

**Title:** United States: Administration Reaction to War Document Leaks  
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**To:** Canberra  
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**From:** Washington  
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**References:** The cable has the following attachment/s -  
National Security Advisor Jones Statement 25 July 10.docx  
White House Press Brief 26 Jul 10.docx  
**Response:** Routine, Information Only



~~RESTRICTED~~

**Annotations:** s 22 1(a)(ii)  
**Summary**

National Security Advisor General Jones (USMC Ret) strongly condemned the disclosure by Wikileaks of thousands of classified US military documents on the war in Afghanistan, s 33 (a)(iii)

s 33 (a)(iii)

National Security Advisor General James Jones (USMC Ret), released a statement on 25 July (attached) strongly condemning the disclosure saying the leak "could put the lives of Americans and our partners at risk, and threaten our national security". Related media commentary has focused on Pakistan's support for the Taliban and other militants, and concerns about progress and resources in the Afghan war. Media reports that suggest some documents relate to ADF activity has not been confirmed.

2. Jones said Wikileaks.com approached the New York Times, the Guardian in the UK, and Der Spiegel in Germany with the documents, but made no attempt to contact the US Administration. The White House had learned of the documents by the news organisations on the eve of publication; White House Press Secretary Robert Gibbs said that the Administration did not attempt to stop the news organisations from publishing reports about the leaks.

3. The documents cover a period of time from January 2004 to December 2009 and Jones stressed that they pre-date President Obama's new strategy and surge of resources for Afghanistan. Jones re-emphasised that the US was "focused on breaking the Taliban's momentum and building Afghan capacity" and noted that since 2009 the bilateral relationship with Pakistan had also deepened. Jones emphasised that the leaks would not impact the US' "ongoing commitment" in Afghanistan and with Pakistan.

4. The Department of Defense has condemned the leak but declined to comment further until the documents were assessed. Colonel Lapan (USMC, Pentagon spokesperson) said the Department would look at the documents as they were made available "to try to determine potential damage to lives of our service members and our coalition partners; whether they

reveal sources in methods and any potential damage to national security". Lapan said the Department had only seen a fraction of the documents that had been disclosed but he noted that the reports that had been seen fell into a category of basic, unit-level reporting - "the type of reporting that goes on at the tactical level on a routine basis" and appeared to have been classified at the Secret level. Lapan said they had not seen anything so far that was "particularly relevant".

5. Senior members of Congress remarked on the leaks: Senator John Kerry (Chairman Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Democrat - Massachusetts) said that "however illegally these documents came to light, they raise serious questions about the reality of America's policy toward Pakistan and Afghanistan". Representative Ike Skelton (Chairman House Armed Services Committee, Democrat - Missouri) said he was "extremely concerned about the manner in which these documents were leaked and with the recklessness of Wikileaks in posting them". Skelton cautioned that the reports "predate our new strategy in Afghanistan and should not be used as a measure of success or a determining factor in our continued mission there". Skelton also said it was "critical that we not use outdated reports to paint a picture of the cooperation of Pakistan in our efforts in Afghanistan", echoing Jones' comments on continued US efforts.

s 33 (a)(iii)

8. Copies of official statements and the White House Press Conference are attached.

9. DFAT (Political) was consulted on preparation of this cable.

text ends  
s 22 1(a)(ii)

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**REDACTED**

THE WHITE HOUSE REGULAR BRIEFING BRIEFER: ROBERT GIBBS, WHITE HOUSE PRESS  
SECRETARY LOCATION: WHITE HOUSE BRIEFING ROOM, THE WHITE HOUSE, WASHINGTON, D.C.  
TIME: 1:07 P.M. EDT DATE: MONDAY, JULY 26, 2010

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MR. GIBBS: It's like a library in here all of a sudden.

Yes. Hold on, stragglers are coming. (Pause.)

Q Are they from Boston?

MR. GIBBS: (Chuckles.)

Q The "Boston straggler." (Scattered laughter.)

MR. GIBBS: If you have to explain it, it's -- (inaudible). I don't know, I just sort of -- I don't know. I got it, but it --

Q (Off mike.) MR. GIBBS: Yeah, it's -- we'll check back, like, on Thursday and we'll --

Q Oh, good. Thanks.

Q That works.

MR. GIBBS: Yes. Yes, (sir ?).

Q Thanks, Robert.

Two questions -- a few on WikiLeaks. What was the president's reaction when you heard about the leaking of those documents?

MR. GIBBS: Well, I remember talking to the president sometime last week after discussions with news organizations that these stories were coming. Look, I think our reaction to this type of material, a breach of federal law, is always the same. And that is, whenever you have the potential for names and for operations and for programs to be out there in the public domain, that it, besides being against the law, has a potential to be very harmful to those that are in our military, those that are cooperating with our military, and those that are working to keep us safe.

Q Well, I mean, was he personally angered by this? Did he demand answers and (this sort of thing ??)?

MR. GIBBS: Well, there is an ongoing investigation, that predated the end of last week, into leaks of highly classified secret documents.

Q Does the White House believe that the documents raise doubts about whether Pakistan is a reliable partner in fighting terrorism?

MR. GIBBS: Well, let's understand a few things about the documents. Based on what we've seen, I don't think that what is being reported hasn't in many ways been publicly discussed, either by you all or by



representatives of the U.S. government, for quite some time. We have certainly known about safe havens in Pakistan. We have been concerned about civilian casualties for quite some time. And on both of those -- both of those aspects, we've taken steps to make improvements.

I think just the last time General Petraeus testified in front of the Senate, there was a fairly robust discussion about the historical relationships that have been had, between the Taliban and Pakistan's intelligence services.

Q So no doubts about Pakistan's trustworthiness or reliability?

MR. GIBBS: No, no. Look, I think the president was clear back in March of 2009 that there was no blank check for Pakistan, that Pakistan had to change the way it dealt with us. It had to make progress on safe havens.

Look, it's in the interest of the Pakistanis, because we certainly saw last year those extremists that enjoyed a safe haven there turning their eye on innocent Pakistanis.

That's why you've seen Pakistan make progress in moving against extremists in Swat and in South Waziristan. But at the same time even as they make progress, we understand that the status quo is not acceptable and that we have to continue moving this relationship in the right direction.

Q One more quickly on this.

What do you think this says about the ability of the government to protect confidential information, if a breach like this can occur?

MR. GIBBS: Well, look, I think there's no doubt that this is a concerning development in operational security. And as we said earlier, it is -- it poses a very real and potential threat to those that are working hard every day to keep us safe.

Q I wanted to ask you quickly about Congressman Rangel and the ethics charges that he faces.

Is it the preference of the White House that he reach a deal and put this behind him, put it behind the party?

MR. GIBBS: You know, Ben, I don't have anything on that.

I've been focused on the WikiLeaks.

Q Are you worried that it would be a distraction if it carries on to September?

MR. GIBBS: I don't. Let me get some information on that.

Q On the WikiLeaks, one of the questions that this raises is whether it makes sense for the United States to continue to give billions of dollars of aid to Pakistan if they are helping the Taliban. And I'm wondering if that's a concern and what you think --

MR. GIBBS: Well, again, I -- as I said a minute ago, on March 27th, 2009, the president said, after years of mixed results, we will not and cannot provide a blank check. Pakistan must demonstrate its commitment to rooting out al Qaeda and the violent extremists within its borders.

Again, I am not going to stand here on July the 26th and tell you that all is well. I will tell you that we have made progress in moving this relationship forward; in having the Pakistanis, as I said earlier, address the issue of safe havens, the issue of extremists operating in that country, by undertaking operations again in Swat and in South Waziristan, because over the course of the past more than a year and a half, what the Pakistanis have found is that those -- the extremists that once enjoyed complete safe haven in parts of their country now threaten their country.

So they've taken steps. We want to continue to work with them to take more steps. We understand that we are in this region of the world because of what happened on 9/11; that ensuring that there is not a safe haven in Afghanistan by which attacks against this country and countries around the world can be planned -- that's why we're there, and that's why we're going to continue to make progress on this relationship.

Q A blank check is one thing, but is there enough progress there to justify the aid that is being given to them?

MR. GIBBS: Again, look, we -- I think -- I think it was -- even if you look at some of the comments the secretary of State made just last week in Pakistan -- and, you know, our criticism has been relayed both publicly and privately. And we will continue to do so in order to move this relationship forward.

Q And I know you're unhappy about the leak, but could you talk about how that part of the issue is characterized in the memos and whether you think it's accurate?

MR. GIBBS: Which?

Q In terms of -- in terms of Pakistan's role.

MR. GIBBS: Look, I'm -- again, I would point you to -- as I said a minute ago, I don't know that what is being said or what is being reported isn't something that hasn't been discussed fairly publicly, again, by named U.S. officials and in many news stories. I mean, The New York Times had a story on this topic in March of 2009 written by the same authors.

Q Okay. Shifting here a second, also want to ask you where things stand with the consumer regulator decision. How soon is the president going to make a decision?

MR. GIBBS: Yeah, I don't have an update on the timeline from last weekend, in which I said I did not think that things were immediate. I know that the president will look at this job and the several other jobs that are created as part of this legislation and make an announcement.

Q And what criteria is he going to be looking at? I know you don't want to talk publicly about the strengths and weaknesses of the candidates, but --

MR. GIBBS: Well, look, I think we've got a number of -- as we've talked about here and with many of you on the phone, I think we've got many good candidates.

And again -- and I think if you look back at the reason that the president and the team wanted to create a bureau that dealt with consumer issues -- because even as we look back at the debate and look back at the issues that were involved in this debate, most people's interaction with the financial system is not on a Wall Street trading level. It's in getting a loan; it's in getting the capital to create or expand a small business, to buy a home. And I think ensuring that there are protections for those on Main Street in order to interact on a daily basis with the financial system are (sic) tremendously important.

Q Is Wall Street's opposition to Warren going to be weighed in the decision-making process?

MR. GIBBS: I'd said this last week, and I'll repeat it again. I think Elizabeth Warren is a terrific candidate. I don't think any criticism in any way by anybody would disqualify her, and I think she's very confirmable for this job.

Yes, sir.

Q Robert, back on the WikiLeaks, a couple of times now you've said in the last couple of moments that a lot of this information is not really new, that named U.S. government officials have said some of this same information in public and --

MR. GIBBS: Well, I'm not saying it's -- yeah, I said there weren't any new revelations in the material.

Q Well, how does it harm national security, if we've known this already?

MR. GIBBS: Well, because you've got -- it's not the content as much as it is there are names, there are operations, there's logistics, there are sources. All of that information out in a public way has the potential, Ed, to do harm.

If somebody is cooperating with the federal government and their name is listed in an action report, I don't think it's a stretch to believe that that could potentially put a group or an individual at great personal risk.

Q But is part of your concern as well that this is going to embarrass government officials, because maybe the war in Afghanistan is a lot worse off than this administration and the previous administration. Let on?

MR. GIBBS: Well, again Ed, that's why I would go back to my first point which is, in terms of broad revelations, there aren't any that we see in these documents. And let's understand this. When you talk about the way the war is going in Afghanistan, the documents purportedly cover from I think January 2004 to December 2009. I can't speak for the conduct of that war from an operational perspective for most of that time.

I do know that when the president came into office in 2009, he in the first few months ordered an increase in the number of our troops; having spent two years talking about how our efforts in Afghanistan were greatly underresourced, increased resources in troops to provide security for an election, and then as you well know conducted a fairly comprehensive and painstaking review of our policy, which resulted in December 1st, 2009's speech about a new direction in Afghanistan.

And I would say this. We came in talking about Afghanistan and Pakistan as a region, not as simply two separate and distinct countries which put emphasis on our relationship and the actions of Pakistan.

Q But even if there is a new policy put in place in December of 2009, does that erase the mistakes that have been -- that may have been made years in advance of that?

MR. GIBBS: Well, of course not.

Q How can that turn -- or -- but does -- do these documents then suggest --

MR. GIBBS: Of course not. Ed, that's --

Q -- suggest that this war is too far gone to turn around with one policy change?

MR. GIBBS: No. No, I don't -- I don't -- I don't -- I don't in any way think the documents suggest that. And I haven't seen anybody to suggest that, except to say this, Ed: The -- we agreed that the direction -- this administration spent a large part of 2007 and 2008 campaigning to be this administration and saying that the way that the war had been prosecuted, the resources that hadn't been devoted to it, threatened our national security.

That's -- remember we had a fairly grand debate about whether or not the central front in this war was Iraq or Afghanistan. We weighed in pretty heavily on Afghanistan because, for years and years and years, more troops were needed, more troops actually had been requested by the commanding general, but no troops were forthcoming. That's why the president increased our number of troops heading into an important election period and why we took steps through a, again, painstaking and comprehensive review to come up with a new strategy.

Q But even after that painstaking review, these documents are suggesting that the Pakistani government had representatives of its spy agencies essentially meeting representatives of the Taliban plotting to attack American soldiers and Afghan officials.

MR. GIBBS: But again -- let me just -- let me just make sure --

Q How can that suggest the war is going well?

MR. GIBBS: No, no -- I -- you're conflating about seven issues into one question. But -- be -- let's be clear, Ed. I don't -- I don't think -- hold -- let me finish; let me finish. No, no -- Q If Pakistani officials are working with the Taliban, how can the war be going well? That's one question.

MR. GIBBS: Again, Ed, I'm saying that the war -- the direction of our relationship with Pakistan, based on steps that we've asked them to take, has improved that relationship.

Right?

Q Okay. Because last week Secretary Clinton said that the U.S. and Pakistan are, quote, "partners joined in common cause."

MR. GIBBS: Yes.

Q Despite these documents, the U.S. and Pakistan are joined in common cause?

MR. GIBBS: That -- Ed, Ed, yes in fighting -- in fighting -- as I just mentioned a few moments ago, in fighting extremists that are within that border.

Again, go back to last year, Ed -- remember last year?

Q Sure.

MR. GIBBS: When those extremists decided they were going to march on the capital in Pakistan, that became a threat to Pakistan. For the first time ever, you saw -- you saw Pakistan fighting back against violent extremists that had otherwise enjoyed safe havens.

When I -- when the -- General Jones refers to in his statement the actions that they took in Swat and South Waziristan, that's exactly what we're talking about.

The point I would make on the premise of your question -- understand that the documents go through December of 2009. I don't know if you meant to conflate actions -- let's just say that the documents --

Q Well, have -- (off mike) -- stopped? Do we know for sure that the Pakistani government is no longer working with the Taliban?

MR. GIBBS: The -- well, again, these documents -- I think they're making progress, and again, I'd refer you to what --

Q Making progress, but it has not ended, even after -- (off mike).

MR. GIBBS: No, I -- again, I would point you to the hearing that was conducted just a month ago -- less than a month ago, with General Petraeus, where this was talked about. Ed, nobody's here to declare, "Mission accomplished." You've not heard that phrase uttered or emitted by us as a way of saying that everything is going well.

Understand this: that we got involved in this region of the world after September 11th, and then for years and years and years and years this area was neglected, it was under-resourced, it was underfunded. That's what led the president to say that what we needed to do was focus on what was going on in Afghanistan. That's why we're here.

Yes, ma'am.

Q May I just follow, Robert?

Q Two questions, Robert.

The first one is, given the apparent ease that Mr. Manning was able to obtain and transfer these documents, has the White House or anyone in the administration ordered any kind of immediate change to make sure that this is not --

MR. GIBBS: I would point you to the Department of Defense, that should be able to discuss what changes they've made in operational security.

Q Do you have any insight into what Mr. Manning may have been motivated by?

MR. GIBBS: Not personally, no. I don't know if the Department of Defense would have something on that.

Q In terms of the president's reaction, can you give us any kind of insight in terms of was he angry, was he concerned, was he worried?

MR. GIBBS: Well, look, again, I think any time you -- any time in which more than 90,000 top secret documents, which are against the law for me to give to you, would -- I think it would be safe to say it's alarming to find 90,000 of them published on a website.

Q Last question. Also, on Ms. Sherrod, I wondered if you had any word on whether she'll accept the job that's been offered and if there's any time frame for that.

MR. GIBBS: That's a question for her.

Q Following up on -- I think the -- I know how you feel about this, but the conventional wisdom in Washington is that the White House is trying to keep the focus on the release of the documents rather than what's in the documents.

MR. GIBBS: No, no. I --

Q You say the president is very concerned with this release, this breach of federal law. But is he concerned with evidence in these documents about civilians casualties, about cooperation between the Taliban and the ISI?

MR. GIBBS: Chip, let's be -- Chip, let's be clear. Again, the statements that the president made in March of 2009 very much understand the complicating aspects of our relationship with both of these two countries; the existence of, as I said, historical relationships between the Taliban and Pakistani intelligence. And, look, during the recent debate about General McChrystal, remember, a decent part of the Rolling Stone article discusses frustration within our own military about rules of engagement around civilian casualties.

So we're not trying to either conventionally -- through conventional wisdom trying to deflect anything. What I'm merely saying is that what has been and I think what is known about our relationship and our efforts, in both Afghanistan and Pakistan, are not markedly changed by what is in these documents.

In fact, I think if again you go back to March of 2009, what the president says, we're clearly taking steps to make progress in dealing with Pakistan's safe havens, certainly dealing with civilian casualties.

We all know that in efforts like this, to win hearts and minds, you're certainly not going to do that with innocent civilians caught tragically in the crossfire.

Q But in reading these documents, if they're true, you can't help but be shocked by what you read in here, about some of the horrible things that have happened.

Has the president read enough of it himself to be shocked and horrified by it?



MR. GIBBS: I don't know -- look, Chip, I want to be clear. The president does not need to read a leaked document on the Internet today to be shocked and horrified by unnecessary, and every civilian casualty is unnecessary, casualty of innocent life.

We can go back, and I've been asked about them inside this briefing room for well over a year, times in which our commander -- at that point, General McChrystal -- Ambassador Eikenberry and former General Eikenberry had gone to see different places around Afghanistan that had seen horrific civilian casualties.

Look, each and every -- as I said, each and every casualty -- innocent civilian casualty is a tragedy. And it makes the job against the extremists much, much harder.

Q On the -- does the president believe that the release of these documents has harmed or will harm the war effort overall?

MR. GIBBS: Again, I think any time in which you potentially put those that could be -- whose names could be in these documents, missions and operations, Chip, they are -- documents are classified and rated secret for a reason. And I think that's the law.

Q So does that factor in the war effort?

