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New York Times
March 26, 2009

Afghan Strikes by Taliban Get Pakistan Help, U.S. Aides Say

By MARK MAZZETTI and ERIC SCHMITT

WASHINGTON — The Taliban’s widening campaign in southern Afghanistan is made possible in part by direct support from operatives in Pakistan’s military intelligence agency, despite Pakistani government promises to sever ties to militant groups fighting in Afghanistan, according to American government officials.

The support consists of money, military supplies and strategic planning guidance to Taliban commanders who are gearing up to confront the international force in Afghanistan that will soon include some 17,000 American reinforcements.

Support for the Taliban, as well as other militant groups, is coordinated by operatives inside the shadowy S Wing of Pakistan’s spy service, the Directorate for Inter-Services Intelligence, the officials said. There is even evidence that ISI operatives meet regularly with Taliban commanders to discuss whether to intensify or scale back violence before the Afghan elections.

Details of the ISI’s continuing ties to militant groups were described by a half-dozen American, Pakistani and other security officials during recent interviews in Washington and the Pakistani capital, Islamabad. All requested anonymity because they were discussing classified and sensitive intelligence information.

The American officials said proof of the ties between the Taliban and Pakistani spies came from electronic surveillance and trusted informants. The Pakistani officials interviewed said that they had firsthand knowledge of the connections, though they denied that the ties were strengthening the insurgency.

American officials have complained for more than a year about the ISI’s support to groups like the Taliban. But the new details reveal that the spy agency is aiding a broader array of militant networks with more diverse types of support than was previously known — even months after Pakistani officials said that the days of the ISI’s playing a “double game” had ended.

Pakistan’s military and civilian leaders publicly deny any government ties to militant groups, and American officials say it is unlikely that top officials in Islamabad are directly coordinating the clandestine efforts. American officials have also said that midlevel ISI operatives occasionally cultivate relationships that are not approved by their bosses.

In a sign of just how resigned Western officials are to the ties, the British government has sent several dispatches to Islamabad in recent months asking that the ISI use its strategy meetings with the Taliban to persuade its commanders to scale back violence in Afghanistan before the August presidential election there, according to one official.

But the inability, or unwillingness, of the embattled civilian government, led by President Asif Ali Zardari, to break the ties that bind the ISI to the militants illustrates the complexities of a region of shifting alliances. Obama administration officials admit that they are struggling to understand these allegiances as they try to forge a strategy to quell violence in Afghanistan, which has intensified because of a resurgent Taliban. Fighting this insurgency is difficult enough, officials said, without having to worry about an allied spy service’s supporting the enemy.

But the Pakistanis offered a more nuanced portrait. They said the contacts were less threatening than the American officials depicted and were part of a strategy to maintain influence in Afghanistan for the day when American forces would withdraw and leave what they fear could be a power vacuum to be filled by India, Pakistan’s archenemy. A senior Pakistani military officer said, “In intelligence, you have to be in contact with your enemy or you are running blind.”

The ISI helped create and nurture the Taliban movement in the 1990s to bring stability to a nation that had been devastated by years of civil war between rival warlords, and one Pakistani official explained that Islamabad needed to use groups like the Taliban as “proxy forces to preserve our interests.”

A spokesman at the Pakistani Embassy in Washington declined to comment for this article.

Over the past year, a parade of senior American diplomats, military officers and intelligence officials has flown to Islamabad to urge Pakistan’s civilian and military leaders to cut off support for militant groups, and Washington has threatened to put conditions on more than \$1 billion in annual military aid to Pakistan. On Saturday, the director of the C.I.A., Leon E. Panetta, met with top Pakistani officials in Islamabad.

Little is publicly known about the ISI’s S Wing, which officials say directs intelligence operations outside of Pakistan. American officials said that the S Wing provided direct support to three major groups carrying out attacks in Afghanistan: the Taliban based in Quetta, Pakistan, commanded by Mullah Muhammad Omar; the militant network run by Gulbuddin Hekmatyar; and a different group run by the guerrilla leader Jalaluddin Haqqani.

Dennis C. Blair, the director of national intelligence, recently told senators that the Pakistanis “draw distinctions” among different militant groups.

“There are some they believe have to be hit and that we should cooperate on hitting, and there are others they think don’t constitute as much of a threat to them and that they think are best left alone,” Mr. Blair said.

The Haqqani network, which focuses its attacks on Afghanistan, is considered a strategic asset to Pakistan, according to American and Pakistani officials, in contrast to the militant network run by Baitullah Mehsud, which has the goal of overthrowing Pakistan’s government.

Top American officials speak bluntly about how the situation has changed little since last summer, when evidence showed that ISI operatives helped plan the bombing of the Indian Embassy in Kabul, an attack that killed 54 people.

“They have been very attached to many of these extremist organizations, and it’s my belief that in the long run, they have got to completely cut ties with those in order to really move in the right direction,” Adm. Mike Mullen, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said recently on “The Charlie Rose Show” on PBS.

The Taliban has been able to finance a military campaign inside Afghanistan largely through proceeds from the illegal drug trade and wealthy individuals from the Persian Gulf. But American officials said that when fighters needed fuel or ammunition to sustain their attacks against American troops, they would often turn to the ISI.

When the groups needed to replenish their ranks, it would be operatives from the S Wing who often slipped into radical madrasas across Pakistan to drum up recruits, the officials said.

The ISI support for militants extends beyond those operating in the tribal areas of northwest Pakistan. American officials said the spy agency had also shared intelligence with Lashkar-e-Taiba, the Pakistan-based militant group suspected in the deadly attacks in Mumbai, India, and provided protection for it.

Mr. Zardari took steps last summer to purge the ISI’s top ranks after the United States confronted Pakistan with evidence about the Indian Embassy bombing. Mr. Zardari pledged that the ISI would be “handled,” and that anyone working with militants would be dismissed.

Yet with the future of Mr. Zardari’s government uncertain in the current political turmoil and with Obama officials seeing few immediate alternatives, American officials and outside experts said that Pakistan’s military establishment appears to see little advantage in responding to the demands of civilian officials in Islamabad or Washington.

As a result, when the Haqqani fighters need to stay a step ahead of American forces stalking them on the ground and in the air, they rely on moles within the spy agency to tip them off to allied missions planned against them, American military officials said.

Mark Mazzetti reported from Washington, and Eric Schmitt from Washington and Islamabad, Pakistan.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/03/26/world/asia/26tribal.html?ref=world>

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Pakistan Set to Reap \$35 billion Windfall from Terrorism

By Chidanand Rajghatta, TNN

WASHINGTON: Terrorism pays. That may well be the message the United States and its allies send out to the world this week as they line up billions of dollars in aid to Pakistan despite the country's military and intelligence agencies being implicated by American officials in acts and practice of terrorism.

Ignoring confirmation about the Pakistan's continued support and use of terrorism obtained through electronic surveillance and informants, and even brazen affirmation by Pakistani officialdom itself, the Obama administration is set to lavish a bonanza that might eventually add up to more than \$ 30-\$ 35 billion over the next decade.

About half the windfall will come from the US and the other half from its allies such as Japan, EU, and Gulf countries.

Washington is set to announce its largesse of around \$ 15 billion of US tax-payer money in course of its new Af-Pak policy to be unveiled Friday, followed by a conference in Tokyo on April 17 of the so-called "Friends of Pakistan" where Islamabad is pitching for \$ 10 billion.

This is in addition to the \$ 7.6 billion pledged by the IMF and various donors, all at the instance of the United States, which believes Pakistan will disintegrate, with disastrous consequences all around, if it is not rescued with massive amounts of aid.

Congressional staff and sources associated with drawing up the aid package say there will be stringent conditions and tough oversight attached to the assistance, but critics of the policy regard the assurances as credulous. The Indian government has not opposed the package. "If they (the United States) have not learned from the past, there is little we can do," one official said on background, referring to the Reagan era bonanza when untrammelled support for Pakistan's military emboldened the country to adopt terrorism as a state policy.

That policy is still very much in place, going by a stunning page one New York Times account on Thursday in which Pakistani officials admit first-hand knowledge of ties between the ISI and extremists and even justify. They tell the paper that the contacts are less threatening than the American officials depict and are part of a strategy to maintain influence in Afghanistan for the day when American forces would withdraw and leave what they fear could be a power vacuum to be filled by India.

"In intelligence, you have to be in contact with your enemy or you are running blind," the paper quotes a senior Pakistani military officer as describing Islamabad's strategy of backing the terrorists. But evidently, Pakistan's activity constitutes more than just contact with the enemy.

The NYT account, striking for the candid detail revealed by unnamed US and Pakistani officials, said Pakistan's support to the Taliban and other militant outfits is coordinated by operatives inside the shadowy S Wing of the ISI. The report says the ISI also shared intelligence with Lashkar-e-Taiba accused in the Mumbai attacks and "provided protection for it." It did say when this cooperation and protection took place.

