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Washington Times
19 October 2008

Military Report Says Terms 'Jihad,' 'Islamist' Needed

Bill Gertz

A U.S. military "Red Team" charged with challenging conventional thinking says that words like "jihad" and "Islamist" are needed in discussing 21st-century terrorism and that federal agencies that avoid the words soft-pedaled the link between religious extremism and violent acts. "We must reject the notion that Islam and Arabic stand apart as bodies of knowledge that cannot be critiqued or discussed as elements of understanding our enemies in this conflict," said the internal report, a copy of which was obtained by The Washington Times.

The report, "Freedom of Speech in Jihad Analysis: Debunking the Myth of Offensive Words," was written by unnamed civilian analysts and contractors for the U.S. Central Command, which is responsible for the Middle East and South Asia. It is thought to be the first official document to challenge those in the government who seek to downplay the role of Islam in inspiring some terrorist violence. "The fact is our enemies cite the source of Islam as the foundation for their global jihad," the report said. "We are left with the responsibility of portraying our enemies in an honest and accurate fashion."

The report contributes to an ongoing debate within the U.S. government and military over the roots of terrorism, its relationship to Islam and how best to counter extremist ideology. It cites two Bush administration documents that appear to minimize any link between radical Islam and terrorism.

A January 2008 memorandum from the Department of Homeland Security's Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties stated that unidentified American Muslims recommended that the U.S. government avoid using the terms "jihadist," "Islamic terrorist," "Islamist" or "holy warrior," asserting that would create a "negative climate" and spawn acts of harassment and discrimination.

Dan Sutherland, Homeland Security officer for civil rights and civil liberties, said the document is not department policy. "This was a compilation of recommendations and thoughts provided to us by some prominent American Muslim thinkers and never was intended to be Department of Homeland Security policy," he said in an interview.

"If a paper from another part of government says this doesn't make sense, that's a valid point. This memo is a thought piece meant to stir discussion." Mr. Sutherland said he agrees that a debate on terrorist terminology is needed in describing "the very serious threat we face." A second document mentioned by the report was developed for the State Department by the National Counterterrorism Center's Extremist Messaging Branch. It urges officials to use the term "violent extremist" and never to use "jihadist" because that will "legitimize" terrorists.

Michael E. Leiter, director of the counterterrorism center, questioned some of the memo's conclusions during a July 10 Senate hearing, said spokesman Carl Kropf. "I do think you cannot separate out the fact that the terror fight we are fighting today involves Islam as a religion," Mr. Leiter said under questioning from Sen. Joe Lieberman, Connecticut independent. He added, however, "the ideology which motivates these terrorists has very little to do in reality with the religion of Islam."

One of the most sensitive issues in the new report involves the word jihad. An Arabic word derived from the verb meaning "to strive," it appears about 30 times in the Koran, but "the preponderance of references refer to internal striving to prove one's piety," said William Graham, a professor of Middle East Studies at Harvard University.

About 10 references are clearly to fighting, said Mr. Graham, who is also dean of the university's divinity school. The word, often translated as "holy war," has been used in a military context throughout Muslim history, said Princeton University Professor Emeritus Bernard Lewis, a leading authority on Islam. Several terrorist groups, including Palestinian Islamic Jihad, include the word in their titles.

The Red Team report said jihad is an obligation of all Muslims under Islamic law and must be performed "until the whole world is under the rule of Islam." However, the Koran states that the embrace of Islam must be voluntary, Mr. Graham said. Jim Zogby, president of the Arab American Institute, said he had no problem using words such as jihad, provided it was made clear that militant groups were misusing the terms to justify their violent actions.

"They're not talking about jihad in a theological sense," Mr. Zogby said. "Jihad means to struggle or strive for the good and against evil. These people are talking about violent revolution." Stephen Suleyman Schwartz, executive director of the Center for Islamic Pluralism in Washington, cautioned against interpreting the debate as a dispute between those who think Islam as a whole is bad and those who think Islam as a whole is good. "Islam is manifestly in crisis, with bad people who are Muslims fighting against good people who are Muslims. That should be the point - how to mobilize the good people against the bad people," Mr. Schwartz said.

The Red Team report said the government documents in question reflect "the views and opinions of a very small [number] of Americans whose contributions may have escaped critical review. ... While there is concern that we not label all Muslims as Islamist terrorists, it is proper to address certain aspects of violence as uniquely Islamic," the report says. The report notes that some terms for terrorists, such as "Islamofascist," are "conspicuously offensive."

The Council on American Islamic Relations (CAIR), a prominent U.S. Muslim group, has argued that government terminology should minimize any connection between Islam and terrorism to avoid fanning religious hatred. A council spokesman said Corey Saylor, CAIR's legislative director, recently stated the group's views on the issue in a Detroit News Op-Ed article. Mr. Saylor said CAIR opposes the use of "jihadist" and other Islamic terms because the use of non-Islamic terms "serves the strategic purpose of isolating extremists and removing the false cloak of religiosity that they use to justify their barbarism."

Marine Corps Maj. Joseph D. Kloppel, a Central Command spokesman, said Red Team reports "are often controversial." "But the resulting debate sharpens reasoning, forces intellectual integrity, and improves decisionmaking and subsequent action," he said in an e-mail, noting that its products are "designed for internal use" and not meant to represent the personal views of the Centcom commander.

Willis Witter contributed to this article.

<http://washingtontimes.com/news/2008/oct/20/report-says-terms-jihad-islamist-needed/>

For full report see: <http://video1.washingtontimes.com/video/RedTeamReport.pdf>

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Washington Post
October 18, 2008; A01

Al-Qaeda Web Forums Abruptly Taken Offline

Separately, Sunnis and Shiites Wage Online War

By Ellen Knickmeyer

Washington Post Foreign Service

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates, Oct. 17 -- Four of the five main online forums that al-Qaeda's media wing uses to distribute statements by Osama bin Laden and other extremists have been disabled since mid-September, monitors of the Web sites say. The disappearance of the forums on Sept. 10 -- and al-Qaeda's apparent inability to restore them or create alternate online venues, as it has before -- has curbed the organization's dissemination of the words and images of its fugitive leaders. On Sept. 29, a statement by the al-Fajr Media Center, a distribution network created by supporters of al-Qaeda and other Sunni extremist groups, said the forums had disappeared "for technical reasons," and it urged followers not to trust look-alike sites.

For al-Qaeda, "these sites are the equivalent of pentagon.mil, whitehouse.gov, att.com," said Evan F. Kohlmann, an expert on online al-Qaeda operations who has advised the FBI and others. With just one authorized al-Qaeda site still in business, "this has left al-Qaeda's propaganda strategy hanging by a very narrow thread." At the same time, in an apparently unrelated flare-up of online sectarian hostility, Shiite and Sunni hackers have targeted Web sites associated with the other sect, including that of a Saudi-owned television network and of Iraq's most revered Shiite cleric. On several occasions over the past three years, unknown hackers have shut down al-Qaeda-affiliated Web sites after they announced the imminent release of a new video message from Osama bin Laden or another extremist leader. It is often impossible to pinpoint the source of such online attacks, though some experts say the culprits could be independent activists.

A U.S. intelligence official, asked about the online attacks, declined to say whether U.S. spy agencies engage in them. American and British security forces each have joint commands overseeing online operations against extremists. "There had been this aura of invincibility" about al-Qaeda's media operations, said Gregory D. Johnsen, a U.S.-based expert on violent Sunni groups in Yemen. "Now this has really been taken away from them." In early September, the al-Fajr forums were drumming up anticipation of al-Qaeda's annual video marking the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks. "Await Sept. 11!" one message declared. Instead, on Sept. 10, the forums vanished.

Rapid changes in domain-registration information and in servers suggested that the sites' webmasters were working intently to bring the forums back up, according to a statement from the SITE Intelligence Group, a leading private monitor of Web sites of extremist groups. After about 24 hours, one forum, al-Hesbah, reappeared, according to Kohlmann, a senior investigator with the NEFA Foundation in Charleston, S.C. Al-Qaeda's Sept. 11 video eventually appeared on al-Hesbah, which means "one who holds others accountable," on Sept. 19. By then, the shine had been taken off the anniversary for al-Qaeda supporters. "Oh, my God, save my brothers on the jihadi forums," one user posted on al-Hesbah, according to Kohlmann.

