

From: [Morning Defense](#)
To: (b) (6)
Subject: POLITICO's Morning Defense, presented by Northrop Grumman: Thornberry to lay out assertive HASC agenda — Obama's State of the Union address to frame budget debate — DoD kills "Air-Sea-Battle"
Date: Tuesday, January 20, 2015 8:38:27 AM

By Austin Wright

With Trevor Eischen

SCOOP - FORMER SAC-D STAFF DIRECTOR TO BECOME GD LOBBYIST: Betsy Schmid, who was staff director of the Senate Defense Appropriations Subcommittee before becoming a vice president at the Aerospace Industries Association last March, is joining defense contractor General Dynamics as director of government relations. "As the senior defense budget adviser for the U.S. Senate, Betsy worked closely with officials in the Pentagon, intelligence community and defense industry and was the lead Senate staff member responsible for annual passage of the defense appropriation bill," says an internal GD announcement. She starts Feb. 2.

FIRST LOOK I - THORNBERRY TO LAY OUT ASSERTIVE HASC AGENDA: Rep. Mac Thornberry is set to defend his right to overturn Pentagon budget decisions in a major policy address this morning, laying out his agenda as the new chairman of the House Armed Services Committee and tackling charges of parochialism head on. The Texas Republican intends to make clear he has no plans to rein in a Congress that's taken heat in recent years from Pentagon leaders and think tank experts on both sides of the aisle for forcing the military to cut spending while rejecting the Obama administration's proposals to do so.

"**Congress determines the size, shape and soul of the military,**" Thornberry says in excerpts of his remarks obtained by Morning D. "The president, then, determines how to use it." Thornberry will deliver the speech at the conservative American Enterprise Institute ahead of President Barack Obama's State of the Union address tonight before a joint session of Congress.

The speech is a debut of sorts for Thornberry, who's now stepping out of the shadow of his Armed Services predecessor, retired Rep. Buck McKeon (R-Calif.). And it marks a bold opening act for Thornberry, who has long taken a measured, non-combative approach to national security issues - leading many experts to believe he'd be a Pentagon ally in pushing for cost-cutting measures that face an uphill climb in Congress. Instead, the 56-year-old Thornberry will put the Pentagon on notice that, like McKeon, he plans to use the power of his gavel to make his mark on defense spending decisions.

We teamed up with POLITICO's Jeremy Herb on a full story previewing Thornberry's speech, including his prepared remarks on the M1 Abrams tank and the A-10 Warthog attack jet, for Pros: <http://politico.pro/1KWa3gY>

DRIVING THE DAY - OBAMA TO PUSH TAX HIKES IN STATE OF THE UNION ADDRESS: The president's 9 p.m. speech in the House chamber is expected to center around his economic proposals to increase federal spending above the Budget Control Act levels in part by increasing taxes for the rich - his starting position in negotiations with Republicans that'll ultimately determine the size of the defense budget for fiscal 2016. We'll also be watching for Obama's remarks on his executive actions to bolster cybersecurity, his Feb. 18

summit on countering violent extremism, the war in Afghanistan and the U.S.-led campaign against the Islamic State.

We wouldn't be surprised if he offers more details on the legislative framework he's preparing to send to Capitol Hill to authorize the current U.S. operations in Iraq and Syria.

- AMONG THOSE SITTING IN THE BOX WITH FIRST LADY MICHELLE OBAMA will be retired Army Staff Sgt. Jason Gibson of Ohio, who was wounded in Afghanistan and met the president in 2012 during one of Obama's trips to the Walter Reed National Military Medical Center. "In October, Jason wrote a letter to thank the president for visiting him as he recuperated and to underscore that 'there is life after a traumatic event and good can come of all things,'" according to the White House. "Jason detailed the year he spent in California after his 21 surgeries: Despite losing both legs and being unable to use prosthetics, he took up surfing and skiing, completed multiple marathons on a hand cycle, and even obtained his pilot's license."

HAPPY TUESDAY AND WELCOME TO MORNING DEFENSE, where we're wishing a happy birthday to astronaut Buzz Aldrin. Keep the tips and pitches coming to awright@politico.com, and follow us on Twitter @[abwrig](https://twitter.com/abwrig), @[morningdefense](https://twitter.com/morningdefense) and @[politicopro](https://twitter.com/politicopro)

FIRST LOOK II - DoD HAS IMPLEMENTED 161 SIGAR RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction is releasing a report this morning looking at the status of its recommendations to the Defense Department to cut down on waste, fraud and abuse in Afghanistan. Of the 209 recommendations to the military that SIGAR has made since its inception in 2008, the Defense Department has implemented 161. "Recommendations from seven audits resulted in up to \$1.1 billion in savings or funds put to better use," the report says. Pros can read the full report here: <http://politico.pro/14Zg474>

FIRST LOOK III - THIRD WAY SUGGESTS ALTERNATIVES TO STEPPED-UP

IRAN SANCTIONS: The centrist think tank Third Way is releasing a report urging Congress not to pass increased sanctions on Iran, saying such a step could lead to the collapse of the current negotiations for a final nuclear deal. Instead, Third Way says, Congress should pass legislation boosting funding for and giving itself a bigger role in ensuring Iran's compliance with the terms of the final deal. The report is due out this morning and will be available on the Third Way website: <http://bit.ly/1yASP28>

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ON THAT NOTE ... SENATE PANEL TO TAKE UP IRAN BILL: The Senate Banking Committee plans to vote Thursday on an Iran sanctions measure, despite the president's pleas for Congress to hold off to allow more time for the current negotiations, according to POLITICO's Zachary Warmbrodt. "I respectfully request for them to hold off for a few months to see if we have the possibility of solving a big problem without resorting potentially to war," Obama said last week.

DoD KILLS 'AIR-SEA BATTLE,' via POLITICO's Philip Ewing: "The Pentagon is folding its much-discussed, little-understood 'Air Sea Battle' concept into a larger 'joint'

strategy project under the Joint Staff. Joint Staff Director Lt. Gen. David Goldfein has signed an order folding Air-Sea Battle into a new 'Joint Concept for Access and Maneuver in the Global Commons,' according to a copy of a memorandum obtained by POLITICO. The Pentagon office set up to pursue the 'concept' will endure under the Joint Staff's J-7 Joint Force Development directorate."

SPEED READ

- The Islamic State threatens to kill two Japanese hostages unless it receives \$200 million in 72 hours. The Associated Press: <http://abcn.ws/1yDMCWz>
- The vice commander of Air Combat Command warns officers that "anyone who is passing information to Congress about A-10 capabilities is committing treason." The Arizona Daily Independent: <http://bit.ly/1CdWQfx>
- The United States blamed North Korea for the Sony hack in part because of a National Security Agency operation that used malware to monitor the activities of the North's hackers. The New York Times: <http://nyti.ms/1zt1Pt4>
- Senate Armed Services Chairman John McCain (R-Ariz.) leads a congressional delegation to Saudi Arabia and Qatar to tour training sites for Syrian rebels. The Guardian: <http://bit.ly/15rPyIk>
- The U.S. is changing its approach to the crisis in Syria. The New York Times: <http://nyti.ms/1IZMYrG>
- The state-of-the-art Ebola treatment centers set up in West Africa by the U.S. military now sit empty as the epidemic subsides. The Washington Post: <http://wapo.st/1xIHv00>
- Court documents detail the crime spree of Marine Lance Cpl. Ethan Foote, who deserted his unit in 2013 and ended up in a Mexican jail for four months. Military Times: <http://militari.ly/1J1XQU7>
- Kiev and Moscow continue to tussle while pro-separatists in western Ukraine attack an international airport outside of Donetsk. Reuters: <http://reut.rs/1xq242u>
- Police in Europe are reconsidering what arms to carry after the terrorist attack in Paris. AP: <http://apne.ws/1BX5a3j>
- Sen. Mark Warner (D-Va.) warns that India will buy drones from other countries unless the U.S. eases its export rules. Reuters: <http://reut.rs/1xs9SRn>

POLITICO LIVE: SOTU EDITION - Beginning tonight at 8:30 p.m. ET, award-winning journalist Glenn Thrush kicks off POLITICO LIVE to preview President Obama's address, joined by Susan Glasser, John F. Harris, Carrie Budoff Brown, Manu Raju, Michael Crowley and more. Tune in to watch the speech and Republican response in full, followed by POLITICO analysis: www.politico.com/live.

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From: [Morning Defense](#)
To: (b) (6)
Subject: POLITICO's Morning Defense, presented by Northrop Grumman: It's Ash Carter's first day — Egypt attacks the Islamic State in Libya — FAA issues its small drone rule
Date: Tuesday, February 17, 2015 8:32:25 AM

By Austin Wright

With Trevor Eischen

IT'S ASH CARTER'S FIRST DAY. The incoming secretary of defense is scheduled to arrive at the Pentagon at 8 a.m. for meetings with Deputy Secretary Bob Work and the three service secretaries and then with Joint Chiefs Chairman Gen. Martin Dempsey. He'll be sworn into office at 11 a.m. at the White House by Vice President Joe Biden. And he'll meet privately with President Barack Obama at 3:15 p.m. in the Oval Office.

"He comes prepared to make tough decisions to defend the country and support the men and women of the department, while at the same time embracing change and building the force of the future," says a senior defense official.

FOR MOST OTHER FEDERAL EMPLOYEES, IT'S A SNOW DAY. Federal offices in Washington are closed, per the Office of Personnel Management: <http://www.opm.gov/>

MEANWHILE ... CONGRESS IS OUT THIS WEEK for the long Presidents Day recess, putting on hold the looming showdowns over funding for the Department of Homeland Security and President Barack Obama's proposal to authorize the war against the Islamic State. Over the weekend, there was lots of finger pointing over DHS funding, which will dry up at the end of the month if Congress and the White House can't reach a deal to keep the agency open. The sticking point is an effort by Republicans to attach to the DHS spending bill provisions that would block Obama's executive order on immigration.

On CBS's "Face the Nation," White House chief of staff Denis McDonough portrayed the impasse as a threat to national security, given the role DHS plays in protecting the country from terrorism (<http://politi.co/1vQz7lw>). And House Speaker John Boehner said he was prepared to let DHS funding expire, blaming Senate Democrats for the potential shutdown. "The House has acted. We've done our job," the Ohio Republican said on "Fox News Sunday." <http://politi.co/17IWJ0r>

Even former Defense Secretary Leon Panetta weighed in - and railed against Congress in general. "They can't even resolve the issue of homeland security," Panetta said on CNN's "State of the Union." "They can't deal with budgets. They can't deal with immigration reform. They can't deal with infrastructure. They can't deal with other issues." POLITICO's Nick Gass has more: <http://politi.co/1vQzSLh>

TOP STORY - EGYPT ATTACKS THE ISLAMIC STATE IN LIBYA, via David Kirkpatrick of The New York Times, from Cairo: "The Egyptian military said on Monday that it had carried out airstrikes in Libya in retaliation for the beheading of more than a dozen Egyptian Christians by a branch of the Islamic State extremist group there. ... The airstrikes represent a significant escalation of Egypt's role in the continuing battle between armed factions in Libya for control of the country.

