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Anti-Isis hackers claim responsibility for BBC cyber-attack

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“Snooper’s Charter” Law Will Damage UK National Security, NSA Whistleblower Warns

Theresa May says new spying powers will be used to bring cyberbullies and online trolls to justice

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How Spy Agencies Find Their Targets

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Scanning for terrorism - brain fingerprinting offers new hope in anti-terrorism fight

This Tool Could Sniff Out a Paris Bomb More Than a Football Field Away

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Other Links Concerning Hot Docs
ACIPSS startet neues YouTube-Portal


a) http://www.acipss.org/
b) https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCZXWJy8VrqPqN6Bk8ifQMw

Siegfried Beer im Interview mit der Wiener Zeitung: „Der Misserfolg ist eingebaut“

(wiener zeitung) Siegfried Beer auf die Frage nach dem Ruf der französischen Geheimdienste: „Es gab Jahre, in denen er sehr schlecht war, Sie können sich vorstellen, dass 1940 so ein Datum war. Frankreich war damals die stärkste Militärmacht Europas und hat trotzdem den Krieg gegen Hitler-Deutschland innerhalb kürzester Zeit verloren. In den vergangenen Jahren und Jahrzehnten ist der Ruf der Franzosen nicht schlecht. Sie haben freilich momentan eine Krisensituation, die nicht so einfach in den Griff zu bekommen ist."


3/16
Vladimir Putin's spy chief dies suddenly aged 58, Kremlin reveals

(mirror) GRU military intelligence chief Col-Gen Igor Sergun, who played a key role in the annexation of Crimea and action by the Russian armed forces in eastern Ukraine, along with Moscow’s air strikes in Syria, died aged 58.

No cause was given in a brief announcement which stated that Putin had offered his condolences in a heartfelt telegram to his widow and two daughters. The Kremlin's top military spy, Sergun was targeted with US and EU sanctions over Ukraine.

A career military spy, Putin promoted him to Colonel-General 11 months ago. His death was the second loss of a senior military figure in the past week. General Alexander Shushukin, 51, commander of Russian paratroopers in the 2014 operation to grab Crimea, died from a blood clot to his heart, said a statement.

Sergun was in charge of the GRU when Malaysia Airlines flight MH17 was downed over eastern Ukraine, with the loss of 298 people. His secret service was blamed by some sources in Kiev and the West for providing rebels with the BUK missile system that shot the aircraft out of the sky.

Last week a former KGB staffer Boris Karpichkov - now exiled to Britain - alleged that the GRU was behind the downing of a Russian tourist jet over Sinai with the loss of 224 in an supposed operation intended to put the blame on jihadists in order to gain the West's backing for Russian military operations in Syria.

Details of Sergun’s intelligence career remained "top secret" but he was known to have served in Albania and former Yugoslavia.

http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/world-news/vladimir-putins-spy-chief-dies-7116071

4/16
Exclusive: Inside IS Terror Weapons Lab

(sky news) Terror group Islamic State is employing scientists and weapons experts to train jihadists to carry out sophisticated "spectacular" attacks in Europe, while also modifying weapons systems capable of targeting passenger jets and military aircraft.

From a "jihadi university" in the Syrian city of Raqqa, the scientists have stunned western weapons experts by producing a homemade thermal battery for surface-to-air missiles. It had been regarded as a virtually impossible feat for terror groups working without a military infrastructure.
But footage exclusively obtained by Sky News shows that IS can now recommission thousands of missiles assumed by western governments to have been redundant through old age. Heat-seeking warheads can be used to attack passenger and military aircraft. They are 99% accurate once locked on.

For decades terror groups, including the IRA, had these weapons but storing them and maintaining the thermal battery - a key component to the warhead - was very difficult. It seems that IS scientists have got round the problem, and that revelation will shock the world of international security.

The IS research and development team has produced fully working remote controlled cars to act as mobile bombs, while they have fitted the cars with "drivers": mannequins with self-regulating thermostats to produce the heat signature of humans, allowing the car bombs to evade sophisticated scanning machines that protect military and government buildings in the West.

http://news.sky.com/story/1617197/exclusive-inside-is-terror-weapons-lab

5/16
North Korea says successfully conducts first H-bomb test

(reuters) North Korea said it successfully tested a miniaturised hydrogen nuclear device on Wednesday, claiming a significant advance in its strike capability and setting off alarm bells in Japan and South Korea.

The test, the fourth time the isolated state has exploded a nuclear device, was ordered by young leader Kim Jong Un and successfully conducted at 10:00 a.m. local time (0130 GMT), North Korea's official KCNA news agency said.

"Let the world look up to the strong, self-reliant nuclear-armed state," Kim wrote in what North Korean state TV displayed as a handwritten note. The nuclear test drew condemnation abroad, with China, the North's chief ally, expressing "resolute opposition" and saying it would lodge a protest with Pyongyang.

a) http://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-northkorea-nuclear-test-idUKKBN0UK0AC20160106
b) http://www.reuters.com/article/northkorea-nuclear-radiation-idUSKBN0UK0IQ20160106
d) http://news.sky.com/story/1617543/h-bomb-5000-times-stronger-than-hiroshima-blast
e) https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/north-korea-says-it-has-conducted-a-successful-hydrogen-bomb-test/2016/01/06/9add0e52-b436-11e5-a76a-0b5145e8679a_story.html?hpid=hp_hp-top-table-main_nkoreatest-2am%3Ahomepage%2Fstory

6/16
Saudi Arabia executes 47 on terrorism charges

(al jazeera) Saudi Arabia's interior ministry says it has executed 47 "terrorists", including Shia religious leader Nimr al-Nimr and a convicted al-Qaeda leader Faris al-Zahrani.
In a press statement read out on state TV on Saturday, the Saudi ministry listed the names of all those it said were already convicted on charges of terrorism. The executions led to protests in a number of countries on Saturday, including Iran - where demonstrators broke into the Saudi embassy and started fires.

The death sentence given to Nimr al-Nimr, who led anti-government protests in the country’s east, was confirmed by the Supreme Court in October.

g) http://www.reuters.com/article/us-saudi-security-iran-khamenei-idUSKBN0UH04Q20160103
h) http://www.reuters.com/article/us-saudi-security-hezbollah-idUSKBN0UH0EX20160103
http://www.reuters.com/article/us-saudi-iran-guards-idUSKBN0UJ1PX20160105

7/16
Terror tip-off from Iraqi preceded foreign intelligence by eight days

( europe online) An Iraqi national tipped off German police about a possible terrorist attack eight days before intelligence from the United States and France led authorities to evacuate two Munich train stations on New Year’s Eve, Bavarian media reported Sunday.

On December 23, an Iraqi man went to a police station in the southern state of Baden-Wuerttemberg and claimed his brother, who lives in Iraq, knew the militants that were planning to carry out the attack, Suedwestrundfunk and Bayerischer Rundfunk radio stations reported.

State police subsequently interviewed the man’s brother, who claimed the attacks would be carried out around January 6 - the feast of the Epiphany, a Christian holiday observed in Bavaria - on Munich’s train network. He gave the names of seven Islamist militants who he said were already in Munich at that time.

State police and Germany’s foreign intelligence agency BND failed to locate the individuals named by the Iraqi man, and two raids on Munich apartments on December 30 did not yield results, the report said. On New Year’s Eve, German authorities received a “very concrete tip” of an imminent attack from intelligence sources in the US and France, causing them to evacuate Munich’s central and Pasing train stations.

a) http://en.europeonline-magazine.eu/terror-tip-off-from-iraqi-preceded-foreign-intelligence-by-eight-days_431607.html
8/16
Neue Struktur für BND gefordert


9/16

Isis: Briton at centre of latest chilling Daesh video reported to be Hindu convert Siddhartha Dhar

(ibi times) The Briton who rants against David Cameron in the latest Isis video before shooting a "spy" in the head has been identified by some newspapers as Hindu convert Siddhartha Dhar, also known as Abu Rumaysah al-Britani. Dhar, a former bouncy castle salesman from Walthamstow, east London, converted to Islam on marrying a Muslim and went to join the Islamic State (Isis) in Syria.

However the family of Dhar have said they aren't certain he is the person who appears on the video, taunting the prime minister and killing a man in cold blood. Sister Konika Dhar said she had changed her mind about the clip, at first believing it was her brother but later was not so sure.

"I was in a state of shock," Konika said. "I believed the audio to resemble, from what I remember, the voice of my brother but having viewed the short clip in detail, I wasn't entirely convinced which put me at ease". However some experts believe the man on the video could well be Dhar. Director of international security studies at the Royal United Services Institute (Rusi) Raffaello Pantucci said: "He sounds a bit like Abu Rumaysah from Al-Muhajiroun videos. From watching him in Al-Muhajiroun videos and this new video he sounds very similar."

Dhar has been an outspoken extremist for some time. Even before travelling to Syria, he appeared on television several times and was charged alongside Anjem Choudhary with supporting a banned Muslim hate group. Dhar was arrested but later fled the country.

10/16

Taliban are at the gates of Kabul as their suicide bombers launch latest in wave of attacks in the Afghan capital
The Taliban carried out a truck bomb attack on a compound for civilian contractors near Kabul airport today, just hours after a lone suicide bomber detonated his explosives vest as the latest in a series of attacks in the Afghan capital over the past week.

At least 30 Afghan civilians, including nine children, were wounded in the attack on Camp Baron, a heavily protected residential compound for civilian technical contractors close to the city’s main airport, a health ministry official said.

A police official said a truck packed with explosives drove up to the armoured gates of the complex before being detonated, smashing windows and sending glass flying and badly damaging nearby houses.


11/16
Afghan forces end siege near Indian consulate in Mazar-i-Sharif

Afghan special forces killed a group of insurgents holed up in a house in the northern city of Mazar-i-Sharif late on Monday, bringing to an end a 24-hour siege following the insurgents’ attack on the nearby Indian consulate.

The soldiers killed the three insurgents who had shut themselves into a large house near the consulate, said Abdul Razaq Qaderi, deputy police chief of Balkh province. He said an investigation was under way to try to identify the men and those behind the attack, which occurred on the same day gunmen attacked an Indian air base in Pathankot in the northwestern state of Punjab near the border with Pakistan.

Eight members of the security forces were wounded in the gun battle which followed the attack on the consulate. The Indian ambassador said all the consulate staff were safe. The attack began late on Sunday after gunmen tried unsuccessfully to break into the consulate, taking advantage of the fact that many people were watching the final of a soccer championship between Afghanistan and India.

http://www.reuters.com/article/us-afghanistan-attack-india-idUSKBN0UI0C020160105
http://www.trust.org/item/20160104063854-euxqv/

12/16
Jaish-e-Mohammed suspected in assault on Indian airbase
Five terrorists thought to be members of Jaish-e-Mohammed were killed by Indian commandos during an assault at an airbase in Punjab province earlier today. The jihadists were said to have been in contact with their handlers inside Pakistan during the assault.

The suicide assault team, wearing military uniforms, attacked the Pathankot Air Force Base – close to the border with Pakistan – at 3:30 a.m., DNA India reported. The attackers first penetrated the outer security cordon and reached a dining facility on the base, but were stopped there by Indian security personnel, led by commandos from the National Security Guard, according to the Hindustan Times.

Fighting lasted for more than four hours before Indian forces killed the five attackers. Three Indian security personnel were killed during the fighting. The jihadists are thought to have been attempting to destroy military aircraft, including Mi-21 attack helicopters and MiG-25 fighters. Security personnel found a “huge quantity of RDX in their [the terrorists’] possession” according to DNA India. RDX is a military-grade explosive that has been used in terrorist plots in India and elsewhere in the past.

13/16
Islamic State video ‘shows killing of five men it says spied for UK’

(bbc) Islamic State militants have released a video, featuring a man and young boy speaking with British accents, purportedly showing the killing of five men who it says were spying for the UK. In the 10-minute film, the man threatens attacks in the UK and says this is a message for David Cameron. A boy later appears in the video, which has not been independently verified, talking about killing "unbelievers".

The UK Foreign Office said it was examining the video's content. In the new video, the masked jihadi militant, who is holding a gun, mocks Mr Cameron for daring to "challenge the might" of the extremist group before he makes a threat to British people to "invade your land".

The five men, wearing jumpsuits, are seen purportedly being shot in the back of the head in a desert location, after making what is claimed to be their confessions.

14/16
Suicide attacks kill dozens of troops in Iraq

(al jazeera) ISIL bombers blamed for attacks on military base near Tikrit and in Haditha as battle for control of Ramadi continues.
Two suicide attacks blamed on the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) group have killed dozens of government troops in Iraq. At least 13 Iraqi soldiers died in Sunday’s attack on police training at the Speicher military base near the city of Tikrit, while an attack in Haditha killed 18 people.

Another 22 were wounded in the attacks by suicide bombers on the base, a former US military facility north of Baghdad, where a large group of police forces from Nineveh, a northern province, were undergoing training.


15/16
Suspect Named After 2 Shot in Tel Aviv

(newsweek) A gunman identified by relatives as a member of Israel’s Arab minority killed two people on a bustling thoroughfare in central Tel Aviv on Friday before fleeing, an incident that ramped up tensions after three months of Palestinian street violence.

Security camera footage showed the assailant, who appeared to be in his mid-to-late 20s and wore protective eyeglasses and a windbreaker, browsing dried fruit at a health food store on Dizengoff Street. He then pulled a machine pistol from his backpack and stepped onto the pavement, shooting wildly. At least three people were also wounded in the attack. With the suspect still at large, police declined to offer a motive.

Sami Melhem, an Israeli Arab lawyer, said the shooter was a relative of his, whose father, a police volunteer, had come forward to identify him to authorities after the security footage aired. The 28-year-old suspect’s name was withheld from publication under a court gag order.


16/16
New Syrian rebel leader appointed after Zahran Allouch killed in air strike

(belfast telegraph) Militant groups in Syria are mourning the death of a powerful rebel commander killed in an airstrike near Damascus - a high-profile assassination that may shift the balance of power in rebel-held suburbs of Damascus.

Zahran Allouch, the head of the Army of Islam group, was killed in an airstrike that targeted the group’s headquarters during a meeting on Friday. He was instantly killed along with other commanders from the ultra conservative Ahrar al-Sham and the Faylaq al-Rahman groups.

His assassination - a month before peace talks are scheduled to begin between the Syrian government and opposition rebel groups - is a blow to insurgents fighting to topple President Bashar Assad and a boost to government forces who have been bolstered by the Russian military intervention in Syria in the past few months.
Syrian government forces have been on the offensive in several parts of the country since Russia began its military campaign in late September to shore up Assad's forces. The Army of Islam took part earlier this month in an opposition meeting held in Saudi Arabia to agree on an opposition delegation that would negotiate with Assad's government representatives in peace talks planned for late January in Geneva. The Syrian government describes the group as "terrorists" and has said it will not negotiate with such factions.


17/16

**Horrific new ISIS video 'shows Russian spy being executed and another forced to dig his own grave'**

(mirror) Horrific new footage released by ISIS claims to show the execution of a Russian spy. Published by the terror group's Russian-language propaganda arm FURAT, the 17-minute video is billed as a round up of news from newly acquired ISIS territory in the Caucasus. It includes references to the recent Islamic State attacks in Paris and the bombing of the Russian passenger jet near Egypt.

There is also a sickening sequence which claims to show extremists having captured and exposed a Russian Federal Security Service (FSB) intelligence officer. After questioning him in the back of the car, the grey-haired man is then shot in the head from point-blank range. Immediately after, another Russian is made to dig his own grave before being executed. The identities of the victims and the footage has not been verified.


18/16

**At least 67 journalists killed around the world in 2015**

(cbc) Sixty-nine journalists were killed around the world on the job in 2015. Twenty-eight of them were slain by Islamic militant groups, including al-Qaeda and the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) group, according to the Committee to Protect Journalists.

The New York-based organization says Syria again was the deadliest place for journalists, though the number of deaths there in 2015 — 13 — was lower than in previous years of the conflict.

"These journalists are the most vulnerable," Joel Simon, the committee's executive director said of reporters and broadcasters working in Syria and other areas inundated with Islamic extremists. "This is, clearly based on the data, an incredible risk for journalists."

In its own count, the Paris-based group Reporters Without Borders says in a report released Tuesday that at least 67 journalists were killed worldwide while reporting or because of their work in 2015. It says the circumstances around another 43 deaths remain unclear.

Those killed by Islamic extremist groups this year included eight journalists killed in an attack in Paris in January at the office of satirical magazine Charlie Hebdo, which had published caricatures of the
Prophet Muhammad. The group al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula claimed responsibility for the attack in which two gunmen massacred 12 people. They said it was in "revenge for the prophet."


19/16
6 American Soldiers Killed in Taliban Attack in Afghanistan

(new york times) In one of the deadliest attacks against American forces in Afghanistan this year, a Taliban suicide bomber on a motorcycle drove into a military convoy near Bagram Air Base on Monday, killing six American service members, United States officials said.

Among the dead was Detective Joseph Lemm, 45, a New York police detective serving in the Air National Guard.

The attack came as Taliban forces have continued seizing territory across Afghanistan, dragging more American troops directly into the fight despite commanders’ continued insistence that the focus of the NATO force in the country remains on training and advising. As the battle intensified this fall, the Obama administration even reversed plans to begin withdrawing troops this year, choosing to leave 9,800 American troops in Afghanistan through at least 2016.

Even away from the most intense battlegrounds, in southern and eastern Afghanistan, and with Afghan forces taking the lead in the fighting, American forces have remained at risk, with at least 15 service members killed this year before the attack on Monday.

The Taliban suicide bomber struck a joint patrol of American and Afghan troops that was moving through a village near Bagram Air Base, a sprawling base north of Kabul that is populated largely by American service members and contractors, Afghan and American officials said.


20/16
Dissident republicans: Irish police warn of increasing threat as they display seized weapons

(bbc) Dissident republican paramilitaries are becoming increasingly skilled at making bombs, Irish police have said as they displayed a sample of seized weapons. The haul included a beer keg bomb, a number of rockets, AK-47 rifles, semtex explosives, handguns and ammunition.

The weapons were all seized by members of the Irish police force (An Garda Siochána) over the last two years. They said they have had "significant success" in disrupting attacks, aimed mainly at targets in Northern Ireland.


21/16
YPG claims to have killed nearly 6,000 enemy fighters in 2015
The Kurdish YPG (or People’s Defense Units) claims to have killed 5,875 members of “enemy forces” in 2015. The claim was made in a post, entitled “Balance of the War Against Hostile Groups in Rojava, Northern Syria: Year 2015,” on the YPG’s official website on Jan. 1.

The YPG does not identify the group(s) these enemy fighters belonged to, but most, if not all of them, were likely members of Abu Bakr al Baghdadi’s Islamic State. The Long War Journal cannot independently verify the YPG’s statistics. It is also possible that some, or many, of the jihadists included in the YPG’s count were actually killed in airstrikes launched by the US and its anti-Islamic State allies.

In coordination with Free Syrian Army groups, the YPG advanced on Islamic State positions in northern Syria in 2015, capturing key border towns and other locations. In June 2015, the YPG announced that it was within 30 miles of Raqqa, the de facto capital of the “caliphate.” These advances “enabled our forces to liberate and secure 18,000 square kilometers,” according to the YPG.


22/16

Other News From Hot Spots

1) Bomb blast hits Afghan capital Kabul
http://www.reuters.com/article/us-afghanistan-blast-idUSKBN0UJ1PP20160106

2) One U.S. service member killed, two wounded in Afghanistan
http://www.reuters.com/article/us-afghanistan-usa-idUSKBN0UJ1JX20160105

3) U.S. conducts air strikes as fighting rages in Afghan province
http://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-afghanistan-taliban-idUKKBN0UK22N20160106

4) Russia releases new footage of a fresh round of airstrikes in Syria claiming to have targeted a number of ISIS oil tanker trucks

5) Army Launches Large-Scale Offensive in Dara’a

6) Syrian regime targets Mount Turkmen near Latakia

7) Strike kills former Israeli prisoner Kantar in Syria

8) Sunni mosques bombed in town south of Baghdad

9) Islamic State attack on Libyan oil port kills two, storage tank ablaze
http://www.reuters.com/article/us-libya-security-port-idUSKBN0UI18D20160104

10) Hezbollah targets Israeli forces with bomb, Israel shells south Lebanon
http://ca.reuters.com/article/topNews/idCAKBN0UI1C320160104
11) Palestinian who stabbed Israeli soldier shot dead in West Bank: army
http://www.reuters.com/article/us-israel-palestinians-idUSKBN0UJ0UX20160105

12) The Empty Threat of 'Boots on the Ground'
http://www.nytimes.com/2016/01/10/magazine/the-empty-threat-of-boots-on-the-ground.html?_r=0

13) The bad news about ISIS's defeat in Ramadi

14) Restaurant hit by deadly suicide attack in Somalia

15) ISIS-run Sharia court SMASHED by coalition airstrikes as problems build for terror group

16) Russian spy footage 'shows ISIS oil entering Turkey'
http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/video/russian-spy-footage-shows-isis-7091541

17) ISIS Executes 20 Villagers near Mosul, Iraq

18) Bombings in, around Baghdad kill seven

23/16
How the NSA uses behavior analytics to detect threats

(computerworld) The National Security Agency has significantly enhanced its capabilities for detecting cyber-threats in the two-plus years since former NSA contractor Edward Snowden pilfered and disclosed classified information.

The multi-layered capabilities, which include user behavior analytics, now protect a private cloud that provides storage, computing and operational analytics to the intelligence community, CIO Greg Smithberger tells CIO.com.

“There are a number of initiatives we have underway there to really use a lot of our big data analytics, a lot of the technology we have developed for our foreign intelligence mission, as well as technology we've developed inside our Information Assurance Directorate,” says Smithberger, who began his new job six months ago after serving in various operational foreign intelligence roles over the past 27 years.
24/16
Inside the NSA’s hunt for hackers

(politico) When America’s premier federal security recruiters go fishing for new technical talent, they have plenty of lures to dangle. There’s the patriotic mission; the promise of a government salary; the thrill of working under the hood on the country’s classified cyber mechanics.

And then there’s the pile of free purple and orange pens.

At a recent job fair in this city’s cavernous convention center, the National Security Agency set up an eight-foot-long folding table and covered it with a black cloth and assorted pieces of schwag, trying to rope in coders and tech experts. “Push the limits of innovation,” read one of its posters. Brochures touted a mission producing results “that you might see on the nightly news,” like disrupting a terrorist attack, catching international drug traffickers or preventing a crippling cyberattack.

25/16
U.S. Republican fight on NSA spying highlights program’s new sweep

(reuters) U.S. intelligence agencies can now reach almost all domestic phone records, far more than they collected under a now-scrapped program by the National Security Agency, according to Republican presidential candidate Ted Cruz.

That estimate of the amount of U.S. phone records now available to investigators put the spotlight on a new intelligence reform law at a time when the limits of surveillance are being debated again after this month’s deadly shootings in San Bernardino, California.

In the Republican presidential debate on Tuesday night, Cruz, a Texas senator, defended his support for the USA Freedom Act, a reform passed this year that prohibits the NSA from collecting domestic call metadata in bulk, by saying the new system was better for intelligence agencies.

26/16
NSA director says new phone records law is “working well so far”

(yahoo) In his first public comments since Congress ended the NSA’s bulk collection of Americans’ phone records, the agency’s director said a new program imposed by Congress to replace it is “working well so far” but that he needs more “empirical data” before he can determine whether it will impair the country’s ability to thwart future terror attacks.

The comments Tuesday night by NSA Director Adm. Michael Rogers would seem to contradict — in some respects — the complaints by critics, led by Republican presidential candidate Marco Rubio, that
A new law known as the USA Freedom Act has compromised the intelligence community’s ability to access the phone records of terror suspects.

The impact of the USA Freedom Act was front and center during Tuesday night’s GOP debate, with Rubio blasting rival Sen. Ted Cruz for voting in favor of the law. The bill, he charged, “did ... take away a valuable tool that allowed the National Security Agency, and other intelligence agencies, to quickly and rapidly access phone records and match them up with other phone records, to see who terrorists have been calling.” Rubio added, “I promise you, the next time there is an attack on this country, the first thing people are going to want to know is, why didn’t we know about it and why didn’t we stop it?”


27/16
U.S. designates a German citizen as a 'global terrorist'

(trust) The U.S. State Department on Wednesday named Emrah Erdogan, a German citizen whom it said had joined and fought with the al Qaeda and al Shabaab militant groups, as a global terrorist.

The designation generally bars Americans from dealing with him and freezes any of his assets under U.S. jurisdiction.

Erdogan is serving a seven-year prison term in Germany for joining militant groups in Pakistan and Somalia and for phoning in a false threat of attacks in Pakistan and Germany in November 2010, the U.S. State Department said in a statement. He is not related to Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan, said a U.S. official, who spoke on condition of anonymity.

a) http://www.trust.org/item/20151209164417-x4y4n/

b) http://www.newvision.co.ug/news/676743-turkish-born-german-man-placed-on-us-terror-list.html

28/16
'Significant blow' to 2 terror groups: U.S. airstrikes kill ISIS head in Libya, al-Qaeda leader in Somalia

(christian today) Pentagon officials announced on Monday that two senior Islamic extremist leaders—one from the Islamic State (ISIS) and other from al-Qaeda group—were killed in separate U.S. airstrikes last month.
Abu Nabil, also known as Wissam Najm Abd Zay, was an Iraqi national and former al-Qaeda operative before assuming his role as head of the ISIS in Libya. He was killed in a Nov. 13 airstrike carried out by an F-15 jet in the city of Derna, Libya, said Pentagon spokesman Capt. Jeff Davis, according to Fox News.

