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=Modernization Faces the Knife

Air Force Secretary Michael Donley laid out the price of Congress' continued refusal to accept hard choices and set budgets that the service can plan to. "If there continues to be resistance to force structure changes, to base closures, to constraining growth in compensation, and given our current focus on trying to improve readiness," continuation of the sequester into the next fiscal year likely would require "disproportionate cuts to our modernization programs," said Donley during a May 24 press briefing in the Pentagon. "These cutbacks in modernization would put at risk the Air Force capabilities this nation will need in the decades ahead," said Donley, who is stepping down from his post on June 21. He noted that in answering the last call for \$487 billion in Defense Department-wide cuts, "the cancellation or delay of modernization programs accounted for 65 percent of total Air Force reductions" across the future years defense program. Chief of Staff Gen. Mark Welsh, appearing with Donley, said the sequester has "driven us over the readiness cliff," and the Air Force can't even think about new starts until its "readiness crisis" is addressed. "We've entered a period from which we must first recover before we can think about what else might be possible down the road," said Welsh. (Donley-Welsh [transcript](#))

—**John A. Tirpak**

[Head of National Guard to tour Oklahoma damage](#)

San Francisco Chronicle

Frank Grass of the **National Guard** is scheduled to visit Oklahoma to thank the state's **National Guard** members for their work after the deadly tornado in Moore. Grass serves as chief of the **National Guard** Bureau. He's scheduled to appear Tuesday ...

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[National Guard reforms are just 'posterior covering'](#)

Arizona Republic

From the earliest days of the Arizona **National Guard** scandal, the people at the top of this important institution displayed a sense that if they could just wait out the troubles, the troubles would go away. Maj. Gen. Hugo Salazar, who inexplicably ...

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[Key U.S. Weapon Designs Hacked](#)

(Washington Post) - Designs for many of the nation's most sensitive advanced weapons systems have been compromised by Chinese hackers, according to a report prepared for the Pentagon and to officials from government and the defense industry.

[Budget Cuts Clip Fighter Squadron's Wings](#)

(Washington Post) - In April, the Air Force ordered the Rocketeers - more formally, the 336th Fighter Squadron - to stop flying because of the automatic budget cuts known as sequestration. Now, the squadron's two dozen F-15s are parked underneath canopies on the flight line, with red covers over their gaping afterburners to keep out birds and critters. Glum pilots find themselves with lots of time for softball and community projects. And the Air Force has one less fighter squadron available to fight.

New Contingencies a Problem

The Air Force is struggling with how it would meet combat commitments after October—if the sequester persists into Fiscal 2014—and may not be able to respond if a new crisis hits, said Chief of Staff Gen. Mark Welsh. Speaking with reporters at the Pentagon on May 24, Welsh said "we're looking at the reality of next year's expectations for deployment support" in Afghanistan, studying "where would be the biggest impacts if we continued to have squadrons not flying at full mission-capable rates." He said the Air Force is talking with combatant commanders and the Joint Staff "to make sure everybody fully understands" what the service can reasonably deliver given its funding limits. In the current fiscal year, the Air Force is executing "the missions that we know about and that we're committed to," but "we are funding the known and taking risk in the area of the unknown," warned Welsh. "New contingencies could be a problem for us," he said. He also noted that "our readiness continues to decline, even while calls for potential no-fly zone or air policing operations in response to Syrian violence are reaching a new crescendo."

(Donley-Welsh [transcript](#))

—**John A. Tirpak**

[Reservist — and employer — adapting after deployment.](#)

Emboldened Enemies?

Rapidly declining US military readiness may spur an enemy to try to take advantage of the situation, acknowledged Chief of Staff Gen. Mark Welsh. Answering a reporter's question at a May 24 Pentagon press conference, Welsh said he would "hope that before someone"—the reporter used the term "competitor"—"made that calculation that they would think very carefully about the risk associated with it, because it's significant." Previously, Welsh and Air Force Secretary Michael Donley have ringingly insisted that the United States would prevail in any new conflict, even with the budget sequester. But, "clearly, the longer we go through this situation where readiness is degrading, the greater the opportunity for someone to make that unwise decision," said Welsh. Donley, at the same press conference, said the United States would, during this time of suppressed readiness, "continue to engage with allies and partners around the world to collaborate on international security matters" aimed at "detering conflict where we can." Many of these partners don't suffer from the fiscal woes facing the United States, he said, and have different capabilities and "offer different real estate." (Donley-Welsh [transcript](#))

