National Security Division Report
Week ending 16 October 2020

Gen. Milley: 'We're Trying To End A War Responsibly, Deliberately'

After nearly two decades of fighting, the Trump administration is trying to bring an abrupt end to the war in Afghanistan, and the U.S. military is trying to manage that end effectively.

Last week, President Trump tweeted that American troops "should" be home from Afghanistan by Christmas, while National Security Advisor Robert O'Brien said in a Las Vegas speech that the number of troops there will drop to 2,500 early next year.

In an interview with NPR, the nation's top military officer, Gen. Mark Milley, said he didn't want to get into future numbers, beyond the drop to 4,500 troops next month. Pressed on the number O'Brien used, Milley brushed that comment aside as "speculation," adding that no final decisions have been made by the president and any further reductions must be made with an eye toward conditions on the ground.

"The key here is that we're trying to end a war responsibly, deliberately," Milley said, "and to do it on terms that guarantee the safety of the U.S. vital national security interests that are at stake in Afghanistan."

That has long been the military's view. A string of commanders have said that there's no military solution to the Afghan war, only a political solution with the Taliban. But they insist the country can no longer be a safe haven for terrorist groups like al Qaeda, the perpetrators of the Sept. 11 attacks who enjoyed the Taliban's hospitality in Afghanistan.

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Space Force Warfighters Will Someday Deploy to Space, General Says

While U.S. Space Force members may be planet-bound for now, its warfighters will eventually deploy into orbit, according to Space Command's top operations boss.

"I think that will happen, but it's a long way off. … But at some point, yes, we will be putting humans into space," Maj. Gen. John Shaw, head of the Combined Force Space Component Command at U.S. Space Command, said Tuesday during a discussion hosted by AFWERX.

"They may be operating command centers somewhere in the lunar environment or someplace else," he said in response to questions posed by Rick Tumlinson of the Space Frontier Foundation. Air Force Magazine was first to report Shaw's comments.

Officials have said the Space Force could eventually expand its mission beyond protecting Earth-bound warfighters by watching over assets such as communications and GPS satellites and potentially even defending human space flights, with members headed into space themselves. Air Force Secretary Barbara Barrett hinted at the possibility in December.

This possibility has also been evident through the service's messaging. For example, Space Force challenges new or potential troops to think beyond what's possible here on Earth in its advertisements, two of which debuted in May.

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Are drug ingredients made in China a risk to troops? Two lawmakers think so

It seems like the military is talking about supply chain constantly now, but that's mostly in the context of technological systems. A bipartisan duo of lawmakers are thinking about another supply chain, though — the one that stocks service members' prescription drugs.

House Armed Services Readiness Subcommittee Chairman John Garamendi (D-Calif.) and Rep. Vicky Hartzler (R-Mo.) introduced a bill last week to look into the military's dependence on China for pharmaceuticals.

"It is very clear that the Chinese government controls fundamental pharmaceutical drugs that are essential for all of our wellbeing," Garamendi told Federal News Network. "Drugs that deal with things like infection like doxycycline, drugs that deal with surgeries like heparin and many of the other generic drugs. All of them have ingredients that are made in China and almost exclusively in China."

The bill, called the Pharmaceutical Independence Long-Term Readiness Reform bill, requires DoD to report on vulnerabilities faced by a dependence on Chinese drugs, and to only purchase American-made raw materials, medicines and vaccines for the military.

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POW/MIA Update

This week, the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency released the following announcements. Click on the links to read more:

October 14, 2020: USS Oklahoma Sailor Accounted For From World War II (Young, M.)
October 14,2020: USS Oklahoma Sailor Accounted For From World War II (Spangler, M.)

Legislative Issue Tracker

Below is legislation the National Security Division is tracking in Congress. New bills are highlighted in yellow. Click on the bill numbers to see more information about the bills.

Bill #	Short Title
H.R.8494	To reaffirm the critical role of congressional consultation and to require appropriate deliberation to assess the effects of the sale or export of major defense equipment to countries in the Middle East on the qualitative military edge of Israel
S. Res. 510/H. Res. 910	A resolution commending the people of Taiwan on holding free and fair democratic presidential and legislative elections, and congratulating Madame Tsai Ing-wen on her re-election to the presidency of Taiwan
H. RES. 1012	Recognizing the 70th anniversary of the outbreak of the Korean War
H.R. 3508/ S.1634	South China Sea Sanctions
H.R.367	Pay Our Coast Guard Parity Act of 2019
S.2297	Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2019
H.R. 4710	The bipartisan Pharmaceutical Independence Long-Term Readiness Reform Act
H.R. 303	Retired Pay Restoration Act
H.R. 4890	The Veteran Deportation Prevention and Reform Act
H.R. 5151	Honoring the Oath Act
S.2794	Bring Our Heroes Home Act
H.R.6395	FY 2021 National Defense Authorization Act
S. 3393	A bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to provide for concurrent receipt of veterans' disability compensation and retired pay for disability retirees with fewer than 20 years of service and a combat-related disability, and for other purposes.
S. 1041	Veterans Visa and Protection Act of 2019
S. 3732	A bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to further protect officers and employees of the United States, and for other purposes
S 1218/HR 2249	World War I Valor Medals Review Act
H.R.4807	Cold War Service Medal Act
H.Con,Res 10	Authorizing the use of the rotunda of the Capitol to honor the last surviving Medal of Honor recipient of the Second World War upon death.
S. 3258	SHIPS Implementation Act
H.R.3233	National Defense Strategy Implementation Act

Click on the link below to open an Excel spreadsheet to see the full legislative tracker:https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1KgPaIfx04RA13m20qLDh5br8dyxiupVX5Dc5ByZteRQ/edit?usp=sharing

Staff Activity:

- National Security Staff virtually attended The American Legion's Fall National Executive Committee Meeting October 14-15, 2020 hosted by the National Headquarters in Indianapolis, IN. It was marked as the first, it was exceptional, and it was the organizations formal online video platform presentation whereby agenda items such as resolutions, commission and committee reports were considered.
- Staff obtained congratulatory and approval signatures from the National Commander James W. "Bill" Oxford for the announcement of the 2020 National Security Awards. National Security Commission Chairman Steven Brennan announced the following recipients and winners:

2020 National Spirit of Service Award Recipients

- Matthew J. Turley, U.S. Army
- Jasmine L. Johnson, U.S. Navy
- Justin T. Middlemiss, U.S. Marine Corps
- Amy-Christy Amakihe, U.S. Air Force
- Amanda Moore, U.S. Coast Guard

2020 National Law Enforcement Officer of the Year Award

- National Law Enforcement Officer of the Year Award winner is Robert Berg Jr. of Wisconsin.

2020 Regional Law Enforcement Officer Award Winners

- Northeast Region - Curt Andrick of Maine
- Central Region - Jeffery S. Ginn of Michigan
- Southern Region - Brandon Medina of North Carolina
- Western Region - Bradley K. Walther of Oregon
- Midwest Region - Robert Berg Jr., of Wisconsin

2020 National Firefighter of the Year Award

- National Firefighter of the Year Award winner is Ryan N. Berney of Nebraska.

2020 Regional Firefighter Award Winners

- Central Region – Donald V. Fletcher of Maryland
- Southern Region – Jeremiah Chisolm of Georgia
- Western Region – Robert Gottbreht of Washington
- Midwestern Region – Ryan N. Berney of Nebraska

***NOTE**: We are honored and excited to provide the above significant announcements. As we continue to adhere to the COVID-19 federal, state and local safety guidelines, more details will be provided regarding the remaining award presentations.

Rhonda Powell, Director, National Security Division