Davis also confirmed the death of a senior al-Qaeda official Abdiraham Sandhere, known as "Ukash." Sandhere, a senior leader of al Shabaab, an al-Qaeda affiliate in Somalia, was killed during an airstrike conducted on Dec. 2, Davis said. He said two other al Shabaab officials were killed in the airstrike. The death of two senior terrorist leaders is a significant blow to ISIS and al-Qaeda, the Pentagon said.

http://www.christiantoday.com/article/significant.blow.to.2.terror.groups.u.s.airstrikes.kill.isis.head.in.libya.al.qaeda.leader.in.somalia/73103.htm

29/16
Clash of 2 terror groups: Al-Qaeda suicide bomber kills top ISIS commander in Syria

(christian today) The "shadowy head" of the Yarmouk Martyrs Brigade, a key ISIS militia, was killed in a recent suicide bombing north of Syria. Al Qaeda's Al Nusra Front has claimed responsibility for the attack.

Muhammad "Abu Ali" al-Baridi, who went by the nickname of "The Uncle," was killed along with five other ISIS militiamen during a meeting on Nov. 15. The brigade is known for its bloody and vicious hold over parts of the Golan Heights, Fox News reported.

Al Nusra Front described the attack as "heroic." The suicide bombing that killed the ISIS leader came two days after the Paris attacks that killed 130 people. Reports said Baridi's death was a stunning blow to the ISIS in Syria. "The Islamic State [ISIS], that controls the closest area to the Israel border in the Syrian Golan Heights, suffered a severe blow and lost its entire top command in the area in one fell swoop," said Alex Fishman, a veteran military correspondent for Israeli daily Yediot Aharonot.

http://www.christiantoday.com/article/clash.of.2.terror.groups.al.qaeda.suicide.bomber.kills.top.isis.commander.in.syria/71920.htm

30/16
33 maps that explain terrorism

(vox) Terrorism is a simple idea — intentionally targeting non-combatants to instill terror in a way that will accomplish political goals — that has had a profound impact on the world.

But while we may think of terrorism today as something associated with wild-eyed religious radicals, in fact its history is much more complicated than that, and even the rise of what we now call jihadism is more complicated than you may think. What follows are 33 maps (okay, a few of them are charts) to tell this story.

http://www.vox.com/2015/12/15/10133138/terrorism-maps

31/16
Pentagon Approves 17 Al-Qaeda Followers for Transfer from Guantanamo Bay
Secretary of Defense Ashton Carter has approved the transfer of 17 detainees from Guantanamo Bay. The detainees will be transferred in small groups, with the first scheduled to be transferred next week. Their identities and transfer location will not be released until they reach their final destination.

After the release of these 17 detainees, the population inside Gitmo will drop to 90, with 31 prisoners remaining eligible for transfer in the future.

For the 59 detainees ineligible for transfer to another country, two options remain. They can either stay in Gitmo for the rest of their lives, or be transferred to a high-security prison within the United States.


32/16
Bosnian immigrant faces sentencing for giving $700 to the Islamic State group and al-Qaida

A Bosnian immigrant formerly from Illinois faces sentencing for giving money to terror groups in Iraq and Syria.

Jasminka Ramic pleaded guilty in September to conspiring to provide material support to terrorists. She is among six Bosnian immigrants indicted in February for funneling money and military supplies to the Islamic State group and al-Qaida in Iraq. Ramic contributed $700.

She is set to be sentenced Tuesday in St. Louis federal court. The other suspects have pleaded not guilty. Husband and wife Ramiz and Sedina Hodzic, and Armin Harcevic, live in St. Louis County. Also accused are Mediha Medy Salkicevic of Schiller Park, Illinois, and Nihad Rosic of Utica, New York.


33/16
Pakistan's ISI has revived Masood Azhar's Jaish-e-Mohammad

For the last three years, security agencies have been receiving inputs of an attempt by Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) to revive the terror group Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) led by terror leader Maulana Masood Azhar.

The re-grouping of Masood's cadres coincided with the hanging of his associate Afzal Guru, an accused in the 2001 Parliament Attack case, in 2013. In February 2014, he delivered a vitriolic anti-India speech at Muzaffarabad in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir at an event to mark the launch of Afzal's book that compiled notes during his long incarceration at Tihar jail.

Security agencies have always been worried about Masood's activities because of his close ties with top Taliban leaders. After the Taliban split along Afghani and Punjabi lines, he had aligned himself with the latter. Azhar lost state support after it was revealed that the Jaish had organised a deadly attack on then Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf. The government agencies stopped all support to Jaish after that. Pathankot points to the change in that policy.
Taliban leaders while in power in Afghanistan had helped Masood’s exchange from an Indian jail in lieu of hijacked Indian Airlines place IC-814 in December 1999. The plane was hijacked and flown to Afghanistan and kept hostage till India agreed to release Masood and others from jail.

http://indiatoday.intoday.in/story/pakistansisi-has-revived-masood-azhars-jaish-e-mohammad/1/563850.html

34/16
Terrorist group says November blast at industrialists’ HQ was for workers

(ekathimerini) The Popular Fighters Group (ELA), which claimed responsibility for a bomb attack on the headquarters of Greece’s industrialists in Athens in November, has issued a proclamation saying it carried out the attack in defense of workers’ rights and against businessmen who support the implementation of bailout measures.

The proclamation was downloaded onto a memory stick that was placed inside an envelope that was left at a telephone exchange on Strefi Hill in central Athens. A member of the group called a newspaper to inform where the proclamation had been left.

The 32-page statement said the bomb had been placed at the headquarters of the Greek Federation of Enterprises (SEV) early on November 24 as “an expression of popular justice against those who grow rich on the back of our literal and metaphorical deaths.” The urban guerrilla group then referred by name to the four workers who lost their lives following an accident at a Hellenic Petroleum (ELPE) refinery last summer.

http://www.ekathimerini.com/204828/article/ekathimerini/news/terrorist-group-says-november-blast-at-industrialists-hq-was-for-workers

35/16
Mobile and headphone use in public ‘a barrier to terror alertness’

(guardian) People should avoid using mobile phones and headphones in public to remain alert to the danger of a potential attack, a former counter-terrorism minister has suggested.

Pauline Neville-Jones, the former head of the Joint Intelligence Committee, said she was alarmed by the number of people ignoring their surroundings and urged members of the public to take responsibility for their safety.

She suggested people would have to get used to disruption to their daily lives as a result of counter-terrorism operations and security scares. Official guidance is for people to be “alert but not alarmed” at the threat from terrorism, but Lady Neville-Jones suggested citizens were not as vigilant as they could be.


36/16
Other Terrorism News
1) Bahrain Uncovers 'Terrorist Cell' Linked to Hizbullah, Iran

2) AQAP leader says America is the 'primary enemy'

3) Divisions emerge within the Islamic State’s Yemen ‘province’

4) San Bernardino terrorists allegedly studied AQAP’s Inspire magazine, pledged allegiance to Baghdadi

5) US continues to push for negotiations with Taliban despite direct ties to al Qaeda

6) Saudi satellite operator drops Hezbollah channel from airwaves

7) Bin Laden’s Men in Tehran… Iran Heavily Indebted to Al-Qaeda

8) Muslim boys are being kidnapped and brainwashed as suicide bombers before being traded by jihadis at £30,000 a time

9) Mutmaßlicher Paris-Attentäter reiste zweimal nach Budapest

10) UP ATS Also Questioning Suspected Al-Qaeda Operatives
http://www.newindianexpress.com/nation/UP-ATS-Also-Questioning-Suspected-Al-Qaeda-Operatives/2015/12/18/article3184414.ece

11) Suspected al Qaeda terrorist had links with Glasgow attack terrorist: Police

12) Death sentence for man who joined ISIL and Al Qaeda

13) Al Qaeda video shows three men purportedly confessing to spying, one shot dead
http://www.trust.org/item/20151208141049-Srm9/

14) Radical Islam in Asia: The Arc of Al Qaeda and ISIS

15) Here’s where terrorist groups like ISIS and Al Qaeda get their money

16) Five members of terrorist cell belonging to Al-Qaeda arrested in Medenine
17) African jihadist group al-Murabitun joins ranks with al Qaeda


18) Ex-wife of ISIS leader and al-Qaeda terrorists freed from jail in prisoner swap

http://www.express.co.uk/news/world/623550/ISIS-al-Qaeda-prisoner-swap

**37/16**

"Weak link" gets tough: After Paris, Belgium raises spy game

(reuters) Islamic State's attack on Paris has triggered shifts in great power strategy in the Middle East, but just as significant for Europeans may be change afoot inside an office block near Brussels’ Gare du Nord station.

The Belgian capital was home to some of the Paris attackers and a logistical planning base for the operation. Dubbed by some "Jihad Central", the city was locked down for days for fear local radicals could strike at home.

Now, stung by international accusations that underfunding and political in-fighting had left its security services the weakest link in Europe’s counter-terrorism defences, Belgium is ploughing resources into an intelligence agency that faces the biggest concentration of Syria-linked militants in the West.


**38/16**

New U.S. Spying Strategy Released Amid Probe of Paris Plot

(bloomberg) The U.S. released a new counterintelligence strategy Wednesday as investigators continued to sift through evidence in last week’s deadly attacks in Paris to determine how a carefully coordinated plot could have eluded the world’s top intelligence agencies.

The policy document, which had been in production prior to the Paris attacks, identifies five broad missions to infiltrate and disrupt foreign adversaries, protect vital computer networks and personal data from cyber-attacks and detect so-called insider threats, or workers inside agencies who might seek to steal or compromise information.

"It’s a strategy for agencies to take a look at the broader picture of what the counterintelligence threat is," William Evanina, the U.S. national counterintelligence executive, told reporters Wednesday.
39/16
Terror suspect's arrest 'bungled' due to overnight raid ban

(independent) Belgian secret services traced Europe’s most wanted man to a Brussels flat two days after the Paris attacks but bungled his capture because they were not allowed to raid the premises between 11pm and 5am, according to reports.

Salah Abdeslam, who was in Paris at the time of the November 13 attacks that killed 130 and whose brother blew himself up, is known to have returned to Belgium the following day as he was identified during a road check but allowed to leave. An explosive vest he is thought to have worn in Paris was found discarded in a bin.

But despite a massive manhunt during which Brussels was placed under maximum alert over an "imminent" terror attack, Abdeslam has evaded capture. Yesterday, Koen Geens, the Belgian justice minister, said that Abdeslam was "likely in a flat in Molenbeek (his home town outside Brussels) two days after the Paris attacks." However, he said that because raids cannot take place between 9pm and 5am, under the country's penal code, unless a crime is in the process of being committed or in case of fire, the police had to wait until after 5am, by which time Abdeslam was nowhere to be seen.

40/16
Montpellier 'terror' arrest: Police detain woman with fake pregnancy belly on suicide bombing suspicion

(ibti times) A young mother has been arrested on suspicion of wanting to use a fake pregnancy "belly" to smuggle explosives and carry out a suicide bomb attack, according to French media reports. The 23-year-old woman, said to have converted to Islam, was arrested along with her husband, 35, in Montpellier, southern France.

The couple's home had been searched by police after the pair were detained last week amidst fears over the woman's "growing radicalisation", according to French regional daily Midi Libre. Officers then found a hollowed out prosthetic belly inside their home. It had been covered in tin foil, said to allow items stuffed inside a greater chance of fooling security gates and metal detectors.

41/16
Die EU nach den Anschlägen von Paris: Zielkonflikte in der Terrorabwehr

(nzz) Nicht nur in Belgien haben sich nach den Attentaten von Paris Mängel im Sicherheitsdispositiv offenbart.

http://www.nzz.ch/meinung/kommentare/zielkonflikte-in-der-terrorabwehr-1.18667388
42/16
ISIS leaders linked to Paris attacks killed in airstrikes, U.S. official says

(syracuse) U.S. and coalition airstrikes killed 10 Islamic State leaders over the past month, including several linked to the Paris attacks or other plots against the West, a U.S. military official in Iraq said Tuesday.

U.S. Army Col. Steve Warren told Pentagon reporters that the militants were killed mainly by drone strikes in Iraq and Syria. He offered few details, but said at least two of those killed were linked to the Paris attacks.

According to Warren, one of the insurgents killed was Charaffe al Mouadan, a Syrian-based IS member who was directly linked to Abdel Hamid Abaaoud, the Paris attack cell leader. Mouadan, who was killed by an airstrike last Thursday in Syria, was planning additional attacks against the West, Warren said. Also killed was Abdel Kader Hakim, who was part of the Islamic State group's effort to plan attacks against Western targets and "had links" to the Paris attack network, Warren said.


43/16
Hausarrest für Umweltaktivisten


Die Konferenz dauert zwei Wochen. Sie soll eine weltweite Abkehr von fossilen Brennstoffen wie Kohle und Erdöl einleiten, um eine weitere Klimaerwärmung zu verhindern.

http://www.kleinezeitung.at/s/politik/aussenpolitik/4876629/Klimagipfel-in-Paris_Hausarrest-fur-Umweltaktivisten-?from=suche.intern.portal

44/16
New York man charged with plotting New Year's Eve attack
(bbc) US authorities have arrested a man described as a supporter of so-called Islamic State (IS) and accused him of planning an attack in New York State. Emanuel Lutchman, 25, from Rochester, is charged with plotting to kill people at a restaurant on New Year’s Eve.

Mr Lutchman told an FBI informant he would use a machete and knives in the attack, officials say. Before his arrest, he made a video pledging allegiance to IS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, the FBI said.

Mr Lutchman came to the attention of authorities after he began expressing support for IS online. "I will take a life, I don’t have a problem with that," Mr Lutchman is quoted as saying in court documents.


45/16
**Special Operations Chief is Obama’s Pick for Centcom, Pentagon Says**

(wall street journal) President Barack Obama will nominate an Army special operations officer to lead U.S. Central Command and oversee the missions in Iraq, Syria and Afghanistan, according to Pentagon officials in Washington.

The officials said that Mr. Obama intends to nominate Gen. Joe Votel, currently the head of U.S. Special Operations Command, to become chief of Centcom, the war command in Tampa, Fla., that oversees U.S. forces in the Middle East.

The move reflects Mr. Obama’s long-held inclination to counter extremist movements like the group calling itself Islamic State with small, highly capable forces like Delta and SEAL teams, rather than large ground units like those used in wars in Iraq in Afghanistan.


46/16
**New Navy contract aims to equip hundreds of ships with drones**

(cnn) The Pentagon is hoping a multimillion-dollar investment in new technology will enable drones on hundreds of Navy ships to provide air support to operations around the globe.

The goal of the "launch and recovery" system, as it has been dubbed by the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency, or DARPA, is to provide airborne surveillance and drone strikes from the decks of "forward-deployed small ships" without having to deploy aircraft carriers or large, fixed land bases.

The $93.1 million contract was awarded to defense contractor Northrop Grumman on December 24 as part of DARPA’s Tactically Exploited Reconnaissance Node program, which aims to enable drones to operate from smaller ships, according to a Pentagon press release.
47/16
Obama digs in on plan to close Guantanamo prison camp

(fox news) President Obama doubled down Friday on his push to shutter the Guantanamo Bay prison camp, calling it a magnet for “jihadi recruitment” and vowing to present his closure plan to Congress - while keeping his cards close to the vest on whether he’d try to use executive action to finish the job.

The president addressed his plans at a year-end press conference at the White House, before heading to Hawaii for his annual family vacation. With the Guantanamo push standing as a major piece of unfinished business going into his final year in office, Obama was asked about his strategy.

Obama said he’ll present Congress with his plan, and argued that the camp remains one of the “key magnets for jihadi recruitment.”

48/16
CIA chief wants to strengthen refugee screening

(cnn) CIA Director John Brennan insisted that the U.S. should maintain its longstanding policy of welcoming refugees from around the globe, but said he is evaluating how to strengthen the existing system.

Speaking at a State Department event Wednesday morning, Brennan addressed the importance of both accepting refugees from Syria and maintaining security safeguards to keep terrorists from exploiting the resettlement program.

Brennan also spoke about the importance of striking a balance between civil liberties and national security in the digital domain in order for the government to protect its citizens. "I don't think we're there yet," he said.

49/16
Security clearance broken, spies inside, says former U.S. official

(cbs) There are probably more people like NSA leaker Edward Snowden working right now with America's secrets says a former deputy secretary of Defense.

John Hamre tells Scott Pelley that the U.S. security clearance process -- the one that green-lit Snowden as well as convicted spy Chelsea Manning and mass murderer Aaron Alexis -- is obsolete.

"We have spies in our midst. I'm convinced of it," says Hamre, who also chairs the Defense Policy Board, which advises the Pentagon. "Our system is very obsolete in my view."


Meet the Head of the Pentagon’s Agile New Digital Team

The Pentagon is standing up a Defense Digital Service, Defense Secretary Ash Carter said today. Modeled on the White House’s own agile cadre of technology wizards, the DoD DDS will be a small team of engineers and data experts meant to “improve the Department’s technological agility and solve its most complex IT problems,” defense officials said.

In a Nov. 18 speech at George Washington University, Carter said the DDS “will bring in talent from America’s technology community to work for a specific period of time, or for a specific project, to apply a more innovative and agile approach to solving DoD’s complex IT problems. It will be led by Chris Lynch, a serial entrepreneur in the tech world. And Chris is not only sitting in the audience; it’s also his first day on the job. He flew out here from the West Coast just yesterday. Welcome to the team, Chris.”

Lynch previously served on the White House’s U.S. Digital Service, launched in August 2014 after the Healthcare.gov debacle, where he revamped tech and policy to improve delivery and manage benefits for service members.

IRS promises to get a search warrant before spying on cellphones

The IRS will no longer use “Stingray” cellphone-tracking devices unless the agency receives a search warrant supported by probable cause, in accordance with the Department of Justice's Policy Guidance, IRS Commissioner John Koskinen says in a letter.

The agency’s use of Stingray surveillance devices went public in October, though at the time it was unclear how (and how often) the IRS used the technology. Stingray devices mimic cell towers to trick nearby phones into connecting to them, allowing the user to track locations, record calls and access text communications.

In today's letter, Koskinen says the IRS has just one Stingray-style device -- though it's trying to get another -- and only the agency's Criminal Investigation division ever used it. The IRS-CI tracked a total of 44 cellular devices across 15 investigations since 2011, ranging from federal grand jury to state inquiries, Koskinen says.

Mobster’s sentence reduced for tip on Oklahoma City bombing

A convicted mobster credited with providing the FBI information about hidden explosives in the 1995 Oklahoma City bombing plot had his sentence shaved by a decade on Tuesday.
U.S. District Judge Edward Korman in Brooklyn reduced the 40-year racketeering sentence being served by Gregory Scarpa Jr. as he blasted prosecutors and the FBI for their handling of the reduction request. The 10-year reduction means Scarpa could be eligible for release in 2025, though the judge said he could die before that because of cancer and generally poor health.

In a written ruling, the judge said that the son of an infamous Colombo crime family enforcer reached out to the government in 2005 while Scarpa and Terry Nichols were serving time together. The judge noted that Scarpa told the FBI Nichols had told him there was a secret cache of explosives in the house where he lived at the time of the Oklahoma City bombing.

http://bigstory.ap.org/article/0aace2e7c3f94dc1aafab163793293ad/mobsters-sentence-reduced-tip-oklahoma-city-bombing

53/16
Dem: Ex-CIA chief Petraeus again debunks Benghazi theories

(ap) Former CIA Director David Petraeus’s testimony to the House Benghazi committee Wednesday was consistent with what he told congressional investigators more than two years ago when he debunked several conspiracy theories about the deadly attacks, according to a committee Democrat.

Petraeus spent four hours behind closed doors Wednesday answering questions from the GOP-led panel investigating the twin 2012 assaults in Libya that killed four Americans, including U.S. Ambassador Chris Stevens.

Petraeus, who was CIA director when the attack occurred, testified previously before the House Intelligence committee as part of its investigation of the attacks.


54/16
Other News From the United States

1) Final tally: Police shot and killed 984 people in 2015

2) CNO releases plan for Navy to stay ahead of rivals at sea, prepare for combat

3) Captain Sacked After Grounding Nuclear Submarine

4) San Bernardino Couple's 'Lost 18 Minutes'

5) Obama In Tears As He Announces Gun Measures
6) Guns, guns, guns: 2015 was a record year for FBI background checks

7) Leibgarde des Präsidenten: Secret Service unter Beschuss
http://www.faz.net/aktuell/politik/ausland/amerika/secret-service-in-der-kritik-13948546.html

8) Carter Taps Former Aide as Military Adviser

9) Silk-Road-Betrug: Secret-Service-Agent muss sechs Jahre ins Gefängnis

10) Behind the scenes in the Marine Corps mission against the Islamic State

11) Oregon 'militia' mocked in the name of #YallQaeda

12) 'Militia' continues siege of Oregon government building

13) Obama pledges to act unilaterally on US gun control

14) West Point Appoints First Female Commandant

15) Pakistanis With Terrorism Ties Caught After Crossing U.S.-Mexican Border

16) Donald Trump defends Muslim ban call after al-Shabab film

17) Marco Rubio Slams NSA Spying on Israel Despite Supporting It Behind the Scenes

18) Navy Leader Says 'Nukes' Essential to US Survival
http://abcnews.go.com/Politics/wireStory/navy-leader-nukes-essential-us-survival-36112247
55/16
Russian intelligence agency says it’s thwarted a Latvian and Lithuanian spy mission

(meduza) The FSB, Russia's Federal Security Service (the successor to the KGB), says Latvian and Lithuanian intelligence services have attempted espionage in Russia. The FSB says foreign intelligence officers tried to persuade two Kaliningrad-based ex-servicemen to reveal restricted information pertaining to the Baltic fleet.

Citizens of Latvia and Lithuania met the ex-servicemen by claiming a shared interest in First and Second World War history, saying they were looking for hidden caches left behind in Kaliningrad by the East Prussian population deported from the territory.

In their exchanges with the ex-servicemen, the intelligence agents allegedly tried to get information about Russia’s Baltic fleet. The Latvian and Lithuanian nationals have since been denied entry to Russia. At the same time, the Russian former soldiers have been issued warning about the inadmissibility of such interactions. No legal proceedings have been brought against them for their exchanges with the foreigners.


56/16
Russia security paper designates Nato as threat

(bbc) Russian President Vladimir Putin has signed an updated national security paper describing Nato's expansion as a threat to the country. The paper says Russia's "independent domestic and foreign policy" has triggered a "counter-action" from the US and its allies.

It accuses these countries of striving to dominate global affairs. The conflict in Ukraine, which began in 2014, has led to a sharp deterioration between Russia and the West.

The updated National Security Strategy signed by President Putin on Thursday is the latest in a series that are critical of Nato. In 2014 Russia announced it was altering its military doctrine to take account of the Ukraine crisis and Nato's presence in eastern Europe.


57/16
The fuel for a nuclear bomb is in the hands of an unknown black marketeer from Russia, U.S. officials say

(center for public integrity) The presence of identical fissile materials in three smuggling incidents indicates someone has a larger cache and is hunting for a buyer.


58/16
New Belarusian Study Highlights Six Aspects of Moscow’s New Geopolitical Strategy
A study by two Belarusian scholars entitled “The New Geo-Strategy of Russia: Consequences and Challenges for the Architecture of International Security” (in Russian) says that the Kremlin’s current geopolitical policy for the next one to four years consists of six elements.

http://windowoneurasia2.blogspot.ch/2015/09/new-belarusian-study-highlights-six.html

59/16
Russia warns Turkey over Aegean warship incident

(reuters) Russia on Sunday warned Turkey to stop staging what it called provocations against its forces in or near Syria after one of its warships fired warning shots at a Turkish vessel in the Aegean to avoid a collision.

The Russian Defence Ministry said one of its warships, the destroyer Smetlivy, had been forced to fire the warning shots on Sunday morning and that it had summoned the Turkish military attache over the incident.

"The Turkish military diplomat was given a tough explanation about the potentially disastrous consequences from Ankara’s reckless actions towards Russia’s military contingent fighting against international terrorism in Syria," the Defence Ministry said in a statement.

http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-russia-turkey-idUSKBN0TW0EU20151213

60/16
Russia says it hit Islamic State with submarine-launched missile for first time

(reuters) Russian Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu said on Tuesday that Russia had for the first time struck Islamic State targets in Syria with missiles fired from a submarine in the Mediterranean.

"The targets were two large terrorist positions in the territory of Raqqa," Shoigu told President Vladimir Putin in a televised meeting, adding that the Calibre missiles had been fired from the submarine Rostov-on-Don.

"We can say with complete confidence that fairly serious damage was done to weapons stores and a factory for preparing mines and, naturally, oil infrastructure." Shoigu said Russia had informed Israel and the United States in advance of its plan to launch missiles from a submarine. He said that, over the previous three days, Russia's air force had flown more than 300 sorties over Syria and struck more than 600 targets of various types.

a)  http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-russia-idUSKBN0TR2H620151209

b)  http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-russia-syria-idUSKBN0TR0TU20151208

61/16
Russlands Atomwaffen: Warnung vor der Erstschlag-Falle

Agenturberichten angeordnet, das russische Nuklearpotential „komplett“ mit neuen Waffen auszurüsten.