—**John A. Tirpak**

WGS-5 Launched

The Air Force and its industry partners launched WGS-5, the fifth Wideband Global Satellite Communications spacecraft, into orbit aboard a United Launch Alliance Delta IV booster fired from Cape Canaveral AFS, Fla. Within an hour of its launch at 8:27 p.m. local time on May 24, controllers in Australia confirmed initial contact with the military communications satellite, indicating that it was "functioning normally and ready to be moved into geosynchronous Earth orbit," states [a release](#) that day from Boeing, the satellite's manufacturer. WGS-5 should enter operations by the end of 2013, following several months of orbit-raising activities to reach its operational perch and on-orbit testing to verify its performance, according to [a release](#) -5

F-35 Costs Decrease

The Pentagon's newly issued [selected acquisition report](#) to Congress notes a \$4.5 billion reduction in the acquisition, operating, and support costs of the F-35 strike fighter program. Prime contractor Lockheed Martin said this marks the first time that a SAR reflects a cost reduction in the program. "We will work with the F-35 joint program office to implement further cost-saving measures, which will result in additional significant decreases to the total program costs," said a company spokeswoman. The F-35 aircraft program has an estimated total cost of \$326.9 billion, down 1.5 percent from the previous \$331.9 billion estimate, states the report, issued on May 23. However, that savings is partially offset by a \$442 million increase in the costs of F-35 engine acquisition, which jumped from \$63.9 billion to \$64.3 billion. Those costs rose primarily due to revised escalation indices, correction of cost allocations between the aircraft and engine subprograms, and a lower ramp-up of engine production in the near term, states the report.

More Extended-Range JASSMs

The Air Force intends to procure an additional 447 extended-range Joint Air-to-Surface Standoff Missiles, but is also reducing its JASSM baseline buy by the same amount, according to the Defense Department's latest [selected acquisition report](#) presented to Congress last week. The move increases the cost of the JASSM-ER program by \$653.6 million, or 17.4 percent, to \$4.4 billion and brings the total number of extended-range missiles that the service wants to 2,947 from 2,500, states the May 23 report. The total number of JASSM baseline missiles decreases from 2,400 to 1,953, reducing the cost of the baseline buy by \$641.5 million to \$2.9 billion, states the report. The Air Force plans to complete its baseline buy in Fiscal 2016, transitioning to all JASSM-ER procurement in Fiscal 2017, states the report.

Triton's First Flight

The Navy's MQ-4C Triton remotely piloted aircraft completed its first flight, [announced](#) prime contractor Northrop Grumman. The hour-and-a-half flight took place over Palmdale, Calif., on May 22. "Triton is the most advanced intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance unmanned aircraft system ever designed for use across vast ocean areas and coastal regions," said Mike Mackey, Northrop Grumman's Triton deputy program director, in a company release. The high-altitude, long-endurance platform, a variant of the RQ-4 Global Hawk that the Air Force operates, is designed to fly missions up 24 hours at altitudes of more than 10 miles, spanning 2,000 nautical miles in range. Its sensor suite is meant to "gather high-resolution imagery, use radar to detect targets, and provide airborne communications and information-sharing capabilities," states the release. The RPA is scheduled to fly to NAS Patuxent River, Md., later this year after completing additional flight tests in California. The Navy [plans to procure](#) 68 Tritons.

About the Air Force Association

- [DoD Buzz: AF Reinstates Crew Sidelined by Nuke SNAFU](#)
- [Pay Blog: Free Museums this Summer for Military Families](#)

[U.S., EU Lead Global Nonproliferation, Biosurveillance Efforts](#)

05/28/2013 10:42 AM CDT

[National Guard: 'Words can't describe' the Okla. damage](#)

NBCNews.com

The Oklahoma **National Guard** has joined local firefighters and the Red Cross to search for survivors in the wake of the devastating tornado. NBC's Gabe Gutierrez reports. By Gabe Gutierrez, Correspondent, NBC News. MOORE, Okla. – On a soggy ...
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[Pease top Air Guard pick for KC-46A tankers](#)

Foster's Daily Democrat

PORTSMOUTH — Pease Air **National Guard** Base has been selected by the military as the most desirable guard facility in the country to house new KC-46A air refueling tankers, rising to the top of a field of 88 competitors nationwide. The decision ...
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[SC National Guard. EMD. Prepared for Disasters](#)

WLTX.com

U.S. Army Capt. Mark Dutton from Anderson, S.C., a physician assistant with 351st Aviation Support Battalion, S.C. Army **National Guard**, checks for a pulse on a simulated victim at a point of distribution during Ardent Sentry exercise, Ridgeland, S.C. ...
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[Air National Guard communications play key role during Ardent Sentry exercise](#)

