

OPERATIONAL ENVIRONMENT WATCH



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(Jordan: No Foreign Troops on Border with Syria), aljazeera.net, 12 December 2011

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“Fanon’s Enduring Relevance,” Pambazuka News, 5 Dec 2011

If Fanon were alive today, his message would remain that it is imperative the wretched of the earth, particularly in Africa, confront the fact that class oppression in Africa comes from fellow



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East Africa: Al Shabaab Versus Kenya - the Twitter War,” The Daily Maverick, 13 December 2011

The revelation of the banter between al-Shebab and the Kenyan army raises important questions about how Twitter is changing the tactical landscape of conflicts in Africa and around the world



- 27 Continued Chinese Focus on High-Tech Rare Earth Elements**

“包头国家稀土高新区让世界刮目相看” (Baotou National New and High Tech Rare Earth Zone Wows the World) Inner Mongolian Issue of China Daily, 05 Nov 2011

These innovation-related products have been widely used in national defense scientific research and new and high-tech fields, which have received numerous awards from related state ministries and commissions



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“Over 350 Militants Killed in Russia’s North Caucasus since Start of 2011,” Moscow Interfax, 13 December 2011

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Facing Missile Threats from Three Directions

27 November 2011

Source: “Türkiye 3 Yönden Füze Tehdidi Altına Girdi: Rusya ve İran’dan sonra şimdi de Suriye! (Turkey Faces Missile Threats from Three Directions: Russia, Iran and now Syria!),” Euractiv.com, 27 November 2011, <http://www.euractiv.com.tr/politika-000110/article/iran-saldr-olursa-ilk-hedefimiz-trkiyedeki-nato-fze-kalkan-022677>



The NATO missile shield radars will be placed in Turkey, Spain, Romania and Poland. Photo via Atlantic Council US <http://www.acus.org>

FMSO Commentary: Turkey has gone from striving for ‘zero problems with its neighbors’ to being faced with missile threats from three directions. The Arab Spring, Turkey’s position on Syria and its decision to host the NATO radar have resulted in this situation.

Iran is aggravated by Turkey’s stance on Syria, which is Iran’s only ally in the Arab world. It is also infuriated by Ankara’s recent decision to host NATO’s early warning radar missile system in Turkey’s southeast. Tehran sees this plan as a U.S.-led plot to protect Israel against a possible counterattack by Iran, in the event that Israel targets Iran’s nuclear facilities. It is now threatening to make the radar its first target in the event of an attack.

Relations with Syria have soured over Turkey’s harsh criticism of the Assad regime, its calls for Assad to step down and its call for tough sanctions on Syria. Turkey is also sheltering about 7,500 opponents of the Assad regime in its Hatay province (on the border with Syria). One of them is Riad al-Assad, a Syrian army colonel who heads a group of army deserters who carry out attacks within Syria. In return, Syria has now reportedly deployed SAM and SCUD missiles near the Turkish border after having recently tested its SCUD B missiles.

Meanwhile, Russia opposes the planned missile defense system, which it worries could threaten its own nuclear missiles or undermine its deterrence capability. Russia announced that it was ready to deploy intermediate range Iskander missiles and a new radar warning system against incoming missiles in Krasnodar, from where it can hit one third of Turkey. Russia has said that it reserves the right to strike NATO’s European shield radars (to be placed in Turkey, Spain, Romania and Poland) unless it was given clear, written guarantees that the missile defense capabilities will not be targeted against its strategic capability. Russia also wants both sides to operate a joint missile shield; NATO wants to keep the two systems separate, but share information with Russia. The two sides are still seeking a compromise. **End FMSO Commentary (Kaya)**

Türkiye 3 Yönden Füze Tehdidi Altına Girdi: Rusya ve İran’dan sonra şimdi de Suriye! (Turkey Faces Missile Threats from Three Directions: Russia, Iran and now Syria!)

Iran’s Air-Space Forces Commander Brigadier General Emir Ali Hacizade said that in the event of an attack on Iran, Iran’s first target would be the NATO missile defense system in Turkey. Two days ago, Russia also announced that their Russian Iskander-E missiles to be deployed in Southern Russia would target the NATO missile shield to be placed in Malatya-Kürecik in Turkey. Meanwhile, Syria also deployed its Sam and Scud missiles (with a range of 1500 km) near the Turkish border. Turkey is now surrounded by missile threats from three directions.

Due to the NATO missile defense shield radar to be hosted in Malatya, Turkey is becoming Iran’s target as well as Russia’s.

Meanwhile, Syria has also pointed its missiles towards Turkey, due to the latest tensions. Scud and Sam missiles with a range of 1500 km (~930 miles) have been placed in Kamışlı and Ayn Diwar- near the Turkish border.

Thus Turkey now faces missile threats from 3 directions: Russia, Iran and Syria.

Iranian Brigadier General Hacizade said, “We have prepared ourselves. If there is an attack on Iran, our first target will be the missile shield systems in Turkey, and then we’ll turn to other targets.”

Brigadier General Hacizade said, “The missile shield to be placed in Turkey is there

***Continued:* Turkey Faces Missile Threats from Three Directions: Russia, Iran and now Syria!**

not because NATO wants it to be, but because the U.S. wants to protect Israel. They are trying to deceive the entire international community, starting with the Turks, into thinking that NATO wants to do this. In today's world, the Zionist regime (Israel) conducts its acts with the U.S., and the U.S. conducts its acts as NATO. However, we believe that the Turks are knowledgeable enough to prevent such a conspiracy. The Muslim Turkish people will destroy this system when it's time."

Russian Missiles Target the Shield

The Russian government, who has opposed the NATO missile shield, has announced that deploy missiles that will target countries which host radar systems, including Turkey. Their Iskander-E missiles, which will be positioned in Krasnodar, will be able to hit a third of Turkey, including the Kürecik radar base in Malatya.

Russia has not been able to come to an agreement with the U.S. and NATO regarding the missile shield in Europe and has threatened to deploy missiles targeting countries that will host the system. During discussions on the topic last year, the Moscow government had suggested joint management of the systems to be placed in Poland, the Czech Republic, Romania and Turkey. This proposal had been rejected by NATO. This situation disturbed Russia, who expanded its missile ranges to include Turkey. These were Iskander-E missiles that it had initially planned to deploy in Kaliningrad to target Poland and the Czech Republic.

Russian President Medvedev threatened to include every country that will host a radar system within the range of its Iskander-E missiles.

A Range of 2,000 Kilometers (~1,250 miles)

Medvedev warned that if Russian concerns regarding the missile shield were not addressed, Russia would consider unilaterally withdrawing from the START treaty, saying, "We will not let the balance of power be disrupted. If our concerns are not addressed, we will develop nuclear warheads that would break the shield. We will also target the system with the tactical Iskander-E missiles." The Russian press reported that the Iskander-E missiles, which have a 2,000 km (~1250 miles) range, would be deployed in the Krasnodar region on the Black Sea, and that they would have the capacity to target the radars to be placed in Malatya Kürecik [in Turkey]. The press also reported that the radar base in Romania would be targeted by Iskander-E missiles to be deployed in Belarus.

Strong Oppositions aren't for Turbulent Times

Vladimir Putin, who is seen as the definite winner of the upcoming elections in March, received wide applause following a speech in which he argued against a strong opposition. Putin, who spoke in the Duma, the lower house of the Russian Parliament said,

"Russia cannot afford to have a strong opposition in such difficult economic times. A strong opposition might block important laws needed to overcome economic instability. In such times, the government hopes that the opposition will be calm and not ruin everything, to no avail. In the coming elections we will take over the government even stronger and show the public that we are moving in the right direction."

4 Minutes away from the Turkish Border

One of the Iskander-E missiles that Russia plans to deploy against the NATO missile shield will be placed in Krasnodar, on the Black Sea coast. These tactical missiles weigh 4,600 kg (4.6 tons) and can be ready to launch by two people, within 18 minutes. They would reach Turkey in 4 minutes, given that Turkey is 480 km (~300 miles) away. If one of the Iskander-E missiles, which go 2,100 m (~1.3 miles) per second, were dispatched from Krasnodar, it would hit one third of Turkey.

Syria Points the Missiles at Turkey too

Scud and Sam missiles, which are some of the most trusted weapons of the Syrian army, have a range of 1500 km.

Syria responded to Turkey's democracy requests with a show of military strength.

It is reported that the Assad regime has pointed its SCUD missiles- designed to carry nuclear warheads- towards Turkey. The SCUD missiles, which, until recently were the U.S.'s and Israel's nightmare, are now deployed on the Turkey-Iraq border in Kamışlı and Ayn Diwar.

Aside from its missiles, the Syrian army is known for having highest number of armored vehicles after Russia.

The Syrian army has 310,000 people, 220,000 of which are land forces units. They have 1,700 T72-M1 tanks; 1,100 T62-MK tanks and 2,500 T55 tanks. The Syrian Army uses howitzers made in Russia, North Korea and Iran, with various dimensions. Their Marine Corps use the weapon of the Soviet era- the Kalashnikov.

The regime in Syria has 1500 km (~930 miles) range missiles, which it has used as a threat to Israel and the opposition in Lebanon for years. The SCUD B/C series missiles' capacity for nuclear warheads is known as Israel's nightmare.

FMSO Commentary: On November 21, the Turkish Armed Forces issued a statement on its website, revealing its personnel figures. This is the first time it has ever issued such a detailed report. According to the figures, the Turkish military has a total of 720,000 personnel, including 365 generals and admirals. These numbers confirm reports that Turkey is the world's 9th largest military (see figure).

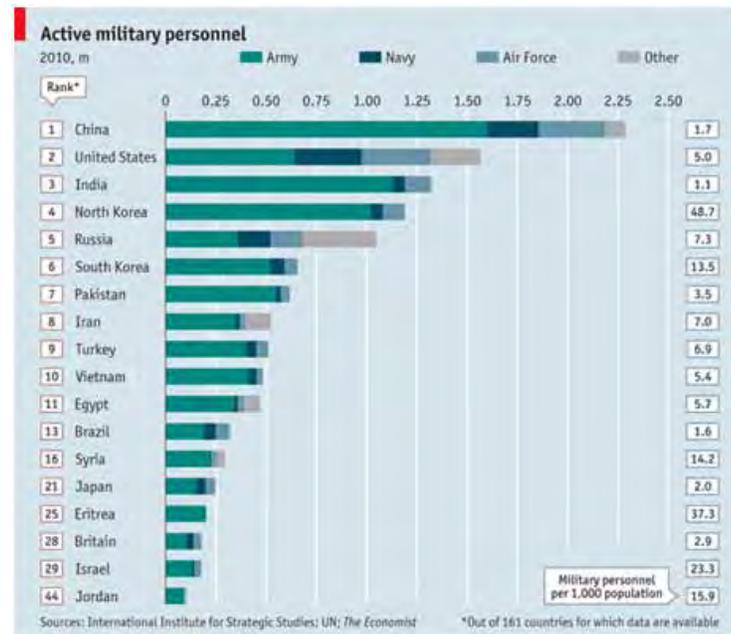
The statement came amid discussions about paid exemption from compulsory military service ('Bill Amending the Law on Military Service'). During the discussions, one issue of contention was the minimum age for those who could benefit from the bill. Some were advocating a minimum age of 30, while others were advocating 22. Thus, the statement from the Armed Forces was interpreted as a sign that there are enough who serve in the military such that the age limit for paid exemption could be lowered.

The bill eventually passed and the terms of paid exemption were set as follows: as of December 31, those who are 30 or older will be allowed to be exempt from their military service by paying 30,000 Liras (~\$16,000). End FMSO Commentary (Kaya)

Military Reveals its Personnel Numbers: 9th Largest in the World

22 November 2011

Source: "TSK'da 465 Bin Kişi Silah Altında, (Toplam 720,000) (465 Thousand Compulsory Personnel Serving in the Turkish Armed Forces (and a Grand Total of 720,000 Personnel)," Yeni Şafak (New Dawn), 22 November 2011. <http://yenisafak.com.tr/Gundem/?!=352514>



Largest Militaries in the World, via The Economist

***TSK'da 465 Bin Kişi Silah Altında,
(Toplam 720,000)
(465 Thousand Compulsory Personnel
in the Turkish Armed Forces [and a
Grand Total of 720,000])***

The Turkish Armed Forces revealed the numbers of its commissioned and non-commissioned officers and privates. According to the figures, the Turkish Armed Forces has a grand total of 720,000 personnel, including 365 generals and admirals. There are 465,197 compulsory personnel. The announcement came right before the decision on the 'paid exemption from military service' bill.

As the country waited for Prime Minister Tayyip Erdoğan's statements on the age limit and price of paid exemption from military service, the Turkish General Staff revealed the numbers of its personnel. Currently, there are a total of 135,799 commissioned and non-commissioned officers. 39,975 of these are commissioned and 95,824 are non-commissioned officers. One factor that attracted a lot of attention was the high number of generals. The Armed Forces has 365 generals and admirals. Reducing this number has been on the agenda in the past few days.

Continued: 465 Thousand Compulsory Personnel in the Turkish Armed Forces (and a Grand Total of 720,000)

CLOSE TO 7,000 RESERVE OFFICERS

The total number of specialized gendarmerie and privates is 65,215. This consists of 24,700 specialized gendarmerie and 40,515 specialized privates. The total number of specialized personnel, (including generals/admirals; commissioned and non-commissioned officers; specialized gendarmerie, specialized private) is 201,379.

College graduates who serve as reserve officers number 6,829; while privates total 458,368. There are 465,197 commissioned officers in the Turkish Armed Forces right now. In addition, there are 53,424 civil personnel working in institutions under the General Staff. So, the total number is 720,000. The personnel size of the Turkish Armed Forces is so big that it would scare off an enemy and inspire trust in an ally. The Turkish Armed Forces has 2-3 times more personnel than many of the European countries' militaries.

A MESSAGE ABOUT PAID EXEMPTION FROM MILITARY SERVICE

This statement was issued amid discussions about the age limit for those who will be eligible for paid exemption from military service. Thus, it was interpreted as a sign that there are enough who serve in the military such that the age limit for paid exemption could be lowered. During debates about what the age limit should

be, some had suggested going down to 22. The statement issued on the Turkish Armed Forces' website was interpreted as a message that, 'there are enough soldiers.'

Here is the Breakdown of the Turkish Armed Forces:

General/Admiral: 365
 Commissioned Officer: 39,975
 Non-commissioned Officer: 95,824
 Specialized Gendarmerie: 24,700
 Specialized Private: 40,515
 Contracted Private: -
 Total Specialized Personnel: 201,379
 Reserve Officer: 6,829
 Private: 458,368
 Total Compulsory Personnel: 465,197
 Total Military Personnel: 666,576
 Civil Servants/Workers: 53,424
 Grand Total: 720,000



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Defense Secretary Panetta Visits Turkey: A 'Golden Age' in U.S.-Turkey Relations?

15 December 2011



Source: "Amerikan Savunma Bakanı Leon Panetta, bugün Ankara'ya geliyor (The U.S. Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta is arriving in Ankara today)" Haberaj.com, 15 December 2011. <http://www.haberaj.com/dunya/4232/amerikan-savunma-bakani-leon-panetta-bugun-ankaraya-geliyor>

Defense Secretary Leon E. Panetta walks through an honor cordon with Turkish Chief of the General Staff Gen. Necdet Özel in Ankara, Turkey, December 16, 2011. DOD photo by Erin A. Kirk-Cuomo via defense.gov

Amerikan Savunma Bakanı Leon Panetta, bugün Ankara'ya geliyor (U.S. Defense Secretary Leon Panetta is coming to Town)

High-level visits from the U.S. are continuing at full speed.

Two weeks after the U.S. Vice President Joe Biden's visit, the U.S. Defense Secretary Leon Panetta is coming to Turkey. Panetta is expected to arrive in Ankara today.

Panetta, who will visit Turkey following a trip to Afghanistan, will meet with his Turkish counterpart İsmet Yılmaz. The U.S. Secretary of Defense is also expected to meet President Abdullah Gül and Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan. Panetta has a full agenda.

The meetings between the two delegations will focus on the radars to be placed in Malatya-Kürecik [in Turkey] as part of a NATO missile defense system. Other topics include Iran, Syria and Afghanistan. Cooperation on the fight against terror will also be discussed.

Turkey will relate its expectations regarding stronger cooperation, particularly for support in the form of live intelligence to the U.S. Secretary of Defense.

Leon Panetta is also expected to focus on Turkey-Israel relations and the regional developments following the Arab Spring.

Panetta's recent comments "Get to the damn table" regarding the Middle East peace process, calling for more effort from Israel to negotiate with Palestinians had attracted attention in the press.

FMSO Commentary: Analysts in both Turkey and the U.S. are speaking of a Golden Age in Turkish-U.S. relations. In the past few months, more U.S. high-level officials have visited Turkey than ever before, including several former U.S. Ambassadors to Turkey, former Secretary of State Madeline Albright, former National Security Advisor Stephen Hadley, Chairman of the President's Intelligence Advisory Board Chuck Hegel, and Vice President Joe Biden.

On December 15-16, Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta joined the long list of high-level officials visiting Turkey.

The 'Golden Age' in relations is due to several factors. The first is Turkey's active participation in the NATO mission in Libya (despite initial hesitation). The second is Turkey's willingness to host radars as part of the NATO missile defense shield, particularly at a time when its relations with Israel are in crisis and despite Iran's threats to target Turkey in the event of an Israeli attack. The third factor is Turkey's role in the Middle East following the Arab Spring, and Erdoğan's speech in Egypt, during which he called for secularism in Egypt and declared that Islam and democracy are compatible. The US has interpreted these actions as affirming Turkey's commitment to its responsibilities within NATO and to remaining within the Western axis (disproving all the uproar about Turkey 'turning east'). In fact, U.S. experts have called Erdoğan's speech in Cairo more important than President Obama's speech in Cairo in 2009.

The article discusses Turkey's expectations from the visit and the agenda items that Turks think Secretary of Defense Panetta will likely raise with his counterparts in Ankara. **End FMSO Commentary (Kaya).**

FMSO Commentary: *One of the many fears raised by protracted conflict in Syria is its effect on the country's two smaller neighbors, Lebanon and Jordan. Jordan, in particular, is finding it increasingly difficult to remain neutral in a conflict from which it can only lose. In mid-November King Abdullah told the BBC that he would step down if he were in Syrian president Bashar al-Assad's position. Early this month Jordan backed Arab League sanctions on Syria, only to afterward request an exemption from some of them.*

The Jordanian economy depends heavily on Syria as a transit route for its trade with Turkey and Europe. Heavily dependent on external trade and foreign investment, Jordan has thus far been able to buy its way out of significant Arab Spring contagion, in part with financial assistance from the Gulf monarchies. There are, however, increasing signs of unrest, particularly among the country's youth. The mid-November death of a young man from the northern town of Ramtha (across the border from the Syrian city of Daraa) in police custody resulted in major protests and highway blockades. Violent incidents have occurred in several Jordanian university campuses over the past few weeks.

As fighting between the Syrian Army and the increasingly organized rebel militias spreads, refugee flows from Daraa and surrounding areas could increase, posing additional strain on Jordanian authorities. In late November the Jordanian government denied rumors that gunfire had been exchanged across the border with Syrian troops. The incident in question appeared to involve Syrian troops firing at a couple that was attempting to illegally cross into Jordan.

*The following article comes from al-Jazeera's Arabic-language website and speaks to a recent rumor regarding the presence of foreign troops along Jordan's border with Syria. **End FMSO Commentary (Winter)***

Jordan and the Crisis in Syria 12 December 2011



Source:

الأردن: لا قوات أجنبية على حدود سوريا

(Jordan: No Foreign Troops on Border with Syria), aljazeera.net, 12 December 2011. <http://www.aljazeera.net/NR/exeres/87287C8C-5A17-4F57-8456-7C998F1C9D52.htm>

U.S. Army vehicles withdrawing from Iraq through neighboring countries, including Jordan. DoD photo by Staff Sgt. Lynette Hoke, U.S. Army. (Released) (Photo by U.S. Army)

الأردن: لا قوات أجنبية على حدود سوريا (Jordan: No Foreign Troops on Border with Syria)

The Jordanian government strongly denied the report from a foreign news website regarding the presence of American or NATO troops near the Syria-Jordan border. Jordanian government spokesman Rakan al-Majali told aljazeera.net that there is no truth to this news, which he characterized as untrue and “beyond anything that could be thought about.” He noted that for Jordan the Syria issue is delicate, sensitive and intertwined with Jordan, and that reports of foreign troop presence in Jordan near the Syrian border are false.

The denial comes in response to reports from British news websites on the presence of NATO and American troops in Jordan near the border with Syria. One of these websites reported that American troops arrived from Iraq to Jordan. Analysts in Amman believe these troops are on their way home, as Jordan is one of the corridors for American troops coming and going from Iraq.

The website quoted Syrian opposition figure Nizar Nayouf as saying that American forces are working to build a command control center in the region of Hawsha near the Syria-Jordan border. Residents of the border area did not confirm the presence of non-Jordanian troops, noting only an increase in Jordanian troop movement in bases near Syria.

The residents said that such movements have increased directly with the flow of refugees allowed into Jordan for humanitarian reasons. Jordan asked the Arab League to be exempted from the economic sanctions imposed on Syria, especially with respect to air traffic and trade. Until now, the league has not responded to Jordan's request.

RELATED ARTICLE

Turk Concerns With US Withdrawal From Iraq by *Karen Kaya*
“The withdrawal of all US troops from Iraq at the end of the year has been the cause of debate in Turkey. There are serious concerns regarding Iraq's territorial integrity and fears that Turkey will face an uphill battle against the PKK” <http://www.faoa.org/Resources/Documents/International%20Affairs%20FAOA%20Journal%20-%20Dec%2011%20-%20Online.pdf>

The Future of the Libyan Army



11 December 2011

Source: (Libya Ex-Rebels Deny Attempt to Kill Army Officer, Say Ready to Withdraw if Government Protects Facilities in Tripoli), Tripoli Post, 11 December 2011. <http://tripoli-post.com/articledetail.asp?c=1&i=7473>

Zintan fighters and mourners carry the coffin of a killed rebel fighter in Zintan last July. Photo via Tripoli Post

Libya Ex-Rebels Deny Attempt to Kill Army Officer, Say Ready to Withdraw if Government Protects Facilities in Tripoli

Libyan revolutionaries who liberated the Libyan capital, Tripoli and toppled the Gaddafi regime denied accusations that they attempted to kill Colonel Khalifa Hifter who claims to be in charge of a Libyan army. The rebels say the alleged national army does not even exist and has played no role in protecting the strategic facilities in Tripoli. It does not have any presence on Libya borders.