MR. GIBBS: No, I think it's concerning that you have -- you certainly have operational security concerns. Again, I think many of our challenges in both Afghanistan and Pakistan are the same today as they were last week. I don't think anybody would tell you that they anticipate that progress isn't going to be slow and difficult in both of these two countries. That's why --

Q That's the PR, but there's more on this. I mean, it's a pretty fundamental question. Do these documents constitute a setback to the war effort in Afghanistan?

MR. GIBBS: I think they constitute a potential national-security concern.

Yes, ma'am.

Q The White House has made a point to say that WikiLeaks is not an objective news outlet, but rather an organization that opposes U.S. policy in Afghanistan. I just wonder if you could explain how that's relevant to the accuracy of the documents.

MR. GIBBS: Well, I think that the -- I think that the founder of Wikileaks, if I'm -- if I read his interviews correctly today, comparing troops in Afghanistan to the secret East German police, is certainly something that we would fundamentally disagree with and something that has -- somebody that clearly has an agenda.

Q That may be the case, but does that in any way impact the accuracy of these documents? For example, are you suggesting they selectively held back documents that would be more favorable to the U.S.?

MR. GIBBS: Savannah, I don't -- I don't -- I don't -- I haven't --

Q You haven't said what's the point.

MR. GIBBS: I'm not afforded -- nobody in this government was afforded the opportunity to see what they do or don't have. I don't -- I don't know that that's a question as relevant for me as much as it is for him.

Q I just wondered if by making this point you're trying to, I guess, attack the credibility of the documents that are out there.

MR. GIBBS: No, no. Again --

Q I mean, other news organizations --

MR. GIBBS: Again, I haven't -- I have not -- as -- I certainly have not reviewed 90,000 documents. This got brought to us late last week.

Again, what I -- the coverage I read off of the news documents doesn't, I think, materially change the challenges that we have in each of these two countries. As I said a second ago, I don't think the challenges that you would have listed on a piece of paper this time last week are, quite honestly, different based on what we read in this documents at this time this week. I think the challenges that we've had and the historical relationships with Pakistan intelligence and the Taliban were certainly something we were working to address. So it's not -- that in and of itself isn't -- isn't a surprise.

Working on safe havens in Pakistan and their impact on our efforts in the war -- all of those things -- I think all of those things many of you all have covered.

Q Is the administration confident it has the leaker in custody?

MR. GIBBS: I'm not going to get into discussing the aspects of the investigation that are -- that's ongoing.

Q New topic, Robert?

MR. GIBBS: Yes, sir. Q Robert, do you think -- do you have a -- any comment on the position taken by the U.S. government in the letter written by Richard LeBaron, deputy chief of the U.S. embassy in London, eight days before the Megrahi release, wherein the U.S. supposedly preferred the use of compassionate release over prisoner-transfer agreement?

MR. GIBBS: No, no, let's be -- let's be clear --

Q And do you have plans to release that? Yes?

MR. GIBBS: One, I think the letter has been released by the State Department.

Two, there was not a preference -- the preference that was enunciated in this letter, the preference that was enunciated in the president's call to Prime Minister Brown, the preference enunciated by John Brennan and others, who contacted the Scots directly, was that al- Megrahi should not be released.

We think that was the right decision not to -- we think the decision not to release him -- we agree with that today. We -- that's what we publicly stated prior to the release.

The letter says, and I think this is borne out, if you look at the pictures of what happened, in the event that the Scots make the decision that we do not think they should make, whatever you do, do not let him travel to Libya, do not let him have a hero's welcome coming home.

We also I think, and the letter clearly states, and I'm not sure this was covered in the Sunday Times which was, we asked for an independent medical examination of Megrahi, to ensure that the medical representation about having only three months to live was indeed supported independently.

The preference enunciated by every level of this government was for him to continue to serve the sentence that he was serving until he died.

Jonathan.

Q Thank you.

Q Could you tell me what effort the White House has made, before the publication of the WikiLeaks documents and after, to try to contain any political fallout? Any outreach to Capitol Hill? Any effort by General Jones or anyone else from the National Security Council, to --



MR. GIBBS: Well, Jonathan, we certainly when we learned of the story notified relevant committees on Capitol Hill that these documents were about to go online.

I don't know that I would -- I wouldn't put that under the rubric of containing political damage. I would put that under the rubric of understanding that 90,000 documents, dating back to January of 2004, which traditionally don't become public were about to be, and Capitol Hill was notified.

Q And what effort -- I know that you met with The Times --

MR. GIBBS: Yeah.

Q -- what efforts did you make to try to get in touch with Assange or any of the WikiLeaks people?

MR. GIBBS: They are not in touch with us. The only -- the only effort that I made in discussing -- the only effort that I made with The Times -- who I will say came to us, I think handled this story in a responsible way -- I passed a message through the writers at The New York Times to the head of WikiLeaks to redact information that could -- that could harm personnel or threaten operations or security. And I think that's in their story -- in The Times story today.

Q And one last question. You mentioned at the beginning of this -- of the briefing the investigation into improper leaking of classified information. Is WikiLeaks part of that investigation?

MR. GIBBS: There's an ongoing investigation as to -- as to this leak, yes.

Q Is that the Manning investigation -- (off mike)?

MR. GIBBS: I'm not going to get into that.

Q Robert, did you --

MR. GIBBS: Nice try.

Q Did you try to get The New York Times not to publish --

MR. GIBBS: No. Never asked them that. The New York -- let's keep -- let's understand first a few things. The New York Times didn't publish the documents.

Q (Sorry?). MR. GIBBS: WikiLeaks published -- WikiLeaks -- Wikileaks published the documents.

I will say this. Had only The New York Times had this story, would we have made an -- a case and an effort, as we have with them and other news organizations, not to compromise security?

Yes. But understand that the Times was one -- The New York Times was one of three news organizations that had access to these documents. We got questions from -- I believe on Friday from Der Spiegel, and met with -- Tommy Vietor, Ben Rhodes and I met with The New York Times on Thursday.

Yes, sir.

Q Robert, can you talk a little bit about any White House concern about support for the war being possibly affected by the leaks here? Have you done any sort of assessment? What's your thinking?

MR. GIBBS: No, again, Roger, I go back to the point that I made to Savannah and others. I think if you took out a piece of paper -- certainly if -- you know, we'll -- the president's monthly Af-Pak reviews will happen on Thursday down in the Situation Room. I'm unaware of a list of concerns that would be different today than they were a week ago, based on what we've seen. I don't -- again, I don't -- I don't see broad new revelations that we weren't either concerned about and working through this time a week ago.

Q Well, I'll switch the topic. BP: Has the president been informed of corporate changes out there? What can you say about their -- what are the --

MR. GIBBS: Look, I would have you talk to BP about personnel changes that they're going to make, if they make them. I will say this. The CEO of BP, the current CEO, Tony Hayward, if he makes the decision or the board makes the decision for him to leave, that's one thing.

What is clear is, BP cannot, should not and will not leave the Gulf without meeting its responsibility to plug the well, to clean up the damage that's been caused and to compensate those that have been damaged. I think that is -- that is the most important lesson out of here. They -- there are obligations and responsibilities, as the responsible party, that BP has. And regardless of who leads the company, those obligations and responsibilities must be met.

Q Do you have some doubt that they won't carry those out?

MR. GIBBS: It's not ours to doubt. It -- ours -- it is ours to ensure that it happens.

Major.

Q Speaking of the spill, Robert, it was disclosed over the weekend that you're -- the White House is sending some folks down, two to Florida, one to Mississippi and I think one to Alabama.

MR. GIBBS: Those numbers are wrong. I can get you better numbers. We sent --

Q What's the purpose?

MR. GIBBS: To improve intergovernmental relations and to improve -- I dare say I've gotten more than a few e-mails from your news organizations about the inability to get information from the joint information center. We've got people there, down at the joint information center. We've got people in each state.

And, look, I think if you look at the progress of our response to the disaster, you go back a few weeks - - and I forget the exact timeline -- but oil gets into a bay that is shared by both Alabama and Florida, right? The western -- or the eastern-most county in Alabama, Baldwin County, is notified; the western-most county in Florida, Volusia, is not -- okay? -- a breakdown in communications from the incident command to the local level.

Out of that, we put onscene coordinators in each of the four affected states and have broadened our ability to ensure that what is happening at a Coast Guard level, what is happening at a direct response level, gets down to -- gets down to local elected officials.

Q But the numbers are wrong?

MR. GIBBS: I can get updated numbers on where people went.

Q Back to WikiLeaks, is it your believe that the documents themselves, to the degree you've either been briefed about them or they've been described to you, by people who know a little bit more than you do, are authentic?

MR. GIBBS: I think we've acted as if they were.

Q Okay, there have been some who have talked about and say these things should be viewed by the public as -- to the degree it does go through them with some degree of skepticism, because they are by nature fragmentary, they develop or talk about one certain episode.

What would you as spokesman for the White House advise the public who may be running through these things and taking them in, in some degree of -- with some degree of interest?

What is your overall assessment of how much is true, what's not? Are they mostly true, mostly untrue? How should they --

MR. GIBBS: Again I think these are -- I think -- I'm, Major, not going to play that broad a role, except to say that I think obviously this is on-the-ground reporting. What is unclear certainly if you read through the stories is whether some of the events that they think might happen happened. But again I think the -- I would sum this up the way I summed it up a little bit ago.

And that is that what -- the concerns that are in these documents, and they're important concerns, they're concerns that we've certainly dealt with since the time we've been here and certainly as it related to Afghanistan and Pakistan, what precipitated the administration from doing a comprehensive review about our policy in both areas.

That is -- our goal is to get this right. Our goal is to keep America safe and to ensure that -- and ensure the safety of those that are conducting these operations.

Q Let me take it from a different point of view. There are some -- and this was part of the subtext, or one of the subtexts, of The Washington Post's lengthy series last week -- that maybe too many things are kept secret. Some might look at these documents and say, "Do these all need to be top secret? Is it -- is all this information really that vital, really that centered into American national security that these should all be top secret?" Do you have any evaluation of that?

MR. GIBBS: Well, again, I think that is -- those are made on a document-by-document basis. I'm not an expert in the classification process. Look, obviously if you -- I think the president would always lean on the American people knowing as much as they possibly can. I think -- look, I think if you -- go -- but --

Q But isn't this --

MR. GIBBS: But -- no, no, no, no, no, hold on; let's be clear. Go back to the 12 or so meetings held in the Situation Room, okay? We announced every one. We had readouts from every one. Lord knows you had readouts beyond the readouts from each and every one. There were photos from each. We didn't exactly have a cloistered evaluation of our policy in Afghanistan and Pakistan. That's not the way we've operated.

And again, I think it's -- let's be clear, and I want to make sure that I'm clear on this. Based on the fact that there's nothing -- there's no broad new revelations in this, our concern isn't that people might know that we're concerned about safe havens in Pakistan, or that we're concerned, as we are, about civilian casualties.

Lord, all you need is a laptop and a mouse to figure that out, or 50 cents or \$1.50 depending on which newspaper you buy. I don't -- I don't think that is -- that is, in a sense, top secret. But what generally governs the classification of these documents are names, operations, personnel, people that are cooperating -- all of which, if it's compromised, has a compromising effect on our security.

Q And can you explain the precipitating factor for the the al-Megrahi letter? What was --

MR. GIBBS: I just have a copy of it. I don't know -- I assume it -- you know, look, at this point -- and this is some conjecture on my part -- at this point, the -- this is a fairly public process. I don't know what exactly led to this letter. I know the letter speaks quite clearly to our preference -- strong preference, as communicated both in this letter and in conversations that we had directly with the government there, that Megrahi should not be released.

Yes, sir.

Q Robert, your -- take your premise, that there's nothing really new in these documents that broadly says something different than what we already knew. There are many examples in Washington where the same things have been said and then a precipitating event like this causes political shock waves that change the dynamic.

MR. GIBBS: I think you're talking about the media culture, aren't you?

Q Well --

MR. GIBBS: (Chuckles.)

Q -- perhaps.

MR. GIBBS: Yeah --

Q But, as we know, there's some interaction there. So the -- I guess the question is -- and it sort of goes back to Jonathan's, which I don't think you answered -- which is, are you all doing anything in the (wake of ?) --

MR. GIBBS: No, no, I answered Jonathan's question. What I -- what I -- Q Maybe the first part.

MR. GIBBS: Right.

Q But the second part --

MR. GIBBS: Well --

Q -- which was, have you done anything since the documents -- since the documents were released this morning to try to assess whether or not, you know, these documents provide any ammunition to your critics, any political (change ?) --

MR. GIBBS: Critics like who?

Q Well, there are critics of the Afghanistan war, and increasingly, people who are uncomfortable with it even in the Republican Party.

MR. GIBBS: I don't know that it -- I don't know if -- I don't know every call that's been made out of here. What I was trying to do was decouple the fact that we've notified Congress that 90,000 documents are about to be put on a website that were -- up until the moment that they go live, were classified documents -- is part of what is generally assumed to be our notification process. Look, I don't know of -- I certainly have not heard of a broad effort relating to what you're talking about.

Jackie.

Q Robert, I'll change the subject, too. The president, I guess, is going to make a statement about the DISCLOSE Act today. Given that that's coming up in the Senate -- (inaudible) -- not expecting 50 votes, he campaigned a lot about, you know, corporate influence in elections, in 527s and the like, and for more disclosure. Do you feel like the administration sort of miscalculated or underestimated (sic) the -- (laughter) -- extent of opposition there would be to trying to crack down on corporate giving?

MR. GIBBS: You mean from Republicans?

Q And --? Just Republicans?

MR. GIBBS: Well, I don't know what the final vote will be tomorrow. But I know that you -- if you had a sliver of Republicans that thought special-interest giving and corporate influence in elections was part of the problem, then this bill would pass.

Q Yeah, but -- (off mike) -- alterations in the legislation sought by some groups on the left.

MR. GIBBS: Pardon me?

Q There have been alterations in the legislation that sat in the House by some groups on the left as well.

MR. GIBBS: There's a legislative process, and then there's a vote, Major. In a vote, you get to decide what side you're on. It's -- the beauty of voting, it's called choosing.

You get to decide whether or not you think there is too much --

Q Right, but in the legislative process, objections from the left did arise.

MR. GIBBS: And they're supportive of the legislation.

Now we get to see --

Q (Off mike.)

MR. GIBBS: Now we get to see who in the Senate is -- who in the Senate thinks there's too much corporate influence and too much special interest money that dominate our elections and who doesn't.

I don't know how it could be any clearer than that.

Q Well, especially in the wake of Citizens United when -- State of the Union speech --

MR. GIBBS: Sure.

Q The president made a big deal about this.

Did you -- did he underestimate and miscalculate just how hard this was going to be?

MR. GIBBS: I think we -- in your words, we might have underestimated that those in the Senate on both the Democrat and Republican side shared the president's goal; mostly if not completely on the Republican side, in protecting the corporate influence and the special interest donors that seek to not just influence elections but ultimately influence policy.

Again I think as I've said here in the last few weeks, governing is about choices, right, you're either going to extend unemployment insurance for those that have lost their job, or you're not for that.

Okay, you're either for small-business -- increased money for small-business lending or you're not for that. And in the next couple days, we'll figure out who think there's too much corporate influence in our elections and who's just fine with the corporate influence we've got.

Mark.

Q WikiLeaks one more time, to follow on Michael's question about the inflection points in public opinion and history?

MR. GIBBS: Right.

Q What do you make of the comparisons between these leaks and the Pentagon Papers?

MR. GIBBS: Well, look, the Pentagon Papers are different in the sense that you're talking about policy documents.

These are sort of on-the-ground reporting of different events.

I don't see how in any way they're really comparable, given -- again, given the fact that -- go back and look at -- again, just in the past month I know we've talked about -- in here we've talked about the concern about civilian casualties. It's not something that has been -- not something that we previously hadn't



touched on that all of a sudden burst out into the public arena. Certainly, as I said earlier, the historic relationships that have been had between the Taliban and the Pakistani intelligence services -- I mean, the headline in The New York Times story says -- basically attributes the headline of that connection to U.S. aides.

So again, it's not to -- I'm not trying to downplay the seriousness of those concerns. They're -- they are -- they are serious. That's why we've taken steps to try to improve that relationship for the Pakistanis to take certain steps so that we can build in Pakistan and in -- and Afghanistan a situation that improves our security.

Q The Republicans said a lot of those things about the Pentagon Papers too, a lot of those same concerns, in the latest reports.

MR. GIBBS: Well, again, I -- no, no, no --

Q I guess my question is about the public-opinion climate.

MR. GIBBS: What I'm -- what I'm trying to -- what I'm trying to --

Q Has it changed?

MR. GIBBS: What I'm trying to -- I don't think that the material that's in the Pentagon -- again, the Pentagon Papers is a fairly exhaustive policy review by the Pentagon. I think, as Major said earlier, these are a series of one-off documents about an operation here or an instance there or a -- they're not a broad sort of -- this isn't a broad review of aspects of civilian -- you know, progress that we have or haven't made on civilian casualties. It's just on-the-ground reporting on that.

I think this --

Q But don't they collectively -- (off mike) -- Robert? I mean, the aggregation of these documents, don't they sort of collectively --

MR. GIBBS: Well, but again, Glenn (sp), you don't -- you -- because there's only a certain time period and you don't know what was and what wasn't either leaked or post -- posted, I think to say that you know everything is probably not the case.

Q May I follow (on Afghanistan ?)?

MR. GIBBS: Ann (sp).

Q Would you compare it to Abu Ghraib, or at least the repercussions from the impact?

MR. GIBBS: I'm always -- I will say this, this is -- I'm always loathe to look back and compare one event to something else when I just don't always -- I don't -- I think we have a tendency to always want to compare to something else rather than simply reporting out what -- but again, Ann (sp), I want to stress again the notion that -- again, and if you wrote down all of what our concerns were in our relationship with Pakistan, if you wrote down what they were about our relationship and the challenges that we face in Afghanistan, I do not know that you would list one thing differently today as a result of what we've read in these documents that you wouldn't have already listed a week ago. I just don't.

And I think that's why -- that's partly your answer to that, Mark; that you don't have some revelation that there's a systematic change of the course of events, that we have stepped up operations in a certain part in the war in Southeast Asia, that we've escalated. I mean, that's just not -- that's not what these documents are.

Q May I (follow up ?)?