62/16
Other News From Russia

1) British and Russian military chiefs met to discuss border ‘incidents’, says Moscow
http://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2015/dec/18/british-russian-military-chiefs-discuss-border-incidents-says-moscow

2) Lithuania Says NATO Jets Scrambled More Often in 2015

3) Putin schwört Russen auf Kampf gegen Terror ein

4) Putin setzt aktualisierte Sicherheitsstrategie in Kraft

5) France, Russia To ‘Strengthen’ Information Exchange on IS

6) Lithuania To Acquire Javelin Missiles, Hikes Defense Spending

7) Putin is Accusing Turkey of Being an ISIS Ally—and He’s At Least Partly Right
8) Russian Helicopters To Overhaul Egyptian Air Force Mi-8T, Mi-17 Fleet

9) Russia, Israel To Broaden Defense Coordination in Syria

10) Egypt, Russia Negotiating Missile Sale

11) Russia 'Paralyzes' Lebanon Airspace with Exercise

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**Crisis in Ukraine**

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Ukraine: Geheimdienst wirft Russland Hackerangriff vor


Eine Sprecherin des ukrainischen Geheimdienstes SBU gab an, hinter dem Angriff stünde Russland. Es sei gelungen, Schadsoftware, die von "russischen Sicherheitsdiensten" stamme, rechtzeitig zu deaktivieren und so einen längeren Stromausfall zu verhindern.


b) [http://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/gadgets-and-tech/hackers-cause-a-power-cut-for-the-first-time-say-researchers-a6798561.html](http://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/gadgets-and-tech/hackers-cause-a-power-cut-for-the-first-time-say-researchers-a6798561.html)

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64/16

Ukraine utility cyberattack wider than reported
(it security) A central European security software firm said that a cyberattack last month in Ukraine was broader than initially reported last week when the nation’s secret police blamed a power outage on Russia.

Western Ukraine power company Prykarpattyoblenergo reported an outage on Dec 23, saying the area affected included regional capital Ivano-Frankivsk. Ukraine’s SBU state security service responded by blaming Russia and the energy ministry in Kiev set up a commission to investigate the matter.

http://www.itsecurityguru.org/2016/01/05/ukraine-utility-cyberattack-wider-than-reported/

65/16
Erdoğan turns down Putin in joining intelligence center in Iraq

(todays zaman) Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan said Turkey has turned down an offer made by Russian President Vladimir Putin to take part in a joint intelligence center operated by Iran, Iraq, Syria and Russia in Baghdad to gather and share information about the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL).

Speaking to Saudi Al Arabiya English, Erdoğan said Turkey rejected the offer on the grounds that he doesn’t want to appear on the same board as Syrian President Bashar al-Assad. His remarks came at a time when Turkey is seeking to overcome disputes with Iraq and with Russia.

Turkish-Iraqi relations relapsed significantly after Ankara sent hundreds of troops to reinforce its small military unit in a camp near ISIL-held Mosul. After Baghdad protested, Turkey partially withdrew its forces from Bashiqa camp to de-escalate the tension and then vowed to pull out all troops from northern Iraq after the US urged it to do so.


66/16
Turkish ‘cleansing’ operation rocks southeastern cities

(reuters) Explosions and gunfire resounded around the southeastern Turkish town of Cizre on Friday after a clash overnight that the army said killed six Kurdish militants and one soldier, as a security operation there entered its 11th day.

Since a two-year ceasefire between Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) militants and Ankara fell apart in July, the mainly Kurdish southeast has been plunged back into a three-decades-old conflict which has killed more than 40,000 people.
A helicopter clattered overhead and armoured vehicles sped along a hilltop road above Cizre, near the Syrian border, as security forces pressed on with a campaign across the region involving thousands of troops, backed by tanks. The town, in Sirnak province, is the focus of what the government has described as an operation to "cleanse" the area of militants. But locals dispute that description and complain that the attacks are indiscriminate.

http://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-turkey-kurds-idUKKBN0U80FI20151225

67/16
Turkey’s southeast hit by more clashes, militants launch bomb attack

(reuters) Clashes between Turkish security forces and Kurdish militants intensified in the southeastern city of Diyarbakir on Wednesday after a bomb attack on troops there killed one soldier and wounded seven other people, security sources said.

Turkish security forces last week launched an operation in the southeast, backed by tanks and thousands of troops, as President Tayyip Erdogan pledged to root out militants after the AK Party which he co-founded won a November election.

Figures from the pro-Kurdish Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP) show at least 24 civilians have been killed in fighting, while state media said 168 militants from the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) were killed in eight days in six southeastern towns.

PKK militants detonated a bomb by remote control in the Diyarbakir district of Sur, which is under police curfew, killing one soldier and wounding six others, security sources said. One civilian was also wounded.

http://www.reuters.com/article/us-turkey-kurds-idUSKBN0U61J320151223

68/16
Cyberattacks reveal Turkey's weaknesses

(al monitor) Turkish media outlets report that more than 400,000 websites registered under Turkey’s Internet country top-level domain ”.tr” are experiencing problems. Since Dec. 14, the computer servers of government agencies and private entities, including the country’s three largest Internet service providers, have suffered systematic cyberattacks. Most Turkish banks and their credit card terminals could not perform any transactions on Dec. 25, and as of Dec. 29 the virtual onslaught was continuing.

According to the Ankara-based Network Information Center, which administers the registry of sites under the “.tr” domain, the cyberattacks against Turkey are of the distributed denial of service (DDoS) kind. In a DDoS scenario, hackers take over multiple computers remotely, send continuous requests to overwhelm the targeted server and deny it the ability to fulfill its duty — be it providing news stories, banking services or video-streaming.

The DDoS attacks have had a noticeable effect on Turkey’s Internet speed. According to Akamai Technologies, one of the world’s leading content delivery network companies, Turkey’s average Internet connection speed was 6.2 megabits per second (Mbps) in the third quarter of 2015. While that figure pales in comparison to world leaders South Korea’s and Sweden’s 20.5 Mbps and 17.4 Mbps, respectively, three Turkish technology experts told Al-Monitor that their country’s average
connection speed has fallen well below 6.2 Mbps since Dec. 14. One expert who spoke to Al-Monitor on condition of anonymity stated that the attacks, which reached 220 gigabits per second, were “unique” and “unprecedented” in Turkey’s history.


69/16
Twitter misses deadline to pay Turkey’s $50,000 terrorist propaganda fine

(the next web) Twitter has missed the deadline for paying a $50,000 fine imposed on it by the Turkish government for its refusal to remove “terrorist propaganda” from the site.

Government minister Binali Yildirim has vowed to take measures to make Twitter pay the fine handed out by the telecoms regulator BTK.

This is the first fine of this kind to be imposed on Twitter, but it’s just part of an ongoing battle between the Turkish government and Web providers. As early as 2010, the Turkish government attempted to block YouTube because people in the country were using it to criticize the founder of modern Turkey, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk.

http://thenextweb.com/apps/2016/01/06/twitter-misses-deadline-to-pay-turkeys-50000-terrorist-propaganda-fine/

70/16
Other News From Turkey

1) Report: Turkey detains 9 ‘Islamic State suspects’ near border with Syria

2) Turkish army kills 14 Kurdish militants, one security officer dead
http://www.reuters.com/article/us-turkey-politics-kurds-idUSKBN0UJ1J220160105

3) Turkey reopens Habur gate to Iraq after 22 days

4) Vice News reporter freed on bail after 131 days in Turkish jail

5) Government report: State grants to HDP may have funded terrorism
http://www.dailysabah.com/nation/2016/01/07/government-report-state-grants-to-hdp-may-have-funded-terrorism

6) Two civilians, two security forces killed in Turkish army action against Kurd rebels
http://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-turkey-politics-kurds-idUKKBN0UJ0YS20160104

7) One soldier, two police, 12 Kurdish militants killed in Turkey's southeast
http://af.reuters.com/article/worldNews/idAFKBN0UJF1S20160101
8) Court rejects appeal for imprisoned generals in MİT trucks probe

9) ISIS Terrorist Attack In Turkey? CIA Warns Turkish Authorities Of Islamic State Plans To Target US Interests

10) Spain To Stay With Patriots in Turkey; Italy Could Deploy Samp/T Missiles

11) Germany to Send AWACS Planes to Turkey

12) Kurdish militants kill two Turkish soldiers, wound six in bomb attack: sources
http://www.reuters.com/article/us-turkey-kurds-idUSKBN0U425X20151221

13) Turkish military offensive kills 110 Kurdish militants in six days - security sources
http://in.reuters.com/article/turkey-kurds-idINKB0N30N520151220

14) Turkish police fire tear gas on Istanbul protest against southeast operations
http://www.reuters.com/article/us-turkey-kurds-protest-idUSKBN0U30U920151220

15) Turkey arrests IS suspect over planned attack on U.S. consulate

71/16

Security Breach Prompts Shake-Up at Israel Missile Defense Office

(defense news) A "serious information security violation" forced Israel's Defense Ministry on Sunday to terminate Yair Ramati as head of the Ministry's Israel Missile Defense Organization (IMDO). "Recently, a serious information security violation was discovered. As a result, Ramati can no longer continue to perform his duties in the Ministry of Defense," MoD announced Sunday.

Defense and industry sources described the security breach as involving classified information stored on Ramati's personal laptop computer. The MoD statement noted that the matter was turned over to "authorized parties," who will continue to deal with the case.

During Ramati's four years as IMDO director, Israel made enormous strides in developing and deploying Israel's four-layer active defense network comprised of Iron Dome, David's Sling, Arrow-2 and the Upper-Tier Arrow-3 together with partners in the United States.
Terrorism as defined by Israel

The burning to death of the Dawabsheh family in July created a conflict between the Israeli Shin Bet internal security agency and the Jewish settlers who sympathised with those who carried out the deadly arson attack. While the Shin Bet knows how dangerous the extremist Jewish groups are and the consequences of their heinous acts that reflect on the existence of the state itself, the rabbis and settler leaders continue to attack the agency and accuse it of using force and violence against the Hilltop Youth and students of religious schools in order to gain information from them.

The conflict between the two sides reached its climax when the Shin Bet sought to bring Israeli society’s attention to what was going on in the West Bank settlements, including attempts to revolt and rebel against the state’s decisions; it leaked a video known as the “blood wedding” to Israel’s Channel 10. The security agency did so despite knowing the damage that broadcasting the video would have on Israel’s position internationally. However, at the same time, the Shin Bet also realised that Israel’s domestic interests are more important than its external status.

The blood wedding video was a shock to Israeli society and its political leadership, and people from across the spectrum condemned it, as they now fear that Jewish terrorism, sponsored by ministers in the current government and rabbis, will increase. This was stated by Minister of Defence Moshe Ya’alon, who expressed his fear of extremism for the future of Israel and its unity and stability. This drove Education Minister Naftali Bennett to reassure the extremists that they possess the reins of political decisions in Israel, and that he personally, and his extremist colleague, Ayelet Shaked, the Minister of Justice, would support them: “So what more could you want at this time?”

Shin Bet uncovers Jewish extremist plot to destroy state

For the first time since the establishment of the State of Israel, the Shin Bet has used what it calls “special methods” for investigating Jews. Some in the extreme right argue that these tools include torture.

Israel May Have Found a ‘Solution’ to Palestinian Knife Attacks

Palestinians and Israeli Arabs have carried out at least 100 knife attacks against Israeli soldiers and civilians in recent months. Now, the Israeli military hopes it has found a way of keeping its troops safe: Neck protectors designed to prevent soldiers from being stabbed or slashed.
According to the Times of Israel, the Israel Defense Forces’ Central Command first floated the idea of giving the new equipment to soldiers based in dangerous areas in November. Lt. Col. Liron Segel, who heads the directorate’s Personal Protection and Equipment Department, said that the Israeli-made gear is effective, comfortable, and easily fits with the troops’ existing bullet-proof vests. “I’ve given them a solution to the threat of stabbing attacks,” he said Tuesday.

Although Segel did not elaborate on how the neck guards were designed, Maj. Guy Elazar, from the IDF’s counterterrorism unit, told the military-run publication Bamahane that the “the inner part of the protector is gentle to the touch [and] the external section is made of half-rigid plastic, which is low and wide so as to defend the connection between the neck and the shoulder blade.”

The new guard has reportedly already been taken into the field for testing and will soon be sent out to units operating in areas where knife attacks have been most common in the West Bank. Up to 850 soldiers may participate in the first round before the IDF considers handing out neck guards to other troops in vulnerable positions.

http://foreignpolicy.com/2016/01/05/israel-may-have-found-a-solution-to-palestinian-knife-attacks/

75/16
Israel releases 4 more Egyptians in prisoner exchange

(ap) Israel has freed four Egyptian prisoners, in addition to two others who had already walked free, in a deal that secured last week’s release from Egypt of Israeli citizen Ouda Tarabin who was convicted of spying.

Israel Prisons Authority spokesman Sivan Weizman says the four Egyptians were imprisoned for drug trafficking. One had served his full sentence while the others were released between two and six years early.

Weizman says the four were flown back to Egypt on Monday. Tarabin, a Bedouin Arab, returned to his family last Thursday after serving a 15-year sentence in an Egyptian prison on charges of spying for Israel. The 34-year-old Tarabin had maintained he was innocent. After his release, he referred to his incarceration as “when I was in a cemetery in Egypt.”

http://hosted.ap.org/dynamic/stories/M/ML_ISRAEL_EGYPT?SITE=AP&SECTION=HOME&TEMPLATE=DEFAULT&CTIME=2015-12-10-06-34-19

76/16
Other News From Israel

1) New Mossad chief: Iran remains central threat for Israel
http://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-4749537,00.html

2) The truth about Gilad Shalit’s five years in captivity

3) Terrorist’s relative: „Why can’t Israel find him?“
http://www.israelnationalnews.com/News/News.aspx/206039#.VoGgRjvSnIU

4) Our new spymaster and the demise of politics
5) Jewish teen accused of church arson confined to house arrest

6) Security forces intensify hunt for Hebron gunmen

7) Shin Bet: Suspected Jewish terrorists belong to radical group
http://www.israelhayom.com/site/newsletter_article.php?id=30875

8) Police catch Herzliya terror suspect
http://www.israelnationalnews.com/News/News.aspx/205972#.Vou_c5vSnIU

9) Israelis charged over fatal West Bank family arson attack

10) Israeli air strikes 'hit Hamas targets in Gaza'

11) 11-year-old Palestinian boy says he stabbed light rail guard ‘to die a martyr’

12) Shin Bet identifies Muhammad Tarda as Kiryat Gat assailant

Abu Dhabi port worker accused of espionage says information was not confidential

(the national) An Indian man, accused of espionage, has claimed the information he spread was freely available to anyone.

At the state security court on Monday, the lawyer for M T B, 54, a logistics supervisor at an Abu Dhabi port, claimed the information he is accused of passing to his country’s embassy, was not considered confidential.

“Except for one piece of information about the American ship,” the lawyer, Mohammed Al Aswad, claimed.

http://www.thenational.ae/uae/courts/abu-dhabi-port-worker-accused-of-espionage-says-information-was-not-confidential
78/16

**ISIL counterattacks target Iraqi troops in Ramadi**

(al Jazeera) The Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) group has continued to launch a series of deadly attacks against Iraqi government forces on the edges of the western city of Ramadi, days after they were driven out of the city centre.

The latest attacks killed at least 11 members of the Iraqi security forces, sources told Al Jazeera on Saturday. Brigadier-General Ahmed al-Belawi told the Associated Press news agency that ISIL struck security forces with a series of car bombs in two areas on the city's outskirts.

Belawi said the troops repelled the attacks and did not lose territory. Ramadi, the capital of Anbar province, fell to ISIL in May, marking a major setback for US-backed Iraqi forces. Iraqi troops retook the city centre on Monday, but ISIL fighters are still holed up in parts of the city.


79/16

**Egyptian court adjourns Morsi’s ‘espionage’ trial**

(middle east monitor) An Egyptian court adjourned the latest trial of the first freely-elected Egyptian President Mohamed Morsi and ten other defendants on Sunday. The trial, on charges of the president’s “espionage” with Qatar, will now commence on 2 January, Anadolu has reported.

An anonymous judicial source told Anadolu that the Cairo Criminal Court adjourned the trial in order to be able to listen to the witness statements of Brigadier General Mohamed Zaki, chief of the Republican Guards, and Brigadier General Usama Al-Jindi.

Morsi also faces four other charges, including inciting the killing of protesters during his rule, degrading the Egyptian judiciary, conspiring with foreign groups (including the Palestinian Islamic Resistance movement, Hamas) and breaking out of prison during the January 25 Revolution which toppled Hosni Mubarak.


80/16

**U.S. Airstrike Killed Iraqis by Accident, Officials Say**

(new york times) An airstrike that mistakenly killed Iraqi troops on Friday was carried out by an American plane, United States officials said on Saturday.

The episode poses a fresh challenge to the Obama administration's efforts to expand cooperation with the Iraqis in fighting the Islamic State, and Defense Secretary Ashton B. Carter was quick to call the Iraqi prime minister, Haider al-Abadi, to express his condolences and invite Iraq to participate in an investigation.
Mr. Carter did not offer a detailed explanation for the errant airstrike, which killed nine Iraqi soldiers and one officer, according to Iraq’s defense minister. But Mr. Carter said, “It seemed to be a mistake that involved both sides.”


81/16
Iraqi military says coalition airstrike hit its forces

(washington post) The Iraqi military said an airstrike by the U.S.-led coalition hit its forces Friday, the first time it has reported a friendly-fire incident since American jets began bombing Islamic State militants in the country last year.

The strike took place as the Iraqi army engaged in close combat with the militants in poor weather conditions south of the city of Fallujah, about 40 miles west of Baghdad, the Iraqi Defense Ministry said in a statement. One soldier was killed, and nine were injured, it said.

But soldiers said the death toll was higher. One officer injured in the strike, who spoke on the condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to speak to the news media, said 25 soldiers were killed and 37 were wounded. A military medic said he had treated at least 20 injured soldiers.

The U.S.-led coalition said it had launched an investigation and offered condolences to the Iraqi security forces. In a statement, it confirmed that coalition planes had conducted several airstrikes in the area.


82/16
Other News From NEME

1) IS steps up assault on western Iraqi town after losses

2) ISIS kills hundreds in major attack on Iraqi city

3) 100 Pakistanis joined ISIS in Syria and Iraq
http://www.iraqinews.com/features/100-pakistani-joined-isis-syria-iraq/

4) IS Expands Car Bomb Attacks From Iraqi Desert
http://www.voanews.com/content/islamic-state-car-bomb-attacks-iraqi-desert/3134082.html

5) Islamic State militants kill six security officers in Iraq’s Ninawa

6) Four armed men set Saudi Aramco bus on fire in oil province
http://www.reuters.com/article/us-saudi-iran-bus-idUSKBN0UJ1W420160105
New Images Show ISIS’s Use of Explosive-Filled Bulldozers to Attack Iraqi Forces

(newsweek) The Islamic State militant group (ISIS) is using fortified bulldozers and armored, machine-gun mounted trucks in its suicide attacks on Iraqi security forces in Anbar, according to the Governor of Anbar’s office.
As battles continue to rage around Iraq’s largest region, new images released to Newsweek by the governor’s office show a bulldozer loaded with explosive-filled containers in the back and fortified with what appears to be steel fencing covering the driver’s seat and the sides of the vehicle.


84/16

Sniper ‘kills Isis suicide bombers from a kilometre’

(independent) An SAS sniper killed three Islamic State suicide bombers by firing shots from the world’s most powerful rifle through a 10inch wall, according to reports. The marksman, said to have been serving as an adviser to Iraqi forces, fired 30 rounds from a Barrett M82 .50 calibre anti-materiel rifle into a two-storey command post in the city of Ramadi in Iraq.

Military sources have suggested that the operation saved many lives. It would be the first time that British troops are known to have taken part in a direct ground attack against Isis. When it was discovered that the bombers were in the building, several options were considered, including an air strike and a rocket launch, but both were deemed too dangerous to civilians, it has been claimed.

Instead, the sniper based himself in another building around 1,000m away and fired into the command post, almost completely destroying one of its walls. A squadron of the elite British troops has been assigned to battling Isis in Syria and Iraq. They have spent more than a decade working closely with their American counterparts in Iraq and Afghanistan, and targeting and intelligence gathering is often worked on jointly. Several dozen are said to be advising Iraqi forces around Ramadi, including six officers led by a Royal Artillery major who co-ordinate western air attacks in support of Iraqi ground troops.


85/16

ISIS tunnels: How ISIS militants evade airstrikes in Ramadi

(cnn) The battle for the key Iraqi city of Ramadi has opened a window into the resilience of ISIS. It took months of daily onslaughts before Iraqi forces and the U.S.-led coalition were able to expel the militants from the city center recently.

Despite this setback, ISIS still controls as much as 25% of Ramadi, local tribal leaders say. And fighting continues to rage in pockets throughout the city. "During our advance to cleanse the area, they would distract us and disappear," Maj. Gen. Sami Kathim, commander of Iraqi Counter Terror Services, told CNN.

Part of a special operations unit, Kathim’s team was among those tasked with hunting the militants. "We discovered they were ducking down and hiding into the tunnels.” The tunneling isn’t exactly a feat of engineering, but it’s a priority in ISIS towns. First the militants take territory, then they dig it up.

ISIS fighters 'murder five Russian nationals' accused of spying on the evil jihadis

(express) ISLAMIC State (ISIS) fighters in Syria have allegedly murdered five Russian nationals, according to Russian media reports. If the latest killings are confirmed, they will bring the number of Russian citizens killed in Syria to six, after a video of an ISIS soldier purporting to execute a “Chechen spy” emerged last week.

The ISIS member who carried out the alleged execution has already been nicknamed “the Russian Jihadi John” and is now the most wanted man in Russia. The government of Russian President Vladimir Putin is now one of a number of foreign armies conducting military operations in Syria, as world powers rush to obliterate ISIS in the wake of last month’s Paris terror attacks which killed 130 people.

Today it was also revealed that at least 27,000 foreign nationals from a number of countries around the world are currently fighting in Iraq and Syria, both for and against ISIS.

Obama Unleashes Hunter-Killers on ISIS

(daily beast) The special ops forces that got Bin Laden, Saddam, and Zarqawi are finally being sent by the dozens to go after the Islamic State’s leaders. Can these troops turn the tide?

The Obama administration is dispatching a targeting force of elite U.S. special operations troops into northern Iraq, after top U.S. defense and intelligence officials warned the ISIS network is growing faster than the coalition that’s fighting it, senior U.S. officials tell The Daily Beast.

The new special operations task force, led by the elite Joint Special Operations Command, is aimed at denting the so-called Islamic State group’s popularity by decimating its leadership and gathering the intelligence needed to cut off more of its operations before they can launch.

JSOC will initially lead the targeting effort in Iraq, but the special operations footprint could be expanded to include other special operations forces, a senior military official told The Daily Beast on Tuesday.

ISIS intends to use birds as suicide bombers to attack US-led warplanes conducting airstrikes

(ibi times) An ISIS supporter has a new idea on his mind to launch an attack against the warplanes conducting airstrikes against the Islamic State – to use birds as suicide bombers.

In a new comprehensive plan titled “A New Way To Down Warplanes,” the ISIS supporter has provided a detailed plan on how to target the U.S.-led coalition’s airstrike campaign in Iraq. The plan was discovered by news site Vocativ, posted on an ISIS supporters’ group on the messaging app Telegram.
At first, the plan was thought to be a trolling attempt. It was later discovered to be a well-laid plan that offers suggestions about which birds and explosives to use against the enemy warplanes. In addition, it also offers suggestions about how to smuggle bombs into a war zone.


89/16
Analysts Accuse CENTCOM of Covering Up Cooked ISIS Intelligence

(daily beast) Allegations are mounting that senior intelligence officials at Central Command not only skewed findings on the ISIS war to please D.C., but tried to hide what they did.


90/16
Ces (nombreux) pays que l’existence de Daech arrange bien


http://tempsreel.nouvelobs.com/attentats-terroristes-a-paris/20151119.OBS9827/ces-nombreux-pays-que-l-existence-de-daech-arrange-bien.html

91/16
How ISIL works: Price controls, vaccination programs, and $40 million a month in taxes

(quartz) The report notes that, unlike al-Qaeda, ISIL is not heavily dependent on foreign donors for money.


92/16
How Saddam’s fighters help Islamic State rule

(reuters) From military victories to surveillance, former Baathists are a powerful factor in the rise and control of Islamic state.


93/16
‘Go ahead and cut off the internet, our messenger pigeons won’t complain’: Last post of female journalist executed by ISIS ‘for being a spy’

(daily mail) ISIS has murdered a female journalist after accusing her of being a spy, activists have confirmed.
Ruqia Hassan often posted information about the daily lives of residents living under ISIS in its Syrian stronghold of Raqqa.

Writing under the pen name Nissan Ibrahim, Ms Hassan’s posts described how the city was targeted by coalition airstrikes on a regular basis.


94/16
Iraqi army kill ISIS war minister

(abna24) On Tuesday, Iraqi fighter jets pounded a terrorist base in the town of Barwanah, located some 200 kilometers (124 miles) northwest of the Iraqi capital of Baghdad, killing the purported Daesh war minister, identified as Samer Mohammad Matloub Hussein al-Mahlawi, along with three of his close aides, Lebanon's Arabic-language Al-Ahed news website reported.

A source in Anbar Province, speaking on condition of anonymity, also said that security forces and tribal fighters, backed by Iraqi military aircraft, carried out two separate offensives in Barwanah and the city of Hadithah, situated about 240 kilometers (150 miles) northwest of Baghdad, leaving more than 250 Daesh militants killed. Over 100 vehicles belonging to the terrorists were also destroyed in the operation, including a number of cars rigged with explosive materials.


95/16
Identity of five men killed by ISIS for spying revealed

(abna24) The identity of five men killed recently by Islamic State (ISIS) militants for spying and shown in a propaganda video has now come to light.

Manhal Marwan’s brother Hael, 40, was killed on charges of spying for Britain. “My brother is a normal civilian just like all other people inside my city. He has shop, and he fixes air conditioning and electric things in homes. And he lives a normal life,” Marwan told BBC. Marwan added that his brother was forced by the militants to admit that was a British spy.

The extremist group released a video on Monday showing Faisal Hamoud Aljafar, 25; Mahyar Mahmud al-Othman, 31; Omar Hamoud al-Jafar, 30; and 18-years-old Obeid Mohammad Abdul al-ghani, accused and executed for allegedly spying for Britain.