A spokesman from the Zintan revolutionaries denied that his fighters, who protect the Tripoli International Airport and other economic strategic facilities within the capital, ever tried to kill the former Gaddafi military assistant and the commander of the infamous Chad War. Zintan revolutionaries spokesman Khalid el-Zintani, said his fighters did not try to kill Hifter and blamed the clashes that occurred on Saturday evening on the Colonel's failure to notify them of his arrival.

"What do you expect fighters to do, when a heavily armed military convoy tries to pass checkpoints (in the direction of the airport) without previous notification?" el-Zintani asked.

When asked about the "National Army" which Hifter claims to be its Chief of Staff, el-Zintani was quoted telling AP that the military is too poorly organized for them to submit to its authority.

"Until now, we don't know anything about the Libyan national army. Who is in charge, where the military bases are, what is its chain of command or even how can rebels join it?" el-Zintani said. "On the ground, the so-called national army is nothing yet," he stressed.

It is a common fact that Libyans do not agree on those who claim to lead the national army and in the case of the revolutionary fighters who toppled Gaddafi they do not trust those who served in high ranks with the former dictator. Hifter is one of those controversial officers at least until he left the country and went to exile. Hifter was the commander of the Libyan army during the Chad war from 1986 to 1987. But he was defeated and taken prisoner with a large number of Libyan soldiers by the Chadian army. In due time he went to exile to join the opposition group outside Libya.

El-Zintani said that rebels were ready to hand the airport to a government agency "only if it is capable of protecting the airport from intrusions." Mukhtar al-Akhdar, the Zintan fighters' commander at the airport, also disputed the legitimacy of the so-called national army and its very authority. "If this is a real army, why don't they go protect the borders instead of trying to take over the airport?" he said.

***FMSO Commentary:** The presence of rebel militias from the countryside in Tripoli is a growing problem for Libya's fledgling government. Of particular concern is the Zintan militia, which played a key role in the final months of fighting and which captured and still holds Gaddafi's son, Saif al-Islam, in custody.*

Recently, Zintan fighters manning a checkpoint leading from the capital to Tripoli's international airport fired at what they said was an armed convoy that attempted to go past the checkpoint without prior notice. This led to an extended firefight between them and members of the convoy, which was transporting Khalifa Hifter, the Libyan Army's new chief of staff, to a nearby military base.

Tripoli's residents have started taking to the streets, asking for the militias to leave the city. The militias have said they will do so once a national army has been formed. The interim government proposed an initial 100-day timetable to build up the military and security forces. Will this be enough time to create a national army, in the shadow of and with potential opposition from the militias? This is one of the main questions as Libya moves forward.

*The attached article is taken from Libya's English-language Tripoli Post. While most of the article's facts are based on news service reports, the tone – sympathetic toward the militias and distrustful of Hifter – is its own. The article highlights the difficult road ahead in establishing a national military that is legitimate in the eyes of the rebels. **End FMSO Commentary (Winter)***

FMSO Commentary: Northern Yemen's Saada province is largely under the control of the Huthis. The Huthis fought government forces and government-backed tribal militias intermittently from the summer of 2004 until February 2010, when a ceasefire was finally reached after Saudi Arabian military intervention in northern Yemen. In April of this year, as antigovernment protests grew in the country's key cities, Saada's provincial governor fled, leaving a power vacuum that was quickly filled by the Huthis and their allies in the province.

The Huthis quickly worked to consolidate their grip on the province by taking key strategic areas and neutralizing some of their potential adversaries. For both ideological and practical reasons, one such adversary is located in the internationally-renowned Salafist learning center ("Dar al-Hadeeth Center") based in the town of Dammaj, on the outskirts of the provincial capital Saada. The Huthis are a Zaydi (Shi'a) revivalist movement and sectarianism has played an important mobilization role in their clashes with the Salafists of Dammaj. As one would expect, the Salafists have for their part over the years spoken quite derogatorily of their Shi'a brethren.

The Huthis, who gained some measure of national popular support after enduring large-scale attacks from Yemeni forces and later for joining the antigovernment protest movement, have lost much of the sympathy they may have once had due to the siege and their heavy-fisted rule in the province. In the meantime, they appear to have consolidated their hold on the provincial capital.

The attached article, taken from one of Yemen's several excellent independent newspapers, describes the recent clashes in the east of Saada province, where Huthi fighters have thus far thwarted attempts by Salafist backers to break the siege of Dammaj. These clashes are not the only ones taking place along the peripheries of Huthi control. **End FMSO Commentary (Winter)**

Sectarian Clashes in Northern Yemen

8 December 2011



A Yemeni army soldier aims his weapon on rebel targets in the northwestern Yemeni province of Saada. Photo via IRIN (www.irinnews.org)

Source:

تفجر القتال بين الحوثيين والسلفيين في كُتاف بصعدة وسقوط قتلى وجرحى

(Deaths and Injuries as Fighting Breaks Out between Huthis and Salafists in Saada's Kitaf District), al-Masdar, 8 December 2011.

http://www.almasdaronline.com/index.php?page=news&article-section=1&news_id=26387

تفجر القتال بين الحوثيين والسلفيين في كُتاف بصعدة
وسقوط قتلى وجرحى

Deaths and Injuries as Fighting Breaks Out between Huthis and Salafists in Saada's Kitaf District

Fighting broke out yesterday evening (Thursday) between Salafi gunmen accompanying a humanitarian convoy and Huthi fighters in the Kitaf district of Saada province, in northern Yemen. There were contradictory accounts of why the fighting started. The office of Huthi leader Abd al-Malik al-Houthi said that the convoy was armed and had "launched attacks in the region of al-Qati'a," in Kitaf district. A Salafi source said it was a humanitarian convoy.

In a statement obtained by al-Masdar Online, al-Huthi added that the convoy "aimed to spread sedition (fitna)" and had launched a "military attack" just as things were returning to normal, "in order to thwart efforts to restore calm." For approximately two months, the Huthis and Salafists have been fighting in the town of Dammaj, district of al-Safra, as the Huthis impose a blockade on the region, which is known for its Salafist religious center.

A source from the Salafi movement confirmed that the convoy, which he described as "humanitarian," came to provide those under blockade in Dammaj with food. He added that it had been stuck in Kitaf district for weeks. A Salafi spokesman by the name of Mutlaq Dabwan told al-Masdar Online by telephone that clashes had broken out when the Huthis cut off the food and medicine convoy. According to him, two Salafi fighters had been killed and others injured in the ongoing clashes. It was not possible to determine whether or not there had been casualties among the Huthis.

As for the number of people in the convoy, Dabwan said that there were hundreds and they had come from various parts of Yemen. The Huthis declared that they had handed two checkpoints along the road to Dammaj to "security forces," but Mutlaq Dabwan said these were actually Huthi fighters wearing military uniform. He also said these checkpoints had prevented a Red Cross team from going to Dammaj to recover the bodies of Salafists who had been killed in previous battles two days earlier. Dabwan said that the situation in the area is "very bad... we are facing hunger on the one side and attacks and bombings on the other."

Conflict Diamonds Return

5 December 2011

Source : Bell, Alex. "Zimbabwe: Key Rights Group Quits 'Failing' Diamond Watchdog," SW RadioAfrica/AllAfrica.com, 5 Dec 2011. <http://allafrica.com/stories/201112060192.html>. Original Global Witness Report at http://www.swradioafrica.com/Documents/05-12-2011_Global-Witness_KPPullot_KPexity.pdf



Kimberly Process logo (left) and Global Witness logo (right), from kimberlyprocess.com and globalwitness.org respectively.

Zimbabwe: Key Rights Group Quits 'Failing' Diamond Watchdog

A key international human rights campaign group has announced that it has left the diamond industry's watchdog, the Kimberley Process (KP), in the strongest indictment yet of the monitoring body. UK based Global Witness said on Monday that the KP's "refusal to evolve and address the clear links between diamonds, violence and tyranny has rendered it increasingly outdated."

Global Witness in recent years has played a key role in exposing ongoing human rights abuses in Zimbabwe's Chiadzwa diamond fields and has previously lobbied for strong action against the country. But the group said that the KP "has proved unwilling to stop diamonds fuelling corruption and violence in Zimbabwe," condemning the group's decision to allow exports from Chiadzwa to resume.

This decision in November has been widely criticized by human rights groups and international members of the diamond industry, who have slammed the KP for appearing to sideline human rights concerns. This is because the decision was made in spite of evidence of serious human rights abuses, ongoing smuggling and high level corruption at Chiadzwa.

The first auction of Chiadzwa diamonds, since the KP's decision in November, got underway in Harare last Friday, with Global Witness warning that the diamond profits could be used to fund violence in Zimbabwe's upcoming election. "Over the last decade, elections in Zimbabwe have been associated with the brutal intimidation of voters. Orchestrating this kind of violence costs a lot of money. As the country approaches another election there is a very high risk of ZANU PF hardliners employing these tactics once more and using (Chiadzwa) diamonds to foot the bill. The KP's refusal to confront this reality is an outrage," said Global Witness founding Director, Chairman Gooch.

The KP has faced intense criticism over its handling of the Zimbabwe situation, with rights groups accusing it of letting the country "off the hook." The group has repeatedly refused to give in to pressure to completely ban Zimbabwe from international trade, and instead made room for the country to fall in line with minimum trade standards.

FMSO Commentary: Their sale helped fuel brutal conflicts in several African nations, earning these diamonds the prefaces of "conflict" and "blood." To help defund the warlords and others responsible for such aggression, the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme was instituted. No longer would purchasing a diamond help finance human rights abuses or civil wars; diamonds would be certified that they came from conflict-free zones. Unfortunately, it appears the process has broken down, at least in Zimbabwe, says Global Witness, a UK-based group which, according to its website, runs "campaigns against natural resource-related conflict and corruption and associated environmental and human rights abuses." Global Witness has left the Kimberley Process, calling for the "diamond trade to be held accountable."

The Zimbabwean diamonds are not fueling civil war, but their mining has contributed to both violence and corruption. In 2008 the Zimbabwean army seized control of the Marange diamond fields, also known as the Chiadzwa diamond fields, in the process killing about 200 miners. Mining concessions of a legally questionable nature were then granted to companies with ties to senior figures in President Mugabe's Zanu PF Party. Desiring to stay in power, some off-budget profits from the mining operations have reportedly been used by the Mugabe-aligned state service organization to violently suppress the regime's political opponents. In its press release, Global Witness notes two companies received Kimberley Process authorization to conduct operations in the Marange field.

One troubling sentence among many in the Global Witness report is the statement that "Nearly nine years after the Kimberley Process was launched, the sad truth is that most consumers still cannot be sure where their diamonds come from, nor whether

they are financing armed violence or abusive regimes.” Though it was a noble try, conflict diamonds appear to be mixing with mainstream diamonds, threatening not just the diamond industry which depends on being able to tell its customers that its products do not contribute to conflict, but also stability and security in parts of Africa. A further breakdown of the Kimberley Process could result in even more conflict diamonds making their way into the supply chain, with the result that widespread violence and perhaps even civil wars could once again be funded by their sale, reminding all who have previously witnessed the carnage they wrought why they are also called by another name...blood diamonds. End FMSO Commentary (Feldman)

Continued: Key Rights Group Quits ‘Failing’ Diamond Watchdog

But these standards have not been met. Mines Minister Obert Mpofu has admitted that smuggling is still rife. Finance Minister Tendai Biti has admitted that millions of dollars in diamond profits are missing from the national coffers. And there are still reports of serious human rights abuses, including evidence of at least one torture facility in the area.

Martin Rapaport, the head of the US network of diamond affiliates the Rapaport Group, said on Monday that the KP has failed in its mandate, because “it does not relate to human rights abuses.” Rapaport said: “The fact that the KP is used to communicate that diamonds are not involved in human rights abuses is a lie. Its misinformation. Its false advertising. Everyone need to be very clear here, the KP does not examine or certify against human rights abuses. Full stop.”



Tim Thomas's *The Dragon's Quantum Leap* peels back the transformation process and uncovers the digital-age impacts of new modes of Chinese military thinking.

***The Dragon's Quantum Leap* expands the scope of Tim Thomas's two previous works on Chinese information warfare concepts. As with his previous work, Tim Thomas primarily uses all-Chinese source material**

Security Implications of Africa's Backlash Against America's Gay Rights Agenda

9 December 2011

Source: "Gays' Rights Not Liberia's Domestic Agenda, Says Defense Minister," Heritage (Liberia), 9 Dec 2011. http://heritageliberia.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=884:gays-rights-not-liberias-domestic-agenda-says-defense-minister-&catid=52:general-news

Gays' Rights Not Liberia's Domestic Agenda, Says Defense Minister

Liberia's Defense Minister, Brownie J. Samukai has said prioritizing the rights of gays is not what he referred to as the domestic agenda of Liberia. The Liberian Defense Minister's comments come in the wake of recent statements emanating from certain western countries and their leaders that countries in Africa must ensure that gays and lesbians are not discriminated against. The US has publicly declared it will fight discrimination against gays and lesbians abroad by using foreign aid and diplomacy to encourage reform. A memo from the Obama administration directs US government agencies to consider gay rights when making aid and asylum decisions. Similar policies already exist for gender equality and ethnic violence.

Secretary of State Hillary Clinton recently told an audience of diplomats in Geneva: "Gay rights are human rights." "It should never be a crime to be gay," Mrs. Clinton said at the United Nations in Geneva, adding that a country's cultural or religious traditions were no excuse for discrimination. "Gay people are born into and belong to every society in the world," Mrs. Clinton said in Geneva. "Being gay is not a Western invention.

It is a human reality," she noted. In October, UK Prime Minister David Cameron's suggestion that aid could be cut to countries that did not recognize gay rights was condemned by several African countries where homosexual acts are banned, including Ghana, Uganda and Zimbabwe. Last week, Nigeria became the latest African country attempting to tighten homosexuality laws, with the Senate passing a bill banning same-sex marriages. Before it becomes law in that West African State, it must be passed by the lower chamber and then signed by the president.

But appearing on the Truth FM Breakfast Show Thursday in Monrovia, Minister Samukai asserted that every country has its national agenda, adding that the issue of the West protecting the rights of gays is their agenda and not Liberia's national agenda.

He stated that there were other things that are much more significant to the development agenda of the country rather than the issue of gays' rights. He made it clear that countries pushing for the rights of gays should continue to do so if this is in line with their agenda. But he pointed out that Liberia should be left alone to carry out those things that fall within the scope of its national agenda.

FMSO Commentary: *The backlash from Africa against the Obama administration's decision to use aid to influence how gays and lesbians are treated in African countries was swift and loud. With only a few exceptions, and probably of little surprise to those who study Africa, the African response to this initiative has been overwhelmingly negative.*

In examining this issue it is important to realize that much of Africa is socially conservative. Additionally, American and African perspectives on human rights tend to differ, with the United States emphasizing equality but much of Africa emphasizing economic fairness and respect for traditional African cultures. Thus, America encouraging gay rights not only is viewed as the wrong fight, but it also goes against the grain of much of African culture.

Many incidents of homophobia in Africa have become worldwide headlines, with perhaps the most notable being the 2009 anti-homosexual bill in Uganda that included the death penalty for, among other things, repeat offenses. Though the bill was basically tabled following an international outcry, it does reflect the virulent anti-homosexual feelings of large swaths of the African population.

Under these circumstances, trying to influence gay rights through aid could impact American-African security relations both by aggravating the African partners and perhaps by also encouraging them to look for less moralizing partnerships elsewhere. Indeed, the article below is by Liberia's defense minister, who is essentially telling America to keep out of Liberia's business. Meanwhile, it is doubtful the Chinese, who are anxious to provide aid to curry favor, as well as sell weapons - including those which compete with American made models - will be discussing such human rights concerns in their dealings with African nations.

The United States, in trying, some might say bravely, to do what it views as the morally right action, is faced with alienating some of the very people in Africa it is trying to influence. Further complicating the issue has been the often polarizing debate in our own country regarding homosexual rights, though likely very few would go so far as to endorse the Ugandan bill warranting death.

It will be extremely interesting to see how this all plays out. Will there be greater rights for gays and lesbians in African countries or will the backlash against what is perceived to be yet another imperialist interference result in a greater rift between America and Africa, perhaps even harming military cooperation? One final note bears keeping in mind: many Africans' position regarding the treatment of gays and lesbians is closer to that of terrorist groups such as al Qaeda than it is to the American stance.
End FMSO Commentary (Feldman)

FMSO Commentary: If the 1960s anti-colonial liberation movements in Africa had a voice, some might say it was the life and writings of Frantz Fanon, the Martinique-born psychiatrist, philosopher, author, and revolutionary. Though he died 6 December 1961 at the age of 36, his works and inspiration live on, recently receiving renewed attention on the fiftieth anniversary of his death. For those attempting to understand opposition, including armed opposition, to the post-colonial “Big Men” and others who have tightfistedly ruled African nations, his writings are essential readings.

The author of several books, his most widely known is “The Wretched of the Earth,” prefaced by the famous French existentialist philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre. In this and other works he looked at, among many topics, the psychological impact colonialism had on Africans, the exploitation of Africans by both colonialists and the postcolonial African dictators, and the rise of social classes, including the African minority elite, of which he wrote, “The national bourgeoisie will be quite content with the role of the Western bourgeoisie’s business agent, and it will play its part without any complexes in a most dignified manner,” reflecting their willingness to exploit the poor masses as was done by the European powers during colonial days.

As many African nations struggle with rampant corruption, dysfunctional political systems, and striking income disparities between the rich and poor, the man whose works influenced Che Guevara, Malcolm X and Stephen Biko has found a new audience looking to apply the lessons learned during decolonization. Thus, today the African papers have editorials asking what would Fanon do if he were still alive, with answers frequently invoking the application of violence, for, as noted, many view the African elite as no more than an uninterrupted continuation of

Frantz Fanon: Possibly Still Inciting African Revolutions 50 Years After His Death

5 December 2011



Source: Biney, Ama. “Fanon’s Enduring Relevance,” Pambazuka News, 5 Dec 2011. <http://www.pambazuka.org/en/issue/561>

Born in Martinique in 1925, Frantz Fanon saw action with the free French army in WWII before going on to study psychiatry at Lyon. He died of leukemia related complications in Bethesda, Maryland in 1961. After resigning as médecin-chef at the psychiatric clinic in Blida, Algeria in 1957, Fanon worked for the anti-colonial Front de Libération Nationale (FLN). The French war in Algeria lasted from 1954-1962. Photo via The Platypus Affiliated Society (platypus1917.org)

Fanon’s Enduring Relevance

What would Fanon make of ‘the myriad socio-economic and political problems facing Africans and people of African descent today,’ asks Ama Biney, on the 50th anniversary of his death.

Fifty years since the untimely death on 6 December 1961 of Frantz Fanon, he continues to have immense relevance in our times. His writings were focused on the dialectics of the colonised and the coloniser during the era of the 1960s. Whilst that era has passed, new forms of colonialism between Africa and the former colonial powers, or Africa and the developed world, now manifest in the 21st century.

Fanon had a clear grasp of the problems confronting emerging African states. The core themes pervading his radical perspective forged from his role as a scholar, psychiatrist and political activist are: The indispensability of revolutionary violence to decolonisation, class struggle in Africa, neocolonialism, alienation and his profound commitment to freedom. What he would make of the myriad socio-economic and political problems facing Africans and people of African descent today with the intellectual tools of analysis he bequeathed is the focus of this article.

VIOLENCE IN OUR TIMES

The violence Africa experienced in the wake of independence i.e. since 1960 onwards has been of two forms. There have been the protracted national liberation struggles that engulfed countries such as Guinea-Bissau, Algeria, Angola, Mozambique, Zimbabwe and South Africa. The material conditions and intransigence of the settler colonial powers in these aforementioned countries forced the nationalist forces to adopt armed struggle as a last resort to secure their political freedom from foreign rulers and settler colonialism. In Angola, Mozambique, and Zimbabwe, it is well-known that these forces were ideologically divided and on the formal attainment of independence, the struggle became an internal one of civil war that wrought death, injury and destruction on the lives of millions of Africans.

Continued: Fanon's Enduring Relevance

Fanon would not have condoned the horrific gratuitous physical violence that has terrorised innocent communities and individuals in the post-independence phase in Africa (and epitomised in the catastrophe of 9/11 and elsewhere) in which the nationalist elite promised so much and abysmally failed to deliver. Such brutal violence from Africa's wars of the 80s and 90s has traumatised communities and individuals and necessitates healing of minds and bodies in the reconstruction of new societies and nations. It continues in the rebel groups such as al-Shabab in Somalia and the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) and the various militias in the DRC. The militias in the DRC are sustained by Uganda's Yoweri Museveni and Rwanda's Paul Kagame, who are US backed autocrats who have been able to siphon the colossal wealth of the DRC by supporting pillage, plunder and rape in this vast country that has not seen peace since its first prime minister, Patrice Lumumba was killed by neocolonial forces in January 1961.

For Fanon the use of violence to free oneself from colonial rule was legitimate for he argued that colonialism 'will only yield when confronted with greater violence' (Wretched of the Earth). That the wars of the decades of the 80s and 90s were fought between Africans and were extremely vicious and brutal is a consequence of the 'pitfalls of national consciousness' that Fanon unsparingly exposed. In essence, the consciousness of the governing elite was limited to their own self-preservation.

