The National Security Division

WEEKLY REPORT

Evacuation of Afghan interpreters who worked with US military to begin last week of July

Omid Mahmoodi says Afghans who worked with the U.S. military are seen as "infidels," and he fears they will be killed when American troops leave. *Provided By Omid Mahmoodi*

DIRECTOR'S CORNER

American Legion calls Biden's plan to evacuate Afghan allies a 'deep disappointment'

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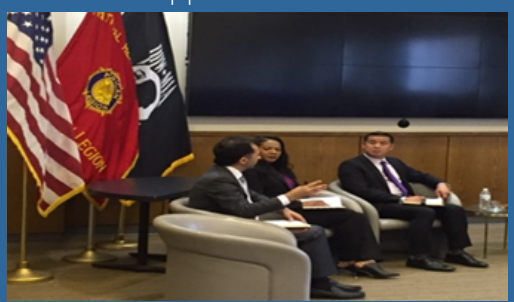
This week the National Security Division participated in a round table briefing by TAL's Executive Director of Government Affairs on conversations with the White House Press regarding the Biden Administration's launch of Operation Allies Refuge. This named operation will support relocation flights for eligible Afghan Nationals and their families who have supported the United States.



WASHINGTON – The Biden administration will begin this month evacuating thousands of Afghans who worked with the U.S. military as interpreters and translators.

The administration announced Wednesday that it was launching a program called "Operation Allies Refuge" to relocate eligible Afghan nationals and their families while their visa applications are vetted.

The first flights out of Afghanistan will begin the last week of July for applicants who are already in the pipeline, a senior administration official said. Details on when the flights will depart or where the Afghans will be relocated won't be made public because of "operational security," the official said.

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Last week, Ariel De Jesus, the Senior Policy Advisor of the National Security Division and interns were invited to Afghan Embassy to meet with Afghan President, Ashraf Ghani. President Ghani invited American veterans, their families, and Gold Star families to personally share his gratitude and appreciation for their sacrifice during the War on Terror in Afghanistan. Pictured is Ariel and the interns with Her Excellency, Roya Rahmani, the Ambassador of Afghanistan to the United States.

This past Wednesday, the National Security Division Team bid farewell to intern Logan Ragsdale. Good luck. He leaves the Division for permanent employment at a local consulting firm. Logan recently graduated from Vassar College in New York with a Bachelor of Arts. Congratulations and good luck!

HOUSE PANEL ADVANCES $706 BILLION PENTAGON BILL ON PARTY-LINE VOTE

The House Appropriations Committee on Tuesday advanced a $706 billion Pentagon spending bill on a party-line vote. The panel voted 33-23 to approve the fiscal year 2022 defense spending bill, setting the stage for a fight on the House floor over the Pentagon budget. When combined with a separate military construction spending bill, the committee's bill closely follows President Biden's request for a $715 billion Defense Department budget next year. Republican opposition to the bill was unsurprising after weeks of GOP lawmakers panning Biden's request as too small amid growing threats from China. Republicans have instead been pushing for a 3 to 5 percent bump over inflation compared to this year's defense budget.

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LEGISLATIVE ISSUES

Foreign Relations

- Support for Afghan Interpreters through the Special Immigrant Visa Program – The American Legion advocate for Afghan Interpreters who stood shoulder to shoulder with U.S. Forces and Diplomats contributing to saving countless American lives. The American Legion urges the President of the United States and the U.S. Congress to recognize the contributions of Afghan SIV recipients. (Resolution No. 16, 2018) Recognition for Afghan and Iraq Combat Translators.
- Addressing the Forever Wars – The American Legion advocate for elevating diplomacy to build a better, safer world (Resolution No. 22, 2020)

Law and Order & Homeland Security

- Cybersecurity and Critical Infrastructure – The American Legion supports refined processes and policies that will enhance interagency cybersecurity, promulgate best practices and standards, and protect critical infrastructure from cyber and other electronic attacks. (Resolution No. 20, 2017)

Conventional Armed Forces

- The American Legion urge Congress to support budget increase in military spending to reverse the effects of sequestration; and, be it finally RESOLVED, That Congress never allows our military forces to reach a weakened state in these uncertain and perilous times.