"My dear brothers . . . increase your supplications for Allah to guide the bullet and to restore al-Ekhlaas successfully so that the message is spread," another user wrote, according to SITE, referring to the most prominent of the downed forums. Johnsen said that on extremist "forums that are still up, you have people who are quite paranoid and quite confused" about what's going on. He said it is "certainly normal for jihadi chat rooms and forums . . . to have some kind of disruption. It was very clear this is something entirely different." Al-Qaeda has continued posting videos and statements on al-Hesbah. But Kohlmann said comparatively few followers have passwords to that site.

Al-Qaeda webmasters may be too concerned about letting in infiltrators to issue more passwords for al-Hesbah or to move to an alternate forum with new passwords, Kohlmann said. "It's the first time it's happened now in three years for al-Qaeda to have only one forum left carrying al-Qaeda's propaganda stream," Kohlmann said. The al-Fajr center was created in late 2005. Al-Qaeda has had to rely on the sites of others to help distribute its videos, costing the organization some control of its message and shrinking its audience, monitors said. The sabotage of sites operated by extremist groups makes it more difficult for those groups to inspire attacks and recruit attackers, said Erich Marquardt, editor in chief of the Sentinel, a monthly online publication by the Combating Terrorism Center at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point.

However, "the downside of knocking jihadist Web sites offline is that you lose the ability to monitor jihadist activities," eliminating opportunities for Western monitors to search for ideological weaknesses or clues to future operations, Marquardt said. "When these Web sites are taken offline, it closes an important window." Separately, Sunni and Shiite Internet partisans are waging a tit-for-tat hacking war. For now, Sunni extremist sites are taking the brunt. In September, hackers targeted what Iranian news media estimated to be 300 Shiite sites, many of them operated by Shiite religious leaders in Iran. Targets included the official site of Grand Ayatollah Ali Sistani, the leading Shiite cleric in Iraq. For several days, visitors to that site were connected instead to a YouTube video featuring American talk-show host Bill Maher mocking what he said were the cleric's edicts, or fatwas, on sexual matters. Aides to Sistani later denied that he had issued such edicts.

A group called Ghoroub XP, based in the United Arab Emirates, asserted responsibility. Its claim has not been publicly confirmed by any authorities. Alleged Shiite hackers responded in force. By Oct. 1, hundreds of sites run by Sunnis, including those of religious figures, had vanished. In their place appeared a site featuring an Iranian flag superimposed over the intense gaze of a smiling woman. There also was a message, citing a Koranic verse: "And one who attacketh you, attack him in like manner as he attacked you."

The site of the Saudi-owned network al-Arabiya was among those attacked, forcing the news organization to move its site briefly to another domain. Al-Arabiya managers issued statements saying their coverage was balanced and neutral. One Iranian, who answered questions submitted in writing and was identified as a hacker by sources familiar with the online religious world in Tehran, asserted responsibility for disrupting one Sunni site and said Sunni extremists online provoked the attack. "The war is only between Shiite groups in Iran and Wahhabis," said the writer, who declined to be further identified. Wahhabis are followers of a stringent Saudi-born branch of Sunni Islam. "The way of hacking is that they attack and we respond," he wrote. "The future will reveal our next step." Correspondent Thomas Erdbrink in Tehran and staff writer Joby Warrick and staff researcher Julie Tate in Washington contributed to this report.

http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/10/17/AR2008101703367_pf.html

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Houston Chronicle/ The Associated Press (Chronicle.com)
October 19, 2008

Al-Qaida Denies Web Attack, But Its Sites Struggle

By PAUL SCHEMM Associated Press Writer © 2008

CAIRO, Egypt — The main Web sites that normally carry messages from the al-Qaida terror group remain inoperable more than a month after they went down just ahead of the seventh anniversary of the Sept. 11 attacks. The Associated Press first reported in September that the Web forums that typically carry messages and videos from Al-Qaida and its allied groupings had ceased functioning around Sept. 10, just as the group said it was set to release a new video message. Only a site called Hesbah and a new one named Faloja now function intermittently, more than a month later, and carry messages from Al-Qaida and its allies in Iraq, Somalia, Pakistan and the Palestinian territories about recent operations.

Al-Fajr Media Center, the extremist group's communications wing, issued a terse statement on Sept. 29 blaming the problems on "technical reasons" and denying the sites had come under a cyber attack as has been widely speculated in the media. "We deny reports published by the media of the tyrants regarding the fall of some of the headquarters of these networks into the hands of the enemy," the statement said, according to the U.S.-based SITE Intelligence Group, which monitors extremist sites. Contributors to the forums also have worried publicly that some kind of Western cyber attack targeted the sites. One prominent jihadi poster, quoted by SITE, suggested extremists should strike back by infiltrating other, more-moderate Islamic discussion forums and flood them with extremist rhetoric to turn them into al-Qaida discussion groups.

In the past week, a new Web site called "the Electronic jihad" also has resurfaced to counter renewed attacks on Islam online, according to its founders. It is not clear, however, if the site has any connection with Al-Qaida. Since the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks on the United States, al-Qaida has run sites on the Web that it has used to disseminate its messages. Many have been shut down over the years as new ones emerge. The group over the years also has appeared to increasingly turn toward online forums, apparently so that it no longer has to rely on news stations to air video and audio messages.

Terror analysts have long seen al-Qaida's media arm as a powerful tool for rallying the network's followers and sympathizers, churning out videos and audiotapes even though the top leadership is mostly out of touch, hiding in the mountainous border regions of Pakistan and Afghanistan. The videos have grown in technical sophistication, featuring computer animations and clips from international television media.

Al-Qaida leader Osama bin Laden has issued three audiotapes himself this year, the most recent in May. The Arabic-language sites also have an extensive online following of would-be jihadis who discuss various topics, including the best ways to carry out attacks and which techniques are religiously permissible. In its press release explaining the outage, Al-Fajr, the group's communications wing promised to return online soon.

<http://www.chron.com/dispatch/story.mpl/ap/world/6066888.html>

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ArabianBusiness.com

Monday, 20 October 2008

Al -Qaeda Terror Suspects Set For Saudi Trial

by [Andy Sambidge](#)

The trial of Al-Qaeda militants, arrested for taking part in a series of terrorist operations across Saudi Arabia, is due to start on Monday in Riyadh.

Seventy terror suspects including Saudis and foreigners are due to appear before the General Court accused of being involved in terrorist attacks that killed 200 people as well as 70 security officers, Arab News reported on Monday. The militants facing trial include those who were allegedly directly involved in the attacks and those who are thought to have helped the terrorists by providing refuge, transport and funds, an Interior Ministry official told the paper.

Last June, the Interior Ministry announced the arrests of 701 militants for plotting to carry out terrorist attacks. Some of the detainees, according to Maj. Gen. Mansour Al-Turki, the ministry's spokesman, were planning to stage terrorist attacks on oil fields and other vital installations. The kingdom has orchestrated a crackdown on Al-Qaeda since 2003. It has also been building a 35,000-strong rapid reaction force to protect oil installations after a failed Al-Qaeda attack in 2006 on the world's largest oil processing plant at Abqaiq in the Eastern Province.

<http://www.arabianbusiness.com/535055-al--qaeda-terror-suspects-set-for-saudi-trial?ln=en>

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New York Times

October 18, 2008, Pg. 9

U.S. Strike Is Said To Kill Qaeda Figure In Pakistan

By Pir Zubair Shah

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan — A missile attack from a remotely piloted American aircraft is believed to have killed a senior member of Al Qaeda in South Waziristan on Thursday, a former member of a militant group in the region said in an interview. The operative, Khalid Habib, an Egyptian who was chief of operations in Pakistan's tribal region, is described by the Central Intelligence Agency as the fourth-ranking person in the Qaeda hierarchy. The attack, on the village of Taparghai, killed four people, some of them Arabs, according to initial reports on Thursday.

A Pakistani intelligence official declined Friday to confirm the death of Mr. Habib. An American official involved in the campaign against Al Qaeda in Pakistan's tribal areas said he could not confirm the report that Mr. Habib had died. It often takes American officials some time to determine the success or failure of attacks by remotely piloted aircraft in the rugged and remote terrain of the tribal areas.

Mr. Habib recently moved to Taparghai from Wana, the capital of South Waziristan, which is in an area that the Americans have been attacking with increasing frequency. Their primary goal is to break the militant network there related to Sirajuddin Haqqani, a Taliban leader closely allied to Al Qaeda, the former member of the militant group said. Mr. Habib had relocated to Taparghai expressly to avoid missile strikes, the former militant said. The area around Taparghai is near Makin, a base of Baitullah Mehsud, the chief of the Pakistani Taliban.

