon is expected to announce a decision on the request on Tuesday.

The NATO force in Afghanistan numbers about 40,000, of which 14,000 are Americans. Separately, the United States has 12,000 troops who are carrying out a counterterrorism mission in Afghanistan.

General McKiernan entered the Army in 1972. In the months before the Iraq war, he pressed to begin the war with a greater number of troops than authorized in the plan he had inherited.

General McKiernan was never a favorite of former Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld, and after the invasion he was made the deputy head of the Army's Forces Command, which oversees the training of American troops in the United States. In 2005, he was awarded a fourth star and made the head of American Army troops in Europe.

His European experience will be a plus in dealing with NATO's disparate forces in Afghanistan. During the 1990s, he was a senior officer with allied forces in Bosnia and later was deputy chief of staff of American Army operations in Europe.

Among his other posts, he has been commander of the First Cavalry Division and the Army's chief of operations.

Assailants with rifles and explosives stage a bold attack in the Afghan capital. The Taliban claims responsibility. One American is among the dead.

By M. Karim Faiez and Laura King, Special to The Times

KABUL, AFGHANISTAN — Striking at a prime symbol of the Western presence in Afghanistan, assailants armed with grenades, assault rifles and suicide vests stormed a heavily fortified luxury hotel in the heart of the capital Monday. The carefully coordinated assault killed at least six people, leaving trails of blood in the marble-floored lobby and forcing terrorized guests to cower behind locked doors or in the basement awaiting rescue.

The attack on the Serena Hotel, an incongruously deluxe five-star establishment in rundown Kabul that is frequented by foreign delegations, Western aid workers and high-ranking Afghan officials, was the boldest such assault in recent memory.

The U.S. State Department said that one American, not a government employee, was among those killed. The victim's name was not immediately released because relatives had not yet been notified.

Another victim was a Norwegian journalist covering the visit to Kabul by Norway's foreign minister. Carsten Thomassen of the Dagbladet newspaper died from injuries sustained in the attack, according to the Committee to Protect Journalists.

"We mourn the loss," CPJ Asia program coordinator Bob Dietz said. "Foreign and local journalists face numerous threats in countries like Afghanistan, where security is a rare commodity."

Norwegian Foreign Minister Jonas Gahr Stoere, who was also staying in the hotel, was unhurt, news agencies reported, citing

Norway's public broadcaster NRK. Several Norwegian journalists and embassy officials were believed to have been in the hotel at the time of the attack, apparently carried out by at least four assailants.

The Taliban, which was ousted from power by U.S.-led forces in 2001, claimed responsibility for the attack almost as soon as it had taken place Monday night. In a city where most people hurry home before dark, many were unaware that the assault had occurred.

A U.S. military official in Kabul, interviewed on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to speak to the press, said dozens of American troops in Humvees converged on the hotel after receiving a panicked call for help from Afghan counterparts shortly after 6:15 p.m.

The 177-room hotel, in the center of a busy Kabul district and almost adjacent to the presidential palace, is walled off and guarded with a fortified gate and blast barriers. The lobby is set back from the street entrance to the hotel compound, and all vehicles are searched before entering.

Many expatriates and Afghan officials use the Serena's well-equipped gym, and Western embassies and military officials often avail themselves of its conference rooms and restaurants for meetings.

It was thought to be the first direct attack on the multimillion-dollar hotel, which opened its doors in 2006, charging as much for a single night's stay as many Afghans make in a month or even a year.

Early accounts of the chaotic sequence of events were sketchy and sometimes contradictory, but witnesses said they heard at least one loud explosion followed by gunfire, then another, closer blast. One of the dead was believed to be a female employee at the hotel gym, in

the wing of the building closest to the front entrance.

Employees quickly herded guests into the basement or warned them to stay in their rooms with the doors locked. An American aid worker who was inside the hotel told the Associated Press of terrified gym patrons huddling in the locker room, hoping they would not be found by the assailants.

"We heard gunfire, a lot of it," said Suzanne Griffin, who works for the U.S.-based nonprofit group Save the Children. "We all just sat on the floor and got as far as we could from any glass... We turned our phones on silent."

News agencies quoted a Taliban spokesman, Zabiullah Mujahid, as claiming responsibility for the assault and saying at least one of the four assailants had blown himself up. Others taking part in the attack managed to flee, he said.

Authorities quickly sealed off the scene, which was illuminated by the flashing lights of emergency vehicles. Troops were conducting a door-to-door search of the hotel in case one or more of the gunmen were still at large.

The assailants apparently managed to breach the outer security barriers and quickly scatter, carrying out separate attacks in the hotel's public areas before guards were able to rally.

"There were two or three bombs, and there was complete chaos," Norwegian journalist Stian Solum told NRK. "A bomb went off... There were shots fired."

Stoere, the Norwegian foreign minister, had called senior embassy staffers to a meeting at the hotel that was in progress at the time of the attack, news agencies reported.

Kabul had remained relatively safe through 2005, even as the situation deteriorated in the countryside, but attacks in the capital have steadily edged upward in the last two years.

Los Angeles Times
January 15, 2008

4. Assault On Kabul Hotel Kills At Least 6

Suicide bombers have mainly targeted Afghan security forces rather than trying to penetrate well-guarded embassy compounds or the headquarters of NATO-led forces, who number about 40,000 and include about 11,000 U.S. troops.

Approximately 12,000 more U.S. troops are in Afghanistan under separate command.

Taliban militants battling the Western troops have been unable this year to seize large new swaths of territory, but have managed to make many parts of the country unsafe for development and reconstruction workers, hampering efforts to rebuild in the wake of decades of warfare.

Last year, a record-setting 140 suicide attacks took place in Afghanistan, most of them targeting Afghan and Western forces, but also leaving hundreds of civilians dead and injured.

Special correspondent Faiez reported from Kabul and Times staff writer King from Dubai, United Arab Emirates. Times staff writer Paul Richter in Washington contributed to this report.

CNN
January 14, 2008

5. 3,200 Marines To Be Sent To Afghanistan In March

By Jamie McIntyre
The Situation Room (CNN), 5:00 PM

BLITZER: An American is among the dead in a very bloody terror attack at a luxury hotel in Kabul. The Taliban are claiming responsibility for the assault, which involved a suicide bomber and gunfire. It comes as the Pentagon now planning to boost the U.S. military presence in Afghanistan by deploying thousands of additional Marines.

Let's go live to our senior

Pentagon correspondent, Jamie McIntyre.

He broke this story, really, a few days ago -- Jamie, but give us a sense of what's going on right now.

I take it a decision has been made.

JAMIE MCINTYRE, CNN SENIOR PENTAGON CORRESPONDENT: Well, Wolf, the question is that with the U.S. essentially caving in and sending additional American reinforcements to Afghanistan, will it let NATO off the hook or will it allow the U.S. to shame the alliance into delivering on its promises?

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

MCINTYRE: The decision to dispatch U.S. reinforcements to Afghanistan comes as the latest Taliban attack against a swanky Kabul hotel frequented by Westerners provides a grim reminder the war is far from won. At least six people, including one American, were killed in a brazen assault by gunmen armed with suicide vests, grenades and AK-47 rifles. The primary target -- believed to be a Norwegian diplomat -- was unhurt.

The prospect of Afghanistan slipping into chaos is what has tipped the scales in favor of what is a tough call for Defense Secretary Robert Gates -- stretching his already over-extended military because other NATO countries have failed to send the troops they promised.

DEFENSE SECRETARY ROBERT GATES: I am concerned about relieving the pressure on our allies to fulfill their commitment. I am concerned about the implications for the force. I also am very concerned that we continue to be successful in Afghanistan and that we continue to keep the Taliban on their back foot.

MCINTYRE: The Pentagon has not yet announced the deployment, but CNN has confirmed that roughly 3,200 Marines are being notified that most will be

sent to the front lines in March, to beef up NATO forces in the southern British sector, where the fighting is toughest. That will put U.S. troop levels in Afghanistan at around 30,000 -- the highest in six years of war. But it's that or risk failure.

ADM. MIKE MULLEN, JOINT CHIEFS CHAIRMAN: It's a really tough situation. And, at the same time, we believe that additional forces in Afghanistan -- and particularly back to economy of force -- can have a big impact. So those are kind of the -- it's the mission versus the strain, very specifically.

(END VIDEO TAPE)

MCINTYRE: Wolf, there's a lot of debate within the administration about the wisdom of essentially letting NATO slide on its commitments by sending those 3,000 American enforcements. It has not been an easy decision. As the Joint Chiefs chairman said last week, if the U.S. had those forces readily available, it would have made this decision a lot earlier -- Wolf.

BLITZER: Jamie McIntyre at the Pentagon. Thanks very much.

New York Times
January 15, 2008
Pg. 1

6. Iraq Defense Minister Sees Need For U.S. Security Help Until 2018

By Thom Shanker
FORT MONROE, Va. — The Iraqi defense minister said Monday that his nation would not be able to take full responsibility for its internal security until 2012, nor be able on its own to defend Iraq's borders from external threat until at least 2018.

Those comments from the minister, Abdul Qadir, were among the most specific public projections of a timeline for the American commitment in Iraq by officials in either Washington or Baghdad. And they suggested a longer

commitment than either government had previously indicated.

Pentagon officials expressed no surprise at Mr. Qadir's projections, which were even less optimistic than those he made last year.

President Bush has never given a date for a military withdrawal from Iraq but has repeatedly said that American forces would stand down as Iraqi forces stand up. Given Mr. Qadir's assessment of Iraq's military capabilities on Monday, such a withdrawal appeared to be quite distant, and further away than any American officials have previously stated in public.

Mr. Qadir's comments are likely to become a factor in political debate over the war. All of the Democratic presidential candidates have promised a swift American withdrawal, while the leading Republican candidates have generally supported President Bush's plan. Now that rough dates have been attached to his formula, they will certainly come under scrutiny from both sides.

Senior Pentagon and military officials said Mr. Qadir had been consistent throughout his weeklong visit in pressing that timeline, and also in laying out requests for purchasing new weapons through Washington's program of foreign military sales.

"According to our calculations and our timelines, we think that from the first quarter of 2009 until 2012 we will be able to take full control of the internal affairs of the country," Mr. Qadir said in an interview on Monday, conducted in Arabic through an interpreter.

"In regard to the borders, regarding protection from any external threats, our calculation appears that we are not going to be able to answer to any external threats until 2018 to 2020," he added.

He offered no specifics on a timeline for reducing the number of American troops in

Iraq.

His statements were slightly less optimistic than what he told an independent United States commission examining the progress of Iraqi security forces last year, according to the September report of the commission, led by a former NATO commander, Gen. James L. Jones of the Marines, who is retired. Then Mr. Qadir said he expected that Iraq would be able to fully defend its borders by 2018.

Mr. Qadir was in the United States to discuss the two nations' long-term military relationship, starting with how to build the new Iraqi armed forces from the ground up over the next decade and beyond, with American assistance.

The United States and Iraq announced in November that they would negotiate formal agreements on that relationship, including the legal status of American military forces remaining in Iraq and an array of measures for cooperation in the diplomatic and economic arenas.

Negotiations have yet to begin in earnest, but both countries have begun sketching their goals, and Mr. Qadir's visit certainly is part of measures by the Iraqi government to lay the foundation for those talks, which are to be completed by July.

"This trip is indicative of where we are in our military relationship with Iraq," said Geoff Morrell, the Pentagon press secretary. "We are transitioning from crisis mode, from dealing with day-to-day battlefield decisions, to a long-term strategic relationship."

Mr. Morrell said the goal was to end a period in which Iraq has been a military dependent and build a relationship with Iraq as "a more traditional military partner."

Meanwhile, Mr. Qadir sketched out a shopping list that included ground vehicles

and helicopters, as well as tanks, artillery and armored personnel carriers.

Those, he said, are needed as Iraq moves toward taking full responsibility for internal security. In the years after that, as his nation assumes full control over its defense against foreign threats, Iraq will need additional aircraft, both warplanes and reconnaissance vehicles, he said.

Pentagon officials said that Mr. Qadir's visit, which includes the usual agenda of meetings at the Pentagon, White House and on Capitol Hill, was expanded to include his first talks with commanders of American headquarters that are responsible for long-term military planning, training, personnel development and doctrine.

Mr. Qadir, a career armor officer who commanded Iraqi troops who fought alongside Marine Corps forces during the battle for Falluja in 2004, spent part of Monday here, at the headquarters of the Army's Training and Doctrine Command, where he questioned senior officers on how the ground force trains its leaders, from sergeants through senior officers.

Even in wartime, "it is a requirement for somebody to think about the future," said Gen. William S. Wallace, the Army's training and doctrine commander. While Army training cannot ignore "the urgency of the next assignment," General Wallace told his visitor, the complexity of modern warfare proved the importance of the Army's program of pulling its leadership out of the fight on a routine schedule to take courses on tactics, operations and strategy, as well as logistics.

At a meeting with senior officers at the nearby Joint Forces Command, Mr. Qadir was told of the American military's latest efforts at synchronizing the efforts of its ground, air and naval forces for combat, and to use computer

exercises to train headquarters units for deployment.

"We are keenly aware that you are not engaged in an exercise in your country," said Gen. James N. Mattis of the Marine Corps, the Joint Forces commander.

General Mattis acknowledged how different the dialogue with Mr. Qadir was on Monday from when the two served together in Falluja. Iraq is still at war, General Mattis said, but Mr. Qadir is carrying out the traditional functions of any regular defense minister.

It is a positive development that "it is just the norm to have an Iraqi come and visit us," General Mattis said.

USA Today
January 15, 2008
Pg. 1

7. Raid Shows Risks In New Tactic To Hunt Al-Qaeda

Rangers recall 17-hour fight that signaled effort in Mosul
By Tom Vanden Brook, USA Today

WASHINGTON — When the two Army Rangers slipped inside the house of suspected assassins in the dark on Christmas morning in Mosul, they expected a fight. They got one.

Two gunmen, using an 11-year-old boy as a shield, confronted the soldiers. One of the Rangers, a staff sergeant, shot the suspects dead with his rifle. The boy was unharmed, according to an Army document about the assault.

That clash — recounted to USA TODAY by four of the Rangers involved and confirmed by the military command in Baghdad — kicked off what U.S. military officials say was a 17-hour firefight that resulted in the deaths of 10 al-Qaeda in Iraq insurgents, including the head of an assassination cell, a financier and a military leader. At least one fighter was from

Saudi Arabia, according to the military account of the raid. Intelligence gleaned from the fight led to 10 follow-up operations, the Rangers' commander said.

The Dec. 25 raid occurred in what military officials say has become the most dangerous part of Iraq — Mosul and surrounding areas, about 200 miles north of Baghdad. The assault was a preview of a U.S.-led campaign to root out insurgents in Mosul and Diyala province who have targeted those who cooperate with Americans. It was part of a broader operation that led to the combat deaths of nine U.S. soldiers last week in Diyala.

Taken together, the episodes show that beyond the threat posed by insurgents' roadside bombs, U.S. troops still face tough fighting in Iraq.

"The operation in Mosul is part of a plan to pursue al-Qaeda in Iraq tenaciously," Gen. David Petraeus, the U.S. commander of U.S. forces in Iraq, said in a statement. "Though we have dealt serious blows to al-Qaeda this past year, its elements remain lethal and we must keep the pressure on them."

As the counterinsurgency strategy and the addition of 30,000 troops into the Baghdad area last year has helped to quiet much of the capital, insurgents have moved to the north and east, where fighting, as the Dec. 25 raid showed, can be fierce. More than half of all attacks in Iraq now occur in the north, according to the U.S. military command in Baghdad.

In December, there were about 600 attacks on coalition troops each week. In northern Iraq, there are about 210 attacks a week. That's down about 40% compared with this time last year, but attacks in the north have declined at a lower rate than for Iraq as a whole. Nationwide, attacks are down 60%.

Last Tuesday, the military announced a major offensive, called Operation Phantom

Phoenix, against al-Qaeda in Iraq in the Mosul area. About 24,000 U.S. troops and more than 130,000 Iraqi security forces are taking part.

"Mosul is a key strategic crossroads for the al-Qaeda both from a financing point of view and foreign-fighter facilitation networks," said Navy Rear Adm. Greg Smith, spokesman for the command in Baghdad, who confirmed the Rangers' account of the Dec. 25 fight.

"It's the one area in the north that al-Qaeda really wants to hang onto, as well as Diyala," Smith said.

Many attacks on Baghdad, he said, have been staged from Diyala.

Mosul, a city with a population of 1.8 million, is a mix of Sunnis, Shiites and Kurds.

Al-Qaeda in Iraq, made up of homegrown Sunni extremists and some foreign fighters, may find blending into the population easier in Mosul, where there are fewer U.S. troops to force them from hiding than in Baghdad, said Michael O'Hanlon, a military analyst at the Brookings Institution.

Engagements such as the Dec. 25 raid may reflect the future of security crackdowns in Iraq, he said.

"Al-Qaeda is adaptive," O'Hanlon said. "They recognized American forces are relatively lacking in Mosul. It is sobering because it reminds us of the difficulty of dealing with these people nationwide. It also underscores how much we're still needed there. It tells you about the adaptability of the enemy and tenuousness of progress."

The Rangers involved in the Dec. 25 raid spoke with USA TODAY by video conference from Mosul and Baghdad. Rules established for special operations units prohibit the use of last names of its elite troops.