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STAFF ACTIVITY

Aerospace

- Staff attended House Armed Services Subcommittee hearing on Tactical Air and Land Forces Hearing: "Fiscal Year 2022 Rotary Wing Aviation Budget Request" The hearing discussed and questioned the witnesses on the readiness, sustainment, management, and future of rotary aviation in all the military branches. Each witness, representing their respective service, shared a testimony that highlighted their current project, status, and future of rotary aviation. Representatives of the Subcommittee questioned relevant concerns and updates on the current sustainment and future of the rotary wing force. Specific issued discussed were the price of the CH-53K King Stallion for the US Marine Corps and the future of unmanned rotary wing. Furthermore, the increased investment in future rotary programs whether manned, like the Army's Future Vertical Lift Program and the unmanned systems pioneered by the Navy, will significantly change the landscape of future combat engagement and the force. Likewise, key investments in current legacy systems like the Blackhawk and Apache programs are paramount in meeting the total readiness of the force.

Law and Order & Homeland Security

- Staff attended Senate Appropriations hearing to review the President's Fiscal Year 2022 Funding Request for the Federal Bureau of Investigation. This hearing discussed the Fiscal Year 2022 funding request for the Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI) and some of the threats and challenges that we face as a nation. Some of the concurring issues the nation faces are, homegrown violent extremist, cyber-attacks, sexual exploitation of children, gangs, corruption, and fraud. Criminals, terrorist, and extremist are quickly advancing in modern day technology. The challenges that the nation face are complex, and the FBI must stay on top of these issues by continuing to evolve technologically.

- Staff attended the following Bill Review.

Bill Name: H.R. 2326 - Veterans' Cyber Risk Awareness Act

Link to Text: Click Here To Read More

Author: Rep. Mace, Nancy [R-SC-1]

Cosponsors: Rep. Bost, Mike [R-IL-12]

Other organizations which support the bill: N/A

Summary of the intent: To direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to conduct a communications and outreach campaign to educate veterans about cyber risks, and for other purposes.

Initial summary of the bill/section text:
This bill requires the Office of Public and Intergovernmental Affairs of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to conduct a communications and outreach campaign to educate veterans about cyber risks. These risks can include disinformation, identity theft, scams, and fraud spread via the internet or social media.

Conventional Armed Forces

- Staff attended the following Bill Review.

Bill Name: S.J.Res.XXX – National Security Powers Act of 2021

Link to Text: See Attached

Author and Cosponsors: Sen. Mike Lee (R-UT), Sen. Chris Murphy (D-CT), and Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-VT)
Other organizations which support the bill: N/A

Summary of the intent: To provide for clarification and limitations with respect to the exercise of national security powers, and for other purposes.

This draft bill would enact fundamental reforms of the War Powers Resolution of 1973 (WPR), the National Emergencies Act of 1976 (NEA), and the Arms Export Control Act of 1976 (AECA)

The National Security Powers Act of 2021 (NSPA) presents an opportunity for Congress to enact the most important recalibration of the balance of power between the president and Congress in decades. The system of checks and balances enshrined in the Constitution is broken. We have found ourselves in an era of government in which the executive can sell weapons indiscriminately, make war unilaterally, and declare emergencies in perpetuity.

Structural reforms are needed to restore the balance of national security powers between the president and Congress. The principles reflected in the NSPA are:

- Military interventions, emergency declarations, and arms sales are areas where the President may act only with authorization or approval from Congress.
- In genuine emergencies where Congress has no time to act, the President may proceed without congressional approval—but only for a limited period of time.
- These national security powers must be used for clearly defined purposes, subject to regular review by Congress, and only as a last resort.

The reforms outlined in the NSPA are critical to preventing future abuses of power that could threaten peace and prosperity and be disastrous for our democracy.