"Egypt's air assault came less than 12 hours after the main Islamic State group released a video online that appeared to show fighters from the group's self-proclaimed Tripolitania Province beheading more than a dozen Egyptian Christians. The Christians were among the thousands of Egyptians who routinely travel across the border to Libya to find work in its oil-rich economy, forging a deep connection between the two neighboring states." More here: <http://nyti.ms/1vOHL3U>

- White House press secretary Josh Earnest, in a statement: "The United States condemns the despicable and cowardly murder of twenty-one Egyptian citizens in Libya by ISIL-affiliated terrorists. ... This heinous act once again underscores the urgent need for a political resolution to the conflict in Libya, the continuation of which only benefits terrorist groups, including ISIL. We call on all Libyans to strongly reject this and all acts of terrorism and to unite in the face of this shared and growing threat."

HAPPY TUESDAY AND WELCOME TO MORNING DEFENSE, where we're on the lookout for tips, pitches and snow pictures. Email us at awright@politico.com, and follow us on Twitter @[abwrig](https://twitter.com/abwrig), @[morningdefense](https://twitter.com/morningdefense) and @[politicopro](https://twitter.com/politicopro).

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HAPPENING TODAY: Retired Marine Gen. John Allen, who's been tapped by the president to coordinate the international coalition against the Islamic State, discusses his efforts at 4 p.m. at the Atlantic Council in Washington. The event will stream here: <http://bit.ly/19plD5Q>

ALSO TODAY: The Christian Science Monitor launches a new security-and-privacy section called Passcode. The launch story, by Passcode's Sara Sorcher, looks at the Darpa cyberwarfare program Plan X. "Slated to cost around \$125 million over four years, Plan X marks the first major attempt to create an actual online battle space and would fundamentally shift the way the military operates on the virtual battlefield," Sorcher writes. More here: <http://bit.ly/1CCM4Mt>

THE WEEK AHEAD: The White House's three-day Summit on Countering Violent Extremism kicks off today. The event is aimed at all types of extremism - but the war against the Islamic State is likely to be a major topic, as Time magazine's Maya Rhodan reports. "Obama is expected to speak twice at the summit, though the full agenda of the week's events has not yet been released," Rhodan writes. More summit details here: <http://ti.me/1v7ksl4>

TOP TALKER - NSA CAN HIDE SOFTWARE IN HARD DRIVES, via Reuters: "The U.S. National Security Agency has figured out how to hide spying software deep within hard drives made by Western Digital, Seagate, Toshiba and other top manufacturers, giving the agency the means to eavesdrop on the majority of the world's computers, according to cyber researchers and former operatives."

"That long-sought and closely guarded ability was part of a cluster of spying programs discovered by Kaspersky Lab, the Moscow-based security software maker that has exposed a series of Western cyberespionage operations. Kaspersky said it found personal computers in 30 countries infected with one or more of the spying programs, with the most infections seen in Iran, followed by Russia, Pakistan, Afghanistan, China, Mali, Syria, Yemen and Algeria."

<http://huff.to/1v97xPD>

FAA (FINALLY) ISSUES SMALL DRONE RULE, via POLITICO's Kevin Robillard:

"Drones can begin flying low over the American skyscape by 2017 under rules proposed Sunday by the Obama administration that will finally allow their legal use for business purposes. The rules, which still need to go through a public comment phase, apply to smaller drones weighing 55 pounds or less. Such small flyers aren't likely to share airspace with manned flights.

"The proposal is largely favorable to the thousands of businesses who want to use drones for photography, agriculture or inspection purposes. While there was discussion of requiring licensed drone pilots to have time flying in a manned aircraft - a potentially expensive proposition - pilots will instead have to pass a written test at an aviation training center. The FAA rejected the idea of offering the tests online, as is done in some other countries." <http://politi.co/1zJcQAG>

INDUSTRY INTEL - AIRBUS GETS \$220.5M ARMY LAKOTA DEAL, via Joe Gould of Defense News:

"The U.S. unit of Europe's Airbus Group was awarded a contract modification worth \$220.5 million to build 41 more UH-72A Lakota light utility helicopters for the U.S. Army, planned as flight trainers at Fort Rucker, Alabama. A service budget official said at a roundtable with reporters earlier this month that next year marks the last of the Lakota fleet for the active Army. ... As part of the Army's aviation restructure, the plan is to divest from the TH-67 Creek training helicopters, made by Bell Helicopter, and replace them with the Lakota." <http://bit.ly/1vRPQF0>

SPEED READ

- The commander of the Army's aviation program office discusses the service's controversial aviation restructuring plan. POLITICO Pro: <http://politico.pro/1DzsAwh>

- Italy will continue with plans to order 90 F-35 fighter jets despite political pressure to cut orders. Reuters: <http://reut.rs/17cgNaL>

- The Army makes it harder to remove transgender soldiers from the service. USA Today: <http://bit.ly/1EFAP8u>

- Seven of every 10 Army Reserve applicants fail to meet standards because they're either 'hooked on prescription drugs, have too many tattoos, are overweight or have mental conditions that prohibit them from joining the military.' The Washington Times: <http://bit.ly/1A1Yq3s>

- Iran's strategy in Iraq could be undermining U.S. military operations in the country. The Washington Post: <http://wapo.st/1vPZvvV>

- Pro-Russian separatists in the Ukrainian town of Debaltseve reject the new ceasefire deal and continue intense fighting against the country's military. Reuters: <http://reut.rs/1AJ8WgH>

- Russia's attempt to woo Finland into defense cooperation hits a brick wall, with the Finnish defense minister saying Russia is "untrustworthy" and he does not trust the country "at all." Defense News: <http://goo.gl/XIvhNo>

- There are fears in Yemen of an all-out civil war. The Washington Post:

<http://wapo.st/1DjKdla>

- The U.S. commences Operation Flintlock, an annual mission in Africa to bolster militaries' counterterrorism capabilities in the region. Stars and Stripes: <http://1.usa.gov/17bJtAC>

- The CIA bought chemical weapons from an Iraqi seller in 2005 and 2006 to prevent them from falling into the wrong hands. The New York Times: <http://nyti.ms/1zHBkul>

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From: [Morning Defense](#)
To: (b) (6)
Subject: POLITICO's Morning Defense, presented by Northrop Grumman: Obama OKs drone exports, with many caveats — Taking his oath, Carter vows candid advice — New report questions Syria strategy
Date: Wednesday, February 18, 2015 8:32:39 AM

By Austin Wright

With Trevor Eischen and Philip Ewing

STATE DEPARTMENT TO ALLOW MORE EXPORTS OF ARMED DRONES: The Obama administration is out with a new policy allowing wider exports of armed drones on a case-by-case basis. This is good news for aerospace firms that have been seeking a bigger global market for weapons that some experts view as the future of warfare and surveillance - and that civil liberties advocates fear are already making war too much like a video game.

The State Department is trying to allay concerns by putting forward "stringent" standards for sales and transfers of military drones to foreign countries. Recipient nations will have to allow end-use monitoring and agree to certain principles, including that armed drones be used in accordance with international law and that they not be used for unlawful surveillance. Here's a State Department fact sheet on the new policy:

<http://1.usa.gov/1A3ulAL>

- The Washington Post's Missy Ryan, who broke the news: "A green light to sell drones overseas would help U.S. firms gain a larger foothold in the global drone market that Steve Zaloga, a senior analyst at the Teal Group Corp., an aerospace research firm, said is now worth more than \$6 billion a year. The new policy also covers the export of commercial drones. China and Israel are actively promoting their drones to foreign buyers."

<http://wapo.st/1CF0aQa>

- POLITICO's Philip Ewing: "Tuesday's decision to export armed drones could spark global fears about dictators or authoritarian governments getting hold of state-of-the-art American systems and using them to monitor or attack their own populations. The Obama administration has quietly permitted its shipments of tanks, fighter aircraft and other weapons to the government of Egypt, for example, after temporarily holding them up after Cairo imposed a political crackdown." <http://politico.pro/1CFZ4kH>

- Roman Schweizer of Guggenheim Partners, in a note to investors: "This policy shift helps privately held General Atomics, maker of the MQ-1 Predator and MQ-9 Reaper, which are the armed UAVs used by the U.S. Air Force. Additional sales of Reapers to international users would benefit Raytheon, maker of the MTS-B multi-spectral targeting sensor, and L-3 Communications, which provides satellite communications components and training simulators. Honeywell supplies turboprop engines and guidance components."

MEANWHILE ... TAKING HIS OATH, CARTER VOWS CANDID ADVICE, via POLITICO's Ewing: "Defense Secretary Ash Carter renewed his pledge of candid advice on Tuesday after taking his official oath of office at the White House from Vice President Joe Biden. Carter vowed to help President Barack Obama 'make the best possible decisions about our security and the security of the world, and then to ensure that our department executes those decisions with its long-accustomed competence and effectiveness.'

"The vice president praised Carter's previous service as the Pentagon's deputy secretary and top weapons-buyer, crediting him with the crash program that sent some 24,000 Mine-Resistant, Ambush-Protected vehicles to Iraq and Afghanistan to help protect American troops against roadside bombs. Biden told a story about meeting soldiers in Iraq whose MRAP had been blown so high off the road it tore down telephone wires - but all inside had survived."

<http://politico.pro/1vDf304>

Carter also met yesterday with the president, who said the new Pentagon chief had already "hit the ground running."

- And in a welcome message to Defense Department personnel, Carter said DoD would have to become a "leaner" organization with "less overhead" and better business and acquisition practices. "To win support from our fellow citizens for the resources we need, we must show that we can make better use of every taxpayer dollar," he said. The full message is here: <http://1.usa.gov/1Aj5WGe>

HAPPY WEDNESDAY AND WELCOME TO MORNING DEFENSE, where we're wishing a happy birthday to former Navy Secretary and Virginia Sen. John Warner. Keep the tips and pitches coming to awright@politico.com, and follow us on Twitter @[@abwrig](https://twitter.com/abwrig), @[morningdefense](https://twitter.com/morningdefense) and @[politicopro](https://twitter.com/politicopro).