But other new details reveal that the ISI is aiding a broader array of militant outfits with more diverse types of support than was previously known, even months after Pakistani officials said that the days of the ISI's playing a double game had ended, the paper reported. One such outfit is the Haqqani network, which by American accounts bombed the Indian Embassy in Kabul with help from the ISI.

The attack killed 54 people, including an Indian diplomat and a military commander. Pakistan's army chief Pervez Kiyani, a former ISI Director-General, subsequently described the Haqqani network as Pakistan's "strategic asset."

But according to the NYT, the ISI's S wing not only helps such networks with fuel and ammunition to fight American troops in Afghanistan, but also replenishes its ranks with recruits from madrassas in Pakistan. There is even evidence that ISI operatives meet regularly with Taliban commanders to discuss whether to intensify or scale back violence before the Afghan elections, it said.

None of this appears to have made a whit of a difference in the planned US largesse for Pakistan. If anything, US

officials and analysts argue it is all the more reason to rush aid to Pakistan so that its democracy and social sector can be strengthened and it can be walked away from the abyss. "If there is a better way to do this, we are all ears," a senior Congressional aide involved in the process, said. While some analysts say that Pakistan extracts aid by pointing a gun to its own head, key figures in the Washington establishment don't want to take the chance that Pakistan ends up falling into the abyss.

US officials, who typically make strenuous effort to shield the Pakistani leadership from charges of fomenting terrorism, maintain that mid-level ISI operatives cultivate relationships that are not approved by their bosses. They say it is unlikely that top officials in Islamabad are directly coordinating the clandestine efforts. But Pakistani officials themselves appear to scoff at American credulity in the NYT report, saying it is part of their long term strategy to keep their options open when the U.S withdraws from Afghanistan.

That expectation got a boost this week when US President Barack Obama spoke of an "exit strategy" in Afghanistan. Although Obama did not specifically refer to any troop withdrawals (on the contrary, he has just directed induction of 17,000 more troops), the fact that Washington is even contemplating an exit strategy seems to justify Pakistan's outlook of keeping its Taliban and terrorism powder dry.

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/Pak-set-to-reap-35-billion-windfall-from-terrorism/articleshow/4318277.cms>

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The Australian
March 27, 2009

Pakistani Agents 'Funding' Taliban

Amanda Hodge, South Asia correspondent

THE US has accused elements within Pakistan's spy agency of funding and even planning the Taliban's campaign in southern Afghanistan, even as the two countries' intelligence officials begin compiling a fresh list of terrorists to be targeted by drone attacks in the lawless border regions.

US officials told The New York Times they had fresh evidence from electronic surveillance and trusted informants that operatives from within the directorate of Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence agency had regular meetings with Taliban commanders to discuss whether to intensify or scale back violence before the Afghan elections due in August.

The US has long suspected ISI operatives of taking US aid money to battle insurgents within the Federally Administered Tribal Areas while at the same time aiding Taliban militants who regularly cross the border to join the battle for control of Afghanistan. But the latest evidence suggests the ISI's support for the militant networks is far broader than previously thought.

The ISI nurtured the Taliban movement in the 1990s and Pakistan insists any contact between operatives within the organisations reflects personal relationships forged more than a decade ago.

But one US official told The New York Times yesterday that so overt were the ties between the two, that the British Government recently sent several dispatches to Islamabad asking that the ISI use its strategy meetings with the Taliban to persuade its commanders to scale back violence in Afghanistan before the August presidential election there.

US Joint Chiefs of Staff chairman Admiral Mike Mullen also commented on the close ties in a recent television interview, saying: "They have been very attached to many of these extremist organisations, and it's my belief that in the long run, they have got to completely cut ties with those in order to really move in the right direction".

Just days before the Obama administration is to unveil its foreign and military strategy for the unstable region, the new accusations appear designed to signal to both the Afghan and Pakistani governments that any future aid is strictly conditional on military co-operation against Islamic insurgents.

The Af/Pak strategy, as it is now known, is likely to involve increasing troop numbers in Afghanistan, a crackdown on drug trafficking, and a greater focus on helping to strengthen civil government institutions and build the economies of both countries.

President Barack Obama has already announced an additional 17,000 troops to be deployed to Afghanistan before its northern summer to help boost efforts to suppress the rising insurgency that now threatens to topple the central Government there.

The review is also believed to include a rethink of how the US uses its missile strikes to target militants on the border, The Wall Street Journal reported.

The administration considers the Predator drone program a success and is unlikely to curtail it significantly, the report says. Two drone strikes in as many days targeting militant hideouts in the FATA are believed to have killed as many as 11 insurgents.

But Pakistan is understood to be pushing to expand the drone program to target extremists responsible for attacks against Pakistanis. It hopes that by doing so it can win over the population opposed to the drone attacks which often claim civilian lives.

To that end, Washington has also announced a \$US5 million (\$7.1 million) bounty for information leading to the capture of Baitullah Mehsud and Sirajuddin Haqqani, two notorious warlords operating in FATA.

While it is not the first time the US has offered large cash rewards for terrorism suspects, Mehsud, a Taliban commander and the suspected mastermind behind the December 2007 assassination of Benazir Bhutto, has until recently been considered a threat only to Pakistan. US drone attacks began targeting Mehsud's hideouts for the first time this month.

The ISI directorate, known as the S Wing, is believed to be responsible for all intelligence operations outside Pakistan. US officials believe it has provided direct support to three groups carrying out attacks in Afghanistan: the Quetta-based Taliban commanded by Mullah Omar, the militant network run by Gulbuddin Hekmatyar and a group run by guerilla leader Jalaluddin Haqqani. But it is also believed to have extended support to Lashkar-e-Toiba, the Punjab-based group believed responsible for the November Mumbai attacks. The Haqqani network focuses its attacks on Afghanistan and is considered a strategic asset to Pakistan, while Baitullah Mehsud aims to overthrow Pakistan's Government.

<http://www.theaustralian.news.com.au/story/0,25197,25247374-2703,00.html>

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Times of India
29 Mar 2009

Cut Ties with al-Qaida, LeT and Taliban: US Tells ISI

WASHINGTON: The United States on Sunday asked the ISI to sever all its ties with extremist's groups including al-Qaida, the Taliban and

Lashkar-e-Taiba, which it called an "existential threat" to Pakistan itself.

ISI, which is having undeniable links with these terrorist groups, has been warned by the Obama Administration, which is more explicitly reflected in the new Af-Pak policy announced by US President Barack Obama on Friday, to set its house in order as soon as possible.

"What we need to do is try and help the Pakistanis understand these groups are now an existential threat to them and we will be there as a steadfast ally for Pakistan," US Defense Secretary Robert Gates told the Fox News today in an interview in which he clearly said that the ISI needs to cut its ties with extremists.

"They can count on us and they don't need that hedge," Gates said as he cited ISI's links specifically to the al-Qaida-linked Haqqani militant network and to the forces of warlord Gulbuddin Hekmatyar in Afghanistan.

It has been told in clear words, that cutting all ties with extremist elements means not only the Taliban and al Qaida related to Afghanistan or western Pakistan, but also those elements like LeT in Kashmir, as the US establishment has now realised and come to the conclusion that all these groups are linked together.

It should be seen as helping the US-led international community in fighting the war against terror and not providing any direct or indirect logistic or other support to these extremists' organisations, ISI has been told by the US.

Richard Holbrooke, the Special US Envoy for Pakistan and Afghanistan, said he along with the Central Command (CENTCOM) Chief General David Petraeus, sat down with the ISI chief (Lt Gen Shuja Pasha) when he was here recently and talked directly in all clear terms with him in this regard.

"It's a topic that is of enormous importance, because if there are links (between ISI and extremist elements) and if those continue and if it undermines the operations, obviously that would be very damaging to the kind of trust that we need to build," Petraeus told the PBS news in another interview.

"ISI really established some of these organizations -- with our money, by the way, back in the days of the Mujahedin fighting against the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. So those links were very strong. And some of them, I think, unquestionably do remember - or do remain to this day.

"It is much more difficult to tell at what level those links are still established, whether some of the contact is the contact of intelligence with sources or it is, indeed, warning. There are some cases, I think, that are indisputable in the past, and the fairly recent past, in which that appears to have taken place," he said.

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/World/US/Cut-ties-with-al-Qaida-LeT-and-Taliban-US-tells-ISI/articleshow/4331023.cms>

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Daily Guardian
Monday, 30 March 2009

Pakistan Blames Lahore Police Academy Siege on Taliban

Saeed Shah in Islamabad and James Sturcke

Pakistan's government today blamed Taliban elements for a bloody raid on a police training centre in Lahore in which gunmen killed 11 officers and cadets, seized hostages and held out against security forces for eight hours before being overpowered.