Q The head of WikiLeaks tells us that he won't identify the source of the material. He actually says we still don't know who the source is. But if it was Private First Class Manning, who is already in custody, the head of WikiLeaks says he's a hero. What does the president say to WikiLeaks and those who believe that they are doing the right thing in outing a policy they disagree with? MR. GIBBS: Well, look -- well, I think there are ways in which one can disagree with a policy without breaking the law and putting in potential danger those who are there to keep us safe. Again, Ann, if I were to have handed one of you these documents, I would be breaking the law. I think there are certainly better ways to discuss and register one's opposition rather than putting people in potential harm's way.

Q What (planning ?) steps? Do you know?

MR. GIBBS: I'm not going to get into that.

Yes.

Q Robert, you talked about choices. Is the president hoping to sway some choices on the DISCLOSE Act this afternoon, or just shine a spotlight for the public on the choices that people made?

MR. GIBBS: Well, look, I -- we certainly hope that those in the Senate listen to what the president says and take that into account before they vote.

Yes, ma'am.

Q Robert, on Congressman Rangel, the president, obviously the head of the Democratic Party, and you, yourself, when asked about Rangel in February --

MR. GIBBS: I'm happy to find some stuff on this, but I don't have anything further. Peter.

Q You don't want to see more?

MR. GIBBS: Peter.

Q Robert, on the Shirley Sherrod thing, she invited the president to come to south Georgia and take him on a tour of some civil rights landmarks. Also, others --

MR. GIBBS: I would say this. Having listened to the call, she invited him broadly to south Georgia. I don't -- I don't remember them getting that detailed into what a visit or a tour might be.

Q Robert, also, is there a moment where there -- is this a moment where the president might lead a national conversation on race? Do you expect us to hear more from the president on this particular issue?

MR. GIBBS: Again, Peter, I said this certainly a lot last week. I don't think the president -- I don't think you have to look at the events of last week and need the president to lead that conversation. I assume and I hope that, whether it was in the offices of this administration, whether it was in the offices of newspapers, television, radio, or whether it was in the homes of millions of Americans, that we learned a little bit about ourselves and about how we react to things.

I don't -- I don't -- I don't think the president has to be -- as I said last week, I don't think the president has to be a -- the teacher in every teachable moment.

Yes, sir.

Q Thank you, Robert. Just a different question regarding personnel. Two weeks ago, the Capitol Hill publication The Hill reported that a top staffer on Senator Baucus's Finance Committee, Ms. Liz Fowler, was about to be named to a key position at the Department of HHS. And Ms. Fowler's also a former vice president of the Wellpoint insurance company. Can you confirm that appointment? And would appointing someone of her position --



MR. GIBBS: I will tell you this. I hope you talk to HHS. I don't get down to that level of detail. And I have not been given that level of detail on any potential impending announcements.

Q Robert, can I ask you about the congressional briefings --

MR. GIBBS: Yes, sir.

Q -- on the WikiLeaks?

MR. GIBBS: Richard (sp). I'll come back to that.

Q And can I follow on -- (off mike).

Q Let me -- let me follow on WikiLeaks for -- let me just follow on WikiLeaks for a second. Even if there is nothing substantially new in these documents, you're in the communications business; are you concerned that the public and therefore perhaps members of Congress will think that there's something new here and that perception will drive reality and that it will have an impact on your policy?

MR. GIBBS: Well, look. I think inherently the last phrase of your question that you didn't necessarily enumerate were -- was about the politics of all this. The president made a decision to put almost 50,000 more troops in Afghanistan, not based on the politics but based on what was right, based on what he believed was -- gave us the best chance at succeeding in Afghanistan and in making the decisions that gave us the best opportunity to improve our relationship with Pakistan and create, as Ed pointed out, a partnership to go after those in Pakistan that sought to do Pakistanis harm or those in Pakistan and Afghanistan that sought to do Americans harm.

That's the filter by which the president went through the meetings. That's the filter by which the president made that decision.

The politics of all of this stuff will settle out regardless. The question that the president asked himself and the question that the team asked themselves in making this decision is, what's the right policy for this country? What's the right policy that keeps us safe? And what's the right policy that prevents safe havens from being recreated in Afghanistan, where planning can happen again, unfettered, to attack this country, as happened on September 11th? That's what --

Q (Off mike) --

MR. GIBBS: -- that's what we're focused on.

(Cross talk.) Yeah.

Q (Off mike) -- if it's unanimous among all the administration that this is the right policy, that it is keeping America safer, what -- (off mike)?

MR. GIBBS: I would point you to DOD on that. I would say this: that there was a very, very large -- very, very extensive -- with multiple inputs -- review of where we were and what we needed to do going forward. We're in the process of implementing going -- of -- we're in the process of implementing that new strategy, evaluating that new strategy and moving forward.

Q But is America really safer?

MR. GIBBS: That's -- I believe America is safer. And I -- because if we were not to -- if we were not to be in this area, if we were to -- if the Taliban were to come and overthrow a government and create a safe haven that allowed al Qaeda and its extremist allies to not have to plot in a cave but sit in the open and plot the next September 11th, our country is -- our country would be much, much more dangerous, a much greater target.

And I think that's why the president has made the decisions he's -- that he's made.

Q Robert, one short --

MR. GIBBS: April.

(Cross talk.)

Q One short question?

Q Robert, (granted ?) documents in the WikiLeaks date back to 2004, is this a direct slap in the face to this administration's intelligence (action ?) in Afghanistan?

MR. GIBBS: I -- again, I think if it says anything, it speaks to some concerns about operational security. I don't -- I don't believe that that's directed at us personally.

Q Well, okay. Well -- and let me -- and also on the -- on the intelligence -- more so on a broader scope on intelligence, after 9/11, the Bush administration kept saying it was not about "if" but a matter of "when" another attack would happen on U.S. soil. Is that still the case, as you deal with intelligence and daily -- (off mike)?

MR. GIBBS: Well, without getting into discussing the same type of material I've said I wouldn't discuss here, we are -- there are a group of people within this government, within this White House that work each day to make sure that doesn't happen.

MR. GIBBS: (Sam ?).

Q And on another -- wait a minute, on another subject really fast. The president is going to "The View" this week to have a conversation with the women of "The View." And he's also going to be at the Urban League talking about education. Last year at the NAACP, the president talked about education, and he put in a lot of civil rights issues as it relates to education; and then he's going to be talking on "The View."

Will the issue -- will he have a cursory possibly conversation with the women of "The View" who have a tendency to be politically astute on matters in the news, on some issues?

MR. GIBBS: Will he have a conversation with them?

Q On race possibly. (Off mike.)

MR. GIBBS: Oh, you -- I missed that word. You didn't --

Q I'm sorry.

MR. GIBBS: You didn't -- I thought you said, are they going to ask him questions?

Q On the issue of race?

MR. GIBBS: And I think I can confirm that -- as a senior administration official that that is entirely the case. (Laughter.)

Q On the matter of race?

MR. GIBBS: I -- you know, look, I have no idea what they're going to ask. And I presume the president will answer -- will answer their questions.

Look, this is -- I know that we talked about late last week that the president has long been scheduled to go to the Urban League and will deliver again a speech about what has been done, in this administration, to change and improve the educational system in this country and ultimately the opportunity that our children are given, as a result of that, and the responsibilities that they and their parents alike have.

Q Will civil rights be infused in that speech?

MR. GIBBS: I think that's safe to bet.

Q One short question?

(Cross talk.)

Q Les, it's not your turn, buddy, hold on. (Laughter.) Q Why is it your turn back there, and I'm up here?

MR. GIBBS: Because I said Sam.

Q You said Sam?

MR. GIBBS: I said Sam, because you were --

Q (Off mike.)

MR. GIBBS: I think you were too busy yelling when I --

(Laughter, cross talk.)

This is instructive.

Yes, Sam.

Q Robert, I get that --

MR. GIBBS: This is like -- (laughs) -- man, it's like a bar.

Q You said you all reached out to Congress last week. And I get that most of this information pre-dates the president's --

MR. GIBBS: I think that -- honestly I think that most of the outreach was probably done less last week and more quite honestly, Sam, over the course of the last 24 hours.

Q Well, the message that this -- that most of this information pre-dates the president's new strategy doesn't seem to have gotten through to people like Senator Kerry, who said today that this information raises serious questions.

Are you all trying to tamp that down and make sure that there's a real (bond ?) between?

MR. GIBBS: No, no, no, let's -- well, let's -- let me -- let me first be clear about -- I think it is hard -- would be hard to identify anybody that has done as much as Senator Kerry has. He was obviously intimately involved in -- met several times with President Karzai around the election and the aftermath on that. He has been -- he's traveled to both countries and I think has been an important -- an important leader in ensuring that our policy is the right one.

Q Well, then he should know more than anybody that this is -- these are new concerns. But he's still saying it raises serious questions.

MR. GIBBS: Well, again, it -- again, I'm not minimizing that this information is out there. What I'm simply saying, Sam, is I -- I think if you asked this of Senator Kerry, I think if you asked this of most on Capitol Hill -- and this doesn't have to do with whether this stuff pre-dates it. I will say that, again, our concern about the direction of the war, the funding and the resources that were being given to it -- and, look,

that is your strategy. If you're not going to fund your strategy, or if you're going to -- if your strategy is going to be predicated on 25,000 troops rather than 100,000 troops, that limits your ability to impact that strategy.

But, look, I think Senator Kerry has been a leading voice on this. And I think our responsibility, and his responsibility as the leader of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, is to do all that we can to get this right.

Sam, we have weekly -- the president hears weekly from commanders on the ground in both Iraq and Afghanistan. And we have monthly meetings -- as I said, will -- that will happen just this Thursday in the Situation Room -- to evaluate where we are, and to make adjustments.

Nobody is writing -- nobody wrote anything in stone and is then just hoping that it all happens. We will continually evaluate where we are, what needs to happen, how do we build Afghan capacity, how do we train up the Afghan National Police and the Afghan National Army as part of a comprehensive national security force that gives us the ability once areas are cleared to be able to transfer, again, both from a governance and a military perspective. I think all of that is important and all of that will be continually evaluated.

Q Thanks, Robert --

MR. GIBBS (?): Last question.

Q Robert -- just one short -- one short question.

MR. GIBBS: Yes, sir.

Q What assurance has the president received from his secretary of State that in 2012 she will not run for president? (Laughter.)

Q That's a great question.

MR. GIBBS: I will -- I am unaware of any assurance that this president needs about his secretary of State.

Thank you.

Q Do you think she's not going to run?

Q Is he going to the wedding?

MR. GIBBS: No.

Q He's not?

Q Not going to run.

Q Does he know where it is now?

END.

THE WHITE HOUSE  
Office of the Press Secretary

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For Immediate Release  
July 25, 2010

**Statement of National Security Advisor GEN James Jones on Wikileaks**

The United States strongly condemns the disclosure of classified information by individuals and organizations which could put the lives of Americans and our partners at risk, and threaten our national security. Wikileaks made no effort to contact us about these documents – the United States government learned from news organizations that these documents would be posted. These irresponsible leaks will not impact our ongoing commitment to deepen our partnerships with Afghanistan and Pakistan; to defeat our common enemies; and to support the aspirations of the Afghan and Pakistani people.

The documents posted by Wikileaks reportedly cover a period of time from January 2004 to December 2009. On December 1, 2009, President Obama announced a new strategy with a substantial increase in resources for Afghanistan, and increased focus on al Qaeda and Taliban safe-havens in Pakistan, precisely because of the grave situation that had developed over several years. This shift in strategy addressed challenges in Afghanistan that were the subject of an exhaustive policy review last fall. We know that serious challenges lie ahead, but if Afghanistan is permitted to slide backwards, we will again face a threat from violent extremist groups like al Qaeda who will have more space to plot and train. That is why we are now focused on breaking the Taliban's momentum and building Afghan capacity so that the Afghan government can begin to assume responsibility for its future. The United States remains committed to a strong, stable, and prosperous Afghanistan.

Since 2009, the United States and Pakistan have deepened our important bilateral partnership. Counter-terrorism cooperation has led to significant blows against al Qaeda's leadership. The Pakistani military has gone on the offensive in Swat and South Waziristan, at great cost to the Pakistani military and people. The United States and Pakistan have also commenced a Strategic Dialogue, which has expanded cooperation on issues ranging from security to economic development. Pakistan and Afghanistan have also improved their bilateral ties, most recently through the completion of a Transit-Trade Agreement. Yet the Pakistani government – and Pakistan's military and intelligence services – must continue their strategic shift against insurgent groups. The balance must shift decisively against al Qaeda and its extremist allies. U.S. support for Pakistan will continue to be focused on building Pakistani capacity to root out violent extremist groups, while supporting the aspirations of the Pakistani people.

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**Title:** United States: President Obama and Congressional Responses to Wikileaks Afghan War Reports Release  
**MRN:** s 22 1(a)(ii) 27/07/2010 05:51:03 PM EDT  
**To:** Canberra  
**Cc:** RR : Afghanistan Pakistan Posts  
**From:** Washington  
**From File:**  
**References:** s 22 1(a)(ii)  
The cable has the following attachment/s -  
100727 Pak Amb to US OpED - An Ally of Necessity.docx  
**Response:** Routine, Information Only

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UNCLASSIFIED

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### Summary

On 27 July, President Obama said the Wikileaks reports "don't reveal any issues that haven't already informed our public debate on Afghanistan .. and point to the same challenges that led me to conduct an extensive review". Congressional figures have expressed concern at the security breach, with several leading Democrats also expressing concern at the portrait painted of the war. No Congressional hearings have yet been announced. In general, commentators have characterised the reports as adding little new or controversial, s 33 (a)(iii)

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To date, Congressional response to the release of 75,000+ leaked Afghanistan reports by Wikileaks has been mixed. Several Democrats and Republicans expressed concern at the security breach, with several leading Democrats going further and expressing concern at the picture of the war in Afghanistan that the reports present. No Congressional hearings have yet been announced to discuss the release of the Wikileak reports.

2. In general, media commentators have downplayed the significance of information revealed so-far in the reports, on the basis they are mostly field-level reports which pre-date the new strategy, add little which is controversial or not already in the public domain, and do not contract official assessments about the conduct of the war (in contrast to the Pentagon papers). Media commentary in the US has focused mostly on the role of Pakistan and the ISI - the Pakistani Ambassador to the US responded in an OpEd in the Wall Street Journal today (see attached). s 33 (a)(iii)

3. Select responses by leading Members of Congress follows:

Senate Armed Services **Chairman Carl Levin** (D-Michigan) stated: "Some of these documents reinforce a long-standing concern of mine about the supporting role of some Pakistani officials in the Afghan insurgency." House Armed Services **Chairman Ike Skelton** (D-Missouri) referred to the contents of the leaked reports "troubling... [The



documents] appear to support what I was asserting for years: The war in Afghanistan was not going well, and we needed a real strategy for success." Senate Foreign Relations **Chairman John Kerry** (D-Massachusetts) said that: "However illegally these documents came to light, they raise serious questions about the reality of America's policy towards Pakistan and Afghanistan. Those policies are at a critical stage and these documents may very well underscore the stakes and make the calibrations needed to get the policy right more urgent." **Representative Nita Lowey** (D-New York), Chairwoman of the House State-Foreign Operations Appropriations Subcommittee was similarly concerned: "The reports contribute to concerns about our partners in the Afghan government, military and police and the actions of the Pakistani military and intelligence services."

4. s 33 (a)(iii)

**Representative Dennis**

**Kucinich** (D-Ohio) stated: "These documents provide a fuller picture of what we have long known about Afghanistan: The war is going badly. We have to show the ability to respond to what's right in front of our face: This war is no longer justifiable under any circumstances."

5. Republicans focused their comments on the act of publicly releasing these documents rather than their substance. For example, House Republican **Chairman Mike Pence** (R-Indiana) said that "the fact that thousands of classified documents were leaked in a clear violation of law is an outrage."

Certainly, some senior Democrats were also critical of Wikileaks for releasing this information. For example, **Senator Diane Feinstein** (D-California), chairwoman of the Senate Intelligence Committee, stated that: "This was a clear and pronounced effort to secure several years' of communications, emails and reports, and without any approval to put it out to the world."

6. Both Democrats and Republicans noted that the released documents "pre-date the President's change in policy," as **Speaker Pelosi** (D-California) observed. "The emerging picture from this leak adds up to little more than what we knew already -- that the war in Afghanistan was deteriorating over the past several years, and that we were not winning," said **Senator John McCain** (R-Arizona), ranking Republican on the Senate Armed Services Committee. "This is why a concerted effort has been made since 2009, both in the Administration and in the Congress, to make changes to our strategy, to increase our commitment of troops and resources, and to bring new and better leadership to the mission. As a result, we are finally beginning to address many of the problems highlighted within these leaked documents," he added in a statement.

7. After meeting with Democratic and Republican Congressional leaders on 27 July 2010, President Obama made the following statement:

"I know much has been written about this in recent days as a result of the substantial leak of documents from Afghanistan covering a period from 2004 to 2009. While I'm concerned about the disclosure of sensitive information from the battlefield that could potentially jeopardize individuals or operations, the fact is, these documents don't reveal any issues that haven't already informed our public debate on Afghanistan. Indeed, they point to the same challenges that led me to conduct an extensive review of our policy last fall.

So let me underscore what I've said many times. For seven years, we failed to implement a strategy adequate to the challenge in this region -- the region from which the 9/11 attacks were waged and other attacks against the United States and



our friends and allies have been planned. That's why we've substantially increased our commitment there; insisted upon greater accountability from our partners in Afghanistan and Pakistan; developed a new strategy that can work; and put in place a team, including one of our finest generals, to execute that plan.

Now we have to see that strategy through."

8. Defence Policy and Political Branches were consulted in preparation of this cable.

text ends  
s 22 1(a)(ii)

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**REDACTED**

## An Ally of Necessity - By HUSAIN HAQQANI

By HUSAIN HAQQANI - Mr. Haqqani is Pakistan's ambassador to the United States.

Page A19

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The much publicized leaking of several thousand classified documents relating to the war in Afghanistan may have provided the war's American critics an opportunity to press their objections. It does not, however, make the case against military and political cooperation between the governments of the United States and Pakistan, made necessary by the challenge of global terrorism.

Under elected leaders, Pakistan is working with the U.S. to build trust between our militaries and intelligence agencies. In recent months, Pakistan has undertaken a massive military operation in the region bordering Afghanistan, denying space to Taliban extremists who had hoped to create a ministate with the backing of al Qaeda. Pakistan-Afghanistan relations have been enhanced to an unprecedented degree. And exchanges of intelligence between Pakistan and the U.S. have foiled several terrorist plots around the globe. The WikiLeaks controversy and the ensuing speculation about Pakistan's role in the global effort against the terrorists should not disrupt the ongoing efforts of the U.S. and Pakistan to contain and destroy the forces of extremism and fanaticism that threaten the entire world.