Mr. Habib was in a parked Toyota station wagon, a favored vehicle of the militants in the tribal area, when he was hit by the missile, the former member of the militant group said. A resident of the village said in a telephone interview that the man killed in the attack seemed to be "important." He was known in the village as Zalfay, the resident said. The name means "long hair" in Pashto, the language spoken in the area. The number of American missile strikes aimed at Qaeda operatives in North Waziristan and South Waziristan has risen sharply in the last six weeks — there have been 11 since early September, according to the Council on Foreign Relations.

The Bush administration is trying to stop the militants from crossing the border and carrying out raids against American soldiers in southern Afghanistan. Officials in Washington have also said they are concerned that Taliban and Qaeda operatives are plotting new attacks against the United States and Europe from their sanctuaries in Pakistan's tribal areas. The missile strikes are conducted by the Central Intelligence Agency but are for the most part coordinated with Pakistan's government, according to American officials. But that cooperation does not extend to ground operations.

In September, a raid by American Special Forces in South Waziristan against what the Americans said were Qaeda forces set off a storm of protest. After that raid, Pakistan's military threatened to resist any such incursions by force. There have been few protests by people in the tribal region against the airstrikes, apparently because those killed have mostly been Arab and Uzbek members of Al Qaeda, not Pakistanis. It had been nearly two years since the last missile attack in the area where Mr. Habib was killed. That attack, on Jan. 16, 2007, killed about 10 militants, most of them Arabs, in a Qaeda training camp in Zamazola. Mr. Mehsud, the Pakistani Taliban chief, vowed to avenge the death by directing a number of suicide bomb attacks against Pakistani military installations.

Eric Schmitt contributed reporting from Washington.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2008/10/18/world/asia/18pstan.html>

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London Daily Telegraph
October 18, 2008

Terrorists 'Use Child Porn' To Exchange Information

By Graham Tibbetts

Terrorists may be using child pornography websites to exchange data, according to anti-terror experts. It is thought Islamist extremists are concealing messages in digital images and audio, video or other files. Police are now investigating the link between terrorists and paedophilia in an attempt to unravel the system. It could lead to the training of child welfare experts to identify signs of terrorist involvement as they monitor pornographic websites.

The move follows the discovery of sex abuse material during investigations into a number of advanced suspected plots. It is not clear yet whether the terrorists chose child pornography because of a personal interest or merely because it represents a useful medium for disseminating information. Security officials have been puzzled at the use of such offensive material by people claiming to be devoted to the teachings of Islam.

"It shows that these people are very confused. Here they are hating Western decadence but actually making use of it and finding that they enjoy this stuff," a source told the Times. British police were first alerted to the link in 2006 when they investigated the possible terror links of a former Mujahideen fighter who preached at a London mosque. They discovered computerised images of child abuse. Five years earlier an investigation of a mosque run by an al-Qaeda recruiter in Milan found child pornography that police believe contained encoded messages.

Baroness Neville-Jones, Conservative security spokesman and former chairman of the Joint Intelligence Committee, said: "The information about a possible link between extremism and child pornography potentially provides useful insight into three things: the methods that extremists use to communicate; the methods they use to target vulnerable people in society; and the techniques they seek to use to conceal their online activities."

Andrew Dismore, Labour MP and chairman of the parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights, said: "This is an important development. We have to do more than just the police work. It needs child protection, criminological and psychological work. "It could become a very important weapon in the fight against terrorism."

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/3215115/Terrorists-use-child-porn-to-exchange-information.html>

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The Daily Star (Colombo)
October 21, 2008

Tamil Tigers Launch Gas Attack

Lankan army claims major success
Afp, Pti, Colombo

Troops and Tamil Tiger rebels were locked in intense fighting in northern Sri Lanka yesterday after government forces smashed through the "last major defences" of the guerrillas, the military said. The rebel Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) launched "poisonous gas attacks" to blunt the military offensive aimed at capturing the rebels' political capital of Kilinochchi, the defence ministry said in a statement.

Soldiers stepped up their offensive on Saturday and captured a two-kilometre (1.25-mile) stretch of the defence line set up by the Tigers near Kilinochchi, the ministry said. It said the fighting was at Akkarayankulam, about 13 kilometres southwest of Kilinochchi. Three weeks ago, the military had said it was within striking distance of Kilinochchi. "Army's 57 division troops yesterday pierced the LTTE-built earth bund in Akkarayankulam, the terrorists' last major defence south of Kilinochchi," the defence ministry said in a statement.

It said the Tigers "launched poisonous gas attacks" on the troops. Military sources said that the Tigers had used a type of tear gas commonly used during riot control. "However, troops withstood the chemical attack and beat off the terrorists," the ministry said. It gave no details of casualties for both sides, but added: "Several soldiers made their ultimate sacrifice for the nation while many others suffered injuries during this battle." There was no immediate comment from the Tigers.

In separate statement, the ministry said soldiers along two other fronts in the north of the island had also stepped up attacks against Tamil Tiger positions over the weekend. Soldiers had encircled a sea base of the Tamil Tigers along the northwest coast while troops on the other side of the island in northeastern Mullaitivu had also stepped up attacks, the ministry said. "Troops also suffered casualties during those confrontations and were being evacuated for treatment," the statement said.

Government soldiers fell victim to booby-trapped devices, anti-personnel mines and mortar fire, the ministry said. "Battlefield sources confirmed that the terrorists suffered significant attrition in terms of men and material," the ministry said. Claiming that the LTTE was on the verge of "defeat" after suffering huge casualties at the hands of Sri Lankan security forces, the government has said that the Tamil tigers are making desperate efforts to rope in Indian leaders to stop the ongoing offensives against them.

"It is very clear that the LTTE is at a decisive stage. And no one can stop them getting defeated. So, they are trying their maximum to get Tamil Nadu (leaders) to pressurise the Indian government to pressurise the Sri Lankan government," Gotabhaya Rajapaksa, powerful defence secretary and brother of Sri Lankan President Mahinda Rajapaksa, said. "That is what the LTTE want and that is why this sudden pressure is coming. The (Sri Lankan) government expects this situation as we know there is no other way for the LTTE. Anyway, the LTTE cannot escape facing military offensives now," he said.

Military officials said both sides continued to trade gunfire and long-range attacks throughout the weekend, but monsoon rains had left heavy weapons ineffective. Neither side could also use trenches for cover as most were flooded with rain water. The Sri Lankan government pulled out of a Norwegian-backed truce with the rebels in January. Tens of thousands of people have died on both sides since the LTTE launched its campaign for an independent state in 1972.

http://www.thedailystar.net/pf_story.php?nid=59520

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Foreign Policy (ForeignPolicy.com)

October 2008

The Worst of the Worst?

By Ken Ballen, Peter Bergen

They told us to overlook the abuses because Guantánamo housed "the worst of the worst." But new statistics prove that the vast majority of prisoners detained there never posed any real risk to America at all. Finish it: Parts of Guantánamo may be closed, but the stain on America's reputation lingers on. When a federal judge ordered the release of 17 Guantánamo Bay detainees earlier this month, it was the first real chance in the seven-year history of the prison camp that any of the prisoners might be transferred to the United States. In making his ruling, the judge categorically rejected the Bush administration's claim that any of the released prisoners, who are all Chinese Muslims, were "enemy combatants" or posed a risk to U.S. security. The decision was temporarily suspended by the appeals court, but the judge was on solid ground.

Controversy over the Bush administration's policy to detain enemy combatants at Guantánamo has raged since the facility opened in 2002—fueled primarily by the lack of legal protections afforded the detainees and allegations of their mistreatment. Often overlooked, however, is the fact that most of these detainees have never posed any real risk to America, for the simple reason that the vast majority of them were never “enemy combatants” in the first place. Indeed, striking new data we have obtained show that, if anything, the 17 innocent Chinese men are far from exceptional.

Before we get to the new statistics corroborating this startling fact, a quick review of how the detainees got to Guantánamo in the first place is helpful. Given the fog of propaganda surrounding the Guantánamo prisoners—whom former Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld once famously described as “the worst of the worst”—you might be surprised to learn that, according to the Pentagon itself, only 5 percent of detainees at the prison were ever apprehended by U.S. forces to begin with. And only another 4 percent were ever alleged to have actually been fighting at all.

