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Today's Headlines and Commentary

By [Raffaella Wakeman](#)

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Considering the fact that it's a Friday, in June, and Congress has left town, there's an awful lot going on.

First, on those pesky "leaks" coming out of the White House. (To be fair, I'm not sure that "three dozen" sources counts as a leak. Sounds more like a waterfall to me.) Josh Gerstein at *Politico* [shares](#) a Wolf Blitzer interview with Senator Dianne Feinstein about the "kill list"/Stuxnet leaks coming out of the White House, and he writes in a [separate column](#) on the seeming irony of the administration's "unprecedented wave" of leak prosecutions while it simultaneously shares all the details of the president's targeted killing strategy and cyber attacks against Iran.

Doug Bandow of Cato [finds similarities](#) between President Obama and the "despotic regimes where officials exercise the power of life and death without restraint" in the *Daily Caller* today.

Scott Shane [reports](#) on Republican calls for an investigation by a special counsel into the leaks (that his reporting benefited from) in the *New York Times*, while Jeremy Herb at *The Hill* [says](#) the White House has rejected the proposal.

Meanwhile, John McCain and John Kerry are at odds over the Stuxnet leaks, with McCain angry at the White House and Kerry displeased with the *Times*' publishing of the story. Jeremy Herb at *The Hill* [covers](#) the senators' remarks.

The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights is [contemplating](#) an investigation into the decision-making around drone strikes as well, writes Carlo Munoz at *The Hill*.

Jeffrey Gettleman at the *New York Times* [tells us](#) that the U.S. is offering \$33 million for information on members of Shabab in Somalia.

Eric Schmitt in the *New York Times* [analyzes](#) the impact that the death of al Libi will have on the direction and strength of Al Qaeda, which appears to be shifting away from

Pakistan and into Yemen. And Arshad Mohammed at Reuters [notes](#) Secretary Clinton's implicit defense of the use of drone strikes yesterday.

Conor Friedersdorf [responds](#) to Andrew Sullivan's [post](#) comparing President Obama's war on terror with that of President Bush's.

John Yoo writes in the *Wall Street Journal* that President Obama is micromanaging the drone campaign:

Yet the greater threat to security comes from Mr. Obama's micromanagement of the drone campaign. Poring over the files of kill-list nominees recalls Lyndon Johnson's role in tightly controlling bombing strikes during the Vietnam War. During Operation Rolling Thunder, Johnson held Tuesday lunches when he and his advisers picked targets to avoid attacks that might provoke Soviet or Chinese intervention.

This misuse of presidential time produced a myopic focus on tactics. Photos of LBJ hunched over maps said it all: Staring at individual targets prevented him from seeing the broader strategic picture in Vietnam and Southeast Asia. Worse yet, it encouraged the military to set aside its judgment in favor of the president's political preferences.

. . . Today the Obama administration commits mistakes of similar dimension by rushing for the exits in Iraq, hastily drawing down in Afghanistan, and failing to pressure Pakistan to control its western regions, where al Qaeda and the Taliban operate with little restraint. America's high-tempo drone campaign cannot succeed for long without the ground support of local bases and intelligence assets.

To stop an enemy without territory, population or regular armed forces, the U.S. must have access to timely, actionable intelligence gleaned from captured terrorists. The interrogation of terrorist leaders not only led the CIA to bin Laden's doorstep. It helped produce the success of the last decade: not a single follow-up al Qaeda attack in the U.S. Exclusive reliance on drones and a no-capture policy spend down the investments in intelligence that made this hiatus possible, without replenishing the interrogation-gained information needed to predict future threats.

The Quote of the Day goes to Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Martin Dempsey, [who told reporters](#) that:

Although we are extraordinarily dissatisfied with the effect the Pakistanis have had on the Haqqanis, we are mindful that they are conducting military operations at great losses.

Ben already [mentioned this piece](#) in the *Boston Review* by David Luban.

MSNBC is [just catching up](#) on the news that the U.S. is spending some money to provide additional amenities like a soccer field and television at Guantanamo detention center.

Joshua Foust at the *Atlantic* [says](#) that we misunderstand drones, and reminds us that drones aren't cheap and they can't totally replace other forms of military operations.

Just in case you think that the U.S. is the only country in the world using drones in military operations, Australia's *ABC News* [reports](#) on that country's drone campaign in Afghanistan.

A bipartisan group of national security experts wrote to Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell urging him to support cybersecurity legislation, [reports](#) Brendan Sasso at *The Hill*.

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