Pakistan is crucial for helping Afghanistan attain stability while pursuing the defeat of al Qaeda led terrorist ideologues. For that reason the White House, the Pentagon and the State Department have denounced the leaking of unattributed and unprocessed information implicating Pakistan in supporting or tolerating the Taliban. House Armed Services Committee Chairman Ike Skelton, a Democrat, warned Monday against judging Pakistan's role in the Afghan war by "outdated reports," adding that Pakistan had "significantly stepped up its fight against the Taliban." Most Americans and many Pakistanis agree on the need for improvements in Pakistan's efforts, but that is not the same as suspecting lack of cooperation.

The tragedy that has unfolded in South Asia is the product of a long series of policy miscalculations spanning fully 30 years. The U.S., in its zeal to defeat the Soviet Union—a noble goal indeed—selected Afghanistan as a venue. Pakistan became caught up in an ideological battle between communism and a politicized version of our Islamic faith. The most violent and most radical elements of the Mujahedeen resistance were empowered to fight the surrogate war against the Russians. Concerns—such as former Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto's warning in 1989 while visiting the U.S. that the world had created a Frankenstein monster in Afghanistan that would come back to haunt us—were generally ignored.

Alliances and relationships forged among supporters of the Afghan jihad 30 years ago have not been easy to dismantle within Pakistan. But they have been dismantled. After 9/11, Pakistan made a deliberate and courageous decision to confront the terrorists as the civilized world's first line of defense. Since the return of democracy in 2008, Pakistan has paid a terrible price for its commitment to fight terrorism. More Pakistanis have been killed by terrorism in the last two years than the number of civilians who died in New York's Twin Towers. Over the past nine years more Pakistani than NATO troops have lost their lives fighting the Taliban. Two thousand Pakistani police have been killed; our mosques and hotels have been savagely attacked; scores of billion dollars of foreign investment were frozen; and tens of billions of dollars of funding for education and health have been diverted to the battlefield against the extremists.

We cannot undo the past, but we can certainly alter the course of the future. The democratically elected government of President Asif Ali Zardari and Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani has followed a clearly laid out strategy of fighting and marginalizing terrorists, even when that decision was less than popular with a public still cynical because of what it believed was the political manipulation of the past. The course laid out by Pakistan's democratic leaders has been executed brilliantly by Pakistan's military and intelligence services.

The documents circulated by WikiLeaks do not even remotely reflect the current realities on the ground. For example, a retired Pakistani general is named as the master planner of the Afghan Taliban's strategy. But this is a man who hasn't held any position within Pakistani intelligence or the military for more than 20 years. For its part, Pakistan's current leadership will not be distracted by something like these leaks. We have paid an unprecedented price in blood and treasure over the last two years. We will not succumb to the terrorists.

As we speak, the military of Pakistan is engaged in a bloody battle, taking enormous casualties, in the mountains of South Waziristan to purge the tribal areas of terrorist sanctuaries. Our intelligence forces are gathering information across the country and targeting terrorist cells in North Waziristan to thwart their designs for destabilizing our government and terrorizing our people.

This is Pakistan's war as much as it is a battle for civilization. Pakistan's very existence and traditional way of life are at stake. We fight alongside our friends from all over the world to protect freedom. The U.S could not have a more committed ally in this defining battle of the third millennium than the people, the government and the military of Pakistan.

**Title:** United States: General Mattis Confirmation Hearing  
**MRN:** s 22 1(a)(ii) 28/07/2010 06:07:39 PM EDT  
**To:** Canberra  
**Cc:** RR : Afghanistan Pakistan Posts, Baghdad  
**From:** Washington  
**From File:**  
**References:** s 22 1(a)(ii)  
The cable has the following attachment/s -  
Mattis Statement 27 July.pdf not attached - publicly available  
Mattis Confirmation Hearing 27 Jul.docx not attached - out of scope  
**Response:** Routine, Information Only and public available

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**Annotations:** s 22 1(a)(ii)  
**Summary**  
s 22 1(a)(ii)

s 22 1(a)(ii)

s 22 1(a)(ii)

7. Questioned on his response to the publication of 92,000 classified war documents by Wikileaks Mattis said he thought it was an "appallingly irresponsible act". He downplayed the effect that the leak might have, noting that the information contained in the documents "didn't tell us anything . . . that we weren't already aware" and noting that he had seen no big revelations. Mattis was more concerned with the effect that it might have on allies, "being more circumspect" but he emphasised that "despite any recent papers leaked to the media, we are remaining in the region; we are not leaving".

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**Title:** United States: Administration Response to Wikileaks  
**MRN:** s 22 1(a)(ii) 30/07/2010 02:17:37 PM EDT  
**To:** Canberra  
**Cc:** RR : Afghanistan Pakistan Posts  
**From:** Washington  
**From File:**  
**References:** s 22 1(a)(ii)  
The cable has the following attachment/s -  
100729 State Comments Wikileaks.docx  
DEFENSE DEPARTMENT REGULAR BRIEFING 29 July 10.docx  
**Response:** Routine, Information Only

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**Annotations:** s 22 1(a)(ii)  
**Summary**

The White House today called for Wikileaks not to post more classified information online, while on 29 July, Defense Secretary Gates announced that the FBI would partner with Defense to investigate the leak. Gates and ADM Mullen expressed deep concern that the leaks placed coalition forces and Afghan civilians at considerable risk and could jeopardise intelligence sources, methods and military techniques and procedures. Gates said action would be taken to tighten security of information on the battlefield. The Taliban has reportedly claimed it will review the documents to identify Afghans cooperating with international forces.

Defense Secretary Gates announced that the FBI would partner with the Army's Crime Investigation Division to investigate the leak of thousands of classified documents relating to the war in Afghanistan, at a press briefing with Admiral Michael Mullen (Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff) on 29 Julys 22 1(a)(ii)

2. Although the leak did not in Gates' view "fundamentally call into question the efficacy of our current strategy in Afghanistan and its prospects for success", there are deep concerns about the impact this could have on the ground. Gates warned that the battlefield consequences of the release could be "potentially severe and dangerous" for coalition forces and Afghan partners as intelligence sources and methods, military tactics, techniques and procedures "will become known to our adversaries". Gates said the leak was a pointed reminder that secret information is classified as such to protect sources of information, to protect troops, to deny enemies information about military operations, and "to preserve our relationships with friends and allies". He cautioned that there are "potentially dramatic and grievously harmful consequences of violations of trust" and said the US would "aggressively investigate, and, wherever possible, prosecute such violations".

3. Mullen shared Gates' concerns about the leak. Mullen said he had not seen anything in the documents that would affect the overall strategy but noted that this was not the reason the leak was "so destructive". Mullen advised that the Pentagon are undertaking a "careful review to determine the degree to which future tactical operations may be impacted, and the degree to which the lives of our troops and Afghan partners may be at risk". Mullen was quoted as saying "Mr Assange can say whatever he likes about the greater good he thinks he

and his source are doing, but the truth is they might already have on their hands the blood of some young soldier or that of an Afghan family".

4. Gates said the Department would seek all the resources needed to investigate and assess the security breach and advised that action would be taken in theatre to tighten procedures for accessing and transporting classified information. The Department had endeavoured to "push access to sensitive battlefield information down to where it is most useful on the front lines" according to Gates even though there were fewer restrictions and controls in the field than at headquarters. Mullen explained that improvements to integrate intelligence more rapidly into operations had generated more intelligence and had allowed the US to operate "much more effectively"; the challenge now according to Gates was "to strike the right balance between security and providing our frontline troops the information they need".

6. Media reports suggest that FBI involvement means the investigation will include civilians, including potentially including Wikileaks founder Julian Assange. s 33 (a)(iii)

7. Gates and Mullen were candid about their concern that the leaks might damage relationships that the US had cultivated with allies and partners, governments and individuals; Gates worried that the US now had "considerable repair work to do in terms of reassuring people and rebuilding trust because . . . people are going to feel at risk".

8. The leaks have generated debate about Pakistan support for insurgents and terrorists but Gates and Mullen cautioned that Pakistan was rebuilding trust with the US and over the past two years had "become increasingly aggressive in taking on terrorists in the north-western part of their country", according to Gates. Gates said Pakistan's willingness to take on insurgents and terrorists had been a "dramatic change" and Pakistani cooperation had been "steadily expanding".

9. White House press secretary Robert Gibbs was quoted today in media reports of an NBC interview (comment: the transcript is not yet available) as saying the leak has already jeopardised the lives of Afghans working with the US and its allies. Gibbs reportedly said the Taliban had declared it would comb the documents for the names of people who had cooperated with international forces in Afghanistan.

s 33 (a)(iii)

11. DFAT (Political) were consulted in the preparation of this cable.

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**DEFENSE DEPARTMENT REGULAR BRIEFING:  
SECRETARY OF DEFENSE ROBERT GATES; ADMIRAL  
MICHAEL MULLEN, USN, CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEFS  
OF STAFF (CJCS)**

**PENTAGON BRIEFING ROOM, ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA  
3:04 P.M. EDT, THURSDAY, JULY 29, 2010**

SEC. GATES: Good afternoon. I would first like to start with some comments about the release and subsequent publication of classified military documents earlier this week.

First, as the president stated, the problems identified and the issues raised in these documents relating to the war in Afghanistan have been well known in and out of government for some time. In fact, it was the recognition of many of these challenges that led to the president to conduct an extensive review of our Afghan strategy last year, which concluded that our mission there needed a fundamentally new approach.

These documents represent a mountain of raw data and individual impressions, most several years old, devoid of context or analysis. They do not represent official positions or policy. And they do not, in my view, fundamentally call into question the efficacy of our current strategy in Afghanistan and its prospects for success.

Having said all that, the battlefield consequences of the release of these documents are potentially severe and dangerous for our troops, our allies and Afghan partners, and may well damage our relationships and reputation in that key part of the world. Intelligence sources and methods, as well as military tactics, techniques and procedures, will become known to our adversaries.

This department is conducting a thorough, aggressive investigation to determine how this leak occurred, to identify the person or persons responsible, and to assess the content of the information compromised. We have a moral responsibility to do everything possible to mitigate the consequences for our troops and our partners downrange, especially those who have worked with and put their trust in us in the past, who now may be targeted for retribution.

Yesterday, I called FBI Director Robert Mueller and asked for the FBI's assistance in our investigation as a partner. It is important that we have all the resources we need to investigate and assess this breach of national security. Furthermore, the department is taking action in theater to prevent a repeat of such a breach, to include tightening procedures for accessing and transporting classified information.

As a general proposition, we endeavor to push access to sensitive battlefield information down to where it is most useful -- on the front lines -- where as a practical matter there are fewer restrictions and controls than at rear

headquarters. In the wake of this incident, it will be a real challenge to strike the right balance between security and providing our frontline troops the information they need.

The U.S. military's success over the years rests on the abilities and integrity of its men and women in uniform and our trust in them. This trust is represented by the fact that, relative to our countries' armed forces, our military culture is one that on the battlefield places great responsibility on the shoulders of even junior servicemembers, to include entrusting them with sensitive information. The American way of war depends upon it.

But to earn and maintain that trust, we must all be responsible in handling, protecting and safeguarding our nation's secrets. For years there has been what I would call appropriate criticism of excessive classification and overclassification of information. However, this recent release of documents is a pointed reminder that much secret information is treated as such to protect sources of information, to protect the lives of our men and women in uniform, to deny our enemies the information about our military operations, and to preserve our relationships with friends and allies.

This recent massive breach should be a reminder to all entrusted with our secrets that there are potentially dramatic and grievously harmful consequences of violations of trust and responsibility. We will aggressively investigate and, wherever possible, prosecute such violations.

Chairman.

**ADM. MULLEN:** Thank you, Mr. Secretary. I certainly share your concerns about the recklessness with which classified documents were both leaked and then posted online.

As I said earlier this week, I am appalled by this behavior, and, frankly, outraged that anyone in their right mind would think it valuable to make public even one sensitive report, let alone tens of thousands of them, about a war that is being waged.

Yes, the documents are old and essentially raw inputs to our intelligence and operations apparatus. And yes, much of what has been revealed has already been commonly understood by the public or otherwise covered in the media. I can assure you, having just come from visits to Afghanistan and Pakistan, that none of what I've seen posted online or reported in the press affects our overarching strategy.

But, frankly, that's not why this is so destructive. The sheer size and scope of the collection now demands a careful review to determine the degree to which future tactical operations may be impacted, and the degree to which the lives of our troops and Afghan partners may be at risk. And I think we always need to be mindful of the unknown potential for damage in any particular document that we handle.



Mr. Assange can say whatever he likes about the greater good he thinks he and his source are doing, but the truth is they might already have on their hands the blood of some young soldier or that of an Afghan family. Disagree with the war all you want, take issue with the policy, challenge me or our ground commanders on the decisions we make to accomplish the mission we've been given, but don't put those who willingly go into harm's way even further in harm's way just to satisfy your need to make a point.

And while I'm at it, let me make one: A big part of my trip -- indeed, a big part of my time as chairman -- has revolved around building and sustaining relationships. Everywhere I went over the last 10 days, those relationships were front and center -- not just for me, but for our commanders and for our diplomats.

I saw it in Kabul, where Ambassador Eikenberry and General Petraeus have forged a strong team and an even stronger dialogue with the Karzai administration.

I saw it in Kandahar city, where I met with a company of U.S. MPs living and working side by side with Afghan police at a security station near the outskirts of town.

I saw it in Islamabad in yet another of my engagements with General Kayani. He spent an entire afternoon flying me to northern Pakistan so I could see for myself some of the rugged terrain he and his troops have to patrol.

If we've learned nothing else in fighting these wars, it's that relationships matter. They are vital. We are not going to kill our way to success, and we sure aren't going to achieve success alone.

So in addition to making sure we understand the tactical risks from these leaks, I think it's incumbent upon us not to let the good relations -- relationships we've established and the trust we've worked so hard to build throughout the region also become a casualty.

Thank you.

Q Mr. Secretary, do you believe that the investigation should go beyond the source or sources of the leak within the military to include those who received or used the information -- WikiLeaks, the news media? And does the presence of the FBI in the investigation indicate such a widening of its scope?

SEC. GATES: Obviously, in the middle of an investigation, and particularly one that is in the military justice system, there's very little that I can say because of the potential for command influence. My basic position, though, is the investigation should go wherever it needs to go. And one of the reasons that I asked the director of the FBI to partner with us in this is to ensure that it can go wherever it needs to go.

Q To include potentially beyond --

SEC. GATES: I'll just -- I'll just leave it at that.



Julian.

Q Sir, PFC Bradley Manning was charged earlier with another leak to WikiLeaks. Do you feel that there was not -- was there an aggressive enough effort to examine what he accessed that he was not supposed to access? Have you thoroughly looked at what documents he, who's already accused, might have looked at in addition to what he's already been charged with?

SEC. GATES: Well, obviously, what I just said in response to Diane's question goes here, too. I'm just not going to talk about any specific individual or the status of the investigation.

Q If I could try again, then, on a slightly different matter. Is there -- are you -- you mentioned that there would be some changes at the tactical level in Iraq. Are you concerned that -- is it a problem that the rules -- there were insufficient rules in place, or that rules were not followed to the letter that allowed breaches on the front line?

SEC. GATES: Well, again, the -- based on what I've been briefed on and what I knew before, as I said in my statement, if the kind of breach involved in the downloading of these thousands of documents had occurred at a rear headquarters or here in the U.S., very high likelihood we would have detected it.

But the interesting thing is -- and it really was one of the lessons learned from the first Gulf War in 1991 -- was how little useful intelligence information was being received by battalion and company commanders in the field. And so there has been an effort over the last 15 or so years in the military, and I would say really accelerated during the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, to push as much information as far forward as possible, which means putting it in a secret channel that almost everybody has access to in uniform, and obviously many civilians as well.

We want those soldiers in a forward operating base to have all the information they possibly can have that impacts on their own security, but also being able to accomplish their mission. And so one of the things that we are going to have to look at with General Petraeus, and soon General Austin, is what kind of -- should we change the way we approach that, or do we -- do we continue to take the risk?

And there are some technological solutions. Most of them are not immediately available to us. But figuring out if we need to change the balance I think is one of the issues independent of the investigations that all of us are going to have to work on.

ADM. MULLEN: Let me take this.

SEC. GATES: Yeah, yeah.

ADM. MULLEN: Can I just add -- make an additional comment to that, is in that change, what it has done is it has put -- pushed -- put us in a position to

much better match the enemy in terms of speed of war. It's integrated intelligence more rapidly into operations, which then generates more intelligence, which allows us to operate much more effectively. And I think, obviously, as the secretary said, we're going to have to take a look at what this investigation tells us and make sure that we have the balance exactly right.

Q Admiral Mullen, you have mentioned that the founder of WikiLeaks may have blood on his hands. Do you know, have people been killed over this information?

ADM. MULLEN: They're still -- what I am concerned about with this is I think individuals who are not involved in this kind of warfare and expose this kind of information can't -- from my perspective, can't appreciate how this kind of information is routinely networked together inside the classified channels we use specifically.

And it's very difficult, if you don't do this and understand this, to understand the impact, and very specifically the potential that is there -- that is there to risk lives of our soldiers and sailors, airmen and Marines, coalition warfighters, as well -- as well as Afghan citizens. And there's no doubt in my mind about that.

Q What --

SEC. GATES: I would -- I would just add one other thing. The thing to remember here is that this is a huge amount of raw data, as I said at the outset of my remarks. There is no accountability. There is no sense of responsibility. It is sort of thrown out there for take as you will and damn the consequences.

Q With all due respect, you didn't answer the question.

Q Mr. Secretary, if I could just come back a minute, the fact is, the department -- the U.S. military knew weeks ago; it is part of the public record that tens of thousands of documents had been downloaded. Without referencing any particular legal matter, it has been in the public record released by this department. Charge sheets had been filed. The department, the military knew. So why the surprise? Why didn't the military move faster to assess this, to establish a team to assess it, to bring the FBI in? Charges were filed about tens of thousands of missing documents weeks ago.

And has anyone else been relieved of duty? Where's the command responsibility in the unit where this occurred?

SEC. GATES: Well, first of all, those are the kinds of issues that I think the investigation will address. I would tell you that, at least from my perspective, it has only been very recently that I was aware of the magnitude of the number of documents that had been -- had been leaked.