Other News From the IS Battleground

1) Islamic State threatens to destroy Saudi prisons after executions
http://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-saudi-security-idUKKBN0UK0T020160106

2) Peshmerga foil ISIS suicide bombers
http://rudaw.net/english/kurdistan/050120163

3) Baghdadi claims ‘infidel nations’ are afraid of ‘final war’

4) ISIS kills a family from Mosul on charges of spying with security forces

5) Former CIA director: Go after ISIS hard
http://video.foxbusiness.com/v/466091089001/former-cia-director-go-after-isis-hard-/?playlist_id=937116489001#sp=show-clips

6) Daesh in Libya executes Moroccan ‘witch,’ Palestinian 'spy'

7) Italian Predator drones spy on ISIS operations in Iraq

8) France uses cruise missiles against Islamic State for first time

9) In Raqqa, support ISIL or die

10) Rund 2.500 IS-Kämpfer bei Luftangriffen im Dezember getötet

97/16
Senior Al Qaeda leader Abu Anwar killed by pro-government forces in Yemen

(the star) Pro-government fighters in Yemen attacked and killed a senior Al Qaeda leader and three people travelling in his convoy near a security checkpoint in the southern Abyan province on Friday, Yemeni officials said.
Ali Abed al-Rab bin Talab, better known as Abu Anwar, was the extremist group’s chief judge in Yemen’s largest province, Hadramawt, which al-Qaida largely controls. He survived a suspected U.S. drone attack in 2014.

Before the attack, Abu Anwar’s convoy was heading to the southern port city of Aden, the officials said. Al Qaeda and Islamic State-linked militants have exploited the chaos of Yemen’s civil war to make incursions into the strategic port city, where militant attacks targeting pro-government officials have escalated in recent months.


98/16
Fighting erupts over control of Yemen’s Aden port

(al Jazeera) Government forces have clashed with fighters for control over the strategic southern port of Aden, Yemeni officials in the southern city say. The officials said on Sunday that fighters believed to be close to al-Qaeda have refused to hand over the port to the government of President Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi.

At least one armed group is reportedly using the port to run lucrative smuggling operations. On Thursday, a drive-by shooting in Aden killed Ahmed al-Idrisi, a senior leader of a pro-government group, just hours after he reluctantly agreed to hand over control of the port to government troops.

Security officials said Idrisi publicly backed the government, but maintained secret deals with armed groups and anti-government forces.


99/16
Bin Laden’s former bodyguard dies in Yemen as conflict rages on

(independent) The former body guard of Osama Bin Laden, who later renounced him and al-Qaeda, has died. Nasser al-Bahri, also known as Abu Jandal, passed away in hospital in Yemen after a long illness, according to the BBC.

Believed to have been in his 40s when he died, he had taken part in attacks alongside Islamist militants during the 1990s in Bosnia, Somalia and Afghanistan.

When in Afghanistan, he was a driver and bodyguard for the-then al-Qaeda leader, Bin Laden, who was later killed by US Special Forces in a raid in Pakistan in 2011. One year earlier, former bodyguard al-Bahri had renounced his old leader’s group - particularly in his home country Yemen.


100/16
Saudi Coalition Claims Progress in Taking Yemeni City of Taez
(defense news) In the battle for the strategic Yemeni city of Taez, the Saudi-led coalition has gained nearly complete control, according to coalition commanders and analysts.

Operations began to capture the city on Nov. 15 with United Arab Emirates forces and Saudi-Emirati trained Yemeni Popular Resistance Committee forces advancing.

According to Mahmood Sharief Mahmood, head of research and constancy, and adviser at the Institute for Near East and Gulf Military Analysis, obtaining control of the city is key to the Arab coalition forces' campaign in Yemen.

http://www.defensenews.com/story/defense/policy-budget/warfare/2015/12/04/united-arab-emirates/76771142/

101/16
Yemen’s Aden governor killed in blast claimed by ISIL

(al Jazeera) The governor of Yemen’s city of Aden, Major General Jaafar Mohammed Saad, and five of his bodyguards have been killed in a car bomb attack claimed by the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) group.

The incident happened on Sunday in Aden’s Tawahi district in the country’s south. ISIL, in a statement posted on a messaging service, said it detonated a car laden with explosives as Saad’s convoy passed by.

The group promised more operations against what it called "the heads of apostasy in Yemen". ISIL also posted what it said were photos of the booby-trapped vehicle as a white van carrying Saad drove past, then two other photos of a huge ball of fire which it said were taken as the bomb exploded.


102/16
Other News From Yemen

1) Woman stoned to death for ‘adultery’ by members of dangerous al-Qaeda offshoot in Yemen

2) Saudi-led airstrikes in Yemen intensify as rebels fire back

3) Yemen imposes curfew in Aden following deadly battle

4) Curfew imposed on Yemen’s Aden after fighting kills 12
http://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-yemen-security-curfew-idUKXBN0UJ0VE20160104
5) Al-Qaeda stones woman to death for adultery in Yemen: Reports - See more at:

6) Southern Yemeni officials survive car bomb attack in Aden
http://www.reuters.com/article/us-yemen-security-attack-idUSKBN0UJ1GH20160105

103/16
The most unconventional weapon in Syria: Wheat
(washington post) In the fall of 2012, fighters from the Free Syrian Army took over Eastern Ghouta, a semi-agricultural area about eight miles northeast of Damascus. Government forces responded by placing the area under siege, cutting off water, electricity, gas, medical assistance and bread.

The regime’s goal was to starve the people of Eastern Ghouta into submission, and it was working: The price of bread and rice went up 50 times. Locals were living on animal feed or sometimes eating nothing at all. “They began to wage war against the people even through their daily bread,” says Majd al-Dik, an aid worker for a Syrian humanitarian group called Spring of Life.

Nine months later, the Free Syrian Army mounted a military operation in a regime-controlled area called al-Matahin, the Mills, just outside Eastern Ghouta. Its objective was a flour mill, flanked by two rows of grain silos that housed part of the Syrian government’s strategic wheat reserves — a potent weapon in the conflict that now, after 4 1/2 years, has killed at least a quarter of a million people. If the opposition could capture the mill, it could keep the wheat, break the siege, gain a strategic point on the airport road — and perhaps even make some money.

https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/the-most-unconventional-weapon-in-syria-wheat/2015/12/18/781a0ae0-9cf4-11e5-bce4-708fe33e3288_story.html

104/16
Amid Syria's civil war, a James Bond-style rescue operation
(ap) In the whirlwind of Syria's civil war, two Russian pilots parachuted from their aircraft into a chaotic front-line mountainous region near the border with Turkey after their aircraft was hit by a Turkish F-16 fighter jet.

http://www.apnewsarchive.com/2015/Amid-Syria-civil-war-a-James-Bond-style-rescue-operation-for-Russian-pilot/id/a27e4cece1c3e4927b25cd932c2a17a10

105/16
Russian airstrikes restore Syrian military balance of power

ACIPSS Newsletter 2016
Weeks of Russian airstrikes in Syria appear to have restored enough momentum to the government side to convince President Bashar Assad’s foes and the world community that even if he doesn’t win the war he cannot quickly be removed by force.

That realization, combined with the growing sense that the world’s No. 1 priority is the destruction of the Islamic State group, has led many to acknowledge that however unpalatable his conduct of the war, Assad will have to be tolerated for at least some time further.

The most dramatic sign of that came Tuesday with the statement by U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry that Assad’s future will be determined by the Syrian people, suggesting in the clearest way yet that he can stay on for now and be part of a transition.

That statement — less a reversal than the culmination of a rethink that had been underway for months — was doubly piquant coming in Moscow, where Kerry was discussing the Syria question with Russian officials.

https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle_east/syrian-troops-capture-strategic-mountain-in-coastal-province/2015/12/16/aeef2c5a-a3f3-11e5-8318-bd8caed8c588_story.html

106/16
How the growing web of the Syrian conflict became a global problem

What started out as simple protests in Syria has expanded to civil war and now an international crisis.

http://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/world/explaining-the-syrian-conflict/

107/16
Syria chemical arms probe found signs of sarin gas exposure: U.N.

A fact-finding mission of the global anti-chemical weapons watchdog has found indications that some people in Syria were exposed to deadly sarin gas, or a compound like it, according to a report the United Nations released on Monday.

The findings come in the latest monthly report on Syria from the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) chief Ahmet Uzumcu. U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon attached it in a Dec. 29 letter to the 15-nation Security Council.

Uzumcu’s report said his agency’s fact-finding mission in Syria was looking into charges by the Syrian government that chemical weapons were used in 11 instances. The report did not specify when the alleged toxic gas attacks occurred.

http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-chemicalweapons-idUSKBN0UI1Z920160104

108/16
Top Ahrar al-Sham leader killed in Homs ambush

The leader of Syrian rebel group Ahrar al-Sham in Homs province has been killed in an ambush, according to a statement from the group and local media reports.
The killing of Abu Rateb al-Homs on Tuesday evening comes just weeks after Zahran Alloush, leader of rebel group Jaish al-Islam, was killed in an air strike claimed by the Syrian government, and follows a string of deaths among local rebel leaders and imams in the central Syrian province in recent months.

"Our hero and leader left this world today at the hands of treachery during a critical time for our people and this region of the world," a statement from Ahrar al-Sham, released on social media, said.

Homsi was reportedly travelling through a village in northern Homs with his wife when two gunmen on motorcycles fired more than 50 bullets at their car, according to pro-rebel website Syria Mubasher.


109/16
Other News From Syria

1) ISIS Holding Albanian Children ‘Hostage’ in Syria

2) Al-Sham Legion announces his withdrawal from Jaish al-Fateh and that they will go to support the fighters of the factions in Aleppo

3) 20 Civilians Killed, Dozens Injured in Damascus Terrorist Mortar Attack

4) Discord in Terrorist Ranks: Daesh Attacks al-Nusra Militants in Syria

5) Dramatische Hungersnot im belagerten syrischen Madaya
http://www.sueddeutsche.de/politik/syrien-hungersnot-im-belagerten-syrischen-madaya-1.2807819

6) Assad forces ‘build up’ troops in Syrian Golan

7) Syrian rebels push back after government onslaught

8) Rebel groups clash in northern Syria

9) Medicine in Aleppo, the world’s ‘most dangerous city’

10) Shells target the capital and warplanes change on rural Aleppo
http://www.syr.aihr.com/en/?p=40869

11) Syrian Forces Repel Militants’ Large-Scale Offensive in Marj Al-Sultan Airbase
110/16

Tunisia Bus Bomber Arrested, Freed Before Attack

(voa) The suicide bomber in Tunisia who blew himself up in a bus packed with presidential guards on Tuesday had been arrested by police before on suspicion of jihadist ties but was released for lack of evidence, a security official said.

Tunisia, one of the Arab world’s most secular nations, is struggling to counter Islamist militancy since becoming a beacon of democratic change in the region after its 2011 uprising that ousted autocrat Zine El-Abidine Ben Ali.
Houssem Abdelli, a street vendor from an impoverished neighborhood of Tunis, detonated his explosives as presidential guards boarded a bus Tuesday afternoon on one of the capital's main boulevards, killing 12 people.

a)  http://www.voanews.com/content/tunisia-bus-bomber-arrested-freed/3077829.html
b)  http://www.middleeasteye.net/news/3-suspects-named-over-tunis-bus-bombing-916112231
c)  http://www.trust.org/item/20151201221919-cnls/3077829.html

111/16
Ce que prévoyaient pour le nouvel an les terroristes arrêtés au Maroc

(telquel.ma) Le site le360.ma révèle le scénario prévu par la cellule terroriste démantelée vendredi 11 décembre. Plusieurs villes marocaines sont concernées.

http://telquel.ma/2015/12/14/ce-prevoyaient-les-terroristes-arretes-au-maroc_1474152

112/16
Les groupes jihadistes se réorganisent dans la bande sahelo-saharienne

(zone militaire) En 2012, l’on comptait au moins quatre groupes importants dans le nord du Mali, à savoir al-Qaida au Maghreb islamique (AQMI), dirigé par l’Algérien Abdelmalek Droukdel, les Signataires par le sang, de Mokhtar Belmokhtar, en délicatesse avec les responsables du premier, le Mouvement pour l’unicité et le jihad en Afrique de l’Ouest (Mujao) et Ansar Dine, du Touareg indépendantiste Iyad Ag Ghaly.

http://www.opex360.com/2015/12/05/les-groupes-jihadistes-se-reorganisent-dans-la-bande-sahelo-saharienne/3077829

113/16
The Terrorist Crisis in Mali: Interview with Soumaila Guindo

(uk voice) On Friday 20th November, a Malian Terror group called Al-Mourabitoun (an Al-Qaeda affiliated group) sieged a hotel in Bamako, Mali’s capital and took 170 people as hostage.


114/16
Mauritania seeks escaped militant linked to 2011 plot to kill president

(reuters) Mauritanian authorities have said they are hunting for an Islamist militant who escaped from prison where he was awaiting execution for his part in a plot to assassinate President Mohamed Ould Abdel Aziz.

A statement released on public television late on Saturday urged residents to provide information on the militant, whom they named. It did not say when or how he escaped. He was arrested in 2011 over alleged links to three vehicles containing explosives heading for Mauritania’s coastal capital, Nouakchott.
One of the vehicles was said to have been targetting Abdel Aziz, who had ordered military strikes in Mali against jihadist bases in 2010 and 2011. Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb claimed responsibility for the plot in a statement released on jihadist forums, according to the SITE Intelligence Group.

http://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-mauritania-islamist-idUKKBN0UH0L120160103

115/16
Al-Qaida jihadi who plotted assassination flees from Mauritania death row

(japan times) A Mauritanian prisoner sentenced to death for terrorism over an al-Qaida plot to assassinate the president has escaped from prison, a security source told AFP on Friday. Cheikh Ould Saleck, on death row since 2011, was last seen by fellow inmates at Nouakchott central prison at midday Thursday, according to the source.

“His absence from group prayers in the evening alerted his fellow Islamist inmates, who went to get him and found his cell locked,” the source said. A guard smashed open the door and found a flag of al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), the group’s north African franchise, the source added.

Ould Saleck and a fellow AQIM jihadi were arrested on the outskirts of the Mauritanian capital in 2011 when the army foiled their plot to kill President Mohamed Ould Abdel Aziz using two car bombs. A Mauritanian gendarme was killed and eight wounded in a firefight following the failed attack, while four suspected AQIM members died.


116/16
Pentagon shutters African drone base, moves aircraft to other hot spots

(washington post) The Pentagon has closed a drone base in Africa and moved the unmanned aircraft to other locations as it strains to cope with a surge in demand for drones from military commanders fighting the Islamic State and other militant groups.

The U.S. military has stopped flying unarmed Reaper drones from an airfield in Ethiopia that had served as a key hub since 2011 for collecting surveillance on al-Shabab, an al-Qaeda affiliate in neighboring Somalia, U.S. officials said.

U.S. troops and contractors packed up the Reaper drones and dismantled their small base of operations in the southern city of Arba Minch in September. But the move was kept quiet until last weekend, when U.S. diplomats confirmed it in a report by an Ethiopian news website.


117/16
Other News From Africa

1) Suicide Bomber Kills 5 Returnee IDPs, Injures Many In Borno
2) AP Interview: Morocco had key intel role after Paris attacks
http://bigstory.ap.org/article/dacb89528e9d4eab9eff162bff8cf713/ap-interview-morocco-had-key-intel-role-after-paris-attacks

3) In latest Guantanamo release, two prisoners sent to Ghana

4) Boko Haram gunmen kill seven in suicide attack, raid: residents

5) Boko Haram battle: On combat patrol with Nigeria’s army

6) Hand grenade attack kills two at Ethiopian university - police
http://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-ethiopia-blast-idUKKBN0UF1YN20160101

7) American jihadist reportedly flees al Qaeda’s crackdown in Somalia

8) CIO spy busted over $480k rhino poaching
http://www.thezimbabwean.co/2016/01/cio-spy-busted-over-480k-rhino-poaching/

9) Kenya’s Garissa university reopens after extremists killed 148 people
http://www.thecitizen.co.tz/News/1840340/3022168/16wfky/index.html

10) At least 6 killed in S. Somalia fighting
http://www.china.org.cn/world/2016-01/04/content_37457235.htm

11) Vigilante and 4 young female suicide bombers killed at security checkpoint in Nigeria
http://nytlive.nytimes.com/womenintheworld/?p=29119

12) Islamic Court Sentences Nigerian Cleric to Death for Insulting Mohammed

13) Clashes in Libya city claims 11

14) Car bomb kills 3 in Somali capital, al Shabaab say behind blast
http://in.reuters.com/article/somalia-blast-idINK8NQO20HX20151219?rpc=401

15) Somali forces recapture village from IS-affiliated al-Shabab breakaway group

16) Unleashed: U.S. Air Force Strike Eagles Hit ISIS and Al Qaeda Leadership

17) French forces kill at least 10 extremists in northern Mali
118/16
China again lands planes on disputed island in South China Sea: Xinhua

(reuters) China on Wednesday landed two test flights on an island it has built in the South China Sea, four days after it angered Vietnam with a landing on the same runway in the disputed territory, the Xinhua state news agency said.

The two flights are likely to spark further condemnation from Vietnam, which launched a formal diplomatic protest over the weekend, and the Philippines, which said it was planning to do the same. Both countries have claims to the area that overlap with that of China, which claims almost the whole of the South China Sea.

Xinhua said the two planes landed on an artificial island in the Spratly Islands on Wednesday morning. "The successful test flights proved that the airport has the capacity to ensure the safe operation of large civilian aircraft," Xinhua said, adding that the airport would facilitate the transport of supplies, personnel and medical aid.
Will China’s new law tackle terror?

(bbc) China’s long-discussed counter-terrorism legislation, passed this week, frames the way the country will counter terrorist threats at home and abroad. But is it capable of getting to the root of the problem?

China faces a dual problem from terrorism; abroad, the picture is very similar to that faced by most Western countries, with Chinese nationals and interests increasingly threatened by groups affiliated with the so-called Islamic State group or al-Qaeda; at home, China has a problem with individuals angry at the state, who sometimes resort to violence against citizens and the state apparatus to express their anger.

Some domestic terrorism appears to be motivated by personal gripes, while some stems from a more general sense of disenfranchisement and alienation. The latter can be found particularly in the westernmost region of China’s Xinjiang province, where the minority Uighur population resent the perceived encroachment by Beijing into their culture and identity.

Chinese embassy: spy report ‘sheer fiction’

(china daily) A spokesperson for the Chinese Embassy in Pyongyang described as "sheer fiction" recent media reports that said more than 100 Chinese nationals were arrested in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea for alleged espionage.

"Violation of laws or criminal activities by Chinese residing in the DPRK are individual cases, there's no 'spies' at all, and the so-called 'hundred of Chinese nationals arrested' is sheer fiction," the unnamed spokesperson said, according to the embassy's website on Wednesday.

The espionage report was initially made by a website called "Daily NK" and was cited on Tuesday by some media in the Republic of Korea, including the Kookmin Ilbo newspaper. Currently, there are around 3,000 Chinese nationals working or living in the DPRK, according to the embassy.

China Condemns U.S. ‘Militarization’ in South China Sea over Spy Plane Flight

(breitbart) The Chinese government is paying “close attention” to the new deployment of an American spy plane off the island of Singapore, officials said Wednesday, wary of the possibility a greater U.S. presence in the area will exacerbate tensions in the South China Sea.
“We are paying close attention to how the relevant situation develops, and hope bilateral defense cooperation between the relevant countries is beneficial to regional peace and stability and not the opposite,” the Chinese Foreign Ministry said in a statement Tuesday, Reuters reports. Chinese Foreign Ministry Spokeswoman Hua Chunying told reporters that the United States’ “regional militarization does not accord with the joint long-term interests of the countries in this region.”

Its remarks regarding new surveillance in the region are markedly less alarmed than when the U.S. Navy conducted a “freedom of navigation” exercise in the region in October. The USS Lassen, which sailed within 12 nautical miles of the disputed Spratly Islands, “has threatened China’s sovereignty and security interest, and has put the safety of personnel on the reefs in danger,” the Chinese government said then in response.


122/16
China appoints its first anti-terror Czar

(the hindu) China on Monday appointed a ‘tough cop’ as its first counter-terrorism Czar to coordinate all security forces involved in the massive crackdown against al-Qaeda backed Uyghur militants in the Muslim-majority Xinjiang province following the deadly Paris attacks.

Liu Yuejin, a key figure in China’s crackdown on illegal narcotics has been appointed as the first commissioner of counter-terrorism, state-run China Daily reported.

Liu’s appointment follows a series of terror attacks allegedly by ETIM, including in March last year when an armed gang killed 29 people and injured 143 others in Kunming.


123/16
US says bombers didn’t intend to fly over China-held island

(washington post) The United States said its two B-52 bombers had no intention of flying over a Chinese-controlled man-made island in the South China Sea, after Beijing accused Washington of “a serious military provocation” in the strategic waters with overlapping claims.

China’s Defense Ministry on Saturday accused the U.S. of deliberately raising tensions in the region, where China has been aggressively asserting its claims to virtually all islands, reefs and their surrounding seas. It reiterated that it would do whatever is necessary to protect China’s sovereignty.

Pentagon spokesman Mark Wright said that the Dec. 10 mission was not a “freedom of navigation” operation and that there was “no intention of flying within 12 nautical miles of any feature,” indicating the mission may have strayed off course.

https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/asia_pacific/us-says-bombers-didnt-intend-to-fly-over-china-held-islands/2015/12/19/68f5d7ac-a6b2-11e5-8318-bd8caed8c588_story.html
124/16
Why China’s Land Grab Is Backfiring on Beijing

(foreign policy) Beijing is alarming its neighbors by building artificial islands in the South China Sea. From Tokyo to Jakarta, countries in the region are pushing back hard.

https://foreignpolicy.com/2015/12/07/why-chinas-land-grab-is-backfiring-on-beijing/

125/16
Other News From China

1) China says extremism losing grip in restless Xinjiang
http://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-china-xinjiang-idUKKBN0UF1MT20160101

2) Indonesia turns to China as ethnic Uighurs join would-be jihadis
http://www.reuters.com/article/us-indonesia-security-idUSKBN0UK0SE20160106

126/16
Afghan spy chief row highlights Kabul’s conundrum over Pakistan

(trust) The resignation of Afghanistan's spy chief this week has highlighted divisions in Kabul over whether President Ashraf Ghani should involve Pakistan as he bids to revive peace talks with Taliban militants that collapsed in July.

Ghani, who travelled to Islamabad this week for a security summit, insists Pakistan must be on board if the peace process is to succeed, raising protests among those who say their neighbour effectively controls the militants.

Pakistan denies it, but historic links between its intelligence service and the Islamist insurgents mean many Afghans believe the movement would be significantly weakened if Islamabad did more to stop it. Rahmatullah Nabil resigned as head of the National Directorate of Security (NDS) on Thursday after months of tension with Ghani, fuelled in part by the Taliban's brief seizure of the northern city of Kunduz in September for which intelligence failures were partly blamed.

http://www.trust.org/item/20151211143753-46pyc/

127/16
Soldier suspected to be ISI operative held in Bengal

(the statesman) A soldier, who was detained by the army on suspicion of spying for Pakistan, was arrested in West Bengal's Darjeeling district by the Delhi Police on Sunday, an official said.
"Rifleman Farid Khan of the Jammu and Kashmir Light Infantry was detained by the army a few days back after some incriminating documents were found in his possession. He was handed over to the police today (Sunday)," a defence spokesperson said.

Farid Khan alias Surgeon was currently posted in West Bengal's Siliguri for the past few weeks. He "came in contact with ISI operative Kaifaitullah in 2014 after a school teacher named Sabar introduced them", said a police source in Delhi.


128/16
Blackberry says will continue operations in Pakistan

(reuters) BlackBerry Ltd said it has decided to continue its operations in Pakistan as the government dropped a request for access to users' data.

The company, which has faced similar problems in the past in India, the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia and Indonesia, had said last month it would delay shutting down its operations in Pakistan until Dec. 30.

State-run Pakistan Telecommunication Authority had in July demanded that the company give access to its BlackBerry Enterprise Services (BES), which encrypts data such as emails and instant messages.

http://www.reuters.com/article/us-pakistan-telecoms-idUSKBN0UE11Z20151231

129/16
Afghan forces raid Taliban ‘jail’ in Helmand

(long war journal) Commandos from Afghanistan’s counterterrorism force freed 59 prisoners from a Taliban “jail” in the troubled southern province of Helmand. The raid, and another like it early last month, are key indicators that the province is slipping out of the Afghan government’s control.

Soldiers from the “1st Ktah Khas (KKA), Afghanistan’s national-level counterterrorism unit,” launched an air assault on the makeshift Taliban prison earlier today in the district of Nahr-i-Sarraj, US Forces-Afghanistan (USFOR-A), the US military command in the country said in a press release.

The raid was an Afghan led and executed operation, according to USFOR-A. “US forces provided only limited intelligence and planning support to this operation,” the press release stated. “No US forces were on the ground during the operation.”


b) http://www.reuters.com/article/afghanistan-taliban-idUSKBN0UG06Q20160102

130/16
‘Voice of the Caliphate’ radio broadcasts anti-Taliban propaganda in Afghanistan
The Islamic State’s so-called “province” in the Khorasan (an area covering Afghanistan and Pakistan) has set up a radio station to broadcast anti-Taliban messages and other propaganda. The station is named “Voice of the Caliphate” and it broadcasts on a FM airwave that can be heard in some parts of Afghanistan and Pakistan.

The pro-Islamic State segments are usually uploaded via Spreaker, which provides users with an application to create their own “on-demand audio podcasts,” and then distributed online using social media platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, and Telegram.

Authorities in the Nangarhar province, where the Islamic State’s Khorasan “province” is based, claimed to have jammed the station’s signal earlier this month. But the “Voice of the Caliphate” continues to broadcast its messages and also distribute them online. One Spreaker account viewed by The Long War Journal currently hosts more than 30 audio clips from the radio station. The most recent was recorded on Dec. 30.