A tip prompted the Christmas raid, said Blake, the Rangers' company commander,

a 32-year-old major from Manassas, Va. An Iraqi man had reported seeing al-Qaeda terrorists execute a man in public. The witness told U.S. troops where the extremists had gathered.

A few hours later, at 2:04 a.m., Pete, 26, of Marlboro, N.J., and his fellow Rangers, with M-4 rifles and night-vision goggles, arrived at the suspected insurgents' doorstep.

"You don't go into anything thinking the best-case scenario," Pete said. "Anytime you go through a door, you're expecting someone there with a gun waiting on you. Or someone with a suicide vest, grenade or whatever their weapon of choice is at that particular time. You're always thinking for the worst."

Six minutes later, he had killed the two gunmen, Pete said, and Rangers had found 10 women and children huddled in the back of the house. The Iraqis' conflicting accounts of how many men remained in the house made the soldiers suspicious.

Lashaun, 27, a sergeant first class from Chester, Va., searched a bathroom and noticed a nylon strap protruding from the bottom of a shower basin.

"That's when I called in Pete and told him to help hold security on the shower basin as I pulled the strap out of the floor," Lashaun said. "That's when the basin came up and revealed a hidden passageway to a hidden bunker."

When he rolled back a concrete block that was sitting on rails, gunfire erupted. Pete estimated the entrance at 2-by-2 feet, barely large enough for a Ranger with 45 pounds of gear to pass through. Lashaun and Pete fired into the hole and backed out of the room.

Pete tossed in a grenade.

After the grenade exploded, the Rangers moved back into the shower room, Lashaun said. Suddenly, he said, grenades started flying

back at them.

Lashaun said he saw one grenade bounce, so he and another Ranger dove through a door before it exploded. Pete and the Ranger retreated to a different room.

Blake, the company commander, said the soldiers had split into two groups of nine each. Gunfire from the insurgents poured out of the bathroom, while Lashaun's Rangers fired back.

Pete figured bullets passed within 1 foot of him. "I was really stuck basically in a crossfire," he said.

Meanwhile, Lashaun hustled the women and children toward safety over a courtyard wall.

"He's risking his life, taking enemy fire, while he's literally extending himself and pushing women and children over the wall," Blake said.

Lashaun then linked up with two Rangers, re-entered the house and fired into the bathroom. One insurgent came around the corner, Lashaun said, and the Rangers killed him "right there on the spot."

As the Rangers tried to move into the shower room, "another guy came up out of the hole," Lashaun said. The Rangers shot him dead.

"After that we came to the conclusion that we need to get out of the house," Lashaun said.

Their commander agreed.

Blake ordered the split-up forces to pull back so they could regroup. Residents in neighboring homes were evacuated.

The Rangers then called for an airstrike.

An AC-130 gunship swooped above the house. The plane, whose two models are known as "Spooky" and "Spectre," is a workhorse for Air Force Special Operations.

At 3:05 a.m., its crew fired five 105mm rounds from a cannon into the house. Delayed fuses allowed the shells to penetrate the roof and explode near the bunker.

"I called that fire onto the

house and watched every single one of those rounds as precision as I've ever seen it," Blake said.

They waited until 9 a.m. before re-entering the house, according to a timeline provided by the military.

The task of re-entering the house fell to J.R., a 26-year-old first lieutenant from Thomaston, Ga. Pete volunteered to join him.

Inside the house, they found two dead insurgents wearing unexploded suicide-bomb belts.

They moved downstairs, where a wall concealed the concrete bunker. J.R. spotted a man there wearing a vest and holding a pin in his hand.

He sensed that there might be others. J.R. began shooting and backing out as the man yanked on the pin.

"His vest detonated, clouding the whole area with dust," J.R. said.

They dropped a grenade in the basement.

"No noises or sounds were made after that grenade," J.R. said.

They dropped another grenade inside the bunker and left the house.

"We then moved back inside the house again to see if there were any more enemy (killed) or any movement inside the house," he said. "We decided to go down inside the basement to ensure there were not any more enemy personnel down there."

J.R., Pete and another Ranger found two dead insurgents and another crawling away, pulling on a pin. It might have been a suicide vest or another grenade, Pete said.

Their suicide vests look like a cummerbund, the garment men wear with tuxedos.

The Rangers shot him, Pete said.

They heard more voices, saw more movement.

J.R. ordered the Rangers out of the house and called Blake.

"At this point, we have eight enemy killed in action that we have engaged," Blake said. "Four of those we have confirmed the wear or use of a suicide belt."

There still may have been three more insurgents inside.

Blake called in "a little bit more firepower," he recalled.

They cleared the neighborhood before two Air Force F-16 fighter jets arrived.

At 11:15 a.m., the warplanes dropped two 500-pound, satellite-guided bombs on the house, destroying it.

The Mosul raid, Smith said, is part of the military's effort to maintain pressure on al-Qaeda and force members to try to survive rather than carry out attacks.

"What we've seen with al-Qaeda is the ability to regenerate," Smith said. "It's hard to say specifically whether this particular operation on Christmas Day caused significant degradation to (al-Qaeda in Iraq's) presence in Mosul, but it sure will hurt them in the short term."

Last week, the military identified one of those killed as Haydar al-Afri, a senior leader of al-Qaeda in Iraq for western Mosul, who allegedly had planned attacks against U.S. and Iraqi forces.

Dakota Wood, a military analyst at the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, predicts difficult fights will continue in northern Iraq until U.S. commanders commit more troops, or more Iraqi soldiers backing U.S. troops become competent.

Al-Qaeda terrorists will keep moving to where the U.S. troop presence is lightest, Wood said.

"It's a consequence of not having enough boots on the ground," Wood said.

"If you have enough force, you can handle all the trouble spots simultaneously," he said.

New York Times
January 15, 2008

8. Rice Makes Unannounced Visit To Baghdad

By Steven Lee Myers

RIYADH, Saudi Arabia — Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice flew to Baghdad on Tuesday, peeling off a trip to the region by President Bush to give momentum to legislative and political reconciliation, the White House said.

Ms. Rice's trip, which was not previously announced, came after Iraq's parliament gave approval on Saturday to a key piece of legislation allowing some former members of Saddam Hussein's Baath Party to work in public service again and receive pensions. The Bush administration and Congress had made the legislation a benchmark for measuring political progress in Iraq as Democrats and others critics of the war debate the war. Ms. Rice is expected to spend only a few hours there, meeting with Prime Minister Nuri Kamal al-Maliki and other officials.

"President Bush and Secretary Rice decided this would be a good opportunity for the secretary to go to Baghdad to meet with Iraqi officials to build on political progress made and encourage political reconciliation and legislative action," a White House spokesman, Gordon D. Johndroe, said.

With Mr. Bush visiting Kuwait, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates and now Saudi Arabia, there was considerable speculation that he would also furtively visit Baghdad. Mr. Bush's trip to the Middle East has focused on the peace process between the Israelis and Palestinians, as well as the war in Iraq and the diplomatic confrontation over Iran's nuclear programs.

Washington Post
January 15, 2008
Pg. 9

9. U.S.: 60 Insurgents Killed In Offensive

Northern Drive Targets

Al-Qaeda in Iraq

By Amit R. Paley, Washington Post Foreign Service

The announcement came on the same day that at least three Iraqi police officers were killed when a booby-trapped house exploded in the northern province of Diyala, underscoring the danger involved in trying to clear insurgents from their safe havens.

The campaign in northern Iraq, known as Operation Iron Harvest, began last week with a major push to kill or capture members of al-Qaeda in Iraq, a homegrown Sunni insurgent group that U.S. officials believe is led by Arabs who have come to Iraq since the war began.

But military officials in Diyala, the initial focus of the operation, were surprised that most of the insurgents were able to evade U.S. forces by either fleeing or hiding among the civilian population. Iraqi and American security forces are chasing the fighters to prevent them from establishing new bases of operation in other areas.

"Now they are in a corner," said Lt. Gen. Abdul Kareem al-Rubaie, the commander of Iraqi military forces in Diyala. "The armed groups have withdrawn and are fleeing."

The attack on the Iraqi police officers took place in the village of al-Abarra Abu Fayad, south of the provincial capital of Baqubah, where Sunni insurgents have fled, according to Rubaie. He said a house rigged with explosives blew up when Iraqi police went inside. Six police officers were wounded in addition to the three killed in the blast.

Insurgents in Diyala, one of Iraq's most dangerous provinces, have frequently used booby-trapped homes to target U.S. troops. Six American soldiers and an Iraqi interpreter were killed in such a house last week during the offensive there.

The U.S. military said in a statement that 193 "suspected extremists" have been detained and 79 weapons caches found since the four-province campaign began. The weapons stores included about 100 roadside bombs, more than 10,000 rounds of ammunition and more than 4,000 pounds of homemade explosives, the military said.

Meanwhile, in Baghdad, Iraqi and U.S. officials raised hopes for political reconciliation among the various sects and parties.

Vice President Tariq al-Hashimi, a Sunni, said the country's largest Sunni political bloc, the Iraqi Accordance Front, was prepared to return to the government if its demands, including the release of Sunni detainees from prison and better government benefits, were met. The group withdrew its ministers from the Shiite-led government last year to protest the lack of Sunni clout within the cabinet.

After meeting with Abdul Aziz al-Hakim, the leader of one of the largest Shiite groups in Iraq, Hashimi said that he hoped political leaders could "push forward the wheels of the political process."

Also on Monday, the senior U.S. officials in Iraq issued their first statement about the passage Sunday of a law allowing Baath Party officials to return to government, the first of the political benchmarks set by the United States.

"Passage of this law represents a signal achievement in that Iraqi political leaders have collectively chosen to reform a de-Baathification process that many regarded as flawed, unfair, and a roadblock to reconciliation," Gen. David H. Petraeus, the top U.S. commander in Iraq, and Ambassador Ryan C. Crocker said in a statement. "Ultimately the impact of this important legislative step will depend as much on the spirit of implementation as on the form

of the legislation."

The new law is an attempt by the Iraqi government to address the first decree issued by the Coalition Provisional Authority, the U.S.-led occupation administration installed after the 2003 invasion. That order banned many senior members of Saddam Hussein's Baath Party from serving in government and helped fuel the Sunni-led insurgency.

Also in Baghdad, gunmen killed Amer Jawdat al-Naieb, an appellate judge and member of Iraq's judicial council, along with his driver, while he headed to work, police said.

Special correspondents Zaid Sabah, K.I. Ibrahim, Saad al-Izzi and other Washington Post staff in Iraq contributed to this report.

Los Angeles Times
January 15, 2008

10. Kirkuk Referendum Needed, Kurdish Leader Says

If Baghdad doesn't arrange for a vote in the next 6 months, then the provincial government should be allowed to sponsor the balloting, he argues.

By Ned Parker, Los Angeles Times Staff Writer

BAGHDAD — The president of Iraq's Kurdish region warned Monday that Kurdish leaders would resist efforts to scrap plans for a referendum on the fate of the multiethnic city of Kirkuk. His tough comments came a day after nearly a dozen political parties in Baghdad challenged Kurdish designs by calling for the central government to impose a solution.

Iraqi Kurdistan leader Massoud Barzani fired back at his Arab opponents who argued that Kirkuk -- a home to Kurds, Arabs and Turkmens -- is no longer subject to an article in the Iraqi Constitution calling for a general referendum on disputed territories to be held by the end of 2007.

"There is no turning back,"

Barzani said in Irbil. "The referendum must be conducted in the next six months."

Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, who was traveling with President Bush in Saudi Arabia, traveled to Iraq early today to press for political reconciliation, officials said.

Meanwhile, a large fire erupted at an oil refinery in Shuaiba, west of Basra, early today. The cause of the fire, which sent large clouds of smoke into the air, was not immediately determined.

Some witnesses said the refinery, which produces oil for southern Iraq but not for export, was sabotaged. Other sources said a technical problem had caused the fire.

Barzani, the Kurdish leader, spoke at the reburial of 365 victims of the bloody 1988 campaign known as the Anfal, which the Iraqi government waged against its Kurdish population. The bodies were recovered from graves across northern and southern Iraq and returned to families in a reminder of how Kurds had suffered at the hands of Saddam Hussein's regime.

"This is our past and we have the right to ask for guarantees in the new Iraq in order to avoid any genocide against the Kurdish people," Barzani told mourners.

If the referendum is not held in the next six months, he said, the Kirkuk provincial government should be able to sponsor its own referendum. The Kurds, who dominate the provincial government, have long dreamed of making oil-rich Kirkuk part of their northern region and believe the area belongs to them historically.

The Kurds also insist that they have been robbed of areas in the northern provinces of Diyala and Nineveh through Hussein's policy of "ethnic cleansing." A referendum would settle the fate of all contested locations.

Barzani appeared to be reacting to the Arab political

groups who read their communique Sunday opposing a referendum on Kirkuk's fate.

The Arab statement also challenged the Kurds' rights to sign oil-exploration contracts with foreign companies independent of Baghdad. The statement brought together Shiite and Sunni Arab parties from opposite ends of the political spectrum.

In Baghdad, Iraqi Vice President Tariq Hashimi said the 44-seat Sunni Arab bloc known as the Iraqi Accordance Front, or Tawafiq, might return to the government. Hashimi made his comments at a news conference after a visit from Shiite leader Abdelaziz Hakim. Tawafiq, which left the government in August, has previously hinted its ministers might return but they haven't yet.

In west Baghdad, a high-ranking judge was assassinated by gunmen, police and hospital sources said. Judge Amer Jawdat Naib, who sat on the national appeals court, and his driver were killed by machine-gun fire after seven gunmen in two cars blocked their vehicle, police said. The shooting took place near two Iraqi army checkpoints.

Many Iraqi judges and lawyers have been assassinated since 2003 as armed groups have sought to destroy the country's professional classes.

Seven Iraqi policemen were killed and four others wounded Monday when they entered a booby-trapped house in Abarat Behroz in Diyala province, police said. Last week, six American soldiers were killed when a booby-trapped house exploded in the Diyala town of Sinsil Tharia.

The U.S. Army announced Monday that it had killed 60 fighters and detained 193 militants during the hunt for Sunni militants in four northern Iraqi provinces. The military said it confiscated more than 4,000 pounds of explosives during the operation.

Sunni militants have flowed into northern Iraq since coming under pressure last year in Baghdad and the western province of Anbar. The northern region now accounts for about 50% of violence nationwide, according to U.S. figures.

Times staff writers Alexandra Zavis, Saif Hameed, Saif Rasheed and Usama Redha contributed to this report.

New York Times
January 15, 2008

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11. Judge And U.S.-Linked Sunni Fighters Are Killed In Iraq

By Richard A. Opiel Jr. and Aber Mohammed

BAGHDAD — Gunmen in two cars assassinated a respected and high-ranking Iraqi appellate court judge and his driver in western Baghdad on Monday morning, Iraqi officials said. Hours later, in Diyala Province, three American-backed Iraqi militiamen died after they entered a building that blew up and collapsed on them, the Iraqi police said.

Judge Amir Jawdat al-Naeeb, a Sunni Arab in his 60s, was killed by gunmen as he was being driven to work, shocking other Baghdad judges and lawyers, who regarded him as one of the country's most competent and even-handed jurists.

The attack appeared to be part of a longstanding campaign by militants to kill doctors, professors, lawyers and other professionals. The judge's friends said they could not think of any case or decision that might have prompted someone to kill him.

"This is a disaster for the Iraqi judiciary," said Aswad al-Monshedi, leader of the Union of Iraqi Lawyers. Judge Abdul Sattar al-Beragdar said that Judge Naeeb was known for his independence. "I think

he was assassinated by outlaws and gangsters targeting good Iraqis," Judge Beragdar said.

Bahaa al-Araji, a leader of the bloc of lawmakers loyal to the Shiite cleric Moktada al-Sadr, said that when he was working as a lawyer in the early 1990s he often appeared before Judge Naeab. Mr. Araji described him as a one-man "legal reference for Iraq."

He said the judge was from a well-known tribe in Ramadi, and moved to Baghdad many years ago. Despite being a Sunni with high standing in the government, he never joined the Baath Party of Saddam Hussein, Mr. Araji said.

At least eight other people were killed in Iraq on Monday, said reports from Iraqi authorities and wire services. The dead included Fayadh al-Moussawi, a senior official with Mr. Sadr's political organization in Basra.

The worst attacks occurred just northeast of Baghdad in Diyala, which is the most dangerous region in Iraq. The province has a volatile mix of militant Sunnis and Shiites, as well as Shiite-dominated security forces with a history of sectarian conduct.

One week ago the American military began its third major initiative in the past year to drive Sunni militants from Diyala. Similar operations are under way in three other northern provinces. So far, 60 "suspected extremists" have been killed and 193 arrested in all four provinces, the military said in a statement on Monday.

The statement seemed to underscore the guerrillas' wide-ranging infrastructure and weapons stockpiles. During the operations, American and Iraqi forces have discovered 79 weapons hideaways containing more than 10,000 light machine gun rounds, 2,000 heavy machine gun rounds and about 100 homemade bombs in various stages of construction.

In a particularly deadly area of central Diyala known as

"the breadbasket," soldiers also discovered an underground bunker system that included a bomb-making workshop and living quarters.