In the second brazen terrorist attack in the city this month, the assailants stormed the Manawan police centre soon after dawn. Gun battles between the attackers and police and army officers surrounding the compound raged throughout the day, and there was a series of loud explosions.

The head of the interior ministry, Rehman Malik, said the militants were Pakistani Taliban elements loyal to Baitullah Mehsud, a commander who claims to have trained a succession of suicide bombers, and was accused of involvement in the December 2007 assassination of Benazir Bhutto.

Other experts speculated that a Punjabi group may have been responsible, though the lines between the various outfits trying to undermine the Pakistani state are increasingly becoming blurred.

The siege reached a climax at about 3.30pm (11.30am BST), when security forces were seen emerging on to the roof of a building where the gunmen had been holed up.

They began firing into the air in apparent jubilation at the end of the situation.

Officials said as many as eight had been killed and six captured; Malik said one of the suspects was an Afghan. He added that 52 officers had been wounded in the attack but gave no word on the number killed, while Geo News television channel said the toll was 20.

The incident was the second major terrorist attack in the Pakistani city within a month after the attack on the Sri Lankan cricket team.

On the roof of the building where hostages were kept, journalists were shown body parts, blood and spent ammunition strewn about.

Three loud explosions were heard from within the compound shortly after 1.30pm. Police speculated that at least some of the gunmen may have blown themselves up to avoid being arrested.

Other gunmen continued firing as troops and police prepared to mount an operation to retake the buildings, a reporter at the scene said.

Earlier, one suspect was seen being led away from the compound by a group of officers.

The gunmen opened fire on helicopters that were monitoring the situation, forcing one down.

One wounded policeman described how the attackers struck while police recruits were going through their regular morning drill on the parade ground.

"A grenade hit the platoon next to ours ... then there was continuous firing for about 20 minutes," the policeman told reporters from his hospital bed.

"A man in light-coloured clothes – I think they were white – stood in front of us, firing at us. They wanted to do as much damage as possible."

The British foreign secretary, David Miliband, today condemned the attacks in a statement released by the Foreign Office in London: "It is deeply saddening that Pakistan has today suffered another deadly attack, this time against people dedicated to protecting Pakistan's security.

"We condemn the attack unreservedly, and extend our sympathies to the families of the victims.

"The attack is yet another reminder of the threat that Pakistan faces from violent extremism. It is a threat that the international community must help Pakistan to tackle, in the interests both of Pakistan's people and of wider stability."

"We are at a state of war," Afzal Ali, the former head of Pakistan's police academy, said: "This was a relatively soft target. You can't expect recruits to take on hardened terrorists."

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2009/mar/30/gunmen-storm-police-academy-pakistan>

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Sydney Morning Herald

April 1, 2009

Taliban Vows More Pakistan Bloodshed

Matt Wade South Asia Correspondent

THE chief of the Pakistani Taliban, Baitullah Mehsud, has claimed responsibility for a bloody attack on a Lahore police academy and has warned a campaign of terror will continue while Pakistan collaborates with the United States.

Mehsud is based in the South Waziristan tribal region bordering Afghanistan, and commands the Tehrik-e-Taliban, a militant force believed to number 20,000. Last week the US Government offered \$US5 million (\$7.25 million) for information leading to his capture.

"We claim responsibility for the attack. This was in retaliation to the ongoing drone attacks in the tribal areas. There will be more such attacks," Mehsud told Agence France-Presse in a phone conversation from an unknown location.

During the Bush administration the US military started using unmanned drones to attack bases on the Pakistani side of the Afghanistan border believed to be used by Taliban fighters. The drone attacks on Pakistani territory have continued since Barack Obama became president in January.

Mehsud told the BBC the Taliban would continue attacks "until the Pakistan Government stops supporting the Americans".

He also claimed responsibility for a suicide attack outside a police station in Islamabad that killed one person nine days ago, and a recent assault on a police post in Bannu, north-western Pakistan.

Mehsud has been blamed for plotting many terrorist attacks in Pakistan including the assassination of the former prime minister Benazir Bhutto. Mehsud denies involvement in her death.

On Monday, a gang of about 10 gunmen detonated grenades and opened fire on police trainees assembled on a parade ground at the police academy on the outskirts of Lahore. The militants then occupied a training centre. After an eight-hour siege, the academy was retaken by Pakistani commandos. Two civilians, eight policemen and eight militants were killed, and 95 people were injured in the siege.

Before Mehsud claimed responsibility, the Interior Minister, Rehman Malik, said those who attacked the academy were believed to be Taliban fighters loyal to Mehsud. Initial investigations indicated the attack was launched from Pakistan's border with Afghanistan, where Taliban militants hide out.

"This is an attack on Pakistan," Mr Malik said.

"There are two choices, to either let the Taliban take over your country or to fight it out. At this time the nation must unite and show its unity."

General Yakoob Khan, director-general of the Pakistan Rangers, a military force involved in ending the siege, said one attacker arrested at the academy was from Afghanistan. Information provided by the man pointed to Taliban involvement in the attack, he said. Three other men were interrogated by investigators.

A lawyer said the Supreme Court had suspended a ban on the Opposition Leader, Nawaz Sharif, and his brother from holding office and contesting elections.

<http://www.smh.com.au/world/taliban-vows-more-pakistan-bloodshed-20090331-9ia8.html>

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Yonhap News
March 26, 2009

N. Korea may Conduct 2nd Nuke Test in case of U.N. Sanctions: Pro-Pyongyang Paper

SEOUL (Yonhap) -- North Korea may resort to a second nuclear test should the United Nations sanction it over its rocket launch, a pro-Pyongyang newspaper hinted Thursday.

North Korea warned early this week that the six-party nuclear talks will break down if the U.N. Security Council opts for sanctions against its satellite launch in early April.

The Choson Sinbo, a Tokyo-based newspaper that conveys Pyongyang's position, compared the current situation to the run-up to North Korea's first nuclear test in 2006. Pyongyang detonated its atomic bomb in October that year as a response to the U.N. Security Council's Resolution 1695, adopted after its missile test in July of that year. Pyongyang viewed the resolution as a "de-facto declaration of war," the paper said.

"If the fuss over sanctions repeats in historical amnesia, it may trigger North Korea's ultra-hardline response again," it said.

U.N. Resolution 1695 blocks the shipment of missile parts to North Korea and demands that the country halt its missile development. In October of the same year, the U.N. adopted a separate resolution, 1718, responding to the North's nuclear test and banning its ballistic missile and nuclear activities.

The paper did not directly mention a second nuclear test, only suggesting the possibility of another nuclear test.

The Choson Sinbo is not an official organ of North Korea, but its messages often reverberate through the North's authorities within days. Its earlier warning of North Korea's possible boycott of the six-party talks in reaction to U.N. sanctions was officially announced by the North's foreign ministry spokesman on Tuesday.

The unnamed foreign ministry spokesman said the U.N. sanctions that are being threatened by South Korea, the United States and Japan "run counter to the 'spirit of mutual respect and equality'" enshrined in the denuclearization talks and "would deprive the six-party talks of any ground to exist or their meaning." The spokesman said the threat of U.N. sanctions is a "revelation of hostility" toward North Korea. He said "both kitchen knives and bayonets should be targets of disarmament as both are similar to each other" if the sanctions take effect.

North Korea notified U.N. agencies earlier this month that it will put its communications satellite Kwangmyongsong-2 into orbit sometime between April 4-8. It said the launch is part of its peaceful space development program and warned that any foreign attempt to shoot down the satellite will lead to war.

South Korea, the U.S. and Japan believe the satellite launch is actually a cover for a long-range missile test.

Yang Moo-jin, a professor at the University of North Korean Studies in Seoul, said North Korea views U.N. sanctions as evidence of hostility toward it and claims its nuclear weapons are a self-defense measure.

"North Korea is ready to talk and ready to adopt confrontation, depending on which is proposed," Yang said.

"In face of confrontation, North Korea's options are obvious -- test more long-range missiles, quit the six-party talks and conduct the second underground nuclear test," he said.

<http://english.yonhapnews.co.kr/northkorea/2009/03/26/40/0401000000AEN20090326008000315F.HTML>

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Japan Times
March 29, 2009

Patriots Deployed Ahead Of Launch

By Kyodo News

Patriot missile launchers have been deployed to several spots in Tokyo and northeast Japan in preparation for the launch of a North Korean rocket that Japan fears might fail and damage its territory.

It is the first time Japan has attempted to fully mobilize the missile shield system since it began building it in conjunction with the United States in 2003.

"Fire units" capable of launching Patriot Advanced Capability-3 missiles left Iruma Air Base in Saitama Prefecture for locations in and around the capital on Friday.