Why is that? Almost all of the detainees were turned over to U.S. forces by foreigners, either with an ax to grind or, more often, for a hefty bounty or reward. After U.S. forces invaded Afghanistan in late 2001, they doled out rewards of about \$5,000 or more to Pakistanis and Afghans for each detainee turned over. Contrary to standard law enforcement practice, the U.S. military accepted the uncorroborated allegations of the award claimants with little independent investigation.

Now, under much pressure, the Pentagon has released more than 500 detainees over the past three years, while some 270 remain. Based on statistics about the fate of other released prisoners in other contexts, it would not have been surprising if many of these men had resumed their lives of terrorist crimes and illegal warfare. In the United States, more than two thirds of state prisoners are rearrested for serious new crimes within three years, according to the Department of Justice.

Terrorists are criminals too—indeed, ideologically committed ones. Every reasonable expectation would lead to the conclusion that the rate of recidivism for terrorists should be as high as, if not higher than, it is for other criminals. But guess what happened to the more than 500 terrorist detainees that the United States has released during the last three years? Only a handful has gone back to terrorism or the battlefield.

Almost a quarter of the Guantánamo detainees who have been released have been sent back to Saudi Arabia. Facing a substantial threat from terrorism in their own country, the Saudi authorities have been rigorous—some might say harsh—in imprisoning and punishing any terrorist deemed a danger. Yet in new statistics provided to us by the Ministry of Interior in Riyadh, zero of the 121 Guantánamo detainees received by the Saudis were deemed dangerous and ineligible for release.

It gets worse. Of those detainees returned to Saudi Arabia from Guantánamo, more than half have been released and are now free, most after spending a period of time in a halfway house designed to promote a smooth return to society. Only six former Guantánamo detainees have been rearrested in Saudi Arabia for any reason—an astonishingly low recidivism rate of less than 9 percent among those released.

Although the Saudi efforts to reintegrate these prisoners into society are certainly commendable, the only reasonable explanation for such a low recidivism rate is that the detainees were never guilty of terrorist acts in the first place. For years, Pentagon officials have claimed that the recidivism rate for prisoners released from Guantánamo is about 7 percent. Information released in May by the Department of Defense further buttresses the Saudi findings of a very low recidivism rate. The department's list of named released detainees who have subsequently engaged in militant or terrorist activities anywhere in the world shows that 12 have done so, a recidivism rate of just 2 percent. In fact, the Pentagon can cite only six instances in which an inmate released from Guantánamo actually took up arms against the United States.

When recidivism rates for criminals typically run in the more than 60 percent range, and when at Guantánamo you have a rate in only the single digits, you don't have much of a criminal (or in this case terrorist) population to begin with. We are hardly saying there are no terrorists at Guantánamo. Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, the operational commander of the 9/11 attacks, and others who were transferred there from secret overseas Central Intelligence Agency prisons in 2006 are certainly members of al Qaeda's hard core.

What we are saying is that new statistics from the Saudi Ministry of Interior, corroborated by the Pentagon's own findings, show that the overwhelming majority of individuals detained at Guantánamo not only were not terrorists, but were likely innocent of any crime. Given the sad history of detaining men without charges or proof, proven instances of harsh confinement, and now, persuasive evidence to indicate that most detainees were innocent of any terrorist activity, it should be among the highest priorities of the next U.S. president to close Guantánamo promptly. Guantánamo has been a powerful recruitment tool for extremists and a stain on the reputation of the United States. Now we can say, with little doubt, that it did not even serve to remove terrorists or insurgents from the battlefield.

Ken Ballen is a former federal prosecutor and the president of the nonprofit organization Terror Free Tomorrow. Peter Bergen is a fellow at the New America Foundation and the author of *The Osama bin Laden I Know* (New York: Free Press, 2006).

http://www.foreignpolicy.com/story/cms.php?story_id=4535&print=1

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Eurasia Insight (EurasiaNet.org)
October 20, 2008

Iran: US Experts Ponder Framework For Engagement Between Washington And Tehran

Richard Weitz

A key question for the next American president, according to two scholars at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, is not whether to talk to Iran, but how to engage, and what topics should dominate the agenda. In a joint presentation at the Carnegie Endowment's Washington, DC, offices, Karim Sadjadpour and George Perkovich argued that Iran was too important for Washington to ignore, given Tehran's influence in key areas of concern for the United States. "The crux of the issue," Sadjadpour observed, "is not whether we should have dialogue, or why we should have dialogue, but how to go about doing so."

In their October 16 presentations, Perkovich and Sadjadpour devoted considerable time to the nuclear issue, with both stressing that a resolution of existing dilemmas could occur only within the context of broader US-Iranian dialogue. [For background see the Eurasia Insight archive]. For example, Perkovich argued that the American political system would not easily accept a deal in which Iran agreed to limit its nuclear activities, but declined to curb aggressive policies and rhetoric toward Israel, or contribute toward resolving other areas of Iranian-American tension.

Sadjadpour maintained that any bilateral dialogue should aim to dissipate decades of "deep-seated mutual mistrust" and misunderstanding that have characterized relations since the 1979 Iranian Revolution. In his view, Iranian leaders believe "that the United States can't live with an independent Islamic government in Tehran," and therefore Washington aims "to go back essentially to a patron-client relationship with Iran which existed during the time of the Shah."

Sadjadpour noted that many Americans also harbor misgivings about Iran, but he urged the next US president to probe directly the issue of what motivates Tehran's anti-Americanism: "Is Iran's foreign policy driven by this immutable ideology that was born out of the 1979 Revolution and really is incapable of changing? Or is Iran's behavior really a byproduct of its relationship with the United States? ... And could a different US approach ... beget a different Iranian approach?" Sadjadpour asked.

Since the historical record is mixed on this question, Sadjadpour hoped that the two countries could "build confidence on issues where there are overlapping interests," which he believed included "a lot more" areas than commonly understood, including Iraq, Afghanistan, and opposition to al Qaeda. He also asserted that "in terms of energy security, there's some common interests [concerning] Iranian exports to Europe to counter Russian energy leverage over Europe." [For background see the Eurasia Insight archive].

Perkovich took a somewhat different approach on forging a new era in US-Iranian relations. He argued that while the "nuclear issue can't be resolved in isolation," the two countries could pursue "reciprocating incremental steps that over time makes things a bit better." Perkovich indicated that the diplomatic chess match between Washington and Tehran currently was stalemated. "Neither Iran nor the United States has the leverage to get what is really wants on any particular issue," he said. Among the moves necessary to break the existing deadlock, Perkovich maintained that Washington needed to stop threatening to use military force to reverse Iran's policy of uranium enrichment, arguing that any American strike was likely to cause more problems than it solved.

The key aim at this stage, Perkovich suggested, was breaking the existing negotiating dynamic, under which "the more [the Iranians] hold out, the more they enrich, the more they get offered." The "psychology" must change by withdrawing any concessions if Tehran stubbornly refuses to negotiate ending its sensitive nuclear activities, Perkovich said. According to Perkovich, if other governments see that neither Washington nor Israel is willing to employ force, and thereby possibly solve the Iranian nuclear problem without their involvement, they will actually perceive a greater need to press Iran to compromise. That, in turn, would reduce Tehran's ability to exploit differences among the countries that oppose its nuclear program.

Perkovich would consider endorsing a military strike if Iran actually proceeded toward developing nuclear weapons. An overt warning to this effect, which he believes would at least in private enjoy widespread support, would give the Iranian government an incentive to adopt confidence-building measures concerning Tehran's nuclear ambitions. Sadjadpour cautioned that while sanctions and threats might have a positive effect in the short-run by "signal[ing] to Tehran that President [Mahmoud] Ahmadinejad's belligerent behavior is not going to reap rewards," over the long-term, such methods would only strengthen hardliners in Iran. He argued that Ahmadinejad's neo-conservative faction in Tehran would be the primary beneficiary of "isolation and sanctions," as such a situation would enable it to keep on distracting the population from the country's economic shortcomings and whip up anti-Western sentiment inside Iran.

Given this consideration, Sadjadpour urged that the next US administration adopt a conciliatory stance toward Tehran should an Iranian president emerge who genuinely desires a better relationship with the United States. American policies that succeeded in reintegrating Iran into "the world of normal nations" would facilitate political reform in Iran, and thereby empower the Iranian people, the "vast majority" of whom want a better relationship with the United States. Sadjadpour and Perkovich downplayed expectations that Washington and Tehran could quickly negotiate a "grand bargain" that would resolve all their major differences. In Sadjadpour's assessment, "there are a variety of reasons why even a sincere, sustained American attempt at dialogue may not initially bear fruit." He considered the Arab-Israeli conflict a fundamental impediment given the vastly different perspectives on the issue in Tehran and Washington.