What would he make of the call by the 'rebel forces' in Libya's National Transitional Council (NTC) for military assistance that led to the UN Security Council resolution 1973 that authorised the NATO no-fly zone over Libya and the eventual violent death of Gaddafi along with several thousands Libyans? The call by the NTC for Western intervention bodes the beginning of the neocolonial project in Libya and the continued military re-colonisation of Africa under the ideological pretext of humanitarian intervention i.e. 'responsibility to protect.'

This figleaf is the latter day doctrine of the 19th century 'white man's burden' and Fanon would have recognised this imperialist agenda and its duplicity which seeks to secure the resources of Africa for foreign benefit.

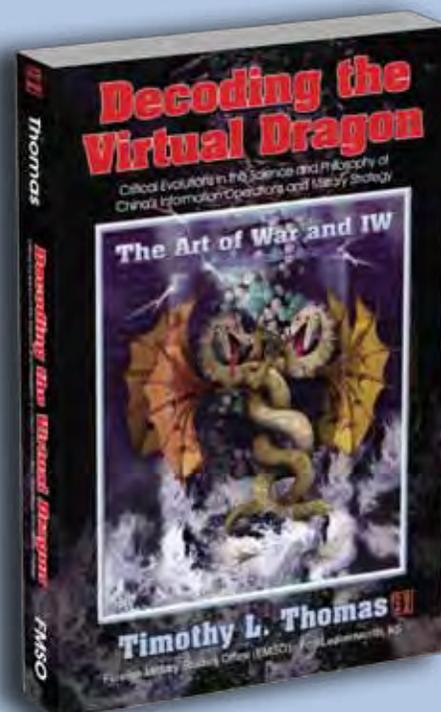
If Fanon were alive today, his message would remain that it is imperative the wretched of the earth, particularly in Africa, confront the fact that class oppression in Africa comes from fellow Africans with black skins who comprise a conceited oligarchy which takes seriously its role as the intermediary of the international conglomerates plundering the continent.

colonial rulers.

It's impossible in a brief commentary to do justice to the many ideas of such a complicated and accomplished man as Frantz Fanon. Fortunately his writings live on, and to begin to understand what colonialism did to the mind of the colonized, the role of violence in national liberation, and so much more it is important to read his books, just as a new generation of Africans who are looking for answers is doing this very moment. End FMSO Commentary (Feldman)

Tim Thomas's *Decoding the Virtual Dragon* explains how Chinese information warfare (IW) concepts since 2003 fit into the strategic outlook, practices, and activities of the People's Liberation Army (PLA). The book offers IW explanations directly from the pens of Chinese experts. The Chinese authors discuss the application or relation of IW to strategic thought, the transformation plans of the People's Liberation Army (PLA), the revolution in military affairs (RMA), and the revolution in knowledge warfare and cognition.

Tim Thomas provides an indispensable source for understanding the fundamentals of Chinese military thought and demonstrating how IW/IO has been integrated into the art of war and strategy.



FMSO Commentary: *When Kenya launched a largely unpredicted invasion into Somalia in late October to halt the al-Shebab-generated tide of terror that had spilled over into its borders, the news was broadcast over local and international radio and by international media outlets on television and through numerous conduits on the Internet. No one expected, however, that the war between the Kenyan army and Al-Shebab would also play out over the so-called Twittersphere. Yet as the article below recounts, the Kenyan army and members of al-Shebab are engaged in a vitriolic Tweet-off that could signal wide-reaching changes in the ways that conflicts around the world are waged.*

Indeed, the revelation of the banter between al-Shebab and the Kenyan army raises important questions about how Twitter is changing the tactical landscape of conflicts in Africa and around the world. By engaging in the Twittersphere, is the Kenyan army losing its tactical advantage of secrecy, potentially revealing too much information about its goals and intentions to the enemy? Is either side writing fake decoy Twitter messages to cover its true intentions from the other side? How does each side interpret the credibility of the messages of the other, particularly given that neither side speaks with a unitary voice? What can each side actually learn from the other by engaging in these mini-diplomatic channels that have heretofore never existed?

Though the accompanying piece only serves to bring these questions into our realm of consideration, they will nevertheless likely prove to be highly salient ones in the future. End FMSO Commentary (Warner)

@IronicWarfareintheModernAge: Kenya and Al-Shebab's Conflict Plays Out Over Twitter

13 December 2011

Source: Simon Allison, "East Africa: Al Shabaab Versus Kenya - the Twitter War," The Daily Maverick, 13 December 2011, <http://allafrica.com/stories/printable/201112131436.html>

East Africa: Al Shabaab Versus Kenya - the Twitter War

A great irony of the cyber age is the way it connects seemingly incongruous and anachronistic opposites in bizarre and unexpected ways. Now the ragtag though powerful Islamist terror group, Al Shabaab, is taking on the Kenyan army on the battlefields of Twitter.

"We shall fight on the beaches, we shall fight on the landing grounds, we shall fight in the fields and in the streets, we shall fight in the hills, we shall fight in the Twittersphere." This is a quote from a speech that Winston Churchill never made, but, had he been fighting his wars in the 21st century, he might have.

For Twitter is becoming another place for enemy combatants to do battle, although their weapons in this particular battleground are limited to social currency and 140 characters.

Al Shabaab, the Islamic militant group currently fighting a guerrilla war against Kenyan troops in Somalia, is the latest to take its conflict to the social media.

Its opponent, Kenya, invaded Somalia to try to wipe out Al Shabaab, was already there, in the form of Kenyan Defence Force (KDF) spokesman Emmanuel Chirchir (@MajorEChirchir) who has swiftly developed a following of more than 10,000, most of whom are charmed by his unabashed jingoism ("Be assured that all Kenyan troops are in good spirits and Steadfast to Mission at Hand") and his donkey paranoia ("selling donkeys to Al Shabaab will undermine our efforts in Somalia", he said once, threatening to bomb large groups of donkeys).

Last week, perhaps frustrated by all the attention Major Chirchir was receiving, Al Shabaab decided it was time for retaliatory tweets. Its relatively sophisticated press team established the handle @HSMPress (the initials standing for the group's full name, Harakat Al Shabaab Al Mujahideen), and have been tweeting since 7 December.

Its first tweet, given its religious leanings, was somewhat predictable: "In the name of Allah the merciful and compassionate" @HSMPress wrote, in Arabic. Since then, it's posted a stream of tweets written in superb English that provide updates on Al Shabaab successes and new threats to Kenya, and have even engaged in a Twitter spat with Major Chirchir - which it won, convincingly.

The spat started with a bit of goading from Chirchir. "@HSMpress ...life has more meaning than denying women to wear bras...RT in support of Somalia women," Chirchir tweeted.

And then the rather incomprehensible: "@HSM Press: Whatever the name, time is up for chopping inovative somali hands." Al Shabaab was confused, and said so - while taking a little dig at Chirchir's rather erratic spelling: "@MajorEChirchir: 'inovative(sp) somali hands'? quite perplexing! care to explain?"

Chirchir didn't, but went on the offensive again, referring to Al Shabaab's use of stoning as a punishment; again, Chirchir demonstrated that spelling and grammar are not his strong points.

"@HSMPress: life has better to offer than stonning innocent girl...". To which Al Shabaab replied, without missing a beat: "@MajorEChirchir Like bombing donkeys, you mean! Your eccentric battle strategy has got animal rights groups quite concerned, Major." Chirchir went quiet after this.

Rebels Attack Senegalese Army in Breakaway Casamance Region

14 December 2011

Source: "Sénégal: Casamance - Une attaque armée fait plusieurs morts," AllAfrica.com, 14 December 2011, <http://fr.allafrica.com/stories/201112140668.html>

Senegal Map, via IRIN (irinnews.org)



Rebels Attack Senegalese Army

Several Senegalese soldiers were killed in Casamance on Tuesday in an attack by presumed rebel forces, less than one month after a deadly assault in this region of southern Senegal, which is engaged in an independence-minded conflict

"We lost some units (soldiers)" during the attack which was lead early Tuesday morning against a faction of the army in the village of Kabeumeu, 60 kilometers north-west of Ziguinchor, the principal city of the region. "Some people went missing," stated a military source, contacted by telephone.

Kabeumeu is in a department [region] near the Gambian border.

The information was confirmed to the AFP by a local representative of the region, also contacted by telephone, who had given accounts of "several killed soldiers" others "taken hostage" by their assailants, supposed members of the Movement for the Democratic Forces of Casamance (MFDC).

The Director of the public army relations (DIRPA) confirmed the attack, but denied the death of the soldiers. "No soldiers were killed. There was only one soldier injured," Col. Abdourahim Kébé, leader of Dirpa, declared to the AFP. "The attackers were fought off. The army is leading tracking operations," he added.

"The soldiers were surprised" by this attack launched at 6 am local time. "Nonetheless, they defended themselves. There were exchanges of intense fire both by heavy weaponry and light weaponry. We had to leave our homes to find safety in the bush," explained a local representative.

According to the Senegalese army, from the end of 2010 to the beginning of 2011, violent outbreaks have resulted in the deaths of twenty soldiers. Numerous supposed rebels have also been killed, but there are no records from independent sources to confirm this.

In February, Senegal and Gambia announced that they would be instituting conjoint patrolling. Similar measures were taken in September between Senegal and the Republic of Guinea-Bissau, countries that are also linked with Casamance.

Since 1982, the conflict in Casamance has claimed thousands of civil and military victims without every having made a precise death toll record available to the public.

FMSO Commentary: Since Senegal gained its independence in 1960, its southern region of Casamance – separated from the rest of Senegal by the sliver of a country that is Gambia – has been waging a low-level war of resistance in an attempt to break away from Dakar and become its own independent entity. The most recent iteration of that half-century long conflict, waged primarily by the group known as the MFDC (the Movement for the Democratic Forces of Senegal) came to light recently, as the Senegalese army reportedly had several members (stationed 60 km north the city of Ziguinchor) killed by the aforementioned rebel group.

Although low-level violence has occurred against symbols of the Senegalese state since independence, violence has been particularly more pronounced in Casamance since 2004, when the MFDC's former leader, Father Augustin Diamacoune Senghor, signed a peace treaty with Dakar. That move caused a fission within the MFDC between those who supported the peace accords and those that did not. After Senghor's death in 2007, the existence of a variety of splintered MFDC groups led many in Senegal to believe that Dakar's reconciliation with Casamance might be increasingly challenging.

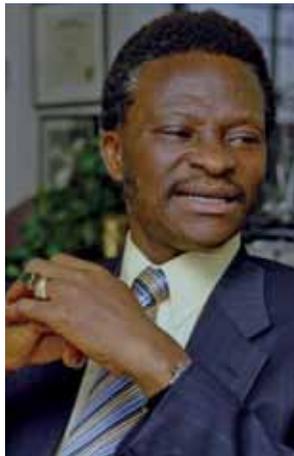
*Indeed, as the accompanying article details, the recent attacks on the Senegalese army do not portend a near-term peace between Dakar and its own Casamance region. **End FMSO Commentary (Warner)***

FMSO Commentary: Boko Haram, Nigeria's homegrown anti-Western and pseudo-al-Qaeda-ian terrorist group, has cultivated a nefarious reputation for itself over the past three years by launching dozens of deadly attacks across the country, most prominently employing a suicide car bomber to attack the UN's mission in Abuja, leaving at least 21 dead. Observers in Nigeria are now worrying about the potential threats that Boko Haram could pose to the nation's airports.

Historically, terrorism in Africa has lacked an aerial dimension. One notable exception to this claim is that of the underwear bomber, Umar Abdul Mutallab, who, although neither targeting Africans nor a member of Boko Haram (but from the northern region of Nigeria from which Boko Haram originates), is the one contemporary figure of attempted air-based African terrorism. As the author of the article below notes, in Nigeria, as in many developing countries, security measures at airports are often lackluster at best. As Boko Haram seeks to find new and more brutal ways to make its mission to install Sharia law known, a new focus on the aerial arena as a stage on which to play out those goals would not be surprising.
End FMSO Commentary (Warner)

Boko Haram's New Aerial Threats

9 December 2011



Source: Chinedu Eze, "Why Boko Haram is Threat to Nation's Airports," This Day, 9 December 2011, <http://www.thisdaylive.com/articles/why-boko-haram-is-threat-to-nations-airports/104629/>

Dr Harold Demuren Director General of the Nigerian Civil Aviation Authority.

Why Boko Haram is Threat to Nation's Airports

The fear is growing by the day that Boko Haram may target the nation's airports if the security is not fortified. The fear is reinforced by the fact that all over the world, terrorists target such important public places.

But the Federal Government through the Ministry of Aviation and the Federal Airports Authority of Nigeria (FAAN), is putting measures in place to forestall such possibility.

But indications have shown that such measures must be unrelenting and continuous because, as the United States warned Nigeria recently, that successful bombing of any of the airports in the country would have collateral damage on the nation's economy, image of the country, as well as the status of the country in the comity of nations. Aviation security experts have given warnings on the possibility of the organisation infiltrating the security apparatus of the airport.

"The worst case scenario is to have a terrorist operative become an airline/airport employee, thus having unescorted access to restricted areas. Such employee could also corrupt an incumbent employee into providing access or to act as an agent of the terrorist," Aisuebeogun said.

The Director-General of the Nigeria Civil Aviation Authority (NCAA), Dr Harold Demuren, said recently that human error was a cog in the fight against terrorism at the airports because if all security procedures are put in place and the officers who are to carry out this process compromise their positions, then all the measures put in place would come to nothing.

He said the most efficacious way to fight terrorism was the use of technology, noting that terrorists had advantages over the society because they have time to plan, they have funding and they are ready to die. "The best bet to defeat terrorists is through technology. Terrorists have advantages over us; they have time to plan; they have funding and the worst is that they are ready to die. The people that are meant to protect you are the ones that will blow you."

FAAN has intensified the training of aviation security personnel, recruited new officers and increased the surveillance of airport facilities together with other security agencies in the country.

Religion Matters in Secular States

27 September 2011

Source: Luong Tam Conggiao. "Thăm gia đình anh Trần Vũ Anh Bình mới bị bắt (Visit with Tran Anh Binh family after arrest)" Lương tâm công giáo (Catholic Conscience), 27 September 2011. <http://luongtam-conggiao.wordpress.com/2011/09/27/tham-gia-dinh-anh-tr%E1%BA%A7n-vu-anh-binh-m%E1%BB%9B-%E1%BB%8B-b%E1%BA%AFt/>



Photo via Luong Tam Cong Giao

The two Jesuit priests comfort relatives, recommended that they should calmly face the truth. The priest told them they should ask the public security forces to work with families with respect to the law: officials should have to wear badges, name plates, and carry identification papers. They cannot behave like a terrorist. Because if this type of police work is tolerated in our society, then when a group of bad guys act in the same way, the population won't know how to prevent them or if to notify authorities. This type of conduct is dangerous!

His relatives said they would seek lawyers to represent Binh. However, it is unlikely that there is any lawyer who would dare pick up cases like this.

Thăm gia đình anh Trần Vũ Anh Bình mới bị bắt (Visit with Tran Anh Bình family after arrest)

LTCG (27.09.2011)-

Today at about 8:00pm, after the Holy Mass held at the neighborhood parish of Blessed Mary of Constant Help of Saigon, the members of the choir had been visiting the family of Peter Tran Vu Anh Binh. Two priests, Joseph Ho Dac of he parish of Saigon and Joseph also joined in the visit to mother and several siblings of Tran Vu Anh Binh.

The priests and family members visited and asked of news. Tan Vu Anh Binh currently lives with elderly mother along with other siblings. His wife does not look healthy. According to his relatives: on 19/09/2011 after attending a Mass for those suffering from homosexual act in parishes, he and others visited points of interest from bún bò alley 14 States, Ward 9, District 3. Earlier Tran Anh Binh had made comment about taking children to school. He went upstairs into a private room. At this time three unidentified young men suddenly stormed into the house without knocking on the door or pressing the bell, without the consent of those who live in that house. A sister began running away from the strange men and was blocked and asked "you go?" The sisters and elder mother cried out and shouted at the strange men to leave the house. The men said they were police and demanded the women allow them in. They would not answer questions, but called to their comrades for assistance. Neighbors witnessed the incident and they counted nearly 20 young unidentified men in and around the house. Later police statements identify the strange men as officials.

This group of people claiming to be security personnel suggested the family must cooperate, otherwise they will produce warrants to search the accommodation!!! They took away a computer desktop, a laptop and a mobile hard drive without a warrant or leaving receipts for objects taken. Peter Tan Vu Anh Binh also suffered arrest by this group of non-uniform police and was taken away.

Two days later, on 21/09/2011 some men in black clothes and dark glasses came into the home to check for CDs and also took custody of some CDs.

On the afternoon of 22/09/2011 Binh's older brother came to the Police Station no. 4 Phan Dang Luu, to meet with officials concerning the police investigation. The meeting was short and requests for information were declined.

FMSO Commentary: A decade of operations in Iraq has shown us the tangible impact of religion on strategic, operational, and tactical military planning and action. Major religions have sacred leaders, sacred sites, and sects that must be recognized and understood, as plans are developed for humanitarian assistance, partner building, or military intervention.

Viet Nam has long been a home for Taoism, Confucianism, and Mahayana Buddhism. Most of the population currently holds to "tam giáo" (triple religion), which blends these three traditions. Surveys conducted under the contemporary communist regime list 80% or more as nonreligious, yet most cultural sources point to the daily veneration of ancestors and an approach to life grounded in the "tam giáo" framework. The CIA fact book lists: Buddhist 9.3%, Catholic 6.7%, Hoa Hao 1.5%, Cao Dai 1.1%, Protestant 0.5%, Muslim 0.1%, none 80.8% (1999 census).

Buddhist sects have been outspoken against the French colonial government, the US-backed South Vietnamese government, and now the Vietnamese Government. One such sect, the Hoa Hao, maintains a nationalist loyalty linked to its native Vietnamese founder, Huỳnh Phú Sổ. Its history includes creation of a militia and armed struggle against perceived outsiders. Activism has not been violent since the 1970s, yet two Hoa Hao priests self-immolated in 2005 in protest against government control of their sect.

Catholic activists and bloggers have risen in number and impact over the past few years. A large expatriate community of Vietnamese Catholics and the greater global Catholic community have rallied to the aid of the activists in Vietnam. A recent raft of arrests has caused a ground swell of concern among human rights nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). The US and European Union continue to use "human rights violations" as a driver for financial assistance and other engagements. Minorities, whether they are religions or ethnic groups, can often take up the majority of concern in governmental planning and programs. In Vietnam in particular, the US has a history with minority groups that now are making the local news. **End FMSO Commentary (Welch)**

FMSO Commentary: *La Familia Michoacana and Los Caballeros Templarios are drug cartels in Mexico that are dedicated to producing synthetic drugs for distribution in the United States. The latter represents a new faction of La Familia and emerged in January 2011 following the alleged death of Nazario Moreno Gonzalez, aka El Chayo, the original founding member of La Familia. Both groups operate in Michoacan, and are known to use religion as a means of coercion. Since its beginnings in 2011, Los Caballeros Templarios have recruited an estimated 1,200 men who adhere with blind faith to the ideological indoctrination utilized by leaders. The group has even gone as far to produce a bible of sorts that contains 53 commandments/operational rules that all members must obey. Under no circumstances have La Familia or Los Caballeros Templarios admitted to being drug cartels, and both operate as if they were working to provide citizens in Michoacan with services and help that the government cannot. Means of operation of these groups have been very successful, and have allowed for the proliferation of synthetic drug production sites throughout the state via the recruitment of thousands of workers.*

Michoacan is a hot spot for synthetic drugs because of its geographical location on the Pacific Coast of Mexico. The Port of Lazaro Cardenas in Michoacan serves as a key shipping port, where chemical precursors utilized to produce synthetic drugs are delivered. The local population in Michoacan fills the ranks of La Familia and Los Caballeros. Key recruitment points utilized by both groups have historically included exploitation of socioeconomic factors, to include religious beliefs, education, and poverty.

The people of Michoacan are strongly Catholic, and a National Institute of Statistics and Geography (INEGI) survey conducted in 2000 indicated that 94%

The Code of the Knights Templar from Michoacán

5 October 2011

Source: El Código de los Caballeros Templarios de Michoacán. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pyQCeoqMkg> (images of pamphlet).
Posted on 19 July 2011

Knights Templar code via YouTube.com



El Código de los Caballeros (The Operational Code of Los Caballeros Templarios)

On July 2011, a 24-page handbook that stipulates the 53 rules and the codes of honor to be followed by members of Los Caballeros Templarios (The Knights Templar) was distributed in the state of Michoacan. Images of the same handbook were posted on YouTube. A translation of the handbook is as follows:

The Code of the Knights Templar from Michoacan:

- This fight is for your people; for my people; for us, and for our future generations.
- This is a mandatory code of practice for every member of The Knights Templar from Michoacan.
- The Knights Templar was created on 08 March 2011. Our mission is to protect citizens and our sacred and sovereign territory of Michoacan.
- Our experienced council members must approve admittance of every member to the group.
- All approved members will join The Knights Templar for life. You will not abandon our cause.
- All members of our group will be sworn in for life via a ritual that will be established by our council. Your sworn statement will be protected with your life.
- Every Knight is to follow our values of honor, dignity, discipline, loyalty, and honesty.
- Knight will respect our oath of silence. Revealing our secrets and activities is strictly prohibited.
- A Knights Templar will selflessly love and serve our community.
- A Knight Templar will believe in God, and that he created life and an eternal truth. A Knight will also believe in the divine purpose of serving God and fellow mankind.
- Our members will fight against materialism, injustice, and tyranny in the world. This fight starts in our homes, neighborhood, cities, states, and country.
- It is your duty to prepare yourself with the necessary tools and equipment to fight our battle and pursue our objective.
- The Knights Templar will establish an ideological battle which will challenge us to defend our

Continued: The Operational Code of Los Caballeros Templarios

society's enduring values and ethics.