Also, several PAC-3 missile launchers had been positioned at the Ground Self-Defense Force's Camp Asaka, which covers an area stretching from Nerima Ward, Tokyo, to parts of Saitama Prefecture, by Saturday morning.

The GSDF also brought in a massive amount of equipment and personnel to the Defense Ministry's headquarters in Ichigaya, Tokyo, ministry officials said.

Two fire units based at Hamamatsu Air Base in Shizuoka Prefecture will be deployed in the Tohoku region by Monday: one to the city of Akita, and the other to a village near Morioka, Iwate Prefecture, the officials said.

The rocket, which North Korea says is carrying a satellite into space, is scheduled to fly over the two prefectures sometime between April 4 and 8.

Chief Cabinet Secretary Takeo Kawamura said the Patriots were being deployed in Tokyo as a precaution because the metropolitan area has the "highest population density" in Japan.

Japan, South Korea and the United States suspect the launch is actually being held to test a long-range ballistic missile.

In notifying international organizations of its launch plan, Pyongyang outlined "danger" areas in the Sea of Japan off the coast of Akita, and the northern Pacific between Japan and Hawaii.

The areas are believed to be where the rocket's first- and second-stage boosters would drop after burning themselves out. Tokyo is concerned the rocket may encounter trouble during its boost phase, which might send its payload or other debris hurtling toward Japanese waters or soil.

In the event of a malfunction, Japan's missile shield can use sea-launched SM-3 missiles to intercept the rocket outside of Earth's atmosphere, or the ground-launched PAC-3s to intercept the rocket or any incoming debris upon re-entry.

<http://search.japantimes.co.jp/cgi-bin/nn20090329a3.html>

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New York Times
March 31, 2009

No U.S. Plans to Stop Korea on Missile Test

By THOM SHANKER and CHOË SANG-HUN

WASHINGTON — The United States has no plans for military action to pre-empt the launching of a long-range missile by North Korea and would act only if the missile or its parts appeared to be headed toward American territory, Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates said Sunday.

South Korea also opposes any military response to North Korea's impending rocket launch, the South Korean president, Lee Myung-bak, said in an interview published Sunday.

The descriptions by Mr. Gates and Mr. Lee of a calibrated military response were the most definitive to date as the international community, led by the United States, Japan and South Korea, pursues diplomatic action to press North Korea not to proceed with the launching of a Taepodong-2 intercontinental ballistic missile.

Amid rising tensions surrounding the expected launch, North Korea on Monday detained a South Korean worker on charges of plotting against the Communist government. The worker was captured at Gaeseong, a North Korean border town where the two Koreas run a joint industrial park.

An independent security think-tank released satellite images on Sunday that it said confirmed the presence of the Taepodong-2 missile on the North's Musudan-ri launch pad. The content of the photos, analyzed by the Institute for Science and International Security in Washington, had not yet been confirmed by the Defense Department by Monday, but they echoed South Korean news reports last week that said the missile had been put in place.

North Korean officials have said the launching, expected to take place between April 4 and 8, is designed solely to push a satellite into orbit. Although the peaceful, commercial and scientific use of space is protected under international law, a United Nations Security Council resolution specifically bars North Korea from testing missiles and nuclear devices.

Mr. Gates said on "Fox News Sunday," "I don't know anyone at a senior level in the American government who does not believe this technology is intended as a mask for the development of an intercontinental ballistic missile."

Even so, Mr. Gates said the United States had no plans to take military action to halt the launching or to shoot down the missile in flight — with one exception.

"If we had an aberrant missile, one that was headed for Hawaii, that looked like it was headed for Hawaii or something like that, we might consider it," Mr. Gates said.

One of America's closest allies in the region, Japan, has authorized its military to shoot down any debris from the rocket that might fall toward its territory, and has joined the United States and South Korea in saying the launching is a cover for testing technology for a long-range missile that could carry a nuclear warhead.

Japan deployed two Aegis vessels to waters off its west coast at the weekend, with an order to prepare to shoot down any debris that could fall on Japanese territory if the rocket launch fails. South Korea is also dispatching an Aegis-equipped Sejong the Great destroyer off the east coast.

Dave Palmer, a spokesman for the American military in Seoul, declined to unveil the missions for two Aegis radar-equipped destroyers — USS John S. McCain and USS Chafee — which were seen docked over the weekend in Busan, a South Korean port. Rear Admiral Chae Hong-pil of the South Korean navy told foreign media reporters last week that the American vessels would move into the sea between Japan and Korea to monitor the North Korean launch.

Mr. Lee, in an interview published Sunday on the Financial Times Web site, said that while Seoul had no position on Japan's stated intention to shoot down debris, military action in response to the launch would not be appropriate. "What I do oppose is to militarily respond to these kind of actions because it is also not in their interest to test-fire anything," he said, referring to North Korea's plans.

All three countries have demanded that North Korea cancel the launching but have conceded there is little they can do to force acceptable behavior on the isolated government in Pyongyang, beyond threatening even more sanctions. American officials acknowledge that the launching would be the first major test for Mr. Obama in dealing with North Korea's ambitions to field long-range missiles and nuclear weapons.

The worker detained by the North on Monday faces charges of "denouncing the North's political system and corrupting North Korean female workers in a plot to persuade them to defect to the South," a spokesman from South Korea's Unification Ministry said, citing a notice from the North.

Two American journalists captured March 17 are still also being held by the North. Analysts said the detentions appeared to be attempts by the North to increase leverage in diplomatic negotiations with Seoul and Washington.

Mr. Gates's comments came as senior administration officials, led by President Obama, took to the Sunday talk shows to describe the strategy unveiled Friday to focus American counterterrorism efforts in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

In battling terrorists in Afghanistan and Pakistan, the president, appearing on the CBS program "Face the Nation," said the United States would respect Pakistani sovereignty but reserved the right to strike at important terrorist targets, after consultations with the government in Islamabad.

"If we have a high-value target within our sights," Mr. Obama said, "after consulting with Pakistan, we're going after them."

But he stressed that those attacks would not be with American ground forces, implying that he was referring to continued strikes from the air.

The American commander in the region, Gen. David H. Petraeus, appeared on CNN's "State of the Union" and explained that "there is no intention for us to be conducting operations in there, certainly on the ground, and there is every intention by the Pakistani military and their other forces to conduct those operations."

Richard C. Holbrooke, the president's top adviser on Afghanistan and Pakistan, said on CNN that success required overcoming tensions between Washington and Islamabad, and he cited what senior Pakistani officials have labeled "the trust deficit."

But since the Afghanistan-Pakistan strategy will require months to be put into effect, the prospect of a long-range North Korean missile launching as early as this week generated a more immediate national security risk.

Sharon Otterman contributed reporting from New York.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/03/31/world/asia/31korea.html>

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Washington Post
March 27, 2009

Senator Seeks to Ratify Nuclear Test Ban Pact

Reuters

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - The chairman of the U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee, [John Kerry](#), said on Friday he had begun laying the groundwork for Senate ratification of a global pact banning nuclear tests.

The Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty was rejected by the Senate a decade ago. President Barack Obama said during his campaign that he would seek to get it ratified. But ratification is up to the Senate, where two-thirds approval is required.

"We are very close ... We don't have that many votes to win over to win," Kerry told a conference on U.S. policy toward Russia. "But they are serious folks and we are going to have to persuade them."

Kerry said his committee would hold hearings on the treaty. A vote by the full Senate is unlikely before next year, the Massachusetts Democrat said.

There is widespread international support for the test ban treaty, but it cannot come into effect because some nuclear powers like the United States and China have not ratified it. Proponents say U.S. ratification could help get other countries with nuclear programs, like India, to sign on.

When the Senate rejected it in 1999, opponents said the verification provisions were insufficient to deal with possible cheating. There were also concerns about whether the safety of the U.S. nuclear arsenal could be maintained without testing.

The United States has had a moratorium on nuclear testing since 1992.

Some strong supporters of verifiable arms control agreements, such as Indiana Republican [Richard Lugar](#), voted against the test ban treaty in 1999. Lugar is now the ranking Republican on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

"We're going to look at this clinically, realistically, as dispassionately as possible," Kerry said. "We are going to do our best to get this passed."

Some 180 nations have signed and over 140 have ratified the test ban treaty, including Russia. Washington signed the pact in 1996 under President Bill Clinton, a Democrat, but he was unable to get it through the Senate, which had a Republican majority then. Now Democrats control 58 votes in the Senate.

When Republican President George W. Bush took office in 2001 his administration made clear it did not want its options limited by such a treaty and never resubmitted it. Kerry lost the presidency to Bush in 2004 elections.

(Reporting by Susan Cornwell; editing by Anthony Boadle)

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/03/27/AR2009032702670.html>

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Salt Lake City Deseret News

March 29, 2009

A.F. Fails To Account for WMD Equipment

By Lee Davidson, Deseret News

After the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks in 2001, the Air Force decided to quickly buy millions of dollars' worth of equipment to help protect its bases from weapons of mass destruction.