131/16
Sindh Daesh Emir Kathiyo, Islamabad Emir Amir arrested

The Sindh Emir for Daesh and al-Qaeda, Umar Kathiyo, has been arrested, though the Counter-Terrorism Department (CTD) officials deny getting hold of him. Umar Kathiyo is stated to be one of the main accused in the Safoora Goth massacre in Karachi.

Security agencies arrested Daesh Islamabad Emir Amir Mansour from Sialkot, while Daesh commander Abdullah Mansouri, arrested from Lahore, has been shifted to Islamabad, according to sources.

Sources said the law-enforcement agencies arrested Umar Kathiyo from interior Sindh and shifted him to some undisclosed location for interrogation. Kathiyo was affiliated with al-Qaeda Indian Subcontinent (AQIS) and later he joined Daesh. He created a network of terrorists in Sindh in 2011. He was responsible for facilitating al-Qaeda Middle-East terrorists, and he was well-versed in Arabic language. He was responsible for fund-raising for the al-Qaeda Middle-East chapter.


132/16
US servicemember killed in Helmand was part of major operation against Taliban

The American servicemember killed in Helmand province Tuesday was involved in a major operation aimed at reclaiming territory held by the Taliban, who have threatened to overrun the entire province.

The special operations forces servicemember, who has not been named, was killed while working with Afghan forces to retake part of Marjah, site of one of the biggest U.S.-Taliban clashes of the war in 2010. Two other servicemembers and several Afghan troops were wounded in the fighting, which died
down during the night into Wednesday, said Col. Michael Lawhorn, spokesman for the international military coalition in Afghanistan.

An Afghan security official in Helmand said the operations in which the servicemembers were involved helped open the road between Marjah and the provincial capital, Lashkar Gah, for the first time in two months. Helmand police spokesman Shah Mahmoud Ashna said the road was opened Tuesday night, but only after Afghan forces cleared 40 buried bombs found along just 5 1/2 miles of roadway.

http://www.stripes.com/news/us-servicemember-killed-in-helmand-was-part-of-major-operation-against-taliban-1.387340

133/16
Afghan Forces Claim Advances in Taliban-held District

(voa) Afghan authorities said that security forces made advances Wednesday in a volatile southern district, killing 43 Taliban insurgents and wounding many others.

The fighting in Marjah, a Taliban-held district in the restive Helmand province, erupted a day earlier when Afghan forces backed by U.S. military personnel launched a counter-offensive to try to regain lost territory.

“We have evicted the opposition from three places (in Marjah),” provincial police chief General Abdul Rehman Sarjang told VOA. He said the counterinsurgency operation has also opened a main road for traffic in the area that was heavily mined by the Taliban.

http://www.voanews.com/content/afghan-forces-claim-advances-in-taliban-held-district/3133138.html

134/16
Why India’s response to Pathankot attack was 'a debacle'

(bbc) It took Indian authorities four days to put down a deadly attack on the Pathankot air force base near the Pakistani border which killed seven Indian soldiers and wounded another 22. The inept handling of the security operation can only be described as a debacle, writes defence analyst Rahul Bedi.

According to official accounts, the National Security Adviser Ajit Doval had advance intelligence of the planned attack on 1 January. But military analysts said India's response to the attack was amateurish - there were inadequate offensive measures and the multiplicity of forces involved and a lack of suitable equipment rendered the entire operation a near fiasco.

When the attack began, Mr Doval chose to airlift some 150 National Security Guard (NSG) personnel from their base at Manesar, on Delhi's outskirts, to fight in unfamiliar terrain.


135/16
The outsize legacy of Sangin, one of the deadliest places in Afghanistan for U.S. and British troops

ACIPSS Newsletter 2016
They called Sangin a “low-density minefield” — a whole district laced with bombs everywhere U.S. and British patrols ventured, slowing their movements to a snail’s pace.

The bombs were everywhere: not just on the bridges over streams but in the streams themselves. The only way to move was single-file, along a trail painstakingly cleared by a point man with the mine detector. Stepping out of line risked death or dismemberment — a popular U.S. Marine platoon sergeant lost his legs that way — and when troops came under fire, they couldn’t even roll into the nearest ditch for cover, so likely was it to be mined.

Barely a year after the last American advisers departed, Sangin, a rural district in Afghanistan’s Helmand province, is reportedly on the edge of falling to the Taliban, the last police there under siege in what used to be NATO’s Forward Operating Base Jackson. That news has prompted soul-searching among veterans of the district — where more U.S. and British troops lost their lives over the years than in any other in Afghanistan — and set off alarm bells at the NATO headquarters in Kabul, which has already rushed U.S. Special Operations teams to other imperiled Helmand districts.


136/16
Other News From API

1) U.S. troops killed and wounded in Helmand were accompanying Afghan forces – Pentagon
http://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-afghanistan-usa-pentagon-idUKKBN0UJ20720160105

2) Suicide bomber blows himself up near Kabul airport: police
http://www.reuters.com/article/us-afghanistan-blast-idUSKBN0UJ0FT20160104

3) Helicopter crash kills three Afghan air crew
http://www.reuters.com/article/us-afghanistan-helicopter-idUSKBN0UH0A520160103

4) Rival Afghan Taliban factions agree on ceasefire

5) Taliban suicide bombing targets restaurant in Kabul

6) Taliban controls or contests nearly all of southern Afghan province

7) Pakistani Taliban says Islamic State leader Baghdadi ‘is not a Islamic Khalifa’

8) Pentagon report on Afghanistan excludes al Qaeda’s pledge to the Taliban

9) Militants train women as suicide bombers in Nuristan: Official

10) Der Kampf ums freie Internet in Indien
11) Kandahar airport attack underlines increasing vulnerability of Afghan security forces and limitations of Taliban attack capabilities


12) Female suicide bombers kill 15 in Chad marketplace


13) One dead, 12 injured in truck bomb blast in eastern Afghanistan


14) Would-be suicide bomber detained in northern Afghanistan

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2015-12/01/c_134862317.htm

15) Suicide attack in Kabul claims 2 lives, wounds 2


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137/16

Top Spook Files Amnesty Request for Ex-Fugitive Din Minimi

(jakarta globe) Indonesia’s spy chief said the Joko Widodo administration will continue its amnesty process for Aceh-based former rebel leader Nurdin bin Ismail, or Din Minimi, despite police’s insistence that the former fugitive should still be prosecuted.

Sutiyoso, head of the State Intelligence Agency (BIN), said the spy body lodged its amnesty proposal to the president on Monday, adding that the Justice and Human Rights Ministry will also seek approval from the House of Representatives.

Din surrendered last week alongside 30 of his men following months-long negotiations with intelligence officials. His group, allegedly responsible for a string of attacks throughout the year against police officers and soldiers in its East Aceh district stronghold, also turned in 15 assault rifles and a sack of ammunition.


138/16

Vietnam-China row over South China Sea plane landing

(bbc) Vietnam has accused China of violating its sovereignty by landing a plane on an artificial island it has built in a contested part of the South China Sea. The Vietnamese foreign ministry said the airfield was built illegally on a part of the Spratly archipelago that lies within its territory.
China said it has complete sovereignty over Fiery Cross Reef and had used a civilian plane to test the airstrip. Several nations dispute China's territorial claims in the area.

China claims almost the whole of the South China Sea, resulting in overlapping claims with several other Asian nations including Vietnam and the Philippines. They accuse China of illegally reclaiming land in contested areas to create artificial islands with facilities that could potentially be for military use.


139/16
Islamic State supporters show training camp in the Philippines

(long war journal) Fighters alleging to be the “Soldiers of the Caliphate in the Philippines” have released a short video showing a training camp somewhere in the Southeast Asian country. It is unclear which group the fighters belong to, but several Philippines-based jihadist groups have pledged allegiance or support to the Islamic State.

The video begins with a masked figure speaking to the camera about making “hajj [pilgrimage] to the Caliphate” before switching to showing the rudimentary training camp. Fighters are then shown participating in running obstacles and partaking in other physical training. Additionally, the jihadists are then shown undergoing basic weapons training with what appears to be a US-made assault rifle. Many of the fighters seen in the video appear to be young, but almost all have their faces covered.

Although the video does not include a date, it appears to have been uploaded recently and posted to social media. A copy of the video was recently obtained by The Long War Journal.

The identity of the specific group the fighters shown in the video belong to is uncertain. The jihadist groups Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG), the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF), and a group calling itself Ansar al Khilafah in the Philippines have all either pledged allegiance or expressed support for the Islamic State in the past. Traditionally, ASG has had ties to al Qaeda. In June 2014, a master ASG bomb maker, who was thought to have been killed in a drone strike in North Waziristan, Pakistan, turned up in the Philippines. The operative, Abdul Basit Usman, was wanted by the US for his involvement in multiple bombings in the Philippines and also had ties to Jemaah Islamiyah, an al Qaeda-linked group in Southeast Asia. Usman was reportedly killed earlier this year in a shootout with the Filipino military, however, he was also reported dead months later after a shootout with another jihadist outfit.


140/16
Thai military expands its powers with Bangkok 'black site'

(reuters) When Bangkok lawyer Winyat Chatmontree was allowed to meet his client in detention at a Bangkok army base, Pratin Chankate shuffled in blindfolded and shackled by military guards.
At their second meeting Pratin, a former police officer charged with plotting to attack senior government officials who was officially in civilian custody, was taken away after five minutes by soldiers, Winyat said.

Pratin is detained in a new facility established by the Thai junta to hold people deemed threats to national security, in what lawyers and rights groups say is an unprecedented expansion of the military's control over the criminal justice system.

http://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-thailand-detentions-idUKKBN0UC1OZ20151230

141/16
Warum Autofahren für Kims Kader so gefährlich ist


http://www.welt.de/politik/ausland/article150493825/Warum-Autofahren-fuer-Kims-Kader-so-gefaehrlich-ist.html

142/16
26 kidnapped by Abu Sayyaf rescued

(gulf today) Government forces rescued 26 people aboard a passenger jeepney (mini-bus) six hours after they were kidnapped by heavily armed members of the Al Qaeda-linked Abu Sayyaf militants on the island province of Basilan in volatile Mindanao, the military reported on Tuesday.

The military quoted the driver as saying he and the passengers were on their way to a remote village in the town of Ungkaya Baku, Basilan when the militants stopped their jeepney on Sunday morning. The militants then ordered the driver to proceed to another village where a special team of soldiers aboard an armoured vehicle rescued them six hours after their abduction, according to the military.
“The armed men immediately scampered and fled towards a forested area when they spotted the impending arrival of the soldiers,” the military said, adding the 26 passengers had been traumatised by their abduction but were otherwise unharmed. In a separate but related development, Brigadier General Alan Arrojado, the chief of Task Group Sulu, reported the arrest of an Abu Sayyaf sub-leader wanted for a series of killings in Basilan’s neighbouring province of Sulu.

http://gulftoday.ae/portal/07721ad6-55f1-47de-9cc2-d61b4b35fa4c.aspx

143/16
Other News From Asia-Pacific

1) Philippine "comfort women" fear China sea dispute blocks justice from Japan
http://af.reuters.com/article/worldNews/idAFKBN0UK13I20160106

2) Sri Lanka on alert for Islamic State terrorist members
http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2016-01/06/c_134984336.htm

3) Abu Sayyaf leader linked to beheading arrested
http://gulftoday.ae/portal/8d295763-a43b-4894-ab6a-8bbf28fd74.aspx

4) Uighur Arrested by Densus 88 Suspected to Be Preparing for Suicide Bombing

5) Alleged Indonesia New Year terror plot thwarted

6) TAO official killed in Narathiwat hostage siege

7) Death sentence for Myanmar men will not affect Thai-Myanmar ties - ambassador
http://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-thailand-britain-murder-ambassador-idUKKBN0U807I20151225

8) Singapore Approves U.S. Surveillance Flights
https://foreignpolicy.com/2015/12/07/singapore-approves-u-s-surveillance-flights/

9) Suspected Muslim rebels kill official, attack police in Thailand's south
http://www.reuters.com/article/us-thailand-south-idUSKBN0UC14X20151229

10) Six arrested over small blast outside Hong Kong legislature
http://www.reuters.com/article/us-hongkong-blast-arrests-idUSKBN0US06820151222
How well is the SIS looking after NZ?

(3news) The Security Intelligence Service (SIS) is New Zealand’s main domestic and counter-intelligence agency. A good spy is meant to be invisible; secret snooping, covert surveillance – cloak and dagger stuff.

But occasionally you catch a glimpse of what our spies are up to and in Lower Hutt, it's in a community newspaper. The SIS is recruiting spies who speak Somali.

There are concerns that within the Somali community of New Zealand, there are supporters of Islamic State or Al Shabab.

http://www.3news.co.nz/tvshows/story/how-well-is-the-sis-looking-after-nz-2015120718#axzz3vdj2Ali1

145/16
Australian teenager pleads guilty to a 'terrorism' charge

(reuters) A Melbourne teen arrested after police found explosives at his home pleaded guilty on Monday to a terrorism-related charge, highlighting concerns about youth radicalization following last week's arrest of a 15-year-old Sydney boy in police raids.

The 17-year-old was planning an attack using improvised explosive devices, police said in May when they raided his home in Greenvale, 20 kms (12 miles) north of Australia's second city, Melbourne.

The boy, who could not be identified because of his age, pleaded guilty to a single charge of "engaging in an act in preparation for, or planning, a terrorist act," the Australian Associated Press reported from the courtroom.

http://www.reuters.com/article/us-australia-security-court-idUSKBN0TX0FE20151214

146/16
China behind 'massive' cyber-attack on Australian government: ABC

(reuters) A major cyber-attack against Australia's Bureau of Meteorology that may have compromised potentially sensitive national security information is being blamed on China, the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) reported on Wednesday.

The Bureau of Meteorology owns one of Australia's largest supercomputers and the attack, which the ABC said occurred in recent days, may have allowed those responsible access to the Department of Defence through a linked network.

The ABC, citing several unidentified sources with knowledge of the "massive" breach, placed the blame on China, which has in the past been accused of hacking sensitive Australian government computer systems. "It's China," the ABC quoted one source as saying.

http://www.reuters.com/article/us-australia-cybersecurity-idUSKBN0TL08M20151202

147/16
Kiwi Nobel laureate Maurice Wilkins investigated by MI5 in the 1950s for spying

Maurice Wilkins, a New Zealand-born scientist who became a Nobel Prize laureate in 1962 for his work on DNA, had earlier been investigated by the British Security Service on suspicion of giving atomic secrets to the Soviets, according to a declassified MI5 file.

Wilkins worked at the successor agency to the Manhattan Project in the United States, which developed the atomic bomb during World War II. In 1953, he was investigated after it became suspected he had also been working as a Communist spy. The MI5 case file was closed when the British intelligence services failed to find any incriminating evidence.

The investigation came at a time of heightened fears of Soviet penetration of the Western scientific and government agencies.


148/16
Other News From ANZ

1) IT security predictions for Australian organisations in 2016

149/16
Why intelligence sharing still has a long way to go

The Paris attacks in November appeared to show that jihadists could seemingly move freely across borders while the information required to stop them did not. But improving intelligence sharing is proving a struggle.

At the 18 December EU summit, leaders promised to improve the fight against terrorism and to deal with a logjam of proposals to improve co-ordination, but it may well prove an uphill struggle. Security and intelligence services are intrinsically secret organisations closely allied to national power and priorities. They will share their secrets - but only with those they trust.

That has worked in places like the "five eyes" alliance of English-speaking countries, but sharing data with all the other countries in the EU is a far more ambitious goal. Many security services will fear that their secrets will not always be kept when so many are involved.


150/16
Planned law to enhance control of Czech intelligence services

(prague monitor) Czech secret services might start to be controlled not only by judges, as originally planned, but also deputy ministers and state attorneys, according to the government’s draft bill on the supervision of intelligence services, the text of which CTK has at its disposal.

The bill is to newly introduce control over the civilian intelligence service (UZSI). At present, lawmakers can only supervise the civilian counter-intelligence service (BIS) and the military intelligence (VZ) service, which fulfils both intelligence and counter-intelligence tasks.

The centre-left cabinet of the Social Democrats (CSSD), ANO and Christian Democrats (KDU-CSL) pledged to enhance the control of the three intelligence services in its policy statement in early 2014. The draft bill was first presented to lawmakers by Prime Minister Bohuslav Sobotka (CSSD) in July. Its text has been partly rewritten by the working group that prepares the bill and that met before Christmas.

According to the draft’s latest wording, a new, five-member controlling body would supervise the services parallelly with the Chamber of Deputies.

http://www.praguemonitor.com/2016/01/06/planned-law-enhance-control-czech-intelligence-services

151/16
Eine europäische CIA

(politik im spiegel) Ein deutscher Geheimdienstler übernimmt die Leitung der EU-Spionagestelle IntCen und soll ihr zu größerer Schlagkraft verhelfen. In der vergangenen Woche ist der BND-Mann Gerhard Conrad zum neuen Direktor des Intelligence Analysis Centre (IntCen) ernannt worden, das beim Europäischen Auswärtigen Dienst angesiedelt ist und der EU-Außen- und Militärpolitik eine nachrichtendienstliche Grundlage verschafft.


https://politik-im-spiegel.de/eine-europische-cia/

152/16
Der Spion, der die EU-Geheimdienste koordiniert

Derzeit ist er an der deutschen Botschaft in London tätig, jahrelang aber agierte er verdeckt als Vermittler des BND in heiklen Angelegenheiten. Bekanntheit erlangte der Geheimdienstmitarbeiter 2011, als er die Freilassung des von der Hamas verschleppten israelischen Soldaten Gilad Shalit aushandelte.

Conrad hat laut der Zeitung «Haaretz» mehrere Male erfolgreich zwischen Israel und radikalen Extremistengruppen vermittelt, weil er als einer der wenigen im BND die arabische Sprache beherrscht. Getarnt als Diplomat sei er seit den 90er-Jahren an jedem Gefangenenaustausch zwischen Israel und der Hizbollah beteiligt gewesen, an dem der deutsche Geheimdienst mitgewirkt habe, schrieb die israelische Zeitung einst.


153/16
Italian president reduces sentence of ex-CIA chief for role in abduction of Egyptian terror suspect

In an act of clemency, Italy’s president has shaved two years off the sentence of a former CIA base chief convicted in absentia in the 2003 extraordinary rendition abduction of an Egyptian terror suspect.

With the decree, announced Wednesday night by the presidential palace, President Sergio Mattarella reduced Robert Seldon Lady’s sentence to seven years from nine.

Mattarella also wiped out the entire penalty — three years — faced by another American convicted in the case, Betnie Medero. The palace statement noted that “neither of the two is currently in Italy.” They are among 26 Americans convicted in absentia in the kidnapping of a Muslim cleric, Osama Moustafa Hassan Nasr, also known as Abu Omar, from a Milan street.


b)  http://europe.newsweek.com/italian-president-offers-pardons-cia-kidnapping-case-408738?rm=eu

154/16
Anonymous 'foils ISIS Italy terror plot' while spying on the terror group's communications

Anonymous claims to have foiled an ISIS terror plot in Italy while spying on the terror group’s communications. The hacker collective made the claim in a series of tweets from its account opened after the Paris Attacks.

It comes days after they issued a rallying call for those that want to join its cause. In an official-looking video posted on YouTube, a pseudo-newsreader wearing a Guy Fawkes mask reads out a statement.
In a voice disguised by a computer, the reader talks with the usual Anonymous hyperbole - praising the group's chaotic, leaderless structure. "Anonymous is not an organisation, it is not a club, a party or even a movement. There is no charter, no manifest, no membership fees. All we are is people who travel together."

http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/technology-science/technology/anonymous-foils-isis-italy-terror-7077333

155/16
New Polish government replaces head of NATO experts' office in night raid

(thewe globe and mail) Officials of Poland’s new right-wing government, backed by troops, entered the office of a fledgling NATO counterintelligence centre shortly after midnight Friday to replace the head of the centre with a person loyal to the new leadership.

The previous head, Col. Krzysztof Dusza, failed to act on a dismissal order last week, said Bartlomiej Misiewicz, a defence ministry official. He said Dusza’s license to access classified information was recently lifted and he could not continue in the post.

There was no resistance, and Dusza wasn’t there, but the head of the centre was able to enter. There was no explanation from the government for the dramatic swoop at 1:30 a.m. The centre is still being formed and is renting space from Polish military counterintelligence. The new Law and Justice government has been replacing top staff at all of the nation’s security services.

c) http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/dec/18/polish-military-police-raid-nato-centre-warsaw

156/16
Russian Reporter Forced Out Of Poland On Spying Charges

(rferl) A Russian journalist who came under suspicion of espionage was forced to leave Poland on December 12 though he protested that he never was presented with specific charges against him.

Leonid Sviridov, who writes for RIA Novosti, part of the pro-Kremlin Rossiya Segodnya news service, told the Associated Press on December 10 that he had to leave Warsaw after running out of legal options for staying on in Poland, where he has worked as a journalist for years.

The 49-year-old has been fighting the government for 14 months and insists he never acted as an agent for Russia. He says he will fight for the right to return to Poland. Sviridov said he is appealing the Polish decision that strips him of the right to residency. The case will go to a Polish court possibly in January. Should that fail, he said he plans to sue Poland at the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg.

http://www.rferl.org/content/russian-reporter-forced-out-of-poland-on-spying-charges/27423587.html
Antiterrorzentrum der EU für besseren Informationsaustausch

(presse) Informationsaustausch ist das Schlüsselwort im Kampf gegen den internationalen Terrorismus: Große Hoffnungen werden deshalb auf das europäische Antiterrorzentrum bei der Polizeibehörde Europol, das am 1. Jänner in Den Haag eröffnet wird, gesetzt.


Sie sollen ein grenzüberschreitendes Ermittlungsteam bilden, das „schnelle Unterstützung bei der Untersuchung von Terrorattacken in der EU liefert“. Im heimischen Innenministerium sieht man die Pläne zwar grundsätzlich optimistisch – wenngleich Ministerin Johanna Mikl-Leitner (ÖVP) bereits vor einigen Wochen mahnte, das Zentrum könne nur funktionieren, „wenn auch alle Mitgliedstaaten Informationen einmelden“.


Bosnian court keeps terror suspects in custody

(arab news) Bosnia’s state court has ordered eight out of 11 terrorism suspects to remain in custody for one month, it said on Monday, after a prosecutor said the group was believed to have been plotting a New Year attack. The men were arrested last week in raids at several locations in the Bosnian capital in a search for 15 suspects believed to be connected with Daesh.

A Bosnian anti-terrorism prosecutor has said the arrests prevented an attack that purportedly would have killed around 100 holiday revelers in Sarajevo. Police have said that more than 150 Bosnians have left to fight for Daesh in Syria and Iraq over the past few years, of whom more than 50 have returned to Bosnia and close to 30 were killed in combat.

http://www.arabnews.com/world/news/856886

Other News From Europe

1) Sweden begins border ID controls to halt refugee influx

2) Danes, Swedes impose new border checks in fresh blow to open-frontier Europe
http://in.reuters.com/article/europe-migrants-denmark-sweden-idINKBN0UI17T20160104

3) Greece denies report on Munich terror suspects

4) Terror threats will be the new normal for Europe, experts say
http://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2016/jan/01/terror-threats-will-be-the-new-normal-for-europe-experts-say
5) Czech Prosecutors Charge Former Defence Minister in Aircraft Deal

6) Spain arrests man accused of recruiting fighters for Islamic State
http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-spain-arrest-idUSKBN0TV0AM20151212

7) Spanish police arrest two suspected of recruiting for Islamic State
http://www.reuters.com/article/es-spain-arrests-idUSKBN0TR1KJ20151208

8) Italy arrests man suspected of helping jihadists enter country
http://af.reuters.com/article/idAFL8N13W2E720151207

9) Clashes erupt in Athens on anniversary of student’s killing by police
http://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-eurozone-clashes-idUKKBNTPOS20151207

10) Migrant dies on Greek-Macedonian border as Greece seeks to end standoff
http://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-europe-migrants-greece-idUKKBNTM1A520151203

11) NATO invites Montenegro to join alliance, defying Russia
http://uk.reuters.com/article/us-nato-montenegro-idUSKBN0TL0J620151202

12) Italy, Kosovo police arrest four jihadist suspects
http://www.reuters.com/article/us-italy-security-arrests-idUSKBN0TK47620151201

13) Romanian prosecutors arrest suspect for attempted blast
http://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-romania-prosecutors-blast-idUKKBNTK4Y420151201

14) Bomb blast in central Athens damages Cypriot Embassy
http://uk.reuters.com/article/us-eurozone-greece-blast-idUSKBN0TD06T20151124

15) Hungary detains group heading to capital with explosives, finds bomb lab
http://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-hungary-security-idUSKBN0TD34820151124

16) Italian police seize 800 shotguns bound for Belgium: statement
http://www.reuters.com/article/us-italy-crime-shotguns-belgium-idUSKBN0TF1SV20151126

160/16
New Jihadi John is a DEAD MAN WALKING: How MI6 'already knows who ISIS killer is'

(express) IT IS only a matter of time until the twisted star of a new ISIS video is vaporised in a drone strike, it has been claimed. Experts believe the man, who killed five prisoners he claimed were British spies in a chilling new propaganda clip, has already been identified.
The apparent successor to Jihadi John sealed his fate "the moment he opened his mouth", despite attempts to conceal his face, it was said. It is almost certain the man - whose identity is not yet known publicly - would have been betrayed to the security services by people who knew him in Britain.

Speaking to Express.co.uk, a counter-terror expert from the Royal United Services Institute said there is practically no chance the man’s identity is still secret. Senior research fellow Margaret Gilmore said: "It is inevitable that he will be identified - and quickly. Security services may already have an ID, but they’re not necessarily going to jump up and down and tell us.