Sadjadpour also warned that many influential Iranians had an interest in perpetuating Iran's isolation because engagement and globalization would threaten entrenched political and economic interests. Supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei would be the main "spoiler," but the Revolutionary Guards, the protected commercial elite, and other elements of Iranian society are likely to act as staunch defenders of the status quo. Even so, Sadjadpour hoped that, after "build[ing] confidence on these issues where there are overlapping interests," Americans and Iranians could "expand the conversation to encompass the issues where there are real points of contention which are very difficult to solve, like the nuclear issue and like the Arab-Israeli conflict."

Editor's Note: Richard Weitz is a senior fellow at the Hudson Institute in Washington, DC.

http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/insight/articles/eav102008a_pr.shtml

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London Daily Telegraph

Iran Arrests Pigeons 'Spying' On Nuclear Site

Iranian security forces have arrested two suspected 'spy pigeons' near the Natanz nuclear facility.

By Our Foreign Staff

Monday, 20 October 2008

One of the pigeons was caught near a rose water production plant in the city of Kashan in Isfahan province, the *Etemad Melli* newspaper reported. It said that some metal rings and "invisible" strings were attached to the bird, suggesting that it might have been somehow communicating what it had seen with the equipment it was carrying. "Early this month, a black pigeon was caught bearing a blue-coated metal ring, with invisible strings," a source told the newspaper. The source gave no further description of the pigeons, nor what their fate might be. Natanz is home to Iran's heavily-bunkered underground uranium enrichment plant, which is also not far from Kashan.

The activity at Iran's controversial uranium enrichment facility is the focus of Iran's five-year standoff with the West, which fears it aims to develop nuclear weapons. The Tehran government insists its programme is intended to generate power for civilian use only. Last year, Iran issued a formal protest over the use of espionage by the United States to produce a key intelligence report on the country's controversial nuclear programme. It is also highly suspicious of Israel, whose extensive intelligence activities are not known to include the use of pigeons.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/middleeast/iran/3229526/Iran-arrests-pigeons-spying-on-nuclear-site.html>

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International Herald Tribune/ The Associated Press
October 18, 2008

China To Help Build 2 Pakistan Nuclear Plants

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan: Pakistan said Saturday that China will help it build two more nuclear power plants, offsetting Pakistani frustration over a recent nuclear deal between archrival India and the United States. The agreement with China was among 12 accords signed during Pakistani President Asif Ali Zardari's recent visit to Beijing, said Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi. While Qureshi gave few details, the accord deepens Pakistan's long-standing ties with China at a time when its relations with Washington are strained over the dragging war against terrorism.

U.S. officials including Assistant Secretary of State Richard Boucher, who arrived in Islamabad on Saturday for talks, have rejected Pakistani calls for equal treatment with India on nuclear power. Chinese leaders "do recognize Pakistan's need, and China is one country that at international forums has clearly spoken against the discriminatory nature of that understanding" between Washington and New Delhi, Qureshi said.

Zardari met with China's top leaders during his first official trip to Beijing since replacing stalwart U.S. ally Pervez Musharraf as president in September. China, a major investor and arms supplier for Pakistan, has already helped it build a nuclear power plant at Chashma, about 125 miles southwest of the capital, Islamabad. Work on a second nuclear plant is in progress and is expected to be completed in 2011.

Qureshi said the Chashma III and Chashma IV reactors would provide Pakistan with an additional 680 megawatts of generating capacity. He didn't say when they would be built or what assistance China would provide. Nor did he discuss any measures to prevent nuclear materials from the new plants from being diverted to Pakistan's atomic weapons program. Pakistan has placed several other civilian reactors under International Atomic Energy Authority safeguards. China's Foreign Ministry had no immediate comment on Qureshi's remarks. However, ministry spokesman Qin Gang said Thursday that China was willing to continue its cooperation with Pakistan on peaceful nuclear programs supervised by the IAEA. Pakistan's nuclear program remains a sore topic with Washington because of its past record of proliferation.

International sanctions were slapped on Pakistan after it detonated its first nuclear charges in 1998 in response to similar tests by India. The sanctions were eased after Musharraf agreed to help Washington hunt down al-Qaida terrorists responsible for the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks in the United States. But the revelation in 2004 that the architect of Islamabad's nuclear program, Abdul Qadeer Khan, had passed nuclear secrets to Iran, Libya and North Korea set back Pakistan's hopes of becoming a trusted member of the world's exclusive nuclear club.

The U.S.-India deal allows American businesses to sell nuclear fuel, technology and reactors to India in exchange for safeguards and U.N. inspections of India's civilian — but not military — nuclear installations. Boucher told reporters earlier this month that the pact with India was "unique" and that a similar agreement with Pakistan was "just not on the table." He said Washington would help Pakistan — where chronic power shortages are contributing to a gathering economic crisis — develop its huge coal reserves, expand hydroelectric power generation and build

wind farms on its Arabian Sea coast. Pakistan, the Islamic world's only known nuclear weapons state, began operating its first nuclear power station with Canadian assistance near the southern port city of Karachi in 1972.

Associated Press writer Audra Ang in Beijing contributed to this report.

<http://www.iht.com/articles/ap/2008/10/18/asia/AS-Pakistan-China-Nuclear.php>

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Houston Chronicle (chronicle.com)

October 18, 2008

Top-Secret Report Details Pakistan's Deep Turmoil

Intelligence assessments also question results of U.S. troops in Iraq, Afghanistan

By Jonathan S. Landay and John Walcott, McClatchy-Tribune

WASHINGTON — A growing al-Qaida-backed insurgency, combined with the Pakistani army's reluctance to launch an all-out crackdown, political infighting, and energy and food shortages are plunging America's key ally in the war on terrorism deeper into violence, says a soon-to-be completed U.S. intelligence assessment. A U.S. official who participated in drafting the top-secret National Intelligence Estimate said it portrays the situation in Pakistan as "very bad." Another official called the draft "very bleak," and said it describes Pakistan as being "on the edge." The first official summarized the estimate's conclusions about the state of Pakistan as: "no money, no energy, no government."

A consensus report

Six U.S. officials who helped draft or are aware of the document's findings confirmed them to McClatchy Newspapers on the condition of anonymity because National Intelligence Estimates are top-secret and are restricted to the president, senior officials and members of Congress. An NIE's conclusions reflect the consensus of all 16 U.S. intelligence agencies. The NIE on Pakistan, along with others being prepared on Afghanistan and Iraq, will underpin a "strategic assessment" of the situation that Army Gen. David Petraeus, who is about to take command of all U.S. forces in the region, has requested. The aim of the assessment — seven years after the U.S. sent troops into Afghanistan — is to determine whether a U.S. presence in the region can be effective and, if so, what U.S. strategy should be. The findings also are intended to support the Bush administration's effort to recommend the resources the next president will need for Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan at a time the economic crisis is straining the Treasury and inflating the federal budget deficit.

Cautious on Iraq stability

The Afghanistan estimate warns that more U.S. troops are urgently needed there and that Islamic extremists who enjoy safe haven in Pakistan pose a growing threat to the U.S.-backed government of Afghan Prime Minister Hamid Karzai. The Iraq NIE is more cautious about the prospects for stability there than the Bush administration and either John McCain or Barack Obama have been, and it raises serious questions about whether the U.S. will be able to redeploy a significant number of troops from Iraq to Afghanistan anytime soon.

Together, the three NIEs suggest that without significant and swift progress on all three fronts — which they suggest is uncertain at best — the U.S. could find itself facing a growing threat from al-Qaida and other Islamic extremist groups, said one of the officials. About the only good news in the Pakistan NIE is that it's "relatively sanguine" about the prospects of a Pakistani nuclear weapon, materials or knowledge falling into the hands of terrorists, said one official. However, the draft NIE paints a grim picture of the situation in the impoverished, nuclear-armed country of 160 million.

Popular opposition

The estimate says that the Islamist insurgency based in the Federally Administered Tribal Area bordering Afghanistan, the suspected haven of Osama bin Laden and his top lieutenants, is intensifying. However, according to the officials, the draft also finds that the Pakistani military is reluctant to launch an all-out campaign against the Islamists in part because of popular opposition to continuing the cooperation with the United States that began under Pervez Musharraf, the U.S.-backed former president, after the Sept. 11 attacks.