The reality is, at this point, we don't know how many more there are out there. It could be a substantial additional number of documents. And we have no idea what their content is, either.

Q Do you believe there's other documents that are either missing or downloaded?

SEC. GATES: Well, first of all, my impression is that the head of WikiLeaks has acknowledged that he has thousands of additional documents that he has not yet posted. So we have his own statement to that effect.

Q The department, is it talking to the founder of WikiLeaks to determine what he may have and just hasn't released yet?

SEC. GATES: No.

Q Is there any kind of dialogue? Why not?

SEC. GATES: Not that I'm aware of. I'm not sure why we would. Do you think he's going to tell us the truth?

Q Should Julian Assange face criminal prosecution? Will he face criminal prosecution, sir?

SEC. GATES: I have no idea. As I -- as I said in answering the first question, the investigation should go wherever it -- wherever it needs to go.

Q You said you were taking steps to mitigate the damage. What, specifically? Are you taking Afghans who are named in those documents out of the country? Or are you doing other things that would specifically reduce the danger of --

SEC. GATES: Without compounding the problem by revealing what we're doing -- (chuckles) -- I would just say that I -- as I said in my statement, I think we have a moral obligation, not only to our troops but to those who have worked with us. And as we go through these documents and identify people who have helped us, it seems to me we have an obligation to take some responsibility for their security.

Elizabeth.

Q Mr. Secretary, can you -- without going into specifics in talking about the investigation, can you talk in a general way about what the FBI can do that the -- that the Army criminal investigation can't do?

SEC. GATES: Well, I don't know, to tell you the truth. I do know that -- I mean, we all know the range of skills of the FBI. And frankly, because I don't know whether this investigation should stop at the edge of the responsibilities of the Department of Defense and the military, it seemed to me, to ensure that the investigation goes wherever it needs to go, that having the FBI involved as a partner was very important in terms of leaving open the full scope of a possible investigation.

Q Can I ask you a non-WikiLeaks question? This is a Veterans Affairs issue. Both you and Admiral Mullen have worked very hard to ensure that the transition from warrior to retired or disabled under the auspices of the VA has gone humanely and efficiently. Yesterday, the VA opened an investigation into an insurance company practice where survivor's benefits are held by the companies in a large, interest-bearing account, the survivors get a small amount of it, and they're not told that their benefits aren't really insured by FDIC.

Andrew Cuomo, the New York attorney general has subpoenaed the companies today. It's becoming a larger issue.

I wanted to get your take on the subject, since you sit on an advisory council for servicemembers and veterans group insurance.

SEC. GATES: I do?

Q (Off mike.)

SEC. GATES: Oh, okay. (Laughs.)

Let me just say that today is the first time -- well, let me say, until today, I actually believed that the families of our fallen heroes got a check for the full amount of their benefit. So this came as news to me. And so I will just say I will be very interested in the outcome of the VA investigation.

ADM. MULLEN: I would just add that -- and I saw the story as well and would have the same observation. Certainly there is great care taken in counseling of those once this tragedy has occurred in a family. It's a very difficult time. And that I certainly am anxious to see where this investigation goes specifically. These are people we have to take care of.

And as you said, we've both been very focused on it. Sometimes the devil's in the details, and certainly this is one I was not aware of.

Q Well, can you do anything from a Defense Department standpoint possibly to ensure that at least survivors know up front how their money is being handled and the disclosure up front, even though you can't -- you can't regulate insurance companies, obviously.

SEC. GATES: Well, I -- you know, all we can do is assure the VA that we will do everything we can to help them in their investigation, but also in terms of, as the chairman just said, whatever we can do to ensure that the families of the fallen are taken care of.

ADM. MULLEN: If I -- if I can, Tony, I would -- or, Mr. Secretary -- I would say that we have put great emphasis on expanding the level of knowledge of those who counsel, those who have to make these decisions. The Army in particular has put in over the course of the last year or two a significant focus here. Obviously, we've got to, you know, again, wait to see what the results are. But certainly we want to do everything we possibly can to get them their benefits.

Q Do you believe that WikiLeaks is a media organization that should be protected under the First Amendment? Or -- that's one question.

The second is, are you concerned that there are other -- without getting into the investigation -- that there are other people that might be leaking documents still? Or do you think this is something that's been sort of contained, and there might be documents out there that were downloaded previously, but not more being downloaded for release?

SEC. GATES: The answer to the second part of your question is I don't know whether there's anybody else out there that is a party to this. That's one element of, clearly, what the investigation will pursue.

With respect to the first question, I think that's a question for people who are more expert in the law than I am.

Q Sir -- actually, for both of you -- do you believe there's going to be a chilling effect -- I guess on the commanders, too, in Afghanistan -- believe there's going to be a chilling effect on future contacts with Afghans who may come forward because of the spillage of names out there? And if you do, is there something you all are planning on doing or doing to mitigate that future concern?

SEC. GATES: One of my -- I spent most of my life in the intelligence business, where the sacrosanct principle is protecting your sources, and that involves your sources trusting you to protect them and to protect their identities. That is one of the worst aspects of this, as far as I'm concerned: Will people trust us? Will people whose lives are on the line trust us to keep their identities secret? Will other governments trust us to keep their documents and their intelligence secret?

You know, it's a funny thing, and especially for a so-called realist, but it's amazing how much trust matters in relationships, whether it's with governments or with individuals around the world. And it seems to me that, as a result of this massive breach of security, we have considerable repair work to do in terms of reassuring people and rebuilding trust because they -- clearly, people are going to feel at risk. And so I think this is one of the -- this is one of the consequences of this kind of a breach, both for those who leak the information and those who post it online, that they don't perhaps think about. But it is -- it is front and center for me.

Q Mr. Secretary?

Q Have you been contacted by other governments concerned about this, besides the Afghan government?

SEC. GATES: There has been -- I don't know precisely, but my sense is that there have been some conversations with other governments beyond just Afghanistan and Pakistan. But, frankly, I'm not familiar with the details of that.



Q Mr. Secretary, are you recommending or considering recommending that the federal government issue an injunction against WikiLeaks if it is indeed considered to be a news organization, or to forestall publication of further documents?

SEC. GATES: I haven't considered that at this point.

Q Something to be considered?

SEC. GATES: I would need to -- I would have to defer to the Justice Department on that kind of an issue.

Q British Prime Minister David Cameron said today that he can't tolerate the idea that Pakistan is allowed to look both ways and is able to promote the export of terrorism, is what he said. Does the U.S. think that the Pakistani government is looking the other way in -- from the allegations made in the WikiLeaks documents?

SEC. GATES: Well, what I -- what I will tell you -- and the chairman's just returned from there, and I certainly want him to address this issue -- what I have seen over the past 18 months to two years is a Pakistani government that has become increasingly aggressive in taking on terrorists in the western part of their -- in the northwestern part of their country. They have 140,000 troops in that area. If you had asked me would they be aggressively pursuing the Taliban in South Waziristan a year or two ago, I would have thought that impossible.

So I think what we have seen, and one of the reasons why these documents are dated, is that in the last 18 months or so there has been a dramatic change, in my view, in Pakistan's willingness to take on insurgents and terrorists, their willingness to put their own military at risk and take casualties in going after this. And our cooperation has been steadily expanding.

I've talked -- over the last three-and-a-half years, I have talked about the fact that one of the challenges the U.S. has faced in both Afghanistan and Pakistan is that they vividly remember us walking out in 1989, and being left to deal with their own security situation on their own. The notion that, under those circumstances and not knowing whether they could count on us to be there -- the notion that they would hedge in one way or another is not a surprise. And it is something that I have talked about ever since I -- ever since I got this job.

But, again, the point that I would make is I think we are rebuilding that relationship of trust with Pakistan, and it is evident in the expansion of cooperation that we have had with them, both in counterterrorism and counterinsurgency.

ADM. MULLEN: I think the heart of your question goes to the ISI. And specifically -- and I've said before and would repeat that it's an organization that, actually, we have, in ways, a very positive relationship, very healthy relationship between our intelligence organizations.



And there have been -- that said, there have been elements of the ISI that have got relationships -- a relationship with extremist organizations, and that we -- you know, I, we, consider that unacceptable. In the long run, I think that the ISI has to strategically shift its -- tied in great part to what the secretary's laid out -- focused on its view of its own national-security interests.

These are issues that -- and I have seen some of this; I was just with General Kayani again, and this is a subject we frequently discuss. And they have, as the secretary said, in that country, captured lots of terrorists, killed lots of terrorists, focused on terrorism. And they are strategically shifting.

That doesn't mean that they are through that shift at all, and they do still -- they are still focused on rebuilding this trust as well, and it is not yet rebuilt.

Q Can I just follow, Mr. Secretary?

SEC. GATES: Last question.

Q Mr. Secretary, what are your goals for your meeting today with industry? And also, what's your reaction to the QDR review panel's criticisms?

SEC. GATES: Well, first of all, the meeting today with the Aerospace Industry Association executives is a periodic meeting that I have with them. They are our industrial partners in many -- in many important projects. And so I try and stay in touch with them periodically. Both Undersecretary Carter and Deputy Secretary Lynn meet with them more frequently than I do. So I would characterize it as a -- as a routine meeting for me.

What was the other part of your question?

Q The QDR review panel --

SEC. GATES: Well, first of all, I haven't read the report. And I have been briefed on the results. I think they have some important contributions that they've made in analysis. They've made some suggestions that I think we need to follow up on. But again, before I get into any specifics, I think I need to read the report.

The one -- the one issue that I've heard reported on in the news media a little bit, just today, has been what has been characterized as the commission's support for the alternate engine. And I would just tell you that I've been informed that -- or been told that Secretary Perry went out this morning and made clear that what the commission is talking about is the importance of competition, and real competition -- that is, where there are -- and now it's my phrase -- where there are winners and losers, not where everybody wins.

Thank you.

END.

**BRIEFER: PHILIP J. (P.J.) CROWLEY, ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF  
STATE FOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS**

**STATE DEPARTMENT BRIEFING ROOM, STATE DEPARTMENT,  
WASHINGTON, D.C.**

**1:27 P.M. EDT, THURSDAY, JULY 29, 2010**

Q President Obama acknowledged this week that there was nothing new in the finding of the WikiLeaks report. So if America was aware all along about the connection and the relationship between the ISI and the Taliban, why has the U.S. been nudging India to go in for talks with its neighbor Pakistan, or encouraging the diplomatic dialogue between India and Pakistan, when you know that the ISI is funding the Taliban which was ending up killing poor Indian workers in Afghanistan?

MR. CROWLEY: Well, quite simply, we encourage dialogue between India and Pakistan because it's in the interest of both countries and the interest of the United States that these countries, that have gone to war multiple times in the past, you know, 60 years, need to build their own relationship, need to find ways beyond military conflict to remove tensions in the relationship, gain a greater understanding that can be of substantial benefit to both the people of India and the people of Pakistan. So we are simply encouraging Pakistan and India to pursue a dialogue that we think is fundamentally in the interest of both countries.

Q But did you share the intelligence that you now say that you knew that the ISI was -- had a relationship with the Taliban, when you asked India to go in for these talks?

MR. CROWLEY: Again, as you started out, as the president said, we think that, while there might be granularity in some of the material that's been -- that has been released -- and again, we emphasize that we think this release has done damage to our national security -- there's no startling revelations in these documents.

You know, Pakistan's relationship with elements that morphed into the Taliban but go back to the, you know, Soviet occupation were very well known. They're known to the United States. They're known to India and they're known to Afghanistan.

(Cross talk.)

Go ahead. I'll come back to you.

Q President Hamid Karzai today at a news conference in Kabul asked for striking safe havens across the border. Is that an option for the U.S.?

MR. CROWLEY: Well, in fact, that's what we're doing. (Laughs.)

Q (Off mike.)

MR. CROWLEY: Well, let me clarify the question.

You know, we are -- we are working with Pakistan to eliminate the safe havens, which are a threat to Pakistan and a threat to Afghanistan and a threat to the United States.

It is central to the strategy that the president unveiled last December. And it's central to the fact that we need effective action on both sides of the border.

You have the United States and the international community working with Afghanistan on one side of the border. And you do have Pakistan taking aggressive action on the other side of the border.

And our message to Pakistan is that that offensive if you will needs to continue.

Q So sending troops across into Pakistan is completely ruled out? (Off mike.)

MR. CROWLEY: We have -- we have no plans to send U.S. combat forces to Pakistan.

Q Thank you.

Q You're relying on the help of ISI, who themselves may be aiding the Taliban. (Off mike.)

MR. CROWLEY: Well, we rely on the kind of effective action by the Pakistani military that we've seen in Swat, we've seen in South Waziristan and we want to see continue.

Q One last question. So India has always maintained and provided proof that -- of this relationship between the ISI and the Taliban extremist groups. Now that America admits that they know of this and they have known of it all along, will you be putting more pressure on your ally Pakistan to bring those responsible for 26/11, including the deaths of six Americans, to justice?

MR. CROWLEY: Well, again, I would challenge the assumption that this is a new revelation. It is not a new revelation. Our concerns about the ISI and its contacts with some of these

elements has been well-known. It has been a part of our conversation with Pakistan for some time. Pakistan itself has commented publicly about this.

But we are -- we are focused on the decisive action that Pakistan must take to deal with the threat that is within its borders and has in the last year or two become clear that it's a threat to Pakistan. And we are -- we are satisfied with the aggressive action that Pakistan has taken in response. We want to see that aggressive action continue. Where we have concerns about ongoing contacts, we will -- we will not hesitate to raise them, you know, with Pakistan.

But ultimately, as we seek a military and political solution to this challenge, it will take the leadership of Afghanistan, as was outlined last week in the Kabul conference. But Pakistan will have to play a role in this, as will other countries in the region.

**Title:** United States: Wikileaks: State Department Cables  
**MRN:** s 22 1(a)(ii) 30/07/2010 04:11:23 PM EDT  
**To:** Canberra  
**Cc:** RR : Afghanistan Pakistan Posts  
**From:** Washington  
**From File:** s 22 1(a)(ii)  
**References:** The cable has the following attachment/s -  
300710 State Dept Briefing - Wikileaks.docx  
**Response:** Routine, Information Only

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**UNCLASSIFIED**

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**Summary**

At the 30 July State Department briefing, spokesman PJ Crowley responded to reports that Wikileaks were in possession of a "large tranche of State Department cables". He said that while State could not verify such reports, he acknowledged that Wikileaks may have other State documents in addition to the "handful" already leaked. He confirmed that State had been in contact with Wikileaks, and that the department was concerned by the impact the leaked information could have on human sources. The relevant transcript excerpt is attached.

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text ends  
s 22 1(a)(ii)

s 22 1(a)(ii)

**REDACTED**



**STATE DEPARTMENT REGULAR BRIEFING****BRIEFER: PHILIP J. (P.J.) CROWLEY, ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF  
STATE FOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS****STATE DEPARTMENT BRIEFING ROOM, STATE DEPARTMENT,  
WASHINGTON, D.C.****12:42 P.M. EDT, FRIDAY, JULY 30, 2010**

...

Q P.J., may I go to couple questions on the leaks? Yesterday I  
--

MR. CROWLEY: If you insist, Goyal. (Chuckles.)

Q Well, it's a different question, not the one you've been  
answering or somebody's been asking you.

One -- yesterday Admiral Mullen at the -- DOD, at the Pentagon,  
said that it is unacceptable that ISI is involved or Pakistan  
was playing double game.

Do you agree what he said, when he said unacceptable, that  
means he did agree and accepted that ISI hand was there?

But my question is that -- everybody's saying that you-all knew  
what was going on but only came to -- in public light only  
after it became officially on the website. So, what steps you  
really had taken?

MR. CROWLEY: Well, Goyal, I'll challenge the last part of your  
question in particular. We do not believe that the documents  
released present any new information in terms of, you know,  
Pakistani interest in and association with elements that have  
played a role in Afghanistan. And it is very, very important to  
understand that there have been historical links going back a  
couple of decades.

We believe that Pakistan has made a strategic shift. They are  
now aggressively attacking these elements inside their borders,  
that have safe havens inside of Pakistan's territory that not  
only threaten Afghanistan, the United States, but also  
Pakistan. The links between Pakistani agencies and these  
elements have been known and understood for quite some time.

The real question is, what is Pakistan doing now? We are  
satisfied with the action -- the aggressive action that

Pakistan has taken, but we want to see Pakistan continue on the offensive. We made that clear since these documents came out.

Q And despite all that, you continue to give billions of dollars to Pakistan. And also, in the meantime there is no really what you call real accountability or real progress.

MR. CROWLEY: And Goyal, your question, again, reflects a kind of a zero-sum mentality that we think is -- you know, cannot be, you know, the equation in the region.

We are investing in Pakistan because it's in the United States's interest to do so. We have a presence in Afghanistan because it is our interest to do so.

We are working cooperatively across the region including with India, because ultimately these are countries that have to live together and find stable relationships that serve their own interest and a collective interest.

That's what we're trying to do. And we think we have the right strategy to do this. We've emphasized and taken a regional approach, you know, to this challenge which is why we have a relationship with Afghanistan, we have a relationship with Pakistan, we have a relationship with India.

All three countries and others can play a role in helping to stabilize this situation.

Q One more if you don't mind?

MR. CROWLEY: All right, quick.

Q Quick one, I'm sorry, to follow.

You will be surprised to know that Mr. Hamid Gul, who was the ISI chief during 9/11 and he was in New York and in Washington on 9/11 and 9/10, now he says as far as these leaks are concerned, this is a plot against Pakistan by the Obama administration.

MR. CROWLEY: It's not.

Q That's according to The Washington Post, his interview.

MR. CROWLEY: It's not.

(Cross talk.)

Q Have you heard anything --

Q Can we stay on the leaks for just a second?

MR. CROWLEY: Okay.

Q Not having to do with India's well-known interest in this, is the State Department aware that WikiLeaks is in position of any diplomatic cables?

MR. CROWLEY: Can we -- well, there were a handful of cables that came out among this tranche, maybe five or six.

So that infers that, yes, there may well have been some State Department cables in whatever was transmitted to WikiLeaks. Obviously there have been reports that there's a large tranche of State Department cables. We can't verify that. The investigation is ongoing, and dealing with the forensics and trying to determine exactly why it might have been transmitted from government computers to WikiLeaks is still an ongoing process.

We would -- we would hope that WikiLeaks would not release any further documents. As both Secretary Gates and Admiral Mullen reflected yesterday, we think this has done damage and has the potential to do additional damage to our national security. But we'll see what happens.