The trouble is, most Air Force emergency responders were never trained how to use much of the equipment, which ranged from monitors to detect chemical weapons to special, tight-fitting air purifying respirators for security forces.

And that's just the beginning of many Keystone Kops-style foul-ups with the gear designed to help protect against biological, chemical and radiological attack, according to a once-classified Air Force Audit Agency report obtained by the Deseret News through a Freedom of Information Act request.

Other problems identified include:

The Air Force has "no assurance \$23.5 million of program funds were appropriately spent" because its purchasers never verified that some equipment was delivered before paying for it, and no baseline inventories existed to allow research into whether extra gear arrived or not.

The Air Force failed to maintain and account generally for such equipment, which auditors said could lead to loss, theft or lack of availability in case of an attack.

The Air Force never established requirements for its emergency response program — so it is uncertain what equipment and training is truly needed to survive attacks.

None of 16 bases evaluated had on hand what has been identified as the minimum list of equipment needed to respond for an attack by weapons of mass destruction.

Such problems mean "responders might not successfully respond to a WMD (weapons of mass destruction) incident, potentially resulting in loss of life and mass casualties," the report said.

The report was once classified "for official use only," and a copy provided to the Deseret News was partially censored — including deleting data about which specific bases were visited, and whether that included Utah's Hill Air Force Base.

Auditors explained what they saw as the root cause for all the foul-ups. Essentially, they said the Sept. 11 attacks led the Air Force to buy equipment quickly without first figuring what it really needed and without developing full plans for training, testing and maintenance.

"Emergency response program development was overshadowed by the 11 Sept. 2001 terrorist attacks and an urgency to equip units to respond to future WMD events," the report says.

It adds officials "did not fully define WMD response program requirements; instead they focused on distributing equipment first and planned to follow on with" plans, tactics and training later. But much of that still had not been accomplished by the time the report was written last June.

Written responses in the report from Air Force commanders in charge of such planning said it is under way, and overall requirements for what installations and emergency responders "will need to plan for, respond to, and recover from a WMD incident" is scheduled to be completed by the end of June.

While much of the equipment was purchased rapidly, the report said it found that most emergency responders "did not know how to use all emergency response equipment."

It said records for three of every five emergency responders show they had received no training on how to use about a quarter of the 636 different types of equipment that had been purchased — including some chemical and radiological arms detectors and air purifying respirators.

"In addition, responders had never used 154 (23 percent) of 636 on-hand line items in exercises, training or real world events," the report said.

At 14 of 16 bases, the report said, managers had not ensured that responders had accomplished the training that had been required. It figured, as a result, that 53 percent of all emergency responders "had not met all emergency management training requirements."

Also, half of the bases studied "did not conduct WMD field exercises which included realistic scenarios demonstrating proficiency levels." Even the bases that did have such exercises did not prepare reports afterward to identify lessons learned about equipment shortfalls or other problems.

And two of the bases that did prepare reports about problems found in training "did not correct identified weaknesses."

The report also said: "Without effective WMD exercises and training, responders might not successfully respond to a WMD incident, potentially result in loss of life and mass casualties."

Much of the equipment that was bought may or may not have been actually delivered. Some that was obtained was not needed. And significant shortages of other needed equipment exist.

For example, for \$23.5 million worth of equipment, "Managers neither verified asset receipt prior to payment nor established an accurate inventory baseline" that could have helped determine whether deliveries had been made or not.

Also, the report said "emergency managers purchased \$1.03 million of unnecessary assets" — mostly hazardous material suits — for bases where they were not required or where units already had what they needed.

Meanwhile, auditors found that at all of the 16 bases it visited, "emergency managers did not maintain equipment levels necessary for personnel protection and mission accomplishment" — with none having the minimum inventory of equipment that the Air Force figured they should have.

But the Air Force still had too much of some types of equipment. "Managers at 13 of 16 installations maintained assets above baseline capability for 241 line items, valued at approximately \$1.12 million" without "awareness or approval" of central commanders.

Written responses included in the report said the Air Force was working to rectify all the deficiencies identified, including better distribution of equipment where it is needed, preparing better plans for training and figuring what is truly required to protect against weapons of mass destruction.

<http://deseretnews.com/article/0,5143,705293849,00.html>

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Global Security Newswire
March 30, 2009

Congressmen Seek Review of Computer Security at U.S. Nuclear Laboratory

Two U.S. lawmakers pressed Friday for more information about computer losses at a major nuclear-weapon laboratory, expressing concern about the facility's "management and accountability" (see *GSN*, Feb. 12).

While investigating the theft of three computers from a laboratory worker's New Mexico home earlier this year (see *GSN*, Jan. 30), the Energy Department learned that 67 computers were missing from the Los Alamos National Laboratory.

"That 67 missing laptops were treated only as lost property, and not as a potential security threat, raises ongoing questions about the security culture at LANL," says a letter to the head of the National Nuclear Security Administration from Representative Joe Barton (R-Texas), senior Republican on the House Energy and Commerce Committee, and Representative Greg Walden (R-Ore.), the ranking Republican on the panel's Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee.

"We are concerned that LANL does not truly know what information was on this equipment or that NNSA security personnel have the ability to find out anymore," the letter adds.

It asks NNSA officials, who are responsible for laboratory oversight, to describe the site's security protocols and assess whether laboratory officials adhered to those measures. The lawmakers asked for a response within four weeks (Greg Webb, *Global Security Newswire*, March 30).

http://www.globalsecuritynewswire.org/gsn/nw_20090330_1363.php

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ITAR-TASS – Russia
27 March 2009

RF to Build 6 Nuclear Subs with Long-Range Cruise Missiles

MOSCOW, March 27 (Itar-Tass) -- Russia will build at least six multipurpose nuclear-powered submarines with long-range cruise missiles for the Navy, a source in the Russian Defence Ministry told Itar-Tass on Friday.

"The Sevmash shipyard is building several models of the leading underwater cruiser Severodvinsk. It is planned to build at least six nuclear-powered submarines," the source said.

"Under the current plans the Severodvinsk will be put into service for the Navy in 2011, other serial submarines should be built by 2017," the source said.

The nuclear submarine Severodvinsk will be equipped with long-range cruise missiles that can potentially carry low-capacity tactical warheads.

"These supersonic highly manoeuvring missiles are designed for strikes on aircraft carriers of the enemy if the latter poses a direct threat to Russia's security. The missiles can be launched at the most important coastal facilities," the source said.

"Despite the construction of a new nuclear submarine with new missiles Russia intends to observe firmly international arms control agreements on equal terms with other countries," the source said.

Russia will finance the construction of a new multipurpose nuclear-powered submarine with long-range cruise missiles, First Deputy Chief of the Navy's General Staff, Vice-Admiral Oleg Burtsev told Itar-Tass on March 20. "The construction of a new multipurpose nuclear-powered submarine that will be equipped with long-range cruise missiles was financed. We are planning to put this submarine into service in 2011," the vice-admiral said.

<http://www.itar-tass.com/eng/level2.html?NewsID=13728730&PageNum=0>

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RIA Novosti
30 March 2009

Russia to Test Launch Topol Ballistic Missile in April

MOSCOW, March 30 (RIA Novosti) - Russia will test launch on April 10 a Topol intercontinental ballistic missile from the Plesetsk space center in northern Russia, the Strategic Missile Forces (SMF) said on Monday.

The RS-12M Topol (SS-25 Sickle) is a single-warhead intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) approximately the same size and shape as the U.S. Minuteman ICBM. The first Topol missiles were put into service in 1985.

"The goal of the upcoming launch is to confirm the reliability of the technical characteristics [of the missile] during an extended service period," the SMF said in a statement.

The missile has a maximum range of 10,000 km (6,125 miles) and can carry a 550-kiloton nuclear warhead.

Although the service life of the SS-25 was extended to 21 years after a series of successful test launches last year, the missile will be progressively retired over the next decade and be replaced by a mobile version of the Topol-M (SS-27 Stalin) missile.

According to open sources, Russia's SMF has a total of 541 ICBMs, including 306 Topol missiles and 59 Topol-M missiles.

<http://en.rian.ru/russia/20090330/120815060.html>

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Daily Telegraph

29 March 2009

China's Global Cyber-Espionage Network GhostNet Penetrates 103 Countries

By Malcolm Moore in Shanghai

The discovery of GhostNet, which is designed to infiltrate sensitive ministries and embassies - and is known to have succeeded in many cases - is the latest sign of China's determination to win a future "information war". A ten-month investigation by the Munk Centre for International Studies in Toronto has revealed that GhostNet not only searches computers for information and taps their emails, but also turns them into giant listening devices.

Once a computer has been infected, hackers can turn on its web camera and microphones and record any conversations within range.

