

CONNECTIONS

JEWISH WAR VETERANS POST #373

ALBERT ARONOWITZ CHAPTER, Tampa, Florida

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SEPTEMBER 2020

NEXT POST MEETING

Sunday, September 13th
10:00 am Meeting
via FreeConferenceCall.com

Phone-In (Audio Only) —
(617) 829-6417

To Join Via Videoconference —

1. Download and launch the

FreeConferenceCall.com
desktop application

2. Click Join and enter your name, email address,
and the host's online meeting ID:

steviefalk



Date	Time	Event
Sunday September 13	1000***	Post Meeting
Saturday September 19		Rosh Hashanah
Sunday September 27		Kol Nidre
Monday September 28		Yom Kippur
Sunday October 18	0930**	Post Meeting
Sunday October 25	0930	Dept. of Florida Quarterly Meeting, Ft. Myers
Sunday November 1		Daylight Savings Time Ends
Tuesday November 3		Election Day
Wednesday November 11		Veterans Day
Sunday November 15	0930**	Post Meeting
Thursday November 26		Thanksgiving

* Dates and Times are subject to change

** Meeting begins at 0930 at James A. Haley VA

*** No Breakfast Provided for the September Meeting due to COVID-19 outbreak.

A full Participant's Guide to joining the phone and/or videoconference will be made available on the Post's website at www.jwvtampa.org.

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For the latest updates:

Check out all of our websites:

Post 373 — www.jwvtampa.org
Dept of FL — www.jwv-fl.org
JWV National — www.jwv.org



COMMANDER'S CORNER



The Veterans Administration (VA) offers Veterans Choice Program

It has been a long summer, but now we are back – at least virtually. The VA is still on lockdown so no in person meetings at this time.

Our meeting will be on Sunday September 13th at 10 am. The usual 3rd Sunday is Rosh Hashanah, so we are meeting early.

At the meeting I will speak about the National Convention which recently wrapped up, a new program I am initiating to create a JWV video, the Marketing Committee and what they are doing, and the upcoming Department of Florida meeting.

I would like to do something different this meeting. I would like for each member to speak briefly about their experience in the military, the JWV, and how they have been handling the Covid situation. I would especially like to know what you like and dislike about the JWV as well as how you feel we could improve the organization. Most importantly, why you joined and why you remain.

For our valued Patrons, please do the same as the above but instead of your experience in the military, please speak about why you decided to become a Patron and what the JWV means to you.

I hope all of you will join in the meeting – either by video or phone – if you have any questions on how to log on, contact me or Steve Falkowitz.

L'Shana Tovah U'Metuka,

Larry

It stipulates that Veterans who have to wait more than 30 days to see a doctor, or who live more than 40 miles from their closest VA site can receive health care from community providers. The provider must be part of the VA's network of community providers. Please go to the following website for further information:

<https://www.va.gov/opa/choiceact/documents/choice-act-summary.pdf>

THE VETERANS HEALTH ID CARD FOR MILITARY BASE ACCESS

The Defense Department announced expanded Commissary, Military Service Exchange and MWR access as of January 1, 2020. Veterans who are eligible and want to take advantage of in-person benefits must have a Veterans Health Identification Card (VHIC). Veterans must be enrolled in the VA health care system to receive a VHIC. To enroll, you can complete an application for enrollment in VA health care by telephone without the need for a signed paper application. Just call 1-877-222-8387 Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. until 8 p.m. Eastern. You can also apply for VA healthcare benefits online at www.va.gov/healthbenefits/enroll, or in person at your local VA medical facility. Once your enrollment is verified, you can have your picture taken at your local VA medical center, and VA will mail you a VHIC.

<https://www.blogs.va.gov/VAntage/68479/veterans-need-vhicfor-in-person-commissary-military-exchange-and-mwr-access/-for-in-person-commissary-military-exchange-andmwr-access/>



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IT'S OFFICIAL: WHITE HOUSE TO AWARD FIRST MEDAL OF HONOR FOR HEROISM IN FIGHT AGAINST ISIS

3 Sep 2020 | Military.com | By Hope Hodge Seck

An Army sergeant major who bravely rescued 75 prisoners from the clutches of ISIS in Iraq will receive the military's highest valor award on the 19th anniversary of the Sept. 11, 2001 territory attacks, the White House announced Thursday.