- The group will fight against the breakdown of moral values and the destructive elements that prevail in society today.
- Members of our group will sustain natural justice and the fundamental rights of man by recognizing the right of our cities and nations to govern themselves within their natural economic means.
- The group will support freedom of speech and religion, collective defense, and will fight to eradicate poverty and injustices that threaten societies in our world.
- Knights will not be judgmental regarding the relationship that any man has with God, even if it is strange or different. Instead, a Knight should attempt to understand the relation that others have with God.
- A Templar soldier should not be closed minded or have antiquated beliefs. God is truth. A knight will always seek the truth because within that truth is God.
- The group encourages patriotism which will be expressed in the pride we have of our lands and of our accomplishments.
- Knights of this group will be humble, honorable, courteous, honest, and chivalrous; characteristics that will make them worthy of being a Knight Templar.
- A Knight is expected to serve the group, and not expect that the group will serve his own purposes. He will know that his service is to God, and will not expect any other reward other than knowing that his devoted service honors the group.
- Knights will not offend anyone. A Knight will be an example of chivalry.
- No woman or child should fear a Knight because of his words or actions. Rather, they should feel protected by a Knight.
- A Knight should not betray another Knight: doing so will dishonor himself and the group.
- A Knight's behavior should not be cruel, offensive, immoral, cowardly, deceitful, or malicious.
- A Knight will not seek advancement within the group. He should be content with the duties assigned to him.
- A Knight will not judge anyone within the group based on his title or social position. Rather, he should judge teammates based on their character and kindness, or lack of it.
- Members of our group will demonstrate sincere subjugation to the principles of our code and obedience to superiors.
- A Knight Templar from Michoacan will always be obedient and disciplined. He will obey those authority figures placed above him.
- All members of our group shall remain firm and truthful in the just causes of God.
- All members of the Knights Templar will lead a sober and happy life and keep a low profile as to not stand out.
- All Knights are obligated to respect their fellow Knights and their superiors.
- Jobs will be completed for the benefit and enrichment of the group and not for personal gain.
- (Part one of item 33 is incomplete). For this reason, abuse of innocent and chaste women and of minors is prohibited as is the use of deceit or power to seduce them.
- Use of drugs is strictly prohibited.

of the population are active Catholics while 61.8% of the population in Michoacan has not received education past the sixth grade level. La Familia Michoacana and Los Caballeros Templarios have taken advantage of these strong religious beliefs and the relative lack of education possessed by citizens to create rules to guide and indoctrinate cartel operators.

Lack of economic means has also facilitated La Familia and Los Caballeros Templarios in recruitment efforts. Over the last ten years, high unemployment levels have prompted citizens living in Michoacan to migrate to the United States. As a result of this mass exodus, Michoacan is currently considered the state with the highest level of rural depopulation in the country. In 2011 the National Council of Political Science in Mexico reported that 54.7% of the population (representing 2,338,000 individuals) in Michoacan is living in poverty. Of this percentage, 59% of working adults earn as little as \$5-10 per day, while the average daily living expenses exceed \$14. These numbers vaguely represent the state of affairs in Michoacan, given the fact they do not even take into account those families that are living in moderate or extreme poverty.

*Eradicating La Familia or Los Caballeros will not solve the thriving synthetic drug market in Michoacan. Citizens in the state are desperate to earn money, and an estimated 84% of the population has relatives living in the United States. This means that La Familia and Los Caballeros are able to build trust in family members living in Mexico that could potentially aid them in recruiting workers in the U.S. Local citizens perceive the government and Federal Police operating in Michoacan as inept, and the heroes to many residents are the local drug cartels. If the government has any chance of winning back the local populace, it would need to focus on improving socio-economic conditions. Without this intervention, drug production and citizen involvement in this operation will continue to thrive. **End FMSO Commentary: (Fiegel and Gonzalez)***

***Continued:* The Operational Code of Los Caballeros Templarios**

- A Knight Templar will never act superior to others.
- All Knights Templar will report relevant personnel matters to the council.
- Kidnappings with the intent of obtaining ransoms are strictly prohibited.
- Group leaders will undergo periodic drug tests and will report results to the council.
- Following the chain of command and absolute coordination with members of the group is an obligation.
- No one will leave his or her place of duty without prior authorization from a superior. Good communication between members at all levels is critical.
- Members of the council will not be lazy or loose lipped.
- Leaders will set the example to be intelligent, clever, humble, wise, efficient, brave, and discrete. Leaders will aim to achieve personal growth.
- All members, regardless of title, will report their arrival to a new location to the chain of command immediately upon arrival.
- During transfer between locations, take necessary precautions and be cautious at all times.
- Knights will be on alert 24 hours a day.
- Knights that violate the ‘Oath of Silence’ will be subject to capital punishment.
- The Knights Templar from Michoacan seeks justice, and for this reason, you shall not kill for pleasure or money, except under special circumstances, which will be previously investigated and approved.
- A Knight Templar from Michoacan is in a constant dilemma, having devoted himself to a double battle. He is always finding himself fighting against the temptation of flesh and blood and against heavenly spiritual forces.
- A Knight will always be conscious that he is a Templar soldier and should always attempt to set the example for others.
- A Knight will travel fearlessly, but will be aware of his surroundings at all times. He will travel with an open heart and a soul full of faith. He will not fear men or demons.
- Knights that betray The Knights Templar will receive maximum punishment and will be deprived of their personal property. His family members will pay the same price.
- A Templar should demonstrate strength where there is weakness. He should provide a voice to those who do not have one. He should be generous with poor people”.
- Translations of the footnotes within the handbook are as follows:
- Love, Loyalty, Equality, and Justice
- I promise and swear that I will fight to protect the oppressed, widowed, and orphaned.
- Chivalry and humbleness are necessities in life.
- I promise and swear that if I fail to respect my oath, I will pay with my own blood.
- No one is prouder than a Templar: the forest is his home and the sky his window.
- Wine is strong, a king is stronger, and women are mighty, but the truth defeats us all.
- Our behavior today sets the example for future generations.
- If I betray my oath, I beg to be executed by the group as a traitor.
- If I betray my honor, I beg to be executed by my fellow Knights or be devoured by wild animals.
- Loyal to our oath; we will fight for a better world.

The Oath of the Knights Templar from Michoacan

I swear to live and die with honor

I swear that I will fight for justice and help my fellow man

I swear that during times of peace and war, I will not see a Knight as my enemy

I swear that I will be loyal to my group

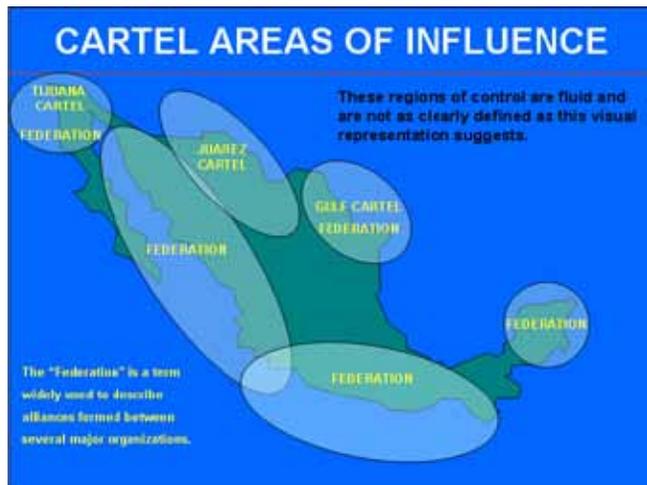
I swear that I will respect women, worship mothers, protect children and the elderly, and assist the ill and needy.

I swear that I will respect the faith of others. I will seek the truth before glory. I will seek honor before being honored.

Mexican Drug Cartels Actively Recruiting Texas Children

Source: “Niños texanos son reclutados por cárteles de droga mexicanos (Texas Children Recruited by Mexican Drug Cartels),” Milenio, 17 October 2011. <http://www.milenio.com/cdb/doc/noticias2011/a651c69e0f2e1c7955fbca5a88dcf06>

17 October 2011



Map of Drug Cartel areas of influence, via U.S. Dept. of Justice (www.justice.gov)

Niños texanos son reclutados por cárteles de droga mexicanos (Texas Children Recruited by Mexican Drug Cartels)

Texas law enforcement officials are reporting that several Mexican drug cartels are recruiting children as young as 11 years old to work in their smuggling operations. Steven McCraw, the Director of the Texas Department of Public Safety, told Reuters that these organizations have a disturbing name for the young Texans drawn into their operations. “They call them ‘the expendables,’” he said. McCraw said his investigators have evidence that six Mexican transnational criminal groups, to include the violent Los Zetas organization, have “command and control centers” in Texas actively recruiting children for their operations, attracting them with what appears to be easy money for doing simple tasks. A typical offer includes a payment of \$50 for them to move a vehicle from one area to another. This type of activity allows the cartel operators to determine whether or not authorities are actively surveilling their shipments.

To provide evidence to the idea that drug cartels are indeed recruiting minors, McCraw stated that 25 minors have already been arrested on charges related to drug trafficking activities in a county that lies along the border of Texas and Mexico. The cartels are now expanding, he said, and have operations in every major city in the state. Still more shocking is the arrest of a 12-year-old boy in October 2011, after he was caught sitting in a stolen pickup truck with 800 pounds (363 kilograms) of marijuana.

To combat this problem, the state of Texas is joining a program initiated by U.S. Customs and Border Protection called “Operation Detour,” in which law enforcement officers meet with children and their parents in schools and community centers to warn them about the

FMSO Commentary: Why children? For the most part, children are highly impressionable and easily manipulated. Economic times may have also left them wanting those creature comforts they have gotten used to in years past, be they a regular treat or special toy. The fast cash provided by the trafficking organizations could easily give them this money that their families possibly cannot afford anymore. These economic times may have left one or both of the parents jobless, forced parents into a different job or an additional job, forced them to work more hours at their current job, or any combination of the four. With regards to working more hours or an additional job, these situations may leave many adolescents not only unsupervised, but also seeking the need of a parental figure in their lives, making them easy prey for the criminals.

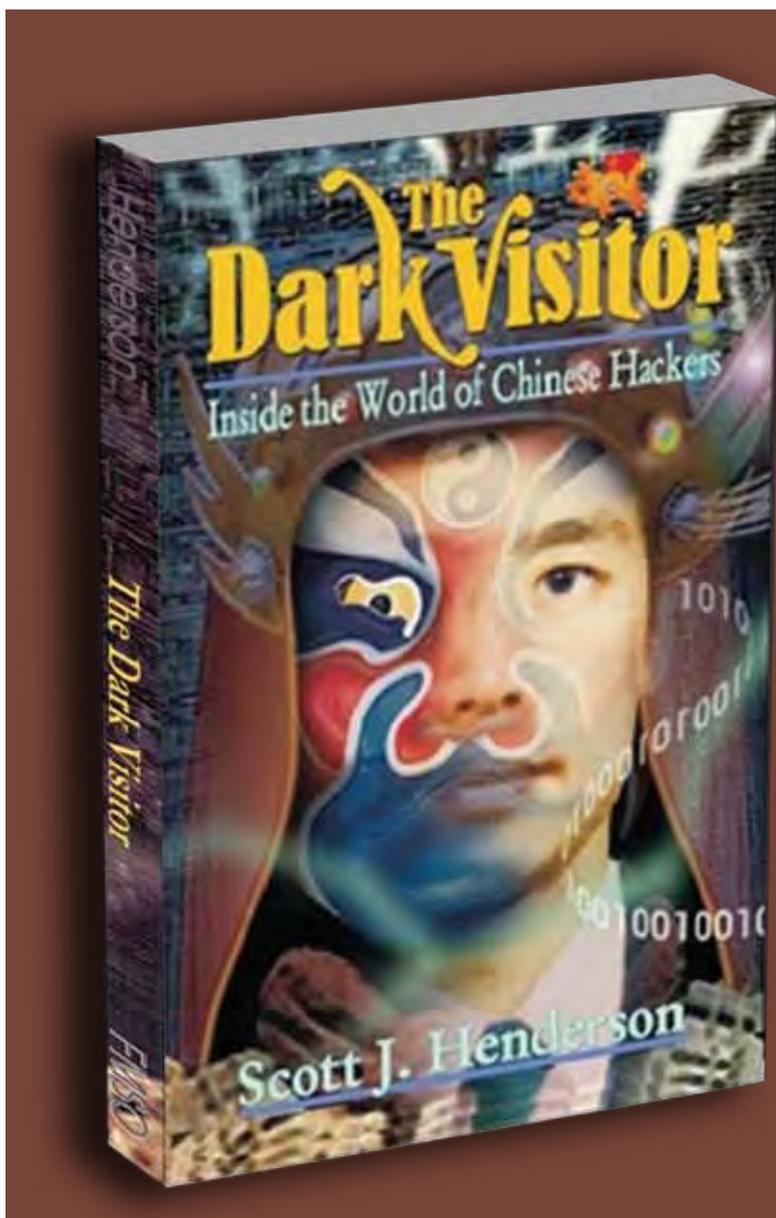
Since its pilot program debut in 1983, the Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE) program has focused on substance abuse prevention education, teaching school aged children how to resist peer pressure and live productive drug- and violence-free lives. In a similar premise as the DARE program, U.S. Customs and Border Protection has unveiled its own adolescent prevention program, which focuses on educating adolescents on the risks associated with getting involved with an illicit trafficking organization.

Illicit traffickers are co-opting not only U.S. children, but also ranchers and others whom the traffickers need to be involved to ensure the clandestine movement of their contraband, including storage and transshipment. On September 19, 2011, the El Paso Times ran a story entitled, “Whistle-blowers Allege Corruption, Cartel Ties.” In the article two former New Mexico law enforcement officers allege that state and federal officials, as well as regional businessmen, maintain ties and accept bribes from Mexican

cartels. In early March 2011 the mayor, police chief, and town councilman of Columbus, New Mexico, were arrested and later convicted on charges relating to an international arms-trafficking scheme that moved weapons south into Mexico. With the Department of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms' "Fast and Furious" scandal, the aforementioned incidents, and others, this may be an indication that this "sanitary zone" along the U.S. border may be more developed than previously thought. **End FMSO Commentary (Scheidel)**

Continued: Texas Children Recruited by Mexican Drug Cartels

dangers of what appears to be easy money that Mexican drug trafficking organizations are offering. These organizations understand the game well, as law enforcement officers say children are less likely to be suspects than adults, are easily manipulated by relatively small sums of money, and face less severe penalties than adults if arrested. In September 2011, Texas officials released a report indicating Mexico-based trafficking organizations are intent on creating a "sanitary zone" on the U.S. side of the Rio Grande, and are intimidating landowners in south Texas into allowing them to use their property as permanent bases for drug smuggling activity.



Scott Henderson's ground-breaking work, *The Dark Visitor* analyzes the history, ideology, organization, exploits, and political motivations of the Chinese hacker network. Whenever possible, the information contained herein has been taken directly from the Chinese hacker organization itself or from interviews with individual members.

Colombians Divided on How to Address the FARC

19 November 2011

Source: “Why Is Timochenko in Venezuela?” by Colombian Luis Alberto Villamarín Pulido November 19, 2011 <http://www.luisvillamarin.com/defensa-nacional-y-seguridad-nacional/641-presencia-de-timochenko-en-venezuela-indica-interaccion-de-chavez-con-el-plan-estrategico-de-las-farc-y-sus-oscuras-propositos.html>

Logo for the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), via Wikimedia



Presencia de Timochenko en Venezuela indica interacción de Chávez con el Plan Estratégico de las Farc y sus oscuros propósitos **(Why Is Timochenko in Venezuela?)**

Plan Renacer [Plan Rebirth], the amendment to the FARC’s Strategic Plan designed by Cano, directs the FARC structures to intensify the war along the Colombian-Venezuelan border with the objective of maintaining the support of and ties with their “Bolivarian brother.” This plan has been under development since Tirofijo was alive and is designed to seek not only international recognition of the FARC as a Belligerent Force but also concrete support in terms of weapons and money, manpower, and political organizations for their final offensive against Colombia.

To this end, Iván Márquez took charge of extending the Caribbean Bloc toward Venezuelan territory from Guajira to the boundaries of the Perijá Mountains and the Catatumbo River; Timochenko took charge of extending the Magdalena Medio Bloc toward Venezuela from the Catatumbo to the boundary with Arauca; Efrén took charge of extending the Eastern Joint Command toward Venezuela in Arauca and part of Vichada; and Mauricio was tasked with extending the Eastern Bloc’s terrorist structures toward Venezuela along the Vichada and Guainía rivers.

This explains Cano’s stratagem under which many squads were left in permanent contact in Tolima and Huila while he hid in Cauca; the armed structures in Nariño, Cauca, and Valle feigned that the strategic epicenter of FARC operations was located there; the squads in the south of Meta and Caquetá maintained persistent armed actions to occupy the attention of Law Enforcement; and all the while, on the Colombian-Venezuelan border, the framework for the new vital nucleus of the war waged against Colombia by the FARC and their accomplices was being developed.

For the following reasons, as simple as they are alarming, Timochenko is in Venezuela: not only because the “FARC Foreign Affairs Ministry” headed by Iván Márquez and Granda operates there, but also because the new central nucleus of their political and

FMSO Commentary: Below is a translation of a November 19, 2011 article, “Why Is Timochenko in Venezuela?” by Colombian Luis Alberto Villamarín Pulido. The original full article can be read in Spanish at <http://www.luisvillamarin.com/defensa-nacional-y-seguridad-nacional/641-presencia-de-timochenko-en-venezuela-indica-interaccion-de-chavez-con-el-plan-estrategico-de-las-farc-y-sus-oscuras-propositos.html>. The context of the article includes the recent naming of Rodrigo Londoño Echeverry, AKA Timoleón Jiménez, or Timochenko, as the leader of the FARC after the Colombian Army succeeded in eliminating its previous commander, Alfonso Cano. The general framework of debate regarding the war has become whether or not the Colombian government should simply pursue a military victory over the FARC, or if a new window has opened for a political settlement. The government has severely reduced FARC sanctuaries within Colombia, leaving the FARC to shelter itself along and across international borders, especially that with Venezuela.

*The author of this Colombian piece is a retired colonel, and the viewpoint he expresses is representative of a hawkish current of policy and strategic thinking in Colombia. Adherents to this current claim some opposition to the security policies of current Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos, denouncing them as insufficiently assertive regarding the defeat of the FARC. The abbreviated translation below is offered in part to counterbalance what FMSO analyst Geoff Demarest sees as a possible misrepresentation of the Colombian strategic climate. The Open Source Center recently offered up a translation of another Colombian article titled, “Colombia: Analyses Disagree on FARC Vitality, But Time Right for Negotiation,” from a widely regarded Colombian weekly journal, *Semana* (Semana.com*

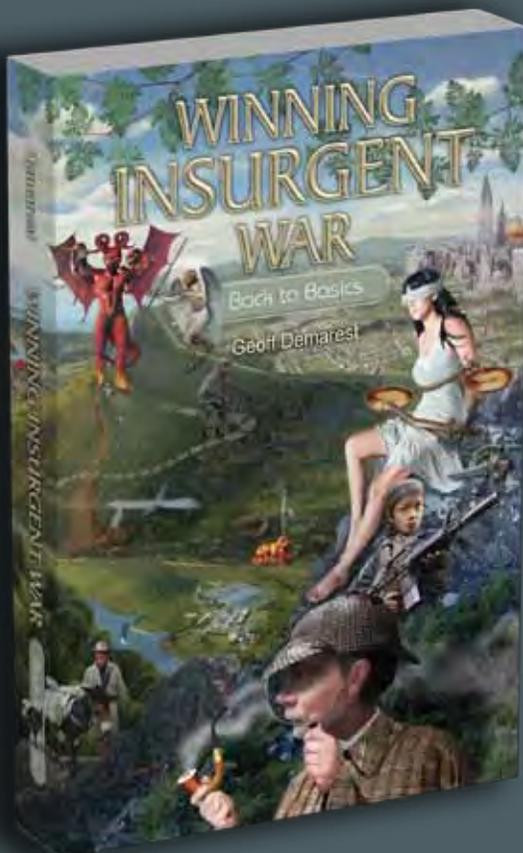
24 Sep 11- 30 Sep 11). That article implies that there exists in Colombian a consensus regarding the wisest and most timely policy to take toward the FARC – in other words, that the historical moment had arrived to negotiate. There is no such analytical consensus. The alternate analysis, that ‘negotiation’ should mean no more than considering surrender terms (that the FARC should be defeated militarily) is held by many Colombian strategists and by much of the public. This more resolute line of thinking -- that the FARC is not morally or operationally worthy to be treated as a party to political negotiations, remembers the peace processes of just a decade earlier in which the FARC cynically used negotiations to gain strength and strategic position. **End FMSO Commentary (Demarest)**

Continued: Why Is Timochenko in Venezuela?

armed aggression against Colombia will be directed from there, funded by Colombian oil, minerals, drug trafficking, and smuggling, as well as the financial, political, and logistical support of the Chávez government.

The facts corroborate that, on instructions from the Cuban dictatorship and at the suggestion or perhaps demand of the FARC, Chávez moderated his grotesque irreverence and disrespect toward Colombia but did not stop supporting the FARC. Meanwhile, Dilma, Correa, Evo, Ortega, and the rest of the FARC’s accomplices covertly support the international cells of the hemisphere’s communists in all arenas in which Colombians for Peace promotes “peace in Colombia,” and they moreover support the legitimization of the FARC for their final offensive.

It is obvious that Timochenko, from the other side of the border, will persist in asserting the FARC’s pacifist agenda with the exchange of kidnap victims for terrorist prisoners and the “necessary initiation of talks” to seek peace, which will draw an immediate echo from their hidden accomplices in NGOs and “friendly” governments. But obviously this occurs while the FARC continue to carry out their Strategic Plan, which as previously noted is a plan for war, not peace....



Geoff Demarest's *Winning Insurgent War* is about a broader set of conflicts than just 'insurgency.' In its 144 sections, Geoff Demarest raises new and overlooked concepts related to modern conflict in a provocative manner designed to stir up debate and critical thinking. As Geoff Demarest puts it: "I hope that some of the ideas in it will be contagious."

Continued Chinese Focus on High-Tech Rare Earth Elements

5 November 2011



Source: Inner Mongolian Issue of China Daily (Chinese), 05 Nov 2011. http://www.nmg.xinhua-net.com/xwzx/2011-11/05/content_24060317.htm

Rare Earth mineral rock obtained by FMSO analyst.