The study revealed that almost a third of the targets infected by GhostNet are "considered high-value and include computers located at ministries of foreign affairs, embassies, international organisations, news media and NGOs". This global web of espionage has been constructed in the last two years.

Another report from Cambridge University said the sophisticated computer attacks had been "devastatingly effective" and that "few organisations, outside the defence and intelligence sector, could withstand such an attack".

The report stopped short of accusing the Beijing government of responsibility for the network, but said the vast majority of cyber attacks originated from inside China. It also remains unclear whether GhostNet was built by the Chinese government, or by independent hackers inside the country.

Ronald Deibert, one of the researchers, said: "We're a bit careful about it, knowing the nuance of what happens in subterranean realms. This could also well be the CIA or the Russians. It's a murky realm that we're lifting the lid on."

However, the US Defence department has repeatedly warned of China's increasing capabilities in electronic warfare. A report from the Pentagon, issued last week, said that the Chinese army "often cites the need in modern warfare to control information, sometimes termed 'information dominance'."

The report added: "China has made steady progress in recent years in developing offensive nuclear, space and cyber-warfare capabilities, the only aspects of China's armed forces that, today, have the potential to be truly global."

The Chinese government decided long ago to make control of information a central plank of the country's policy. At the 10th National People's Congress, in 2003, the Chinese army announced the creation of "information warfare units". General Dai Qingmin said internet attacks would run in advance of any military operation to cripple enemies.

The discovery of GhostNet was prompted when the office of the Dalai Lama in Dharamsala, India, contacted experts to investigate if it was being bugged.

Ross Anderson, at Cambridge University, and Shishir Nagaraja at the University of Illinois, wrote in a new report: "The office of the Dalai Lama started to suspect it was under surveillance while setting up meetings between His Holiness and foreign dignitaries. They sent an email invitation on behalf of His Holiness to a foreign diplomat, but

before they could follow it up with a courtesy telephone call, the diplomat's office was contacted by the Chinese government and warned not to go ahead with the meeting."

Mr Nagaraja travelled to Dharamsala last September and discovered that the Tibetan computer system had been breached from inside China. The Tibetan computers contained highly sensitive details about refugees and schools, both of which are possible targets for Chinese reprisals.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/asia/china/5071124/Chinas-global-cyber-espionage-network-GhostNet-penetrates-103-countries.html>

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London Times
March 29, 2009

'World's Biggest Cyber Spy Network' Snoops on Classified Documents in 103 Countries

Mike Harvey, Technology Correspondent

Read the research paper in full <<http://www.scribd.com/doc/13731776/Tracking-GhostNet-Investigating-a-Cyber-Espionage-Network?autodown=pdf>>

A cyber spy network operated from China hacked into classified documents on government and private computers in 103 countries, internet researchers have revealed.

The spy system, which investigators dubbed GhostNet, compromised 1,295 machines at Nato and foreign affairs ministries, embassies, banks and news organisations across the world, as well as computers used by the Dalai Lama and Tibetan exiles.

The work of Information Warfare Monitor (IWM) investigators focused initially on allegations of Chinese cyber espionage against the Tibetan exile community but led to a much wider network of compromised machines.

IWM said that, while its analysis pointed to China as the main source of the network, it had not been able conclusively to identify the hackers. The IWM is composed of researchers from an Ottawa-based think tank, SecDev Group, and the University of Toronto's Munk Centre for International Studies.

The researchers found that more than 1,295 computers had been affected at the ministries of foreign affairs of Iran, Bangladesh, Latvia, Indonesia, Philippines, Brunei, Barbados and Bhutan. They also discovered hacked systems in the embassies of India, South Korea, Indonesia, Romania, Cyprus, Malta, Thailand, Taiwan, Portugal, Germany and Pakistan.

The remote spying operation is thought to be the most extensive yet uncovered in the political world and is estimated to be invading more than a dozen new computers a week. Other infected computers were found at Deloitte & Touche in New York.

The IWM report said: "GhostNet represents a network of compromised computers resident in high-value political, economic, and media locations spread across numerous countries worldwide. At the time of writing, these organisations are almost certainly oblivious to the compromised situation in which they find themselves. The computers of diplomats, military attachés, private assistants, secretaries to Prime Ministers, journalists and others are under the concealed control of unknown assailant(s)."

It added: "In Dharamsala [the headquarters of the Tibetan government in exile] and elsewhere, we have witnessed machines being profiled and sensitive documents being removed. At our laboratory, we have analysed our own infected 'honey pot' computer and discovered that the capabilities of GhostNet are potent and wide-ranging.

"Almost certainly, documents are being removed without the targets' knowledge, keystrokes logged, web cameras are being silently triggered, and audio inputs surreptitiously activated."

Once the hackers infiltrated the systems, they gained control using malware – software they had installed on the compromised computers – and sent and received data from them, the researchers said. The investigation concluded that Tibetan computer systems were compromised by multiple infections that gave attackers unprecedented access to potentially sensitive information, including documents from the private office of the Dalai Lama.

The investigators went to India, Europe and North America to collect evidence about the infected systems used by Tibetan exiles. It was in the second stage of the inquiry, when they were analysing the data, that they uncovered the network of compromised computers.

The IWM report said in its summary: "The GhostNet system directs infected computers to download a Trojan known as Ghost Rat that allows attackers to gain complete, real-time control. These instances of Ghost Rat are consistently controlled from commercial internet access accounts located on the island of Hainan, in the People's Republic of China."

The researchers said GhostNet was spread using classic malware techniques. "Contextually relevant emails are sent to specific targets with attached documents that are packed with exploit code and Trojan horse programmes designed to take advantage of vulnerabilities in software installed on the target's computer.

"Once compromised, files located on infected computers may be mined for contact information, and used to spread malware through e-mail and document attachments that appear to come from legitimate sources, and contain legitimate documents and messages."

Greg Walton, the editor of IWM, said: "Regardless of who or what is ultimately in control of GhostNet, it is the capabilities of exploitation, and the strategic intelligence that can be harvested from it, which matters most. Indeed, although the Achilles' heel of the GhostNet system allowed us to monitor and document its far-reaching network of infiltration, we can safely hypothesise that it is neither the first nor the only one of its kind."

Two researchers at Cambridge University who worked on the part of the investigation related to the Tibetans are releasing their own report. In an online abstract for The Snooping Dragon: Social Malware Surveillance of the Tibetan Movement, Shishir Nagaraja and Ross Anderson wrote that while malware attacks are not new, these attacks should be noted for their ability to collect "actionable intelligence for use by the police and security services of a repressive state, with potentially fatal consequences for those exposed".

<http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/uk/crime/article5996253.ece>

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Wall Street Journal
MARCH 29, 2009

Researchers Say They Uncover International Cyber-Spy Network

By BEN WORTHEN

Security researchers said they have discovered software capable of stealing information installed on computers in 103 countries, an apparently coordinated cyber-attack that targeted the office of the Dalai Lama and government agencies around the world.

The software infected more than 1,200 computers in all, almost 30% of which are considered high-value targets, according to a report published Sunday by Information Warfare Monitor, a Toronto-based organization. (Read the report <http://documents.scribd.com/docs/1jjiyoq3c13a9a4udh2s7.pdf>> .)

Among the affected computers were those in embassies belonging to Germany, India, Romania, and Thailand, and in the ministries of foreign affairs for Barbados, Iran and Latvia.

The researchers say the infected computers acted as a kind of illicit information-gathering network, and that they observed sensitive documents being stolen from a computer network operated by the Dalai Lama's organization. They traced the attacks to computers located in China, but stop short of blaming the Chinese government.

A separate report by researchers at Cambridge University, also published Sunday, alleges that the Chinese government or a group working closely with it is responsible for the attack on the computer in the office of the Dalai Lama. (Read the report <<http://www.cl.cam.ac.uk/techreports/UCAM-CL-TR-746.pdf>> .)

Media officials at China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and State Council Information Office declined requests for comment Sunday. The Chinese government has repeatedly denied past allegations that it sponsors cyber attacks.

The New York Times published an article about the reports on its Web site Saturday.

The apparent attacks are the latest in a series of incidents that suggest cyber-espionage is on the rise. Last year, Kevin Chilton, commander of the U.S. Strategic Command, said military computer networks are increasingly

coming under attack from hackers trying to steal information, many of whom appear to have ties to China. The U.S. government has also said that military contractors have been victims of these attacks.

In trying to tap into government computers, attackers have been stepping up the use of sabotaged programs, sometimes called malware. The technique is essentially the same as that used by criminals that try to break into people's home PCs to steal credit cards or other information.

A victim is tricked into opening an infected file attached to an email or downloading a file from a Web site. Criminals have managed to gain control over millions of computers by sending files pretending to be racy pictures of celebrities or winning lottery tickets.