Many of the Sunni militants are believed to have fled in advance of the operation, just as they did before another large operation last summer. But they left plenty of deadly traps behind. Six American soldiers were killed last Wednesday in a house where a huge explosion, apparently set off by a hidden trigger wire, collapsed the home on them.

At least five other house bombs have been discovered in the past week. House bombs have become a common weapon of the insurgents in Diyala, who in many cases have been able to move large amounts of explosives into a house without being detected by American or Iraqi forces or reported by neighbors or onlookers.

The latest such attack happened Monday south of the provincial capital of Baquba and involved an American-Iraqi force and members of an American-recruited Sunni Arab militia known as an Awakening group. At least three Awakening guards were killed when they entered a house, only to have it explode, the Iraqi police said.

The force was searching for fighters from Al Qaeda in Mesopotamia, the mostly home-grown insurgent group that American officials say is foreign-led.

Six Iraqi policemen were also wounded, the police said, and another Awakening guard was shot to death in a village nearby.

The American military also disclosed on Monday that Haji Uday, the leader of a large Sunni Awakening militia in Baquba, died on Sunday when his vehicle collided with a dump truck near Khalis while it was being escorted by the Iraqi police. The accident injured six other Iraqis. The

military said it was investigating the crash.

Reporting was contributed by Anwar J. Ali, Ahmad Fadam, Karim Hilmi and Qais Mizher from Baghdad and Iraqi employees of The New York Times from Diyala and Basra.

Christian Science Monitor
January 15, 2008

12. U.S. Pushes Iraq To Clear More 'Benchmarks'

Signs of political reconciliation are emerging in Iraq, raising US hopes that a logjam has broken.

By Howard LaFranchi, Staff writer of The Christian Science Monitor

WASHINGTON -- The Bush administration is counting on Saturday's passage of a key piece of legislation in Iraq, easing measures against former Baathists, to act as a break in a logjam that has held up national reconciliation.

With violence down, insurgent groups quieted, and many of the forces affiliated with Al Qaeda in Iraq routed, the United States is hoping passage of the new law means the "surge" of 30,000 additional troops is succeeding. In announcing the surge a year ago, President Bush said its aim was to provide the conditions for Iraq's warring power blocs to find common ground on important political issues.

What the US has done is provide an "opportunity" for Iraqis – led by the government of Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki – to compromise on unsettled power-sharing issues, including oil-revenue distribution, provincial elections and powers, and constitutional reform, some experts say. But with US troop levels beginning to shrink and with the US commitment to Iraq likely to weaken no matter who is elected president in November, it's now crunch time for Iraq's leaders.

"The US needs the Iraqis

to come up with their own surge of political action, and pretty quickly here, if the effort is to be a long-term success," says James Phillips, a Middle East expert at the Heritage Foundation in Washington. "The US military surge did its job in improving conditions on the ground, but now the Maliki government must take the opportunity to transform those gains by reaching out to moderate Sunnis and bringing them into a political-power-sharing arrangement.

"If they miss this opportunity," he adds, "Iraq could slip back."

The law easing restrictions on former Baathists will have its greatest impact on Sunni Arabs who made up Iraq's power elite under Saddam Hussein. More ex-Baathists who had government posts before the war are expected to reclaim those jobs, while others previously barred from benefits will now receive government pensions.

Yet even as Iraqi politicians debate the new law's real impact – with some predicting it will actually lead to a purge of some Sunnis from Iraq's new security forces – some signs are surfacing that action could be imminent on other measures.

On the heels of passage of the de-Baathification measure, several Shiite, Sunni, and secular political groups announced formation of a common front to press for action on oil revenue-sharing legislation and on the prickly issue of control over the oil-rich city of Kirkuk. The new political alliance may be a sign that determination is growing among nationalist forces to blunt the regionalist tendencies of some Kurdish and Shiite blocs.

But others predict the new alliance could serve to boost Mr. Maliki by giving him a bargaining chip with those dragging out passage of national-reconciliation measures. If the alliance –

which includes the parties of former Prime Minister Ayad Allawi and of firebrand cleric Moqtada al-Sadr – sticks together, it could potentially include the votes of about half the Parliament.

On a nine-day tour of the Middle East, President Bush hailed passage of the de-Baathification law as "an important step toward reconciliation." At the White House, officials hope more measures – which the US dubs "benchmarks" for Iraqi political action – will be approved by March, when Gen. David Petraeus is scheduled to deliver a progress report on Iraq to Congress.

Even as they note progress in Iraq as a result of the surge, some experts say long-term prospects for national reconciliation remain cloudy. One reason is that the surge succeeded in part by cooperating with and arming Sunni groups formerly opposed to the US, resulting in Sunni militias that may now feel less inclined to compromise with the dominant Shiite forces, they say.

"We have scattered the forces of Al Qaeda in Iraq, no question," says Wayne White, who headed the State Department's Iraq analysis until 2005 and is now at the Middle East Institute in Washington. "But we've made civil war far more likely down the road by making Sunni Arabs far more able to fight it."

Maliki is unhappy with how the US has empowered Sunni groups – ostensibly to fight Islamic extremists but potentially to stand up to Shiite-dominated security forces. The US, says Mr. White, needs to use the new reality on the ground to "scare" all of Iraq's political forces into making the hard compromises that can stave off a return to violence in the future.

White House claims that reconciliation is taking place in the grass roots even if progress stalls at the national level, he adds, won't be enough. "The

Sunni Arabs will never believe you until it is enacted into national legislation," he says. "Until then, they are going to believe that, as the US loses more of its influence, everything gained informally will be lost."

The Heritage Foundation's Mr. Phillips says it would be misleading to claim that no progress has been made in the past year just because US-sought benchmarks aren't met. For example, he says, some revenues from Iraq's oil production have been distributed to regions despite no national legislation.

But he agrees that the US should pressure the Iraqis to pass the oil legislation for at least two reasons. One, he says, is that "brokering a durable power-sharing deal" would be a signal to Iraq's Shiites, Kurds, and Sunnis "that could take the steam out of a big part of the insurgency."

The other reason, he says, has to do with US politics. The Iraqis need to act now, he says, because they may not be able to count on the same level of support from the next US president.

Newport News Daily Press
January 14, 2008
Pg. 1

13. Commanders Prep For African Mission

By Stephanie Heintz

The U.S. Joint Forces Command's war-fighting center in Suffolk was filled last week with more than 80 military officers, who were completing their last round of training before deploying to the Horn of Africa.

They will work throughout East Africa - including Kenya, where riots and ethnic violence erupted recently after a disputed presidential election - but fighting was the furthest thing from their military minds.

The Defense Department wants to address instability in the region through a mixture of partnerships with charities;

training host nation militaries in, among other skills, human rights; and completing humanitarian projects.

"Our business is to make dreams come true, to help people help themselves," a senior Navy officer said. "But make no mistake about it: We're in the business of security."

The Daily Press was invited to attend some of the training - typically closed to the public - with the understanding that participants would be referred to only as "military officers."

The officers make up the new crop of U.S. military commanders who will lead the peace effort from the Djibouti-based Combined Joint Task Force - Horn of Africa.

Joint Forces Command is based in Norfolk with a compound in Suffolk. It plans the mission rehearsals for commanders heading to Africa, Iraq and Afghanistan. Those rehearsals include a combination of classroom briefings and simulated problems to solve.

Briefings for the African-bound commanders included talks on how to better coordinate with charities, how to decide what humanitarian projects are most needed and the importance of understanding the tribal diversities among the people they'll be working with. The hands-on part of the training runs this week. It'll force the officers to deal with simulated problems, like the effect of pirates off Somalia, human trafficking and a natural disaster.

Stabilizing the countries in the Horn of Africa through humanitarian outreach, the Navy officer said, will not only benefit East Africans, but also help "prevent things from happening in our homeland."

The task force was created shortly after the U.S. invaded Afghanistan in response to the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks. The concern then was that terrorists fleeing

Afghanistan would move to the Horn of Africa. The military didn't see that happen, but it did learn of a need to help.

The end game, the Navy officer said, is all about "increasing security, enhancing stability and enabling sovereignty" in Djibouti, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Seychelles, Somalia, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda and Yemen.

In early 2004, the U.S. Institute of Peace reported that the Horn of Africa had become a major source of terrorism.

Al-Qaida was linked to the 1998 U.S. Embassy bombings in Kenya and nearby Tanzania. In 2000, the group was deemed responsible for the bombing of the USS Cole, a Norfolk-based destroyer, in the Yemeni Gulf of Aden.

Trying to stabilize a region by improving the lives of people who live there, though, can be as complicated an endeavor as planning a military invasion. Take reconnaissance as an example, an Army officer said.

"Civil affairs recon is very important, especially in Africa," he said. "We've learned lessons about well drilling too close to one tribe."

Other tribes might then avoid the well, which reduces its value. You also have to be patient, a charity expert told the group.

"You're not going to get people to love you in six months," the expert said. "You must have a long-term plan."

Building a school or hosting a free medical clinic must be part of a well-designed program, the expert said - like one to improve an education system or address inadequate health care. The mission is challenging but rewarding.

"The assignments in the Horn of Africa can make a career," an Army officer said. "We have the ability to actually do something that matters, (and) a guy can spend 30 years in the military and not get that."

USA Today
January 15, 2008
Pg. 9

14. 'Wanted' Billboards Go Up For Suspect In Slaying Of Marine

By Mike Baker, Associated Press

JACKSONVILLE, N.C. — Federal authorities planned to post billboards nationwide with the picture of a Marine wanted in the slaying of a pregnant colleague, and the sheriff announced a \$25,000 reward Monday for information leading to his arrest.

Authorities are looking for Marine Cpl. Cesar Laurean, wanted in the death of Marine Lance Cpl. Maria Lauterbach, who had accused him of rape. FBI officials said the first billboards with Laurean's photo would appear in Tampa; Columbus, Ohio; and Las Vegas.

"The search for Laurean is Earthwide," Onslow County Sheriff Ed Brown said at a news conference. "You're never gone for good when law enforcement is after you."

Authorities recovered what they believe to be the burned remains of Lauterbach and her 8-month-old fetus from a fire pit in Laurean's backyard over the weekend. Police believe Laurean, 21, of the Las Vegas area, fled Jacksonville, N.C., before dawn Friday, and have said he left behind a note in which he admitted burying Lauterbach's body but claimed she cut her own throat in a suicide. Brown said late Monday that authorities had received a preliminary autopsy report, but he declined to discuss details.

North Carolina is one of 15 states without a fetal homicide law, but Onslow County District Attorney Dewey Hudson said he has no plans to step aside in favor of a military prosecution.

Georgetown University law professor Gary Solis said local authorities have primary jurisdiction in the case. "They

have the crime scene and they have the physical evidence," he said.

That makes it unlikely that Laurean would be prosecuted under the federal fetal homicide law passed in 2004 during the height of attention on the California trial of Scott Peterson, who was accused of murdering his pregnant wife, Laci. The law makes it a crime to harm a fetus during an assault on a pregnant woman.

"As a matter of law, the military could prosecute him (Laurean) separately," said Scott Silliman, a former military lawyer who is now director of the Center on Law, Ethics and National Security at Duke University. "But as a matter of policy, it rarely happens."

Arizona Daily Star (Tucson)
January 15, 2008

California

15. Dereliction Reduces Senior Marine DI

SAN DIEGO — A senior Marine Corps drill instructor convicted of dereliction of duty but acquitted of maltreating recruits has been sentenced to a reduction in rank and 90 days of hard labor without confinement.

A military jury handed down the sentence to Sgt. Robert Hankins late Friday. Hankins and two junior drill instructors faced courts-martial for what prosecutors said was the rampant abuse of recruits at the Marine Corps Recruit Depot in San Diego between December 2006 and February 2007.

The sentence reduces Hankins' rank to lance corporal.

Miami Herald
January 15, 2008

16. Fourth Fleet May Sail Again

The U.S. Navy's storied Fourth Fleet could sail the Southern Atlantic again under a plan being promoted to create the institution in Mayport, Fla.,

run by Southcom in Doral.

By Carol Rosenberg

The Navy is considering restoring the Fourth Fleet in the Atlantic Ocean, a bureaucratic change that would raise the prominence of Pentagon maritime activities in Latin America and Caribbean.

Navy Adm. Mike Mullen, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, made the disclosure during a visit to the Southern Command on Monday -- calling it "a great idea" that "as far as I know is moving forward."

The move would bring no new vessels to the region but would put Southcom on par administratively with other Pentagon outposts that have large budgets and bigger muscle. For example, the Central Command operates the Fifth Fleet in the Middle East.

It would also restore an institution that sent U.S. Navy warships into southern waters in search of Nazi U-boats.

The Navy created the Fourth Fleet in 1943 to hunt submarines in the South Atlantic during World War II.

It was disbanded seven years later.

At the Pentagon, Navy Cmdr. Jeff Davis said no final decision has been made. Mullen said if such an institution were created, it would be worked out between the Navy's top officer, Adm. Gary Roughead, and Adm. James Stavridis, the Southcom commander who runs the region's U.S. military operations out of South Florida.

In theory, the Fourth Fleet would operate out of Mayport near Jacksonville, now a smaller headquarters for Navy South, which coordinates Navy activities in Latin America and the Caribbean for Southcom. It is run by a one-star officer, Rear Adm. James W. Stevenson Jr. A Fourth Fleet would be run by a two- or three-star admiral, and may need congressional approval.

Davis emphasized that no new vessels -- and no

additional budget -- would come with the creation of a Fourth Fleet. Instead, warships from various bases would be assigned to sail in the fleet -- in waters stretching from the Caribbean through Central and South America.

Military analysts said the establishment of a Fourth Fleet admiral could elevate Southcom's prominence in discussions on where ships are deployed -- and would surely send a signal to southern neighbors.

"It gives the Navy a bigger profile in the region," said Frank Mora, professor of national security strategy at the National War College in Washington, D.C. "It sends a message to the region that you are important at a time when there is a sense that we don't care."

Moreover, it may also reflect the Navy's increasing commitment to Latin America and the Caribbean at a time when the Pentagon is preoccupied -- and when ground forces are focused on Middle East operations.

In recent years, the Southern Command has increasingly relied on the Navy for humanitarian operations.

"Symbolism is something that has some currency," said Mora. "It's a way of compensating for limited resources and funds, perhaps lack of focus in Washington or other things."

Mullen, the top U.S. military officer since October, was at Southcom as part of a five-day trip to the region that includes Colombia and El Salvador.

Boston Globe
January 15, 2008

17. Warning: Updating US Fleet Is Pricy

Top admiral sees need for controls

By Bryan Bender, Globe Staff

The US Navy's top officer has warned that the skyrocketing costs of designing and building cutting-edge

warships - a problem that has plagued some shipbuilding programs in recent years - could hamper the service's ability to obtain the fleet it needs to defend American interests as well as deter China and other rising naval powers.

Admiral Gary Roughead, who took over as chief of naval operations in September, said in a recent interview that the Navy should expand its fleet from 280 ships to 316 in the coming decades.

But Roughead also warned that such an expansion and the economic boost to New England that would accompany it face major obstacles: the Navy's tendency to pack more technologies into its new ships than it absolutely needs, and the tendency of the nation's business-hungry shipyards to take advantage of it when going after lucrative government contracts.

"Ships are not inexpensive things," Roughead told Globe reporters and editors last week during his tour of the region's shipyards, including Portsmouth Naval Shipyard and Bath Iron Works in Maine. "We have to do all we can to make sure we are setting the requirements right - that we are not just putting things on that we want - [and] that we monitor the cost and construction in such a way that we don't lose control over that cost and we are able to deliver the ships to the country."

One recent example is the Zumwalt-class destroyer program, a next-generation ship being managed by Waltham-based defense giant Raytheon and being built by Bath Iron Works. Because the ship is based on the most advanced technology available, the Navy now estimates that each Zumwalt destroyer will cost more than \$3 billion, well over earlier estimates of \$2 billion per ship.

Several years ago, the Navy had planned to purchase at least 30 of the warships but the high cost has led the Pentagon to reduce the order to

just seven.

Roughead told the Globe his visit to the New England shipyards was intended "to be able to get a sense of their infrastructure and the programs they have under construction for us and better inform myself as to the status of our shipbuilding programs."

Meanwhile, the Navy will have to determine the kind of vessel it needs to fill in the gaps it had expected to fill with a larger number of Zumwalt destroyers, he said.

Roughead said the service is studying the possibility of designing a new cruiser, known as the CG(X), that could use many of the same technologies developed for the Zumwalt with the hope that doing so will "mitigate the risk" of building the new warship. But figuring out ways to keep construction and operating costs down is considered paramount, he said.

For example, dramatically rising oil prices recently led some members of Congress to call for building only warships that are nuclear powered, like American aircraft carriers and submarines.

Los Angeles Times
January 15, 2008

18. Judge Stands By Ban On Sonar

The Navy is expected to appeal the decision, meant to protect marine mammals, affecting upcoming training exercises.

By Kenneth R. Weiss, Los Angeles Times Staff Writer

A federal judge in Los Angeles declined Monday to set aside her order forbidding the Navy from using powerful sonar in training missions in Southern California waters unless it operates farther than 12 miles off the coast and adopts other measures to lessen the effect on whales and dolphins.

The Navy is expected to appeal Judge Florence Marie Cooper's decision and ask that her injunction temporarily be removed to allow training

exercises to begin later this month without the restrictions.