Q Well, based on the five or six that were included in this first tranche, do you have any specific concerns about what there might be out there?

MR. CROWLEY: Well, we -- do we have concerns about what might be out there? Yes, we do.

Q Do you have any idea of what it might -- and do you have any idea of what it might be, given --

MR. CROWLEY: I don't -- I don't think -- I don't think we've arrived at a -- at a specific determination of what have -- what might have been downloaded. When we provide our analysis of situations in key countries like Afghanistan and Pakistan, we distribute these (across ?) interagency, including to military addressees. So within -- resident within, you know, military networks, you know, are State Department, you know, classified documents. So is the potential there that State Department documents have been compromised? Yes.

And clearly, we have the same concern on our end that the military has on its end. We rely on sources to provide us information and perspective that allows us to understand what's going on around the world and make sure that our policies are appropriate to those circumstances. If those sources are compromised, we lose valuable information, and sources -- in many cases, human sources can be put at risk.

Q Hasn't anyone in the U.S. government begun any kind of dialogue with WikiLeaks to find out what else they have and encourage them --

MR. CROWLEY: I am not aware of any direct dialogue with WikiLeaks.

Q Why is that? I mean, the U.S. is willing to talk to North Korea, but not WikiLeaks?

MR. CROWLEY: Well, I think you have to ask the question of WikiLeaks.

Q Has the U.S. reached out to them, but WikiLeaks won't --

MR. CROWLEY: We have passed messages to them, yes.

Q Coming back again to the WikiLeaks, yesterday, both of them at the Pentagon suggested that they -- as you said, they have no dialogue with him, but they criticized him, and today he has issued a statement criticizing the U.S. government. So this tit-tat going on through media, is it not -- are you planning to sit down with him or approach him for the left-over documents --

MR. CROWLEY: Well, he's not an American citizen, so, you know, our ability to talk to him, wherever he might be, is obviously limited. You know, we respect the fact that, you know, once these documents were distributed to news organizations, it was news organizations that contacted us, and we had the opportunity express specific concerns. And I think we understand that the news media organizations took some steps to minimize the risk of compromise of sources and methods of the intelligence involved in this case.

We would prefer, obviously, that none of this information be released, you know, in public. It does do damage to our national security. But as to whether or not he'll come forward and engage in a constructive process, I can't say.

Q Any self-respecting intelligence service in the world is pouring over these things like there is no tomorrow. And they have all kinds of English speakers and translators, and going through it to -- with a fine-tooth comb. I mean, this is not just the media that can really go into --

MR. CROWLEY: No, you're right. No, and that's -- I think that's a point that the secretary and Admiral Mullen made yesterday: that you dump out tens of thousands of documents, you know, intelligence services all over the world will be looking over them and seeing what they can glean in terms of how we gain information, and this can have a national-security impact. We're not saying that because the release of these documents is

somehow inconvenient. Actually, the release of the documents by themselves have not really had a significant effect. It -- but behind these documents is a very important intelligence system that is -- that is vital to our national security. And we are -- we are concerned, and will remain concerned, that if WikiLeaks continues on its current path, this will do damage to our national security.

Q Secretary Gates yesterday also mentioned that -- you know, falling back on his background as a former director of CIA and all that -- that a major damage has been done and there will be a lot of repair work that needs to be done. So have you launched that repair work?

MR. CROWLEY: Well, we -- as Secretary Gates made clear yesterday, we are fully investigating this across the government.

I think you touch on a very good point. We do have important and vital conversations every day with representatives of other governments. And that is important to us and helps us understand, you know, what's happening in the world and the impact of our policies around the world.

If those conversations are now somewhat constrained because someone will fear that, you know, if I say something to an American diplomat today, it will appear on the front page of the New York Times tomorrow, that too has an impact. You know, we have to be able to build and sustain a trusting relationship, you know, with other countries.

And quite legitimately, leaders of various countries have asked this question: How could this happen? And unfortunately, you know, somebody inside the system has compromised, you know, their sovereign oath. We are investigating that and will be prepared to, you know, prosecute those involved.

But by the same token, you know, this kind of unauthorized leak, you know, does have an impact. And that's why you've heard the response that you've heard from, you know, leaders from the president to the secretary of Defense to the secretary of State to the chairman of the Joint Chiefs.

David.

Q Back on Iran. Have you heard anything diplomatically that would back up the notion put forth by the Iranian nuclear chief today that they would be willing to enter into talks within days? Is this something you're trying to track down?

MR. CROWLEY: Well, there have been contacts, you know, between Iran and Catherine Ashton. And we have made clear that we are willing to sit down as the P-5 plus one with Iran. And we will



see if a meeting can be worked out and how quickly. I can't say at this point.

Q This is in addition to the meeting Ashton had with Mottaki in Kabul on the 20th?

MR. CROWLEY: I think it's part and parcel of the same process. There -- we do have indications from Iran that they are willing to have a meeting. Again, it takes some preparation to understand, are they willing to come forward, are they willing to engage, you know, seriously on the fuller range of issues, most significant to us the nuclear issues? If we're satisfied that Iran is prepared to have a constructive meeting, then we'll work with others to try to set it up.

Q But nothing has changed, really, in --

MR. CROWLEY: Nothing, has changed, no.

Q -- since Wednesday, when --

MR. CROWLEY: Correct. Correct. Correct.

Q Do you -- do you see, with -- they are announcing a start date, that they are willing now to enrich up to 20 percent as a genuine position or a tactical --

MR. CROWLEY: Well, that's a very good question. In the case of the proposal regarding the Tehran research reactor, the details matter, both in terms of the level of enriched material that would be subject to shipment, who will oversee that shipment, who will have responsibility for that shipment and what will be the disposition of that material. There are -- you know, we are -- we are looking to use the TRR to satisfy ourselves that Tehran cannot achieve a breakout capability in violation of the nonproliferation treaty and its international obligations. That's our interest.

But we'll see, if we get into a meeting, you know, how flexible Iran is in using the research-reactor proposal to try to start to satisfy and answer the questions that we have about the nature of their nuclear program.

Q You said earlier that Iran changing -- reversing its position which Mottaki insisted on at the U.N. because of the sanctions?

MR. CROWLEY: Well, I'm not sure that Iran -- that's the very point. The Tehran declaration fell short of concerns that we had. And we are willing to meet Iran and discuss those concerns. But in terms of whether we can actually move forward with the kinds of arrangement -- a lot depends on the details of what Iran is prepared to do.



Q Sonia Gandhi, the top official from the ruling Congress Party of India, is visiting U.S., along with her son, Rahul Gandhi. Do you have any comments, or are there any engagements?

MR. CROWLEY: I'm not aware that she has -- she's planning to come here.

Q Just a quick one. New subject. Department has a new travel warning to China. Is that something to do with the religious crackdowns by the Chinese authorities?

MR. CROWLEY: I'm -- Goyal, I missed the first --

Q Travel warning to China.

MR. CROWLEY: Travel warning to China?

Q From the State Department.

Q It was -- (off mike).

MR. CROWLEY: Oh. I think it had to do -- yeah -- okay.

Q Thank you.

MR. CROWLEY: Thanks. Have a nice weekend.

END.

**Title:** United States: s 22 1(a)(ii)  
**MRN:** s 22 1(a)(ii) 30/07/2010 04:19:41 PM EDT  
**To:** Canberra  
**Cc:** RR : Afghanistan Pakistan Posts, Beijing, New Delhi, Tehran, UN New York  
**From:** Washington  
**From File:**  
**References:**  
**Response:** Routine, Information Only

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**Annotations:** s 22 1(a)(ii)  
**Summary**  
s 22 1(a)(ii)

s 33 (a)(iii)

s 22 1(a)(ii)

**REDACTED**

s 22 1(a)(ii)

**REDACTED**

**Title:** United States: s 22 1(a)(ii)  
**MRN:** s 22 1(a)(ii) 02/08/2010 05:20:09 PM EDT  
**To:** Canberra  
**Cc:** RR : Afghanistan Pakistan Posts  
**From:** Washington  
**From File:**  
**References:** s 22 1(a)(ii)  
The cable has the following attachment/s -  
Levin Letter 28 July.pdf  
Afghanistan News Transcripts Aug 10.docx  
**Response:** Routine, Information Only

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**Annotations:** s 22 1(a)(ii)  
**Summary**  
s 22 1(a)(ii)

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s 22 1(a)(ii)

s 33 (a)(iii)

s 22 1(a)(ii)

s 22 1(a)(ii)

**REDACTED**



s 22 1(a)(ii)

**Wikileaks**

12. Gates said the policy to push information and intelligence as far forward to the soldiers as possible had inadvertently made it easier to release information in theatre than it would be at a rear headquarters or in the US. Gates said the Department would look at this process in the wake of the leak, but he stressed that he would not be supportive of any limitation of information to the frontline.
13. Gates was frustrated that there was "no sense of responsibility or accountability associated" with the leak. The Justice Department (and others) would look at the legal culpability with respect to the leak; Gates felt there was also a moral culpability and said "the verdict is guilty on Wikileaks".
14. Separately Senator Carl Levin (Chairman Senate Armed Services Committee, D-Michigan) wrote to Gates on 28 July stating his concern about the nature and extent of the damage caused by the release of these documents. Levin requested the Department of Defense provide to Congress an assessment of the leak to include: the extent of information divulged that was not previously public the extent to which sources and methods were divulged; a damage assessment of which individuals may have been put at risk and the extent to which allies may be less cooperative in the future; and what steps the Department will take to prevent future leaks (and identify the individual/s who released the documents).
15. Transcripts of the interviews and a copy of the Congressional letter to Gates are attached.
17. DFAT (Political) were consulted on this cable.

s 22 1(a)(ii)

**REDACTED**

**CBS "EARLY SHOW" INTERVIEW WITH PRESIDENT BARACK OBAMA**

**SUBJECT: THE WAR IN AFGHANISTAN; THE ECONOMY; IMMIGRATION REFORM; BP TAX WRITE-OFF INTERVIEWER: HARRY SMITH**

**7:02 A.M. EDT, MONDAY, AUGUST 2, 2010**

MR. SMITH: I had a bit of a busy last couple of days, including an interview with President Obama on Friday. He's going to be in Atlanta today, laying out his plans for Iraq, as the military gets ready to end its combat operations there. The president has increased the U.S. commitment, of course, in Afghanistan.

I sat down for an exclusive interview with the president on Friday and we discussed a number of issues that he and the nation are facing, including our latest strategy in Afghanistan.

(Begin videotaped segment.)

MR. SMITH: As we end July, it's the most deadly month for U.S. troops since the war began in 2001. It almost feels like a slippery slope.

PRESIDENT OBAMA: If I didn't think that it was important for our national security to finish the job in Afghanistan, then I would pull them all out today, because I have to sign letters to these family members when a loved one is lost.

We now have a strategy that can work. We've got one of our best generals in Dave Petraeus on the ground. I've been very clear that we are going to move forward on a process of training Afghans so that they can provide for their own security and that, by the middle of next year, by 2011, we are going to start thinning out our troops and giving Afghans more responsibility.

I will tell you that I have not met a single young man or woman who's in uniform right now who's served in Afghanistan who doesn't think that that's an important mission.

MR. SMITH: Why is this economy now not growing the way people in the country would want it to grow?

PRESIDENT OBAMA: This has been an extraordinary downturn. So that means that if you're in a deeper hole, it's going to take longer to come back. When we've lost as many jobs as we have, when you've seen as much hardship, people losing values in their homes and their 401Ks, et cetera, people have every right to be scared, to be angry, to be frustrated.

And I took this job because I was convinced that I could solve these problems, not just short term, but long term. But I also knew this was going to be a bumpy road ahead. And I don't expect the American people to be satisfied when we're only half of the way back. We've got to keep on growing faster than we're currently growing. We've got to make sure that we deal with the long-term unemployment that's out there, which is a huge problem.

**MR. SMITH:** A federal judge backed up your opinion of the Arizona immigration law. The method is wrong. Is the mission correct?

**PRESIDENT OBAMA:** The mission of controlling our immigration process is absolutely correct. And that's why my administration's actually put more resources on the border to the point where we now have more of everything -- border patrols, more overflights, and, you know, more immigration agents. You name it, we've got more of them on the borders. And we want to work with Arizona.

I understand the frustration of the people of Arizona. But what we can't do is demagogue the issue and what we can't do is allow a patchwork of 50 different states or cities or localities where anybody who wants to make a name for themselves suddenly says, "I'm going to be anti-immigrant and I'm going to try to see if I can solve the problem ourselves."

This is a national problem. We've got a comprehensive system that not only deals with our border, but also deals with the 11 million undocumented workers who are here, giving them a pathway so that they can actually be citizens here in the United States.

**MR. SMITH:** BP, as is its right, looks like it's going to take about a \$10 billion tax write-off on the money that it's expending for the Gulf cleanup. Should they do it?

**PRESIDENT OBAMA:** My priority has been to make sure that the fishermen, the store owners, the bait-shop owners, those folks are made whole. We've gotten now a commitment that is almost complete in terms of structure for \$20 billion to help them. They're also going to have to pay for the entire cleanup down there, and that includes the bills from us, the federal government.

So they -- as long as they are meeting their obligations, then my attitude is that, you know, they should be treated like other companies when it comes to what their taxes are.

END.

**August 01, 2010**

Presenter: Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates

**ABC News Interview with Secretary Gates**

AMANPOUR: Secretary Gates, thank you very much for joining us and welcome to "This Week".

GATES: Thank you.

AMANPOUR: Let's start with WikiLeaks.

How can an ordinary soldier sitting at his computer, apparently listening to Lady Gaga or whatever, spew all this stuff out with nobody knowing?

GATES: It's -- it's an -- it's an interesting question, because had -- had he tried to do this or had whoever did this tried to do it at a -- a rear headquarters, overseas or in pretty much anywhere here in the U.S., we have controls in place that would have allowed us to detect it. But one of the changes that has happened as we have fought these wars in Iraq and Afghanistan has been an effort to put the -- put as much information and intelligence as far forward to the soldiers as we possibly can, so that at a forward operating base, they -- they know what the security risks are to them and they -- and they also have information to help them accomplish their mission.

So -- so we put an enormous amount of information out at a -- at the secret level and push it the furthest forward possible. And so it is this -- it -- it was much easier to do in theater and in Afghanistan or Iraq than it would have been at a rear headquarters or here in the U.S.

AMANPOUR: So do you now have to reassess that -- much less intelligence going to the forward bases?

GATES: I think we have to look at it, although I must say, my bias is that if one or a few members of the military did this, the notion that we would handicap our soldiers on the front lines by denying them information in an effort to try and prevent this from happening -- my bias is against that. I want those kids out there to have all the information they can have.

And so we're going to look at are there ways in which we can mitigate the risk, but without denying the forward soldiers the information.

AMANPOUR: How angry were you -- beyond the fact that classified information is out there -- the substance of it?

GATES: Well, I'm not sure anger is the right word. I just -- I think mortified, appalled. And -- and if -- if I'm angry, it is -- it is because I believe that this information puts those in Afghanistan who have helped us at risk. It puts our soldiers at risk because they can learn a lot -- our adversaries can learn a lot about our techniques, tactics and procedures from the body of these leaked documents. And so I think that's what puts our soldiers at risk.

And -- and then, as I say, our sources. And, you know, growing up in the intelligence business, protecting your sources is sacrosanct. And -- and there was no sense of responsibility or accountability associated with it.

AMANPOUR: You know, you talk about putting your sources at risk, a Taliban spokesman has told a British news organization that they are, indeed, going to go

after any of those names that they find in this treasure trove of documents and they will, as they say, they know how to deal with people.

Are you worried?

I mean Admiral Mullen said that this leak basically has blood on its hands?

GATES: Well, I mean given the Taliban's statement, I think it -- it basically proves the point. And my attitude on this is that there are two -- two areas of culpability. One is legal culpability. And that's up to the Justice Department and others. That's not my arena. But there's also a moral culpability. And that's where I think the verdict is guilty on WikiLeaks. They have put this out without any regard whatsoever for the consequences.

AMANPOUR: So let me ask you about a couple of things that came out. One is the possibility that the Taliban may have Stinger missiles.

Do they, do you think?

GATES: I don't think so.

AMANPOUR: At all?

GATES: I don't think so.

AMANPOUR: The other is about Pakistan. Again raising the notion that Pakistan, no matter how much you say they're, you know, moving in your direction, helping with this fight against the Taliban and against al Qaeda, that they still are hedging their bets, that elements in Pakistan continue to hedge their bets or out and out support the Taliban and what they're doing in Afghanistan.

How much of a problem is that for you?

GATES: Well, it -- it is a concern, there's no question about it. But -- but I would say that, again, we walked out on Pakistan and Afghanistan in 1989 and left them basically holding the bag. And -- and there is always the fear that we will do that again. And I believe that's the reason there's a certain hedge.

But what I see is a change in the strategic calculus in Pakistan. As they see these groups attacking Pakistan itself, where they are more and more partnering with us and working with us and fighting these insurgents and 140,000 soldiers in Northwestern Pakistan fighting some of the same insurgents we are.

AMANPOUR: Right. But they're basically fighting the insurgents that are threatening them. They haven't gone into, for instance, these safe havens which still exist, Northern Waziristan. And General Jones, the national security adviser, has told "The Washington Post" that these safe havens are a big question mark in terms of our success rate.



So unless they do that, cut off those safe havens, will you succeed in Afghanistan?

GATES: Well, I think we can but --

AMANPOUR: Even if the safe havens --

GATES: -- but we clearly --

AMANPOUR: -- exist?

GATES: -- we clearly would like for them to go after the safe havens. But they have gone after the safe haven -- some of the safe havens, in South Waziristan and Swat and elsewhere, places where, 18 months ago, I wouldn't have believed the Pakistanis would be actively engaged -- and militarily.

And so the Pakistanis going after any of these groups, I believe, overall, helps us in what we're trying to accomplish, both with respect to Afghanistan and with respect to al Qaeda.

AMANPOUR: But given the way the war is going right now and given the fact that the Taliban are very wily and very adaptable enemies and they do have a place where they can go across the border and hide, can you afford to wait for the Pakistanis to -- to move on into Northern Waziristan?

GATES: I think that the -- first of all, we are increasing our cooperation with the Pakistanis in terms of working on both sides of the border, in terms of trying to prevent people from crossing that border. We are increasing our forces in Eastern Afghanistan that will help us do this. So I think that -- I think we're moving in the right direction here.