"The moment he opened his mouth, family, friends and people who knew him in the UK will have stepped forward. "It's unlikely that they will all have stayed quiet. If it was a friend of yours you would absolutely recognise that voice immediately." Spies at GCHQ could also use voice-recognition software to match the murderer’s British accent to previous recordings, Ms Gilmore said.


161/16
Tories order spy planes that don’t work with RAF's in-flight refuelling system

(mirror) The jets could be forced to turn back during missions to track lurking Russian submarines as they need a top-up every four hours.

Airhead defence chiefs have admitted ordering nine spy planes that are incompatible with the RAF’s in-flight - refuelling tankers.

It means the P-8A Poseidons, intended to track Russian submarines lurking off the UK coast, could be forced to turn back during missions as they need a top-up every four hours.

http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/tories-order-spy-planes-dont-7053700

162/16
Former MI5 officer sparks outrage claiming Paris terror strikes were 'inside job not ISIS'

(express) A FORMER British spy has sparked outrage after claiming the Paris terror attacks were an "inside job" and not carried out by Islamic State (ISIS).

David Shayler, 49, has released a video on YouTube claiming there is "much evidence" that jihadis were not behind the atrocities which left 130 people dead in the French capital.

The former MI5 officer instead claimed "dark forces" linked to western intelligence services were behind the attacks on November 13.

http://www.express.co.uk/news/weird/630279/Former-MI5-officer-outrage-claiming-Paris-terror-attacks-inside-job-ISIS-Daesh
163/16
Knife attacker slashes man in London 'terrorist incident'

(reuters) A knife attacker slashed a man at an east London metro station, reportedly screaming "This is for Syria!", in what police described as a terrorist incident, prompting a senior minister to urge Britons on Sunday not to be intimidated.

A pool of blood near the ticket barriers at the Leytonstone Underground station, about six miles (10 km) east of central London, could be seen in footage posted on Twitter that also showed the suspect confronting police on Saturday evening.

Police said the man, believed to be aged 29, had also threatened other bystanders. One man, thought to be 56 years old, suffered serious but not life-threatening injuries and was in a stable condition at a London hospital. A second victim suffered minor injuries.

http://www.reuters.com/article/us-britain-stabbing-idUSKBN0TO0RA20151206

164/16
UK Soldiers May Face Iraq War Crime Charges

(sky news) An inquiry into allegations of murder, abuse and torture by British forces between 2003 and 2009 could result in prosecutions.

British veterans of the Iraq War could face prosecution for crimes including murder, the head of a team examining potential torture and unlawful killing during the conflict has said.

Mark Warwick, who leads the Government-established Iraq Historic Allegations Team (IHAT), has told The Independent there are "lots of significant cases" where there is substantial evidence for the Service Prosecuting Authority (SPA) to press charges.

http://news.sky.com/story/1615421/uk-soldiers-may-face-iraq-war-crime-charges

165/16
Wanted terrorist The White Widow is ‘spotted in north east England hotel’

(metro) Terrorist Samantha Lewthwaite, also known as the White Widow, has reportedly been spotted in the north east of England.

Lewthwaite, also known as Sherafiyah Lewthwaite, was thought to have been killed by a Russian sniper in 2014 in Ukraine, however a witness told police in Darlington that they saw a person fitting her description checking into the Bannatyne Hotel on boxing day.

The 32-year-old mother of four is wanted in connection with several terror-related offences, including suspected involvement in the slaughter of 148 people by gunmen at a Kenyan university. Interpol currently have her under a ‘red notice’, meaning police forces from any country in the world have the authority to arrest her.
Britain's 'shoddy' security under fire after militant slips away to Islamic State

(reuters) Six weeks after a British militant who is suspected of being an Islamic State executioner slipped out of the country, police sent a letter asking him to surrender his passport, a security bungle that has drawn criticism from opposition lawmakers.

Though the masked militant who was shown directing the killing of five men in an IS propaganda video has not been officially identified, media including the BBC and the Daily Telegraph have named him as Siddhartha Dhar, a Londoner who once sold inflatable bouncy castle toys.

Dhar, 32, left Britain for Syria in September 2014 while on police bail after his arrest on suspicion of belonging to a banned group and encouraging terrorism. "The system has failed because it allowed him to abscond to Syria," Andy Burnham, the home affairs spokesman for the opposition Labour Party, said in parliament on Tuesday.

Hostages killed by Isis were not British spies, say UK agencies

(guardian) Britain’s intelligence agencies have made a preliminary assessment that the Islamic State made false claims that the five hostages murdered in a new propaganda video had acted as UK spies.

David Cameron, who confirmed that he had viewed part of the footage, said the video was “desperate stuff” from an organisation that is losing territory under pressure from allied airstrikes.

Britain’s three intelligence agencies – MI5, MI6 and GCHQ – have been analysing the video since its release over the weekend and concluded that none of the hostages were working for Britain.

The agencies cannot definitively rule out that they may have been working for other allied countries. Their strong assumption, however, is that the hostages were working for Syrian resistance opposed to Isis in their territory. A vital part of the resistance’s work is the dissemination of video to highlight the horrifying impact of life under Isis. But Hamoud al Mousa, who describes himself as the founder of the anti-Isis activist group Raqqa is Being Silently Slaughtered, told the Guardian he did not know the victims and that they were not part of the organisation.

National Crime Agency could replace police in leading fight against terrorism

(guardian) Police could be stripped of their role in leading the fight against terrorism and replaced by a national agency directly answerable to the home secretary, under advanced plans being studied by Theresa May.
The Guardian has learned that May’s officials have begun approaching senior candidates who could lead the review, whose key question will be whether the National Crime Agency (NCA) should take over from police.

The police are expected to vigorously resist the change and argue that the current system is the “most effective way of countering the threat” of terrorism. Scotland Yard would view the loss of its lead role on terrorism as a humiliation. May will make a final decision on whether to go ahead with the review, to be undertaken by a panel of experts, early this year.


169/16
Other News From the United Kingdom

1) Sir Brian Tovey obituary
http://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2016/jan/04/sir-brian-tovey-obituary

2) Police use terror laws to spy on Scottish journalists
https://www.pressandjournal.co.uk/fp/news/scotland/778826/police-use-terror-laws-to-spy-on-scottish-journalists/

3) David Cameron intervenes in case of British grandfather Kamal Foroughi ‘facing death’ in Iranian jail

4) Shrewsbury 24: Government rejects calls to release files

5) British bombers hit oil field targets in Syria for second time
http://www.reuters.com/article/mideastcrisis-syria-britain-idUSL8N13U0C220151206

6) Police To Confront Terrorists In New Tactic

7) Kenya Jails UK Terror Suspect For Forgery

8) “He’s my grandson”: Briton recognises boy in IS video
http://uk.reuters.com/video/2016/01/05/hes-my-grandson-briton-recognises-boy-in?rpc=401&videoId=366918957&feedType=VideoRSS&feedName=LatestVideosUK&rpc=401&videoChannel=117759

9) Labour reshuffle: McFadden sacked for views on terrorism

10) British Airways bombscare: Terror on board as passenger shouts ‘I have a bomb and you’re all going to die’
http://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/uk-world-news/british-airways-bombscare-terror-board-7126184

11) Theresa May 'misled' by security services over banned students
http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/theresa-may-misled-by-security-services-over-banned-students-a6764146.html

12) British policy chief apologizes for 30-year-old race comments
Loyalist Mark Harbinson in court charged with firearm offences

(belfast telegraph) Prominent loyalist Mark Harbinson has been remanded into custody after being charged with firearm offences. Standing in the dock of Lisburn Magistrates Court wearing a blue jumper and jeans 48-year-old Harbinson, from the Sheepwalk Road in Lisburn, was accused of having a Makarov 9mm semi automatic pistol, 28 rounds of suitable ammunition and a silencer with intent to endanger life "on a date unknown prior to December 21, 2015."

Giving evidence to the court, Detective Sergeant Cush said he believed he could connect Harbinson to the offences and that police were objecting to bail amid fears that he posed a serious risk of flight. The officer from the serious crime branch of the PSNI described how, acting on information, police searched Harbinson's home under the terrorism act on December 21 last year, discovering the disassembled weapon, bullets and the working silencer hidden in a family circle tin of biscuits in an out building.

He recounted how Harbinson himself was not present during the extensive search but that his father and uncle, who attended the farm during it, told Harbinson cops were searching his home, leading him to flee the country, firstly to the Republic and then to Cumbria.


Ex-soldiers furious over MoD's Ballymurphy 'witch hunt' letters

(belfast telegraph) Former paratroopers who received letters from the Ministry of Defence (MoD) appealing for information about the 1971 Ballymurphy shootings have branded the investigation a "witch hunt". In the letters, the MoD said it "may have" destroyed lists containing the names of soldiers who gave testimony to inquests shortly after Ballymurphy.

A total of 10 people were killed in shootings and another suffered a heart attack during the confrontation. Therefore, the MoD said it had been forced to write to dozens of men appealing for them to come forward with information.
One former soldier said everyone who served in Northern Ireland would be "looking over their shoulders". He told the Daily Mail all troops were following orders from their commanding officer at the time, and called the probe "the PSNI on a witch hunt."


172/16
Real IRA Bomb Concerns Still Exist On British Mainland, UK Security Services Suggest

(iibi times) The British government issued a warning Friday declaring that the Real Irish Republican Army, a splinter group that has not renounced violence, still poses an “enduring threat” of committing one-off terror attacks in mainland Britain.

The group, which has not mounted the kind of sustained campaign waged by the larger Provisional IRA from the 1970s through the ‘90s, is considered to be dangerous again by U.K. security services.

British terror threat assessments have concluded that the Real IRA and other dissident republicans still “aspire” to target the U.K., according to a report from the Telegraph. The Provisional IRA’s ruling body, the Army Council, still exists, according to British security services, although in a reduced role.

a) http://www.ibtimes.com/real-ira-bomb-concerns-still-exist-british-mainland-uk-security-services-suggest-2240049

173/16
The MI6 Wyman spy network in Dublin

(an phoblacht) IN DECEMBER 1972, the extent of the British Intelligence spy network in Ireland and their infiltration of the Garda Síochána was dramatically exposed by the arrest of John Wyman and Patrick Crinnion. Wyman (alias “Douglas Smythe” and also known as “Michael Teviott”), a member of MI6, the Secret Intelligence Service, was an important cog in the well-oiled machine of British Intelligence in Ireland.

During the 1960s, especially following the beginning of the most recent phase of the struggle, Wyman’s network expanded. He recruited a number of gardaí and Special Branch officers as agents, the most important being Garda Detective Sergeant Patrick Crinnion. Crinnion joined the Garda in 1955. He was transferred to Dublin Castle in 1961 and in 1969 was appointed private secretary to the then Head of the Special Branch, Chief Superintendent John P. Fleming, and moved to Garda HQ in the Phoenix Park to control the intelligence section known as C3.

Crinnion was a particularly valuable spy and was ideally placed to supply the British with intelligence on the IRA, the Republican Movement and gardaí. In return for large sums of money, he supplied Wyman with photostat copies of files and information relating to republicans and republican sympathisers. Keith and Kenneth Littlejohn, two English criminals on the run in Ireland in 1969, made contact with British Intelligence and offered to work for them in return for an amnesty.
174/16
Bloody Sunday paras win court battle against detention and transfer to Northern Ireland

(belfast telegraph) Former paratroopers who face questioning over the Bloody Sunday killings have won their High Court battle against being detained and transferred to Northern Ireland for interview by police. Lord Chief Justice Lord Thomas described the case at a recent hearing as "a matter of great public interest".

The ex-soldiers, who cannot be named, applied for a judicial review against the Chief Constable of the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI), who wants them taken back to Northern Ireland for an investigation into whether criminal offences may have been committed by soldiers who used lethal force on Bloody Sunday in 1972.

The High Court in London granted the seven men an order prohibiting the PSNI from arresting them on their undertaking "that they will attend for an interview under caution... to be carried out by the PSNI at a police station in England and Wales, or other acceptable location". At the centre of the case was the way the PSNI is conducting its historical probe into the deaths of 14 civil rights demonstrators in Londonderry.


175/16
PSNI use trailer in MRF appeal

(irish news) Police have taken the unusual step of taking a mobile billboard around west Belfast to appeal for information over a re-opened legacy investigation into the activities of the controversial British army unit.

The PSNI announced earlier this month that they would be re-examining the activities of the covert Military Reaction Force who were active in Belfast in 1972 before being disbanded amid claims they were acting outside the law. Since launching the appeal detectives say a number of witnesses have came forward.

Among the attacks under investigation are the fatal shootings of Patrick McVeigh and Daniel Rooney. Police have used a trailer to take a billboard around west Belfast, passing locations where the attacks took place.


176/16
Tax fraudster Thomas 'Slab' Murphy faces five years in jail for illegal empire
Prominent republican Thomas ‘Slab’ Murphy is facing a potential prison sentence of up to five years after being convicted of tax fraud. Murphy’s conviction is hugely embarrassing for Sinn Fein, whose president Gerry Adams previously called him a "good republican".

Murphy (66) from Ballybinaby, Hackballscross, Co Louth, denied nine charges but was convicted on all counts after a 32-day trial at Dublin’s Special Criminal Court. The prosecution alleged he did not furnish a return of income, profits or gains or their sources over eight years.

In March 2006 Mr Adams sprang to Murphy’s defence when police and customs swooped. During the operation the Republic’s Criminal Assets Bureau (CAB) and customs officers uncovered evidence of a hidden economy worth hundreds of millions of pounds. Afterwards the Sinn Fein president described Murphy as "a keen supporter" of the party’s peace strategy.

b) http://www.independent.ie/opinion/comment/untouchable-ira-godfather-was-lionised-by-sinn-fin-34297761.html
e) http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/republic-of-ireland/caponestyle-conviction-is-significant-and-symbolic-34302423.html
g) http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/republic-of-ireland/task-force-gears-up-to-tackle-crossborder-crime-34304656.html
j) http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/opinion/debateni/nelson-mccausland/slabs-conviction-shows-how-deep-criminality-runs-within-the-provos-34311987.html

177/16

**Officers should be punished over bomb failings, says Police Ombudsman**

(belfast telegraph) Four police intelligence officers should be disciplined for failing to pass on details about a bomb attack on a colleague, the PSNI watchdog has recommended. Constable Peadar
Heffron, a Catholic Gaelic speaker, lost a leg when the under-car device was detonated by dissident republicans near Randalstown, Co Antrim, five years ago.

Even though there was insufficient evidence to support an allegation that the attack could have been prevented, Police Ombudsman Dr Michael Maguire said there was a failure to help investigating detectives.

Four officers - two detective superintendents and two detective sergeants - from the PSNI's C3 unit should be disciplined, the Ombudsman insisted.


178/16
Dissident republican clears first stage of partially secret trial

(belfast telegraph) A prominent dissident republican cleared the first stage today in a legal battle over the choice of lawyer to represent his interests at a landmark bid for a partially secret court hearing. Belfast man Terence McCafferty is suing the British Government for being returned to prison based on intelligence alleging he was a Real IRA leader.

The authorities are seeking a closed material procedure (CMP) for part of that action due to issues of national security. Attempts to secure the so-called secret court are being advanced under powers contained in the Justice and Security Act 2013. It would involve intelligence documents being assessed by a judge and a special advocate barrister appointed to protect the rights of a plaintiff shut out from the hearing.


179/16
RIRA boss is out of jail and living at home on temporary release

(herald) The founder of the Real IRA terror group has been granted temporary release from Portlaoise Prison ahead of his due release date next March. Michael McKevitt (65) has spent the last number of weeks at his home in Blackrock, Co Louth, after being granted temporary release, which is being constantly reviewed by the prison service on specific dates.

He is serving 20 years for directing terrorism and was also convicted of membership of an illegal organisation after being convicted in the Special Criminal Court in August, 2003. He was the first person in the State to be jailed for directing terrorist activities and has been in custody since his arrest in March, 2001.

It is understood that the RIRA terror chief who has been suffering from poor health has to obey strict conditions to remain out of jail - including regularly signing on at a garda station. McKevitt was one of four men found liable for the Omagh bombing in a civil action at Belfast High Court taken by relatives of the dead. The Real IRA bomb killed 29 people and two unborn twins on August 15, 1998.
180/16
Independent TDs offer €5,000 each in failed bid to secure bail for IRA suspect

(independent) Independent TDs Mick Wallace, Clare Daly and Maureen O'Sullivan offered to stand bail at a cost of €5,000 each for a man accused of IRA membership and being in possession of a component part of a controlled explosive device.

University graduate Donal O’Cosidealbha (24) of Abbeyfield, Killester, Dublin 15, was one of several men arrested last May on foot of an investigation by the Special Detective Unit (SDU) into the activities of the IRA. Senior gardaí have told the Special Criminal Court their inquiries uncovered "advanced plans" by the IRA to mount bomb attacks during the visit to Ireland of Britain’s Prince Charles.

Yesterday, Mr Wallace and Ms Daly attended the non-jury Special Criminal Court for a hearing in which Mr O’Cosidealbha, who is learning Russian, was refused bail for a third time. The TDs were among a group of seven people who planned to stand as independent sureties in the event the young engineering graduate was granted bail pending his trial, which may not take place until 2017.

181/16
Paul Williams: IRA spy ring watching Leinster House holds the key to Sinn Féin’s outlook

(independent) Sinn Féin has previously demanded the abolition of the Special Criminal Court. The party has also got previous on criticising our judiciary. It occurred when two Sinn Féin election workers were jailed for espionage activities - effectively spying on Government ministers, TDs and senators at Leinster House in a major IRA intelligence-gathering trawl.

At the time, 13 years ago, the uncovering of the spy ring was played down on all sides for fear it would disrupt the still infant peace process. The argument for not highlighting the IRA activity was not unlike the apologists this week for Slab Murphy’s tax evasion - the appeasement of the IRA is more important.

However, the extent of the espionage ring did surprise the authorities here, who up to then had been convinced Sinn Féin and the IRA had gone down a purely political route.

182/16
Alleged top dissident Fitzsimons held for two years is denied bail

(belfast telegraph) An alleged senior dissident republican held in custody for two years on a charge of trying to murder police officers has been refused High Court bail. Lawyers for Henry Fitzsimons claimed that he should be released to prevent his case turning into a form of detention without trial.
They also argued the evidence linking him to a gun attack on a police convoy in north Belfast is weak. Fitzsimons (47) is alleged to have conspired with co-accused Colin Duffy and Alex McCrory to kill security force members. Other charges against him include attempting to murder members of the PSNI, conspiracy to possess firearms and explosives with intent to endanger life, aiding and abetting the possession of a firearm, and belonging to a proscribed organisation - namely the Irish Republican Army.

He was arrested after a police Land Rover and two other vehicles came under fire as they travelled along the Crumlin Road in December 2013. Two AK47 rifles and 14 spent rounds of ammunition were later recovered along with a hijacked and burnt-out taxi the gunmen used for their getaway.

http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/northern-ireland/alleged-top-dissident-fit simons-held-for-two-years-is-denied-bail-34306118.html

183/16
Jailed: Man who helped IRA gang after murder of policeman 22 years ago

(belfast telegraph) A Londonderry man who walked into a police station and confessed to a string of IRA-related offences in the 1990s has been handed a 10-year prison sentence. Christopher Paul O’Kane - who admitted playing a role in several attacks against the security forces as well as assisting offenders in the aftermath of a 21-year-old policeman's murder - appeared in the dock of Belfast Crown Court.

Due to his sentencing falling within the terms of the Good Friday Agreement, coupled with time he has already served on remand, it is expected O’Kane, from Woodland Avenue in Derry, will be released around May 2016. During yesterday’s sentencing, Judge Gordon Kerr QC said that while he accepted O’Kane’s role was not one of a bomb-maker or a planter of bombs, at the time of offending he was "acting as a member of a terrorist group".


184/16
Loyalist William Cameron shot in leg sparking fears of further violence

(belfast telegraph) The shooting of a top loyalist in Co Antrim has sparked fears of further trouble before Christmas. William Cameron (50) was attacked on Friday night close to shops on the Castlelima estate in Carrickfergus.

Local councillor Billy Ashe told the Belfast Telegraph that people were fearing for the future. Cameron, who has a conviction for possessing bullets, was politically involved with the Ulster Democratic Party (UDP) and later the Ulster Political Research Group (UPRG), both of which were linked to the UDA.

Cameron was out walking when he was approached by three masked men, who shot him once in the calf. Mr Ashe said: "We had hoped that all this nonsense was in the past and we don't want to see a return to these kinds of attacks in Carrickfergus."
three males made off on foot, however direction of travel is unknown at this time."


185/16
Police files on Kieran Doherty murder to be heavily censored

(belfast telegraph) Three police files containing potentially key information on the murder of a dissident republican are set to be heavily censored before being made available to his inquest, a coroner has been told. Real IRA man Kieran Doherty, 31, was shot dead in February 2010 and his body dumped near Londonderry.

The Real IRA claimed responsibility for the killing of one of its own members, but nobody has ever been charged with the murder. In the weeks before his death, Mr Doherty claimed MI5 attempted to recruit him as an agent and his family have raised concerns the UK Security Services could have played a role in his death.

Police are in the process of security vetting their murder investigation files before making them available to lawyers representing the family at a planned future inquest. A preliminary hearing at Belfast Coroner’s Court was told that while progress has been made on five of eight main police folders, significant issues remain outstanding on the other three files.


186/16
Monaghan assault rifles part of Michael McKevitt RIRA haul

(irish news) ASSAULT rifles seized in Co Monaghan are among several hauls of weapons syphoned off by former Real IRA leader Michael McKevitt and buried in sealed silage tanks after he split from the Provisionals in 1997.

The AK47s were among arms discovered at Scotstown on Wednesday, less than half a mile from the Fermanagh border near Roslea, in an intelligence-led Garda operation which began last week. As well as the rifles from the Provisionals IRA’s former arsenal, handguns, mortars, detonators and other bomb parts were also found.

The handguns are believed to be newer weapons acquired by the leadership of the Real IRA after the split from the Provisionals, dispelling speculation that the arms dump was part of a forgotten haul that was overlooked for decommissioning. In recent times the guns fell under the ownership of the merger group calling itself the ‘IRA’, made up for former RIRA members and other independent republicans.

An informer in the ranks of the merger organisation, a man who in the past flitted between groups, is believed to have led gardaí to the weapons dump, which is one of the largest uncovered for many years.
Supergrass Gary Haggarty to find out if he is to stand trial

A so-called loyalist supergrass is set to discover next spring if he will stand trial for a catalogue of murders and paramilitary crime.

Gary Haggarty’s legal team told a court on Wednesday they were aiming to be ready for committal proceedings sometime in March. Barrister Fiona Doherty also said: “It’s probably going to be a much more reduced type of hearing than we thought.”

Haggarty, a suspected Ulster Volunteer Force commander-turned police informer, is facing a record 212 charges covering a 16-year period between 1991 and 2007. The prosecution case against the 43-year-old north Belfast man runs to 12,000 pages, with his alleged offences including:

Other News From Northern Ireland

1) There were 16 national security attacks in 2015
http://www.londonderrysentinel.co.uk/news/londonderry-news/there-were-16-national-security-attacks-in-2015-1-7136036

2) Drones have been used 13 times in last 2 years
http://www.londonderrysentinel.co.uk/news/londonderry-news/drones-have-been-used-13-times-in-last-2-years-1-7130183

3) Over 100 extra gardaí for ‘Riot Squad’ ahead of 1916 events

4) Cost of probe into garda shooting of IRA man is double original estimate

5) Mental health issues sideline 413 PSNI officers: Sixteenth of total force took time off because of stress

6) Sinn Fein challenged to come clean and admit IRA was responsible for Kingsmill massacre

7) Kingsmill massacre: 'They didn't die in the first round of fire. I still hear them screaming in fear and agony'

8) Whitecross: 'My brother found the lads dead. He didn't speak for a year afterwards'
9) Hoax bomb planted under policeman’s car in Millreagh, Dundonald

10) Dissident secures jail visits to fiancé accused of killing Catholic policeman

11) Loyalists 'still on ceasefire' despite UDA death threat

12) 'I have a responsibility to my brother-' Bloody Sunday relative on General Ford

13) Real IRA raider shot dead during a botched robbery of a security van 'died doing his duty in war'

14) Shooting victims 'had failed to turn up to be shot'

15) Oglaigh na hEireann claim shotgun shooting

16) Dungiven family may move home after pipe bomb left on doorstep

17) Police numbers won’t be cut to make savings of £13m, says senior PSNI officer

18) Man arrested by gardai targeting activities of dissident republicans in Louth

19) Dissident Republicans order in luxury food including fillet steaks at Portlaoise Prison

20) Belfast man to sue Google over allegations he's a police informant

21) Sinn Fein won’t support anti-terror laws following Paris attacks

22) Two teenage brothers battered in West Belfast in attack being blamed on dissidents acting as vigilantes in wake of Christopher Meli death
http://www.belfastlive.co.uk/news/belfast-news/two-teenage-brothers-battered-west-10628248
23) Man shot in leg by masked gang in Carrickfergus

24) Prison service apologises to police widow over failure to reveal her husband’s killer had been freed

25) Man shot in the legs in Craigavon attack

26) Paramilitary disbandment strategy panel unveiled

27) Brighton bomb kills officer – 31 years later
http://www.newsletter.co.uk/news/northern-ireland-news/brighton-bomb-kills-officer-31-years-later-1-7120194

28) Garda Kingsmills information ‘raises more questions than answers’
http://www.newsletter.co.uk/news/northern-ireland-news/garda-kingsmills-information-raises-more-questions-than-answers-1-7122111

29) Coalisland police station bomb accused fails in bid to be allowed to spend time with family at Christmas

30) Minister may face judicial review over Ludlow murder

31) Bloody Sunday Paras can’t be arrested and taken to NI, judges rule

32) Omagh suspect ‘gave explosives to bomb factory pair’

33) Man shot in the legs after he is dragged from house

34) Identity of person in paper trail crucial issue in ‘Slab’ Murphy trial

35) Date set for appeal hearing into David Cameron’s refusal to hold Pat Finucane inquiry

36) Man charged with IRA membership over guns find

37) ‘Provo Princess’ teacher who glorifies IRA on social media sparks probe by police and council chiefs
http://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/scottish-news/provo-princess-teacher-who-glorifies-7053966
38) Undercover officer Mark Kennedy 'monitored NI groups'

39) 'Micky Bo' killer among those released for Christmas

40) PSNI apology for officer Peadar Heffron badly injured in bomb attack

189/16
Diffuse Bedrohungslage in Österreich

(standard) Die Terroranschläge in Frankreich und die damit zusammenhängenden Razzien auch in Belgien und Deutschland haben nach Einschätzung des heimischen Bundesamtes für Verfassungsschutz und Terrorismusbekämpfung (BVT) das Bedrohungsszenario in Österreich kaum verändert. Seit Monaten herrsche eine erhöhte allgemeine Risikolage – jedoch ohne konkrete Hinweise auf Anschläge oder Attentate in der Alpenrepublik, wie auf Anfrage des STANDARD betont wird.