Sgt. Maj. Thomas "Patrick" Payne will receive the Medal of Honor Sept. 11 at the White House for his actions during a "daring nighttime hostage rescue" Oct. 22, 2015, while he was deployed to Iraq in support of Operation Inherent Resolve, the coalition fight against ISIS.

Payne led a combined assault team in liberating hostages during two separate risky forays.

"With speed, audacity, and courage, he first led his team as they quickly cleared the assigned building, liberating 38 hostages," the White House said in a statement. "Then, upon hearing a request for additional assault team members to assist with clearing the other building, Sergeant Payne, on his own initiative, left his secured position. He exposed himself to enemy fire as he bounded across the compound to the other building from which enemy forces were engaging his comrades."

After engaging enemy fighters from the roof of that now-burning building, he returned to ground level, fighting his way toward the entrance in a race to save the hostages still inside. Others on the ground had been thwarted from entering due to the fire inside.

"Sergeant Payne knowingly risked his own life by bravely entering the building under intense enemy fire, enduring smoke, heat, and flames to identify the armored door imprisoning the hostages," the White House statement reads. "Upon exiting, Sergeant Payne exchanged his rifle for bolt cutters and again entered the building, ignoring the enemy rounds impacting the walls around him as he cut the locks on a complex locking mechanism. His courageous actions motivated the coalition assault team members to enter the breach and assist with cutting the locks."

Payne's Medal of Honor award was first reported Sept. 2 by the Associated Press, which also reported that the hostages included Kurdish pershmerga fighters facing impending execution by ISIS militants.

"Sergeant Major Payne is part of the 9/11 generation and joined the Army out of a sense of patriotism and duty to serve his country," the announcement states.

It also notes that Payne comes from a tradition of service, with two brothers in the Army and Air Force. His wife, Alison, is a nurse.

"Growing up in Batesburg-Leesville and Lugoff, South Carolina, Sergeant Major Payne comes from what he characterizes as 'small-town America,' and his connection to his home state is a strong part of his personal identity," the White House said.

Payne is also a Purple Heart recipient who sustained wounds from a grenade blast in 2010 during a deployment to Afghanistan. Though the wound was nearly "career-ending," according to the release, he'd overcome it and go on with a teammate to win the grueling Best Ranger competition.

Payne will be the first U.S. service member to receive the Medal of Honor for heroism in support of the fight against ISIS.



Sgt. Maj. Payne in Northern Afghanistan in 2014. Payne and his unit had been ambushed on this same hill the day prior. (Courtesy of Sgt. Maj. Thomas P. Payne)

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LAWMAKERS INTENSIFY MEDAL OF HONOR PUSH FOR BLACK D-DAY HERO WHO SAVED DOZENS

8 Sep 2020 | Military.com | By Hope Hodge Seck

Army Cpl. Waverly Woodson returned from World War II a hero. A medic from 320th Barrage Balloon Battalion, the only Black Army unit that landed at Omaha Beach, Normandy, on D-Day, he'd labored 30 grueling hours, fighting through his own shrapnel wounds to save the lives of dozens, perhaps hundreds, of men.

But despite multiple public accounts of his bravery, Woodson was thwarted from receiving the military's highest combat honor twice, a bipartisan group of lawmakers says: once because of the color of his skin and again because of an Army administrative technicality. Now, that group is planning to take legislative action to ensure that Woodson gets his medal.