Anti-U.S. and anti-government sentiments have grown recently, stoked by stepped-up cross-border U.S. missile strikes and at least one commando raid on suspected terrorist targets in the FATA that reportedly have resulted in civilian deaths. The Pakistani military, which has lost hundreds of troops to battles and suicide bombings, is waging offensives against Islamist guerrillas in the Bajaur tribal agency and Swat, a region of the North West Frontier Province bordering Afghanistan. U.S. officials said insurgent attacks on Pakistani security forces provoked the Pakistani army operations.

The Pakistan general staff also remains concerned about what it considers an ongoing threat to its eastern border from its traditional foe, India, the draft NIE finds. The army chief of staff, Gen. Ashfaq Kayani, wants the new civilian coalition government of Prime Minister Yousaf Raza Gilani to provide the military with political cover by blessing a major anti-insurgency crackdown.

<http://www.chron.com/disp/story.mpl/world/6065345.html>

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ONLINE - International News Network (Pakistan)

20 October 2008

US Reaffirms Cooperation To Pak In War Against Terror

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and US on Saturday agreed to train Pakistani law enforcement agencies especially frontier corps akin to international standard to tackle scourge of extremism and terrorism in Pakistan. US would also deliver state of art weapons to Pakistan's security forces. The decision into this effect was taken during meeting between advisor to the Prime Minister on Interior Rehman Malik and US Assistant Secretary of State for South Asia Richard Boucher who is in Pakistan for two days official visit. Issues related to war against terrorism, Pak-US relations, ongoing military operation in tribal areas of the country and mutual interest were discussed during the meeting, sources told Online. Interior advisor also apprised US Assistant Secretary of State for south Asia about President Asif Ali Zardari's visit to China, besides briefing him about steps taken by government against scourge of terrorism and extremism.

During the meeting, it was decided that US would deliver state of art weapons to Pakistani security forces and they would trained akin to international standard so that human loss could be reduced.

The Premier advisor on Interior went on to say that Pakistan is waging war on terror in national interest and the scourge would be eliminated at all cost. He also assured Richard Boucher no talks would be held with extremists and terrorists, sources added. US Assistant Secretary of State for South Asia Richard Boucher while lauding Pakistan's role in war against terrorism hoped that Pakistan would continue its cooperation with US in the war. He also assured cooperation to Pakistan in war against terrorism.

During his stay in Pakistan, Richard Boucher would meet President Asif Ali Zardari, Prime Minister Syed Yousuf Raza Gillani and Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi. Richard Boucher would mount pressure on Pakistani authorities to intensify its role in war against terror, sources said. Richard Boucher arrived in Pakistan at that time when joint sitting of Parliament was likely to pass a resolution during in-camera session regarding terrorism and National Security.

<http://www.onlinenews.com.pk/details.php?id=134852>

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New York Times/Reuters

October 18, 2008

Pg. 7

North Korea Sticks To Pact, U.S. Says

WASHINGTON (Reuters) — North Korea has stuck to its promise and has begun taking steps once again to dismantle its nuclear reactor at Yongbyon under an agreement it reached with the United States last weekend, the State Department said Friday. “The North Koreans have in their efforts reversed all their reversals in the reactor,” said Sean McCormack, a State Department spokesman. “All the seals are back on, the surveillance equipment is back, reinstalled, and the equipment that had been removed is back where it had been.”

The North Koreans have also removed more nuclear fuel rods from the reactor, Mr. McCormack said. “On the reactor, they have actually gone beyond where they were prior to their reversing the disablement steps,” he told reporters, adding that 60 percent of the fuel rods had been taken out of the reactor. However, he said the North Koreans had more to do in their fuel reprocessing facility. “They have not yet gotten to that baseline where they were,” he said, although there has been progress on this part of the agreement, too.

The United States removed North Korea from its terrorism list last weekend after the North agreed to a compromise plan to let American and other inspectors verify that it was adhering to its promises to dismantle its nuclear weapons program. The verification measures have to be formally agreed on by North Korea, South Korea, the United States, Russia, Japan and China — the six nations seeking to settle the dispute over North Korea’s nuclear program.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2008/10/18/world/asia/18korea.html?partner=rssnyt&emc=rss>

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Los Angeles Times

October 19, 2008

Important News Expected From North Korea

North Korean diplomats are told to put things on hold and stand by for an important announcement. Some speculated that ailing leader Kim Jong Il is dead or incapacitated.

By Barbara Demick

Los Angeles Times Staff Writer

BEIJING — North Korean diplomats abroad have been told to refrain from traveling and prepare for an "important announcement," Japan's Yomiuri newspaper reported Saturday. The report prompted another round of speculation that North Korea's secretive leader, Kim Jong Il, has died or is incapacitated. The newspaper did not indicate when the announcement might be made. In recent weeks, Pyongyang had denied reports that the 66-year-old Kim was seriously ill after a stroke. When the nation's founder and father of the present leader, Kim Il Sung, died in 1994, North Korean officials were told to stand by for an important announcement.

But North Korea experts said Saturday that the announcement could be related to other international matters. Pyongyang has been expected for some time to schedule a congress of the ruling Workers' Party, an event that could be used to announce a new economic policy as well as to clear up uncertainty about the succession of power. The last such event was the sixth party congress in 1980, when Kim Jong Il was officially designated his father's successor. "They are overdue to hold a party congress to announce a new generation of leaders and a new economic policy," said Leonid Petrov, a North Korea expert, speaking from Dandong, China, at the border with North Korea.

Another possibility is that North Korea is preparing to break off communications with South Korea because of tensions with a new conservative government in Seoul. Although North Korea blocks its citizens from receiving foreign news reports, rumors of Kim's poor health have been spreading in the country, causing anxiety about the future. Kim has no obvious successor, with three sons and other relatives and party cadres all vying for power. Experts believe that Kim's death could trigger a violent power struggle within or even lead to the collapse of the regime. Trying to project an image of stability, North Korea this month released photographs showing a healthy-looking Kim inspecting a military unit. But analysts say the foliage in the background of the photographs suggests they were taken in the summer.

<http://www.latimes.com/features/health/la-fg-kim19-2008oct19.0.186245.story>

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The Post Chronicle

Monday, 20 October 2008

North Korea: Penpix Of Possible Successors To Kim Jong Il

by Staff

Japanese news media said North Korea could issue an important announcement soon that might concern the health of leader Kim Jong-il. Diplomats say they believe Kim, 66, recently suffered a stroke but latest news report suggest he maintains his grip on power in Asia's only communist dynasty. Following are profiles of some possible successors to the reclusive leader, who intelligence sources have said suffers from diabetes and heart problems.

THE THREE SONS

Jong-chol, the second oldest of Kim's three known sons, is believed to be 27. Educated in Switzerland, he is thought to suffer from a hormonal disorder but is considered the favorite to succeed his father. Despite Jong-chol's lack of any formal grooming for the top job, one North Korea expert said he had been accompanying his father on official trips around the country. Jong-nam, 37, is the oldest son but many believe he fell from grace after trying to enter Japan with a forged passport. The youngest son, Jong-un, born in 1983, is often cited as the most promising but is seen as unlikely to be picked in a society where the tradition of seniority is so strong.

BROTHER-IN-LAW

Jang Song-taek, 62, is married to Kim's sister and a ruling Workers' Party official who appeared to lose favor some years ago in a power struggle with reformers. More recently, though, he returned to the inner leadership circle and is often seen as the second most powerful man after Kim in the ruling party structure, though he officially holds only a relatively low rank.

HEAD OF STATE

Kim Yong-nam, 80, is head of the North Korean parliament's leadership council and the country's nominal head of state. While a long-time loyal party member and a former foreign minister, he is not thought to have the legitimacy rooted in the North's revolutionary history, seen as necessary to become leader. If he did succeed Kim, it would likely be as a figurehead.

THE GENERALS

Jo Myong-rok is head of the powerful Political Department of the North's army and Kim's number two in the National Defense Commission. But he, too, is believed to be in poor health. A 2006 report by the South's intelligence agency named another general, O Kuk-ryol, as a younger and more likely successor to Kim's military post. The report said he appeared to be a reliable figure who is familiar with South Korea. General Hyon Chol-hae, 74, deputy director of the political division of the Korean People's Army, is frequently at Kim's side when he visits military units for his field guidance tours, leading analysts to believe he is a trusted aide.