HAPPENING TODAY: The president speaks at 4:15 p.m. in the South Court Auditorium as part of the ongoing White House Summit on Countering Violent Extremism. Ahead of his speech, Obama published an op-ed in the Los Angeles Times says that taking out terrorists on the battlefield isn't enough. The international community, he wrote, has "to confront the violent extremists - the propagandists, recruiters and enablers - who may not directly engage in terrorist acts themselves, but who radicalize, recruit and incite others to do so."

<http://lat.ms/1vENFPe>

ALSO TODAY: Former Defense Secretary William Cohen discusses the "future of defense" at 10 a.m. at the Center for American Progress in Washington. The event will stream live here:

<http://ampr.gs/1ABWKA2>

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EXCLUSIVE - NEW REPORT QUESTIONS SYRIA STRATEGY: Washington should focus more on containing the Islamic State and less on "destroying" it, the National Security Network argues in a new report out today. The paper argues the U.S. can do better trying to bottle up ISIL both 'horizontally' and 'vertically' than it can trying to train a force of 'moderate' Syrians to fight ISIL and then take on the regime of Syrian President Bashar Assad. "There is no explicit linkage for the strategy to advance beyond containing and degrading the Islamic State toward the desired defeat of the organization," the authors write. "This policy rests on several dubious assumptions."

First, the U.S. assumes the 'moderate' fighters will actually take on ISIL first and not Assad. It assumes they can survive both against ISIL, Assad and other rebel groups. And it assumes that, if everything else goes well, an openly U.S.-backed coalition can somehow win and keep popular support in Syria if it did step into power after Assad agreed to step down, the

report says. The full NSN report is here: <http://bit.ly/1L9SSI3>. And POLITICO's Ewing has a story on the report here: <http://politico.pro/17giJ22>

WAR REPORT - UKRAINIAN CEASEFIRE DEAL UNRAVELS, via Reuters: "Russian President Vladimir Putin told Kiev to let its soldiers surrender to pro-Russian rebels, who spurned a ceasefire in eastern Ukraine and fought their way on Tuesday into the town of Debaltseve, encircling thousands of government troops. A peace deal reached at all-night talks in the Belarussian capital Minsk last week had all but unravelled, with both sides failing to begin pulling back heavy guns as required after the rebels refused to halt their advance." <http://reut.rs/1LbK7NG>

TOP DOC - CRS RELEASES BACKGROUNDER ON NEW NAVY OILER

COMPETITION: The Congressional Research Service is out with a backgrounder on the Navy's TAO(X) program to build a new class of 17 oilers that'll bring fuel to ships at sea. The Navy requested \$674 million in fiscal 2016 to fully fund the first ship. One of the big questions for Congress, according to CRS, is whether to approve the Navy's plan to bundle the competition to produce the new oiler fleet with a separate program to build new amphibious ships. Under the bundle plan, competition would be limited to two shipbuilders: Huntington Ingalls and General Dynamics NASSCO. Read the report here, via USNI News: <http://bit.ly/1CFVtCV>

INDUSTRY INTEL - DoD IG ISSUES SUBPOENA TO PRATT & WHITNEY FOR ENGINE DATA, via Bloomberg's Tony Capaccio: "The Pentagon inspector general has subpoenaed United Technologies Corp.'s Pratt & Whitney engine unit, saying the company has repeatedly refused to document more than \$1.54 billion in maintenance work on C-17 aircraft engines, according to an unreleased audit. The subpoena, dated Oct. 27 and not previously disclosed, was issued after Pratt & Whitney resisted requests starting in July on the cost of C-17 engine work compared with services on its comparable commercial engine, according to the Defense Department's watchdog unit." <http://bloom.bg/1vg9REF>

SPEED READ

- An anonymous U.S. defense official says Egyptian airstrikes against the Islamic State in Libya are being carried out without U.S. assistance. The Washington Post: <http://wapo.st/17NOuQI>

- Egyptian President Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi wants a U.N.-backed coalition to root out extremists in Libya. Reuters: <http://reut.rs/1A2li30>

- The European Union adds two of Russia's deputy defense ministers to the sanctions list over the Ukraine crisis. Defense News: <http://goo.gl/rOunGP>

- Expanding a tiny State Department agency to help streamline counterterrorism efforts is part of the White House's broader plan to degrade ISIL's propaganda efforts. The New York Times: <http://nyti.ms/1CFvGNV>

- Lawmakers in Basra, a southern region of Iraq, want to create a semi-autonomous state after feeling neglected by Baghdad. The Washington Post: <http://wapo.st/1FnKyE3>

- Civilian casualties in Afghanistan were up 22 percent last year from 2013. The New York Times: <http://nyti.ms/1Fryf9P>

- Boeing wins a \$30 million contract to improve Navy laser weapons. POLITICO Pro:
<http://politico.pro/17OZ3mI>

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From: [Morning Defense](#)
To: (b) (6)
Subject: POLITICO's Morning Defense, presented by Northrop Grumman: Carter ousts Kirby — Jeb's foreign policy, by George — U.S. identifies 1,200 'moderate' Syrian fighters
Date: Thursday, February 19, 2015 8:33:33 AM

By Austin Wright and Jeremy Herb

With Trevor Eischen and Philip Ewing

EXCLUSIVE - LOCKHEED'S TOP LOBBYIST DISHES ON THE F-35, LCS AND THE LONG-RANGE STRIKE BOMBER: Robert Rangel has seen all sides of the defense debate: on Capitol Hill, inside the Pentagon and in the industry. In December, the former Republican House Armed Services staff director and top aide to then-Defense Secretaries Donald Rumsfeld and Robert Gates took over Lockheed Martin's lobbying shop as senior vice president for Washington Operations.

And yesterday, he sat down with Morning D during Lockheed's annual media day in Crystal City, Virginia. Here are some edited excerpts:

Morning D: In lobbying against sequestration, is there any change in strategy compared with the approach Lockheed and the industry took in 2012 ahead of the first round of automatic cuts?

Rangel: I wouldn't say it's necessarily a change in strategy, but just a recognition that the debate has shifted. Now, we've gone through a sequestration round. We've had a bit of an interregnum here with the temporary budget deal, and now there's the prospect of getting back to that mechanism. So there's more, let's say, more experience collectively under the belt here. That hasn't lessened the urgency, but I think it's going to be a bit of a different conversation. The broad political environment has changed.

Morning D: Last year, Lockheed and Boeing fought over tactical aircraft funding, with Lockheed urging more funding for the F-35 and Boeing urging more funding for the EA-18G Growler. Will we see that fight continue this year?

Rangel: I don't think it will be a fight. Clearly, going forward, you're familiar with what's in the budget request. As you know, that's just Phase One of a multiple-step process. Again, more than likely there will be a subsequent conversation, but in the current budget environment it's a pretty tough case to make to make significant adds - not just for our programs but for anybody's programs.

Morning D: On the Air Force's new long-range strike bomber competition, from a lobbying standpoint that program could end up getting significant scrutiny from Capitol Hill. We've seen in past competitions that the loser sometimes goes to the Hill to make their case. Could we see that with the bomber, too?

Rangel: One of the complications with this program is it's highly classified. And so we are very much tied to the direction that we're getting from the Air Force. And we're playing by the rules, and we have no intention to not play by the rules, which is essentially to observe this competition and in particular this critical phase with essentially the final stage. What may transpire after that is anybody's guess. The scenario you just cited is not unreasonable, but

we'll just have to wait and see how that plays out.

Morning D: With Sen. John McCain (R-Ariz.) chairing the Senate Armed Services Committee this year, there's likely to be a lot of pressure on the Littoral Combat Ship program. What are you doing from a lobbying standpoint?

Rangel: It's important to note that the LCS program just has gone through a significant change, and the department has made a decision following its study to migrate to a variant, the [Small Surface Combatant]. So that's core to any discussion about LCS and the future of LCS. We believe the program has a bright future - it's still critical to the modernization and shipbuilding plans of the Navy.

There's much more from the interview here, for Pros: <http://politico.pro/1E7hQWD>

HAPPY THURSDAY AND WELCOME TO MORNING DEFENSE, where we're always on the lookout for tips, pitches and feedback. Email us at awright@politico.com, and follow us on Twitter @[abwrig](#), @[morningdefense](#) and @[politicopro](#).

HAPPENING TODAY: Joint Chiefs Chairman Gen. Martin Dempsey is at Texas A&M University speaking at the 60th Student Conference on National Affairs. And President Barack Obama speaks again at 10:30 a.m. at the White House Summit on Countering Violent Extremism being held at the State Department.

TOP TALKER - CARTER OUSTS KIRBY: Rear Adm. John Kirby, who became a highly visible face for the Defense Department as it launched the war in Iraq and Syria, is stepping down to make room for a new civilian press secretary. Kirby acknowledged his departure in a briefing for reporters yesterday, a day after Defense Secretary Ash Carter took an oath of office to become President Barack Obama's fourth Pentagon chief. Carter wants to "revisit" the role of press secretary, Kirby said, so he plans to name a civilian to take over for the two-star admiral.

Kirby's next moves are unclear. Two-star public affairs officers are rare, and as the first uniformed Pentagon press secretary, there's no precedent for him to follow. Kirby's long service in the Pentagon, previously as the Navy's chief of public affairs and earlier as the top spokesman for then-Joint Chiefs Chairman Adm. Mike Mullen, means he has long-standing relationships with many members of the Pentagon press corps. He's been a fixture on cable TV news networks. And reporters applauded yesterday after Associated Press correspondent Lolita Baldor and CNN reporter Barbara Starr hailed Kirby for his depth of knowledge about the military.

POLITICO's Philip Ewing has more on Kirby's ousting here: <http://politi.co/1CKbyYt>

- Former White House National Security Council spokesman Tommy Vietor, in a Tweet: "Bad decision to replace John Kirby as DOD spokesman. He's earned the trust of the press and military leadership, and is great at the job."

'JEB'S FOREIGN POLICY, BY GEORGE,' via POLITICO's Michael Hirsh: "Jeb Bush may be his 'own man,' as he declared Wednesday in his inaugural foreign-policy speech as a putative presidential candidate. But to hear GOP insiders describe it, the former Florida governor is pulling together his foreign-policy team with a distinctive Bush-family recipe in mind.