包头国家稀土高新区让世界刮目相看 (Baotou National New and High Tech Rare Earth Zone Wows the World)

On November 1, when the launch of Shenzhou VIII concluded with a complete success, People at Mengxi [Inner Mongolia Rare Earth] Magnetic Industrial Company who gathered and watched the live television immediately applauded and cheered excitedly. Yang Mingsheng, General Manager of the company said in introduction that Shenzhou VIII has once again used the rare earth samarium cobalt permanent magnet device produced by his company, and thanks to that, it had flown into the space perfectly to meet “Tiangong-1 [Heavenly Palace 1]” [space laboratory module].

Baotou Mongolian Rare Earth Magnet Co., Ltd. [Mengxi Magnetic Industrial Company] is one of the rare earth enterprises with the most innovative capacity in Baotou National New and High-tech Rare Earth Zone, which has contributed significantly to national aerospace cause. From the successful launches of the “Shenzhou” series of spacecrafts into space, to the successful launch of lunar “Chang E” satellite, and the successful entry to the predetermined orbit of the “Tiangong-1,” all the launch vehicles used for these launches have used the rare earth permanent magnet devices developed and manufactured by this company. The Middle East has oil, and China has rare earths. [A significant portion of China’s] rare earths is located in Baotou. From January to September this year, the total output value of the rare earth area of the Baotou National New and High-Tech Rare Earth Zone reached 11.528 billion yuan, an increase of about 78.9% over the same period last year. The rare earth industry’s output had surpassed ten billion yuan for the first time.

Baotou National Rare Earth New and High-tech Zone is “a product transformation and industrialization base for national new rare earth materials.” After two years of development, the newly planned and developed 8,000-mu [1318 acres or 2.06 square miles]

FMSO Commentary: The following article is an excellent example of the magnitude of China’s rare earth elements industry and gives a glimpse into the country’s world of technological innovation. Between the 1950s and 1990s the United States reigned in research and development of rare earth elements, which are essential for hundreds of high-tech applications, including military-based applications. During this same period China exported primarily rare earth oxides and minerals. The past two decades, however, have given way to a shifting of roles. Today China focuses more on research and development of rare earth elements while the United States has backed off dramatically. Today China is said to have tens of thousands of scientists working on research and development of rare earths elements, while the United States has a fraction of that.

Meanwhile, China produces over 90 percent of the world’s rare earth supplies and has been providing incentives for foreign manufacturers to move their operations to the Baotou area, China’s rare earths industrial base. China’s rare earth programs are also backed by the government, with great national pride enveloping the industry.

The United States is still considered the top country in technological innovation. However, China is focused on one day exporting, and consuming, home-developed technologies, rather than importing goods developed elsewhere. These new developments include homegrown military innovations, which could one day threaten U.S. national security. End FMSO Commentary (Hurst)

RELATED ARTICLE

Southeast Asia — Indo or China by *Ivan Welch*

“Understanding the current dynamics of the world’s several geostrategic regions, is a full time effort for the government, military, or business professional. In the past decade Southeast Asia has seen massive natural disasters, government turmoil, terrorist attacks and on-going insurgencies. Within this mix of tumults, the region saw economic expansion as the adjacent India and China lead global growth. US political focus is consistently drawn back to the region and the US military is often a first-responder in time of need. Study of Southeast Asia is well worth your time.” <http://www.faoa.org/Resources/Documents/International%20Affairs%20FAOA%20Journal%20-%20Dec%2011%20-%20Online.pdf>

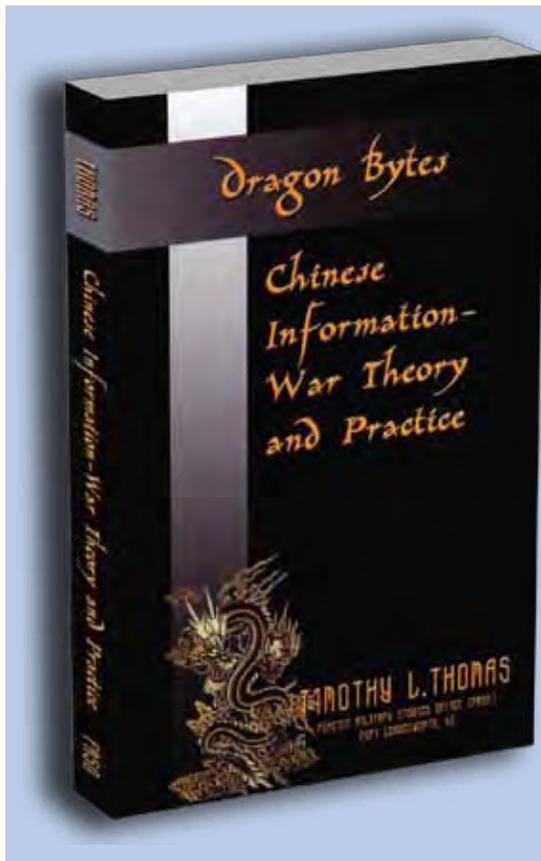
Continued: Baotou National New and High Tech Rare Earth Zone Wows the World

rare earth application industrial park has seen numerous rare earth enterprises and a total of 37 projects settle in the park, including Bao-Steel Magnetic Materials [Inner Mongolia Baotou Steel Rare Earth Magnetic Materials Co., Ltd.], and Rare-earth Treasure Bowei [Baotou Rare-earth Treasure Bowei Medical Systems Co., Ltd.]. In the meantime, the industrial park has optimized the rare earth industrial structure, and promoted industrial transformation and upgrading. Wang Biao, General Manager of Bao-Steel Magnetic Materials said in an introduction: “our project has a total investment of about 730 million yuan, and covers an area of 108 mu. It will become a second to none group base for rare earth magnetic materials production and application in China.”

Baotou’s rare earth resources and industrial advantages have drawn the attention of the world. In order to win “the right to speak” in the international market for Baotou’s rare earths, the Rare Earth New and High-tech Zone and Baotou Steel have jointly founded the Inner Mongolia Baotou Steel Rare Earth International Trading Co., Ltd., and bought shares of the International Trade Co., Ltd. As a result, a completely new raw material platform has been established. As the world’s leading production, supply and export base for light rare earth elements, Baotou Rare Earths have been preliminarily developed into a new phase: it has controlled the market while

developing a circular economy in parallel and averting the dilemma of selling its rare earth raw materials as cheap as “dirt.” Its impact on the world rare earth markets and rare earth applications has increased dramatically. Currently, the Baotou National Rare Earth New and High-tech Zone has 76 rare earth enterprises in which the enterprises for rare earth new materials and end application products account for 87%.

Innovation is the power and soul for the development of a country or a region. In Baotou National Rare Earth New and High-tech Zone, there are 17 rare earth new and high-tech enterprises, and two national-level, nine regional-level and 17 city-level rare earth enterprise engineering technology research centers. Within the “15th Five-Year” period alone, about 54 patent applications for rare earths and relevant applications were submitted in which 41 patents were granted. These innovation-related products have been widely used in national defense scientific research and new and high-tech fields, which have received numerous awards from related state ministries and commissions. “Whenever Baotou rare earths roar, the earth shakes noticeably.” This reflects the distinguished international status won by Baotou National Rare Earth New and High-tech Zone via innovation and development.



***Dragon Bytes* by Tim Thomas examines China’s information-war (IW) theory and practice from 1995-2003. Some specialists may be surprised that the Chinese openly discuss not only computer network attacks and electronic preemption but also the development of IW units and an “integrated network-electronic warfare” theory (which closely approximates the US theory of “network-centric warfare”). The Chinese development of an IW theory is representative of their country’s philosophy and culture. By creating an “IW theory with Chinese characteristics” the People’s Liberation Army (PLA) has offered an alternate way of viewing the application of IW than in the West.**

Chinese Experts Recognize Long Haul Ahead for First Aircraft Carrier



30 November 2011

Source: Wang Tianyi, Wen Wei Po (Chinese), 30 Nov 2011. <http://paper.wenweipo.com/2011/11/30/CH1111300014.htm>

Varyag under tow in Istanbul in route to China by U.S. Navy

專家解讀：航母形成戰力 需時八至十年 Expert Interpretation: It Will Take Eight to Ten Years for Aircraft Carrier to Become Combat Capable

Well-known Chinese military commentator Major General Peng Guangqian told Hong Kong's Wen Wei Po reporter that this outing by China's aircraft carrier platform should be one of "a number of debugging tests" in its construction process. The aircraft carrier is a modern warfare platform incorporating the highest-level military technologies and a massive coordination system. "This means that it must pass through several rounds of debugging and calibration before officially entering into use." According to his explanation, the aircraft carrier's test voyage certainly does not mean that the aircraft carrier has already achieved combat capabilities. Based on experiences in the development of aircraft carriers by world powers, aircraft carriers typically go through two to three years of test voyages, and it usually takes eight to 10 years to come to possess combat capabilities.

"Because China is developing its own aircraft carrier in a void and it is relatively lacking in experience, there remains considerable distance to travel if it were to ultimately establish a combat group with a nuclear-powered aircraft carrier, like that of the United States. However, compared to other countries with aircraft carriers, those other countries lack the advantage we hold in terms of many top technologies," said Peng Guangqian.

"Becoming an Armed Force" is More Difficult than "Becoming a Device"

Academy of Military Science Professor Wang Changqin pointed out in an article that the aircraft carrier is a national treasure. Its importance lies in the "implement importance" of its technical embodiments, and even more in the "utility importance" of improved training. Therefore, a country's aircraft carrier project is a technical project involving "becoming a device," but more importantly it is a personnel project involving "becoming an armed force."

He believes that aircraft carrier training for key figures such as the carrier commander and pilots of carrier-based aircraft should focus on actual operation training. The aircraft carrier commander is not only the supreme commander of all of the naval and aviation

FMSO Commentary: For years rumors have abounded about China's plans to incorporate aircraft carriers into its Navy. This year those rumors have come to pass.

In Western assessments of China's growing military might there is almost always, at a minimum, mention of or discussion about the Varyag, China's first aircraft carrier. The making of the Varyag has been a long and winding work in progress. With its keel laid down in 1985, it was first destined to become a Soviet navy multirole aircraft carrier. However, construction stopped in 1992 after the breakup of the Soviet Union. At first the Varyag was not maintained. Then it was stripped, and by 1998 it lost its engines, a rudder and operating systems. Finally, Ukraine put it up for auction. A Hong Kong based company, planning to transform it into a casino in Macau, purchased the vessel for \$20 million. However, instead of ending up in Macau, in 2005 it was put up in dry dock at the Dalian shipyard.

This year China's first aircraft carrier made its maiden voyage. However, as the article below points out, there is still a long road ahead as China strives to build up its equipment, expertise, and manpower. Then again, for the many skeptics who previously claimed China was not seeking to become a blue water navy, China's progress is proving otherwise. End FMSO Commentary (Hurst)

Continued: Expert Interpretation: It Will Take Eight to Ten Years for Aircraft Carrier to Become Combat Capable

personnel onboard the carrier, he is also the number one decision maker for all matters on the carrier.

According to the United States' experience, after passing through cultivation and filtering based on "multi-faceted incubation," it takes at least 20 years for a naval aviator or naval flight officer to become a qualified aircraft carrier commander. And it takes at least eight years for a carrier-based pilot to become a carrier-based pilot with basic qualifications to conduct solo take-offs and landings and execute naval combat training tasks.

Wang Changqin pointed out that this long, slow process of "becoming talented personnel," together with the approximately three years of "becoming a device" for an aircraft carrier to be built by the United States, shows why it is so hard for an aircraft carrier to "become an armed force." While focusing our efforts on aircraft carrier construction, it is also necessary to simultaneously develop reserves of and training for the corresponding personnel.

Foreign Military Studies Office (FMSO.leavenworth.army.mil)

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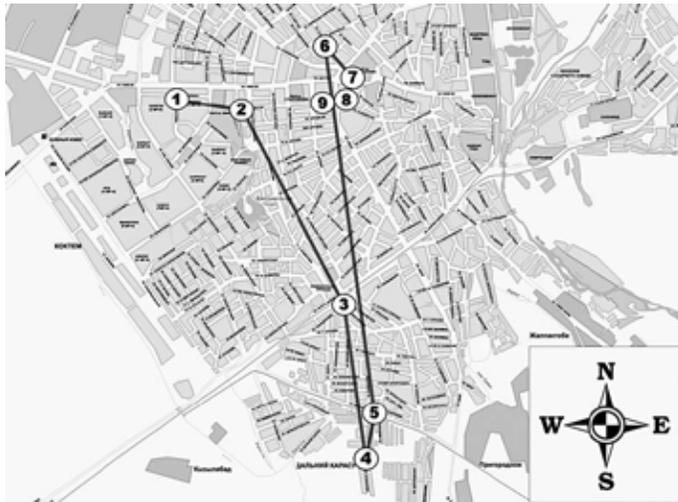


Islamic or Criminal Violence in Kazakhstan?

15 November 2011

Source: Vybornova, Galina. "Кровавый путь убийцы (The Bloody Path of the Killer)," Vremya (Time), 15 November 2011. <http://www.time.kz/index.php?module=news&newsid=24530>

Map of terrorist attacks by Maksat Kariev, via time.kz



Кровавый путь убийцы (The Bloody Path of the Killer)

We followed the path of the terrorist Maksat Kariev, who the people have already nicknamed "The Terminator"...

At 10:30 on Saturday (November 12), according to the official version, Kariev took possession of a Mazda. He then proceeded to the hunting store "Make", and arrived at 11:20. It was here that he shot the store guard with a 16 gauge shotgun and mortally wounded a random customer. Then he went toward the train station and ditched the Mazda under a bridge. Here he stole another car, a Russian VAZ, and drove to his home. Around 800 meters from his house, Kariev somehow figured out that he was under surveillance by two men from the National Security Committee (KNB) and shot them from the car.

The exact time of Kariev's next attack is unknown, but police said it was about 12:00-12:10 near a store called Dulat. Here he shot two sergeants from the province security service with a Saiga rifle. According to witnesses, a terrorist aimed a machine gun and then a "bazooka" at a crowd of people and at a passing bus, but apparently decided not to shoot and went to the regional department of the KNB. Perhaps it was one of the main objects of the terrorist attacks; he fired two shots from a grenade launcher onto the second floor of the KNB building. Then for around 40-50 minutes Kariev shot and killed six people.

About 13:00 the terrorist moved on and a few minutes later was on the corner of Abay and Kazybek Bi streets. Here traffic police caught up with him. After firing several shots, Kariev pulled out a grenade. At this moment, the traffic police commander attacked and knocked him to the ground. There was an explosion...

There were seven victims in addition to Kariev. Who is he, our Kazakh Terminator? Kariev, born in 1977, was a native of the Zhambul Province. While serving in the army (1995-1997) he proved himself as a good marksman. He lived with his mother in Taraz. In Taraz there is now an interagency investigative group; apparently they have not ruled out the existence of accomplices.

***FMSO Commentary:** The shooting in Taraz is yet another incident of violence in Kazakhstan in 2011. There have been bombings in Aqtöbe, Astana, and Atyrau, and shootings in Shubarshy and Almaty. Government security forces also took casualties outside Almaty on December 3 when they raided a house with suspected militants. This was the first time, however, that civilians had been killed; previously only police or members of the security services had been targets or casualties.*

In a press release the government of Kazakhstan said that a man identified as Kariev, responsible for the shootings, was linked to jihadist groups. The terrorist group Jund al-Khalifa (Soldiers of Caliphate) claimed responsibility for the attack. The first time anyone had heard of this group was when it was reportedly linked to the bombing in Atyrau in October of this year. Jund al-Khalifa is reportedly active on the Afghanistan-Pakistan border and has ethnic Kazakhs in leadership positions. More and more it appears that Kazakhstan is dealing with the terrorism that had been limited to Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, or Uzbekistan. However, there are still some unanswered questions.

*Although it is not exactly known why civilians were killed in this instance, there is information to suggest that they were in the wrong place at the wrong time or they died as a result of an overreaction from Kariev. All attacks prior to Taraz specifically targeted police or members of the National Security Committee (KNB); the attackers had been involved in Islamic militant groups, but they had been motivated by revenge for fellow group members whom police arrested and reportedly tortured. This is not the same kind of terrorism seen in the region that purposely targets civilians. While this could change in the future, it appears that terrorists in Kazakhstan are only targeting the security services and police. **End FMSO Commentary (Stein)***

FMSO Commentary: Russia has had a number of concerns about Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) since it started over ten years ago. These range from violence spilling over into the region and the drug trade from Afghanistan to the U.S. gaining a foothold in Central Asia, a region that Russia has traditionally seen as its sphere of influence. Russian leaders have voiced these concerns with more frequency in the past year. A recent concern is that, as U.S. forces drawdown over the next few years up until the 2014 withdrawal date from Afghanistan, they will redeploy to bases in Central Asia. This has now grown into a worry that the U.S. will be giving surplus weapons to Central Asian militaries. While this might seem to be far-fetched theory, there could be some truth at the core of it.

The U.S. has been assisting Tajikistan in developing its border forces and providing training and equipment, and earlier this year broke ground on a training center for Tajik security forces. During the Tajik Civil War (1992-97) and up until 2005, Tajikistan did not have a border guard force of its own; the Russian Border Guards filled in this gap, particularly along the Afghan-Tajik border. Within the past few months a member of the Russian government advocated that Russia redeploy its Border Guards to Tajikistan to help curb the flow of narcotics. Tajikistan rejected this proposal.

Russia might be concerned with losing its role as a trainer and supplier of defense equipment for Central Asia, not just Tajikistan. However, this is unlikely to happen. All Central Asian countries, except for Turkmenistan, are members of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), which allows them to purchase military weapons and equipment from the Russian defense industry at prices the Russian military pays. The military and security services of Central Asia also train more frequently with their Russian counterparts than they do with the U.S. Russia's concerns should not be dismissed, but they leave out how Central Asian governments view the drawdown and withdrawal. **End FMSO Commentary (Stein)**

Addressing the 2014 Withdrawal from Afghanistan

5 December 2011

Source: Kononov, Sergey. "Пентагон завалит оружием Центральную Азию (The Pentagon Will Stuff Weapons into Central Asia)," *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, 5 December 2011.

http://www.ng.ru/nvo/2011-12-05/1_pentagon.html

Gen. Vincent Brooks with the Tajik Chief of Staff Ramil Nadyrovym. Photo from www.dvidshub.net



Пентагон завалит оружием Центральную Азию (The Pentagon Will Stuff Weapons into Central Asia)

The Russian leadership is very concerned about the fate of surplus weapons that can enter into Central Asia countries at no cost following NATO's withdrawal of troops from Afghanistan in 2014. There is a strong likelihood that a delivery of significant quantities (of weapons) to Central Asian countries, many of which are superior to Russian ones, will allow these countries to strengthen and modernize their armies. Russia is concerned that NATO and U.S. bases may remain in Afghanistan and that bases will appear in Central Asia after 2014.

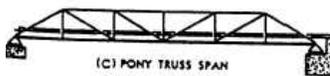
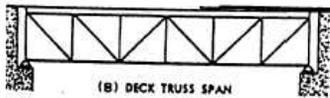
In this situation Moscow is more concerned with the fact that the weapons and military equipment, which are now in Afghanistan, will be transferred to Central Asia countries. It is precisely this kind of scenario that the Americans are trying to play with post-Soviet countries. This will cause significant damage to the interests of Russia, which still has long-term plans of military and military-technical cooperation with Central Asian countries.

According to a military-diplomatic source in Russia, the subject of a transfer of surplus weapons from Afghanistan was discussed at the end of November with Tajik and Uzbek leaders during a visit to Dushanbe and Tashkent by U.S. Army Lt. General Vincent Brooks. They discussed the transfer of unmanned lethal devices, digital radios, individual sets of equipment, GPS navigators, armored cars and vehicles, air defense systems, tanks and rocket-artillery systems, as well as small arms equipped with night vision scopes. According to sources, the Pentagon has apparently come to the conclusion that these high-tech weapons are not suitable because the Afghan Army lacks the education and has a stable relationship with the Taliban. The armies of post-Soviet countries can master these weapons without problems. After the withdrawal of U.S. and NATO forces from Afghanistan, some Central Asian countries will surpass the Russian army on the level and quality of their new weapons and equipment.

One can only imagine how much the help from the U.S. and NATO will be appreciated if the equipment from Afghanistan is handed over free of charge to the Tajik army. It may be worth tens of millions of dollars. For Russia this is an impossible fund to match.

A Quickly Forgotten Explosion

The structural framework for different types of single-span truss bridges commonly used for rail. Photo via Integrated Publishing (engineering training.tpub.com)



25 November 2011

Source: Norbutaev, Yadgor. “Блог Ядгора Норбутаева: «Ночь стоит у взорванного моста...» (The Blog of Yadgor Norbutaev: «Night Stands at the Blown-up Bridge...»),” Asia-Plus, 25 November 2011. <http://news.tj/ru/news/blog-yadgora-norbutaeva-noch-stoit-u-vzorvannogo-mosta>

Блог Ядгора Норбутаева: «Ночь стоит у взорванного моста...» (The Blog of Yadgor Norbutaev: «Night Stands at the Blown-up Bridge...»)

There was an explosion, as reported in Uzbekistan on November 17, on the rail line from Termez to Kurgan-Tyube and later it was recognized as a terrorist attack. There were fortunately no victims. So what? – I thought. It is only some small thing. Some evildoers destroyed a couple of rails, there will be an immediate criminal investigation opened against them, and then soon those terrorists will be behind bars, and the trains will resume movement in one to two hours. Later we learned that trains have not resumed on this line.

In order to unceremoniously let a freight train derail, 200 grams of TNT and primitive skills would be needed, but to bring down a genuine bridge requires special training.

The best way to start researching this is with maps. To do this, I recommend interested readers to take advantage of Google Earth, preferably the latest version from the fall of 2011. The outline of this bridge can be guessed by its shadows. The width of the water surface, the irrigation canal, is about 8 meters. This is classified as a small bridge (the length is less than 25 meters), metal, single-span, laid over an unnavigable water barrier, with single railroad track. As one old partisan said: “These bridges are pleasant to blow up at dawn...”