(Reporting by Jack Kim, editing by Roger Crabb)

http://www.postchronicle.com/news/breakingnews/article_212179958.shtml

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GovExec.Com

OCTOBER 20, 2008

Super Cyber Command

By Bob Brewin (What's Brewin')

Rumors, tips and sheer speculation about the ultimate structure of Defense Department cyber forces keep pouring into the What's Brewin HQ adjacent to the Sangres de Cristos Mountains in New Mexico. Two of my sources close to the Defense Information Systems Agency tell me the super cyber command structure will incorporate the DISA network operations center and the Homeland Security Department's National Cyber Security Center, along with some help from the National Security Agency in Fort Meade, Md. Oversight of this interesting, if rather ungainly lash-up, will fall under the U.S Strategic Command, I'm told.

Cyber missions will be carried out by units within the three military departments, including the Air Force Cyber Command, the planned Navy Cyber Forces Command and the provisional Army Network Warfare Battalion. The battalion was tantalizingly mentioned (with few details) by Army Chief Information Officer Lt. Gen. Jeff Sorenson in a series of speeches this summer, including this one at an Armed Forces Communications and Electronics Association lunch in August. Maybe GovExec and Nextgov should start a cyber command so we don't feel left out.

Lockheed's Cyber-Game-Croom Card

Lockheed Martin Corp. confirmed early last week that it had hired former DISA director Air Force Lt. Gen. Charles Croom (and for some odd reason would not tell me his job title). Later in the week, Lockheed said Croom will lead an overall companywide cyber strategy as vice president of cybersecurity solutions. Lockheed said it also hired Lee Holcomb, former chief technology officer at DHS and former NASA CIO, to head the Center for Cyber Security Innovation, which will centrally manage all stuff cyber for the company. I think Croom and Holcomb will be very busy during the next few months. The timing on these hires could not be better.

Defense, UPS Cultural Training Model

Marine Corps Gen. James Cartwright, vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, speaking on Oct. 10 at the Marine Corps University in Quantico, Va., said Defense faces challenges in cultural and language training for its forces and leadership deployed abroad. Cartwright said UPS, the international delivery company, provides a great model of success in these training programs that Defense could emulate, including putting employees into the program before they are sent overseas. "We've got to get in the same boat," Cartwright said.

That will require some long-term planning, based on my conversation with John Valeri, UPS vice president for international human resources. According to Valeri, who says he is a talent scout for personnel who have the mojo to work abroad, the scouting starts early in a manager's career with interviews and psychological tests to determine if a candidate -- and his or her spouse -- has the ability to work and live in different cultures as part of a succession planning effort.

UPS strives to identify talent that can meet this test and then nurtures it, he said. This includes the ability to have a true worldview, not a myopic one, Valeri added. Foreign language skills come second, and UPS will fund training in different languages for an employee and spouse. It also will sponsor a monthlong session with a family abroad.

Before an overseas assignment (and in UPS terms, this could be an American posted to Asia or an Asian posted to Europe), UPS sends the employee and family for what he called a "look see" in the country that could be their assignment to make sure they can handle cultural differences. The visit includes trips to everything from grocery stores to schools to potential homes, to check if the family will be comfortable.

Valeri said the basis of the UPS international executive talent search -- which he believes can be applied to Defense -- is to identify individuals who adapt well and who have the right stuff to work and live in any country on any continent early in their careers. Maybe Defense needs a few good international talent scouts of its own.

I Know Past Is Prologue

Readers recently have chided me for not applying a historical perspective in this column, which I find amusing because I am now plowing through three hefty books that definitely provide that perspective. They are: the biography of World War II spymaster and OSS chief, Wild Bill Donovan: The Last Hero (Times Books, 1982), by Anthony Cave Brown; American Prometheus (Vintage Books, 2006), which is the biography of J. Robert Oppenheimer, who spearheaded development of the atom bomb, written by Kai Bird and Martin J. Sherwin; and Franklin Delano Roosevelt: Champion of Freedom (Perseus Publishing, 2005), by Conrad Black, which at 1,280 pages seems to be the book that never ends.

All provide quite relevant insights into events I cover today, particularly Brown's book, which depicts the resistance FDR and his spy chief encountered to establish central control of intelligence at a time when "intelligence shared was power shared," Brown wrote. In a passage that foreshadows the fight over control of the cyber domain, Brown wrote the Army and Navy wanted to be in charge of intelligence in World War II because they felt they would be "badly disadvantaged if any other than they were put in charge of the new organization."

I'd love to write a book to update intelligence battles. But since the last one -- Vietnam on Trial: Westmoreland vs. CBS (Atheneum, 1987) -- took three years to write and returned about a dollar a day, I'll pass. I need this gig so I can pay a lot of taxes, which in return will be used to bail out the banks that lent too many people too much money to buy too much house.

Beyond the Rough Draft of History

My favorite description of newspapers is they provide a "rough draft of history." Now some bright soul needs to come up with a definition of where Web stories and columns fit in to the development of the historical record. Then there's the two word description of newspapers: fish wrap, which harkens back to the day when fish and chip vendors wrapped that day's fish-to-go in the previous day's newspaper. Think of this as digital fish wrap, if you like.

Combating Terrorism Center (West Point)

October 20, 2008

Iranian Strategy in Iraq: Politics and "Other Means"

The Combating Terrorism Center at West Point would like to announce the release of our newest report: Iranian Strategy in Iraq: Politics and "Other Means." The report can be found at http://ctc.usma.edu/Iran_Iraq/CTC_Iran_Iraq_Final.pdf This report addresses Iran's dual-strategy of providing military aid to Iraqi militia groups and giving political support to Iraqi political parties. Although the report details the scope and nature of Iranian support to Iraqi militias, it concludes that Iran's political efforts are the core of its effort to project influence within Iraq. The report also concludes that Iran has recently worked to reduce the level of violence in Iraq while concentrating on a political campaign to shape the SFA and SOFA agreements to its strategic ends.

Like many CTC reports, Iranian Strategy in Iraq is partly based on declassified information. In this case, that data includes interrogation summaries of captured militia fighters, Saddam-era Iraqi intelligence reports, and data listing weapons caches found to contain Iranian-made weapons. All of this data has been declassified and approved for release.

For full text see http://ctc.usma.edu/Iran_Iraq/CTC_Iran_Iraq_Final.pdf

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Homeland Security Today (HSToday.com)

20 October 2008

An Argument for 'Bottom-Up' Policy on National Preparedness

by Mickey McCarter

The United States cannot truly obtain a greater level of national preparedness in homeland security because preparedness policy is based on flawed assumptions that do not provide enough flexibility to state and local governments, according to an argument in the most recent issue of Homeland Security Affairs: The Journal of the Naval Postgraduate School Center for Homeland Defense and Security.

Samuel Clovis, chairman of the Department of Business Administration and Economics at Morningside College in Sioux City, Iowa, examines three basic assumptions driving national preparedness policy and finds that they do not match state and local policy conditions. In "Promises Unfulfilled: The Sub-Optimization of Homeland Security National Preparedness," Clovis observes that state and local governments absorbed the mission of homeland security into their public safety and emergency management services, but the US federal government has maintained a separate focus on terrorist acts.

"This divergence in perspective has led to ever increasing tensions between the national government and state and local governments when policies related to homeland security national preparedness are at issue," Clovis writes.

The three assumptions driving government policy under this model are that there is an obtainable ideal level of national preparedness; that the federal government has an obligation to direct preparedness policy to provide

accountability for homeland security grant funding to state and local governments; and that current homeland security public policy reflects the active involvement of state and local governments in its development, deployment and implementation.

Many of the problems with these assumptions hinge on funding, Clovis says. The federal government cannot force state and local governments to spend money that they do not have on homeland security. State and local governments meanwhile must balance homeland security with education, transportation, health care and other needs of their citizens. In addition, as state and local governments absorbed homeland security into their public safety and emergency management structures, state and local governments would have "to augment preparedness and increase community resilience based on public management models other than the ones in place at this time," Clovis argues.

The second assumption is flawed because the federal government lacks good information to make determinations on how state and local governments spend homeland security grant funds.

"It is preposterous for the national government to assume that officials in DHS have enough information to make decisions about what is best for the citizens of Florida, Kansas, or Arizona," Clovis declares. "The one-size-fits-all approach to policy development belies any sensitivity to the fact that perhaps conditions might be different in each state, county, city, and village."