"Bush's advisory team is being pulled together by two mainstream Republican foreign-policy experts who served both his father and his brother, Richard Haass and Robert Zoellick. They have enlisted not only old GOP lions like James Baker - who first served under Ronald Reagan and distinguished himself as George H.W. Bush's secretary of State - but also neoconservatives such as Iraq war advocate Paul Wolfowitz and John Hannah, Dick Cheney's former national security advisor." <http://politi.co/1MzJfE2>

- Here's a full list of Bush's foreign-policy advisers, via The Washington Post:
<http://wapo.st/1zO3xiW>

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WAR REPORT - U.S. IDENTIFIES 1,200 'MODERATE' SYRIAN FIGHTERS: Military commanders have identified about 1,200 "moderate" Syrian fighters to begin "screening" in hopes they could be trained to take on the Islamic State, the Pentagon said yesterday. About 100 American troops have deployed to Turkey, Qatar and Saudi Arabia to begin work on the training camps that the Obama administration eventually hopes will yield some 5,400 "moderate" fighters in the first year. The total U.S. troop commitment for the effort could eventually reach about 1,000. POLITICO's Ewing has more on the effort here:
<http://politico.pro/1vjgh62>

INDUSTRY INTEL - LOCKHEED SETS \$80M F-35 COST GOAL: Lockheed Martin is trying to push the fly-away unit cost of the Air Force variant of its F-35 fighter jet to about \$80 million by fiscal 2019, compared to \$110 million to \$115 million today. The target is dependent on several factors, as Lockheed F-35 General Manager Lorraine Martin explained to reporters yesterday at the company's annual media day in Crystal City.

First, the goal is dependent on Congress funding a scheduled ramp-up in F-35 orders to full-rate production by 2019. And it's dependent on Lockheed achieving the cost goals laid out in its "Blueprint for Affordability," which calls on Lockheed and its partner companies to invest about \$170 million in efforts to improve the efficiency of F-35 production. The government is also looking at investing about \$300 million in the efforts, designed to reduce the price of the fifth-generation F-35 to be on par with legacy fourth-generation fighters.

MAKING MOVES

- **OBAMA MAKES SEVERAL AIR FORCE NOMINATIONS:** The president is nominating Air Force Lt. Gen. Ellen Pawlikowski to lead Air Force Materiel Command and Air Force Maj. Gen. John Dolan to lead U.S. Forces Japan. More Air Force moves are here:
<http://1.usa.gov/1JqgYAV>

- **UTC GETS NEW TOP LOBBYIST:** Timothy McBride has been named senior vice president for government relations at United Technologies, succeeding Gregg Ward, who's retiring. McBride comes to UTC from Covidien, a medical device firm. He was also a member of the George H.W. Bush administration, serving as a personal aide to the president for five years.

SPEED READ

- Lockheed Martin continues expanding into fields outside its traditional defense businesses. POLITICO Pro: <http://politico.pro/17h4Ro5>

- Rep. Duncan Hunter plans to push a bill to strip service secretaries of the ability to revoke awards from troops, following the California Republican's criticisms of Army Secretary John McHugh for revoking a soldier's Silver Star. Army Times: <http://bit.ly/17sc04N>

- The head of Lockheed's Skunk Works division defends fighter jet stealth technology following comments from Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Jonathan Greenert that 'stealth may be overrated.' USNI News: <http://bit.ly/1z19bym>

- The Air Force could have to divest both its U-2 spy planes and Global Hawk Block 40 surveillance drones if sequestration returns. National Defense: <http://bit.ly/1G6JKRI>

- The Afghan Taliban is beginning peace talks with the U.S. in Qatar. Reuters: <http://huff.to/1Lgjqrd>

- Two U.S. soldiers in Afghanistan are convicted on federal charges in connection to a scheme to sell fuel from a military base on the black market. Stars and Stripes: <http://1.usa.gov/1ATqqqW>

- Ukraine's president calls for an international intervention in his country after a major defeat against pro-Russian separatists. The Washington Post: <http://wapo.st/1EpIZ4Q>

- White House press secretary Josh Earnest accuses Israel of "cherry-picking specific pieces of information ... to distort the negotiating position" of the U.S. in its talks with Iran. Reuters: <http://reut.rs/1A6O56n>

- Western countries confront the phenomenon of young men raised in nonviolent households joining the jihadist movements of Al Qaeda and ISIL. The New York Times: <http://nyti.ms/19yhUmw>

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From: [Morning Defense](#)
To: (b) (6)
Subject: POLITICO's Morning Defense, presented by Northrop Grumman: W.H. to host summit on violent extremism — Holder defends Petraeus leak investigation — Who's best on the budget, Hagel or Carter?
Date: Monday, January 12, 2015 8:33:53 AM

By Austin Wright

With Trevor Eischen and Jeremy Herb

SCOOP - THORNBERRY TO LAY OUT HASC AGENDA NEXT WEEK: New House Armed Services Chairman Mac Thornberry will lay out his agenda for the committee in a speech Jan. 20 at the conservative American Enterprise Institute. The Texas Republican "will note that America faces the widest and most serious range of threats in history," says spokesman Claude Chafin. "Congress has a role in meeting those threats; he will lay out his agenda for how to do so."

FIRST LOOK - SIGAR SAYS SALARIES FOR AFGHAN POLICE AT RISK OF CORRUPTION: The Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction is releasing a report this morning on the potential for corruption in the system for paying members of the Afghan National Police force, the ANP. Since 2002, the report says, international donors have provided \$3.6 billion for ANP salaries and other payroll costs, with the U.S. contributing \$1.3 billion of the total. But there's no assurance that payroll numbers provided by Afghanistan are accurate, nor that police officers are receiving their full salaries, the report says.

"Nearly 20 percent of ANP personnel are at risk of not receiving their full salaries because they are paid in cash by [a Ministry of Interior]-appointed trusted agent, a process that lacks documentation and accountability," the report explains. "There is limited oversight of trusted agents and a higher risk that funds may be subject to corruption." The bottom line: "Unless the MOI develops the capability to ensure and verify the accuracy of ANP personnel and payroll data, there is a significant risk that a large portion of the more than \$300 million in annual U.S. government funding for ANP salaries will be wasted or abused." The report is here, for Pros: <http://politico.pro/1xd5OmI>

WHITE HOUSE TO HOST SUMMIT ON COUNTERING VIOLENT EXTREMISM: The White House announced yesterday it'll host a summit Feb. 18 on countering violent extremism - an effort "made even more imperative in light of recent, tragic attacks in Ottawa, Sydney, and Paris," according to White House press secretary Josh Earnest. The event is "to highlight domestic and international efforts to prevent violent extremists and their supporters from radicalizing, recruiting, or inspiring individuals or groups in the United States and abroad to commit acts of violence," Earnest said.

The summit was originally slated for October but postponed without explanation, reports POLITICO's Josh Gerstein. More here: <http://politi.co/1B50uI8>

MORE FRANCE NEWS

- About 1.5 million people attended a unity march against terrorism in Paris yesterday. The Washington Post: <http://wapo.st/14lk5GM>
- Secretary of State John Kerry is due in Paris later this week, following criticism of the

Obama administration for having no top officials among the roughly 40 world leaders at yesterday's march. The Washington Post: <http://wapo.st/1w9tI2i>

- One of the three French attackers killed by police Friday appears in a video pledging allegiance to the Islamic State (his two accomplices declared themselves followers of Al Qaeda in Yemen). The New York Times: <http://nyti.ms/14NSAGx>

- There are concerns about a possible backlash against Europe's Muslim population. McClatchy: <http://bit.ly/1BSTC0A>

- Joint Chiefs Chairman Gen. Martin Dempsey said on "Fox News Sunday" the Islamic State is inspiring other terrorist groups to be more extreme. POLITICO: <http://politi.co/1DMTvmS>

- In a letter to the editor, Thornberry says intelligence gathering and military action stop terrorists, not signs and Twitter hashtags. The Washington Post: <http://wapo.st/1KB9SYa>

HAPPY MONDAY AND WELCOME TO MORNING DEFENSE, where we hope federal employees enjoy their extra two hours of sleep (more info on the weather delay here: <http://1.usa.gov/1aMQvpT>). Keep the tips and pitches coming to awright@politico.com, and follow us on Twitter @[abwrig](https://twitter.com/abwrig), @[morningdefense](https://twitter.com/morningdefense) and @[politicopro](https://twitter.com/politicopro)

HAPPENING TODAY: The Pentagon's No. 2 acquisition official, Alan Estevez, participates in an event at 3:30 p.m. at the Washington Convention Center called Military Transportation System Lessons Learned. And Defense Information Systems Agency Director Lt. Gen. Ronnie Hawkins Jr. moderates a discussion at 11 a.m. in Pentagon City, hosted by the Armed Forces Communications and Electronics Association D.C. Chapter.

THE WEEK AHEAD: HASC holds an organizational meeting tomorrow at 11 a.m. Meanwhile, the Senate Armed Services Committee has postponed what was set to be its first meeting of the 114th Congress tomorrow - a session with former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger. And Air Force Secretary Deborah Lee James is appearing twice this week, first on Wednesday at the Atlantic Council and then Thursday at the Pentagon, where she'll brief reporters.

WHAT ABOUT CHUCK HAGEL? The outgoing defense secretary is going on his final major trip as secretary to Missouri, California, New Mexico and Texas. POLITICO's Philip Ewing, who will be traveling with the Hagel, previews the trip:

"**The secretary is set to visit Whiteman Air Force Base in Missouri**, home of the B-2 Spirit stealth bomber, to thank airmen and talk about the importance of long-range bombers. ... Then he plans to travel to Marine Corps Air Station Miramar outside San Diego to visit with Marines. Next Hagel is flying out to the amphibious assault ship USS America at sea in the Pacific. Then he plans to travel to the White Sands Missile Range in New Mexico and to Fort Bliss in Texas, where he finished his Army basic training 47 years ago."

At Fort Bliss, he'll give his last major speech to the troops.

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TOP TALKER - HOLDER DEFENDS PETRAEUS LEAK INVESTIGATION, via POLITICO's Tarini Parti: "Attorney General Eric Holder declined to confirm on Sunday the Justice Department and FBI have urged felony charges against former CIA Director David Petraeus, but insisted the investigation has been carried out appropriately. The recommendation for bringing charges, contending Petraeus provided classified information to his former mistress Paula Broadwell, [was] first reported Friday by The New York Times." There's more on Holder's comments here: <http://politi.co/1tXhCtb>. And Friday's NYT article, which is based on anonymous officials briefed on the investigation, is here: <http://nyti.ms/1x5N2gW>

SASC Chairman John McCain of Arizona and fellow Republican Sen. Lindsey Graham of South Carolina blasted the Petraeus investigation as "grievously mishandled," calling it an outrage that the confidential recommendation of prosecutors to charge Petraeus was leaked to The Times. "It is a shameful continuation of a pattern in which leaks by unnamed sources have marred this investigation in contravention to fundamental fairness," the senators said in a statement Saturday. 'No American deserves such callous treatment, let alone one of America's finest military leaders whose selfless service and sacrifice have inspired young Americans in uniform and likely saved many of their lives.'