The recent confrontation between Navy ships and fast-moving Iranian boats in the Persian Gulf illustrates precisely why this case gives the Navy "heartburn," said Cmdr. Jeff A. Davis, a Navy spokesman at the Pentagon.

The judge's order, he said, restricts sonar training in the Santa Catalina basin, a "choke point" whose similarity to the Strait of Hormuz can help sailors learn to detect submarines while defending against "swarming attacks by small boats."

The Navy's integrated approach to training is designed to ensure that sailors are prepared to respond simultaneously to all potential threats, Davis said.

"While we respect the court's decision and appreciate the care it took in crafting it, we cannot in good conscience send American sons and daughters into potential trouble spots without adequate training to defend themselves," Davis said. "This is a national security issue, and we must use all methods available to ensure that overly broad restrictions do not hamper our ability to train."

In her rulings, Cooper has said she tried to balance national security needs with environmental protections -- specifically those to prevent unnecessary harm to whales and dolphins from mid-frequency active sonar. That's the type the Navy uses to detect quiet diesel-electric submarines.

She has cited scientific studies linking U.S. and NATO warships' use of sonar to the deaths and injuries of beaked whales and other marine mammals. She also has reiterated the Navy's own predictions that the upcoming exercises off Southern California "will cause widespread harm to nearly 30 species of marine mammals."

She has closed some whale-rich waters to training

exercises and insisted that the Navy increase its efforts to watch for whales and shut down the sonar if marine mammals come within 2,200 yards. Her ruling affects training runs off Southern California only.

Atlanta Journal-Constitution
January 15, 2008

19. Pilot Error Cited In Blue Angels Crash

A Navy Blue Angels pilot killed in a crash in Beaufort, S.C., last April apparently had become disoriented after failing to properly tense his abdominal muscles to counter the gravitational forces of a high-speed turn, according to a report. It blamed the crash on an error by Lt. Cmdr. Kevin Davis, who was in his first season flying in formation with the Navy's elite aerial demonstration team. Because they could interfere with controls, the Blue Angels fly without the G-suits that most fighter pilots wear to avoid blacking out during such maneuvers.

Denver Rocky Mountain News
January 14, 2008

Pg. 14

20. Changing Warfare Prompts AFA To Bring Back Resistance Training

By Associated Press

A program to train Air Force Academy cadets how to resist enemy forces will be reinstated this summer, 13 years after officials discontinued the program over claims that simulated sexual abuse crossed into actual abuse.

Academy Superintendent Lt. Gen. John Regni outlined the program Thursday in a meeting with the academy Board of Visitors, a civilian panel that advises the academy.

The training will focus on hostage resistance, an evolution that reflects a change in the threat facing military

forces. Previous training developed after the Vietnam War focused on preparing military personnel for prisoner of war situations.

Sexual assault resistance training will no longer be a part of the program, academy spokesman John Van Winkle said.

The training is part of a larger program known as Survival, Evasion, Resistance and Escape that will include classroom instruction. It includes role-playing exercises such as cadets in front of a video camera being forced to denounce the United States.

"We want them to be as prepared as we can make them," said Brig. Gen. Susan Desjardins, the commandant of cadets.

In 1995, officials canceled the resistance component of the program after one female cadet said fellow cadets choked her into unconsciousness, splattered her with urine, called her obscene names and forced her to simulate masturbation. One cadet, acting in the role of captor, took her into the woods, made her take off her shirt and lie down while he simulated a rape, according to a lawsuit she filed. It was settled out of court.

One male cadet told reporters he was forced to wear a skirt and makeup and was paraded around camp during his training. A trainer tied him facedown on a bench, and another cadet "victim" was instructed to simulate rape.

After the resistance portion was removed, the academy retained other elements of survival training, calling it Combat Survival Training, which all cadets still take.

With Air Force personnel manning machine guns, leading vehicle convoys and performing other jobs previously done by soldiers and Marines, leaders, including Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. T. Michael Moseley, urged the academy to reinstate the resistance training.

"It's just a different type of warfare that involves a whole lot more than the direct combatants sometimes," academy spokesman Johnny Whitaker said.

Over the course of the three-week program this summer, 660 cadets will undergo training entirely in a classroom setting, Whitaker said. Next year, the sophomore class will participate, and the training will incorporate field exercises.

The resistance training will be done by active-duty professional trainers from the Air Force Survival School at Fairchild Air Force Base, Wash., Van Winkle said. No cadets will serve as resistance trainers, he said.

New York Times
January 15, 2008
Pg. 19

21. With '07 Vetoes To Confront, The House Returns To Work

By Carl Hulse

WASHINGTON — Congress opens its 2008 session Tuesday by returning to a crucial bill lingering from 2007, a major Pentagon policy measure that was rejected in a surprise move by President Bush late last year.

House members are scheduled to resume work on the \$696 billion measure, which authorizes military programs and had been approved with broad bipartisan backing.

In announcing on Dec. 28 that he would not sign the bill, Mr. Bush said the administration had concluded that a provision could lead to legal claims by victims of Saddam Hussein's government against Iraqi assets banked in the United States.

Senior legislative aides said Monday that Democrats were not inclined to mount a major fight over the veto, preferring to move quickly to the economic, health care and energy issues likely to

dominate the months before the November elections for president, 435 members of the House and 35 senators.

Officials said the most likely approach would be to vote to send the Pentagon measure back to the Armed Services Committee, where the disputed provision could be quickly corrected, allowing the bill to be brought back for a final vote by the end of the week.

"We hope to fix it," an aide said.

Democrats want to make some response to the president's action, in which he used a so-called pocket veto that lets a measure expire without a signature, because Congress has a longstanding position of challenging the circumstances when a pocket veto can be used.

Republicans have urged quick action on the measure, which allocates money for operations in Iraq and Afghanistan and nearly every other military program.

But the military is in no danger of running out of money for combat since \$70 billion in direct war spending was approved last month. The bill does include a raise for the military, and lawmakers plan to make the pay increase retroactive so members of the armed forces would not be penalized by the president's veto.

The House has a second veto to confront next week when it is scheduled to consider Mr. Bush's second rejection of an expansion of the State Children's Health Insurance Program. Democrats failed in a previous effort to override the president on the issue and have already extended the program through this year to prevent eligible children from losing their coverage.

In another fight spilling over from 2007, Congress will also have to decide whether to renew the administration's terrorist surveillance program. A temporary extension that

Congress approved last summer over the objections of many Democrats expires in February.

Leading Democrats and the White House continue to disagree over whether telecommunications companies that participated in the program at the administration's urging should be granted retroactive legal immunity from claims of violating privacy.

Members of both parties say they expect the early part of this year's session to focus on debate over the shape of an economic stimulus package that both Democrats and the White House have said is likely, given increasing warning signs about a possible recession. The specifics of any plan remain unknown, and the Senate is not due back in session until next week.

Unlike last year, when Democrats took over full control of Congress for the first time in 12 years and had a clearly delineated agenda to begin the year, both parties are still assembling the specifics of their election-year programs and have a series of policy retreats scheduled to refine their themes.

Washington Post
January 15, 2008
Pg. 11

22. Wolf Urges Safety Probe Of Baghdad Embassy

By Glenn Kessler, Washington Post Staff Writer

Rep. Frank R. Wolf (Va.), ranking Republican on the Appropriations Committee panel that handles funding for the State Department, wrote Comptroller General David M. Walker to request the inquiry and to ask that initial findings of the review be provided to the Appropriations Committee in "no later than 45 days" because of "the importance of providing security for dedicated and professional personnel in Iraq."

Wolf also wrote a separate

letter to Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, notifying her of his GAO request and emphasizing that she must get involved in the issue. "I strongly urge you to investigate these allegations," Wolf wrote.

Wolf said he requested the GAO probe because of a report in *The Washington Post* last Saturday quoting State Department officials "asserting significant life safety risks associated with the newly constructed U.S. embassy in Baghdad," which will be the biggest U.S. diplomatic mission in the world. While construction has been substantially completed, documents and interviews suggest that safety concerns had been dismissed in the rush to finish the \$736 million project.

A team of top fire-safety engineers from State's bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations is being dispatched shortly to examine the complex, officials said yesterday. State Department experts are concerned about potential failures in the suppression system and substandard wiring in the fire detection and control systems.

Los Angeles Times
January 15, 2008

23. U.S. Commander Searches For More Openness In China

'The last thing we want is a confrontation,' Adm. Timothy Keating says, citing concerns about Beijing's military range, canceled port calls and Taiwan's upcoming election.

By Mark Magnier, Los Angeles Times Staff Writer

BEIJING — The growing range of Chinese submarines and other weapons systems, recent tensions over canceled Hong Kong port calls and heightened sensitivities over Taiwan's upcoming presidential election underscore the importance of improved relations between the Chinese and U.S. militaries, a high-ranking American

commander said today.

Adm. Timothy J. Keating, the top U.S. commander in the Asia-Pacific region, said during a three-day China visit that Washington sought greater openness from China, particularly in the areas of long-range cruise missiles, antisatellite technology and "area-denial" weapons that prevent adversaries from occupying territory.

"The last thing we want is a confrontation, whether in the air, on the sea or under the sea," Keating told reporters in a briefing at the U.S. Embassy.

A number of Chinese submarines have surfaced close to U.S. warships recently, and in November, China canceled at the last minute a Hong Kong port call by the U.S. aircraft carrier *Kitty Hawk*. This followed by a few days China's cancellation of a requested port visit by two U.S. Navy minesweepers seeking shelter. China has not explained the cancellations, but officials suggested they were related to U.S. weapons sales to Taiwan or to a congressional honor bestowed on the Dalai Lama, the exiled Tibetan spiritual leader. Beijing considers Taiwan a breakaway province and has accused the Dalai Lama of trying to encourage Tibet to secede.

Gen. Chen Bingde, in charge of day-to-day operations for the 2.2-million-member People's Liberation Army, sought to ease U.S. concerns even as he defended the port-call cancellations.

"China is a country with its own territory," Bingde said Monday. "If your ship wants to stop by in Hong Kong, you have to follow the international rules and go through some procedures."

Keating said part of the reason for his visit was to help avoid missteps over Taiwan, which has a presidential election March 22. China fears Taiwan might declare independence this year after concluding that as the 2008

Olympics host, Beijing will be reluctant to respond too aggressively.

China's military has enjoyed double-digit budget increases over the last decade, although its capabilities pale in comparison with those of the Pentagon. Openness between two such lopsided forces remains difficult, said He Qisong, a professor at the Shanghai University of Political Science and Law.

"There's no absolute transparency when it comes to military issues," he said. "Otherwise, there wouldn't be any military secrets."

Washington Post
January 15, 2008
Pg. 10

24. U.S. Admiral, Chinese Discuss Port Calls

Specifics Behind Rejection of Carrier Last Year Remain Unclear

By Maureen Fan, Washington Post Foreign Service

Beijing's refusal to allow the USS *Kitty Hawk* battle group and other Navy ships to visit Hong Kong became a diplomatic incident last year. The decision seemed shrouded in mystery, with conflicting statements from Chinese officials.

Experts speculated that China was unhappy about the United States honoring the Dalai Lama, whom China regards as a "splittist" advocating an independent Tibet, and with U.S. arms sales to self-ruled Taiwan.

Keating, whose last visit to Hong Kong in 1999 was on the *Kitty Hawk*, said he was unclear about who in the Chinese government decides whether to deny port calls, especially those arranged well in advance.

"We have a request in for another visit to Hong Kong fairly soon, and I was given assurances that it would receive, I'll say, favorable consideration," said Keating, the U.S. military commander

for the Asia-Pacific region. "Those are my words, but I was not unhappy with the language used both at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Department of Defense."

Keating is on his second visit to Beijing since his posting in March, seeking to build better relationships with the Chinese military and urge more transparency.

In remarks to reporters Monday, Chinese Gen. Chen Bingde, chief of general staff, suggested that the *Kitty Hawk* had not followed the correct procedures.

"China is a country with its own territory," Chen said. "If your ship wants to stop in Hong Kong, you have to follow the international rules and go through some procedures."

Keating said the Chinese had not made the same complaint privately and that the United States had followed all international rules.

He said the two sides focused on future events and operations, including an invitation to the Chinese to participate in a multilateral military exercise in Thailand in May.

USA Today
January 15, 2008
Pg. 5

25. China: Military Buildup Poses No Threat To U.S.

China defended its growing military prowess, saying it is not a threat to the United States, and urged Washington not to sell weapons to Taiwan. "If you fear China's military buildup, you don't have much courage," said Gen. Chen Bingde, chief of general staff of the People's Liberation Army, before meeting Adm. Timothy Keating, head of the U.S. Pacific Command.

Chen told Keating that Taiwanese President Chen Shui-bian "had stubbornly intensified secessionist

activities," China's official Xinhua News Agency said. "Chen urged the United States ... to cut off its military contact with Taiwan and to stop weapon sales," Xinhua said.

Atlanta Journal-Constitution
January 15, 2008

26. China, India OK Military Exercises

Chinese and Indian leaders agreed at a summit in Beijing to a second round of joint military exercises and raised their target for two-way trade by billions, underscoring growing interaction between the two Asian giants and rising economic powers.

New York Times
January 15, 2008
Pg. 1

27. Militants Escape Control Of Pakistan, Officials Say

By Carlotta Gall and David
Rohde

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan — Pakistan's premier military intelligence agency has lost control of some of the networks of Pakistani militants it has nurtured since the 1980s, and is now suffering the violent blowback of that policy, two former senior intelligence officials and other officials close to the agency say.

As the military has moved against them, the militants have turned on their former handlers, the officials said. Joining with other extremist groups, they have battled Pakistani security forces and helped militants carry out a record number of suicide attacks last year, including some aimed directly at army and intelligence units as well as prominent political figures, possibly even Benazir Bhutto.

The growing strength of the militants, many of whom now express support for Al Qaeda's global jihad, presents a grave threat to Pakistan's security, as well as NATO

efforts to push back the Taliban in Afghanistan. American officials have begun to weigh more robust covert operations to go after Al Qaeda in the lawless border areas because they are so concerned that the Pakistani government is unable to do so.

The unusual disclosures regarding Pakistan's leading military intelligence agency — Inter-Services Intelligence, or the ISI — emerged in interviews last month with former senior Pakistani intelligence officials. The disclosures confirm some of the worst fears, and suspicions, of American and Western military officials and diplomats.

The interviews, a rare glimpse inside a notoriously secretive and opaque agency, offered a string of other troubling insights likely to refocus attention on the ISI's role as Pakistan moves toward elections on Feb. 18 and a battle for control of the government looms:

*One former senior Pakistani intelligence official, as well as other people close to the agency, acknowledged that the ISI led the effort to manipulate Pakistan's last national election in 2002, and offered to drop corruption cases against candidates who would back President Pervez Musharraf.

A person close to the ISI said Mr. Musharraf had now ordered the agency to ensure that the coming elections were free and fair, and denied that the agency was working to rig the vote. But the acknowledgment of past rigging is certain to fuel opposition fears of new meddling.

*The two former high-ranking intelligence officials acknowledged that after Sept. 11, 2001, when President Musharraf publicly allied Pakistan with the Bush administration, the ISI could not rein in the militants it had nurtured for decades as a proxy force to exert pressure on India

and Afghanistan. After the agency unleashed hard-line Islamist beliefs, the officials said, it struggled to stop the ideology from spreading.

*Another former senior intelligence official said dozens of ISI officers who trained militants had come to sympathize with their cause and had had to be expelled from the agency. He said three purges had taken place since the late 1980s and included the removal of three ISI directors suspected of being sympathetic to the militants.

None of the former intelligence officials who spoke to The New York Times agreed to be identified when talking about the ISI, an agency that has gained a fearsome reputation for interfering in almost every aspect of Pakistani life. But two former American intelligence officials agreed with much of what they said about the agency's relationship with the militants.

So did other sources close to the ISI, who admitted that the agency had supported militants in Afghanistan and Kashmir, although they said they had been ordered to do so by political leaders.

The former intelligence officials appeared to feel freer to speak as Mr. Musharraf's eight years of military rule weakened, and as a power struggle for control over the government looms between Mr. Musharraf and opposition political parties.

The officials were interviewed before the assassination of Ms. Bhutto, the opposition leader, on Dec. 27. Since then, the government has said that Pakistani militants linked to Al Qaeda are the foremost suspects in her killing. Her supporters have accused the government of a hidden hand in the attack.

While the author of Ms. Bhutto's death remains a mystery, the interviews with the former intelligence officials made clear that the agency remained unable to control the

militants it had fostered.

The threat from the militants, the former intelligence officials warned, is one that Pakistan is unable to contain. "We could not control them," said one former senior intelligence official, who spoke on condition of anonymity. "We indoctrinated them and told them, 'You will go to heaven.' You cannot turn it around so suddenly."

The Context

After 9/11, the Bush administration pressed Mr. Musharraf to choose a side in fighting Islamist extremism and to abandon Pakistan's longtime support for the Taliban and other Islamist militants.

In the 1990s, the ISI supported the militants as a proxy force to contest Indian-controlled Kashmir, the border territory that India and Pakistan both claim, and to gain a controlling influence in neighboring Afghanistan. In the 1980s, the United States supported militants, too, funneling billions of dollars to Islamic fighters battling Soviet forces in Afghanistan through the ISI, vastly increasing the agency's size and power.