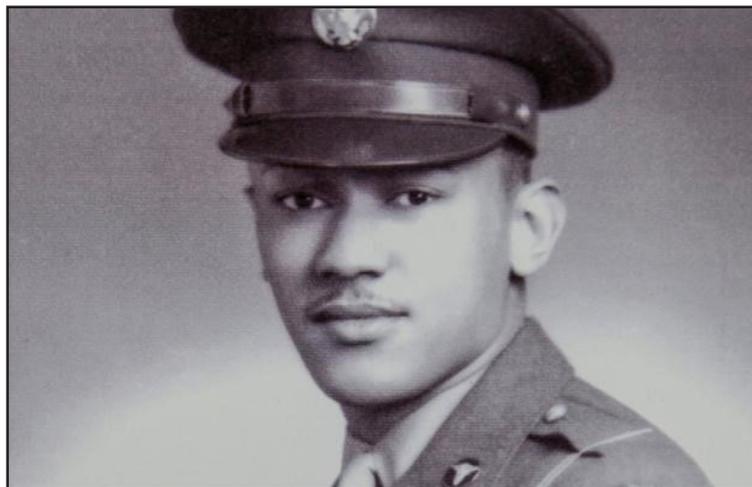
Four lawmakers in the House and Senate announced Tuesday that they are introducing legislation that would authorize President Donald Trump to award Woodson the Medal of Honor, bypassing the traditional military approval process. The group is led by Sen. Chris Van Hollen, D-Md., who first called on the Army to act on Woodson's case in 2015. It also includes Maryland representatives Anthony Brown and David Trone, both Democrats, and Sen. Pat Toomey, a Pennsylvania Republican.

While Woodson's widow, Joann, lives in Maryland, his original hometown was Philadelphia. Woodson died in 2005 at age 83, having received only the Bronze Star in recognition of his bravery.

"Back home, Black newspapers hailed Woodson as the 'No. 1 invasion hero,' and Stars and Stripes wrote that he and his fellow medics 'covered themselves with glory,'" Van Hollen said. "But Waverly Woodson returned home to an America that still did not guarantee basic civil rights and equal treatment under the law, much less equal recognition for his heroism."

No Medals of Honor were presented to Black troops at the conclusion of World War II; it was only after then-President Bill Clinton acted more than half a century later that seven Black veterans received the medal. Van Hollen says the Army has declined to reconsider Woodson's case as it lacks an original recommendation from his command -- a document he believes perished in a famous 1973 records fire.

Brown, the ranking member of the House Armed Services Committee, said that, despite the administrative roadblocks, the



This undated photo provided by the Woodson family shows Cpl. Waverly B. Woodson Jr. Members of Congress on Sept. 8, 2020, said Woodson, a Black army medic who saved dozens of wounded troops on the beaches of Normandy on D-Day despite being severely wounded himself, deserves the Medal of Honor, as they announced legislation to posthumously award it to him. *(Courtesy of the Woodson family via AP)*

time is right for Woodson to be recognized fully.

"Corporal Woodson is deserving of the Medal of Honor. And there is a record that supports that. And you know, for reasons that the Army is trying to articulate, they can't get beyond that," Brown said. "But ... I don't think we can ignore the fact that what has changed is in this country. We do have a heightened sensitivity of the racial inequities and disparities that have plagued this country for four centuries. ... And now is a day of reckoning for all of us to step forward and say, 'How do we correct this horrible record?'"

Woodson's wife, who participated in a press call with the four lawmakers, discussed how her husband had been recalled to service during the Korean War and, in yet another act of racism, been denied an instructor posting at a base in the still-segregated state of Georgia.

Joann Woodson, now 91, was aided in her advocacy of her husband by historian Linda Hervieux, who researched Woodson's record extensively for her book, "Forgotten: The Untold Story of D-Day's Black Heroes, at Home and at War." It was their work that first caught Van Hollen's attention.

SENATORS TO ESPER: REVERSE YOUR DECISION TO KILL STARS AND STRIPES

2 Sep 2020 | Military.com | By Oriana Pawlyk

A group of senators wants to reinstate funding for *Stars and Stripes*, the military's newspaper for service members, as the organization faces being totally defunded before the year is out.

The bipartisan group, led by Sen. Dianne Feinstein (D-CA), on Wednesday sent a letter to Defense Secretary Mark Esper to preserve the "historically significant publication," which only requires "a tiny fraction" of the Defense Department's annual budget, according to the lawmakers.