To (definitively) destroy any bridge is to temporarily terminate traffic on it, so that it is more difficult to recover. Therefore, the efforts of demolition should be directed not against the construction of the bridge, but against its supports. If one only destroys the rail, then it can quickly be replaced. Proper destruction of the bridge’s foundations would accordingly lead to the metal structure collapsing under its own weight. It’s desirable that as a result of the explosion, these metal structures “curl up” so that in recovery operation they would have to cut and pick out individual parts.

Now, the organizational work prior to the sabotage. First, it is necessary to make careful observations of the objective. This should determine the intensity of traffic on the bridge, as well as identify patterns of people and vehicles near it. It may take up to several days.

FMSO Commentary: An explosion on Uzbekistan’s railway in November came and went largely unnoticed. The explosion happened on a rail bridge just east of Termez, Uzbekistan, on a rail line that runs to southern Tajikistan. The following article from Asia-Plus is taken from the blog of Yadgor Norbutaev, an independent analyst from Uzbekistan. While a blog is not vetted to the extent a newspaper is, Norbutaev (likely an alias) is established as a reliable source and this entry is the most extensive coverage of the incident available from local sources. The government of Uzbekistan acknowledged the explosion on November 19, and that it will carry out an investigation to determine the cause.

There have been a few theories of the cause of the explosion, ranging from terrorists operating out of Afghanistan to disrupt supplies on the Northern Distribution Network (NDN) to the government of Uzbekistan destroying its own rail lines in order to halt supplies bound for construction of the Roghun dam in Tajikistan. None of the theories was backed by any concrete evidence; no terrorist group claimed responsibility for the explosion and construction of Roghun is continuing, but will not be completed for several years at the earliest.

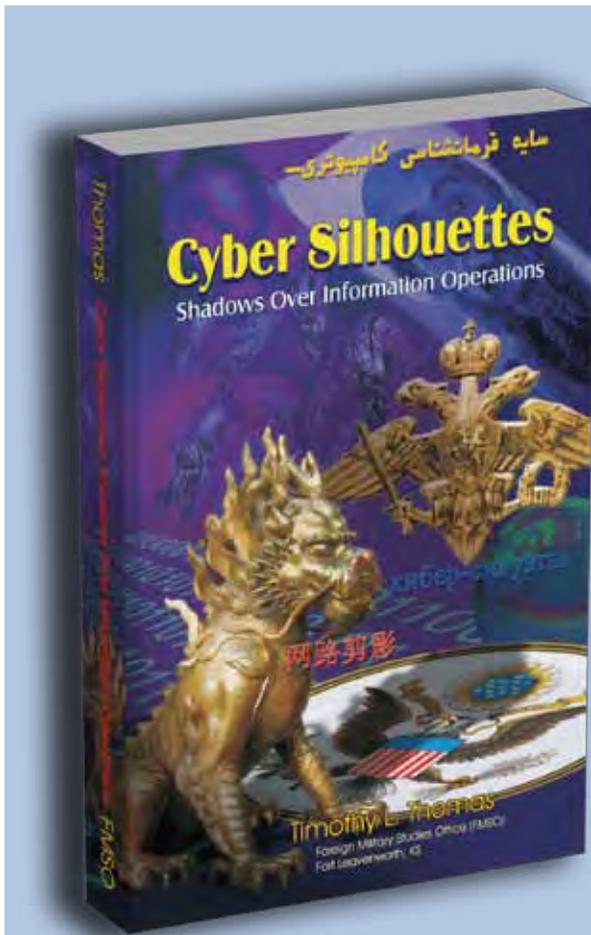
Norbutaev does not provide any definite answers to who was behind the explosion or why it happened, but he offers some information that otherwise would not have been reported. He offers some insight of how an operation would have been conducted if, indeed, this was a planned attack. His knowledge of the geography of the region extends beyond a Google map search and speculation; Uzbekistan’s border forces would very likely have caught any group in the act or soon after the explosion took place. These forces have shown capabilities in the past to quickly react to attacks and apprehend suspects. Ultimately, while there was an interruption in train service on this line, there did not appear to be any significant interruption in supplies on the NDN, a harsh reaction from security forces, or panic in the region. Unless it is later revealed to be a terrorist act or another explosion takes place, this could be quickly forgotten. **End FMSO Commentary (Stein)**

Continued: The Blog of Yadgor Norbutaev: «Night Stands at the Blown-up Bridge...»

Next, carefully consider the design of the bridge, and draw a picture with dimensions and its material make-up. After that, carry out calculations to determine the mass, form, and site of explosive charges. Then prepare a written order which defines specific tasks for each participant of the group from start to finish, an explanation of the means of communication, how to retreat, and much more. Allow the time necessary for preparation to destroy (the bridge); this could depend on many different factors, from two to five hours. By Army regulations – two units with an officer.

This bridge is located close to the border with Afghanistan. At the moment (autumn-winter), some areas of the floodplain of the Amu Darya River are not flooded. The distance from the bridge to the border in a straight line is from two to three kilometers. Almost next to the bridge is a paved road; likely to run between border patrols. Approximately two kilometers to the southwest is the frontier post. About a kilometer to the west are some radio installations and a large tower, probably with the constant presence of people. All this is on almost flat terrain with good visibility. Carrying out preparation work for an explosion will in any case be accompanied by a great noise. In the desert any sounds carry far, especially at night. Conclusion – strangers appearing in the area of the bridge, carrying out suspicious work, cannot go unnoticed by the border guards.

What is the cost to carry out all this? Is it important for Uzbekistan or Tajikistan to stop trains for a day? Why in the press is there not a single photo from the event? Doubts, doubts, doubts...



Tim Thomas's *Cyber Silhouettes* explores the impact of the Cyber Age on military thinking and operations worldwide.

***Cyber Silhouettes* presents challenges to the American information operations (IO) expert regarding inadequate current terminology, and the need for reevaluation of "core capabilities and supporting elements". Tim Thomas further recognizes how cyber processes have allowed criminals and insurgents/terrorists to practice guerilla warfare tactics and illegal or extremist activities online. He contends that the subjective nature of war has changed to include a social context unlike any other time in history.**

Tim Thomas provides a unique perspective that will lead to a better understanding of our complex digitized lives, new ideas for US armed forces to consider, and help analysts identify potential danger zones.

Russian Aerospace Defense

2 November 2011



Source: M. A. Gareev, "Ob organizatsii vozdushno-kosmicheskoi oborony Rossiiskoi Federatsii," Journal of the Academy of Military Science (Vestnik Akademii Voennykh Nauk), No. 2 (35), 2011

Logo of the Russian Federal Space Agency, commonly abbreviated as FKA and RKA. The Russian Federal Space Agency is responsible for Russian space science program and general aerospace research.

РОККОСМОС

On the Organization of the Russian Federation's Aerospace Defense

Prognosis and other scientific research on the prospects of developing the military-political situation, aerospace and rocket technologies, and weapons based on new physical principles attest to the fact that the necessity of creating a common system of aerospace defense [vozdušno-kosmicheskaja oborona, hereafter cited as VKO] for the country is a matter that has been evolving for a long time and requires the implementation of a number of urgent measures at the government level. The necessity and orientation of resolving this issue are determined by the following very important circumstances.

Firstly, it is completely obvious that the nature of armed struggle is radically changing. Its center of gravity and principal efforts are shifting to the aerospace domain, the elements of which are increasingly more interconnected. The world's leading countries are counting on gaining dominance in the air and in space.

The conduct of massive aerospace campaigns, consisting of a whole series of air operations, with the delivery of massive bomb, rocket and radio-electronic strikes, first and foremost, against an adversary's aviation, rocket forces, and naval forces, his air defense system, command posts, industrial, energy, and other very important infrastructure objectives, and, finally, against the main ground force groupings, is planned at the very beginning of a war.

Aviation and naval forces can accomplish these missions from remote basing regions and without a preliminary full concentration on the theater of military operations [hereafter cited as TVD]. Naval aircraft and ships will approach only to the line from which to launch cruise missiles. These can destroy targets on practically the entire depth of the territory of the opposing side.

Of particular danger is the accelerated development of strategic (long-range) precision weapons in conventional air-based and sea-based equipment, which can be used to destroy strategic nuclear forces objectives also at the very beginning of a war to reduce or bring to naught our potential for strategic containment. Work continues as well on the creation of cosmic strike means.

Under these conditions thwarting an adversary's aerospace attack is acquiring primary decisive significance. Practically speaking, the course and outcome of a war and the fate of the country on the whole depend on thwarting his aerospace attack. VKO is becoming the main mission of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation. Therefore, it must be resolved not only by Air Defense [hereafter cited as PVO] and the Air Forces.

During the Great Patriotic War, despite the presence of field (naval) air defense and the creation of several front PVOs, 89% of the adversary's aircraft were destroyed by our Air Forces, mainly by strikes against airfields and fighter aviation forces; only 11% were destroyed by PVO resources. In our time, dynamic operations and the employment of strike resources are acquiring greater importance and require linkage to the resolution of missions of VKO forces and means of all services of the Armed Forces.

FMSO Commentary: This article describes the author's views on the creation of an aerospace defense force in Russia. The author of the article, General of the Army Makhmut Gareev, is the President of the Academy of Military Science and the author of countless articles of military importance. He still advises the Ministry of Defense and is probably the closest Russian example of a strategist that would compare with the US's Andrew Marshall in the Pentagon.

Gareev lists a few points of concern. First, the nature of armed warfare is changing and its center of gravity is shifting toward aerospace and its various interrelationships. Second, since it is impossible to carry out all of aerospace defense's (VKO's) missions in one branch of the armed forces, it demands centralization of command and control under a Supreme Commander, as well as the General Staff of the Armed Forces. Third, for the previous reason it may be more advisable to create a VKO Strategic Command instead of a new separate branch of the Armed Forces. Fourth, a separate state program for VKO's development of forces and resources must be adopted. Finally, it is necessary to carry out four top priority measures: establishing an operations group of specialists, modeling the VKO's Strategic Command's command and control system, providing proper exercises once the command is created, and preserving the VKO Academy for training specialists.

The Space Troops are providing the initial foundation for creating the VKO. Gareev concludes noting that VKO forces are of both strategic and military-political importance for decision-makers, and they are an important cog in the establishment of strategic stability and the deterrence of aggression. **End FMSO Commentary (Thomas)**

Continued: On the Organization of the Russian Federation's Aerospace Defense

Secondly, the scope and importance of VKO, its implementation in all spheres, and the resolution of tasks enlisting the forces and means of all services of the Armed Forces make it impossible to implement VKO tasks within the framework of any single service of the Armed Forces (including the Air Forces and Space Command), and require centralization of command and control on the scale of the Armed Forces under the leadership of the Supreme High Command and the General Staff of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation. In other words, the necessity has arisen not to reestablish a separate Armed Forces service—the PVO forces—as is sometimes suggested, but rather to create a common VKO system combining within its framework all forces and means—the Air Forces, PVO, Rocket Defense Forces, Space Defense Forces, and others.

For this it is necessary to create a Strategic Command for Aerospace Defense within the structure of the General Staff as an organ of operational control called upon to ensure the coordinated combat employment of all forces and means designated to resolve VKO tasks.

The principal VKO missions amount to the following: continuous reconnaissance of the aerospace domain (one can already speak of an aerospace TVD) and timely warning about rocket and aerospace attacks; implementation of VKO (antisatellite struggle, control of the space domain, and defense against strikes from space), antirocket defense (strategic and nonstrategic), and PVO.

The main mission of the VKO strategic command being created is to ensure centralized command and control of rocket defense, space defense and rocket attack warning means [sredstva preduprezhdeniia o raketnom napadenii, hereafter cited as SPRN]; and control of the space domain in cooperation with all Air Force and PVO forces and means carrying out combat duty and at the disposal of the operational-strategic commands (military districts, taking into account their new organization and designation).

As the experience of local wars and the development of similar systems in leading countries shows, in organizing VKO for one's own territory the command and control system must be strictly centralized, providing automated command and control of all systems and resources carrying out these missions, in a common combat cycle and in the information and command and control domain, where the command and control cycle is measured in seconds.

At present there is an elementary basis for the creation of VKO.

Above all, these are the space forces, to which have been assigned the missions of rocket attack warning, rocket defense of Moscow, and countering space systems and control of the space domain, as well as air defense resources that are part of the operational-strategic commands' (military districts') air forces.

During a discussion recommendations were made concerning the creation of a main VKO commissariat on the basis of the main command of the Air Forces. However, in subordinating not only rocket defense, space defense, and SPRN, but also all forces and means taking part in the resolution of PVO tasks to the main command of the Air Forces, an extremely huge structure, difficult to command, arises; moreover, the organizational structure and the newly established system of responsibility for the Air Forces and strategic commands on the TVD (military districts) for resolving tasks in the struggle against an aerospace adversary is violated.

And the main thing is, inasmuch as in our time aerospace defense should be implemented with the enlistment of forces and means of all Armed Forces services, the full value of their command and control can be implemented directly by the Supreme High Command through the General Staff.

According to the result of a number of research works (including in the "Pyramid" automated command and control system), in the case of creating a VKO on the basis of the Air Forces, when, instead of centralized common command and control of all VKO forces and means the matter is restricted by their interaction, the effectiveness of resolving PVO tasks is reduced by 15-20%, and the danger of the flights of their aircraft [is increased] by 30%. The combat employment of forces, especially future VKO aviation complexes such as the MAK ROU (A-100) and T-50, becomes substantially more complicated. The experience of combat operations in the Near East and the exercises "Soiuz-88", "Otrazhenie 90" and others demonstrates that, in the absence of common centralized command and control, losses of aircraft from their own surface-to-air missile systems comprise as much as 20-25%, and in Egypt at the beginning of the 1970s, for example, the number was even greater.

In addition, the variant of creating a VKO strategic command instead of a new separate Armed Forces service is less wasteful in a financial and materiel respect, requiring two times fewer personnel, and ensures its organizational formation in a much shorter time. And it does not require a fracturing of the developed structures of the command and control system of the Armed Forces.

Thirdly, taking into account the above-mentioned considerations, it is expedient to create the VKO strategic command on the basis of the former PVO central command post and assign it the following missions:

- planning and organization of the country's VKO under the leadership of the General Staff, as well as the cooperation of all forces and means taking part in resolving VKO tasks, including with union countries;
- direct command and control of all forces and means carrying out combat duty and taking part in resolving tasks within the VKO system.

A most important mission of the VKO strategic command is covering the principal industrial and energy objectives, communication centers, strategic nuclear force groupings, airfields, and command and control centers. The maneuver of the PVO forces and means of military districts, including fighter aviation, can be performed to accomplish this mission.

Here the principle of separating operational and administrative functions of the different commands, roughly in the same way as the command and control of the American joint strategic command of the strategic nuclear forces and, in the future, simultaneously the strategic offensive and defensive forces, must be precisely observed. For example, in the US this command is involved only with the combat command and control of forces and means allocated for combat duty and accomplishing combat tasks. It is not involved with issues about day-to-day development and training or logistics for these forces. The responsibility for these tasks lies on the Departments (commands) of the Army, Air Force, and Navy.

As applicable to Russian conditions, it is advisable to construct the VKO command and control system according to the same principle as the General Staff's implementation of combat command and control of the strategic nuclear forces. With the creation of appropriate conjoined automated command and control systems for all forces and means, it is

***Continued:* On the Organization of the Russian Federation's Aerospace Defense**

possible to implement common centralized command and control by the General Staff of both the strategic nuclear forces and strategic VKO resources.

The influence of the VKO strategic command on the forces and means of strategic commands (military districts) will be implemented by means of common planning of strategic operations, organization of a common system of detecting an adversary's means of aerospace attack, notification of all VKO command and control organs, and coordinated employment of all forces and means enlisted to repel and thwart an adversary's aerospace attack.

Fourthly, it is advisable to adopt a separate state program for the development of VKO forces and means, which, at present, substantially lag behind the adversary's forces and means for aerospace attack. This, above all, relates to space means of detection, SPRN, space defense, and the system of radio-electronic detection (especially of cruise missiles), the potentials of which have been sharply reduced.

Inasmuch as the adversary's contemporary aerospace resources can launch rockets hundreds and thousands of kilometers away from the target, it is necessary to create space, aviation, and air defense complexes and systems capable of intercepting the adversary's means of attack on the far approaches to our objectives.

As has already been mentioned, new, more modern resources for centralized automated command and control of VKO forces and means, and new space and air posts for reconnaissance, target indication, and command and control, such as the AWACS (A-50) are also required.

The A-135 rocket defense system in its current state is capable of resolving the mission of covering our most important objectives in the Moscow industrial region against a limited nuclear rocket strike at the beginning of a war, and accomplishing other missions basically by information forces and SPRN and control of the space domain. If, however, the creation of rocket defense is sped up in the world's most important regions, then Russia will not only have to improve its rocket defense system in the Moscow region, but also create such a system in the Volga and Ural regions.

Taking into consideration the fact that the probable adversary's entire system of command and control, including aerospace attack resources, is tied up with space, it is necessary to direct the main scientific and technological efforts towards seeking out the resources and methods aimed at bringing down the entire space communications and command and control system. This will not only create favorable conditions to successfully resolve VKO tasks, but also violate the principal base on which the opposing side structures its entire network-centric system of command and control. With this goal one could also study a potential such as creating a scientific and technological center for VKO in the science center in Skolkovo.

On the whole, in the initial stage the Moscow zone's operational and strategic VKO command can serve as a nucleus of forces and means of the VKO strategic command. This zone encompasses 350 towns and 1,100 other large populated areas, the territory of 25 oblasts, and a number of Russian Federation republics, having an overall area of 1.3 million square kilometers. It can be viewed as a nucleus, a leading sector, and a smaller prototype of the entire future VKO system.

On the whole, the new VKO command and control organ can be manned

by officers from the General Staff, the Main Air Force Staff, the VKO Military Academy, and other necessary specialists.

Fifthly, with the aim of a more profound development of the suggested concept of organizing a new VKO system and subsequently verifying in practice its vitality, the following high priority measures must be implemented:

- creating in the General Staff an operational group of specialists from representatives from the Main Operations Directorate (GOU), the Main Air Force Staff, Space Forces Command, and other command and control organs in the General Staff Military Academy to assess the actual condition of available forces and means and the command and control system, and to resolve preliminary organizational issues in accordance with "The Concept of Aerospace Defense of the Russian Federation until the Year 2016 and Future Prospects" (dated 2 April 2006);

- modeling (in the GOU of the General Staff, together with the Main Air Force Staff and Space Forces Command) a command and control system for the Strategic VKO Command on the basis of the available (in the VKO Military Academy in Tver') system of command posts and "Specter" modeling complex (for example, in the US, for scholars and military specialists to analyze and substantiate variants of the transformation of US Space Command into an operational-strategic command, 85 possible variants of different structures and 627 different proposals were compared);

- anticipating (after creating a VKO strategic command) the conduct of a command and staff exercise under the leadership of the Armed Forces General Staff, with the participation of the Supreme High Commander of the Russian Federation Armed Forces and all organs of VKO command and control, and partial enlistment of aviation forces and other VKO units, as well as defense industry scholars and specialists. The result of all this experience would be to refine the VKO's missions and organizational structure;

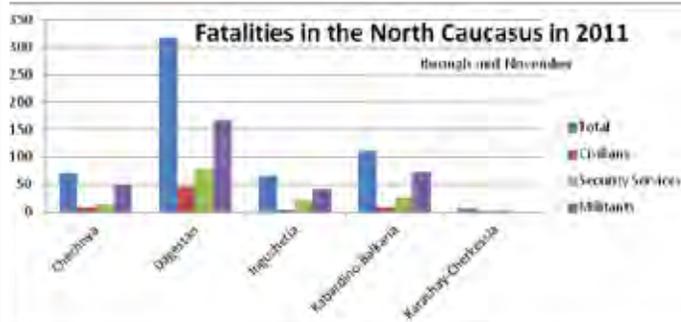
- maintaining under all circumstances the VKO Military Academy in Tver' to train broad profile VKO specialists, and refraining from joining it to the Military Space Academy in St. Petersburg.

Thus, as a whole, VKO has for the Russian Federation not only strategic, but also important military-political importance. It is becoming one of the most important factors for ensuring strategic stability, and containing aggression with the employment of nuclear and conventional weapons; it is becoming a guarantor of timely support to the President of the Russian Federation—the Supreme High Commander of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation—by means of reliable information on the aerospace situation for making appropriate military-political and strategic decisions.

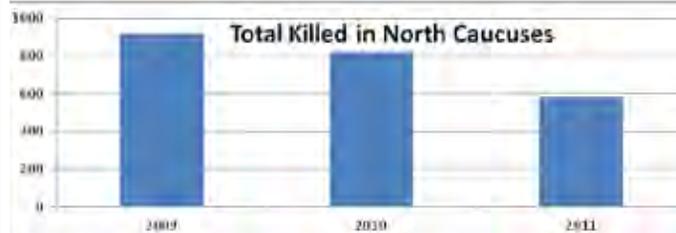
In connection with this, and taking into account the fact that the VKO tasks must be resolved with the participation of a number of state structures, the Russian Academy of Science, and industry, the tasks for the creation of VKO must be included in the National Security Strategy and Military Doctrine (in their next iterations).

Taking into account all this, subsequent work on creating and establishing VKO must be a priority task of the entire system of military development, and be financed as a separate budget article, approved by the President of the Russian Federation, as a most important state task for ensuring the reliable defense of the country and the national security of the Russian Federation.

FMSO Commentary: The Russian Federation has recently released statistics about its fight against insurgency in the North Caucasus. There has been some criticism of the Russian government for “covering up” the severity of the situation in the North Caucasus by fudging numbers and glossing over events. Remarkably, figures about violence in the North Caucasus were similar in Moscow’s 13 December 2011 Interfax article and analysis from the 2 December 2011 Kavkaz-Knot website. Independently derived estimates from media sources are also in general agreement with these figures.