Publicly, Mr. Musharraf agreed to reverse course in 2001, and he has received \$10 billion in aid for Pakistan since then in return. In an interview in November, he vehemently defended the conduct of the ISI, an agency that, according to American officials, was under his firm control for the last eight years while he served as both president and army chief.

Mr. Musharraf dismissed criticism of the ISI's relationship with the militants. He cited the deaths of 1,000 Pakistani soldiers and police officers in battles with the militants in recent years — as well as several assassination attempts against himself — as proof of the seriousness of Pakistan's counterterrorism effort.

"It is quite illogical if you think those people who have

suffered 1,000 people dead, and I who have been attacked thrice or four or five times, that I would be supportive towards Taliban, towards Al Qaeda,” Mr. Musharraf said. “These are ridiculous things that discourages and demoralizes.”

But some former American intelligence officials have argued that Mr. Musharraf and the ISI never fully jettisoned their militant protégés, and instead carried on a “double-game.” They say Mr. Musharraf cooperated with American intelligence agencies to track down foreign Qaeda members while holding Taliban commanders and Kashmiri militants in reserve.

In order to undercut major opposition parties, he wooed religious conservatives, according to analysts. And instead of carrying out a crackdown, Mr. Musharraf took half-measures.

“I think he would make a decision when a situation arises,” said Hasan Askari Rizvi, a leading Pakistani military analyst, referring to militants openly confronting the government. “But before that he would not alienate any side.”

There is little dispute that Pakistan’s crackdown on the militants has been at best uneven, but key sources interviewed by The Times disagreed on why.

Most Western officials in Pakistan say they believe, as Pakistani officials, including President Musharraf, insist, that the agency is well disciplined, like the army, and is in no sense a rogue or out-of-control organization acting contrary to the policies of the leadership.

A senior Western military official in Pakistan said that if the ISI was covertly aiding the Taliban, the decision would come from the top of the government, not the agency. “That’s not an ISI decision,” the official said. “That’s a government-of-Pakistan decision.”

But former Pakistani

intelligence officials insisted that Mr. Musharraf had ordered a crackdown on all militants. It was never fully carried out, however, because of opposition within his government and within ISI, they said.

One former senior intelligence official said that some officials in the government and the ISI thought the militants should be held in reserve, as insurance against the day when American and NATO forces abandoned the region and Pakistan might again need them as a lever against India.

“We had a school of thought that favored retention of this capability,” the former senior intelligence official said.

Some senior ministers and officials in Mr. Musharraf’s government sympathized with the militants and protected them, former intelligence officials said. Still others advised a go-slow approach, fearing a backlash against the government from the militants.

When arrests were ordered, the police refused to carry them out in some cases until they received written orders, believing the militants were still protected by the ISI, as they had been for years.

Inside the ISI, there was division as well. One part of the ISI hunted down militants, the officials said, while another continued to work with them. The result was confusion.

In interviews in 2002, Kashmiri militants in Pakistan said they had been told by the government to maintain a low profile and wait. But as Pakistani military operations in the tribal areas intensified, along with airstrikes by C.I.A.-operated drones, militant groups there issued highly charged and sometimes exaggerated accounts of women and children being killed.

The first suicide bombing attack on a military target outside the tribal areas came days after an airstrike on a madrasa in the tribal area of Bajaur in October 2006 killed

scores of people.

Another turning point came last July when Pakistani forces stormed the Red Mosque in Islamabad, where militants had armed themselves in a compound less than a mile from ISI headquarters and demanded the imposition of Islamic law. Government officials said that more than 100 people died. The militants have insisted that thousands did.

Several weeks later, militants carried out the first direct attacks on ISI employees. Suicide bombers twice attacked buses ferrying agency employees, killing 18 on Sept. 4 and 15 more on Nov. 24. According to Pakistani analysts, the attacks signaled that enraged militants had turned on their longtime patrons.

The Militant

One militant leader, Maulana Masood Azhar, typifies how extremists once trained by the ISI have broken free of the agency’s control, turned against the government and joined with other militants to create powerful new networks.

In 2000, Mr. Azhar received support from the ISI when he founded Jaish-e-Muhammad, or Army of Muhammad, a Pakistani militant group fighting Indian forces in Kashmir, according to Robert Grenier, who served as the Central Intelligence Agency station chief in Islamabad from 1999 to 2002. The ISI intermittently provided training and operational coordination to such groups, he said, but struggled to fully control them.

Mr. Musharraf banned Jaish-e-Muhammad and detained Mr. Azhar after militants carried out an attack on the Indian Parliament building in December 2001. Indian officials accused Jaish-e-Muhammad and another Pakistani militant group of masterminding the attack. After India massed hundreds of thousands of

troops on Pakistan’s border, Mr. Musharraf vowed in a nationally televised speech that January to crack down on all militants in Pakistan.

“We will take strict action against any Pakistani who is involved in terrorism inside the country or abroad,” he said. Two weeks later, a British-born member of Mr. Azhar’s group, Ahmed Omar Sheikh, kidnapped Daniel Pearl, a reporter for The Wall Street Journal who was beheaded by his captors. Mr. Sheikh surrendered to the ISI, the agency that had supported Jaish-e-Muhammad, and was sentenced to death for the kidnapping.

After Mr. Pearl’s killing, Pakistani officials arrested more than 2,000 people in a crackdown. But within a year, Mr. Azhar and most of the 2,000 militants who had been arrested were freed. “I never believed that government ties with these groups was being irrevocably cut,” said Mr. Grenier, now a managing director at Kroll, a risk consulting firm.

At the same time, Pakistan seemingly went “through the motions” when it came to hunting Taliban leaders who fled into Pakistan after the 2001 American invasion of Afghanistan, he said.

Encouraged by the United States, the Pakistanis focused their resources on arresting senior Qaeda members, he said, which they successfully did from 2002 to 2005. Since then, arrests have slowed as Al Qaeda and other militant groups have become more entrenched in the tribal areas.

Asked in 2006 why the Pakistani government did not move against the leading Taliban commander Jalaluddin Haqqani, and his son Sirajuddin, who are based in the tribal areas and have long had links with Al Qaeda, one senior ISI official said it was because Pakistan needed to retain some assets of its own.

That policy haunts Mr. Musharraf and the United

States, according to American and Pakistani analysts. Today Pakistan's tribal areas are host to a lethal stew of foreign Qaeda members, Uzbek militants, Taliban, ISI-trained Pakistani extremists, disgruntled tribesmen and new recruits.

The groups carried out a record number of suicide bombings in Pakistan and Afghanistan last year and have been tied to three major terrorist plots in Britain and Germany since 2005.

Mr. Azhar, who once served his ISI mentors in Kashmir, is thought to be hiding in the tribal area of Bajaur, or nearby Dir, and fighting Pakistani security forces, according to one former intelligence official. Militants who took part in the Red Mosque siege in Islamabad in July were closely affiliated with Mr. Azhar's group. This fall, his group fielded fighters in the Swat Valley, the famous tourist spot, where the militants presented a challenge of new proportions to the government, seizing several districts and mounting battles against Pakistani forces that left scores dead.

One militant from a banned sectarian group who joined Mr. Azhar's group, Qari Zafar, now trains insurgents in South Waziristan on how to rig roadside bombs and vests for suicide bombings, according to the former intelligence official.

Cooperation against the Taliban fighting in Afghanistan has improved since 2006, and three senior Taliban figures have been caught, according to Western officials and sources close to the ISI. Yet doubts remain about the Pakistani government's intentions.

Senior provincial ISI officials continue to meet with high-level members of the Taliban in the border provinces, according to one Western diplomat. "It is not illogical to surmise that cooperation is on the agenda, and not just debriefing," the diplomat said.

"There are groups they know they have lost control of," the Western diplomat added. But the government moved only against those groups that have attacked the Pakistani state, the diplomat said, adding, "It seems very difficult for them to write them off."

The Agency Now

Western officials say that before Mr. Musharraf resigned as army chief in December, he appointed a loyalist to run the ISI and appears determined to retain power over the agency even as a civilian president.

"For as long as he can, Musharraf will keep trying to control these organizations," a Western diplomat said. "I don't think we should expect this man to become an elder statesman as we know it."

That puts Mr. Musharraf's successor as army chief, Gen. Ashfaq Parvez Kayani, who headed the ISI from 2004 to 2007, in a potentially pivotal position. General Kayani, a pro-American moderate, is loyal to Mr. Musharraf to a point, according to retired officers. But he will abandon him if he thinks Mr. Musharraf's actions are significantly undermining the standing of the Pakistani army.

Mr. Musharraf will maintain control over the agency as long as his interests coincide with General Kayani's, they said, while the new civilian prime minister who emerges from February's elections is likely to have far less authority over the agency. Opposition political parties already accuse the agency of meddling in next month's election. The Western diplomat called the ISI "the army's dirty bag of tricks."

Since Ms. Bhutto's assassination, members of her party have accused government officials, including former ISI agents, of having a hidden hand in the attack or of knowing about a plot and failing to inform Ms. Bhutto.

American experts played down the chances of a

government conspiracy against Ms. Bhutto. They also said it was unlikely that low-level or retired officers working alone or with militants carried out the attack.

But nearly half of Pakistanis said in a recent poll that they suspected that government agencies or pro-government politicians had assassinated Ms. Bhutto. Such suspicion stems from decades of interference in elections and politics by the ISI, according to analysts, as well as a high level of domestic surveillance, intimidation and threats to journalists, academics and human rights activists, which former intelligence officials also acknowledged.

Pakistani and American experts say that distrust speaks to the urgent need to reform a hugely powerful intelligence agency that Pakistan's military rulers have used for decades to suppress political opponents, manipulate elections and support militant groups.

"Pakistan would certainly be better off if the ISI were never used for domestic political purposes," said Mr. Grenier, the former C.I.A. Islamabad station chief. "That goes without saying."

Pakistani analysts and Western diplomats argue that the country will remain unstable as long as the ISI remains so powerful and so unaccountable. The ISI has grown more powerful in each period of military rule, they said.

Civilian leaders, including Mrs. Bhutto, could not resist using it to secure their political aims, but neither could they control it. And the army continues to rely on the ISI for its own foreign policy aims, particularly battling India in Kashmir and seeking influence in Afghanistan.

"The question is, how do you change that?" asked one Western diplomat. "Their tentacles are everywhere."

Christian Science Monitor

January 15, 2008

28. Will Iraq Playbook Work In Pakistan?

One tribal leader vows to raise a force of 600 to help fight an Al Qaeda-linked tribe in Waziristan.

By David Montero, Correspondent of The Christian Science Monitor

ISLAMABAD, PAKISTAN -- Pitting Sunni tribes against Al Qaeda-allied tribes has worked in Iraq. Will it work against the Taliban in Pakistan?

Pakistan's troubled tribal belt is emerging as the latest test bed of this counterterrorism strategy.

On Monday, fresh fighting broke out near the Afghan border town of Ghalanai. Pakistani security forces killed 23 Taliban fighters and lost seven of their own men, Reuters reported.

In September of 2006, Pakistan's government brokered a controversial truce deal in which it released Pakistani militants in return for pledges that they support the government in fighting against Al Qaeda and foreign militants, such as Uzbeks. The dividends of that deal have been slow to materialize.

But last week, Maulvi Nazir, a pro-government Taliban commander, vowed to raise a militia to fight Baitullah Mehsud, a wanted Taliban commander who the Pakistani government blames for the Dec. 27 assassination of Benazir Bhutto and for the bulk of suicide attacks that have left some 800 dead in the past year.

The two militia leaders, who operate near the city of Wana in South Waziristan, are already enemies. The Pakistani government is relying on that enmity to accomplish what Pakistan's military has failed to do: rid the area of foreign militants linked to Al Qaeda and capture or kill Mr. Mehsud.

While the plan worked in Iraq, some Pakistani analysts

warn that it could backfire in Pakistan. In the long run, militias raised to fight against Al Qaeda today could turn against the government tomorrow.

"I think it's a very misguided step. It might work for the time being in Iraq, but it won't work here. You can buy [the militants'] loyalty for some time. But it's not a long-term solution," says Rahimullah Yusufzai, a journalist and political analyst in Peshawar.

In March, Pakistan's military hailed Nazir's militia when it launched an attack against the Uzbek forces of Mehsud, killing as many as 100. Some analysts now expect the Pakistani military to provide cash and weapons to the Nazir's new militia, although the military has not announced any such plans.

The new plan comes as Washington is openly considering direct intervention in Pakistan's tribal belt, considered a staging ground that has allowed militants to launch their deadliest spate of attacks in Pakistan's history.

"[The Federally Administered Tribal Areas – FATA] continues to be of grave concern to us, both in the near term and in the long term," Admiral Mike Mullen, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, told reporters at a Pentagon briefing last Friday. "It's having a significant impact, not just in Afghanistan.... There are concerns now about how much they've turned inwards, literally, inside Pakistan."

Some US officials say that the problem is bad enough that it could warrant inserting Special Forces on the ground in Pakistan's tribal belt. That move remains controversial for the operational risk it poses to American troops and because of the possible diplomatic fallout. President Pervez Musharraf has resisted even the suggestion of such a plan, saying the US military would "regret" any such insertion.

Other plans have called for

more direct US support of tribal factions against Al Qaeda.

Even Nazir is an unlikely ally. Young and battle-hardened, he endorses the same radical Islamist ideology as the militants he's promised to fight, and has pledged his allegiance to Mullah Omar, the Taliban's founding spiritual leader.

But Nazir is also violently opposed to Mehsud, who hails from a rival clan, the Mehsuds. The two men parted ways last year when Nazir forcefully evicted hundreds of Uzbek militants under Mehsud's command. While Mehsud openly favors Uzbek militants, the Ahmadzai Wazir's – Nazir's tribe – have seen the foreign militants as a scourge that has brought unwanted bloodshed to Waziristan.

The new Nazir militia, promised to number 600, is expected to be more defensive than offensive, analysts say, protecting areas outside Wana from Mehsud's forces. Mr. Yusufzai says the new deal is a sign of how desperate the military has become: "[Nazir] wants Taliban-style rule. [Giving him money and arms] will destabilize the whole area.."

Others counter that the security situation in FATA demands a new approach. "This is the situation, that we have to deal with the lesser of two evils," says Brig. (ret.) Mahmood Shad, the former secretary of security for FATA. "As compared to Baitullah Mehsud, [Nazir] can be considered [the] lesser evil."

Los Angeles Times
January 15, 2008

29. U.S. Offers Saudis 'Smart' Arms Technology

As Bush visits the kingdom, his administration formally unveils the planned sale, which Congress has the authority to block.

By James Gerstenzang, Los Angeles Times Staff Writer

RIYADH, SAUDI ARABIA — President Bush began two days of talks with Saudi leaders Monday as his administration sent formal notice to Congress of a controversial U.S. sale of "smart bomb" technology to this desert kingdom.

The visit here with Saudi King Abdullah is one of the most diplomatically challenging stops of the president's six-nation passage across the Middle East. Bush is pressing the Saudis to support both peacemaking efforts between the Israelis and Palestinians and U.S. moves to limit Iran's influence in the region.

Bush said early today that he would bring up the subject of high oil prices in his meeting with Abdullah.

"Oil prices are very high, which is tough on our economy," he told a group of Saudi entrepreneurs during a meeting at the U.S. Embassy.

The arms technology is part of a broad program announced in July that eventually could transfer an estimated \$20 billion worth of military hardware to six Persian Gulf nations. The effort, along with arms sales to Israel and Egypt, is intended in part to help U.S. allies offset Iran's military power and political clout in the region.

The most controversial element of the sales is the offer to the Saudis of Joint Direct Attack Munitions, technology that allows standard weapons to be converted into precision-guided bombs. The deal envisions the transfer to Saudi forces of 900 upgrade kits worth about \$120 million.

Under U.S. provisions governing such arms sales, Congress has 30 days in which it may disapprove the transaction now that lawmakers have received formal notification.

Israel has expressed concerns about the sale but has not formally protested. Two U.S. lawmakers said they would introduce a resolution of

disapproval when Congress returns to session today.

"It's mind-bogglingly bad policy because the Saudis at every turn have been uncooperative," said Rep. Anthony Weiner (D-N.Y.), who is sponsoring the resolution of disapproval with Rep. Robert Wexler (D-Fla.). The technology sale has drawn strong opposition from Congress.

But a spokeswoman for Rep. Tom Lantos (D-Burlingame), chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, said he did not intend to ask his panel to consider a resolution of disapproval. The

spokeswoman, Lynne Weil, said Lantos had been thoroughly briefed by administration officials and did not plan to oppose the sale or comment further.

Other nations receiving weapons in the package announced last year are the United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, Bahrain, all of which Bush has visited on his current Middle East trip, as well as Qatar and Oman.

Anthony Cordesman, a Middle East and arms expert at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington, said the threat posed by Iran was the reason for the deals.

The Persian Gulf states, particularly Saudi Arabia, are key to the United States' ongoing efforts to isolate Tehran, a Shiite Muslim power often at odds with its neighbors, where Sunni Muslims hold sway.

Many U.S. allies in the gulf were concerned that a U.S. intelligence report last month finding that Iran had halted its nuclear weapons program in 2003 was a signal that the United States was taking a new, conciliatory approach toward Tehran.