Finally, the third assumption behind national preparedness policy is flawed because the federal government does not actually incorporate the input of state and local governments into the policy development process, Clovis asserts. While the federal government consults them, it does not draw upon their advice to formulate its vision of preparedness policy nor use that input to alter policy in any real way. A "bottom-up" approach that draws policy from state and local governments would be more effective in augmenting preparedness than a "top-down" approach as currently used by the federal government, Clovis adds.

Network models that enable jurisdictions to develop and carry out their own strategic objectives could result in a system that is more fluid and thus more capable of preparing communities for disasters than the current system, which is based on a concept of fixed response capabilities, Clovis says. State and local governments could plan and augment preparedness by adopting contemporary public management models that create policy from the bottom up.

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Clearing The Path Toward A Nuclear Renaissance

By Richard K. Lester

THIS YEAR'S presidential debates featured the unfamiliar spectacle of America's two leading politicians competing with each other to declare their support for nuclear power. How times have changed. The so-called nuclear renaissance reflects one underappreciated reality and one misconception. The reality is that the world has little chance of avoiding the worst risks of global climate change unless we build many more nuclear power plants. Nuclear power has a unique place in the global climate-change debate. It is the only carbon-free energy source that is already contributing on a large scale and that is also expandable with few inherent limits.

The misconception is that nuclear power would reduce our dependence on oil imports. In fact, not even a major nuclear expansion could help solve that problem for decades. If the nuclear renaissance is actually to happen, several formidable obstacles must be overcome. One of the biggest is nuclear waste. Although public opinion has been shifting in favor of nuclear power, the failure to demonstrate high-level waste disposal remains a major barrier to public acceptance.

Federal regulators will spend the next four years trying to determine whether the proposed waste repository at Yucca Mountain can satisfy the stringent regulatory standards that have been set for it. Challenging technical issues make the outcome far from a sure thing. The intense political opposition in Nevada only adds to the uncertainty. The next president should order a top-to-bottom review of our nation's nuclear-waste management strategy. The licensing

review at Yucca Mountain should be allowed to run its course. Much useful knowledge will be gained, regardless of the outcome.

But we must also do other things. First, we must acknowledge that spent nuclear fuel can be stored safely in dry casks for many decades, and transfer the fuel from most reactor sites to one or two central locations for storage. Nothing further would need to be done to the fuel on either safety or economic grounds until much later in the century. At that point we might decide to dispose of it directly, or we might choose to recover the unused uranium and plutonium it contains. In the meantime, we should abandon the Bush administration's ill-advised rush to full-scale fuel reprocessing and replace it with a modest-scale research program to develop new recycling technologies.

On the other hand, it is long past time for a broad-based, high-quality scientific and engineering program to develop new approaches to nuclear-waste disposal. The technology in use today was frozen 25 years ago. But since then, tremendous advances in subsurface science and technology have been made - many by the oil and gas industry. Some are directly relevant to the waste-disposal problem.

In an era of global terror, much more must be done to make the world safe for activities like nuclear power. But more should also be done to make nuclear power safe for the world, and the United States should lead the way. Instead of following the stale examples of Britain, France, and Japan - whose decisions to reprocess, made more than 30 years ago, have brought mixed results - the next US administration should recognize a simple fact: Achieving the deep reductions in greenhouse gas emissions needed to avoid the worst effects of global climate change is likely to require nuclear expansion not only in North America, Europe and Japan, but also in many other countries, big and small, and at various stages of economic and political development.

Making nuclear power safe for this world of diversity means devising the safest, simplest, most economically competitive version of the open nuclear fuel cycle. The United States should be leading in the development of new spent fuel-disposal technologies. It should also be developing smaller, less expensive power plants relying on modular construction techniques, as well as innovative reactors and fuel cycles designed for proliferation resistance and direct disposal. Let's get on with it.

Richard K. Lester is director of the MIT Industrial Performance Center and professor of nuclear science and engineering at MIT.

http://www.boston.com/bostonglobe/editorial_opinion/oped/articles/2008/10/21/clearing_the_path_toward_a_nuclear_renaissance/

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The Limits Of Nuclear Power

By Daniel B. Botkin

John McCain has called for building 45 new nuclear power plants by 2030 and 100 eventually. Barack Obama's Web site says, "It is unlikely that we can meet our aggressive climate goals if we eliminate nuclear power from the table." But to what extent can nuclear power really help achieve energy independence? There's a problem about nuclear energy that gets little attention. At present, fossil fuels provide 87 percent of the world's total energy while nuclear power plants provide just 4.8 percent. (All nuclear power plants currently generate electricity, accounting for about 15 percent of world electricity generation, while fossil fuels produce almost 67 percent of the electricity.)

The best estimates put the amount of uranium that can be mined economically (what geologists call the reserves) at about 5.5 million metric tons, and according to the International Atomic Energy Agency, today's nuclear power plants use 70,000 metric tons a year of uranium. At this rate of use, the uranium that could be mined economically would last about 80 years. Suppose it were possible to replace all fossil fuels with nuclear power. Suppose that we could use nuclear energy to make liquid and gas fuels to power vehicles, and could do this quickly using conventional nuclear power plants.

We would have to build enough plants to increase energy production by 17.4 times, which means using 1.2 million tons of uranium ore each year. At that rate of use, the reserves of uranium would be used up in less than five years. Geologists also estimate that there are about 35 million tons of uranium out there regardless of the cost of mining it (geologists call this identified resources). With nuclear power replacing all fossil fuels, even these would be used up in 29 years. Thus, if the goal is to counter global warming by replacing all fossil fuels with nuclear power, this goal cannot be met.

Advocates of nuclear power point out that it doesn't have to replace all other sources of energy. Let's consider that approach. At a recent meeting, the Group of Eight major industrial countries agreed to reduce carbon emissions 50 percent by 2050. Suppose nuclear energy increased just enough each year to enable fossil-fuel use to decline at a constant annual rate, to 50 percent by 2050, while nuclear power therefore increased to provide 50 percent of the world's energy. At this rate of use, uranium reserves would run out by 2019, and the estimated maximum of 35 million metric tons of uranium in identified resources would run out by year 2038, gaining us less than two decades.

There are some important caveats. Exploring for minerals is done on an as-needed basis, and large areas of the world may have been little explored for uranium. Every mining geologist and mine corporation executive will tell you that estimates of total reserves of a mineral are just that - estimates - and that the reserves of many minerals always increase over time. This approach may be all right for the planning time of mining companies, but it won't work for a long-term global energy strategy based on adequate supplies of uranium.

Considering the enormous costs of building the large number of nuclear power plants that are contemplated to replace fossil fuels, the United States would be courting disaster if it chose this route with nothing but blind faith that there may be a lot more uranium out there if we only look for it. We need to know a lot more about available uranium resources and where they are. If they are in unfriendly countries, they might not be available at all.

Nuclear power advocates also argue that it is possible to recover significant amounts of uranium from spent fuel. According to the International Atomic Energy Agency, "In 2004, two-thirds of the uranium used was newly mined; the rest came from civil and military stockpiles, spent fuel reprocessing and re-enrichment of depleted uranium." But the amount from spent fuels is not specified, and a reprocessing program to deal with 1.2 million tons of used uranium would be a major undertaking, perhaps not technologically feasible in the near future. Others suggest that breeder reactors, which produce more nuclear fuel than they use, will solve the problem.

The United States experimented with a few breeder reactors from 1964 to 1994, but they were shut down or work on them halted in the 1990s. Other nations have tried building them, and some are considering or developing them. But to my knowledge perhaps only one or two breeder reactors are in use and providing electrical energy anywhere in the world, and these are probably not "breeding." There are reasons for this: The technology is not there yet, and the reactors are dangerous in themselves, even without considering their potential use in making atomic weapons. They are the kind of nuclear reactors that everybody fears Iran or North Korea might build and use to make atomic bombs.

In sum, the breeder-reactor route, if it is practical at all, is a long way in the future as a major contributor to the world's energy, and certainly not a way to reduce our dependence on fossil fuels now or in the near future. The bottom line: From what is known about resources of uranium and the present and future state of nuclear power plants, there is no way that nuclear power can play a dominant role in the world's energy supply. This is not to say that it could play no role in a mixed strategy involving many kinds of energy, only that those who continue to press for a greater role for nuclear power must first show that there will be enough uranium to assure that thousands of nuclear power plants built at enormous cost would not soon stand idle - and leave our economy standing idle too.

Daniel B. Botkin is an environmental scientist. His latest book, "Tomorrow's Energy: Fact and Fiction," will be published in 2009.

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