DEFENSE POW/MIA ACCOUNTING AGENCY

FULFILLING OUR NATION'S PROMISE

- July 8, 2021: Soldier Accounted For From Korea War (Crosby, L.)
- July 8, 2021: USS Oklahoma Sailor Accounted For From World War II (Battles, R.)
- July 7, 2021: Soldier Accounted For From Korean War (Conley, P.)
- July 7, 2021: Marine Accounted For From World War II (White, G.)
- July 7, 2021: Marine Accounted For From Korean War (Ellis, H.)
- July 6, 2021: Soldier Accounted For From World War II (Swackhammer, M.)
- July 6, 2021: USS Oklahoma Sailor Accounted For From World War II (Walker, H.)
- July 6, 2021: USS Oklahoma Sailor Accounted For From World War II (Thinnes, A.)
- July 1, 2021: USS Oklahoma Sailor Accounted For From World War II (Harr, R.)
- July 1, 2021: USS Oklahoma Sailor Accounted For From World War II (Skaggs, E.)
- July 1, 2021: Soldier Accounted For From Korean War (Henderson, R.)
- July 1, 2021: Airman Accounted For From World War II (Shay, A.)

Vietnam Repatriation Ceremony

Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency Detachment 2 and the Vietnam Office for Seeking Missing Persons (VNOSMP) held the 155th Repatriation Ceremony on 9 July 2021 at Gia Lam Airport outside Hanoi, Vietnam. During the ceremony the United States' Chargé d'Affaires, a.i. Christopher Klein and Director General of the ministry of Foreign Affairs Americas Department, Mr. Le Chi Dung witnessed the signing over of remains thought to be associated with a U.S. service member still missing from the war in Vietnam. This ceremony was the culmination of collaborative efforts of the U.S. and Vietnam during the 143rd Joint Field Activity, working together on an underwater recovery site off the coast of Nha Trang. These remains will be transferred to the DPAA Laboratory in Hawaii for further review.he ceremony's location was especially significant to the history of the MIA accounting mission in Vietnam. From February to April 1973, over 500 American POWs were repatriated through Gia Lam Airport and returned home. Friday's ceremony was the first repatriation at Gia Lam Airport since "Operation Homecoming" almost five decades ago. Speaking at the ceremony, Mr. Klein thanked the government and people of Vietnam for their continued support to locate and return Americans who are still missing from the war. He also highlighted the efforts of both DPAA and the VNOSMP to safely continue this important humanitarian mission in accordance with all COVID 19 prevention protocols. Mr. Le Chi Dung, Director General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Americas Department and Director of the VNOSMP, remarked on the special significance of Gia Lam Airport. In addition to being the location of the first repatriation of Americans after the war, Gia Lam district was also the location of the first post-unification excavation activity in 1985. The United States and Vietnam have cooperated for over 30 years to fully account for those Americans still missing from the war in Vietnam.

PROGRAMS

JUNIOR ROTC AWARDS CEREMONY

JROTC Awards Ceremony at Frankford High School Army Junior ROTC on May 27, 2021. Thank you to The American Legion for their continued support of JROTC programs and youths nationwide.

ANNEX

MORE STORIES!

Russia, China, Iran Warn U.S. Must Not Intervene in Cuba

“Russia, China and Iran have warned the United States that it must not intervene in Cuba after the island was rocked by major protests for which U.S. President Joe Biden cast his support. As Cuban Foreign Minister Bruno Rodríguez railed against "the increased aggression of the U.S. government" during lengthy remarks delivered to the press Tuesday in the wake of historic anti-government demonstrations alleging shortages in COVID-19 vaccines and basic humanitarian needs, his message was echoed by three powers deeply critical of Washington's foreign policy toward Havana, and in many other parts of the world.”

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Guard training could be canceled as political fights delay reimbursement for Capitol Hill mission

Despite looming financial headaches for the National Guard, congressional leaders remain far apart on plans for a new Capitol Hill security supplemental plan containing hundreds of millions of dollars for the service.
On Monday, Senate Appropriations Committee Chairman Patrick Leahy, D-Vt., introduced a new $3.7 billion proposal to provide money for security upgrades to the congressional campus, bulk up Capitol Police training and equipment, and cover $521 million in unexpected Guard costs related to the four-month deployment to Capitol Hill in the wake of the Jan. 6 attack on Congress.

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Ailing vet's visit to DC previews long-awaited return of Honor flights

Since the coronavirus pandemic shut down Honor Flights 16 months ago, at least 757 veterans have passed away waiting for a chance to visit the nation’s war memorials in Washington, D.C. Ronald Dean’s family wanted to make sure he wasn’t the next one on that list .On Thursday, Dean — a 74-year-old Marine Corps veteran who served in Vietnam in 1967 and 1968 — made his first visit to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, accompanied by an emotional cohort of family members.

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