AMANPOUR: But you don't have an open-ended period of time. The president has clearly said that the summer of 2011 is a period of transition. And many people are interpreting that in all sorts of different ways, as you know.

The Taliban is clearly running out the clock -- it's trying to run out the clock.

Let me put something up that David Kilcullen, the counter-insurgency expert, a former adviser to General Petraeus, said about the timetable.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

DAVID KILCULLEN: They believe that we had stated a date certain, that we were going to leave in the summer of 2011. And they immediately went out and spoke to the population and said, the Americans are leaving in 18 months, as it was then. What are you doing on the 19th month? Who are you backing? Because we'll still be there and they won't be.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

AMANPOUR: So that question is out there. So many people are arranging their schedules for 2011 -- the summer of 2011.

But my question to you is this, what can General Petraeus do to defeat the Taliban at their own game?

What can he do now in Afghanistan to avoid this deadline that they're setting for themselves?

GATES: Well, first of all, I think we need to re-emphasize the message that we are not leaving Afghanistan in July of 2011. We are beginning a transition process and a thinning of our ranks that will -- and the pace will depend on the conditions on the ground. The president has been very clear about that. And if the Taliban are waiting for the nineteenth month, I welcome that, because we will be there in the nineteenth month and we will be there with a lot of troops. So I think that --

AMANPOUR: But what is a lot of troops?

GATES: Well, first of all, I think that -- my personal opinion is that -- that drawdowns early on will be of fairly limited numbers. And as we are successful, we'll probably accelerate. But, again, it's -- it will depend on the conditions on the ground.

AMANPOUR: Is there any way now -- between now and December, between now and next -- next summer, to deliver some high profile, real reconstruction, real sort of progress to them to make everybody know that you're serious and to change the dynamic?

GATES: Well, first of all, I think we're already seeing that. We're already seeing it in Central Helmand, where security development and governance, economic returning. We are seeing it in places like Nad Ali. We're actually seeing it in places like Marjah, that has been slower and tougher than we anticipated, but it's getting better every day. And we're seeing it in gradually improving security in the area around Kandahar.

It's going to take some time. It's going to be tough. We're going to take casualties. We have warned about this for months, that this summer would be very difficult for us. But I think there are tangible signs that this approach is working, this strategy is working.

But the key thing to remember is the full surge isn't even all I Afghanistan yet and will not be until the end of August. So this surge over the last few months is only beginning to take effect.

AMANPOUR: What I think a lot of people maybe don't get is that the Afghan people still want the American forces there. In the latest ABC poll, it shows that 68 percent of the Afghan people actually want the American forces still there.

Do you think that there has been an opportunity missed or should there be an opportunity seized by yourself, maybe by the president, to go out and speak to the

American people more about -- about Afghanistan, about the strategy, about why it's important?

GATES: Well, first of all, I'm here. And I think the president has been out and has spoken about this. He talked about it in some detail at the time he nominated General Petraeus, about where we were headed.

Probably we can do more. But Secretary Clinton and I and the president and the vice president and General Jones have all been out and -- and talking about this. And -- and I think -- you know, frankly, one of the things that I find frustrating is that I think that the president's strategy is really quite clear. I hear -- I hear all the stories that say what's the strategy, what's the goal here?

I think it's quite clear. It's to -- it's to reverse the momentum of the Taliban, deny them control of populated areas, degrade their capabilities at the same time we're building up the Afghan security forces, so that the Afghan security forces can deny the Taliban and al Qaeda a base from which to attack the United States and the West.

AMANPOUR: All right.

GATES: It's pretty straightforward.

AMANPOUR: OK. Then let me -- since you brought that up, I want to bring up what Vice President Biden told NBC earlier this week about the strategy and about -- about the aims, because, again, I think the American people and many people are confused about what is the -- what is winning, what is the strategy right now?

Let me put that up.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

JOSEPH BIDEN, VICE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES: We are in Afghanistan for one express purpose -- al Qaeda. The threat to the United States -- al Qaeda that exists in those mountains between Afghanistan and Pakistan. We are not there to nation-build.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

AMANPOUR: Is that it?

GATES: That's good.

AMANPOUR: Is that the war?

GATES: I agree with that. We are not there to -- to take on a nationwide reconstruction or construction project in Afghanistan. What we have to do is focus our efforts on those civilian aspects and governance to help us accomplish our se -- our security objective.

We are in Afghanistan because we were attacked from Afghanistan, not because we want to try and -- and build a better society in Afghanistan.

But doing things to improve governance, to improve development in Afghanistan, to the degree it contributes to our security mission and to the effectiveness of the Afghan government in the security arena, that's what we're going to do.

AMANPOUR: A final question, do you think the way out is to strike a deal with the Taliban?

GATES: I think that the -- I think that the way out is to improve the security situation in Afghanistan to the point -- and to degrade the Taliban to a degree where they are willing to consider reconciliation on the terms of the Afghan government -- detaching themselves from al Qaeda, agreeing that -- to under -- abide by the Afghan constitution, agreeing to put down their weapons. I think those are the -- those are the conditions that -- that need to -- reconciliation must take -- must be the end game here. But it must take place on the terms of the Afghan government.

AMANPOUR: And you think that can happen in -- in a year?

GATES: Well, we're not limited to a year. I think that it can happen in the time frame that we're looking at ahead. Again, July 2011 is not the end. It is the beginning of a transition.

AMANPOUR: Secretary Gates, thank you so much for joining us.

GATES: Thanks a lot.

AMANPOUR: Thank you.END

**CBS "FACE THE NATION"**

**■HOST: HARRY SMITH**

**■GUESTS: ADMIRAL MICHAEL MULLEN, USN, CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF (CJCS); SENATOR JON KYL (R-AZ); RICHARD HAASS, PRESIDENT, COUNCIL ON FOREIGN RELATIONS; THOMAS SAENZ, PRESIDENT, MEXICAN AMERICAN LEGAL DEFENSE AND EDUCATION FUND (MALDEF)**

10:30 A.M. EDT, SUNDAY, AUGUST 1, 2010

**MR. SMITH:** Today, on "Face the Nation," the battle over immigration and the war in Afghanistan. Last week, a federal judge struck down several of the essential elements of Arizona's new immigration law. Where does the fight go from here? We'll hear from both sides, Senator Jon Kyl, Republican of Arizona and Thomas Saenz, head of the Mexican-American Legal Defense and Education Fund.

Then, in the last week of what has been the deadliest month for Americans in Afghanistan, tens of thousands of war documents were released by WikiLeaks. How much damage has been done? We'll ask Admiral Mike Mullen, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; get some perspective from Richard Haass, from the Council on Foreign Relations.

But, first, the fight over immigration on "Face the Nation."

MR. SMITH: Chairman Mike Mullen, thank you very much for joining us.

ADM. MULLEN: Good to be with you, Harry.

MR. SMITH: Let's start with some of the news of the week, especially the WikiLeaks. About Julian Assange, you said this week -- and his collaborators -- they might already have on their hands the blood of some young soldier or that of an Afghan family.

Do you know, in this last week, have any direct link between these leaks and an attack on an Afghan or on a U.S. soldier?

ADM. MULLEN: Well, what I said this week is I was appalled by the leaks, certainly, extremely concerned about the potential. I very much meant what I said, including what you just quoted of what I said and, specifically, endorsed by the Taliban leadership, which has come out in the last day or so and said that they, in fact, are looking at the names that are leaked. And I certainly think that's an indicator of what's possible.

What I don't think people that aren't in the military and in conflict understand is the danger of these kinds of leaks, the ability to net together what is seemingly information that may not be related and then to take advantage of it.

And I think it's, you know, irresponsible and could very well potentially end up in loss of lives.

MR. SMITH: Have you all been able to move in any way to protect some of the Afghan informants that were named in these leaks?

ADM. MULLEN: There are, certainly, efforts going to do that, but I couldn't speak to specifics right now.

MR. SMITH: But there are efforts going on to do that?

ADM. MULLEN: Well, I think -- and Secretary Gates said it earlier in the week. I think we do have a moral obligation given their exposure and given what they've done to do all we can to ensure their safety.

MR. SMITH: In your conversations with the other branches of the government, I know that you don't want any more of these documents to be released. Is there anything the government, as a whole, can do to prevent it?

ADM. MULLEN: Well, there's, obviously, an investigation which is open and expanding as necessary. And I actually feel very strongly that the release of additional information could continue to jeopardize as I've indicated.

I'm not specifically aware of any action that's been taken in the government to bar anybody from leaking more information.

MR. SMITH: Also, in the news this week is the Army's suicide report. And the number of suicides, the number of attempted suicides are at record levels. Do we really know why? And is there any effective countermeasure that can be done to help bring it down?

ADM. MULLEN: Well, the essence of what the Army leadership was addressing was to its own leadership. I fundamentally believe this is a leadership challenge and problem. It continues to grow.

The rates have gone up -- not just in the Army but in all our military services -- fairly dramatically for the last several years. We now exceed the --

MR. SMITH: Civilian rate.

ADM. MULLEN: -- the civilian rate throughout the country. It's a very complex problem.

I believe, even though there are some that don't, I believe it does have to do with the deployments. The inability to spend enough time --

MR. SMITH: Because, statistically, it doesn't necessarily match up. I mean, that would be the instinct, but it doesn't really match up.

ADM. MULLEN: I understand that. Again, I've been doing this a long time. I understand the pressures. I see the pressures in families and in members routinely. Although, there are many who've taken their lives who haven't deployed.

So I certainly don't say it's all specifically tied to that, but it's a big factor. And the leadership has got to grasp this. The Army has undertaken a significant study, national-level study. There aren't many studies that comprehensively get at this. It's a five-year study, but it's also producing results early.

So there's a tremendous amount of focus on this as there needs to be. We've got to see if we can turn it around.

MR. SMITH: Americans are waking up this morning and they're realizing that July was the deadliest month for U.S. soldiers in Afghanistan thus far, since the war started in 2001. Some of these Americans, as they're looking at this, are wondering why we're still there and why this war has not been won.

ADM. MULLEN: Well, the focus of the president's strategy is really on dismantling, defeating and disrupting al Qaeda who struck us from Afghanistan because the Taliban



ran the place and they had a safe haven. They're now moved, for the most part, to Pakistan.

And, really, it's a regional strategy that focuses on both Pakistan and Afghanistan. The focus is on securing the Afghan people so that Afghanistan will not be able to return to the safe haven it was for extremist al Qaeda specifically, but other terrorist organizations as well.

We left Afghanistan in the late '80s. We left Pakistan in the late '80s. And we find ourselves back there now. And, certainly, the questions that are out there from the citizens in those countries are, are we going to stay this time or not. And I believe we've got to stay. We've got the right strategy, the right resources and, in fact, it hasn't been resourced really until the last year.

So, yes, it's the most deadly month. Sadly and tragically, we predicted this would be a very difficult year, but we've got the right strategy and leadership. And this, over the course of the next year or so, is really a critical time.

MR. SMITH: Admiral, thank you very much for being with us today.

ADM. MULLEN: Thanks, Harry.

END



**NBC "MEET THE PRESS"**

■ **HOST: DAVID GREGORY**

■ **GUESTS: ADMIRAL MICHAEL MULLEN, USN, CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF (CJCS); NEW YORK CITY MAYOR MICHAEL BLOOMBERG (I); PENNSYLVANIA GOVERNOR ED RENDELL (D); ALAN GREENSPAN, FORMER CHAIRMAN OF THE FEDERAL RESERVE**

9:00 A.M. EDT, SUNDAY, AUGUST 1, 2010

MR. GREGORY: This Sunday -- security breach -- the leaking of secret Afghanistan war documents has enraged U.S. military officials who warn of serious consequences for the leaker and the man behind the website, WikiLeaks.

ADMIRAL MIKE MULLEN, CHAIRMAN, JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF: (From videotape.) Mr. Assange can say whatever he likes about the greater good he thinks he and his source are doing, but the truth is they might already have on their hands the blood of some young soldier or that of an Afghan family.

MR. GREGORY: But do the documents provide an unvarnished account of where the war strategy is failing? Our lead newsmaker interview this morning, the president's top

military advisor just back from Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Iraq, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Admiral Mike Mullen.

Then -- America's painfully slow economic recovery. Why does it feel so much like recession? Perspective on the outlook for growth, unemployment, the government's role, and your taxes from former chairman of the Federal Reserve, Alan Greenspan; mayor of New York City, Michael Bloomberg; and governor of Pennsylvania, Ed Rendell.

Finally, an assessment of the many political and leadership tests for the president from jobs to ethics charges against Congressman Rangel laid out this week. With us, author and historian, Doris Kearns Goodwin and Time Magazine's senior political analyst, Mark Halperin.

ANNOUNCER: From NBC News in Washington, "Meet the Press" with David Gregory.

MR. GREGORY: Good morning. July is now the deadliest month for U.S. troops in the nearly nine-year war in Afghanistan. With us, our lead newsmaker interview this morning, the president's principal military advisor, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Admiral Mike Mullen. Welcome back to "Meet the Press."

ADM. MULLEN: Good morning, David.

MR. GREGORY: We just played for our viewers very strong comments by you this week about these leaks. You indicated those who were responsible for making these secret documents public may already have blood on their hands -- a strong statement. What specifically do you mean?

ADM. MULLEN: These -- the scope and the volume of these leaks are unprecedented, and the specifics of them -- and I've been through some of them -- but we've still got a lot of work to do to really put the details together. But I think the leaks themselves don't look clearly at the war that we're in. There is an ability to put this kind of information together in the world that we're living in, and the potential for costing us lives, I think, is significant.

I said when it first occurred, I was appalled. I remain appalled and that the potential for the loss of lives and for American soldiers, our coalition soldiers or Afghan citizens is clearly there.

MR. GREGORY: But how can that happen based on this?

ADM. MULLEN: Well, I would speak to, actually, the Taliban spokesman has come out in the last day or so and said that they are looking at the names. And I think that's evidence of what that potential is. So --

MR. GREGORY: These are Afghans that they're looking at?

ADM. MULLEN: There are Afghan names that are listed in the documents and specifically the Taliban spokesman said that they are going to look at that.

I think people that aren't --

MR. GREGORY: They could be killed, is the point?

ADM. MULLEN: Exactly, and people that aren't in a fight like this, that don't do this for a living, don't understand what the potential is for something like this in terms of the kinds of information. And a piece of information may seem very innocent in and of itself, and a lot of this is old information. But being able to net it together is -- there's potential there that it could have a much bigger impact than just as is evident on the face of a piece of information.

MR. GREGORY: What endangers you as troops?

ADM. MULLEN: The fact that they would look at what our tactics are, how we report, where we're fighting, who is involved, the kinds of things that we do. And yet there's -- the volume is such that we really haven't put it all together to be able to say this is extremely what the potential is in terms of that.

MR. GREGORY: You are looking at a suspected private who you believe may be responsible for obtaining this information and ultimately leaking it. What should happen to those responsible?

ADM. MULLEN: I think anybody in our -- in the national security apparatus has got to take full cognizance of their responsibility for the safeguarding of classified information. And I wouldn't go into the specific details of this investigation or of the case --

MR. GREGORY: But does it --(inaudible)?

ADM. MULLEN: Again, I'll let the investigation run its course, and we'll see where it goes specifically. But the concern, obviously, is for the leaking of classified information that is going to endanger people, operations, and potentially, depending on how serious it is, outcomes.

MR. GREGORY: There are some who have argued that the fixation about the leak perhaps is a distraction from the larger point of these documents and that is that it goes, in an unvarnished way, to the core question of whether the strategy is actually working.

The New York Times, as part of its reporting, made this piece of analysis, and I'll put it up on the screen, on Monday: "The documents of 92,000 reports spanning parts of two administrations from January '04 through December '09 illustrated mosaic detail why, after the United States has spent almost \$300 billion on the war in Afghanistan, the Taliban are stronger than at any time since 2001."

Don't you think the public gets a look at these documents, and the bigger concern here is not the leak but the fact that this war may be a lost cause?

ADM. MULLEN: I don't think that the Taliban being stronger than they've been since 2001 is news. I mean, I've been concerned about the growing insurgency there for a number of years. We really are at a time in Afghanistan, after the president's review,

where we've got the right strategy, the right leadership, and the right resources. And we really are in the second year of that aspect of Afghanistan. I certainly understand it is the ninth year. It is a long time. The sacrifices have been significant. And yet, at the same time, I think the strategy is right, and the release of these documents, best that I can tell, have not affected the strategy. Many of them were very, very old.

That said, it's still -- I think we've got to work our way through exactly what the potential impact would be. And I think, from my perspective, we're headed in the right direction.

MR. GREGORY: But the reality is still the same whether it's news or not. The disillusionment among the American people about the fact that the Taliban is stronger and not weaker -- go back a year ago nearly. You were on this program, and I asked you about the mission. And here is a portion of what you said:

MR. GREGORY: (From videotape.) Are we rebuilding this nation?

ADMIRAL MIKE MULLEN: (From videotape.) To a certain degree, there is some of that going on.

MR. GREGORY: Is that what the American people signed up for?

ADM. MULLEN: No, right now the American people signed up, I think, for support of getting at those who threaten us. And to the degree that the Afghan people's security and the ability to ensure that a safe haven doesn't recur in Afghanistan, there is focus on some degree of making sure security is okay, making sure governance moves in the right direction, and developing an economy, which will underpin their future.

MR. GREGORY: The problem with that, a year on, is that, again, the Taliban is stronger, and there appears no evidence that they are willing to do the core thing, which is to turn their back on al Qaeda. Isn't that the case?

ADM. MULLEN: Well, I think, again, that is the main mission, is to make sure that Afghanistan can't become a safe haven again. They are, indeed, stronger. And yet the president approved additional forces most of which are there, but there are still additional forces yet to come this year.

So we've said for many, many months this would be a very difficult year. You pointed out the losses that have occurred in the month of July, the highest ever. We recognize that. This is a tough fight, but we think we've got the resources right, the strategy right. There's also a regional piece of this. A lot of effort done on the Pakistan side, significant effort on the part of the Pakistani leadership, Pakistani military to address that as well. But we're not there.

We are at a point now where, over the course of the next 12 months, it really is going to, I think, tell the tale which way this is going to go.

MR. GREGORY: But another problem area in terms of achieving the goal, is, indeed, Pakistan. I've talked to people who say the strategy, in effect, boils down to this, with General Petraeus on the scene: bloodying the nose of the Taliban to the point that they are

willing to turn their back on al Qaeda, Pakistan can broker a deal where there is some power-sharing in the country where the Taliban have a seat at the table and control some part of that geography. And, in return, al Qaeda is out of the picture.