Was den Verfassungsschützern Sorge bereitet, ist, dass die Pariser Anschläge wieder eine neue Facette des Terrors gezeigt haben: Auf die generalstabsmäßig geplante Großaktion von 9/11 folgten Anschläge von selbstradikalisierten Einzeltätern oder sehr kleinen Gruppierungen; nun war seit langem wieder eine offenbar größere Gruppe organisiert, die erstmals in Europa auch Suizidattentäter beinhaltete. Was letztendlich für Präventionsarbeit und Sicherheitsmaßnahmen extrem schwierige Voraussetzungen schaffe.

http://derstandard.at/2000026348179/Terror-Diffuse-Bedrohungslage-in-Oesterreich

190/16
Österreich will WhatsApp und Skype überwachen

(futurezone) Nach den Terror-Anschlägen in Paris wurden nicht nur in Frankreich die Rufe nach mehr Überwachung laut. Auch in Österreich sind einige Anti-Terror-Maßnahmen geplant, die die Kommunikation im Internet betreffen. Die futurezone hat dazu offizielle Presseanfragen beim Justiz-
und Innenministerium gestellt - die Beantwortung der Anfragen zog sich nun über Wochen und ergab Folgendes:


http://futurezone.at/netzpolitik/oesterreich-will-whatsapp-und-skype-ueberwachen/170.021.535

191/16
Sicherheitspolizeigesetz: "Hooligan-Paragrafen" jetzt auch für Extremisten

(kleine zeitung) Belehrung und Meldepflicht im Sicherheitspolizeigesetz sind nicht nur für Jihadisten geplant, sondern für alle "verfassungsgefährdenden" Angriffe, seien sie ideologisch oder religiös motiviert.

Die Pläne von Innenministerin Johanna Mikl-Leitner (ÖVP) zur Überwachung allfälliger Terroristen sind nicht auf die viel beschworenen Jihadisten beschränkt. Wie aus dem Entwurf für eine Änderung des Sicherheitspolizeigesetzes (SPG) hervorgeht, geht es generell um die Vermeidung von "verfassungsgefährdenden Angriffen" - nicht nur religiös, sondern auch ideologisch motiviert.

Als konkrete Maßnahme soll zum einen die sogenannte "Gefährderansprache zur Deradikalisierung" zum Einsatz kommen. Personen, von denen anzunehmen ist, dass sie einen Angriff auf den Staat begehen könnten, werden von der Polizei vorgeladen und "über rechtsskonformes Verhalten belehrt". Schwerpunkt dieser Belehrung muss dabei das "besondere Gefährdungspotenzial durch Radikalisierung und die damit verbundenen Rechtsfolgen" sein, außerdem muss die Polizei auf "Deradikalisierungsprogramme" hinweisen.

http://www.kleinezeitung.at/s/politik/innenpolitik/4879404/Sicherheitspolizeigesetz_HooliganParagrafen-jetzt-auch-für-Extremisten

192/16
Wie der Terror die Justiz beschäftigt

fünf Jahren Haft). Die Angeklagten waren großteils Flüchtlinge aus Tschetschenien, die versucht hatten, von Wien oder Niederösterreich über die Türkei in die vom IS kontrollierten Gebiete in Syrien zu gelangen (einigen war das auch gelungen, diese kehrten allerdings zurück und wurden angeklagt).


193/16

**Terrorbekämpfung in Österreich: Einstellen auf den neuen Feind**

(kurier) Der Terror ist in Europa angekommen. Bürger in Paris oder Belgien leben seit vierzehn Tagen in Angst. Und auch wenn der Staatschutz laut dem Direktor der Spezialeinheiten, Bernhard Treibenreif, keinen konkreten Hinweis auf einen bevorstehenden Terroranschlag in Österreich hat, muss die Cobra die neuesten Erkenntnisse aus Paris in ihre aktuelle Planung einbeziehen.


194/16

**Other News From Austria**

1) Nachhilfe für Justizwachebeamte

http://www.kleinezeitung.at/k/kaernten/klagenfurt/4880680/Kaernten_Nachhilfe-fur-Justizwachebeamte?from=suche.intern.portal

2) In Tirol verhafteter Iraker bleibt in U-Haft
Salafistische Szene wächst auf Höchststand

(ntv) In Deutschland gibt es dem Verfassungsschutz zufolge inzwischen 7900 Salafisten. Damit habe die Szene einen neuen Höchststand erreicht, sagte der Präsident des Bundesamtes für Verfassungsschutz (BfV), Hans-Georg Maaßen, dem "Tagesspiegel". Vor zwei Jahren waren es noch 5500 Salafisten.

Allerdings wachse die Zahl von Islamisten, die sich in die Konfliktregion Syrien-Irak begeben, nicht mehr so rasch wie im vergangenen Jahr. 760 "Dschihad-Reisende" aus Deutschland hätten sich seit Beginn
des syrischen Bürgerkrieges auf den Weg in die Region gemacht, sagte Maaßen. 2014 hatte seine Behörde noch eine Verdopplung auf 550 von 270 registriert.

Maaßen warnte davor, in den nach Deutschland strömenden Asylsuchenden "pauschal eine terroristische Bedrohung zu sehen". Allerdings wäre es auch "kurzsichtig, so zu tun, als hätte der Flüchtlingsstrom überhaupt keine Auswirkung auf unsere Sicherheit", fügte er hinzu. So versuchten Salafisten nach wie vor, im Umfeld von Flüchtlingsheimen Anhänger zu gewinnen.

http://www.n-tv.de/politik/Salafistische-Szene-waechst-auf-Hoechststand-article16490421.html

196/16
Vorratsdatenspeicherung: Wie Bayern den Geheimdienst doch an die Daten lassen will

(spiegel) Geheimdienste sollten keinen Zugang zu den Verbindungsdaten der Bürger haben - und doch will Bayern jetzt seinem Verfassungsschutz den direkten Zugriff erlauben. Möglich machen soll das eine Lücke im Gesetz von Justizminister Maas.


http://www.spiegel.de/netzwelt/netzpolitik/vorratsdatenspeicherung-in-bayern-was-duerfen-geheimdienste-a-1068138.html

197/16
Geheimdienst-Kontrolleure reichen Klage ein: "Wir sind reingelegt worden"


198/16

German intelligence service reopens channels with Syria’s al-Assad

(europe online) The German intelligence service has reopened communications with Damascus, according to media reports Friday, as Germany and other western allies rethink their relationship with Syria’s embattled Bashar al-Assad.

Intelligence service agents have recently begun flying out to Syria again to meet with their counterparts there in a bid to collect and exchange information on Islamist terrorists, Germany’s mass-circulation daily Bild reported.

The move comes amid debate over the fate of the Syrian leader. Russia and Iran, al-Assad’s main allies, refuse an agreement that would force him to step down, while the United States and other countries backing the rebels want him out of power. Critics have accused al-Assad’s government of brutally cracking down on opposition forces, including using chemical weapons against militants and, in at least one instance, civilians.

199/16

German cabinet approves more soldiers for Mali, Iraq

(trust) The German cabinet has approved plans to send up to 650 soldiers to Mali, boosting its presence in the U.N. peacekeeping mission in the West African country which is beset by Islamist militant violence.

It also agreed to increase the numbers of soldiers training Kurdish Peshmerga forces in northern Iraq to up to 150 from 100. The majority of the German forces who will start going to Mali in the coming weeks will be stationed in the north of the country which has seen an upsurge of violence by Islamist militants.

Working with Dutch forces who operate a military camp in the northern city of Gao, they will carry out reconnaissance work and provide logistical support. Germany’s lower house of parliament is due to decide on both missions at the end of January.

200/16

Kölns Polizeipräsident Albers: Letzte Warnung für den Wachtmeister am Rhein


Da waren zunächst die Ausschreitungen der rechten Schlägergruppe "Hooligans gegen Salafisten" (Hogesa), die sich im Herbst 2014 am Kölner Hauptbahnhof ausgetobt hatte. Die Polizei hatte seinerzeit die Größe und die Brutalität der Gruppe unterschätzt und erwies sich in der Folge als zu schwach, um der Lage Herr zu werden. Dutzende Beamte wurden verletzt, es entstand erheblicher Sachschaden.


201/16
**Terror im Westen: Gefahr durch Islamisten ist hoch wie nie**


Die meist über das Internet vertriebenen Veröffentlichungen islamistischer Gruppierungen hätten mittlerweile den Umfang einer "industriell anmutenden Propagandaproduktion" erreicht. Der IS verscheiche mitunter 30 bis 40 "Propagandaeinheiten" pro Tag. Dazu zählen Videos, Texte, Audios und Bilder, die vor allem über soziale Medien veröffentlicht werden.

Die Terrormiliz IS sei inzwischen in 30 Ländern präsent und habe ein vitales Interesse an "Failed States" (gescheiterten Staaten), heißt es weiter. Die Terrormiliz Islamischer Staat (IS) suche wie zuvor schon Al-Kaida nun auch den "direkten Kampf" mit dem Westen. Diesen Strategiewechsel habe die Terrormiliz bereits im September angekündigt.

[http://www.n-tv.de/politik/Gefahr-durch-Islamisten-ist-hoch-wie-nie-article16710571.html](http://www.n-tv.de/politik/Gefahr-durch-Islamisten-ist-hoch-wie-nie-article16710571.html)

202/16
**Röwers Umsturzphantasien**
Helmut Roewer, promovierter Jurist und Verfassungsschutzpräsident von Thüringen, als dort in den neunziger Jahren die rechtsextreme Terrorzelle Nationalsozialistischer Untergrund (NSU) erwuchs und abtauchte, ist für manchen noch immer ein geschätzter Gesprächspartner.

Etwa für Michael Friedrich Vogt, der sich im Internet als Journalist und Dokumentarfilmer vorstellt. Vogt hat nun ein Interview mit Roewer im Netzsender „Quer-Denken TV“ geführt. Der Moderator fragt Roewer, ob die politische Spitze Deutschlands mit ihrer Flüchtlingspolitik und der ungehinderten Einreise aus sicheren Drittstaaten den Rechtsstaat verletze, gar verlasse?


Eine gute Stunde zieht sich das Gespräch hin, bevor Roewer einen apokalyptischen Ausblick für Deutschland gibt. Es werde eine „Bruchlinie“ geben, in dem Moment, wenn den Einsatzkräften der Befehl gegeben werde, gegen das eigene Volk vorzugehen. Roewer erläutert hier nicht den Zusammenhang, in dem das der Fall sein könnte. Doch weiß er: „Dann ist Schluss mit lustig.“ Dann werde nicht mehr von Wahlen die Rede sein, „dann gibt es einen Umsturz“.

http://www.faz.net/aktuell/politik/thueringer-verfassungsschutz-prueft-helmut-roewers-aeusserungen-13998190.html

203/16
Other News From Germany

1) Die AfD : Im Blick der Verfassungsschützer
   https://www.tagesschau.de/inland/afd-verfassungsschutz-101.html

2) Deutscher Geheimdienst: Lage gefährlicher als nach 9/11

3) Kritik vom Justizminister: CSU hat laut Maas Facebook nicht verstanden

4) Vier «Tornados» zu Anti-IS-Einsatz gestartet
   http://www.n-tv.de/ticker/Vier-Tornados-zu-Anti-IS-Einsatz-gestartet-article16693981.html

5) SPD fordert Prüfung von Waffenlieferungen an Riad
   http://www.welt.de/politik/ausland/article150570606/SPD-fordert-Pruefung-von-Waffenlieferungen-an-Riad.html

6) Rocker bekämpfen den Staat vor Gericht
   http://www.welt.de/politik/deutschland/article150601091/Rocker-bekaempfen-den-Staat-vor-Gericht.html

7) German police give all-clear over package at Merkel’s office
   http://ca.reuters.com/article/topNews/idCAKBN0UK0UZ20160106

8) Germany registered 1.09 million asylum seekers in 2015
   http://ca.reuters.com/article/topNews/idCAKBN0UK0WU20160106
9) Germans shaken by New Year attacks on women in Cologne
http://www.reuters.com/article/us-germany-assaults-idUSKBN0UJ1IP20160105

10) Mordanschlag auf Linkenpolitiker in Wismar

11) Neue Aufregung um Roewer: Verfassungsschutz prüft Ex-Chef
http://www.n-tv.de/politik/Verfassungsschutz-prueft-Ex-Chef-article16694576.html

12) Flüchtling von Schüssen getroffen

13) German vice chancellor’s party wants far-right PEGIDA put on spy watch

14) SPD-Experte: Anti-Terror-Zentrum notfalls nur mit einigen EU-Ländern

15) NSU-Ausschuss: Ex-Geheimdienst-Chef widerspricht Ermittlern

16) German Officials Warn of New Security Risk: Local Extremists Recruiting Refugees

17) BND soll rechtswidrig deutschen Diplomaten abgehört haben

18) "Von Rechten unterwandert": Darum ist Pegida ein Fall für den Geheimdienst
http://www.huffingtonpost.de/2015/12/02/pegida-geheimdienst-recht_n_8696514.html

204/16
Schweiz sperrt Gelder von vier Ranghohen aus Burundi

(nzz) Die Schweiz hat Gelder von vier in den Konflikt involvierten Personen in Burundi ab sofort gesperrt. Die Sanktionen betreffen Ranghöhe, die gegen den Frieden, die Sicherheit und die Stabilität im ostafrikanischen Land handeln.

Der Bundesrat nahm eine entsprechende Verordnung am Freitag an. Sie ist eine Reaktion auf die schweren Menschenrechtsverletzungen und die Sicherheitsprobleme des Landes seit dem Frühling 2015, wie der Bundesrat schreibt.

http://www.nzz.ch/international/afrika/schweiz-sperrt-gelder-von-vier-ranghohen-aus-burundi-1.18657870

205/16
Switzerland probes ICCS member over Qaeda connection

(gulf today) Swiss federal prosecutors said on Saturday they had opened criminal proceedings against a board member of Switzerland’s largest Islamic organisation accused of propaganda for extremist groups, including Al Qaeda.

The office of Switzerland’s attorney general said in a statement it had “opened a criminal proceeding against a member of the Board of Directors of the Islamic Central Council of Switzerland (ICCS), as well as against persons unknown,” for violating “the prohibition of groups like Al Qaeda, Daesh and similar organisations.”

The German citizen is suspected of creating “for propaganda purposes” a video from a trip into parts of war-ravaged Syria, “without having explicitly distanced himself from Al-Qaeda activities” in the country, the statement said. The man, who was not identified, had, among other things, interviewed “a senior member of the jihad umbrella organisation Jaysh al-Fath (“Army of Conquest”), of which the Syrian Al-Qaeda branch Jabhat Al Nusra (“Support Front”) is also a member,” it pointed out.

http://gulftoday.ae/portal/099b2387-a0eb-4f82-bd8c-10a760ff313e.aspx

206/16
Syrians arrested on suspicion of making explosives

(cbs) Two Syrians arrested in a vehicle containing traces of explosives have not been clearly linked to four men with suspected ties to the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria who are wanted by Swiss authorities, the Geneva prosecutor said Saturday.

The arrests of the two Syrians on Friday came amid stepped-up police patrols in Geneva. Authorities raised the security vigilance level and announced a hunt for at least four suspects allegedly linked to ISIS who were believed to be plotting a "specific" attack in the city.

Geneva prosecutor Olivier Jornot spoke to reporters after Switzerland’s Attorney General’s office and Federal Police Office announced criminal investigations against the two Syrians on suspicion that they had violated laws on making and transporting explosives and toxic gases and a ban on links to militant groups like al Qaeda or ISIS.

Amid concerns that the four fugitives might have accomplices, Jornot said: "No link has been established in the different cases." Clarifying an earlier official statement, the prosecutor said no toxic gas - only traces of explosives - were found in the Syrians’ vehicle, which they told police they had only
recently obtained. He said the two Syrians spoke no French and were believed to have been recent arrivals in Switzerland.


207/16
Other News From Switzerland

1) Spy vs. Spy: Tech-Savvy Swiss Duo Bitnik Refines the Art of Espionage

208/16
Mexico shooting: Mayor Gisela Mota killed in Temixco

(bbc) A newly-elected Mexican mayor has been shot dead on her second day in office. Gisela Mota was killed at her home in the city of Temixco, 85km (52 miles) south of the capital Mexico City, hours after taking her oath of office on Friday, police said.

Reports said she was attacked by four gunmen. Police shot two of the attackers dead and arrested the others. A motive for the killing is unclear. Several Mexican mayors were killed last year by alleged drug traffickers.

The left-of-centre former federal congresswoman, who was in her early 30s, had promised to try to clean up Temixco, an industrial city where problems associated with drugs and organised crime are rife.


209/16
Guatemala prison riot leaves eight inmates dead

(bbc) A riot at a prison in Guatemala has left at least eight inmates dead and more than 20 injured. The authorities said the inmates were drinking on New Year’s Eve when a fight broke out. At least two prisoners were beheaded by fellow inmates.

Rioters set fire to mattresses and bedsheets and cut power in the jail. The prison, in the port city of Puerto Barrios on the Caribbean coast, was built for 175 prisoners but now houses more than 900.

Street gang members make up the bulk of Guatemala’s prison population. Deadly gang warfare inside prison walls is not uncommon. Severe overcrowding makes it hard for guards to control the prisoners - who are often heavily armed with home-made weapons as well as firearms smuggled into the jail.
El Salvador to help arrest soldiers accused in 1989 murder of priests

(reuters) El Salvador said on Wednesday it would cooperate in the arrest of 17 former soldiers accused of killing six Jesuit priests in one of the most notorious atrocities of the country’s bloody civil war.

The government made the announcement after a Spanish judge sent a new petition to international police agency Interpol on Monday, ordering the soldiers’ capture for the 1989 murders of the priests, their housekeeper and her daughter. Five of the priests were Spanish and one was Salvadoran.

Salvadoran presidential spokesman Eugenio Chicas said once legal requirements were met, the government of the Central American nation could make the arrests.

Other News From South America

1) Cars torched outside U.S. consulate in Tijuana: FBI
   http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mexico-usa-consulate-idUSKBN0UG03120160102

2) Ten killed in gang-related violence in El Salvador: police
   http://www.reuters.com/article/us-elsalvador-violence-idUSKBN0UF20U20160101

3) Mexico mayor shooting: Morelos governor takes over local police

4) Chef von kolumbianischem Verbrechersyndikat in Peru gefasst
   http://www.n-tv.de/ticker/Chef-von-kolumbianischem-Verbrechersyndikat-in-Peru-gefasst-article16679936.html

Toronto 18’ convict granted day parole so he can go to graduate school

(national post) Saad Gaya, one of 11 Toronto men convicted for planning a series of al-Qaida-inspired terrorist attacks in Southern Ontario, has been granted day parole in order to attend graduate school.

“You have clearly demonstrated your denunciation of radicalization and you presented as being very genuine in this regard,” wrote the Parole Board of Canada in a New Year’s Eve decision releasing the 28-year-old Gaya into a Toronto halfway house.
In 2010, Gaya was sentenced to 12 years in prison for his role in the “Toronto 18” terrorist plot, a foiled plan to commit mass murder in both Ottawa and Toronto.


213/16
Hackers block Russian minister’s cyber account with Turkish symbols

(Reuters) A social network account of Russia’s communications minister was temporarily blocked on Sunday in a cyberattack carried out by hackers presenting themselves as a Turkish activist group and parading images of a warplane and Turkish flags.

Russia’s ties with Turkey suffered a severe blow when a Turkish fighter shot down a Russian bomber near the Turkish-Syrian border in November, a move described by Russian President Vladimir Putin as “a stab in the back”.

Minister Nikolai Nikiforov’s Instagram account was blocked by “The Börteçine Cyber Team” hackers, according to screenshots of the account, published by Russian and Turkish media and featuring Turkish flags, a portrait of Turkey’s founding father Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, and a warplane.

http://www.reuters.com/article/us-russia-turkey-minister-cybersecurity-idUSKBN0UH0HJ20160103

214/16
Iranian Groups Hit ISPs with Info-Stealing Attacks

(info security) Two newly discovered Iran-based espionage groups have been spotted launching information-stealing cyber raids on local dissidents and airlines and telecoms firms in the Middle East.

Symantec’s Security Response Team explained in a blog post that ‘Cadelle’ and ‘Chafer’ go back at least as far as July 2014, with C&C infrastructure registered even earlier—in 2011.

The groups, which number between 5-10 operatives in each, use custom backdoors to help them grab the targeted information.


215/16
Russian Cyberspies Use Updated Arsenal to Attack Defense Contractors

(security week) A Russia-linked cyber espionage group has been using new tools in attacks against defense contractors and other high profile targets, Kaspersky Lab reported on Friday.
The threat actor, known as Pawn Storm, Strontium, APT28, Sofacy, Sednit and Fancy Bear, has been actively targeting military, media, defense and government organizations from across the world since 2007. Entities in NATO countries have been primarily targeted, but researchers recently spotted an increase in attacks aimed at Ukraine.

Pawn Storm has been known to use zero-day exploits targeting Adobe Flash Player, Java, Microsoft Office and Windows in its operations. The attackers have also leveraged a wide range of tools to achieve their goals, including backdoors such as SPLM (also known as Xagent and CHOPSTICK) and AZZY (aka ADVSTORESHELL, NETUI and EVILTOSS), and USB stealers designed for data theft from air-gapped systems. Implants dubbed JHUHUGIT and JKEYSKW have also been observed in Pawn Storm attacks.


216/16
5 massive security threats set to emerge in 2016

(memeburn) The Internet of Things (IoT), a global network of objects equipped with connected sensors, is only just starting to take off in a big way.

As more and more of those objects come online however, so the security risks around them increase. It’s not just the connected objects at risk either, but also the cloud and virtualised infrastructure that supports them. And perhaps scariest of all, it’s becoming increasingly difficult to tell that an attack’s actually happened.


217/16
Iranian Hackers Infiltrated New York Dam in 2013

(wall street journal) Cyberspies had access to the control system of a small dam near Rye in 2013, sparking concerns that reached to the White House, according to former and current U.S. officials and experts familiar with the previously undisclosed incident.


218/16
What’s next for intelligence in an encrypted world?

(the strategist) John Coyne’s recent Strategist post raises some interesting questions for intelligence agencies and their paymasters; namely, what are the capabilities that agencies require to continue to protect our security, and what’s a reasonable expectation of their success in doing so?


219/16
Cyber data-sharing shield may be part of big U.S. spending bill
Companies that share cyber data with the U.S. government in its fight against hackers would get broadened legal immunity, under a precedent-setting proposal likely to become part of a major spending bill being developed in Congress, sources close to the negotiations said on Tuesday.

If added to the $1.15 trillion spending package, the cyber-security proposal would amount to the first serious attempt by Congress to combat the rising threat of debilitating hacks from foreign nation-states and malicious actors that have hit a growing number of businesses and government agencies in recent years.

The spending bill must be approved within days to keep the U.S. government from shutting down and lawmakers were scrambling to attach a host of non-spending related policy riders to the fast-moving measure.

http://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-cybersecurity-legislation-idUSKBN0TY2YF20151216

220/16
Treasury releases rules on hacker sanctions

The Treasury Department has issued the rules for carrying out sanctions related to commercial espionage, which were imposed by President Obama last year in an executive order aimed at curbing Chinese hacking.

The regulations, published in the Federal Register on Dec. 31 but not widely reported, seek to define and clarify the scope of Executive Order 13694, promulgated by the president in April. The order, "Blocking the Property of Certain Persons Engaging in Significant Malicious Cyber-Enabled Activities," was the result of Chinese cyberattacks aimed at stealing trade secrets from American companies.

According to the text of the abbreviated guidelines, Treasury will have the power to take measures against entities engaged in "significant malicious cyber-enabled activities" that include trade sanctions, freezing of assets, and visa bans against individual perpetrators.

http://www.washingtonexaminer.com/article/2579650

221/16
Thai police websites hacked over death sentences

Anonymous hackers attacked more than a dozen Thai police websites in protest against death sentences handed down to two Myanmar migrant workers for allegedly killing two British tourists.

Fourteen Thai police websites were attacked and of those listed nine were inaccessible on Tuesday, according to Anonymous' Facebook page.

Thai police confirmed the cyber-attacks on Tuesday but said there was no confidential data on the public websites.

Anti-Isis hackers claim responsibility for BBC cyber-attack

Activists who say their goal is to disrupt online propaganda by Islamic State have claimed responsibility for a cyber-attack on the BBC website.

The New Year’s Eve attack took down the iPlayer and other services for a few hours, according to Joe Lynam, the BBC’s business correspondent.