As a result, Bush needed during this Mideast tour to affirm his commitment to working with allies in the region to restrain an ascendant

Iran, according to analysts. He also needed to reassure Israeli allies that Washington still takes the threat from Iran as seriously as Israelis do.

On Monday, Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert repeated to his parliament's Defense and Foreign Affairs Committee a previous warning that he would not rule out taking military action to prevent Iran from gaining nuclear weapons, according to one participant.

"I made it clear that Israel would not be able to accept a nuclear Iran, and there is no option being rejected in advance," Olmert said, according to the participant, who spoke on condition of anonymity because the comments were made in closed session. "Anything that could lead to the prevention of Iran's nuclearization is part of the legitimate context of dealing with the issue."

Though Bush and Abdullah may share deep concerns about Iran, the Saudi monarch may be less interested than the U.S. president in a direct confrontation with Tehran, said Kenneth M. Pollack, a senior fellow at the Saban Center for Middle East Policy at the Brookings Institution in Washington.

Abdullah, who ascended to the throne Aug. 1, 2005, has proved to be less compliant from a U.S. perspective than his predecessor, the late King Fahd. Pollack said, however, that seeking reconciliation with Iran gives the monarch a choice: He can "play good cop to our bad cop," or, if reconciliation fails, "he can then help us to confront Tehran."

Bush also was expected to press Abdullah to at least quietly support renewed talks between Israel and the Palestinian Authority that the president hopes will produce the outlines of a peace agreement before he leaves office.

Overall, said Bruce Riedel, also of the Saban Center, Abdullah has had a "difficult

and conflicting relationship" with Bush, repeatedly snubbing U.S. invitations for him to visit.

A senior Bush administration official, speaking to reporters under White House ground rules that did not permit his being identified, said the president would seek to "strengthen his personal ties" with the king.

Times staff writers Paul Richter and Julian E. Barnes in Washington contributed to this report.

Washington Post
January 15, 2008
Pg. 11

30. In Persian Gulf Incident, Some Suspect Hecklers

By Robin Wright, Washington Post Staff Writer

Since at least 1982, U.S. Navy ships plying the Persian Gulf have been taunted by mysterious radio transmissions that are alternately obscene, nonsensical, racist, infantile, misogynistic and menacing. Sometimes they threatened U.S. ships; at other times they simply babbled away, all night, in falsettos.

Few were taken seriously, until five Iranian patrol boats sped around three U.S. warships last week. Now there are questions about whether the unidentified radio transmissions could be linked to the verbal threat, made at the height of the Jan. 6 encounter, to blow up an unspecified target "in minutes."

U.S. officials initially thought the message was from Iran and aimed at the American vessels, but have since said they cannot prove its origin or target. The confrontation became an international episode. President Bush threatened Tehran with "serious consequences" for any future provocation.

"I don't think it was the Iranians. It was not related. It was someone spoofing. It was someone getting on your

circuit and trying to interfere with military operations," said Rick Hoffman, retired captain of the USS Hue City, an Aegis guided-missile cruiser, who listened to the harangues during tours in the Gulf between 1982 and 2002.

In the early 1980s, the source of the tirades became known as the Filipino Monkey because he slurred Filipinos with the term, according to Navy officials who have heard the broadcasts. Since then, the transmissions -- all on Channel 16, the open frequency for maritime traffic -- have spawned a legion of copycats who are collectively known as the Filipino Monkey, because no one has discovered the identity or origin of any of them. All the transmissions come from somewhere around the Gulf.

"It could easily be a lot of people, even a network of people, and I suspect it is," said G.I. Wilson, a retired Marine colonel who served in the Gulf and compared the tirades to "Tokyo Rose chitchat."

During his later deployments, Hoffman said, the radio interruptions escalated. "It wasn't the same person night after night. They feed on each other. It's like people with a can of spray paint. It's radio graffiti," said Hoffman. "It could be anyone near a radio that feels like being a knucklehead."

The possibility that the Filipino Monkey was linked to last week's verbal threat, first reported by the Navy Times on Friday, has caused frustration in the Navy's 5th Fleet in the Gulf. A Google search produced more than 20,000 sites yesterday that picked up reprints and blogs about the story around the world, including in Iran.

Navy officials said speculation about the radio threat has diverted attention from the provocative action by Iran's speedboats, which was the primary issue. "While we don't know where the transmission came from, we do

believe it is related to the aggregate of actions. It could be a coincidence, but it would be a pretty significant coincidence in the midst of the five boats speeding rapidly," said Cmdr. Lydia Robertson, a spokeswoman for the 5th Fleet.

Over the weekend, Cmdr. Jeffery James of the USS Hopper acknowledged that the transmission, which came about seven minutes after the Iranian speedboats approached, may have been a coincidence. But he insisted the danger was real.

"Whether it was coincidental or not, it occurred at exactly the same time that these boats were around us, and they were placing objects in the water -- so the threat appeared to be building," he said at a news conference Sunday.

But military communications experts say radio interruptions are easy to accomplish and the Jan. 6 threat could have come from anywhere. "It's very, very simple. The radio is omnidirectional. He could have been in any direction from the ship, from east, north, west or south," said Joel Harding, a former army intelligence officer and electronic-warfare expert who served in the Gulf and has heard the Filipino Monkey.

Hoffman said that many of the later radio taunts coincided with times that American ships were talking either to each other or to Iranian vessels in the Gulf. "You'd get heckling. Anyone within 30 miles and sometimes further, they heard the IRGC [Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps] and the U.S. talking and they are getting on the line and ranting and raving," he said. "It was generic to all of the Gulf."

Wall Street Journal
January 15, 2008

Pg. 6

31. U.S. Uses Probe To Pressure Iran

White House Considers '94

Argentine Bombing A Terrorist Blueprint

By Jay Solomon and Evan Perez

WASHINGTON -- As tensions between the U.S. and Iran persist, Washington and its allies are using an investigation into a 1994 terrorist attack in Argentina to maintain pressure on the Iranian regime.

Behind the scenes, Bush administration officials are encouraging the probe, which centers on the bombing of a Jewish community center in Buenos Aires. One U.S. goal is to cause legal problems for some of Iran's political leaders. Administration officials also hope to use the matter to highlight Iran's alleged role in financing and supporting terrorism around the world.

The Argentine case comes as the White House is trying to redefine its Iran policy. Conflict between the two nations heated up following a recent naval standoff in the Straits of Hormuz. At the same time, American allies have professed confusion about the U.S. position in light of a U.S. intelligence estimate that played down the threat posed by Tehran's nuclear program. In his public comments, President Bush has continued to define Iran as a threat.

The aftermath of the 1994 bombing at the Argentine-Israelite Mutual Association in Buenos Aires

Senior Bush administration officials believe the Buenos Aires bombing serves as a model for how Tehran has used its overseas embassies and relationships with foreign militant groups, in particular Hezbollah, to strike at its enemies.

Over the past year, the Bush administration has charged the international arm of the Iranian Revolutionary Guards Corps, the Qods Force, with supplying munitions and training to Shiite militias fighting U.S. forces inside Iraq. Iran has denied the charge. Washington also believes

Tehran has increased funding for Hezbollah and the Palestinian Islamist movement Hamas in a bid to undermine pro-Western governments in Lebanon and the Palestinian territories.

In November, Interpol, the global policing body, issued most-wanted orders, known as "red notices," for one current and four former Iranian officials for their alleged involvement in the 1994 bombing. Interpol became involved after a request for help from the Argentine government. The bomb attack killed 85 people and is among the largest terrorist attacks ever staged in Latin America.

Iran mounted a vigorous attempt to block the red notices, according to Interpol officials, arguing the case had become politicized. American, Israeli and Argentine diplomats succeeded in getting Interpol's members to vote for the execution of the indictments.

The Argentine case is a "very clear definition of what Iranian state sponsorship of terrorism means," said a senior White House official tracking the case. "Iran is not just morally supporting terrorism, but using terrorist proxies as a tool for its state policy." The successful issuing of red notices "could place Iranians in a very difficult situation," the official said. For example, the indictments will make it hard for the officials to travel overseas.

Among those placed on Interpol's most-wanted listed are: Ali Fallahian, Iran's former intelligence chief; Mohsen Rezaei, a former commander of the Iranian Revolutionary Guards Corps; and Ahmad Vahidi, a Revolutionary Guards general who currently serves as Iran's deputy defense minister. Interpol also issued a red notice for Imad Mugniyah, a Lebanese national alleged to have commanded the covert terrorist wing of Hezbollah, the Lebanese militia and political party that is tied to Iran.

A U.S. court indicted Mr.

Mugniyah for his alleged role in a 1985 hijacking of a TWA airliner. U.S. officials have also charged Mr. Mugniyah with masterminding the 1983 bombing of the U.S. Marines Corp barracks in Beirut, Lebanon.

Argentine investigators also sought the arrests of Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, the former Iranian president, and two other onetime Iranian officials. Interpol denied these requests.

Iranian diplomats say the U.S. and Israel are distorting the case as part of a wider campaign to roll back Tehran's nuclear program. "It's a propaganda act," said Mohammad Mohammadi, an Iranian diplomat at its United Nations mission. "American officials are encouraging Argentina to pursue this case."

José Octavio Bordón, Argentina's ambassador to Washington until last month, countered that the Iranians "are trying to put some political spin on this, but this is a fight against impunity." An Argentine court formally indicted the Iranian officials in November 2006.

In a report seeking the Iranians' arrests, Argentine investigators said the bombing was conceived and ordered by the "highest levels of the Tehran regime as part of its general foreign policy, which doesn't reject the use of terrorism as a tool to achieve its objectives."

The Iranian officials are charged with using Tehran's Buenos Aires embassy, its cultural office and contacts in the local Muslim community to plot and execute the attack on the Jewish Community Center, known as the Argentine-Israelite Mutual Association Building, or AMIA.

The Iranian government sent information and "materials" related to the attack through diplomatic pouches, according to court documents. In their report, Argentine investigators said that in the

four months before the bombing, Mohsen Rabbani, the Iranian cultural attaché in Buenos Aires, received more than \$150,000 to finance the attack. The report said \$94,000 was withdrawn ahead of the bombing.

Investigators also documented a series of phone calls from public telephones and cellphones in Buenos Aires to a Brazilian border region long seen as a fund-raising center for Hezbollah. Subsequent calls went from Brazil to Hezbollah headquarters in Beirut, which investigators believe communicated the final approval for the bombing.

The Argentine report contends that the attack may have been in part retaliation for Israel's assassination of a top Hezbollah official and for attacks on Hezbollah camps in Lebanon.

Efforts to prosecute the perpetrators stalled in Argentina for more than a decade until former President Nestor Kirchner established a special commission. The newly elected Argentine government of Cristina Kirchner, the former president's wife, has also pledged to bring the perpetrators to justice.

To date, Iran has refused to hand over the five indicted men to Argentine authorities. In recent weeks, the Iranian government has threatened to take its own legal action against Buenos Aires for allegedly tarnishing Tehran's international image.

U.S. and Interpol officials acknowledge that the international community has no legal mechanisms to force Tehran to comply with Interpol's ruling. "Iran is not compelled in any way to abide by" the red notices, said an Interpol official. "If the subjects never leave the country, they're not at risk."

Boston Globe
January 15, 2008

32. Olmert Hints That

Strikes On Nuclear Facilities In Iran Are An Option

By Mark Lavie, Associated Press

JERUSALEM - Prime Minister Ehud Olmert warned yesterday that all options are open when it comes to keeping Iran from obtaining atomic weapons, his clearest sign yet that Israel could use force against a nation considered among its most serious threats.

Addressing a closed meeting of the parliament's Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, Olmert was quoted as saying that Israel would not accept an Iran armed with nuclear weapons.

Iran has always maintained that its nuclear program is for peaceful purposes, and a recent report by US intelligence agencies concluded that Iran suspended its nuclear weapons program in 2003. However, Israel continues to warn that Iran's goal is to acquire nuclear weapons.

Israel considers Iran a serious threat because of suspicions over its nuclear program and its long-range missile capabilities. Iran's president, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, has repeatedly called for Israel to be "wiped off the map," and there is evidence that Iran bankrolls such extremist anti-Israel groups as Hezbollah and Hamas.

A participant in the committee meeting yesterday said Olmert warned, "Israel clearly will not reconcile itself to a nuclear Iran," adding, "All options that prevent Iran from gaining nuclear capabilities are legitimate within the context of how to grapple with this matter."

The meeting participant spoke on condition of anonymity because the session was closed.

Israel has been warning about Iran's nuclear program for more than a decade.

It has said that since Iran

threatens not only Israel but also Europe and the Middle East, Israel will not take the lead in the struggle to keep Iran free of nuclear weapons.

But there has been speculation that Israel might mount a preemptive strike at Iran, similar to its 1981 Israeli attack on the Iraqi nuclear reactor.

However, analysts have pointed out that the Iranian nuclear facilities are spread around the country, many of them hidden, and doubt whether Israel has the military capability of destroying Iran's nuclear program.

Meir Javedanfar, an Israel-based Iran analyst, said Olmert refused to rule out a military option "in order to increase the urgency to find a diplomatic solution."

"I think this is Prime Minister Ehud Olmert's way of making sure that the international community stays alert on the Iranian nuclear issues," Javedanfar said.

CNN
January 14, 2008

33. Navy Officials Say Iranian Threat Was Real

By Barbara Starr

The Situation Room (CNN), 5:00 PM

BLITZER: U.S. warships buzzed by Iranian speedboats -- just what happened last week in the Persian Gulf is hotly disputed by both sides. The U.S. military says sailors heard a very ominous threat over their radios.

But could that threat actually have been a hoax?

The voice, I must say, sounded very weird right from the beginning.

Let's go live to our Barbara Starr.

She's been looking into this story and has got some new information -- Barbara, what have you found out?

BARBARA STARR, PENTAGON CORRESPONDENT: Well,

Wolf, the blogs have just been full of speculation about what did happen in the Persian Gulf last Sunday between the U.S. Navy and Iran.

But today, we spoke to some of the Navy officials involved in the incident. They have some pretty clear views.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

STARR: A Navy captain involved in last week's incident with Iranian speedboats in the Strait of Hormuz says he's convinced a threatening radio transmission was real and not a heckler. It came over an open channel monitored by all Mariners.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: I am coming to you.

CAPT. DAVID ADLER, COMMANDER OF USS PORT ROYAL: I just don't believe that it was a heckler. I don't buy that. I heard it and I just -- you know, I don't know who's pushing that around, but I just -- I tell you, it's just -- it's unrealistic.

STARR: The privately published "Navy Times" newspaper first raised the possibility it was a heckler, noting that in recent years, American ships operating in the Middle East have had to contend with a mysterious but profane voice making harassing radio calls.

Adler made clear the Navy was ready to fire, if it came to that.

ADLER: We don't intend for someone to get to shoot us first.

STARR: When it comes to the rules of engagement, the Navy warns there's no magic line in the water -- sail too close and get shot.

ADLER: It's do we believe that was the guy on the radio? What's his speed?

What's his closure?

How many are in the boats?

How many boats are there?

Did I see a weapon in the boat?

Can I tell if he's on the weapon?

And these are all the

things that we're getting from multiple sources in seconds at a time. And so there is no magic anything.

(END VIDEO TAPE)

STARR: Wolf, the U.S. intelligence community is now reviewing the entire incident, as well as three other encounters the U.S. Navy has had with Iranian speedboats in the last six months, trying to determine to what extent Iran is really ratcheting up tensions in the Persian Gulf -- Wolf.

BLITZER: This story is really resonating out there.

When you get more information, Barbara, let us know. Thanks very much.

Washington Times
January 15, 2008

Pg. 5

34. Sub Technology Revealed In Court During Spy Appeal

Judge refuses new trial for Mak

By Bill Gertz, Washington Times

Details of U.S. Navy advanced engine-silencing technology for submarines were disclosed in court documents last week during an appeal hearing for convicted Chinese spy Chi Mak.

A federal judge in California last week refused a new trial for the Chinese-born defense contractor who was convicted last year of conspiring to export defense technology to China.

U.S. District Judge Cormac Carney rejected a motion from Mak that said the laws he violated were vague and methods used during trial by prosecutors were improper. Sentencing was set for March. Mak could receive a maximum prison term of 45 years.

Meanwhile, relatives of Mak, including sister-in-law Fuk Li and nephew Billy Mak, were arrested by Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents on Wednesday and are being deported, an ICE spokeswoman said.

The two relatives pleaded guilty last summer to related spy charges. The convictions opened the way for ICE to initiate deportation proceedings.

"This woman and her son freely admitted their role in a chilling scheme to turn over sensitive defense information to the Chinese," said Jennifer Silliman, deputy special agent in charge of the ICE office of investigations in Los Angeles. "Given their reckless disregard for our nation's security, ICE's goal is to remove them from the United States and ensure they will never again be able to call their adopted country home."

Chi Mak, his wife, Rebecca Laiwah Chiu, his brother Tai Mak and Tai Mak family members Fuk Li and Billy Mak were arrested in 2005 as part of a spy ring that funneled defense technology to China, including details of U.S. submarine and warship technology.

Tai Mak and Fuk Li were arrested Oct. 28, 2005, at Los Angeles International Airport as they sought to travel to Hong Kong carrying a computer disk that U.S. officials said contained restricted technology for the Navy's Quiet Electric Drive (QED) technology.