In an espionage attack, the messages are much more targeted, said Shishir Nagaraja, one of the authors of the Cambridge study who investigated the attack on the office of the Dalai Lama. The emails appear to come from someone the recipient knows and may contain a file that recipient has been expecting.

"Who wouldn't open that?" said Mr. Nagaraja, who is now a postdoctoral researcher at the University of Illinois. The attacks "depend less on technical measures and more on abusing trust."

In the attacks tracked by the Canadian researchers, the installed software provided near-complete control over the victims' computers. The attackers could search for and steal sensitive files, capture passwords to Web sites, and even activate a computer's Web camera if they desired. The victims were typically unaware that someone else could control their computers.

Officials working with the Dalai Lama first became suspicious that their computers had been compromised when a foreign diplomat the office had contacted via email received a call from the Chinese government discouraging a meeting with the Dalai Lama. Mr. Nagaraja said he traveled to Dharamsala, India, in September 2008 to investigate, and found evidence while there that cyber espionage was underway.

Mr. Nagaraja stressed that businesses are also at risk. While the incidents uncovered by the researchers dealt mainly with government organizations, corporations could hire hackers to steal information from rivals using similar techniques.

Indeed, there is a precedent for such incidents. In May 2005 Michael and Ruth Haephrati were arrested and later plead guilty to stealing secrets from dozens of businesses in Israel by crafting fake business proposals that really contained malicious software. The Haephratis would call their targets on the phone to make sure they had opened the infected files.

Targeted attacks are on the rise. Researchers at MessageLabs, a division of Symantec Corp., only detected about one or two targeted attacks per week in 2005. In 2008, the researchers detected 53 of these attacks a day.

The Canadian researchers are based at the Munk Centre for International Studies at the University of Toronto and the consulting firm SecDev Group. They said their investigation, conducted between June 2008 and March 2009, was prompted by allegations of cyber espionage against the Tibetan community.

—Jason Dean contributed to this article.

http://online.wsj.com/article/SB123834671171466791.html?mod=googlenews_wsj

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Washington Post

March 27, 2009

In The Loop

Reports of the Long War's Death Were Apparently Premature

By Al Kamen

Administration officials have been insisting that no decision has been made to stop using the term "global war on terror" -- or GWOT (GEE-wot) -- in official communications.

An Office of Management and Budget e-mail sent to the Pentagon a few days ago said: "This Administration prefers to avoid using the term 'Long War' or 'Global War on Terror' [GWOT]. Please use 'Overseas Contingency Operation.' "

OMB Director Peter Orszag, asked about this in a telephone news conference on the budget Wednesday, said he'd seen our blog post on this. "I sometimes am amused by things that I read in the press," he said. (Yeah, well, he should see some of the laugh-riot stuff written by administration officials.) "I am not aware of any communication that I've had on that topic," he said.

OMB spokesman Kenneth Baer dismissed the e-mail as "a communication by a mid-level career civil servant" and said, "There was no official memo or guidance given out by OMB." Pentagon spokesman Geoff Morrell told reporters he'd "never received such a directive" and would still use GWOT "if it's appropriate," and he noted that the OMB explained that one of its staff members "may have been a little overexuberant."

Morrell said he had no "preferred" word for describing "global operations to protect the homeland and the American people" and suggested that "perhaps a better -- another way to refer to it would be . . . a campaign against extremists who wish to do us harm" (CAEWWT-DUH?).

In any event, he said OCO was really just a "budget term" and "I don't think there's anything to the story."

Okay. So here's what let's do. For the rest of the year, anytime a senior administration official -- assistant secretary or above -- uses "GWOT" or "global war on terror," in the present tense, in written testimony sent to the Hill, we will contribute -- personal cash here -- one American dollar to the Committee to Protect Journalists. The CPJ is an organization that works to keep reporters from being gunned down or jailed in such places as Sierra Leone, Iraq, China, North Korea, Mexico, Georgia and Russia. Just send a copy of, or direct us to, the relevant page of testimony. Send e-mail to intheloop@washpost.com or mail to In the Loop, 1150 15th St. NW, Washington, D.C. 20071.

Gitmo work

Unemployment numbers are rising, and even lawyers are not immune from layoffs in this economy. But not to worry. There are still jobs to be had. The Pentagon's Office of the Deputy General Counsel says it has "multiple positions" to represent the government in cases in federal court here being brought by Guantanamo Bay detainees. The jobs -- paying \$30,000 to \$130,000, "depending on experience and qualifications" -- start right now, though they last three years at most. Civil or criminal litigation experience is preferred, as well as "experience with intelligence matters and an active security clearance."

No? Apply anyway, we're told. The jobs are based here, "with potential for some travel to Guantanamo."

With Alice Crites

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/03/26/AR2009032603667.html>

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New York Times
April 1, 2009

Philippines Officials Plead With Rebels on Captives

By CARLOS H. CONDE

MANILA -- Officials in the Philippines repeated an appeal Tuesday to the terrorist group Abu Sayyaf not to harm three Red Cross workers it took hostage after a deadline set by the group for beheading one of the captives passed with no sign that the threat had been carried out.

Abu Sayyaf head demanded that the military pull its soldiers out of an island province in the south, warning that it would behead one of the three Red Cross workers if the demand were not met by 2 p.m. Tuesday.

Military officials said it was "physically impossible" to remove troops from Sulu island, the group's base in the southern Philippines, where the Red Cross workers were kidnapped in January.

The deadline passed Tuesday without any report of a beheading. That, however, was small comfort to officials working for the release of the hostages, who knew that Abu Sayyaf was capable of carrying out its threat. They said they had done their best to make sure that the Red Cross workers remained safe, but that they were prepared for the worst.

"If you think killing any of them will stop Red Cross, you are wrong," a weeping Richard Gordon, chairman of the Philippine National Red Cross, said on national television a few minutes before the 2 p.m. deadline.

Mr. Gordon said he had been on the phone around noon Tuesday with Albadeer Parad, the leader of the Abu Sayyaf group holding the hostages, and had pleaded with him to extend the deadline to at least 6 a.m. on Wednesday, but that Mr. Parad rejected him. Mr. Gordon said he could no longer contact Mr. Parad's phone as the deadline neared.

Abdusakur Tan, the governor of Sulu province who earlier declared a state of emergency in his province, said the government would certainly respond if the Abu Sayyaf made good on its threat.

"We are not going to take this sitting down," he said on ABS-CBN television. "We are prepared for the worst."

Concerns about the fate of the hostages heightened last week after the government launched military offensives in Sulu, enlisting civilian volunteers in an attempt to prevent Abu Sayyaf from slipping through. Pope Benedict XVI, Cardinal Gaudencio Rosales as well as the International Committee of the Red Cross have appealed to the military not to launch attacks that could harm the hostages, and to Abu Sayyaf to release the hostages.

"Please spare and release Mary Jean, Eugenio and Andreas," Jakob Kellenberger, president of the International Committee of the Red Cross, said in a statement Monday. "All they were doing was helping people in need in your area. There is no ideology or religious law that could justify killing them."

Mary Jean Lacaba of the Philippines, Eugenio Vagni of Italy and Andreas Notter of Switzerland were abducted by armed men in Sulu on Jan. 15 after doing humanitarian work inside the provincial jail.

Abu Sayyaf, responsible for many of the deadliest terror attacks in the Philippines, has a grim record of following through on threats to behead its captives. Guillermo Sobero, an American from Corona, California, was decapitated by the group in 2001. Abu Sayyaf guerrillas also beheaded two Filipino teachers in 2000 as a "birthday gift" to President Joseph Estrada.

Dante Jimenez, chairman of the nongovernment Volunteers Against Crime and Corruption, said the government must now finish off the Abu Sayyaf "once and for all because they are mocking all of us, they are holding all of us Filipinos hostage."

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/04/01/world/asia/01phil.html?ref=asia>

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Miami Herald

OPINION

Terrorism

26 March 2009

Pakistan is the Central Front in the War

David Kilcullen, an Australian army reservist and top advisor to Gen. David Petraeus during the troop surge in Iraq, has spent years studying insurgencies in countries from Indonesia to Afghanistan, distinguishing hard-core terrorists from "accidental guerrillas" -- and his theories are revolutionizing military thinking throughout the West. Kilcullen spoke with Carlos Lozada of The Washington Post about why Pakistan is poised for collapse, whether catching Osama bin Laden is really a good idea and the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. Excerpts:

Q. What is the real central front in the war on terror?

A. Pakistan. Hands down. No doubt.

Q. Why?

A. Pakistan is 173 million people, 100 nuclear weapons, an army bigger than the U.S. Army, and al Qaeda headquarters sitting right there in the two-thirds of the country that the government doesn't control. The Pakistani military and police and intelligence service don't follow the civilian government; they are essentially a rogue state within a state. We're now reaching the point where within one

to six months we could see the collapse of the Pakistani state, also because of the global financial crisis, which just exacerbates all these problems . . . The collapse of Pakistan, al Qaeda acquiring nuclear weapons, an extremist takeover -- that would dwarf everything we've seen in the war on terror today.