"*Stars and Stripes* is an essential part of our nation's freedom of the press that serves the very population charged with defending that freedom," the 15 senators said in the letter. "Therefore, we respectfully request that you rescind your decision to discontinue support for *Stars and Stripes* and that you reinstate the funding necessary for it to continue operations."

The Pentagon in February proposed cutting all of the newspaper's funding — roughly \$15.5 million annually — to reallocate those dollars toward other high-profile programs, such as space, nuclear and hypersonic systems, Esper said at the time. The Senate version of the fiscal 2021 National Defense Authorization Act does not contain funding for the paper; lawmakers will convene this fall to develop a joint version of the bill.

"We trimmed the support for *Stars and Stripes* because we need to invest that money, as we did with many, many other programs, into higher-priority issues," he said during a news conference at NATO headquarters in Brussels, following DoD's \$740 billion budget submission to Congress. *Stars and Stripes* is published in print and online.

While the paper, which is distributed to U.S. troops stationed at bases worldwide, maintains editorial independence, it receives federal funding as part of the Pentagon's Defense Media Agency. About \$8.7 million of the subsidy comes through operations and maintenance (O&M) funding, and about \$6.9 million from contingency operations funds, Stripes said. The remainder of the Stripes annual budget comes from advertising, subscriptions and sales.

The senators warned that the deadline for the paper's operation to disband is fast approaching.

"We understand that DoD plans to cease publication of *Stars and Stripes* on September 30, 2020 and completely dissolve the organization by January 31, 2021 as a result of the proposed termination of funding in the fiscal year 2021 President's budget," they said. "We urge you to take steps to preserve the funding prerogatives of Congress before allowing any such disruption to take place."



Defense Secretary Mark Esper testifies to the Senate Armed Services Committee about the budget, Wednesday, March 4, 2020, on Capitol Hill in Washington. (AP Photo/Jacquelyn Martin)

In July, Rep. Ruben Gallego (D-AZ), a Marine veteran, introduced an amendment during the House Armed Services Committee markup that would allocate the necessary \$15.5 million to keep *Stars and Stripes* afloat.

"Thousands of troops around the globe rely on them for the kind of news that just isn't covered elsewhere — stories from American bases, the latest Department of Defense news, and transparency coverage that cuts through political and military brass BS talking points," Gallego said. "It's exactly the type of honest coverage that our armed forces need, and we weren't going to let the Administration stifle these voices without a fight."

The lawmakers on Wednesday noted that because of language within the previous year's continuing resolution, passed to sustain funding levels, DoD also cannot legally terminate a program "until a full-year appropriations bill is enacted."

"It was *Stars and Stripes* that revealed the Defense Department's use of public relations firms that profiled reporters and steered them toward favorable coverage of the war in Afghanistan," the lawmakers said.

"Most recently, the paper brought to light the failure of schools on U.S. military installations to shut down during the pandemic, despite Japanese public schools doing so. These stories illustrate why *Stars and Stripes* is essential: they report on stories that no one else covers."

MILITARY NOT SELECTED TO BE AMONG FIRST GROUPS TO RECEIVE CORONAVIRUS VACCINE



Soldiers with the 28th Expeditionary Combat Aviation Brigade receive tests for COVID-19 at their mobilization station at Fort Hood, TX, on July 27, 2020. *(Army photo by Capt. Travis Mueller)*

3 Sep 2020 | Stars and Stripes | By Caitlin M. Kenney

WASHINGTON -- Service members might not be at the front of the line to receive the coronavirus vaccine when it is ready, unless they are health care workers or at high risk of contracting the disease, according to a document outlining the possible order of distribution.

A four-phased approach for distributing a coronavirus vaccine in the United States has been recommended by the Committee on Equitable Allocation of Vaccine for the Novel Coronavirus. It was laid out in “Discussion Draft of the Preliminary Framework for Equitable Allocation of COVID-19 Vaccine,” published Tuesday by the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine.

According to the preliminary framework, which is open for public comment until Friday, the military was not set aside as an individual population group to be prioritized in any of the four phases of distribution for a vaccine. Instead, “in the absence of a separate allotment of [coronavirus] vaccine to the U.S. military,” the committee recommended personnel would receive the vaccine using the same priority criteria as civilians, the document states.