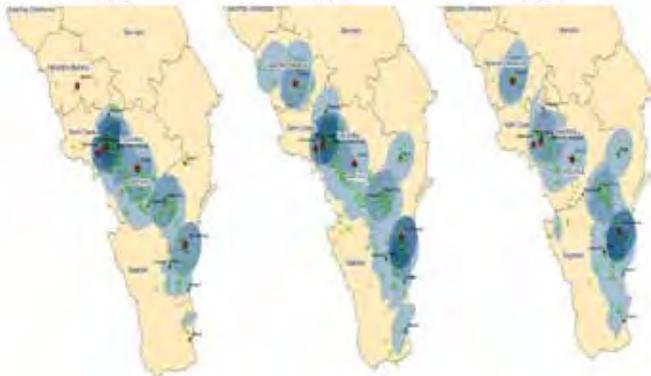
In absolute numbers, violence has decreased in the North Caucasus from 2009 to 2011. Unfortunately, the concentration of where attacks are occurring appears to be spreading. The one-time “hot spots” of violence in Chechnya and Ingushetia are spreading north into Kabardino-Balkaria and farther south and east into Dagestan.



One statistic not mentioned by either article is the number of arrests, which has risen substantially over the last year, signaling a possible increase in security forces activity.

Density of Insurgent Activities

2009 2010 2011



Russian Government Statistics for Violence in North Caucasus in 2011

13 December 2011

Source: Over 350 Militants Killed in Russia’s North Caucasus since Start of 2011,” Moscow Interfax, 13 December 2011, <http://www.interfax.com/news.asp>

“Armed Conflict in Northern Caucasus: 1205 Victims in 11 Months of 2011,” Kavkaz-Knot, 2 December 2011, <http://georgia.eng.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/19206/>

Maps and graphs by Chuck Bartles FMSO analyst

Over 350 Militants Killed in Russia’s North Caucasus since Start of 2011

In the first 11 months of 2011, 351 militants were killed in the North Caucasus Federal District (NCFD), corporate-owned Interfax news agency reported on 13 December, quoting the official website of the Russian Interior Ministry’s Main Directorate for the NCFD.

In particular, 156 people have been killed in Dagestan, 73 in Kabarda-Balkaria, 61 in Chechnya, 40 in Ingushetia, 15 in North Ossetia and 6 in Karachay-Cherkessia.

According to the directorate, since the start of the year 683 people have been killed by militants and 522 have been wounded. Of these, losses among law-enforcement employees numbered 169 killed and 324 wounded.

In addition to this, 350 terrorist-related crimes occurred in the NCFD, 50 of which law-enforcers managed to avert.

Kabarda-Balkaria

Two suspected members of the bandit underground, who were on the federal wanted list, were blown up by an unidentified explosive device (IED) in the town of Chegem, Kabarda-Balkaria, the republic’s law-enforcement agencies told Interfax-South on 13 December.

“On the night of 12-13 December, an explosion occurred in the town of Chegem. Police who arrived at the scene of the incident found the bodies of two men with multiple injuries. During an examination, three IEDs, an assault rifle, a pistol and a large amount of ammunition were found on them,” the source said, adding that the identities of the dead men have been established; they were

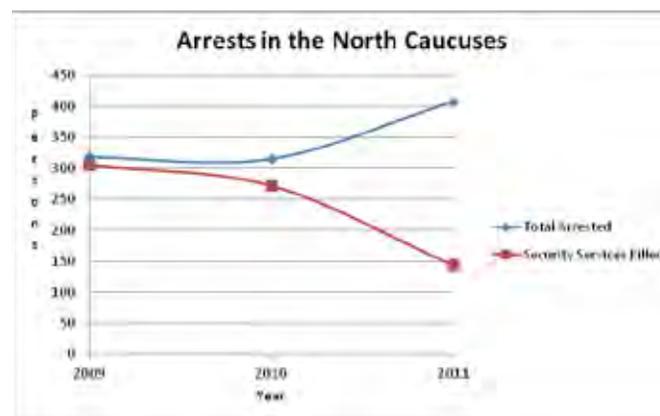
Continued: Over 350 Militants Killed in Russia's North Caucasus since Start of 2011

on the federal wanted list, listed as participants in illegal armed formations.

A later report by state news agency RIA Novosti on the same day named the men as 28-year-old resident of Chegem Andemirkan Alkhasov and 21-year-old resident of the village of Kenzhe Mukhamat Tappaskhanov.

According to the RIA report, one of the IEDs was equivalent to 500 g of TNT, another to 1 kg of TNT and the third was based on a grenade.

Interestingly, there appears to be an inverse relationship between the number of security forces killed and the number of arrests in the North Caucasus.



As the 2014 Olympic Games in Sochi approach, Russian security forces will likely continue to increase operations in an effort to muzzle potentially embarrassing outbursts of violence in the North Caucasus. End FMSO Commentary (Bartles)

Armed conflict in Northern Caucasus: 1205 victims in 11 months of 2011

During 11 months of 2011, that is, from January 1 to November 30, at least 1205 persons fell victim of the armed conflict in Northern Caucasus, including 683 casualties and 522 injured persons. These are the results of calculations made by the “Caucasian Knot” based on the data from its own correspondents and information from open sources.

The absolute leadership among the regions of Northern Caucasus by the number of victims – 685 persons – belongs to Dagestan, which was also ahead of all by the total number of conflict victims in the first half of 2011. From the start of the year, this republic saw 372 casualties and 313 injured persons.

The runner-up is Chechnya, which had – as of November 30 – 202 victims of the armed conflict of law enforcers and members of the underground, including 92 casualties and 110 injured persons. The third place is occupied by Kabardino-Balkaria: 158 victims, among which 116 casualties and 42 injured persons.

Then, in descending order we have: Ingushetia (103 victims: 69 casualties and 34 injured persons); North Ossetia (25 victims: 16 casualties and 9 injured persons), Karachay-Cherkessia (24 victims: 15 casualties and 9 injured persons) and the Stavropol Territory (8 victims: 3 casualties and 5 injured persons).

Losses among power agents and underground

The losses among the members of the armed underground in

Northern Caucasus during the first 11 months of 2011, according to police reports, reached 351 persons. These are people who died as a result of self-explosions and who were liquidated by power agents in their fight against militants. Of the above total number, 156 casualties belong to Dagestan, 73 – to Kabardino-Balkaria, 61 – to Chechnya, 40 – to Ingushetia, 15 – to North Ossetia and 6 – to Karachay-Cherkessia.

Besides, 348 persons, involved – according to law enforcement bodies – in the armed underground, were detained. Of them, 146 persons were detained in Chechnya, 97 – in Dagestan, 73 – in Kabardino-Balkaria, 22 – in Ingushetia, 7 – in Karachay-Cherkessia and 3 – in the Stavropol Territory.

The “Caucasian Knot” hereby emphasizes that the statistics of militants assumes alleged members of the armed underground – the persons who were declared as such by law enforcement bodies.

The losses among power agents from the start of the year in Northern Caucasus as a result of attacks, bombings, armed clashes and attempts include at least 169 casualties, including 93 persons perished in Dagestan, 28 – in Kabardino-Balkaria, 21 – in Chechnya, 19 – in Ingushetia, 6 – in Karachay-Cherkessia, 1 – in North Ossetia and 1 – in the Stavropol Territory.

Other 324 persons in this category were injured, namely, 164 persons – in Dagestan, 80 – in Chechnya, 32 – in Kabardino-

Continued: Armed conflict in Northern Caucasus: 1205 victims in 11 months of 2011

Balkaria, 29 – in Ingushetia, 8 – in Karachay-Cherkessia, 6 – in North Ossetia and 5 – in the Stavropol Territory.

Civilian victims

The confrontation of power agents and the armed underground affects also the civilian population of Northern Caucasus – peaceful people fall victim of the armed conflict.

Since the start of 2011, in Northern Caucasus, attacks, bombings, shootings and attempts took away lives of at least 163 civilians: 123 – in Dagestan, 15 – in Kabardino-Balkaria, 10 – in Chechnya and Ingushetia each, 3 – in Karachay-Cherkessia and 2 – in the Stavropol Territory.

At least 198 civilians were injured, including 149 – in Dagestan, 30 – in Chechnya, 10 – in Kabardino-Balkaria, 5 – in Ingushetia, 3 – in North Ossetia and 1 – in Karachay-Cherkessia.

Besides, kidnapping and disappearances continue in Northern Caucasus. In total, during 11 months of 2011, the regions of the

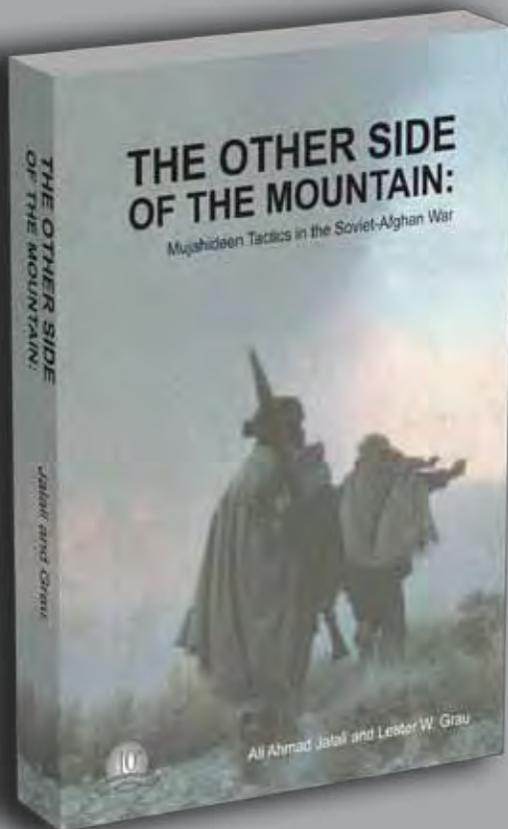
North-Caucasian Federal District (NCFD) registered at least 64 such incidents, 28 of them happened in Dagestan, 20 – in Chechnya, 13 – in Ingushetia, 3 – in Kabardino-Balkaria.

It should be understood that the above figures cannot reflect with absolute accuracy the number of victims in each of the highlighted categories. Not all the data is placed in news reports. It is not always possible to check how true the statements of law enforcers are. There are difficulties in identifying body remains – the lack of adequate laboratories is still an acute problem, which affects the duration and quality of examinations.

See earlier reports: “During September 26-October 2, eleven persons perished in armed conflict in Northern Caucasus”, “Sydoruk: in 2011, 70 power agents lost in Dagestan”, “Armed conflict in Northern Caucasus: 1007 victims from start of year”, “Armed confrontation in Northern Caucasus: 656 victims for the period January to June, 2011”.

Les Grau's classic *The Other Side of the Mountain*, is the most broadly distributed book on the Afghan theater. Capturing the personal stories and perspectives of Mujahedin fighters during the Soviet Afghan war, Les Grau has provided a blueprint of the belligerents in the current conflict.

It is on General Petraeus's reading list and in the rucksacks of deploying soldiers.



Fears over European Ballistic Missile Defense



NATO Ballistic Missile simulation, via dvids.net

17 November 2011

Source: Aleksandr Frolov, "Russia-NATO: While Forming a Mutual Understanding," [Interview with Dmitriy Olegovich Rogozin, the Russian Federation Permanent Representative to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization], *Krasnaya Zvezda Online*, 17 November 2011

Rogozin on Latest Russia-NATO Council Session on Missile Defense

The latest Ambassadorial Russia-NATO Council took place on Tuesday (15 Nov). Russian Deputy Defense Minister Anatoliy Antonov, who spoke at it, set forth Russia's approach to the missile defense problem and conventional arms control in Europe. And although this approach is based on the whole on the 2010 Lisbon understandings, it once again did not receive a constructive response from the NATO side. Why is it occurring like this and what are the prospects of a mutual understanding and is it capable of being transformed into positive and mutually beneficial cooperation between Russia and NATO? Dmitriy Rogozin, the Russian Federation Permanent Representative to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, responds to our commentator on these and other issues.

[Frolov] Dmitriy Olegovich, it was said that the Lisbon Summit opened a "window of opportunity" for cooperation between Russia and NATO on a broad spectrum of international security and stability problems and first of all on the issues of the development of the European missile defense. Does it remain open or is the NATO countries' stubborn aspiration to deploy a missile defense system on the European Continent capable of closing it?

[Rogozin] We will learn this during the NATO Summit in Chicago in May 2012. More precisely, the situation should be clarified already prior to the conduct of this Summit Meeting. A decision will be made on whether or not the head of the Russian State will go to Chicago depending on the development of events surrounding the European Missile Defense Architecture. Today one thing is clear: the Lisbon declarations have turned out to be only declarations. The North Atlantic Alliance doesn't intend and will not develop a joint missile defense system with Russia to defend Europe and is not prepared to move toward adequately close and complementary coordination of the work of the two independent systems. According to the plans, the 3rd and 4th phases of the missile defense deployment (Poland and the northern seas) will cover a portion of Russian territory with the NATO radar sites' area of operation and could become a potential range for the interception of missiles that are flying from the south to the north (we will leave the reality of this scenario without commentary for the time being). Besides the fact that offering its air and ground space for the battle of the "Free World" with the "Evil Empire" is not part

FMSO Commentary: This month (December 2011), it will have been a full twenty years since the collapse of the Soviet Union. Much has changed since then, particularly in the realm of geopolitics, where the Cold War rivalry has been largely replaced by terrorism and other inchoate dangers. Given these new threats, one might have presumed that that the old Cold War rivalry between NATO and Russia would have been resolved. That would be a mistake. For a number of reasons, the NATO-Russian relationship remains fraught with mistrust and tension. One contributing factor stems from Russia's current Representative to NATO, Dmitry Rogozin, who has played a key role in prolonging this distrust.

An unabashedly nationalist politician, Rogozin was appointed to NATO in 2008 as a clear sign from the Kremlin that the era of Russian accommodation (and perhaps even cooperation) with the alliance was over. As a proponent of Russia's superpower status, Rogozin has cleverly used his NATO position to strengthen both his own and the Kremlin leadership's political positions within Russia. Rogozin has helped to maintain the façade of NATO's aggressive designs against Russia, which in turn helps to legitimize the Kremlin's less than democratic rule.

The US/NATO plan to create a European-based ballistic missile defense (BMD) system has been a particularly rich propaganda source for Rogozin and the Kremlin. Simply put, despite assurances to the contrary, the Kremlin leadership maintains that this system will ultimately be used to neutralize Russian strategic nuclear capabilities. In the excerpted interview below, Rogozin (who some have suggested could become the next Minister of Defense) elaborates on the Kremlin-approved interpretation of NATO, and explains the basis for Russian fears over the planned deployment of this missile defense system. **End FMSO Commentary (Finch)**

Continued: Rogozin on Latest Russia-NATO Council Session on Missile Defense

of Russia's plans, the deployment of this system near our borders violates the nuclear balance that has developed in previous decades and undermines the RF strategic potential. Therefore, if the arguments of both the Russian Side and of the independent experts in the West will not be heeded by the Americans, then not simply the "window of opportunity" will close but we will fall back to an arms race and to the confrontation and fears of the past.

[Frolov] Assertions that these weapons are not directed against Russia are one of the arguments, which NATO is using during the realization of the plans for the development of the American missile defense weapons near Russia's borders. Is that so?

[Rogozin] At the negotiations, I constantly repeat the words of the "Iron Chancellor" Bismarck that politicians must be concerned not about intentions but about potentials. They can substantiate as much as they want to us that the missile defense weapons (including the kinetic interception weapons) are not directed against Russia at the present time but this does not signify that they cannot be - even hypothetically - redirected against us. Their missile defense complexes will be able to destroy ballistic air targets right up to the Ural Mountains and who will convince me that this does not affect RF security interests? Of course, the missile defense systems were conceived as a defensive weapon, but missiles and warheads are indifferent to which targets they destroy.

Therefore, we are also saying that NATO's political declarations about the U.S. missile defense system in Europe not being directed against Russia's interests doesn't mean a lot to us. We need legally-binding guarantees from Washington and NATO that this system is not directed against Russia and that precisely define its parameters and restrict the potential of this system exclusively to defense from short and medium range missiles. Specific figures and geographic coordinates must be indicated: the number of missile interceptors, their deployment locations, the number of radars and their operating range, the parameters of the missile interception algorithms, the procedures for mutual information in the event of the emergence of risks, and so forth. But the Americans are not agreeing to any restrictions. Therefore, there will be an asymmetrical response from Russia.

[Frolov] But this could have a negative impact on our mutual relations with the Alliance...

[Rogozin] I have already said and will stress once again: we do not want a new spiral of confrontation. But if our interests will not be taken into account during the alignment of the U.S. missile defense architecture in Europe, a harsh and unpleasant response will follow for our Western partners. They will have to spend money and energy to minimize the consequences of our response and build up new muscles. But then again, they will have to do

this under conditions of the deepest financial crisis. We will not permit a violation of the strategic parity - the foundation of the world's stability over the course of all recent decades. But this will also signify an arms race which the other growing world powers will certainly join. Europe will go deaf from the saber rattling and will devolve into a political crisis, as a result of which radical populists will occupy places in the governments. And with regard to ruinous expenditures, there's no such thing. The taxpayers will have to reject their new automobiles and televisions in favor of more powerful missile systems. And we will even find ourselves in the situation not of 1939, but of 1914, when everyone was tense, flustered, and waiting for the hostile. U.S. logic will lead to this result: "Missile defense at any price, with Russia or without it".

[Frolov] If you more broadly look at the problem of cooperation between Russia and NATO, we must pay attention to the fact that our partners are moving toward it only there where this is advantageous to the Alliance. How can we turn this practice around?

[Rogozin] Actually, NATO frequently does things, which will contradict its own interests. The events in Libya or the irresponsible statements regarding Georgia's membership in the Alliance show that NATO is still far from genuine pragmatism and too much is being done under the influence of whatever factors, only not of the security interests and quality of life of 900 million Euro-Atlantic citizens. Russia will not achieve mutual trust and mutually advantageous cooperation from the North Atlantic Alliance, if the Alliance itself is disoriented and does not understand its own interests in this changing world. We have to be satisfied with the tactic of "a smaller scale". For the time being, the Alliance's extensively advertised transformation is obviously proceeding not in that direction, while transforming it not into a defender of democracy but into its gendarmerie.

[Frolov] NATO has confirmed that it intends to maintain tactical nuclear weapons in Europe and at the same time appeals are more frequently being heard to Russia to reduce its arsenals of these weapons. Will this problem not become a stumbling block in Russia-NATO relations?

[Rogozin] My prediction is: This issue will soon serve as a rift among the allies within the Alliance itself. The Europeans do not understand why they need the ecological risks and dangers of a terrorist seizure of the U.S. nuclear facilities. In this background, the idea is gradually maturing in public opinion that it is time for NATO to shut down and in its place create a military bloc of the European countries without the participation of America and all the more so its domination. In its turn, U.S. tactical nuclear weapons in Europe - are a unique anchor for the United States, which it will

Continued: Rogozin on Latest Russia-NATO Council Session on Missile Defense

never voluntarily reject, even if the proponents of the reduction of the American presence in the outside world will win the U.S. elections.

With respect to Russia, our position consists of the following: we do not consider the U.S.'s tactical nuclear weapons in Europe to be tactical. For us, these are strategic weapons and their status was one of the problems during the course of the negotiations, which preceded the conclusion of START III. Therefore, on this issue the ball is first and foremost in the court of NATO and the United States. The United States must withdraw its nuclear weapons from Europe. Russia has already long since done that, our weapons are located on our territory and there is nowhere to withdraw them further away. The development of negotiations surrounding European missile defense and the progress of the implementation of START III are also components of the question that you posed.

[Frolov] Afghanistan is recently being cited as an example of Russia's successful cooperation with NATO. Russia has done quite a bit to support NATO's counterterrorist operation, including offering its airspace corridor for the airlift of nonmilitary cargoes, and has also canceled Afghanistan's \$10 billion debt to the Russian Government. But NATO is giving us little in response. This especially concerns a topic that is painful for us - halting narcotics trafficking to Central Asia and from there to our country. How much has this cooperation been beneficial for Russia, will it not result in the fact that we will be compelled to once again send our soldiers to that country?

[Rogozin] We need to highlight the following things here. Of course, it is advantageous for Russia that the NATO operation in Afghanistan would successfully conclude, that is, with the destruction of the terrorists, the establishment of peace, order, and stable state rule, the restoration of the economy, and the stabilization of this entire region. Therefore, we are willingly resorting to the assistance of the ISAF forces, including by providing transit of nonmilitary cargoes across our territory and we are participating in the training of cadres for the narcotics police and civil services, and so forth. That is, our interests coincide with NATO's plans.

The topic of combating narcotics production and trafficking spoils this idyllic picture to some extent. The poppy fields have actually expanded during the occupation, the Afghan drug economy has assumed colossal scales, and our country is suffering more from heroin addiction than any other country in the world. The Coalition is clearly not applying adequate efforts in order to combat this. Russia and NATO need a peaceful Afghanistan, which is engaged with the construction and development of the well-being of its citizens, and not with the export of terrorism, Islamism and the "white death".

[Frolov] Many people and experts in Russia, in particular, take the position that not Brussels but precisely Washington decides all of the Alliance's business at a time when the former is realizing what is being conceived across the ocean. What do you think, do the U.S.'s European allies have their own position and, if that exists, what is its difference from the American position?

[Rogozin] There is a very weighty actual substantiation of this position. NATO actually remains a military-political tool of U.S. policy in Europe and beyond its borders. America accounts for $\frac{3}{4}$ of all NATO expenditures and this corresponds to Washington's weight in internal NATO discussions. Unfortunately, even the major European powers have resigned themselves to this situation: we practically do not hear the French or German accent in the words and NATO affairs. We hear only American slang. According to the Wikileaks materials, a "mole" was even working in the NATO General Secretary's entourage, who methodically transmitted all sensitive information to the American delegation. In general, neither the national delegations nor the international secretariat can compare with the U.S.'s influence on NATO decisions and actions. It is possible that they lock horns behind closed doors but consensus decisions are presented in public, which never contradict the positions of the State Department or the Pentagon. One can regard individual episodes as the exceptions which confirm the rule.