DVIDS

The S.C. **National Guard** is participating in a major NORAD and USNORTHCOM sponsored training exercise called Ardent Sentry, May 17 to 21, 2013. It involves a scenario of a hurricane striking the South Carolina coast, requiring more than 1,500 members ...
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[New Air National Guard Mobile Experience To Travel Continental United States ...](#)

Sacramento Bee

WASHINGTON, May 22, 2013 -- /PRNewswire/ -- The Air **National Guard** is proud to announce the new, interactive Air **National Guard** Mobile Experience. The hands-on, immersive experience takes attendees on a fast-paced journey through life in the Air ...
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[Groton sub base. National Guard planning furloughs](#)

Norwich Bulletin

About 750 civilian employees at the Navy's submarine base in Groton and more than 600 technicians working for the Connecticut **National Guard** are facing furloughs. They are among those being asked to take some days off without pay as the Defense ...
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[SRS hosts National Guard troops for response training](#)

The Augusta Chronicle

The S.C. **National Guard** is also participating in a major NORAD and USNORTHCOM training exercise involving a scenario of a hurricane striking the South Carolina coast, requiring more than 1,500 members of the S.C. **National Guard** to practice disaster ...
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[Missouri National Guard supports soldiers in the workplace](#)

KRCG

The Missouri **National Guard** has increased several state and federal job initiatives. "Our Soldiers and Airmen are modern Minute Men, ready to answer their nation's call at any moment," Adjutant General Maj. Gen. Steve Danner said. "While they're ...

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[Mansfield Guard base gets C-130s](#)

Columbus Dispatch

MANSFIELD, Ohio — Members of the 179th Airlift Wing of the Ohio Air **National Guard** watched their future roll in yesterday afternoon. It came in the form of two C-130 Hercules planes that landed at the Mansfield base. They'll be joined within the next ...

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[National Guard military police company from Bolivar, Lexington to deploy today ...](#)

Jackson Sun

Roughly 107 members of the unit will hold a deployment ceremony for family and friends at the Bolivar **National Guard** Armory, at 11185 U.S. 64 W. at about 8 a.m. today. Following the ceremony, the soldiers will depart the armory at roughly 9 a.m. for ...

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[Air Force tanker fuels optimism](#)

Seacoastonline.com

Congratulations to the Pease Air **National Guard** Base — home to the 157th Air Refueling Wing — on being selected as the U.S. Air Force's top choice to receive 12 new KC-46A refueling tankers. This long-anticipated decision protects the Pease ANG ...

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[Prescott receives honor for support of National Guard & Reserve employees](#)

Prescott Daily Courier

According to a news release from ESGR, the award is the Department of Defense's highest recognition given to employers for exceptional support of employees serving in the **National Guard** and Reserve. A review board comprised of military and civilian ...

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[NH's Pease to get new line of refueling tankers](#)

San Antonio Express

"The selection of Pease as the first Air **National Guard** location in the country to host the KC-46A is a testament to the outstanding support in the defense of our nation by the men and women of the 157th Air Refueling Wing," said the wing's commander, Col.

[See all stories on this topic »](#)

[Deploy National Guard to help out](#)

HeraldNet

The first thing our governor would do is send in the **National Guard**. Why the Guard, you say? Well, the first thing they are citizen soldiers whose duty is to protect our home area. When deployed to a devastated area they would help the local law ...

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[Air Force Team Makes It To The Top Of The World](#)

(Stripes.com) - A team of U.S. airmen recently reached 29,000 feet -- with their feet still on the ground. The summit of Mount Everest was the final peak to conquer for the Seven Summits Challenge, the goal of which was to have a group of airmen climb the highest mountains on every continent.

[A Nation 'Still At War' Honors Its Dead](#)

(New York Times) - President Obama on Monday paid homage to the nation's military, especially troops serving in Afghanistan, using his traditional Memorial Day address at Arlington National Cemetery to exhort Americans to honor their sacred obligation to veterans and to remind the country that our nation is still at war.

[. Australian Spy HQ Plans Stolen By Chinese Hackers: Report](#)

(Reuters.com) - Chinese hackers have stolen the blueprints of a new multi-million-dollar Australian spy headquarters as part of a growing wave of cyber attacks against business and military targets in the close U.S. ally, a Australian news report said.

[Navy Reserve Squadron Makes Final Md. Flight](#)

(Baltimore Sun) - Earlier this month, Navy Cmdr. James King and Lt. Cmdr. Justin Van Hoose climbed into the cockpits of the squadron's last two EA-6B Prowlers for a final flight before the squadron moves this summer from Maryland to the West Coast. The Navy has ordered the squadron the only one of its kind staffed by reservists to join the dozen active-duty squadrons at Naval Air Station Whidbey Island in Washington State.