The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine provides independent policy advice, including ad hoc committees such as the one that wrote this vaccine distribution draft at the request of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the National Institutes of Health.

The Pentagon did not respond Wednesday to a request for comment about the document.

The four phases are organized into population groups, with those who are at the highest risk of contracting the virus or becoming severely sick receiving the vaccine first. Then, workers in daily support industries, such as mail carriers, bus drivers and teachers, would be next, as well as those in homeless shelters and prisons. The third group would be children, young adults and workers in industries such as restaurants and hotels. And finally, everyone else who does not fall into the criteria for the other three phases would then get the vaccine.

For each population group, the vaccine would also be prioritized geographically through the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Vulnerability Index, according to the report.

Pentagon officials have repeatedly said service members are less likely to be severely affected by the virus. The military now has about 1.2 million active-duty service members and 781,000 reservists, according to the report.

“We have a young, healthy, fit, robust demographic in the United

States military,” Defense Secretary Mark Esper said in March.

As of Wednesday, the military has had 38,424 cases of the coronavirus and seven service members have died. About 575 people have been hospitalized and 23,011 have recovered, according to Pentagon data.

Throughout the United States, there have been more than 6.1 million cases of the coronavirus and more than 185,000 deaths as of Wednesday, according to Johns Hopkins University, the highest numbers of any country affected by the pandemic.

Operation Warp Speed is the public-private effort led by the government to rapidly develop and distribute a vaccine for the coronavirus. The Defense Department is a participant in the effort, and one of its key responsibilities would be supporting a quicker distribution of the vaccine across the country.

The goal of Operation Warp Speed is to have 300 million doses of a vaccine developed and delivered by January 2021, according to the Defense Department. But the details for how the vaccine will be distributed and given to people have not been fully determined, according to the draft document.

Despite the goal to have doses available for everyone in the United States by early next year, the committee was established in July to look at how the vaccine would be distributed with a small initial supply, according to the report.

The committee researched and designed a way for distributing the vaccine fairly by examining other frameworks for medical care during the coronavirus pandemic and past priorities for vaccines, including the 2009 H1N1 influenza A pandemic and the Ebola epidemic in West Africa between 2013 to 2016.

Phase One populations are high-risk workers in health care facilities and those whose underlying health puts them at “significantly” higher risk from the virus, according to the document. Service members who work in health care facilities or who have underlying conditions that would put them at significant risk would potentially be in this first phase.

Phase Three also would cover a large portion of the military as it includes all “young adults” or people who are between 18 to 30 years old. Even though people in this age range are less likely to die or be hospitalized by the virus, more evidence is showing that they might disproportionately be spreading the virus more, according to the report. It also cites studies that adults younger than 30 have larger social networks than other adult-age groups, making them more at risk of exposure and spreading the virus.

They are also more likely to live in communal settings, and this would also apply to the barracks and dorms for service members on military installations.

The military has had outbreaks among its personnel, including on ships where sailors are put in confined work and living conditions. The outbreak of the virus aboard the aircraft carrier Theodore Roosevelt in March infected more than 1,150 sailors. One died.

The public comments submitted this week will be considered in the final framework and report that is expected to be released in the early fall, according to the National Academies website.

AIR FORCE TESTS NEW BOMB THAT COULD REPLACE CONTROVERSIAL CLUSTER MUNITIONS

2 Sep 2020 | Military.com | By Oriana Pawlyk

The Air Force recently tested a new next-generation fragmentation bomb on the F-16 Fighting Falcon meant to be an alternative to cluster munitions that diminishes the risk of unexploded ordnance, according to a news release.

Through a series of flights held in July, the 28th and 422nd Test and Evaluation Squadrons measured battle damage from the BLU-136 Next Generation Area Attack Weapon at the Nevada Test and Training Range, according to Air Combat Command.