WHO'S BEST ON THE BUDGET, HAGEL OR CARTER? Via POLITICO's Jeremy Herb and Jen Judson: "What's better for the Pentagon to defend its new budget request: a lame-duck defense secretary on his way out or a new one who had no part in the budget decision making process? That's the scenario the Pentagon is confronting as the fiscal 2016 budget will be released Feb. 2 - at the same time, Ash Carter will be in the midst of his Senate confirmation process to replace outgoing Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel.

"The overlapping timelines - the budget presentation and Carter's confirmation - create a timing dilemma over who is best suited to defend the budget and make the case that Congress should go along with the new cuts that will likely be included. It's a conundrum both for the Pentagon and the new chairmen of the House and Senate Armed Services committees, which typically have the defense secretary and Joint Chiefs chairman testify the day after the budget is released by the White House." More here, for Pros: <http://politico.pro/1DNJ7v2>

MAKING MOVES

- **'FINANCIAL BATMAN' APPOINTED AS CIA'S NO. 2:** David Cohen, undersecretary for terrorism and financial intelligence at the Treasury Department, has been tapped to be deputy director of the Central Intelligence Agency. Cohen, who was dubbed the administration's "financial Batman" in a New York Times article about his efforts to track the Islamic State's finances, has been in his current post since 2011.

- **HASC GETS EIGHT NEW DEMOCRATS:** Eight Democrats, including six freshmen, are joining HASC. The panel lost seven members from the last Congress due to retirements and election losses, which means it's likely that at least one other Democrat on the panel is leaving the committee for a key panel like Appropriations or Ways and Means. Reps. Tim Walz of Minnesota and Beto O'Rourke of Texas are the new Armed Services members who are not freshmen. The freshmen are Reps. Donald Norcross of New Jersey, Ruben Gallego of Arizona, Mark Takai of Hawaii, Gwen Graham of Florida, Brad Ashford of Nebraska and Seth Moulton of Massachusetts.

SPEED READ

- The Pentagon defends the seeming inconsistency of wanting to retire its A-10 Warthogs but also using the attack jets against the Islamic State. POLITICO Pro: <http://politico.pro/1A6ofvs>
- President Barack Obama plans this week to roll out several executive actions on cybersecurity. POLITICO: <http://politi.co/1C6Ntw3>
- In heavy combat over the weekend in Iraq, Kurdish forces beat back an Islamic State assault on the town of Gwer. McClatchy: <http://bit.ly/1xfFBDO>
- A U.S.-lead airstrike in Syria last month killed at least 50 civilians, according to an eyewitness and a human-rights group. McClatchy: <http://bit.ly/14lGjbY>
- Top brass won't benefit from a force-wide raise of 1 percent after Congress placed a one-year pay freeze on generals and admirals. Military Times: <http://militari.ly/1BMHz5c>
- Japan begins selling weapons after lifting a self-imposed defense export ban, but the country remains nervous as it reflects on its militaristic past. The Washington Post: <http://wapo.st/1y8dHh6>
- Tensions rise between Ukraine and Russia ahead of peace talks. Defense News: <http://goo.gl/kbdQc3>
- Iran wants to speed up talks over its nuclear program. Reuters: <http://reut.rs/1ICURBu>
- Hundreds of people in Southern Afghanistan rallied in support of the killing of Charlie Hebdo staffers in France. Reuters: <http://yhoo.it/1C499ZV>

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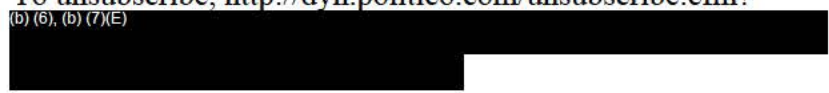
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From: [Morning Defense](#)
To: (b) (6)
Subject: POLITICO's Morning Defense, presented by UnitedHealth Group: Senate to pass NDAA again today — Two Americans killed in Jordan shooting — SASC tackles Goldwater-Nichols
Date: Tuesday, November 10, 2015 8:32:27 AM

By Jeremy Herb | 11/10/2015 08:30 AM EDT

With Louis Nelson

NDAA TO MOVE QUICKLY THROUGH SENATE TODAY: The Senate is set to show how quickly it can move legislation - when it has all 100 senators on board. The upper chamber is slated to approve this morning the new version of the National Defense Authorization Act that passed the House last week - with no procedural votes, no waiting 30 hours and no 60-vote threshold. Just a simple up-or-down vote to send the defense policy bill to President Barack Obama for the second time. And this time around, with the budget issues resolved, the president is expected to sign it into law, even though the White House is still opposed to the restrictions on transferring prisoners from the U.S. military prison at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

A NEW FRONT - TWO AMERICANS KILLED IN SHOOTING IN JORDAN POLICE CENTER, [via The Associated Press](#): "A Jordanian police captain opened fire Monday on instructors at an international police training center in Jordan's capital, killing at least five people, including two Americans, before being shot dead by security forces. It was not clear if there was a political motive to the shooting spree, which also wounded six people, including two Americans. But concern has swirled in staunchly pro-Western Jordan over possible revenge attacks by Islamic militants since the country assumed a high-level role in the U.S.-led military campaign against the Islamic State extremist group, which controls large areas of neighboring Syria and Iraq.

"The unprecedented assault inside a Jordanian security compound also raised questions about the kingdom's image as an island of relative stability in a turbulent region. The shooting took place at the Jordan International Police Training Center in Amman, where Jordanian and foreign instructors, including Americans, have trained thousands of police officers from the Palestinian territories and other parts of the Arab world in recent years."

HAPPENING TODAY - SASC TACKLES GOLDWATER-NICHOLS: The Senate Armed Services Committee dives into 30 years of Goldwater-Nichols this morning in a hearing that hits at the heart of Senate Armed Services Chairman John McCain's Pentagon reform efforts. The landmark 1983 law re-organized the Defense Department and changed the roles of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the service chiefs and combatant commanders. The Arizona Republican has three primary reasons for undertaking a top-to-bottom review of the Pentagon's organizational structure, according to a SASC aide: the new threat environment that's expanded the number and type of threats, the diffusion of technology that's eroded the military's tech edge and fiscal constraints that demand prioritization.

One of the three witnesses at today's hearing is James Locher, a senior fellow at Joint Special Operations University and a primary author of Goldwater-Nichols. Locher will testify that the Pentagon's organizational structure needs to be "faster, more collaborative and more decentralized," according to excerpts of his written testimony shared with Morning D. The Pentagon, Locher says, "has not adapted its organizational approaches to keep up with the world it faces."

HAPPY TUESDAY AND WELCOME TO MORNING DEFENSE, where we want to wish the Marine Corps a happy 240th birthday today. We're still trying a new method of embedding links into Morning D, so tell us what you think at jherb@politico.com, or on Twitter [@jeremyherb](#), [@morningdefense](#) and [@politicopro](#).

What Works Event - Live From Brussels: Tune in as POLITICO Magazine continues an international series of conversations about the future of cities with an exchange of lessons learned in Countering Violent Extremism in the US and Europe between speakers: Mashuq Ally, Assistant Director, Birmingham City Council, United Kingdom; Mayor Hans Bonte, Vilvoorde, Belgium; Jan Jambon, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Security and the Interior with responsibility for the Large Cities and Buildings Agency, Belgium; Tibor Navracsics, European Commissioner for Education, Culture, Youth and Sport; Adbi Warsame, Minneapolis City Council Member. **Watch Live Today, 12 p.m. EST:** [POLITICO.com/live](#).

PLANE CRASH INVESTIGATION - RUSSIA IS COMING AROUND TO THE BOMB, [via The Wall Street Journal](#): "Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev said Monday that a bomb may have caused the downing of a passenger jet in Egypt, the strongest official acknowledgment to date by Russia that it may have been a terror incident. The shift in tone from Russia comes amid increasing belief among U.K. and U.S. officials that the Oct. 31 crash of a Russian-operated Airbus A321, which killed all 224 people on board, was the result of a terrorist bomb."

"'The probability of a terrorist act, of course, is held as a cause of what happened,' Mr. Medvedev said in an excerpt of a forthcoming interview with Rossiiskaya Gazeta, according to state news agency TASS. The Kremlin's spokesman said Monday that the U.K. shared some intelligence with Russia regarding the crash, but didn't comment on the nature of that information."

- FBI OFFER OF ASSISTANCE GOES UNANSWERED, [reports Reuters' Mark Hosenball](#): "Neither Russia nor Egypt has accepted an offer from the FBI to assist them in investigating the crash of Metrojet flight 9268, which crashed in Egypt's Sinai Peninsula on Oct. 31 shortly after takeoff, a U.S. government source said. The FBI has offered 'forensic assistance' and other unspecified services to both Russia and Egypt, said Joshua Campbell, an FBI spokesman."

FIRST LOOK - A BLUEPRINT FOR VETERANS AND THE VA: The Center for a New American Security will release a new report this morning detailing how the next president can best serve veterans and the military community. Titled "Passing the Baton: A Bipartisan 2016 Agenda for the Veteran and Military Community," the report lays out several recommendations, including structure reform to the Department of Veterans Affairs, expanded data sharing between the government, private companies and non-profits and eliminating barriers to public-private non-profit partnerships that aid veterans. The paper includes an agenda for the next president's first 100 days for the veterans' community.

The full report is [here](#).

POLITICO PRO Q&A - AIA CEO DAVID MELCHER: "It's been a busy five months for David Melcher since he took the reins of the Aerospace Industries Association: The threat of budget caps squeezing the defense budget and the expiration of the Export-Import Bank gave the leading defense industry trade association plenty with which to grapple. But things appear to be looking up for Melcher and AIA, with the budget issue resolved - much to the satisfaction of the defense industry - and Ex-Im proponents hoping the bank will be reauthorized soon, too."

"Melcher came to AIA in June following a stint as CEO of Exelis and its predecessor, ITT, before Harris Corp. acquired Exelis earlier this year. A 32-year Army veteran who retired as a three-star general, Melcher succeeded Marion Blakey, who left to become CEO of jet-engine manufacturer Rolls Royce North America. Melcher sat down with POLITICO over the weekend at the Reagan National Defense Forum in Simi Valley, Calif., to discuss AIA's lower-key lobbying approach, its priorities for the new year and what steps the trade association would like to see tackled next on acquisition reform."

The full Q&A is [here, for Pros](#).