[Slurs, Threats Sully Corps](#)

(USA Today) - Federal law enforcement officials are investigating a former Marine and several active-duty Marines after they allegedly posted threatening and lewd messages on social media sites that targeted President Obama and a California congressswoman, according to a government official informed of the investigations.

[Afghans Facing A Fight Without U.S. Backup](#)

(Philadelphia Inquirer) - After 2014 the United States is expected to leave behind a residual force of 8,000 to 10,000 troops, mostly as mentors and trainers. NATO is being asked to contribute several thousand as well, but so far only Germany has promised 800 troops. Some in the U.S. military see a steep learning curve ahead for the 350,000 Afghan service personnel.

[. The Bomb Whisperer](#)

(Los Angeles Times) - In the seven months since arriving here in western Kandahar province, the easygoing 22-year-old from a small town in Minnesota had uncovered more than a dozen of the crude but lethal improvised explosive devices. Now he was taking the lead on one more mission: the platoon's last combat patrol in Afghanistan before packing up and heading home.

[. Women Senators Vow No Tailhook Repeat On Sexual Assaults](#)

(Bloomberg.com) - California Senator Barbara Boxer recalls her outrage over the response to the 1991 sexual assault of 83 women and seven men at the Tailhook Navy aviators

convention in Las Vegas.

[. Missile Defense Concerns Persist](#)

(Los Angeles Times) - A senior Russian diplomat said Washington's latest moves to ease Moscow's concern about the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's U.S.-led missile defense plans are insufficient.

[. Gunman In Rampage Said To Be Marine](#)

(Washington Post) - A man suspected in a West Texas shooting rampage that left one woman dead and five others wounded was a Marine who was wanted for questioning in a killing in North Carolina, officials said Monday.

[In Time Of Sequesters, Uncle Sam Is Trying To Hire 27,000](#)

(Washington Times) - The budget cuts known as sequestration were supposed to wreak havoc, forcing the shrinking of critical workforces including airport security officers and food inspectors. But since sequestration kicked in March 4, the government has posted openings for 4,300 federal job titles to hire some 10,300 people. The median position has a salary topping out at \$76,000, and one-fourth of positions pay \$113,000 or more, according to an analysis by The Washington Times of federal job listings.

[Decades Later, Marine's Wish Comes True](#)

(Miami Herald) - Before Cpl. Thomas Cotton Jones was killed by a Japanese sniper in 1944, he wrote what he called his last life request to anyone who might find his diary: Please give it to Laura Mae Davis, the girl he loved. Davis did get to read the diary but not until nearly 70 years later, when she saw it in a display case at the National World War II Museum.

[The President's Welcome Overture To Congress](#)

(Wall Street Journal) - Last week, President Obama laid out his revised vision for U.S. counterterrorism policy. The president mentioned that he looks forward to "actively engaging Congress" on oversight of counterterrorism operations. Though consultation and engagement by the White House on national security has been too rare, many of us in Congress welcome a new chance at cooperation.

[. The Forgotten Amerasians](#)

(New York Times) - At a time when the issue of immigration reform is before the nation, Amerasians need new leaders in Congress to speak on their behalf. What's more, the military has recently announced that it will restore a significant presence in the Philippines; last year, over 70 ships stopped at Subic Bay, and over 100 planes stop at Clark Air Base each month. The United States, then, has an opportunity for redemption to make sure Filipino Amerasians are not left behind by the ship again.

[Choosing Sides](#)

(Los Angeles Times) - Unless Afghanistan can find a more capable successor to Karzai, it is hard to imagine the country being able to consolidate the hard-won security gains made since 2009 by American troops. The future of Afghanistan may turn on the outcome of the April 2014 presidential election -- assuming it is held.

[. In Syria, Go Big Or Stay Home](#)

(New York Times) - FROM liberal internationalists to hawkish conservatives, a chorus of influential voices in Washington is suggesting that American intervention in Syria would also do serious damage to Bashar al-Assad's close ally, Iran.

[. Mission Accomplished](#)

(Washington Post) - President Obama wisely avoided the phrase "mission accomplished" in his major speech last week about the "war on terror," but columnists aren't obliged to be so circumspect: It is time to declare victory and get on with our lives.

[The Retreat Doctrine](#)

(Wall Street Journal) - A couple of weeks ago I scored Barack Obama for having no real foreign policy to speak of. But then the president gave a speech last Thursday at the National Defense University that set my complaint to rights. There is, after all, a method, a purpose, a governing idea. It's called the Retreat Doctrine.