Lynam told BBC Breakfast that the technology correspondent, Rory Cellan-Jones, had received a tweet from a group calling itself New World Hacking (NWH), claiming responsibility for a distributed denial of service (DDoS). It bombarded the system with 600 gigabits a second of messages.

http://www.theguardian.com/media/2016/jan/02/bbc-cyber-attack-anti-isis-hackers-claim-responsibility

Other News Concerning the Cyber Battlefield

1) Blast a Hole in Adobe Flash and Earn $100,000

2) Former Guantánamo detainee speaks to hacker conference by video link

3) Web attack knocks BBC websites offline

4) Twitter ‘confuses’ Iyad Al-Baghdadi with Islamic State leader

5) AVG’s Web TuneUp put millions of Chrome users at risk

6) Microsoft to warn of nation-state hacks

7) How is Artificial Intelligence transforming Wall Street?

8) Wetherspoon hack: customer details stolen in latest cyber-attack

9) Hacker sent ‘death to the Jews’ text messages after breach in phone network

10) Japanese PM’s website hacked by whaling protesters
http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/dec/10/japanese-pms-website-hacked-whaling-protesters

11) Cybersecurity experts ‘charge £10,000 a day to protect UK’s top firms’
12) Anonymous swaps Isis propaganda site for Prozac ad in trolling fight

13) Web services firm CloudFlare accused by Anonymous of helping Isis
http://www.theguardian.com/technology/2015/nov/19/cloudflare-accused-by-anonymous-helping-isis

14) North Korea's 'paranoid' computer operating system revealed

15) US charges four men in 'one of the largest hacking schemes ever'
http://www.theguardian.com/technology/2015/nov/10/us-computer-hacking-jp-morgan-theft

224/16
“Snooper’s Charter” Law Will Damage UK National Security, NSA Whistleblower Warns

(buzzfeed) Proposed legislation strengthening the spying powers of the UK’s intelligence agencies will lead to more civilian deaths from terror attacks, a former senior intelligence official has warned.

William Binney, a former technical director of the NSA who became a prominent critic of the agency in the Bush era, told BuzzFeed News that the bulk surveillance allowed under the draft Investigatory Powers Bill — dubbed the “snooper’s charter” by critics due to the spying powers it enables — leads to more terror deaths, as agencies are unable to identify terrorists until after they commit attacks.

Binney, who is due to testify on the draft legislation before a joint committee of parliament on Wednesday, said that while targeted surveillance could prevent terror attacks, mass surveillance leaves agencies swamped with too much information — meaning they can only track down terrorists after attacks occur.

a) http://www.buzzfeed.com/jamesball/snoopers-charter-bill-will-damage-uk-national-security-nsa-w#.bxYlzZ5l

b) http://www.wired.co.uk/news/archive/2016-01/06/mass-surveillance-william-binney-nsa-uk-ip-bill

225/16
Theresa May says new spying powers will be used to bring cyberbullies and online trolls to justice

(daily mail) Theresa May reportedly claims the surveillance powers - unveiled under the Investigatory Powers Bill last month - will help police and spooks to track down and identify anonymous cyberbullies.
This is because they will force Internet firms to retain individuals' connection records - which may then be used by officials to unmask abusive users going by various aliases, The Times reports.

It is the first time the government has said the new laws will be used to deal with what Mrs May describes as the 'pernicious' issue of cyberbullying, which affects millions of young Brits annually. The Home Secretary made the remarks on the draft bill - which is being considered by parliament and has been criticised by many including the tech giant Apple - in a letter to MP James Cartlidge.


226/16
Apple savages Britain's proposed new spying laws

(business insider)Apple has vigorously attacked the UK’s new proposed spying laws — accusing them of everything from undermining consumer trust to threatening to "spark serious international conflicts."

The Californian tech giant submitted written evidence to the parliamentary joint committee looking at the draft bill, and has been reported on by The Financial Times and The Guardian.

The Investigatory Powers Bill is an attempt by David Cameron's Conservative government to update Britain's spying laws for the modern age. Under the bill, Britons' internet history will be retained and accessible by law enforcement. With judicial approval, they can also access the content of communications. It will also make it legal for spooks to hack into people's devices when required.


227/16
US lawmakers snuck a controversial cyber-spying bill into the spending budget

(business insider) A controversial bill known as the Cybersecurity Information Sharing Act (CISA) was slipped into a piece of legislation handing much of the federal government’s funding, meaning it’s fairly certain it’ll get passed at this point.

CISA passed in the Senate 74-21 in October much to the dismay of major tech companies, like Twitter and Reddit, who have taken public stances against it for violating user privacy. Now CISA, which has now been renamed the Cybersecurity Act of 2015, has been put into what is known as the end-of-the-year omnibus bill — a sweeping deal handling taxes and government funding.

Vetoing the omnibus bill, which takes hours upon hours to hammer out and was finalized at 2 A.M. Wednesday, is politically costly. Not having an end-of-the-year budget would shut the government down like in 2013. Wrapping CISA in the omnibus bill is a fairly sure-fire way to ensure it’ll pass.

b) http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2015/dec/16/congress-budget-omnibus-cisa-surveillance-cybersecurity
228/16

**Cameron to review legal protection of shoot-to-kill police officers**

(guardian) David Cameron has ordered a review into whether armed police should have greater legal protection if they shoot terrorists and other suspected criminals. He has asked for an inquiry amid concerns that officers who shoot to kill fear prosecution if they pull the trigger.

A government source stressed that the review has been requested in light of police concerns over the powers they have to protect the public from a Paris-style terror attack. However, the move will be controversial because it comes in the same week that an officer was arrested and interviewed under caution as part of the Independent Police Complaints Commission inquiry into the death of Jermaine Baker.

The 28-year-old, from Tottenham, north London, died after being shot during an operation against an alleged attempt to spring two offenders from a prison van near Wood Green, north London.


229/16

**Other Links Concerning Anti-Terror Law and Civil Rights**

1) Law firm referred to disciplinary tribunal over Al-Sweady inquiry

2) Prosecutors’ Secrecy Orders on Subpoenas Stir Constitutional Questions
   [http://www.nytimes.com/2016/01/01/nyregion/prosecutorssecrecy-orders-on-subpoenas-stir-constitutional-questions.html?_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2016/01/01/nyregion/prosecutorssecrecy-orders-on-subpoenas-stir-constitutional-questions.html?_r=0)

3) Saudi beheadings soar in 2015 under discretionary rulings

4) Norwegian Court to Hear Breivik’s Rights Case in Prison

5) Netzexperte: "Datenschutz wird in TTIP nicht angetastet"

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230/16

**This is the Air Force radiation sniffer plane deploying after North Korea’s nuclear test**
The U.S. Air Force will soon deploy a WC-135 Constant Phoenix aircraft to test for radiation near North Korea, part of the U.S. military’s ongoing effort to determine what the country’s provocative nuclear bomb test entailed.

The use of the so-called nuclear “sniffer plane” was confirmed on Tuesday by an official at the Pentagon, speaking on condition of anonymity due to the sensitivity of the operation. The aircraft collects air samples and debris, and is a modified version of a C-135B or EC-135C Boeing airplane. It will determine whether the explosion was actually a hydrogen blast, as North Korea has claimed. That assertion has been viewed with widespread skepticism by nuclear weapons experts.

“We’ll know for sure once the WC-135 gets air samples,” the defense official said. The Constant Phoenix was commissioned by Army Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower in September 1947, as he gave the Army Air Forces — a precursor of the Air Force — responsibility for detecting atomic explosions worldwide, Air Force officials said. The mission was initially assigned to the WB-29 aircraft, but was swapped over to WB-50 and eventually the WC-135 by 1965.


231/16
How Spy Agencies Find Their Targets

Drone strikes depend on signals intelligence - phone records, metadata (the who and when of a call) and internet communications.

An anonymous former drone operator told the Intercept website that 90% of drone killings in Afghanistan were carried out based on metadata.

For a while, this was as basic as identifying the SIM card used by a militant, then determining its location by triangulating location information from the different mobile phone towers that phone would connect to.

http://news.sky.com/story/1586934/how-spy-agencies-find-their-targets

232/16
Civilian Jets An 'Easy Target' For IS Missiles

The former head of the RAF has said evidence uncovered by Sky News of Islamic State recommissioning surface-to-air missiles is of great concern and that passenger planes would be an easy target.

Air Chief Marshal Sir Michael Graydon was responding to exclusive footage which revealed the extremists were able to produce homemade thermal batteries for heat-seeking missiles - a feat that has eluded terror groups until now.

It raises the possibility of the militants being able to reactivate discarded stockpiles of older missiles, previously thought redundant. The capability of the insurgents emerged in more than eight hours of unedited training videos shot at a jihadi 'weapons lab' in the IS stronghold of Raqqa.
a)  http://news.sky.com/story/1617348/civilian-jets-an-easy-target-for-is-missiles
b)  http://news.sky.com/story/1617274/are-islamic-state-missiles-a-threat-to-raf

233/16
US military shelves Google robot plan over 'noise concerns'

(bbc) The US army says it has mothballed plans to deploy a robot developed in conjunction with Google because it is "too loud". The Legged Squad Support System - referred to by some as "the big dog" - is capable of carrying 400lbs (181.4kg) of equipment over rugged terrain.

But the US Marines now say its petrol-powered engine is too noisy for them to use in battle. Google has long said it planned to move away from its military contracts.

The LS3 was developed by Boston Dynamics - a robotics firm acquired by Google in 2013 - as part of a tie-up with the Pentagon's research arm, the Defence Advanced Research Projects Agency (Darpa).


234/16
Scanning for terrorism - brain fingerprinting offers new hope in anti-terrorism fight

(wa today) The challenges faced by counterterrorism authorities are numerous. They include determining whether a person jailed for terrorism-related offences – and now due for release – has been deradicalised by imprisonment, or is just faking it; determining whether persons returning from war zones, like recently returned Australian Ashley Dyball, have been illegally involved in conflict (they invariably claim to have been engaged in humanitarian work); establishing whether a person has bomb-making knowledge, and; determining whether a young Muslim trying to depart Australia has been accessing Islamic State briefing material on how to get to Syria.

One technology seems to have the potential to provide national security authorities with important indicators as to a person-of-interest’s likely involvement in terrorism – and even his or her level of radicalisation. It’s been labelled “brain fingerprinting” technology, though a less confronting and more marketable title for the technology might be “Memory Scanning”).

What, might you ask, is brain fingerprinting? It is a forensic science technique that uses electroencephalography (EEG) to determine whether specific information is stored in a subject’s brain by measuring electrical brainwaves based on the brain’s response to words, phrases or pictures presented to it on a computer screen.


235/16
This Tool Could Sniff Out a Paris Bomb More Than a Football Field Away

(defense one) The U.S. military is working to refine and improve a multi-sensor device that could one day deploy to detect suicide vests.
As Parisian police moved in to apprehend people suspected of launching last week’s terror attacks, a woman detonated a suicide-bomb vest.

The recent appearance of such weapons in Western cities has alarmed many in law enforcement. One positive outcome of the military’s extensive experience with such devices is a new system that can help guards detect a bomb vest from up to 100 meters away.


236/16

Other News Concerning Spycraft and Technology

1) In historic first, SpaceX lands first reusable rocket

2) Crazy old spy cameras made to look like guns and books
http://www.wired.com/2016/01/history-photography-50-cameras/

3) Former Cuba prisoner Alan Gross details torture threats and survival strategies
http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/nov/27/former-cuba-prisoner-alan-gross-torture

237/16

Lord Gowrie told Irish diplomats about British spying

(Irish times) Irish diplomats were warned by a member of Margaret Thatcher’s cabinet about blanket eavesdropping on their communications with Dublin during the talks that led to the Anglo-Irish Agreement.

Arts minister Lord Gowrie, who was a member of the British cabinet subcommittee that handled the agreement negotiations, gave the warning to Irish diplomat Richard Ryan, who was based at the London Embassy at the time.

Lord Gowrie, whose family had sold the Castlemartin estate in Co Kildare to Tony O’Reilly, was appointed to the cabinet subcommittee because of his contacts on both sides of the Irish Sea. He had lunch with Ryan on March 27th, 1985. In his report of the meeting, the diplomat said Lord Gowrie felt honoured that the prime minister had asked him to be a member of the subcommittee.


238/16
1890: WWI Spy Who Would Choose British Overlords Over Turkish Is Born

(haaretz) January 5, 1890 is the birthdate of Sarah Aaronsohn, one of the heads of a Jewish spy ring that supplied intelligence to British forces in the Middle East during World War I. Aaronsohn entered the Zionist pantheon in large part for her heroic death, caused by a gunshot wound she inflicted upon herself so that she would not reveal details about her comrades in the Nili organization.

Sarah was the fifth of the six children of Efraim Fischel Aaronsohn and the former Malka Glatzano. Both were from Baku, Romania, and came to Palestine in 1882 as part of the First Aliyah wave of Jewish settlement. The Aaronsohns settled in what became the town of Zichron Yaakov, on southern Mt. Carmel, and became a leading family of the colony, which was famously bankrolled by the Baron Edmond de Rothschild. Sarah's older brother Aaron (1876-1919) achieved special distinction as an agronomist, establishing an experimental station at nearby Atlit.

When World War I began, Palestine was still under the rule of the fading Ottoman empire. Opinions varied among the Jewish settlers as to whether their cause would be better off with an Allied victory, meaning that the United Kingdom would likely occupy the country, or with an Axis win, in which case Turkish rule would presumably continue. David Ben-Gurion, for example, was studying law in Constantinople (later Istanbul) in 1914, and for the first two years of war, he and most of his labor-Zionist comrades supported the Turks.

http://www.haaretz.com/jewish/features/1.695352

239/16
Schwechat: Anschlag jährt sich zum 30. Mal


240/16
Will America’s 100 Year-Old Female Spy Finally Be Recognized for The Hero She Is?

(daily beast) She worked behind enemy lines—and was captured by the Soviets. But the U.S. government never properly credited her full credit for her heroism. After seven decades, that may be about to change.
Cpt. Stephanie Czech arrived at the U.S. embassy in Berlin wearing civilian clothes, as always, and delivered the report she’d been carrying to the intelligence section. The war may have ended, but Czech was still working, undercover.

Berlin was not her home base. Czech had arrived in Poland in October 1945, and spent the next four months driving around the countryside. She claimed to be a clerk at the U.S. embassy in Warsaw, searching for distant relatives in her spare time. In fact, Czech was an officer in the Women’s Army Corps and one of only two members of the Office of Strategic Services stationed in the country.


241/16
Daphne Park: A woman of intelligence

(big issue) Queen of Spies is the biography of Baroness Daphne Park (1921-2010), who was a senior area controller in Britain’s Secret Intelligence Service, popularly known as MI6. Park’s entry to the secretive agency came about in World War Two when she served in the Special Operations Executive as a coding instructor and as a briefing and dispatching officer (responsible for dispatching secret agents on their missions behind enemy lines).

She is probably best known for her role in the overthrow and subsequent murder of Patrice Lumumba. After the war she joined MI6, serving in Paris, Moscow, Léopoldville (now Kinshasa), Lusaka, Hanoi and Ulaanbaatar. She is probably best known for her role in the overthrow and subsequent murder of Patrice Lumumba, the first prime minister of the independent Congo Republic.


242/16
The spy who averted nuclear Armageddon

(guardian) Rainer Rupp, codename Topaz, was a West German working for the East German secret service at the heart of Nato in its headquarters in Brussels.

Reagan’s plan for a massive combined Nato exercise, simulating a nuclear war on eastern Europe using live nuclear weapons and with every sense of a real situation, so alarmed the Soviet Union that they thought the exercise was a fig leaf for the real thing – a pre-emptive strike against them.

They were determined to get in first, and only days before the exercise was due to take place had their bombers loaded with nuclear bombs ready on the tarmac. Rupp was able to inform them that it was indeed only an exercise, but they still didn’t believe him until he was able, at the last minute, to provide them with highly classified documentation to prove his assertion.

http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/dec/08/the-spy-who-avereted-nuclear-armageddon

243/16
The last time a Russian jet was shot down by a NATO jet was in 1952
A Russian Su-24 Fencer, a multi-role attack aircraft, was shot down by Turkish F-16s while reportedly flying in Turkish airspace Tuesday. The shoot down — while having wide-ranging ramifications for countries operating in the region — marks the first time a NATO country has shot down a Russian jet in just over 63 years.

On November 18, 1952, in the waning months of the Korean War, four U.S. aircraft carriers were steaming through the Sea of Japan with orders to strike North Korean supply lines in the city of Hoeryong, North Korea. Hoeryong sits near the mouth of the Yalu river on the spit of land that borders both Chinese Manchuria and Russia.

As the ships neared their targets, the U.S.S. Helena with a team from the National Security Agency aboard, detected radio traffic coming out of the Soviet Union, according to an account in the aviation magazine Flight Journal. The transmissions indicated that the carriers had been detected and Russian aircraft were preparing to intercept.


244/16
**Gary Powers: The U2 spy pilot the US did not love**

(bbc) Steven Spielberg's most recent movie, Bridge of Spies, tells the story of a Cold War prisoner exchange between the Soviet Union and the US. The deal allowed US spy plane pilot Gary Powers to return home - but once there he faced a chorus of criticism.

Gary Powers had been in flight for four hours when his troubles began. His spy mission from an American airbase in Pakistan took him over central Russia, where, at more than 70,000 feet above the ground, he believed he was beyond the range of either fighter planes or missiles.

The 30-year-old CIA pilot, a veteran of the Korean war, expected to make his way, without incident, all the way across the Soviet Union to another base in Norway. But when he was over the Russian city of Sverdlovsk, the unimaginable happened. His U2 spy plane was hit by a Soviet missile barrage.


245/16
**USS Pueblo sailors tortured in North Korea see new hope for compensation**

(washington post) The memory of 11 gruesome months of captivity in North Korea came flooding back to Tom Massie when he heard that the American hostages held in Iran for 444 days more than three decades ago will finally be compensated for their ordeal.

Good for them, he thought. But for Massie and his 81 fellow crew members on the USS Pueblo, a Navy spy ship that North Korea seized in international waters in 1968, financial recompense remains elusive.

Now in their 60s and 70s, many disabled and struggling on fixed incomes, the men of the Pueblo have received almost nothing in damages. The government once paid them about $800 for food they didn’t eat, calculated at the World War II rate of $2.25 a day.

246/16
Other Links Concerning Intel History

1) Algeria buries independence hero Hocine Ait-Ahmed

2) Ronald Reagan’s Disarmament Dream
http://www.defenseone.com/ideas/2016/01/ronald-reagans-disarmament-dream/124819/?oref=defenseone_today_nl

Hot Docs Online, Conferences & Literature

247/16
Spying: Taoiseach warned of UK bugging Irish communications

(independent) Irish diplomats were warned by a senior British official during critical Anglo-Irish Agreement talks that all their communications were being bugged. The revelation came in a secret 1985 document deemed so sensitive it was sent from London to Dublin by courier to be hand-delivered to Taoiseach Dr Garret FitzGerald, Foreign Affairs Minister Peter Barry and Tánaiste Dick Spring.

The document, dated March 27 1985, was sent from Richard Ryan, a senior official based at the Irish Embassy in London. Ironically, just two years later Dr FitzGerald publicly moved to dismiss reports of an attempt to 'bug' the Irish Embassy in London. Mr Ryan had lunch with Lord Gowrie - now Grey Ruthven, 2nd Earl of Gowrie - in early 1985 before the Anglo Irish Agreement was signed.

Lord Gowrie, despite being a Scottish Peer, was born in Ireland and served under Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher first as Minister for Employment, then Minister for Northern Ireland and finally as Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster. "(Lord) Gowrie feels honoured that the Prime Minister has asked him to join the Cabinet sub-committee which has just been set up," Mr Ryan wrote. "He feels he must proceed with great care in order not to compromise in any way the objectivity that is essential to the job," he explained. "He asked that the Ambassador and I should be very aware of blanket eaves-dropping in our communications with Dublin and that we should not allow our special relationship with him (known to the Prime Minister and one of the reasons for him being brought in at this time) to lead to difficulties."


248/16
Declassified: US Military’s Secret Cold War Space Project Revealed
(live science) A newly released treasure trove of historical data reveals intriguing details about a secret Cold War project known as the Manned Orbiting Laboratory (MOL).

The U.S. Air Force's MOL program ran from December 1963 until its cancellation in June 1969. The program spent $1.56 billion during that time, according to some estimates.

While the program never actually lofted a crewed space station, those nearly six years were quite eventful, featuring the selection of 17 MOL astronauts, the remodeling of NASA's two-seat Gemini spacecraft, the development of the Titan-3C launch vehicle and the building of an MOL launch site at Vandenberg Air Force Base in California.


249/16
Pinochet’s Secret Envoy to Kissinger: Contreras

(national security archive) On January 7, 1975, DINA chief Manuel Contreras traveled to Washington D.C. for a secret meeting with the deputy director of the CIA, Vernon Walters. His real purpose, however, was to courier a one-page message from Augusto Pinochet to Henry Kissinger.

“He came as a special envoy from President Pinochet with a message for you to be delivered through me,” Walters reported to Secretary of State Kissinger after meeting with Contreras for 45 minutes. Pinochet’s typed memo requested that the U.S. provide Chile with economic credits, and assistance, as well as tanks, ships, submarines, and electronic surveillance support to protect Chile from a perceived military threat from Peru. In his conversation with Walters, Contreras reported that DINA had “infiltrated a member into the Central Committee of the Chilean Communist Party,” and the regime had “completely dismantled” the armed resistance.

With Kissinger planning a visit to Chile, Walters reported, Pinochet wanted him to know that his regime was “willing to take a number of steps in the direction of human rights and let you have the credit for having persuaded him to do it.”

https://nsarchive.wordpress.com/2015/12/22/pinochets-secret-envoy-to-kissinger-contreras/

250/16
The Domestic Role of the American Military

(fas) The role of armed forces in an open society may be likened to a potent medicine that is life-saving in the proper dosage but lethal beyond a certain proportion. Military forces have proved to be indispensable for securing the political space in which free institutions can flourish, but they may also trample or destroy those institutions if unconstrained by law and wise leadership.

A rich and thoughtful account of how the U.S. military has protected, supported, clashed with and occasionally undermined constitutional government in this country is presented in the new book “Soldiers on the Home Front: The Domestic Role of the American Military” by William C. Banks and Stephen Dycus (Harvard University Press, 2016).
The authors, who are law professors, trace the role of the military back to its constitutional roots, which are not as precisely defined as they might have been. The Framers of the Constitution “knew that troops would sometimes be needed to help enforce the civilian laws. They just neglected to tell us precisely when.” And so, Banks and Dyson write, U.S. military forces have played a multiplicity of domestic roles over time, both constructive and abusive.

https://fas.org/blogs/secrecy/2016/01/soldiers-home-front/

251/16

Other Links Concerning Hot Docs

1) Margaret Thatcher wanted to crush Loyalist strikers just like she did the miners
http://www.thejournal.ie/margaret-thatcher-loyalists-2502808-Jan2016/

2) Declassified files: Trimble’s ‘weak arguments’ for independent Northern Ireland

3) Declassified files: SDLP moderate’s ‘intemperate tirade’ at NIO man

4) The secret note that revealed how much Margaret Thatcher trusted Garret Fitzgerald

5) Ronald Reagan’s private reaction to Brighton bomb

6) ‘Unstable’ Joe Kennedy’s 1988 challenge to British government

7) British alarm over rising Sinn Féin vote in 1988

8) Uncovering Omagh’s little known RAF airfield

9) Anglo-Irish relations seen as ‘a nuisance’ by British officials

10) Poppy Day Enniskillen bomb prompted special summit

11) Declassified files: Thatcher wrote personal note to Bloomfield after bombs

12) Charles Haughey ‘distrusted’ Department of Foreign Affairs

13) State Papers: INLA described by Catholic priests as ‘bunch of lunatics’
21) Papers reveal scathing verdict on former UK minister Sir Richard Needham

22) Semtex shortage hampered attempts to train Maze prison sniffer dogs

23) Bomb scares: ‘Garden shed’ terrorism may seem amateurish but these devices are deadly and part of our daily lives

24) Anger as Northern Ireland bomb squad deals with 700 security alerts in the last three years

25) ‘Hungover Douglas Hurd had to be walked round Dublin park’ after meeting with Irish government

26) Secret files: ‘Astonishment’ at Soviet Union’s concern for jailed Provo killers’ human rights

27) Thatcher thought Anglo-Irish Agreement ‘gave Irish all the glory, none of the headaches’
28) Secret files: Russia nearly dropped an atomic-powered spy satellite on Northern Ireland

29) Police bid to outlaw Sinn Fein was rejected by Government in 1988

30) Douglas Hurd forbade 'Derry' and 'Londonderry' in official correspondence

31) British were forced to defend Maze against Soviet 'rights violations' queries
http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/northern-ireland/british-were-forced-to-defend-maze-against-soviet-rights-violations-queries-34323297.html

32) John Hume 'wanted talks with IRA Army Council'

33) Killing of loyalist was bid 'to rebuild IRA support'
http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/northern-ireland/killing-of-loyalist-was-bid-to-rebuild-ira-support-34322861.html

34) Declassified files: Thatcher relieved unionists didn’t bomb after Anglo-Irish accord

35) NI state papers: Dublin anger over Birmingham Six and John Stalker

36) Declassified files: RAF flight ended up in Mullingar

37) State Papers: ‘What would you do if Dundalk were bombed?’

38) Trooping off to school: Amazing video of children strolling past British soldiers at the start of The Troubles
http://www.belfastlive.co.uk/news/history/trooping-school-amazing-video-children-10664085

39) Governor warned of potential ‘bloodbath’ among IRA prisoners if rubber bullets were removed

40) Garret FitzGerald asked Britain about using unarmed police in North

41) SDLP impressed by party’s inclusion in government’s ‘most secret negotiations’

42) Catholic Primate lobbied for release of Gusty Spence