**** A message from UnitedHealth Group:** At UnitedHealth Group, one reason we are optimistic about the future of health care is connectivity: Exchanging information seamlessly among people, providers, and places. <http://bit.ly/1WFgdFc> **

BOOK EXCERPT - BARACK OBAMA, LAWYER-IN-CHIEF: POLITICO Magazine is out with [an excerpt](#) from the new book, "Power Wars: Inside Obama's Post-9/11 Presidency," written by Charlie Savage of The New York Times: "In June 2013, when a cascade of leaked top-secret documents showed the world that Barack Obama had entrenched the post-9/11 surveillance state bequeathed to him by George W. Bush, many observers were surprised. But several of Obama's advisers thought back to an afternoon some 4½ years earlier, shortly after their administration took office."

"The officials were there to tell Obama about secret surveillance programs - including the fact that the National Security Agency was collecting Americans' domestic phone records in bulk. The meeting and its aftermath helped establish a pattern for Obama's presidency that has confounded many of his supporters. The liberal-minded legal scholar promised change from Bush's 'global war on terrorism,' but he ended up entrenching many Bush-like counterterrorism policies: drone strikes, military commissions, detaining Guantánamo prisoners without trial - and broad surveillance activities, including the NSA's bulk phone records program. How did this seeming transformation happen? Obama's approach to the bulk records program - driven, above all, by his inclinations as a lawyer - is key to deciphering the larger mystery."

MAKING MOVES - REVISION MILITARY TECHNOLOGIES HIRES NEW PRESIDENT: The Vermont-based research firm Revision Military Technologies has tapped retired Lt Gen Michael Dubie as its president. Dubie retired from the Air Force in October as deputy commander of U.S. Northern Command.

DESSERT - NAVY MISSILE TEST OFF CALIFORNIA STILL NO UFO, DOD SAYS AGAIN: The Pentagon issued another statement Monday about a missile test off the coast of California - and no, it wasn't a UFO, in case you were wondering. The Pentagon said a second Trident II missile was launched in a test off the Southern California coast around noon Monday. The Navy's daytime launch didn't generate the same controversy - and conspiracy theories - on social media as the first one Saturday night, but DoD did note Monday's launch was the final one of the exercise.

SPEED READ

- Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu strikes a conciliatory tone in his meeting with the president at the White House: [POLITICO](#)
- Islamic State-aligned forces in Afghanistan behead seven civilian hostages: [NYT](#)
- Moscow warns the next round of talks on Syria should not focus on demands for Syrian President Bashar Assad's resignation: [AP](#)
- The Senate report on CIA interrogations is still stuck in limbo: [NYT](#)
- Lockheed Martin is pitching its C-130 aircraft to the British military as a cheaper replacement for the Boeing-made P-8: [Defense News](#)
- Russia announces it will move forward with a deal to send its S-300 missile systems to Iran: [Agence France-Presse](#)
- The Air Force struggles to add new drone pilots as it copes with pilot fatigue and a shortage of recruits: [Los Angeles Times](#)
- The Army's 101st Airborne Division Headquarters will deploy to Iraq early next year: [Stars and Stripes](#)
- The American Psychological Association retracts a study claiming that male-on-male sexual assault in the military occurs at a rate 15 times higher than previously believed: [Military Times](#)

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To: (b) (6)
Subject: POLITICO's Morning Defense, presented by UnitedHealth Group: Obama, Netanyahu meet at White House — Defense world sounds an optimistic note at Reagan conference — F-35 cybersecurity tests delayed
Date: Monday, November 9, 2015 8:32:46 AM

By Jeremy Herb | 11/09/2015 08:30 AM EDT

With Louis Nelson, Austin Wright and Leigh Munsil

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U.S. INTELLIGENCE AGENCIES SET TO POINT TO BOMB DESTROYING RUSSIAN PLANE, via our colleague Leigh Munsil: "The U.S. intelligence community is nearly ready to conclude the Islamic State or an affiliate is behind the downing of the Russian passenger jet over Egypt, two top members of the House Intelligence Committee said Sunday. 'Until it's final, we can't say,' Rep. Peter King (R-N.Y.) said on ABC's 'This Week.' 'But, right now, all the evidence points in that direction, yes.'"

"And an airline or airport worker likely placed a bomb on the plane, added Rep. Adam Schiff of California, the committee's ranking Democrat. 'There's a growing body of intelligence and evidence that this was a bomb,' Schiff said on ABC. 'I also think that ISIS might have concluded that the best way to defeat airport defenses is not to go through them - but to go around them with the help of somebody on the inside.'"

2016 WATCH - BEN CARSON CLAIMED WEST POINT SCHOLARSHIP BUT NEVER APPLIED, POLITICO's Kyle Cheney [has the story](#) that generated plenty of controversy over the weekend on both sides of the debate: "Republican presidential candidate Ben Carson on Friday conceded that he never applied nor was granted admission to West Point and attempted to recast his previous claims of a full scholarship to the military academy - despite numerous public and written statements to the contrary over the last few decades."

"West Point has occupied a central place in Carson's personal story for years. According to a tale told in his book, 'Gifted Hands,' the then-17 year old was introduced in 1969 to Gen. William Westmoreland, who had just ended his command of U.S. forces in Vietnam, and the two dined together. That meeting, according to Carson's telling, was followed by the offer of a 'full scholarship' to the military academy. West Point, however, has no record of Carson applying, much less being extended admission."

- **CARSON: 'IT'S REALLY TIME TO MOVE ON,'** via [POLITICO's Munsil](#) : "Ben Carson says he's under more scrutiny than any previous presidential candidate, suggesting the excessive vetting was a response to the threat he poses to progressivism and Democrat Hillary Clinton's campaign 'I have always said that I expect to be vetted, but being vetted and what is going on with me - 'You said this 30 years ago, you said this 20 years ago, this didn't exist,' I have not seen that with anyone else,' the Republican presidential hopeful said in an interview aired Sunday on NBC's 'Meet the Press' ""

INDUSTRY INTEL - BOEING, LOCKHEED PROTEST BOMBER DECISION: Boeing and Lockheed Martin are protesting the Air Force's decision to award the Long Range Strike Bomber contract to Northrop Grumman, the companies announced Friday. The protest, to the Government Accountability Office, is a sign the losing team doesn't believe the selection process was fair - and marks the beginning of a new round of political wrangling over the high profile project. The Air Force's next-generation bomber is expected to be worth as much as \$111 billion over the coming decades and has been one of the hardest-fought weapons competitions in recent Pentagon history.

SPEED READ

- A breakaway faction of the Taliban says it's ready to negotiate with the Afghan government and support the rights of women to work and seek education: [The Washington Post](#)
- The defense secretary says more U.S. troops are possible in Syria to fight against the Islamic State: [ABC News](#)
- Arab allies are vanishing from the campaign against the Islamic State as the U.S. ramps up airstrikes: [The New York Times](#)
- Former prisoners of the Islamic State describe their captivity before a raid freed them in Iraq when a U.S. soldier was killed: [The Washington Post](#)
- Venezuela says a Coast Guard intelligence plane violated its airspace: [Reuters](#)
- Federal prosecutors are investigating pharmacies for fraudulent claims in the military health insurance program: [The Wall Street Journal](#)
- Canada's naval industry eyes an influx of cash following the nation's pullout from the F-35 fighter program: [Defense News](#)
- A safety system designed to quickly ground the big Army surveillance blimp likely failed when it untethered and flew away from Maryland to Pennsylvania: [Inside Defense](#)
- A mysterious flash of light streaking across the Southern California sky Saturday was a Trident missile fired in a test by the Navy: [San Diego Union-Tribune](#)

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To: (b) (6)
Subject: POLITICO's Morning Defense, presented by UnitedHealth Group: Senate to pass NDAA again today — Two Americans killed in Jordan shooting — SASC tackles Goldwater-Nichols
Date: Tuesday, November 10, 2015 8:32:08 AM

By Jeremy Herb | 11/10/2015 08:30 AM EDT

With Louis Nelson

NDAA TO MOVE QUICKLY THROUGH SENATE TODAY: The Senate is set to show how quickly it can move legislation - when it has all 100 senators on board. The upper chamber is slated to approve this morning the new version of the National Defense Authorization Act that passed the House last week - with no procedural votes, no waiting 30 hours and no 60-vote threshold. Just a simple up-or-down vote to send the defense policy bill to President Barack Obama for the second time. And this time around, with the budget issues resolved, the president is expected to sign it into law, even though the White House is still opposed to the restrictions on transferring prisoners from the U.S. military prison at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

A NEW FRONT - TWO AMERICANS KILLED IN SHOOTING IN JORDAN POLICE CENTER, [via The Associated Press](#): "A Jordanian police captain opened fire Monday on instructors at an international police training center in Jordan's capital, killing at least five people, including two Americans, before being shot dead by security forces. It was not clear if there was a political motive to the shooting spree, which also wounded six people, including two Americans. But concern has swirled in staunchly pro-Western Jordan over possible revenge attacks by Islamic militants since the country assumed a high-level role in the U.S.-led military campaign against the Islamic State extremist group, which controls large areas of neighboring Syria and Iraq.

"The unprecedented assault inside a Jordanian security compound also raised questions about the kingdom's image as an island of relative stability in a turbulent region. The shooting took place at the Jordan International Police Training Center in Amman, where Jordanian and foreign instructors, including Americans, have trained thousands of police officers from the Palestinian territories and other parts of the Arab world in recent years."

HAPPENING TODAY - SASC TACKLES GOLDWATER-NICHOLS: The Senate Armed Services Committee dives into 30 years of Goldwater-Nichols this morning in a hearing that hits at the heart of Senate Armed Services Chairman John McCain's Pentagon reform efforts. The landmark 1983 law re-organized the Defense Department and changed the roles of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the service chiefs and combatant commanders. The Arizona Republican has three primary reasons for undertaking a top-to-bottom review of the Pentagon's organizational structure, according to a SASC aide: the new threat environment that's expanded the number and type of threats, the diffusion of technology that's eroded the military's tech edge and fiscal constraints that demand prioritization.

One of the three witnesses at today's hearing is James Locher, a senior fellow at Joint Special Operations University and a primary author of Goldwater-Nichols. Locher will testify that the Pentagon's organizational structure needs to be "faster, more collaborative and more decentralized," according to excerpts of his written testimony shared with Morning D. The Pentagon, Locher says, "has not adapted its organizational approaches to keep up with the world it faces."

HAPPY TUESDAY AND WELCOME TO MORNING DEFENSE, where we want to wish the Marine Corps a happy 240th birthday today. We're still trying a new method of embedding links into Morning D, so tell us what you think at jherb@politico.com, or on Twitter [@jeremyherb](#), [@morningdefense](#) and [@politicopro](#).