[Beaten On The Job, An Afghan Police Officer Goes On TV And Hits Back](#)

(New York Times) - When the son of the most powerful military commander was stopped here by a police officer with the temerity to search his vehicle, he responded with a typically privileged attitude: he had his men beat the policeman.

[Guantanamo Review Speedup Urged](#)

(Wall Street Journal) - U.S. agencies are trying to move ahead on the long-stalled process of reviewing terrorism suspects held at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, with an eye toward reducing the prison population, in keeping with President Barack Obama's national-security speech last week.

[. 'My Son Will Leave In A Coffin Unless The World Takes Notice'](#)

(London Times) - Guantanamo Bay detainees are determined to continue their three-month hunger strike even if it means leaving the US military base in a coffin, a father said yesterday.

[. Beijing Says Ties With U.S. At A Crucial Point](#)

(Wall Street Journal) - China's President Xi Jinping said relations with the U.S. were at a "critical juncture" during a meeting Monday with White House National Security Adviser Tom Donilon, ahead of a closely watched summit in California with U.S. President Barack Obama next month.

[. Japan: U.S. Pilot Rescued Off Okinawa](#)

(New York Times) - Japanese rescuers saved an American fighter pilot from the waters off southern Japan after his F-15 fighter crashed into the ocean early Tuesday, Japanese officials said.

[U.S. Forces Japan Accepts Hashimoto's Apology](#)

(Kyodo News) - U.S. Forces Japan accepted Osaka Mayor Toru Hashimoto's apology for his earlier remarks urging U.S. forces to use Japan's legal adult entertainment industry to prevent the recurrence of sex offenses in Okinawa.

[. E.U. Drops Arms Ban For Syrian Opposition](#)

(Washington Post) - McCain makes surprise visit to country, meets with rebels.

[In Terror Shift, Obama Took A Long Path](#)

(New York Times) - The pivot in counterterrorism policy that President Obama announced last week was nearly two years in the making, but perhaps the most critical moment came last spring during a White House meeting as he talked about the future of the nations long-running terrorism war. Underlying the discussion was a simple fact: It was an election year. And Mr. Obama might lose.

[. Senators Seek Army Sex Investigation](#)

(Bloomberg News) - Alaska's U.S. senators called for a full investigation of allegations that sexual affairs were condoned on the military base in their state that provides the main U.S. defense against a missile attack.

[A Will For The Wounded](#)

(Honolulu Star-Advertiser) - In his will, Campbell asked his family not to focus on his death, but try to get 100,000 people to donate to the Wounded Warrior Project, which helps injured service members. His relatives and friends have worked to honor that request ever since. So far, 1,514 people have donated more than \$120,000 in his name.

[US Intelligence Embraces Debate In Security Issues](#)

(Yahoo.com) - The three cases provide a rare look inside the secretive 16 intelligence agencies as they try to piece together security threats from bits of vague information from around the world. But they also raise concerns about whether officials who make decisions based on their assessments can get clear guidance from a divided intelligence community.

[. After Decades Of Searching, Could A Handful Of Debris Provide The Answer?](#)

(McClatchy Newspapers (mcclatchydc.com)) - This is Part Three of a three-part series on the search for Spooky 21, an AC-47 gunship that disappeared with its six-man crew while on a secret mission over Laos during the Vietnam War.

[What Hasn't Changed In The War On Terror](#)

(Wall Street Journal) - The war on terror, by contrast, always has been fought in a gray area. And so it remains in the wake of President Barack Obama's declaration last week, in a speech and a presidential order, that he is changing some of the ground rules.

[Call An End To Iran's Stalling](#)

(Washington Post) - As the conflict in Syria rivets international attention, Iran's nuclear program continues apace. Unfortunately, while the Iranians install the next generation of centrifuges - machines that can produce enriched uranium three to four times faster than before - the "P5+1" negotiations on Iran's nuclear program have ground once again to a halt.

[Reinvigorate Patriotism With National Service](#)

(USA Today) - Also in 2011, a Pentagon survey found that 57% of the servicemen and women on active duty were the children of current or former members of the military. So the composition of today's armed forces looks more like a family business than a military force that is drawn widely from the nation's population. Sadly, too many Americans have grown comfortable with this.

[Silencing The Whistle-Blowers](#)

(New York Times) - But while Private Mannings ordeal has received exhaustive news coverage, it may ultimately have a less profound bearing on this tension than a barely noticed memo quietly released by the Obama administration earlier this year.

[Punishing Honesty At The Naval Academy](#)

(Baltimore Sun) - What might surprise you is one method by which the Naval Academy screens its midshipmen and the perverse message this method sends to our future Navy and Marine Corps officers.

Al Bunting, Colonel USAF (R)

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