That's still a big "if" and here is one of the reasons why -- look at Pakistan's record. Start with this Pew Research Center survey poll from this week: How do Pakistanis view the U.S.? Nearly six in 10 see the United States as an enemy. We know that the Taliban is operating from within Pakistan, some safe havens in escalating their attacks. David Cameron, the conservative leader now of the U.K., the prime minister, said this, as reported by The Financial Times on Wednesday: "The U.K. prime minister used his first public appearance in Bangalore to warn Pakistan to stop promoting terror or face isolation in the international community. And these documents demonstrate what a lot of people knew, which was the intelligence service for Pakistan was helping the Afghan Taliban."

Is Pakistan working against our interests there?

ADM. MULLEN: I've said for a long time, clearly, a critical key to success in the region is going to be Pakistan and our relationship with Pakistan, which was one that broken in the late '80s, and which we've worked hard to restore; that there are elements of the Pakistani intelligence agency that are connected -- have had relationships with extremists is certainly known, and that has to change.

I just came back from, I think, my 19th trip to Pakistan since I've been in this job, spending time, particularly, with the military leadership, General Kayani, and he has actually directed his military to take on the insurgent threat in his own country. We recognize -- and he's made great strides. We recognize that part of that is to focus on the Haqqani network as well as the other Afghan Taliban --

MR. GREGORY: They operate in that tribal area?

ADM. MULLEN: They do, and they have a safe haven there, and that causes us great problems in Afghanistan as well -- that we are anxious to have that addressed is well known to him.

So this isn't going to turn overnight, and you laid out one possible outcome. I think it's a little early to say exactly what the outcome would look like specifically. Suffice it to say, I think we have to be in a stronger position in Afghanistan, vis-a-vis the insurgency overall. We have to continue to develop this relationship and evolve this relationship with Pakistan. There's a regional approach here and certainly India, which is where Prime Minister Cameron spoke from -- India is certainly more than just concerned with the overall outcome here.

MR. GREGORY: But truer on true, the big fear is that Pakistan is working against us and not with us?

ADM. MULLEN: In many ways, Pakistan is working with us. I mean, they're a military -- they are an intelligence agency. I mean, we've got a very strong relationship, in the



positive sense, with their intelligence agency. Now, that doesn't mean there aren't some challenges --

**MR. GREGORY:** Some supporting elements killing U.S. soldiers.

**ADM. MULLEN:** But they have shared intelligence with us. They have killed as many or more terrorists as anybody. They've capture them and, certainly, the focus on changing the strategic shift, if you will, in that agency so that that doesn't happen at all is a priority for us.

**MR. GREGORY:** Fair to say that among the outcomes you would look at would be a scenario where the Taliban would have some power in the country.

**ADM. MULLEN:** I think in any of these kinds of insurgencies over history, in the political solution, those who have been insurgents at some point in time have been in a position of political influence at some point down the road. But I think we're way too early to say what that looks like or when it might happen.

**MR. GREGORY:** It seems to be an important point. If you look at the cover of Time Magazine, which has a pretty striking photograph of a young woman whose nose was cut off by the Taliban, just one indication of how brutal and horrific these people are. And they've done this when they were in power and, indeed, even when they've been out of power.

The grim reality, if that's an argument for why the U.S. should not leave, is that our central mission, the central mission of the United States not to protect the women of Afghanistan. Is that fair?

**ADM. MULLEN:** I think the central mission in Afghanistan right now is to protect the people, certainly, and that would be inclusive of everybody. And that in an insurgency and a counter-insurgency, that's really the center of -- (inaudible).

**MR. GREGORY:** But you said a year ago, our central mission was to get at those who threaten us. Our central mission is not to protect the women who could still be brutalized if the Taliban comes into power in any fashion.

**ADM. MULLEN:** Well, the Taliban are incredibly unpopular with the Afghan people, even as we speak, as they have been for a long period of time. The mission -- the overall mission is to dismantle and defeat and disrupt al Qaeda. But we have to make sure there is not a safe haven that returns in Afghanistan. Afghanistan has to be stable enough, has to have enough governance, has to create enough jobs, have an economy that's good enough so that the Taliban cannot return to the brutality of the kind of regime that you just showed.

**MR. GREGORY:** However, the United States could still withdraw and do so having achieved the mission. And yet women like those on the cover of that magazine could still be in danger?



ADM. MULLEN: Certainly, the long-term goal is to make sure, with respect to the population in Afghanistan, that there is a governance structure that treats its people well. But to say exactly how that's going to look and what specifics would be involved, I think it's just way too early.

MR. GREGORY: I just want to ask you a couple of questions about Iran, another threat that this administration is facing. The consequences of Iran developing a nuclear weapon are vast and something that the administration certainly wants to prevent. This is what you said back in April of 2010. I'll put it up on the screen -- at Columbia University: "I think Iran having a nuclear weapon would be incredibly destabilizing. I think attacking them would also create the same kind of outcome." Keen analysis, but my question is which is worse?

ADM. MULLEN: Actually, when I speak to that, I talk to unintended consequences of either outcome. And it's those unintended consequences that are difficult to predict in what is an incredibly unstable part of the world that I worry about the most.

What I try to do when I talk about that is identify the space between those two outcomes, which is pretty narrow, in which, I think, diplomacy -- the kind of sanctions, the kind of international pressure, that is being applied -- I am hopeful works. I recognize that there isn't that much space there but, quite frankly, I am extremely concerned about both of those outcomes.

MR. GREGORY: So leaders have to make a decision. You're a leader, the president is a leader. Which is worse, Iran with a nuclear weapon or what could happen if the United States attacks?

ADM. MULLEN: Well, certainly, for our country, the president would be the one making those decisions, and I wouldn't be one that would pick one or the other as long as I think they both have great downside potential.

MR. GREGORY: The president has said he is determined to stop Iran from developing a nuclear weapon. He doesn't just say it's unacceptable, he says he's determined to stop it. Is force against Iran by the United States on the table in a way that it has not been even in our recent history, the past six months, a year?

ADM. MULLEN: I think the military options have been on the table and remain on the table and, certainly, in that regard, it's one of the options that the president has. Again, I hope we don't get to that, but it's an important option, and it's one that's well understood.

MR. GREGORY: There was a concern among Israelis, among Americans, that there weren't very many good options when it came to attacking Iran, should it come to that. Is that still the case?

ADM. MULLEN: I think that's the case.

MR. GREGORY: There aren't very many good options?

ADM. MULLEN: No, no, I mean there aren't -- it depends on what you mean by that. None of them are good in a sense that it's certainly an outcome that I don't seek -- that we wouldn't seek, at the same time. And for what I talked about before is not just the consequences of the action itself but the things that could result after the fact.

MR. GREGORY: But the military has a plans should it come to that?

ADM. MULLEN: We do.

MR. GREGORY: One final question. It's something I'm sure deeply troubles you, and that is the rate of suicides in the military. And the concern is not just that they have been increasing but that commanders in the field have not been attentive enough to the problems that are leading to suicides. What should be done about that?

ADM. MULLEN: Well, I think it was addressed this week very well by General Chiarelli specifically. The purpose of the review, which was widely reported on, was to understand as much as we could about what the problem was. It is not a problem that exists just in the Army, because the suicide rate is up in all our services, and we don't have the answers.

I am one who believes that the pressure of these wars and the repeated deployments is a significant factor. But there is a significant population that have committed suicide that have not deployed. So it's an incredibly complex, vexing problem. I think what General Chiarelli did was correctly focus on leaders to be all-attentive to this in every single way and know that we certainly -- we're not even close to solving. It's an enormously complex problem nationally for us and, certainly, we are a microcosm of that.

But our rates now exceed the norm in the country, and it's something we absolutely have to continue to focus on.

MR. GREGORY: Admiral Mullen, thank you very much.

ADM. MULLEN: Thank you, David.

END



4. What steps is the Department taking to identify the individual or individuals who released these documents and to prevent future leaks of this kind?

Thank you for your assistance in this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Carl Levin". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the word "Sincerely,".

Carl Levin  
Chairman

**Title:** United States: s 22 1(a)(ii)  
**MRN:** s 22 1(a)(ii) 02/08/2010 06:34:09 PM EDT  
**To:** Canberra  
**Cc:** RR : Afghanistan Pakistan Posts  
**From:** Washington  
**From File:**  
**References:** The cable has the following attachment/s - not attached - out of scope  
20100802 Fact Sheet on US Response to Flooding In Pakistan.docx  
**Response:** Routine, Information Only

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**Summary**  
s 22 1(a)(ii)

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s 22 1(a)(ii)

s 33 (b)

s 22 1(a)(ii)

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s 22 1(a)(ii)

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s 22 1(a)(ii)

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s 7 2A  
s 22 1(a)(ii)

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s 72A

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s 7 2A  
s 22 1(a)(ii)

**REDACTED**

**Title:** United States: Media Inquires on Wiki-Leaks  
**MRN:** s 22 1(a)(ii) 11/08/2010 06:01:39 PM EDT  
**To:** Canberra  
**Cc:** RR : Chicago, Honolulu, Los Angeles, New York CG, UN New York, Washington  
**From:** Washington  
**From File:**  
**References:** The cable has the following attachment/s -  
100811 State Briefing - Wikileaks - approach to allies.docx  
11 August Daily Beast Wiki Leaks.docx  
**Response:** Routine, Information Only

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**UNCLASSIFIED**

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### Summary

On 11 August, online news publication The Daily Beast ran an article, "U.S. Urges Allies to Crack Down on WikiLeaks," which reported that the Obama Administration had approached Britain, Germany, Australia and other allies to consider opening a criminal investigation of Julian Assange and WikiLeaks. US media outlets CNN and Reuters contacted Post asking if the Embassy has been approached on the matter. A State Department spokesperson said today he was "not aware that anyone at the Department of State has had that kind of conversation with a foreign government".

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On 11 August, online news publication The Daily Beast ran an article, "U.S. Urges Allies to Crack Down on WikiLeaks," which reported that the Obama Administration had approached Britain, Germany, Australia and other allies to consider opening a criminal investigation of Julian Assange and WikiLeaks. US media outlets CNN and Reuters contacted Post today (11 August) asking if the Embassy has been approached on the matter. s 33 (a)(iii)

2. The State Department spokesperson (Crowley) was asked today (11 August) about reports that the US was pressuring allies to consider criminal action against Wikileaks. Crowley said "I'm not aware that anyone at the Department of State has had that kind of conversation with a foreign government." Asked if the US would nevertheless like to see states investigate Wikileaks, Crowley said "we [are] obviously investigating directly the leak itself. That investigation is led by the Department of Defense. We are supporting that investigation. But the attorney general has indicated that we will aggressively pursue any case where we believe our laws have been broken. I, you know, would think that any other country that has been similarly affected by this action would consider similar steps, but those are decisions for individual countries to make".

3. The *Daily Beast* article and relevant text from the State Department briefing are attached.

text ends  
s 22 1(a)(ii)



s 22 1(a)(ii)

**REDACTED**

U.S. Urges Allies to Crack Down on WikiLeaks  
by Philip Shenon  
August 10, 2010 | 7:16am

The Obama administration is pressing Britain, Germany, Australia, and other allied Western governments to consider opening criminal investigations of WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange and to severely limit his nomadic travels across international borders, American officials say.

Officials tell The Daily Beast that the U.S. effort reflects a growing belief that WikiLeaks and organizations like it threaten grave damage to American national security, as well as a growing suspicion in Washington that Assange has damaged his own standing with foreign governments and organizations that might otherwise be sympathetic to his anti-censorship cause.

American officials confirmed last month that the Justice Department was against Assange and others as a result of the massive leaking of classified U.S. military reports from the war in Afghanistan, including potential violations of the Espionage Act by Bradley Manning, the Army intelligence analyst in Iraq accused of providing the documents to WikiLeaks.

Now, the officials say, they want other foreign governments to consider the same sorts of criminal charges.

"It's not just our troops that are put in jeopardy by this leaking," said an American diplomatic official who is involved in responding to the aftermath of the release of more than 70,000 Afghanistan war logs—and WikiLeaks' threat to reveal 15,000 more of the classified reports.

"It's U.K. troops, it's German troops, it's Australian troops—all of the NATO troops and foreign forces working together in Afghanistan," he said. Their governments, he said, should follow the lead of the Justice Department and "review whether the actions of WikiLeaks could constitute crimes under their own national-security laws."

Last month, a prominent pro-military group in Australia suggested that Assange may have through the release of the Afghan war logs, given the threat the leak may have posed to the lives of Australian troops serving in the NATO-led force.

The Obama administration was \_\_\_\_\_ by Amnesty International and four other human-rights groups for WikiLeaks to be far more careful in editing classified material from the war in Afghanistan to be sure that its public release does not endanger innocent Afghans who may be identified in the documents.

The initial document dump by WikiLeaks last month is reported to have disclosed the names of hundreds of Afghan civilians who have cooperated with NATO forces; the Taliban has threatened to hunt down the civilians

named in the documents, a threat that human-rights organizations say WikiLeaks should take seriously.

"It's amazing how Assange has overplayed his hand," a Defense Department official marveled. "Now, he's alienating the sort of people who you'd normally think would be his biggest supporters."

The joint letter by the five groups, first revealed by The Wall Street Journal, was met by a tart response from Assange, who communicates with the outside world largely through the social-networking Internet tool Twitter.

He appeared to suggest that news organizations and human-rights groups, notably Amnesty International, should help him underwrite his cost of the editing and release of more of the Afghan war documents—but that they were instead refusing to provide assistance.

"Pentagon wants to bankrupt us by refusing to assist review," he tweeted on Monday, referring to the effort by WikiLeaks to convince the Defense Department to join in reviewing the additional 15,000 documents to remove the names of Afghan civilians and others who might be placed in danger by its release. "Media won't take responsibility. Amnesty won't. What to do?"

In a separate posting on Twitter, Assange estimated the cost of the "harm minimization review"—a reference, apparently, to the effort to edit the 15,000 documents to remove informants' names—at \$700,000. It was not clear how he arrived at that figure.

The Australian-born Assange travels constantly and is said to have no real home, living instead in the homes of friends and supporters around the world.

He was reported as recently as last week to be in the U.K., although he has spent significant time this year in Australia, Iceland, and the U.S. He has said he is postponing future travel to the U.S. because of fear that he faces legal sanctions here.

Through diplomatic and military channels, the Obama administration is hoping to convince Britain, Germany, and Australia, among other allied governments that Assange should not be welcome on their shores, either, given the danger that his group poses to their troops stationed in Afghanistan, American officials say.

They say severe limitations on Assange's travels might serve as a useful warning to his followers that their own freedom is now at risk. A prominent American volunteer for WikiLeaks reported last month that he was subjected to hours of questioning and had his laptop and cellphones seized by American border agents on returning to the U.S. from Europe late last month.

An American military official tells The Daily Beast that Washington may also want to closely review its relations with Iceland in the wake of the release of the Afghan war logs.

Assange and his followers have been successful in pressing the government of Iceland, in the wake of the collapse of the country's banking system, to reinvent itself as a haven for free speech, creating a potential home for WikiLeaks and other organizations that may violate the laws of the U.S. and other nations through the release of classified documents.

**STATE DEPARTMENT REGULAR BRIEFING****BRIEFER: PHILIP J. (P.J.) CROWLEY, ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF  
STATE FOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS****STATE DEPARTMENT BRIEFING ROOM, STATE DEPARTMENT,  
WASHINGTON, D.C.****1:39 P.M. EDT, WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 11, 2010**

...

Q P.J., yesterday, you took a question on the reports of U.S. pressuring allies on WikiLeaks. Those reports persist. I'm wondering if you have any more information about whether or not this is true.

MR. CROWLEY: We've touched a lot of bases over the last 24 hours, and I'm not aware that anyone at the Department of State has had that kind of conversation with a foreign government.

Q But are you hoping that these governments will kind of take a look at how this has impacted their own national security and decide to take criminal action?

MR. CROWLEY: Well, you know, as I think the attorney general has indicated, you know, we are evaluating -- well, step back further -- we obviously investigating directly the leak itself. That investigation is led by the Department of Defense. We are supporting that investigation. But the attorney general has indicated that we will aggressively pursue any case where we believe our laws have been broken. I, you know, would think that any other country that has been similarly affected by this action would consider similar steps, but those are decisions for individual countries to make.

Q One of the servers that's used in these WikiLeaks things is in Sweden. Have you approached the Swedes to take that down?

MR. CROWLEY: Again, I mean, I can just speak for -- we have not approached any country to encourage them to do anything. Most of our conversations have been -- you know, as I've indicated, we've had conversations with a variety of countries, both explaining, you know, the leak, you know, listening to concerns that we've had. But I'm not aware that we've had any conversation where we have said that you should look at prosecuting person X, Y or Z.

Q Has WikiLeaks responded to your call of not publishing any further data, (you made ?) last week?

MR. CROWLEY: I'm not aware that we've had any direct contact with WikiLeaks.

Q And also, the foreign minister of Afghanistan has said they will review their foreign -- country's foreign policy after going through the WikiLeaks data. What do you have to say on that?

MR. CROWLEY: Well, I mean, that remains our central concern, that we cooperate extensively with countries around the world, we share information back and forth. Any time that information is released publicly to those who do not have access to classified information, we are concerned about the compromise of that information and the compromise of those sources.

And that's why we say that we have great concern that this negatively impacts our national security.

....



**STATE DEPARTMENT REGULAR BRIEFING****BRIEFER: PHILIP J. (P.J.) CROWLEY, ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF  
STATE FOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS****STATE DEPARTMENT BRIEFING ROOM, STATE DEPARTMENT,  
WASHINGTON, D.C.****2:07 P.M. EDT, TUESDAY, AUGUST 10, 2010**

...

**Q** On WikiLeaks? Can you talk about reports that you're pressuring Britain and other allies to launch their own criminal investigations about WikiLeak(s) and to block the site?

We had talked about this a little bit over a week ago, but there are more reports surfacing that you're putting pressure on allies to do something about this.

**MR. CROWLEY:** Yeah, let me take that question. I'm not aware of any specific conversations that we've had with some of the countries mentioned. Obviously, it is something that's cropped up in different conversations that we've had. Citing one, the secretary's call last week with President Karzai, they did talk about WikiLeaks and she asked the president what his perspective on it was.

I'll take the question as to whether we've had conversations along those lines and are encouraging others to consider, you know, their own potential prosecutions.

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