Q. How important is it to kill or capture Osama bin laden?

A: Not very. It depends on who does it. Let me give you two possible scenarios. Scenario one is, American commandos shoot their way into some valley in Pakistan and kill bin Laden. That doesn't end the war on terror; it makes bin Laden a martyr.

But here's scenario two: Imagine that a tribal raiding party captures bin Laden, puts him on television and says, "You are a traitor to Islam, and you have killed more Muslims than you have killed infidels, and we're now going to deal with you." They could either then try and execute the guy in accordance with their own laws, or hand him over to the International Criminal Court. If that happened, that would be the end of the al Qaeda myth.

Q. President Barack Obama has said that he will be "as careful getting out of Iraq as we were careless getting in." Is his decision to remove combat forces by August 2010 and leave 50,000 non-combat troops careful or careless?

A. I think it is politically careful. The distinction between combat and non-combat forces in a counterinsurgency environment is largely theoretical. Anyone who is still in Iraq will actually or potentially be engaged in combat.

Q. How much longer will the war last?

A. The intervention ends when the locals can handle it. Right now they can't. I think that within three to five years, we can say that the chance that the Iraqis will be able to hold their own against their internal threats is pretty high. So I'd say we have another three to five years of substantial engagement in Iraq.

But one other factor here is external interference. What are the Iranians doing, what are the Saudis doing, what are the Jordanians and the Syrians doing? The Iraq part is not the problem, it's the regional security part that is the problem.

Q. What are the lessons of Iraq that most apply to Afghanistan?

A. I would say there are three. The first one is you've got to protect the population. Unless you make people feel safe, they won't be willing to engage in unarmed politics. The second lesson is, once you've made people safe, you've got to focus on getting the population on your side and making them self-defending. And then a third lesson is, you've got to make a long-term commitment.

Q. Obama has suggested that it might be possible to reach out to moderate elements of the Taliban, along the lines of the Anbar Awakening in Iraq. Would that work?

A. If the Taliban sees that we're negotiating for a stay of execution or to stave off defeat, that's going to harden their resolve . . . I'm all for negotiating, but I think the chances of achieving a mass wave of people turning against the Taliban are somewhat lower in Afghanistan than they were in Iraq.

<http://www.miamiherald.com/opinion/other-views/story/968139.html>

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Daily Telegraph
30 March 2009

Analysis: Victory Over Gunmen may Convince Pakistanis that Terrorism can be Beaten

By Dean Nelson, South Asia Editor

The attackers shot their way into the compound as trainee officers were being drilled on the parade ground, and reminded them of the true nature of the war ahead: one where al-Qaeda and Taliban-affiliated groups can strike at will, not just in the remote Tribal Areas by the Afghan border, but in the heart of Pakistan's cities.

It was a further reminder to Islamabad of the heavy price it would pay for waging what many Pakistanis see as "the West's war".

One Western observer said he hoped the attack would serve as a wake-up call to Pakistan's political class which has regarded the fight against al-Qaeda and its allies as an American war against Pashtun tribesmen "on the other side of the Hindu Kush". Perhaps this might finally persuade them it was their own fight for survival, he said.

The early signs did not hold out much cause for hope. There were reports of limp and lifeless police officers strewn over the parade ground and 500 trainees being held hostage, which seemed to indicate yet another example of Pakistan's helplessness.

But eight hours after the gunmen made their terrifying entrance, Pakistani television viewers witnessed unexpected scenes of jubilation as army special operations officers and paramilitary troops celebrated a swift victory on the training centre's rooftop.

Young men in uniforms threw their shirts over their heads and fired shots in the air after killing all but one of the attackers.

For the first time on local television, viewers saw their own soldiers celebrating a victory over "terrorism" as one for Pakistan. Commentators called it "Pakistan's Mumbai" but remarked with pride how their special forces had defeated the gunmen in "just eight hours." Their televised joy may have achieved something that President Asif Ali Zardari and his predecessors all promised but failed to deliver. This attack may finally have persuaded Pakistanis that combating terrorism is their war after all - and that it can be won.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/asia/pakistan/5076940/Analysis-Victory-over-gunmen-may-convince-Pakistanis-that-terrorism-can-be-beaten.html>

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Wall Street Journal

OPINION

MARCH 30, 2009

The Real Afghan Issue Is Pakistan

By GRAHAM ALLISON and JOHN DEUTCH

In announcing his new Afghanistan and Pakistan policy, President Barack Obama articulated "a clear and focused goal: to disrupt, dismantle, and defeat al Qaeda in Pakistan and Afghanistan, and to prevent their return to either country in the future."

This is a sound conception of both the threat and U.S. interests in the region. Mr. Obama took a giant step beyond the Bush administration's "Afghanistan policy" when he named the issue "AfPak" -- Afghanistan, Pakistan and their shared, Pashtun-populated border. But this is inverted. We suggest renaming the policy "PakAf," to emphasize that, from the perspective of U.S. interests and regional stability, the heart of the problem lies in Pakistan.

The fundamental question about Afghanistan is this: What vital national interest does the U.S. have there? President George W. Bush offered an ever-expanding answer to this question. As he once put it, America's goal is "a free and peaceful Afghanistan," where "reform and democracy" would serve as "the alternatives to fanaticism, resentment and terror."

In sharp contrast, during the presidential campaign Mr. Obama declared that America has one and only one vital national interest in Afghanistan: to ensure that it "cannot be used as a base to launch attacks against the United States." To which we would add the corollary: that developments in Afghanistan not undermine Pakistan's stability and assistance in eliminating al Qaeda.

Consider a hypothetical. Had the terrorist attacks of 9/11 been planned by al Qaeda from its current headquarters in ungoverned areas of Pakistan, is it conceivable that today the U.S. would find itself with 54,000 troops and \$180 billion committed to transforming medieval Afghanistan into a stable, modern nation?

For Afghanistan to become a unitary state ruled from Kabul, and to develop into a modern, prosperous, poppy-free and democratic country would be a worthy and desirable outcome. But it is not vital for American interests.

After the U.S. and NATO exit Afghanistan and reduce their presence and financial assistance to levels comparable to current efforts in the Sudan, Somalia or Bangladesh, one should expect Afghanistan to return to conditions similar to those regions. Such conditions are miserable. They are deserving of American and international development and security assistance. But, as in those countries, it is unrealistic to expect anything more than a slow, difficult evolution towards modernity.

The problem in Pakistan is more pressing and direct. There, the U.S. does have larger vital national interests. Top among these is preventing Pakistan's arsenal of nuclear weapons and materials from falling into the hands of terrorists such as Osama bin Laden. This danger is not hypothetical -- the father of Pakistan's nuclear bomb, A.Q.

Khan, is now known to have been the world's first nuclear black marketer, providing nuclear weapons technology and materials to Libya, North Korea and Iran.

Protecting Pakistan's nuclear arsenal requires preventing radical Islamic extremists from taking control of the country.

Furthermore, the U.S. rightly remains committed to preventing the next 9/11 attack by eliminating global terrorist threats such as al Qaeda. This means destroying their operating headquarters and training camps, from which they can plan more deadly 9/11s.

The counterterrorism strategy in Pakistan that has emerged since last summer offers our best hope for regional stability and success in dealing a decisive blow against al Qaeda and what Vice President Joe Biden calls "incorrigible" Taliban adherents. But implementing these operations requires light U.S. footprints backed by drones and other technology that allows missile attacks on identified targets. The problem is that the U.S. government no longer seems to be capable of conducting covert operations without having them reported in the press.

This will only turn Pakistani public opinion against the U.S. Many Pakistanis see covert actions carried out inside their country as America "invading an ally." This makes it difficult for Pakistani officials to support U.S. operations while sustaining widespread popular support.

As Mr. Biden has warned: "It is hard to imagine a greater nightmare for America than the world's second-largest Muslim nation becoming a failed state in fundamentalists' hands, with an arsenal of nuclear weapons and a population larger than Iran, Iraq, Afghanistan and North Korea combined."

Avoiding this nightmare will require concentration on the essence of the challenge: Pakistan. On the peripheries, specifically Afghanistan, Mr. Obama should borrow a line from Andrew Jackson from the battle of New Orleans and order his administration to "elevate them guns a little lower."

Mr. Allison is director of the Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs at Harvard's John F. Kennedy School of Government and author of "Nuclear Terrorism: The Ultimate Preventable Catastrophe" (Holt Paperbacks, 2005). Mr. Deutch is a professor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and a former director of the Central Intelligence Agency under President Bill Clinton.

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB123837495311668059.html>

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