[Frolov] It is totally obvious that the existence among the sides of prejudices with regard to each other is the primary reason that prevents the development of full-fledged cooperation between Russia and NATO. In your view, is the resolution of this problem possible or not?

[Rogozin] Do you remember the old anecdote? Mice must be transformed into porcupines. How? This is a tactical issue and I am a strategist. If I speak seriously, then the primary prejudices are concentrated on the NATO side. They perceive us as a potential aggressor, in one of their telegrams they describe Russia as a "virtual mafia state, which is ruled by a corrupt authoritarian kleptocracy of officials, oligarchs and organized crime". They are compiling defense plans in the event of our military expansion. But Russia, on the contrary, is demonstrating exceptional cordiality, affability, liberalism and altruism, for which it is paying dearly.

And, if I will be totally frank, if we will have practical cooperation, the real common matter, which yields real benefit for our countries and it will grow in all directions, then everything will be possible in our relations. This isn't happening for the time being, cooperation in the missile defense sphere could become that matter, but...

FMSO Commentary: Against the backdrop of larger Russian military reform, the slow, uneven transition from conscription toward building a professional military trudges along. While some within the political and military leadership understand the benefits of a professional military, old attitudes (and bureaucracies) die hard. The problem has been aggravated by a host of other factors, to include poor planning, demographic decline, ethnic tensions, and a tradition of brutal hazing within the ranks. Despite all the patriotic rhetoric of the last decade, serving in the military still does not appeal to a large percentage of young Russian men.

I recall visiting Moscow in the mid-1990s and taking part in a conference dedicated to sharing ideas on how to transition from a draft to a professional military. My briefing dealt with the strategies the US Army used in the 1970s when it adopted the all-volunteer model of manning. My Russian colleagues were amazed at the resources spent on developing effective public relation tools in 'selling' the idea of military service to young American men and women. Brought up in the old Soviet school (where defending the 'motherland' was the central tenet of the party), they claimed that such PR was unnecessary. Given the events of the past two decades, however, this attitude is slowly beginning to change.

The excerpted article bellows describes how the Russian Ministry of Defense will target its message among those most receptive to serve as a contract soldier. 'Recruitment Brigades' will sell the many positive aspects of military service among the economically distressed regions. As in many other countries, military service in Russia has often served as a stepping stone for greater opportunity. Recruiting a soldier into the ranks takes some skill; actually training and caring for the soldier is more challenging. It remains unclear whether this positive military image will be transformed into reality. **End FMSO Commentary (Finch)**

Be All You Can Be in Russian Army



Armed forces of the Russian Federation emblem
[Public domain], via Wikimedia Commons.

22 November 2011

Source: Denis Telmanov, "Defense Ministry to Send 'Recruitment Brigades' to Depressed Regions. Military Department Will Use Housing, Wages, and Status To Tempt Poor Russian Citizens To Become Contract Soldiers," *Izvestiya Online*, 22 November 2011.

Russian Defense Ministry 'Recruitment Brigades' To Focus on Depressed Regions

Izvestiya has clarified the operating technique of the so-called recruitment brigades whose creation was announced last week by Chief of General Staff Nikolay Makarov. It is planned to invite mainly residents of depressed regions -- with low wages and a lack of prospects -- to serve in the Army under contract. Apart from money, they are planning to offer the contract soldiers official housing, preferential mortgages, and other social benefits.

A source in the Defense Ministry told *Izvestiya* that it is planned to set up recruitment centers at the commands of military districts and at military commissariats, while the military commissariats themselves will concentrate solely on draftees.

"The brigades will be both stationary and mobile and they will be provided with the necessary equipment -- buses and all-terrain vehicles for difficult roads -- on the basis of outsourcing. They will travel around population centers, first and foremost in depressed regions, and invite young people who have nowhere to go and who do not want to just melt away, to serve in the Army under contract," *Izvestiya's* source explained.

By way of campaigning and information materials, the recruiters will have posters and pamphlets with photographs of "courageous fighters" and "top-class military equipment," differing for each combat arm and branch of service. The layouts are currently being approved. In addition, all the recruiters will be given instructions on how to weed out the "obviously unreliable contingent" -- alcoholics, drug addicts, and people who are mentally unstable -- at the interview stage. The others will be sent to the military medical commission to confirm their fitness for military service.

By way of arguments in favor of service in the Army the recruiters will offer, first and foremost, high wages -- the initial sum comes to 28,000-30,000 rubles.

In addition, a system is currently being worked out for increasing the pay of contract personnel by geometrical progression: On the conclusion of a repeat contract in three years' time the basic pay increases threefold, and on subsequent renewals by a factor of five and seven. And the total sum of payments will be comparable with an officer's pay.

"The minister said clearly at the conference that it makes no difference who receives the wages -- a good officer or a good contract soldier who serves honestly and devotes all his

Continued: Russian Defense Ministry 'Recruitment Brigades' To Focus on Depressed Regions

efforts to the Army," the representative of the Defense Ministry explained.

At the same time he stressed that all contract personnel will undergo recertification and possible elimination every year.

"The Army's overriding interest is in people with whom it has a long-term relationship, who have won a good reputation and devoted their lives to the service of the Motherland. That is why this relationship of mutual dependence is currently being set up: We are dependent on them and they on us," Izvestiya's source explained.

He acknowledged that a "battle for the male population of the country" has currently broken out between the security departments and the Defense Ministry does not plan to surrender.

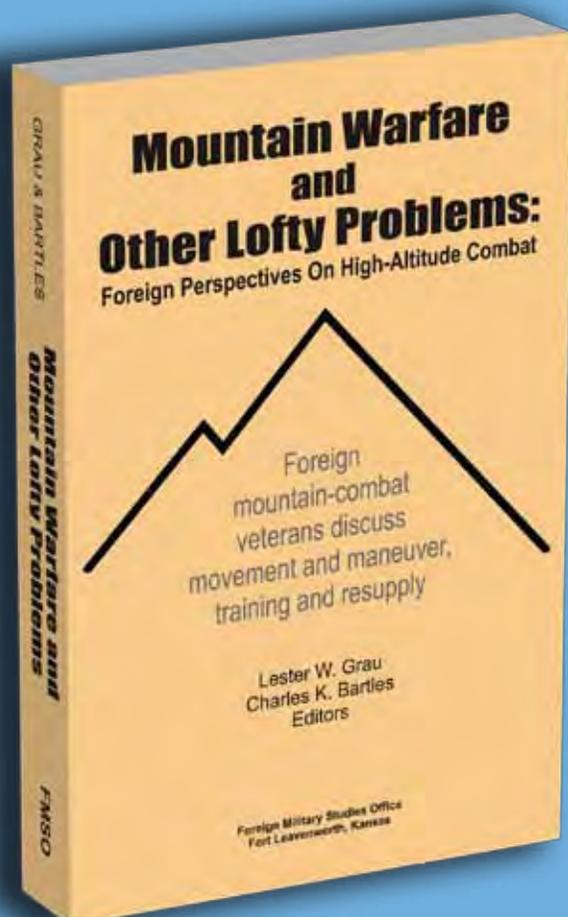
As a guaranteed social package for contract personnel it is planned to allocate service housing in comfortable hostels, free education, medical treatment, leisure, and concessions for children on entering cadet and Suvorov schools and Defense Ministry

boarding schools. However, unlike officers, contract personnel will not receive permanent housing after retiring on pension.

A representative of the directorate for work with personnel told Izvestiya that the full list of social benefits that it is planned to promise to contract personnel on recruitment will be approved by Defense Minister Anatoliy Serdyukov in the near future.

"We have examined all the questions connected with the image. Everything now depends on the approval of the recruitment centers' operating technique, the social package for contract personnel, and an understanding of the time parameters within which we must operate," the representative of the directorate for work with personnel noted.

The Defense Ministry Main Personnel Directorate has been instructed to set up the "recruitment brigades." A separate directorate is currently being set up there for this purpose.



The United States Army has been involved in a mountain war for a decade. After all this time, **mountain combat remains a stubbornly difficult** mission and technology can offer only modest support to the infantry's mission of closing with the enemy or the logistician's mission of getting support forward. This book by Les Grau and Chuck Bartles covers operations and tactics, artillery, and aviation support, reconnaissance, communications, training, and logistics in the mountains.

This book is not United States Army doctrine. Rather, it is offered as an alternate view to a most-challenging military environment.

FMSO Commentary: *Up until quite recently, the individual Russian soldier has been at the end of the military food chain. He would receive whatever wasn't stolen or consumed by the higher ranks. Considered to be largely expendable, and enjoying almost zero legal protection, the Russian conscript became an expert in scavenging and living off the land. While rotund officers might have had problems buttoning their uniforms, the average soldier was fortunate if he did not go to bed hungry.*

Over the past two decades, there have been countless reports of Russian uniformed personnel suffering from malnutrition, caused by either food shortages or poor quality rations. For instance, just this past summer, during the Tsentr 2011 military exercises, there was a case of mass food poisoning after soldiers consumed rotten rations. There was another incident a few months earlier where MVD (Internal Forces) recruits were fed dog food that had been relabeled as canned meat.

*It appears that the sorry situation surrounding the soldiers' sustenance has begun to change. On paper at least, proper nutrition has become a key element of the ongoing military reform. The political and military leadership have started to place greater emphasis on the most valuable resource: the individual soldier. As the excerpted article below illustrates, the 'hunger pangs' of the Russian soldier may soon be a thing of the past. **End FMSO Commentary (Finch)***

Beefing Up Russian Soldiers

16 November 2011

Source: Denis Telmanov, "New Ration Will Make Soldiers Hostages to Physical Training: Energy Content of New Ration Could Cause Second-Degree Obesity Among Recruits," *Izvestiya Online*, 16 November 2011



Russian MRE. DoD photo by Staff Sgt. Aaron Betz, U.S. Army.

Views of Military and Nutritionists on High-Calorie Daily Ration Differ

Russian Defense Minister Anatoliy Serdyukov reports that the Russian soldier's basic ration is the most energy-intensive in the world. According to him, the total energy value of daily military rations is 4,400 calories - more than in the armies of the United States, Germany, England or France.

"A total of 4,400 calories per day is a really a lot for an 18-year-old male. Even 3,000 is really a lot. If one were to consume 4,400 calories a day, within a year that person would suffer from second-degree obesity," the Russian Academy of Medical Sciences Nutrition Institute told *Izvestiya*.

In cases of second-degree obesity the excess is 30-49% of body weight. In such cases shortness of breath can occur even at complete rest. Soldiers would also begin to be bothered by signs of pulmonary insufficiency due to abdominal fat pressing the diaphragm upward. In this kind of obesity the abdomen is enlarged, and by evening swellings forms in the legs. The fighting man would complain of poor memory, dizziness, inability to concentrate and drowsiness.

Viktor Tutelyan, Russian Academy of Medical Sciences Nutrition Institute director, explained that with that kind of ration only intense physical exertion can keep soldiers from becoming obese:

"Substance exchange in a comatose person burns 900 to 1,500 calories per day. Someone who has no exertion all day burns 2,000. Burning up 4,440 would require 3-6 hours of intense physical exertion. Plus, the soldiers would have to put all their effort into it and not slack off, otherwise the unused calories will be stored as fat; that's a law of substance exchange."

Continued: Views of Military and Nutritionists on High-Calorie Daily Ration Differ

However, the Defense Ministry reasonably commented that no one is making soldiers eat all of their daily ration.

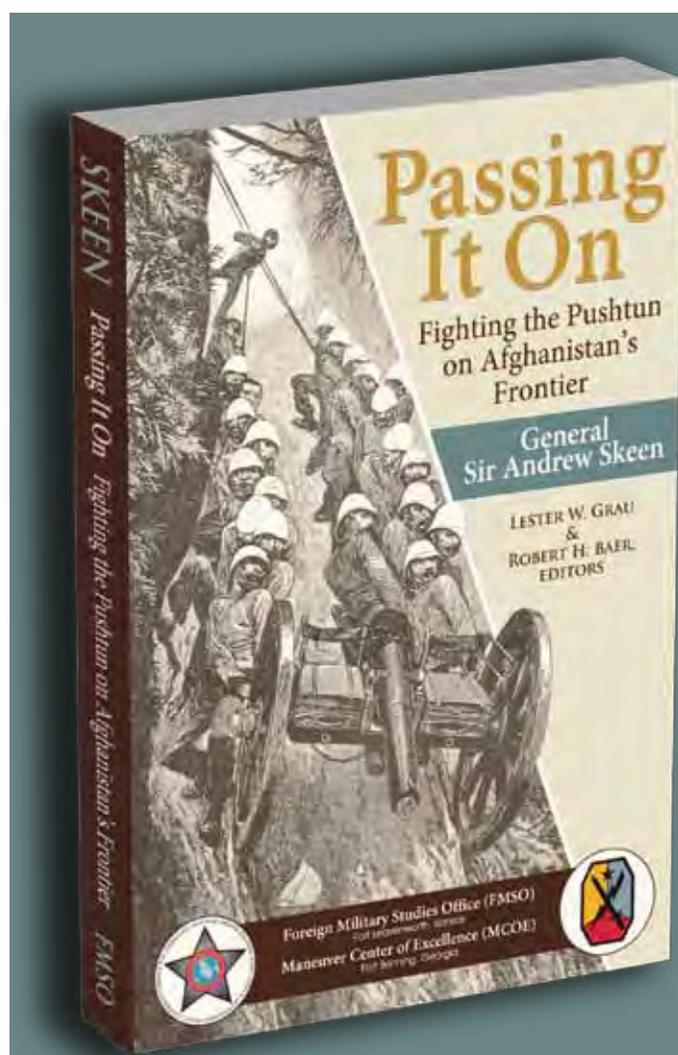
“Nobody has any intention of forcibly cramming all that into the recruits. It is simply that - as practical experience has shown - due to the exertion involved in intensive combat training and sports, soldiers do eat those 4,440 calories gladly, and some even ask for more, according to Igor Konashenkov, head of the Defense Ministry Press Service and Information Office.

He emphasized that the nutritional ration for military service personnel consists of several meal options that vary in terms of their caloric content. Depending on appetite one can make both high-calorie and low-calorie combinations out of them.

“The main thing is that the soldiers be well fed,” Konashenkov said in explanation of the military leadership’s position.

The current daily ration for a Russian soldier eating at army mess halls includes (not counting spices): 250 grams of meat, 120 grams of fish, one egg, 10 grams of cheese (on a sandwich), 15 milliliters of milk (one glass), 45 grams of butter, 120 grams of cereal and beans, 65 grams of sugar (8 teaspoons), 30 grams of premium-grade macaroni, 900 grams of potatoes and fresh vegetables, 650 grams of bread (one loaf), 1 gram of tea (one cup), 1.5 grams of coffee (instant), 100 grams of fruit juice, 10 grams of dried fruit and even 1 Geksavit multivitamin pill.

Pilots, sailors, submarine crews and wounded personnel also receive a special ration that includes (in addition to the above) sausage, smoked meats, herring, poultry, cottage cheese, sour cream, jam, fruit and a larger coffee portion: 1.5 cups for pilots and five cups for submarine crews.



In resurrecting General Sir Andrew Skeen’s *Passing It On*, the Foreign Military Studies Office and the Maneuver Center of Excellence, have provided a detailed look from 1932 that holds valuable lessons and understanding of the Operational Environment in the Af-Pak Theater of today.

FMSO Commentary: For the past 20 years, Russia has maintained a modest military presence in the semi-independent statelet known as Transdneistria, located in eastern Moldova. Ostensibly, the Russian forces are guarding former Soviet weapon stockpiles and helping to maintain peace between this separatist region and the Moldovan authorities. In 1992, there was a brief, vicious war after the pro-Russian region proclaimed its independence. Since then, Russian military forces have both helped and hindered in resolving the political status of this region.

Transdneister serves as a microcosm of the 'power-vertical' form of governance advocated by the Kremlin. President Igor Smirnov and his clan have ruled the region since 1991, transforming the region into a personal fiefdom. The Smirnov band controlled all of the security services and most of the economy. Not surprisingly, the region has been transformed into a veritable hole of crime and corruption, a conduit for every sort of illegal trafficking.

For a number of reasons, the Russian leadership in Moscow hopes to break the Smirnov monopoly and has been working to support another candidate. This past week, Smirnov was voted out of office. It was not so much the democratic aspirations of the local people that helped to remove Smirnov, as the Kremlin realization that a tin-pot dictator can become a serious security threat. In the excerpted interview below, Smirnov expresses a willingness to use his well-armed praetorian guard to protect his corrupt throne. Exaggerating external threats is a favorite tool for those leaders who lack genuine political legitimacy. **End FMSO Commentary (Finch)**

Waving the Dniester Flag

Source: Dniester Moldovan Republic TV, 6 December 2011

6 December 2011



Map of Moldova, including Transnistria [Transdneistria, Dniester region], via www.moldova.org

Moldova's Separatist Leader Pledges to Strengthen Army

In the context of Moldova's speedy assimilation with Romania, the breakaway Dniester region will continue enhancing its armed forces in all aspects, Dniester president Igor Smirnov has said. The state-run television showed him saying that the Dniester army is kept in a permanent readiness to counter possible attacks. Smirnov said that the region's authorities are doing their best to keep Russia's presence in the region. He warned against attempts to "change the Dniester nation" or threaten it with suspension of humanitarian assistance from Russia. The following is the text of report broadcast by the Dniester Moldovan republic TV on 6 December:

Enhancement of combat and mobilization readiness, the state of armament and hardware. The military command of the [Moldovan breakaway] Dniester region armed forces summed up the results of 2011. The commander-in-chief of the Dniester army, president Igor Smirnov thanked in person all those who have defended peace and calm in the republic since its early days.

[Correspondent] The command of the Dniester armed forces has reported to the commander-in-chief Igor Smirnov on the battle and mobilization readiness of troops. The training plan has been fulfilled in full which means the Dniester army is not merely capable of protecting the republic, but is ready to stand up for it should there be encroachments on freedom and independence of the Dniester people. These were in place 19 years ago.

[Smirnov] First and foremost, I want to thank you all for doing your utmost amid all

Continued: Moldova's Separatist Leader Pledges to Strengthen Army

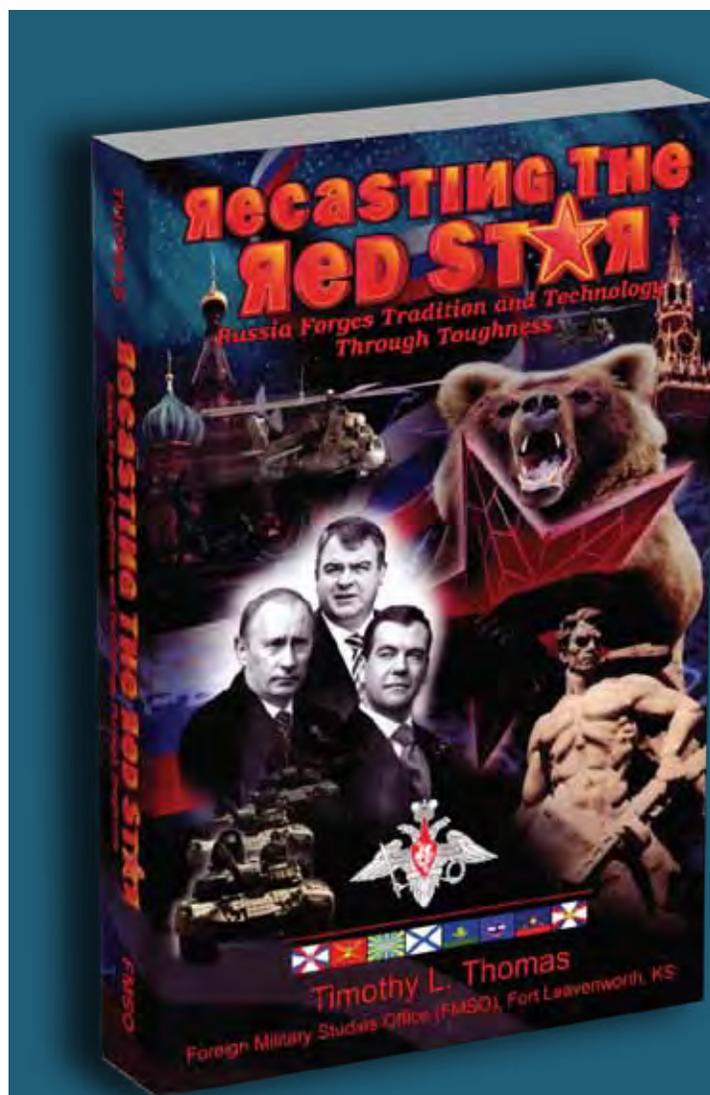
difficulties to repel possible aggression. Our republic has lived for 21 years now and since 1990 the situation has not improved. I think officers realize this, therefore we will strengthen our army in all aspects.

[Correspondent] Having drawn a parallel between the situation in the Dniester region ahead of the presidential election and in Moldova during the times of the Soviet Union's collapse, the president warned the officers against repetition of the once staged scenario. In Smirnov's view, replacement of principle ideas often triggers a loss of the most valuable thing - statehood and the country's centuries-long history. By efforts of its politicians, Moldova has been in fact wiped off from the political map of the globe. Over a half of the current Moldovan population are holders of Romanian passports.

[Smirnov] It was then that the Moldovan intelligentsia started to study in Romania and now 1,500 Moldovan students a year are accepted in Romania's higher schools. It is interesting that the state Moldova studies history of Romania.

[Correspondent] The Dniester region's path could not be determined by someone's immediate intervention. It had been defined at seven referenda. At the 2006 plebiscite, 98 per cent of Dniester residents voted for our republic's independence and a union with Russia.

[Smirnov] Our voice is heard in the Russian politics. We spare no effort to keep Russia's presence here. No matter how hard they try, they will not manage to change us. It will all depend on our people's will.



Tim Thomas's Recasting the Red Star describes Russia's culture of military thought through its modernization effort. Adding to his robust library of work on the subject, Tim Thomas illuminates Russia's Defense Ministry reform efforts, the Russian national security strategy take on the operational environment, and a relevant review of the Russian military doctrine.