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PLANE CRASH INVESTIGATION - RUSSIA IS COMING AROUND TO THE BOMB, [via The Wall Street Journal](#): "Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev said Monday that a bomb may have caused the downing of a passenger jet in Egypt, the strongest official acknowledgment to date by Russia that it may have been a terror incident. The shift in tone from Russia comes amid increasing belief among U.K. and U.S. officials that the Oct. 31 crash of a Russian-operated Airbus A321, which killed all 224 people on board, was the result of a terrorist bomb."

"'The probability of a terrorist act, of course, is held as a cause of what happened,' Mr. Medvedev said in an excerpt of a forthcoming interview with Rossiiskaya Gazeta, according to state news agency TASS. The Kremlin's spokesman said Monday that the U.K. shared some intelligence with Russia regarding the crash, but didn't comment on the nature of that information."

- FBI OFFER OF ASSISTANCE GOES UNANSWERED, [reports Reuters' Mark Hosenball](#): "Neither Russia nor Egypt has accepted an offer from the FBI to assist them in investigating the crash of Metrojet flight 9268, which crashed in Egypt's Sinai Peninsula on Oct. 31 shortly after takeoff, a U.S. government source said. The FBI has offered 'forensic assistance' and other unspecified services to both Russia and Egypt, said Joshua Campbell, an FBI spokesman."

FIRST LOOK - A BLUEPRINT FOR VETERANS AND THE VA: The Center for a New American Security will release a new report this morning detailing how the next president can best serve veterans and the military community. Titled "Passing the Baton: A Bipartisan 2016 Agenda for the Veteran and Military Community," the report lays out several recommendations, including structure reform to the Department of Veterans Affairs, expanded data sharing between the government, private companies and non-profits and eliminating barriers to public-private non-profit partnerships that aid veterans. The paper includes an agenda for the next president's first 100 days for the veterans' community.

The full report is [here](#).

POLITICO PRO Q&A - AIA CEO DAVID MELCHER: "It's been a busy five months for David Melcher since he took the reins of the Aerospace Industries Association: The threat of budget caps squeezing the defense budget and the expiration of the Export-Import Bank gave the leading defense industry trade association plenty with which to grapple. But things appear to be looking up for Melcher and AIA, with the budget issue resolved - much to the satisfaction of the defense industry - and Ex-Im proponents hoping the bank will be reauthorized soon, too."

"Melcher came to AIA in June following a stint as CEO of Exelis and its predecessor, ITT, before Harris Corp. acquired Exelis earlier this year. A 32-year Army veteran who retired as a three-star general, Melcher succeeded Marion Blakey, who left to become CEO of jet-engine manufacturer Rolls Royce North America. Melcher sat down with POLITICO over the weekend at the Reagan National Defense Forum in Simi Valley, Calif., to discuss AIA's lower-key lobbying approach, its priorities for the new year and what steps the trade association would like to see tackled next on acquisition reform."

The full Q&A is [here, for Pros](#).

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BOOK EXCERPT - BARACK OBAMA, LAWYER-IN-CHIEF: POLITICO Magazine is out with [an excerpt](#) from the new book, "Power Wars: Inside Obama's Post-9/11 Presidency," written by Charlie Savage of The New York Times: "In June 2013, when a cascade of leaked top-secret documents showed the world that Barack Obama had entrenched the post-9/11 surveillance state bequeathed to him by George W. Bush, many observers were surprised. But several of Obama's advisers thought back to an afternoon some 4½ years earlier, shortly after their administration took office."

"The officials were there to tell Obama about secret surveillance programs - including the fact that the National Security Agency was collecting Americans' domestic phone records in bulk. The meeting and its aftermath helped establish a pattern for Obama's presidency that has confounded many of his supporters. The liberal-minded legal scholar promised change from Bush's 'global war on terrorism,' but he ended up entrenching many Bush-like counterterrorism policies: drone strikes, military commissions, detaining Guantánamo prisoners without trial - and broad surveillance activities, including the NSA's bulk phone records program. How did this seeming transformation happen? Obama's approach to the bulk records program - driven, above all, by his inclinations as a lawyer - is key to deciphering the larger mystery."

MAKING MOVES - REVISION MILITARY TECHNOLOGIES HIRES NEW PRESIDENT: The Vermont-based research firm Revision Military Technologies has tapped retired Lt Gen Michael Dubie as its president. Dubie retired from the Air Force in October as deputy commander of U.S. Northern Command.

DESSERT - NAVY MISSILE TEST OFF CALIFORNIA STILL NO UFO, DOD SAYS AGAIN: The Pentagon issued another statement Monday about a missile test off the coast of California - and no, it wasn't a UFO, in case you were wondering. The Pentagon said a second Trident II missile was launched in a test off the Southern California coast around noon Monday. The Navy's daytime launch didn't generate the same controversy - and conspiracy theories - on social media as the first one Saturday night, but DoD did note Monday's launch was the final one of the exercise.

SPEED READ

- Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu strikes a conciliatory tone in his meeting with the president at the White House: [POLITICO](#)
- Islamic State-aligned forces in Afghanistan behead seven civilian hostages: [NYT](#)
- Moscow warns the next round of talks on Syria should not focus on demands for Syrian President Bashar Assad's resignation: [AP](#)
- The Senate report on CIA interrogations is still stuck in limbo: [NYT](#)
- Lockheed Martin is pitching its C-130 aircraft to the British military as a cheaper replacement for the Boeing-made P-8: [Defense News](#)
- Russia announces it will move forward with a deal to send its S-300 missile systems to Iran: [Agence France-Presse](#)
- The Air Force struggles to add new drone pilots as it copes with pilot fatigue and a shortage of recruits: [Los Angeles Times](#)
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PRO SCOOP - F-35 CYBERSECURITY TESTS DELAYED OVER VULNERABILITY CONCERNS, our colleague Austin Wright [has the story](#): "Military officials have delayed key cybersecurity testing of the F-35 fighter jet out of concern the drills could damage the sophisticated software that serves as the backbone for the next-generation aircraft's operations, irking the Pentagon's own weapons testers and members of Congress. The delays, which have not previously been reported and were confirmed by the F-35 Joint Program Office, are the latest in a string of controversies surrounding the military's most costly weapon system, which is years behind schedule and over cost."

"Those who are pushing for the drills to be conducted as planned say there's irony in the program office's concerns that cyber tests could damage the fighter program and disrupt real-world F-35 operations. Such concerns, they say, are exactly why the tests are necessary for the Lockheed Martin-built plane that's often described as a flying computer and is intended to ensure the Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps can maintain air dominance for decades to come."

U.S. INTELLIGENCE AGENCIES SET TO POINT TO BOMB DESTROYING RUSSIAN PLANE, via our colleague Leigh Munsil: "The U.S. intelligence community is nearly ready to conclude the Islamic State or an affiliate is behind the downing of the Russian passenger jet over Egypt, two top members of the House Intelligence Committee said Sunday. 'Until it's final, we can't say,' Rep. Peter King (R-N.Y.) said on ABC's 'This Week.' 'But, right now, all the evidence points in that direction, yes.'"

"And an airline or airport worker likely placed a bomb on the plane, added Rep. Adam Schiff of California, the committee's ranking Democrat. 'There's a growing body of intelligence and evidence that this was a bomb,' Schiff said on ABC. 'I also think that ISIS might have concluded that the best way to defeat airport defenses is not to go through them - but to go around them with the help of somebody on the inside.'"

2016 WATCH - BEN CARSON CLAIMED WEST POINT SCHOLARSHIP BUT NEVER APPLIED, POLITICO's Kyle Cheney [has the story](#) that generated plenty of controversy over the weekend on both sides of the debate: "Republican presidential candidate Ben Carson on Friday conceded that he never applied nor was granted admission to West Point and attempted to recast his previous claims of a full scholarship to the military academy - despite numerous public and written statements to the contrary over the last few decades."

"West Point has occupied a central place in Carson's personal story for years. According to a tale told in his book, 'Gifted Hands,' the then-17-year-old was introduced in 1969 to Gen. William Westmoreland, who had just ended his command of U.S. forces in Vietnam, and the two dined together. That meeting, according to Carson's telling, was followed by the offer of a 'full scholarship' to the military academy. West Point, however, has no record of Carson applying, much less being extended admission."

- **CARSON: 'IT'S REALLY TIME TO MOVE ON,'** via [POLITICO's Munsil](#) : "Ben Carson says he's under more scrutiny than any previous presidential candidate, suggesting the excessive vetting was a response to the threat he poses to progressivism and Democrat Hillary Clinton's campaign 'I have always said that I expect to be vetted, but being vetted and what is going on with me - 'You said this 30 years ago, you said this 20 years ago, this didn't exist,' I have not seen that with anyone else,' the Republican presidential hopeful said in an interview aired Sunday on NBC's 'Meet the Press' ""

INDUSTRY INTEL - BOEING, LOCKHEED PROTEST BOMBER DECISION: Boeing and Lockheed Martin are protesting the Air Force's decision to award the Long Range Strike Bomber contract to Northrop Grumman, the companies announced Friday. The protest, to the Government Accountability Office, is a sign the losing team doesn't believe the selection process was fair - and marks the beginning of a new round of political wrangling over the high profile project. The Air Force's next-generation bomber is expected to be worth as much as \$111 billion over the coming decades and has been one of the hardest-fought weapons competitions in recent Pentagon history.

SPEED READ

- A breakaway faction of the Taliban says it's ready to negotiate with the Afghan government and support the rights of women to work and seek education: [The Washington Post](#)
- The defense secretary says more U.S. troops are possible in Syria to fight against the Islamic State: [ABC News](#)
- Arab allies are vanishing from the campaign against the Islamic State as the U.S. ramps up airstrikes: [The New York Times](#)
- Former prisoners of the Islamic State describe their captivity before a raid freed them in Iraq when a U.S. soldier was killed: [The Washington Post](#)
- Venezuela says a Coast Guard intelligence plane violated its airspace: [Reuters](#)
- Federal prosecutors are investigating pharmacies for fraudulent claims in the military health insurance program: [The Wall Street Journal](#)
- Canada's naval industry eyes an influx of cash following the nation's pullout from the F-35 fighter program: [Defense News](#)
- A safety system designed to quickly ground the big Army surveillance blimp likely failed when it untethered and flew away from Maryland to Pennsylvania: [Inside Defense](#)
- A mysterious flash of light streaking across the Southern California sky Saturday was a Trident missile fired in a test by the Navy: [San Diego Union-Tribune](#)

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By Jeremy Herb | 02/16/2016 08:30 AM EDT

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Date: Thursday, June 9, 2016 8:34:04 AM

By Jeremy Herb | 06/09/2016 08:30 AM EDT

With Zach Montellaro, Connor O'Brien, Austin Wright and Ellen Mitchell

RYAN TO ROLL OUT GOP NATIONAL SECURITY AGENDA: House Speaker Paul Ryan is unveiling the House Republican national security agenda this morning, a policy document intended as a rebuke to President Barack Obama's foreign policy - but also serving as a counterweight to the presumptive Republican presidential nominee, Donald Trump

The [23-page document](#) issues broad themes on terrorism, securing the border, strengthening alliances, reforming the State Department and modernizing the military

Republicans spend plenty of ink slamming the Obama administration, from the Iran deal to restoring relations with Cuba to the Russia reset. But the agenda also contains some gentle pushback to Trump's foreign policy pronouncements - including his border wall with Mexico, where the agenda states that "we need more than just fencing" to secure the border. House Republicans propose more Border Patrol agents, "high fencing" and better surveillance.