FBI agents also arrested a Chinese Ministry of State Security official operative at the airport as the intelligence officer videotaped the couple's arrest. The officer was later released.

Mak's motion to retry or dismiss the case stated that a U.S. government witness improperly testified about the QED, which uses special technology to dampen engine noise, a key strategic technology that requires a license to export and is barred from transfer to China.

A rebuttal document written by Assistant U.S. Attorney Gregory W. Staples countering the retrial motion stated that QED is an electrical process where "step-mode

switching is combined with pulse-width modulation to create a so-called perfect sine wave." That process is called "cascading multi-level inverter" and "produces quieter motors."

"The QED document that [Mak] was convicted of attempting to pass included a discussion of the QED/ inverter technology but was not limited to it," the document stated. "Rather, that document discussed a particular topology or methodology of powering a submarine."

Judge Carney stated in his ruling that QED is meant to "reduce harmonic distortion from an engine, thereby making the engine run more quietly."

It is not known whether China obtained the silencing technology from the Mak family spy ring. U.S. intelligence officials said the arrests were ordered in 2005 because of Navy concerns that China would obtain what the government had said is sensitive but unclassified technology.

Los Angeles Times
January 15, 2008

35. Airbus Adds Incentive In Bid For Air Force Contract

The European firm pledges to build commercial jets in the U.S. if it receives the \$40-billion Pentagon award.

By Peter Pae, Los Angeles Times Staff Writer

The competition for the Pentagon's biggest contract in years intensified Monday as European aircraft maker Airbus said it would assemble commercial jets in the U.S. if it won the \$40 -billion award to build aerial refueling tankers for the Air Force.

The announcement marks the latest effort by Airbus and its partner Century City-based Northrop Grumman Corp. to upset rival Boeing Co. to build the planes that would be used to refuel fighters and bombers in midair.

Boeing, based in Chicago, is considered the favorite after having won the initial contract that was overturned in the aftermath of a Pentagon procurement scandal several years ago that led to jail for an Air Force official and a Boeing executive.

The latest contract calls for building 179 tanker jets for \$40 billion, but the potential value could rise to at least \$100 billion with prospects for additional orders.

With so much at stake, the Airbus pledge to build not only tankers but also commercial planes in the U.S. is likely to raise the political stakes in what has already been one of the more hard-fought Pentagon contract competitions.

"This is really about Congress and the political fight that is coming regardless of who wins," said Scott Hamilton, an aviation consultant in Issaquah, Wash.

A winner could be picked as early as Jan. 31, but analysts anticipate a protracted battle in Congress, which could withhold funds to buy the planes if the majority is not happy with the selection.

The competition has already split Congress along regional lines, with Southern politicians pushing the Northrop-Airbus bid and politicians in the Northwest calling for a Boeing win.

The Northrop-Airbus plane would be assembled in Mobile, Ala., and Boeing's jet would be built in Everett, Wash.

Airbus has proposed a modified version of its A330 passenger jet for the tanker, and Boeing is offering a modified 767 aircraft.

Airbus said that if it won the contract, it would assemble its commercial cargo version of the A330 on the same line as the tanker, an economic boon for Alabama and the surrounding region. It would mark the first time that the Toulouse, France-based aircraft maker would assemble planes outside Europe.

Winning the contract could have a bigger effect on Airbus than on Boeing, Hamilton said. Airbus, hit by costly delays with its marquee A380 super jumbo jet and other financial woes, needs the cash flow from the tanker deal to fund development of other commercial planes such as the A350 to compete with Boeing, Hamilton said.

In addition to helping gain political support in the U.S., the move to assemble commercial planes in Alabama could help alleviate the company's monetary woes with the weakening dollar. Though based in Europe, Airbus sells planes in U.S. dollars but pays for parts and wages with the stronger euro.

Airbus, a subsidiary of European Aeronautic Defense & Space Co., said it would hire 1,000 workers in Alabama to build the tanker. It would add 300 more to the factory line to build the commercial cargo planes.

In all, Northrop and Airbus said about 25,000 people in 49 states would be involved in building the tanker, and Boeing said its program would support 44,000 jobs, most of them employed by subcontractors.

Wall Street Journal
January 15, 2008

Pg. 2

36. Airbus's Military Project Misfires

Amid Overall Record '07, A400M's Delays Show Perils of a New Arena

By Daniel Michaels

When Airbus announces its 2007 sales tomorrow, it can boast of a record year for commercial-jetliner orders and deliveries, and progress in overcoming troubles with its A380 superjumbo. But the company stands to pay dearly for snags on another high-profile project: the A400M military-transport plane.

The A400M, Airbus's first big foray into military airlift, is

already at least six months late. That forced Airbus parent European Aeronautic Defence & Space Co. to take a charge of almost €1.4 billion (\$2 billion) on the program in its third-quarter results in November.

EADS Chief Executive Louis Gallois warned more delays could follow the plane's first flight in the summer. Chief Financial Officer Hans Peter Ring said the company will have a loss on the first 180 planes.

When Airbus started work on the A400M almost a decade ago, it promised to apply its expertise in handling the cost-obsessed customers and brutal competition of commercial aviation to the world of defense procurement. Instead, Airbus stumbled on problems that have long dogged military contractors: politics, technology and weak project management.

The A400M is Europe's bid to create an all-purpose airlifter that countries around the world badly need. The four-engine propeller plane, which can carry troops, equipment or humanitarian aid, fills a big gap between two existing U.S. planes: Lockheed Martin Corp.'s smaller C-130 and Boeing Co.'s much larger, jet-powered C-17. Goldman Sachs estimated in a research report in September that the A400M could grab around one-third of the market for military-transport planes over the next 20 years, translating into orders for some 500 planes valued at as much as \$60 billion.

But Airbus's expertise in commercial jets wasn't so easy to transfer to defense contracting, Mr. Ring conceded. "The logic was wrong," he said, because the engines and military systems "were more complex than expected."

In May 2003, seven European countries agreed to buy 180 A400Ms for roughly €20 billion, suggesting a price of around €110 million a plane.

Airbus promised to deliver the first plane in 2009. But the A400M, which had been under design in various forms for years, had a difficult birth. Before 2003, Germany wavered over whether it could afford the plane. To land the order and break into the potentially lucrative defense business, Airbus committed to developing the aircraft on a tight schedule for a fixed budget, agreeing to swallow any cost overruns.

Executives dismissed the risk, saying they already had delivered demanding jetliners according to strict contracts and would use the same management skills on the A400M.

Now with the threat of more delays, European defense officials are holding Airbus to its word. "We have a contract that is quite well-written and quite solid," said Gen. Nazzareno Cardinali, director of Europe's military-procurement agency, known by its French acronym, Occar. "We are reminding Airbus that they must stick to the contract."

One of the first problems the project hit wasn't technical, but political. In April 2003, Airbus then-Chief Executive Noël Forgeard selected a turbine-powered propeller engine from Pratt & Whitney, a unit of U.S. industrial titan United Technologies Corp. Mr. Forgeard said Pratt's bid was 20% below a competing bid from Europrop International GmbH, a consortium of Britain's Rolls-Royce PLC, France's Safran SA, Germany's MTU Aero Engines and Spain's Industria de Turbo Propulsores.

Pratt's plan was to modify an existing engine, while Europrop proposed developing a bigger one from scratch. The largest and most complex turboprop engine ever built, it would be able to lift more than Pratt's engine but would be tougher to develop. Several European governments, including France's and

Germany's, said they would buy A400Ms only if equipped with Europrop engines. So Airbus extended its decision deadline, Europrop cut its price, and Mr. Forgeard announced a "satisfactory outcome."

In mid-2006, when Airbus admitted it had crippling problems building the massive A380 jetliner, EADS investigated whether similar problems lurked in the A400M project. They did.

The plane's sophisticated new body and wings are coming together well, Airbus says, but equipment attached to the airframe presented big headaches. Installing complex military electronics and defensive systems used to protect the largely unarmed A400M from attacks has been difficult.

EADS chief Mr. Gallois, himself a veteran of the engine business, says because Europe hadn't developed an entirely new turboprop in decades, engineers had to relearn the technology.

Officials at Europrop said their work was partly delayed by shifting requirements. As defense ministries piled more equipment onto the A400M, its planned weight rose, lifting engine-power requirements.

Europrop also had management troubles common among Europe's unwieldy multicountry defense programs, which face conflicting demands from various capitals. The group didn't devote sufficient staffing to the project or monitor progress closely enough, people familiar with the program say.

CQ Weekly
January 14, 2008
Pg. 113

37. Iraqi Oil Exports Still Not Gushing Forth

By Elaine Monaghan, CQ Staff

With petroleum prices hovering near \$100 a barrel, industry observers are touting a revival of oil exports from

U.S.-occupied Iraq. The nation sits on the third-biggest conventional oil reserves in the world, after Saudi Arabia and Iran, and the dream of bringing the oil extraction business — long neglected under Saddam Hussein — into line with global demand was a key goal for advocates of the Iraq War, who claimed initially that increased oil revenue would help the American occupation pay for itself.

But even though recent reports within the oil industry suggest that the Iraqi oil supply has stabilized, bringing it to the global market remains a fairly daunting prospect, analysts say. David Kirsch, who manages the Market Intelligence Service of the consulting firm PFC Energy, says that production capacity in Iraq stands at 2.4 million barrels per day, still shy of the 2.8 million produced on the eve of the invasion — and the 3.5 million that marks the country's peak daily production. Even so, such numbers are somewhat impressionistic, since the Iraqi government hasn't installed a reliable meter system to track oil production — and how much oil gets pilfered by militias, militant Islamists and black marketeers.

That, say industry observers, points up the bigger obstacle facing suitable upgrades to the oil business: the stalled political situation. Iraqis have yet to complete essential laws that provide for the sharing of oil revenue, regulate foreign investments and restructure the national oil ministry while resurrecting the nationally owned oil company. Jim Placke, an adviser to 2006's congressionally mandated Iraq Study Group who works as a senior associate at Cambridge Energy Research Associates Inc., also notes that political corruption has diverted oil resources into the hands of militant groups.

Such endrums obviously compound the security concerns that have prevented

the industry from taking off since the U.S. invasion in the spring of 2003. American and Iraqi officials have "improved security along the key export pipeline route from Kirkuk to Baiji refinery, but that is a very short-term solution," says Kirsch. "Security concerns could easily reassert themselves."

One U.S. government official who does not have permission to speak on the record describes the problems with framing and executing effective law for the oil industry in words that could apply to the general political inertia in Iraq today: Rival ethnic groups and regions can't reach workable accords.

The official says this is especially the case in the oil-rich north, where Kurdish officials have been composing and approving laws squarely at odds with the interests of other groups in the central government. Nevertheless, the official notes that Iraqi oil production now meets budget targets supplied by the International Monetary Fund, which bodes well for the Iraqi export trade.

Still, it's no secret that the main target — maintaining enough civil peace to secure an investment-friendly oil industry — remains a moving one. David Pumphrey, a former Energy Department official who now is deputy director of the Center for Strategic and International Studies' energy and national security program, sums up the dilemma tersely: "The question of stability will be an important one, which will really depend on the security situation."

New York Post
January 15, 2008

38. Smearing Soldiers

The Gray Lady's Killer-GI Lie
By Ralph Peters

THE New York Times is trashing our troops again. With no new "atrocities" to report from Iraq for many a month, the limping Gray Lady turned

to the home front. Front and center, above the fold, on the front page of Sunday's Times, the week's feature story sought to convince Americans that combat experiences in Iraq and Afghanistan are turning troops into murderers when they come home.

Heart-wringing tales of madness and murder not only made the front page, but filled two entire centerfold pages and spilled onto a fourth.

The Times did get one basic fact right: Returning vets committed or are charged with 121 murders in the United States since our current wars began.

Had the Times' "journalists" and editors bothered to put those figures in context - which they carefully avoided doing - they would've found that the murder rate that leaves them so aghast means that our vets are *five times less likely* to commit a murder than their demographic peers.

The Times' public editor, Clark Hoyt, should crunch the numbers. I'm even willing to spot the Times a few percentage points (either way). But the hard statistics from the Justice Department tell a far different tale from the Times' anti-military propaganda.

A *very* conservative estimate of how many different service members have passed through Iraq, Afghanistan and Kuwait since 2003 is 350,000 (and no, that's *not* double-counting those with repeated tours of duty).

Now consider the Justice Department's numbers for murders committed by all Americans aged 18 to 34 - the key group for our men and women in uniform. To match the homicide rate of their peers, our troops would've had to come home and commit about 150 murders a year, for a total of 700 to 750 murders between 2003 and the end of 2007.

In other words, the Times unwittingly makes the case that military service *reduces* the likelihood of a young man or

woman committing a murder by 80 percent.

Yes, the young Americans who join our military are (by self-selection) superior by far to the average stay-at-home. Still, these numbers are pretty impressive, when you consider that we're speaking of men and women trained in the tools of war, who've endured the acute stresses of fighting insurgencies and who are physically robust (rather unlike the stick-limbed weanies the Times prefers).

All in all, the Times' own data proves my long-time contention that we have the best behaved and most ethical military in history.

Now, since the folks at the Times are terribly busy and awfully important, let's make it easy for them to do the research themselves (you can do it, too - in five minutes).

Just Google "USA Murder Statistics." The top site to appear will be the Department of Justice's Bureau of Justice Statistics. Click on it, then go to "Demographic Trends." Click on "Age." For hard numbers on the key demographics, click on the colored graphs.

Run the numbers yourself, based upon the demographic percentages of murders per every 100,000 people. Then look at the actual murder counts.

Know what else you'll learn? In 2005 alone, 8,718 young Americans from the same age group were *murdered* in this country. That's well over twice as many as the number of troops killed in all our foreign missions since 2001. Maybe military service not only prevents you from committing crimes, but also keeps you alive?

Want more numbers? In the District of Columbia, our nation's capital, the murder rate for the 18-34 group was about 14 times higher than the rate of murders allegedly committed by returning vets.

And that actually *understates* the District's

problem, since many DC-related murders spill across into Prince George's County (another Democratic Party stronghold).

In DC, an 18-34 population half the size of the total number of troops who've served in our wars overseas committed the lion's share of 992 murders between 2003 and 2007 - the years mourned by the Times as proving that our veterans are psychotic killers.

Aren't editors supposed to ask tough questions on feature stories? Are the Times' editors so determined to undermine the public's support for our troops that they'll violate the most-basic rules of journalism, such as putting numbers in context?

Answer that one for yourself.

Of course, all of this is part of the disgraceful left-wing campaign to pretend sympathy with soldiers - the Times column gushes crocodile tears - while portraying our troops as clichéd maniacs from the Oliver Stone fantasies that got lefties so self-righteously excited 20 years ago (*See? We were right to dodge the draft ...*).

And it's not going to stop. Given the stakes in an election year, the duplicity will only intensify.

For an upcoming treat, we'll get the film "Stop-Loss," starring, as always, young punks who never served in uniform as soldiers. This left-wing diatribe argues that *truly* courageous troops would refuse to return to Iraq - at a time when soldiers and Marines continue to re-enlist at record rates, expecting to plunge back into the fight.

Those on the left will never accept that the finest young Americans are those who risk their lives defending freedom. Sen. John Kerry summed up the views of the left perfectly when he disparaged our troops as too stupid to do anything but sling hamburgers.

And The New York Times will never forgive our men and women in uniform for their infuriating successes in Iraq.

Ralph Peters' latest book is "Wars of Blood and Faith."

Washington Times
January 15, 2008
Pg. 13

39. Iran Continues To Provoke

By James Lyons

On Jan. 5, three U.S. Navy ships were transiting the Straits of Hormuz when they were encountered by five small high-speed crafts that were assessed to belong to the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Navy. The five boats broke into two groups, one on each side of the transiting U.S. Navy ships.

The groups maneuvered aggressively in the direction of the U.S. formation. During this approach, the Iranian craft issued a threatening radio transmission to the U.S. Navy ships, which, in effect, said the ships would explode. Further, two of the high-speed crafts were seen dropping boxes in the water in the path of the last ship in the formation. The boats continued maneuvering close astern of the formation, closing at times to less than 500 yards. They apparently paid no attention to the warnings issued by the U.S. ships.

What did the Iranians hope to accomplish by provoking this incident? Were they testing our rules of engagement? Perhaps.

I am told this is not the first such encounter. I understand there was a similar incident on Dec. 19 — a U.S. Navy ship, the USS Whidbey Island, opened fired when similar craft approached within 800 yards in the same area and they scattered. Well done.

The question remains, then, in this latest incident, why didn't we open fire on these clearly threatening crafts, particularly after their radio transmission that the U.S.

Navy ships would explode? There are standard rules as guidance for our commanding officers to follow when confronted with a threatening situation. However, the commanding officer should not be required to go through a rigid set of instructions before he can take effective action. The first action for a commanding officer is to take those actions necessary to protect his ship and crew. There should be no requirement for the on-scene commander to first report to his superior and ask for guidance. Hopefully, there is no such requirement.

We all recall the situation last March when 15 U.K. service members who were clearly in Iraqi territorial waters were captured by the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Navy and held captive for two weeks. In that situation the on-scene commander called back to his captain who told him to offer no resistance. How embarrassing.

We had a similar situation on April 4, 2003, where four special operations craft proceeding into the Shatt al Arab waterway were surrounded by five Iranian Revolutionary Guard Naval boats with their weapons unmasked, their crew shouting obscenities.

Our on-scene commander, who was a Navy captain, called back for guidance and was told to withdraw. In the words of a highly respected Marine who was in one of the boats stated that we clearly had them outgunned and could and should have "blown them away." A missed opportunity.

The decision on whether the aggressive actions of the speeding Iranian Revolutionary small crafts are threatening must be left with the on-the-scene commander. He must not be bound by a set of rigid rules that he must go through before he can open fire. It must be his call and he must be confident he will have the backing of his superiors in

the chain of command.

Every one of my commanding officers knew he was not to take the first "hit" and that I would back him up. I put this in writing as part of what were then the rules of engagement. I hope they can still be found.

James Lyons, U.S. Navy retired admiral, was commander in chief of the U.S. Pacific Fleet, senior U.S. military representative to the United Nations, and deputy chief of naval operations, where he was principal adviser on all Joint Chiefs of Staff matters.

USA Today
January 15, 2008
Pg. 11

40. Iraq, Anyone?

Why aren't presidential candidates talking about the postwar era and how they would repair the damage this terrible war has done to the nation? After all, our own reconstruction is at stake.

By James Reston Jr.

A year from now, no matter who is elected, this country will inaugurate a postwar president. Depending on the continued success of the troop surge, the growing confidence of Iraqi authority and the safety of the withdrawal, the details might be different. But essentially, the nightmare of Iraq will be over and a new era of U.S. history will begin. So why are none of the candidates putting forward their vision of the post-Iraq era in America?

Instead, the primary campaign is focused on issues that have been around for years. Politicians have been haggling about energy, special interests, climate change, terrorism, health care and immigration since the early 1990s. None of these issues defines a new era.

The desperate imperative of the post-Iraq era is to repair the terrible damage that this war has done to the basic fabric of the nation and to its standing

in the world. Reconciliation and reconstruction after Iraq is the great undiscussed issue of this campaign. The voters in the primaries should be asking themselves who among the candidates has the right temperament to preside over the healing of the nation.

Historically, the country has been in this situation twice. The aftermaths of the American Civil War and the Vietnam War are the reference points for 2009. In both instances, the amnesty issue was the catalyst. After the Civil War, the citizenship status of Southern rebels had to be addressed if the nation was again to be unified. In that case, the need was for the reconciliation of the two sections of the country. After the Vietnam War, the issue was the more than 50,000 war resisters who had fled to Canada. Their situation had to be addressed, and eventually it was, when Jimmy Carter proclaimed a presidential pardon the day after his inauguration in January 1977. In that case, the need was for reconciliation between the older and the younger generations.

Both Gerald Ford and Jimmy Carter had the right temperament to preside over the final exit from Vietnam and the healing of the nation after Vietnam and the Watergate scandal. They were "experienced" enough and "tough" enough to be president. But they did not present the snarl of the warrior. What they gave and what the nation needed after divisive war and terrible scandal was a peacemaker.

Politician debate misplaced

With Iraq, there is no catalytic issue driving a need for reconciliation domestically. But there is such a need internationally. That need is for reconciliation with the Islamic world. What is the program of the candidates to change our crusader image? When Islam is invoked in the political debate,

the phrase we hear is violent Islamic extremism. The focus of our political debate is on the handful of Islamic criminals rather than on the billions of peace-loving believers of the world's fastest growing religion.

A true reconstruction of America after the disaster of the past seven years must involve a process of historical purification. Our political process must be cleansed of the abuses, missteps, distortions and outright lies that have been committed in our name, so that the mistakes of Iraq are never repeated again. It was precisely because there was no formal process of reconstruction after Vietnam, apart from the amnesty issue, that the lessons of that war were not learned and the mistakes of elective, aggressive American warfare were repeated.

What could the elements of a U.S. reconstruction after Iraq be? I can imagine five elements:

•First, a Truth and Reconciliation Commission. South Africa after apartheid provides the model for such a commission. With the 9/11 Commission and the Baker-Hamilton Commission, the tradition of outside, blue-ribbon panels has already been established. Such a commission needs a leader with the moral stature of Bishop Desmond Tutu.

•Second, Iraq Papers. The release of the Pentagon Papers in 1971 showed a government struggling to understand how it went so wrong. We need an equivalent disclosure now. Did the government struggle internally with the Iraq decision? What went on inside when the war turned sour? We don't know. Hopefully, it will not require another Daniel Ellsberg to find out.

Jettison volunteer army

•Third, the end of the Volunteer Army. The establishment of the volunteer army in 1973 was a cynical and highly effective tool to take the younger generation out of U.S.

political life. It has worked very well in the Iraq adventure: The silence of youth has been deafening. With the next proposal for a risky, elective, aggressive American war, the young generation who will fight it needs to be heard from. A universal draft or universal public service requirement needs to be enacted as part of reconstruction.

•Fourth, peace with Islam. A sweeping plan to reconcile America with Islamic nations must begin. The damage of the invasion, torture, Abu Ghraib and Guantanamo could take generations and many presidencies to reverse, but the process must begin.

•Fifth, the Bush interviews. A few years from now, an extensive set of interviews with the ex-president should take place along the lines of David Frost's famous interviews with Richard Nixon in 1977. Let Bush profess to be another Harry S. Truman and argue that history will vindicate him. To watch him flounder with that weak argument in the face of serious scrutiny would be part of our collective catharsis.

James Reston Jr. is the author of The Conviction of Richard Nixon. He was the lead researcher and strategist for David Frost in the historic 1977 Nixon interviews.

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41. Toward A Nuclear-Free World

By George P. Shultz, William J. Perry, Henry A. Kissinger and Sam Nunn

The accelerating spread of nuclear weapons, nuclear know-how and nuclear material has brought us to a nuclear tipping point. We face a very real possibility that the deadliest weapons ever invented could fall into dangerous hands.

The steps we are taking now to address these threats are not adequate to the danger.

With nuclear weapons more widely available, deterrence is decreasingly effective and increasingly hazardous.

One year ago, in an essay in this paper, we called for a global effort to reduce reliance on nuclear weapons, to prevent their spread into potentially dangerous hands, and ultimately to end them as a threat to the world. The interest, momentum and growing political space that has been created to address these issues over the past year has been extraordinary, with strong positive responses from people all over the world.

Mikhail Gorbachev wrote in January 2007 that, as someone who signed the first treaties on real reductions in nuclear weapons, he thought it his duty to support our call for urgent action: "It is becoming clearer that nuclear weapons are no longer a means of achieving security; in fact, with every passing year they make our security more precarious."

In June, the United Kingdom's foreign secretary, Margaret Beckett, signaled her government's support, stating: "What we need is both a vision -- a scenario for a world free of nuclear weapons -- and action -- progressive steps to reduce warhead numbers and to limit the role of nuclear weapons in security policy. These two strands are separate but they are mutually reinforcing. Both are necessary, but at the moment too weak."

We have also been encouraged by additional indications of general support for this project from other former U.S. officials with extensive experience as secretaries of state and defense and national security advisors. These include: Madeleine Albright, Richard V. Allen, James A. Baker III, Samuel R. Berger, Zbigniew Brzezinski, Frank Carlucci, Warren Christopher, William Cohen, Lawrence Eagleburger, Melvin Laird, Anthony Lake, Robert McFarlane, Robert McNamara and Colin Powell.

Inspired by this reaction, in October 2007, we convened veterans of the past six administrations, along with a number of other experts on nuclear issues, for a conference at Stanford University's Hoover Institution. There was general agreement about the importance of the vision of a world free of nuclear weapons as a guide to our thinking about nuclear policies, and about the importance of a series of steps that will pull us back from the nuclear precipice.

The U.S. and Russia, which possess close to 95% of the world's nuclear warheads, have a special responsibility, obligation and experience to demonstrate leadership, but other nations must join.

Some steps are already in progress, such as the ongoing reductions in the number of nuclear warheads deployed on long-range, or strategic, bombers and missiles. Other near-term steps that the U.S. and Russia could take, beginning in 2008, can in and of themselves dramatically reduce nuclear dangers. They include:

**Extend key provisions of the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty of 1991.* Much has been learned about the vital task of verification from the application of these provisions. The treaty is scheduled to expire on Dec. 5, 2009. The key provisions of this treaty, including their essential monitoring and verification requirements, should be extended, and the further reductions agreed upon in the 2002 Moscow Treaty on Strategic Offensive Reductions should be completed as soon as possible.

**Take steps to increase the warning and decision times for the launch of all nuclear-armed ballistic missiles, thereby reducing risks of accidental or unauthorized attacks.* Reliance on launch procedures that deny command authorities sufficient time to make careful and prudent decisions is unnecessary and

dangerous in today's environment. Furthermore, developments in cyber-warfare pose new threats that could have disastrous consequences if the command-and-control systems of any nuclear-weapons state were compromised by mischievous or hostile hackers. Further steps could be implemented in time, as trust grows in the U.S.-Russian relationship, by introducing mutually agreed and verified physical barriers in the command-and-control sequence.

**Discard any existing operational plans for massive attacks that still remain from the Cold War days.* Interpreting deterrence as requiring mutual assured destruction (MAD) is an obsolete policy in today's world, with the U.S. and Russia formally having declared that they are allied against terrorism and no longer perceive each other as enemies.

**Undertake negotiations toward developing cooperative multilateral ballistic-missile defense and early warning systems, as proposed by Presidents Bush and Putin at their 2002 Moscow summit meeting.* This should include agreement on plans for countering missile threats to Europe, Russia and the U.S. from the Middle East, along with completion of work to establish the Joint Data Exchange Center in Moscow. Reducing tensions over missile defense will enhance the possibility of progress on the broader range of nuclear issues so essential to our security. Failure to do so will make broader nuclear cooperation much more difficult.

**Dramatically accelerate work to provide the highest possible standards of security for nuclear weapons, as well as for nuclear materials everywhere in the world, to prevent terrorists from acquiring a nuclear bomb.* There are nuclear weapons materials in more than 40 countries around the world,

and there are recent reports of alleged attempts to smuggle nuclear material in Eastern Europe and the Caucasus. The U.S., Russia and other nations that have worked with the Nunn-Lugar programs, in cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), should play a key role in helping to implement United Nations Security Council Resolution 1540 relating to improving nuclear security -- by offering teams to assist jointly any nation in meeting its obligations under this resolution to provide for appropriate, effective security of these materials.

As Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger put it in his address at our October conference, "Mistakes are made in every other human endeavor. Why should nuclear weapons be exempt?" To underline the governor's point, on Aug. 29-30, 2007, six cruise missiles armed with nuclear warheads were loaded on a U.S. Air Force plane, flown across the country and unloaded. For 36 hours, no one knew where the warheads were, or even that they were missing.

**Start a dialogue, including within NATO and with Russia, on consolidating the nuclear weapons designed for forward deployment to enhance their security, and as a first step toward careful accounting for them and their eventual elimination.* These smaller and more portable nuclear weapons are, given their characteristics, inviting acquisition targets for terrorist groups.

**Strengthen the means of monitoring compliance with the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) as a counter to the global spread of advanced technologies.* More progress in this direction is urgent, and could be achieved through requiring the application of monitoring provisions (Additional Protocols) designed by the IAEA to all

signatories of the NPT.

**Adopt a process for bringing the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) into effect, which would strengthen the NPT and aid international monitoring of nuclear activities.* This calls for a bipartisan review, first, to examine improvements over the past decade of the international monitoring system to identify and locate explosive underground nuclear tests in violation of the CTBT; and, second, to assess the technical progress made over the past decade in maintaining high confidence in the reliability, safety and effectiveness of the nation's nuclear arsenal under a test ban. The Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty Organization is putting in place new monitoring stations to detect nuclear tests -- an effort the U.S. should urgently support even prior to ratification.

In parallel with these steps by the U.S. and Russia, the dialogue must broaden on an international scale, including non-nuclear as well as nuclear nations.

Key subjects include turning the goal of a world without nuclear weapons into a practical enterprise among nations, by applying the necessary political will to build an international consensus on priorities. The government of Norway will sponsor a conference in February that will contribute to this process.

Another subject: Developing an international system to manage the risks of the nuclear fuel cycle. With the growing global interest in developing nuclear energy and the potential proliferation of nuclear enrichment capabilities, an international program should be created by advanced nuclear countries and a strengthened IAEA. The purpose should be to provide for reliable supplies of nuclear fuel, reserves of enriched uranium, infrastructure assistance, financing, and spent fuel management -- to ensure

that the means to make nuclear weapons materials isn't spread around the globe.

There should also be an agreement to undertake further substantial reductions in U.S. and Russian nuclear forces beyond those recorded in the U.S.-Russia Strategic Offensive Reductions Treaty. As the reductions proceed, other nuclear nations would become involved.

President Reagan's maxim of "trust but verify" should be reaffirmed. Completing a verifiable treaty to prevent nations from producing nuclear materials for weapons would contribute to a more rigorous system of accounting and security for nuclear materials.

We should also build an international consensus on ways to deter or, when required, to respond to, secret attempts by countries to break out of agreements.

Progress must be facilitated by a clear statement of our ultimate goal. Indeed, this is the only way to build the kind of international trust and broad cooperation that will be required to effectively address today's threats. Without the vision of moving toward zero, we will not find the essential cooperation required to stop our downward spiral.

In some respects, the goal of a world free of nuclear weapons is like the top of a very tall mountain. From the vantage point of our troubled world today, we can't even see the top of the mountain, and it is tempting and easy to say we can't get there from here. But the risks from continuing to go down the mountain or standing pat are too real to ignore. We must chart a course to higher ground where the mountaintop becomes more visible.

Mr. Shultz was secretary of state from 1982 to 1989. Mr. Perry was secretary of defense from 1994 to 1997. Mr. Kissinger was secretary of state from 1973 to 1977. Mr. Nunn is former chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee.

The following participants in the Hoover-NTI conference also endorse the view in this statement: General John Abizaid, Graham Allison, Brooke Anderson, Martin Anderson, Steve Andreasen, Mike Armacost, Bruce Blair, Matt Bunn, Ashton Carter, Sidney Drell, General Vladimir Dvorkin, Bob Einhorn, Mark Fitzpatrick, James Goodby, Rose Gottomoeller, Tom Graham, David Hamburg, Siegfried Hecker, Tom Henriksen, David Holloway, Raymond Jeanloz, Ray Juzaitis, Max Kampelman, Jack Matlock, Michael McFaul, John McLaughlin, Don Oberdorfer, Pavel Podvig, William Potter, Richard Rhodes, Joan Rohlfing, Harry Rowen, Scott Sagan, Roald Sagdeev, Abe Sofaer, Richard Solomon, and Philip Zelikow.

Washington Times
January 15, 2008
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42. Differences Of Opinion

I would like to make several points in the ongoing discussion by Bill Gertz, Frank Gaffney and now Diana West concerning the recent decision to allow Stephen Coughlin's contract with the Joint Staff to expire ("Coughlin sacked," Inside the Ring, Jan. 4; "A Purple Heart in war of ideas?" Commentary, Jan. 8; "Foul play," Op-Ed, Friday).

In my experience, Hesham Islam, a retired Navy commander, who patriotically served this country in uniform for more than 20 years and continues to serve now as a GS-15 government employee, has been done a disservice by these writers.

Yes, Mr. Islam is a Muslim, and yes he has a view of the religion that does not necessarily coincide with Mr. Coughlin's, but those who suggest our Defense Department cannot hold different points of view do not understand how the system works.

The suggestion that the deputy secretary of defense, Gordon England, is somehow being duped in his efforts to reach out to the Islamic community is also unfair.

Mr. England is a true American patriot who left a lucrative career in industry to serve his country. He is more than capable of discerning who has the best interests of this country at heart, and that is why he has Mr. Islam as an assistant.

In fact, it appears that it is the difference of opinion between Mr. Coughlin and Mr. Islam that Mr. Gaffney, Mr. Gertz and Miss West appear to be upset with, and one would have to wonder if this folderol would have ensued if Mr. Islam had a different last name.

Mr. Gertz and Miss West may want to further investigate what the American taxpayers were paying for Mr. Coughlin's product and who the good steward was that decided to terminate the bloated contract.

CAPT. GORDAN E. VAN HOOK, Navy,
Alexandria

Editor's Note: The items referred to appeared in the *Current News Early Bird* on January 4, 8, and 11, 2008.

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43. Corrections & Amplifications

RETIRED Army Maj. Gen. Dan Mongeon, now at Public Warehousing Co. of Kuwait, was a commander of the Defense Supply Center from 1998 to 2000. A Dec. 17, 2007, page-one article on Public Warehousing's military dealings incorrectly dated his tenure at the office from 2000 to 2005. That was the period of his tenure at the supply center's parent office, the Defense Logistics Agency.

Editor's Note: The article by Cam Simpson and Glenn R. Simpson appeared in the *Current News Early Bird*, December 17, 2007.

New York Times
January 15, 2008

44. For The Record

An article on Monday about President Bush's visit to the Middle East, during which he heard Arab states' concerns about Iranian influence in the region, referred incorrectly to the composition of Bahrain's population. The majority of the people there are Shiite Muslims, not Sunni.

Editor's Note: The article by Steven Lee Myers appeared in the *Current News Early Bird*, January 14, 2008.