The agenda states clearly the U.S. "should maintain a strong NATO presence in Europe," after Trump suggested NATO was obsolete. House Republicans do call for pressing allies to spend more on the military, in a nod to Trump's complaint the U.S. is contributing too much to the alliance. But in several cases, the document is short on specifics.

It calls for modernizing the military, for instance, but it doesn't attempt to quantify the added costs that come with it. And nowhere does it mention a repeal of the Budget Control Act that Republican defense hawks warn is strangling the defense budget and decimating the military's readiness - but the party's fiscal hawks support keeping in place.

Ryan and other top Republicans are rolling out the national security agenda at a Council on Foreign Relations [event](#) this morning. It's the second plank in the speaker's "A Better Way" policy agenda, following his plan to counter poverty on Tuesday. He'll be joined by House Majority Leader Kevin McCarthy of California and six GOP committee chairmen.

SENATE TO VOTE TODAY - REALLY - ON SPENDING AMENDMENTS: Yes, the Senate will take amendment votes today on the National Defense Authorization Act. The chamber famous for its methodical pace is doing just that as it debates the defense policy bill, but it's scheduled 11:15 a.m. votes on two amendments: Senate Armed Services Chairman John McCain's proposal to increase defense spending by \$18 billion through the Overseas Contingency Operations war account and a Democratic alternative to provide an equal boost in domestic spending. Both will need 60 votes to pass.

- **SO, WILL THE BILL GET DONE THIS WEEK?** Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.) filed a motion to cut off debate on the bill Wednesday night, which could set up a procedural vote leading to final passage on Friday. The two sides also could reach an agreement to finish the bill earlier - the Senate has yet to vote on Friday this year - or they even could strike a deal to allow for amendment votes into next week (though that's looking less likely).

McConnell's motion could spell trouble for senators eager to get votes on their contentious amendments. And several senators are pushing for their proposals to be debated, including Florida Sen. Bill Nelson's measure on Russian rocket engines and New York Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand's military sexual assault reform proposal. At this point, however, there'll have to be agreement for the Senate to do much of anything on amendments if it sticks to the Friday deadline.

- **YOU GET A LETTER, AND YOU GET A LETTER:** With such a sweeping bill, the NDAA attracts plenty of attention from outside advocacy groups, and the letters and op/eds have been flying around Capitol Hill. A sampling in the MD inbox includes [a letter](#) from progressive and anti-war groups against McCain's amendment to boost defense spending, [another](#) from open government groups on removing Freedom of Information Act exemptions from the bill, [an op-ed](#) from former Air Force Space Command chief retired Gen. William Shelton backing ULA in its fight with SpaceX and [one more](#) supporting Sen. Tim Kaine's (D-Va.) proposal on countering violent extremism.

HAPPY THURSDAY AND WELCOME TO MORNING DEFENSE, where we're always on the lookout for tips, pitches and feedback. Email us at jherb@politico.com, and follow on Twitter [@jeremyherb](#), [@morningdefense](#) and [@politicopro](#).

HAPPENING TODAY - CARTER TO ROLL OUT 'FORCE OF THE FUTURE' INITIATIVE: Defense Secretary Ash Carter rolls out the latest part of his "Force of the Future" initiative in the Pentagon courtyard. It's Carter's third batch of "Force of the Future" reforms and The Associated Press [reports](#) this morning that Carter will propose changes to the military's "up or out" promotion system. "Force of the Future" has not been without controversy, as Republicans on Capitol Hill have been critical of it, and it was connected to the departure of Carter's former personnel chief, Brad Carson.

- **THE MEETING SHALL NOT BE DISCUSSED:** SpaceX and Tesla co-founder Elon Musk met with the defense secretary Wednesday, but neither the Pentagon nor Musk wanted to say much about it afterward. "Elon has a number of long-standing commitments in D.C. and is making a courtesy visit to the secretary while in town," a SpaceX spokesman said Wednesday. While Carter may have been glad Musk stopped by, the Pentagon declined to provide a readout of the meeting. Musk had fun with the media speculation on his visit, [tweeting](#): "Something about a flying metal suit."

ALSO TODAY: The House Armed Services Emerging Threats and Capabilities Subcommittee holds a [joint hearing](#) with the Foreign Affairs Terrorism, Nonproliferation and Trade Subcommittee on targeting the finances of terror groups. And staffers from the Senate Armed Services and House Foreign Affairs Committees discuss Asia foreign policy and defense issues this afternoon at the [Heritage Foundation](#).

RNC GETS INPUT ON ITS DEFENSE AND FOREIGN POLICY PLATFORM: The Republican National Committee held a "listening session" with defense and foreign policy analysts and lobbyists on Wednesday to discuss its party platform. Two attendees told Morning D it was a "productive" meeting with RNC officials in a listening mode. Among the issues discussed: elevating terrorism as a threat beyond the Middle East, Israel, rebuilding the tools of statecraft and U.S. alliances - including NATO, where Republicans' robust foreign policy orthodoxy has been at odds with Trump.

One attendee said the consensus message was to "strongly reaffirm the U.S. commitment to the alliance," while also noting the importance that NATO members should be meeting their 2 percent threshold, in a nod to some of Trump's concerns. This won't be the only RNC listening session on defense issues: another is being held Monday, according to an MD tipster.

- **NATO VS. TRUMP OVER NEW INTEL POST**, [via our colleague](#) Louis Nelson: "Donald Trump bragged to Bloomberg Wednesday that his criticism led to NATO's plan to create a new high-level intelligence post to help combat terrorism. But NATO says Trump had nothing to do with it. The presumptive Republican nominee has sniped at the trans-Atlantic treaty organization throughout his campaign, arguing the U.S. disproportionately funds NATO even though it 'doesn't cover terrorism'."

"Trump told [Bloomberg](#) that the creation of NATO's new assistant secretary general for intelligence position is 'all because of me.' NATO disputed Trump's claim and said the new position has no connection to the presumptive GOP nominee or any other candidate."

FOR YOUR RADAR - SPENDING BILLS COULD BE ON TAP NEXT WEEK: The House Rules Committee will meet next week to sort through amendments to the defense appropriations bill ahead of possible floor consideration. Next week's meeting indicates that floor action on the defense bill is also possible then. A spokesman for the House majority leader, however, characterized the timing of the bill as still to be determined. The Senate could also take up its defense spending bill next week.

- **BUT THE RULES ARE A-CHANGIN' FOR THE DEFENSE BILL IN THE HOUSE**, [reports](#) our colleagues Jake Sherman and Heather Caygle: "House Speaker Paul Ryan is looking to tighten leadership's grip on the appropriations process by blocking amendments that could sink spending bills. The proposal, which Ryan (R-Wis.) made in a closed-door party meeting Wednesday morning, is being billed as a slight walk back from his promise of opening the House floor to a raft of amendments. But Ryan and the GOP leadership expect most amendments will still be permitted and only so-called poison pill proposals will be blocked."

WAR REPORT - IRAQI TROOPS ENTER FALLUJAH, [via the AP](#): "A column of black Humvees carrying Iraqi special forces rolled into southern Fallujah on Wednesday, the first time in more than two years that government troops have entered the western city held by the Islamic State group. The counterterrorism troops fought house-to-house battles with the militants in the Shuhada neighborhood, and the operation to retake the city is expected to be one of the most difficult yet."

- **BUT MORE BOMBINGS AROUND BAGHDAD, [reports](#)** Reuters: "More than 22 people were killed and 70 wounded in two separate bombings on Thursday in Baghdad, one targeting a commercial street and the other an army checkpoint, Iraqi police said."

ALLIES OF RAND PAUL, KOCH TAKE AIM AT HAWKS, [reports](#) POLITICO's Bryan Bender: "Sen. Rand Paul's vision of a less militaristic foreign policy got little traction in the GOP primaries, but some of his key backers are joining forces with associates of billionaire Charles Koch in a fresh effort to steer Washington away from interventions in overseas wars. They're launching a think tank, the [Defense Priorities Foundation](#), that seeks to elevate national security policies that are decidedly out of the mainstream of Republican - and even some Democratic - foreign policy thinking, featuring a significantly greater reluctance to assert military force or even impose sanctions on nations such as North Korea."

MAKING MOVES - MCHUGH TO K&L GATES: Former Army Secretary John McHugh has been hired by lobbying firm K&L Gates, [reports](#) our POLITICO Influence colleague Isaac Arnsdorf. "McHugh told PI he had talks with about a dozen firms and chose K&L Gates for its global reach and collaborative approach. He is eight months into his two-year cooling-off period during which he can't lobby the Defense Department, but he will be providing 'strategic advice.' He ruled out returning to public office."

"Before becoming secretary, McHugh rose to ranking member of the House Armed Services Committee. LeMay was his principal civilian adviser and also worked for him on the Hill. K&L Gates' defense clients include Textron Systems, Michael Baker International and ManTech International."

SPEED READ

- About a dozen detainees released from the U.S. military prison at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, have launched attacks against U.S. or allied forces in Afghanistan: [The Washington Post](#)
- The Pentagon is planning to shift its command structure in the Islamic State fight to increase reliance on the U.S. Special Operations Command: [The Wall Street Journal](#)
- The U.N. accuses the leaders of the African nation Eritrea of widespread crimes against humanity: [The New York Times](#)
- While the battle rages around Fallujah, 90,000 civilians are still trapped in the city: [Reuters](#)
- The defense secretary and his Swedish counterpart sign a new defense pact: [POLITICO Pro](#)
- A Defense Department inspector general investigation into a Medal of Honor denial shows how subjective the process can be: [The Washington Post](#)
- U.S. carrier movement in the Mediterranean Sea is intended to send a message to Russia: [WSJ](#)
- A study says EU defense spending increased, while defense research and technology spending was at its lowest level: [Defense News](#)
- Military lawyers push back against allegations from Khalid Sheikh Mohammed's defense team that the prosecutors colluded with the judge in the case: [The Guardian](#)

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