“The operational tests were designed to gather data to determine the operational performance of the BLU-136, specifically in the areas of blast and fragmentation damage,” Lt. Col. Daniel Lambert, 28th TES Global Strike division chief, said in the release. “This data will help decision makers determine if the BLU-136 is a viable substitute for the Air Force’s fleet of cluster bombs.”

The 2,000-pound bomb is intended for “light vehicles, light structures and personnel,” the release said. When paired with a joint direct attack munition (JDAM) GPS-guided tail kit, the BLU-136 becomes the GBU-31v11 bomb; and because it’s compatible with the JDAM kit, it will be ready for operations “if and when fielded,” Lambert said.

“This also means that the delivery of the GBU-31v11 from any other aircraft will likely require little to no changes in loading or delivery tactics,” he added.

During the test, personnel drew several rings — 75, 150 and 225 feet in radius — around the intended target, explained 1st Lt. Savannah Bray, spokeswoman for the 53rd Wing, Eglin Air Force Base, Florida.

After the test, they found fragments exceeding 225 feet from the center of the target, she told Military.com on Wednesday. “Within 150 feet, severe damage is likely to occur,” she said.

But the fragments themselves are non-explosive, “making it a

less-hazardous alternative to cluster munitions,” the release said.

The Pentagon for decades has used cluster bombs, which, when broken apart, disperse smaller bomblets or submunitions through their target.

Cluster bombs are not without controversy: The New York Times in 2017 reported that the weapons’ “dud rate” often

approaches 20% when deployed in combat situations, meaning they frequently fail to detonate when they’re supposed to and thus can make the environment extremely dangerous to friendly forces and civilians.

That same year, the Pentagon reversed its plan to ban cluster munitions and kept its stockpiles, citing threats from North Korea as the reason to keep the munitions.

Then-Deputy Defense Secretary Patrick Shanahan said that developing a replacement for cluster bombs would take

too long when faced with the North Korean threat, so the Pentagon looked to its available capability.

The Pentagon was tasked by President George W. Bush’s administration to bring cluster bombs’ failure rate under 1% or find an alternative. However, the Defense Department said the U.S. military’s efforts to develop more reliable, and thus safer, cluster munitions that have a failure rate of 1% or less were unsuccessful, the Associated Press reported at the time.

Nonetheless, Shanahan signed a directive that December to end a 2008 policy approved by former Defense Secretary Robert Gates, which had stipulated the Pentagon would “no longer use cluster munitions which, after arming, result in more than one percent unexploded ordnance” by the end of 2018.

“You’re probably familiar with the fact that we’ve been working on a technology to eliminate the danger of cluster munitions,” Shanahan said. “But the timing of that technology to eliminate the danger, and the need to backfill the shortfall in munitions, did not line up.”



F-16 Fighting Falcon from the 422nd Test and Evaluation Squadron.
(U.S. Air Force)

CHINA'S MILITARY HAS SURPASSED US IN SHIPS, MISSILES AND AIR DEFENSE, DoD REPORT FINDS

1 Sep 2020 | Military.com | By Richard Sisk

China's People's Liberation Army (PLA) has already surpassed the U.S. in missile development and its number of warships and air defense systems under the Chinese Communist Party's plan to achieve dominance by 2049, the Defense Department said in a sobering report Tuesday.

The ultimate goal of the People's Republic of China, or PRC, is to "develop a military by mid-Century that is equal to — or in some cases superior to — the U.S. military, or that of any other great power that the PRC views as a threat," the DoD's annual report to Congress said.

To that end, the PRC has "marshalled the resources, technology, and political will over the past two decades to strengthen and modernize the PLA in nearly every respect," the report said.

Under the national strategy pressed by Chinese President Xi Jinping, the result has been that "China is already ahead of the United States in certain areas" essential to its overall aim of progressing from homeland and periphery defense to global power projection, the report said.

"The PRC has the largest navy in the world, with an overall battle force of approximately 350 ships and submarines, including over 130 major surface combatants," the report said.

That's compared to the U.S. Navy's current battle force of 295 ships.

In addition, "the PRC has more than 1,250 ground-launched ballistic missiles (GLBMs) and ground-launched cruise missiles (GLCMs) with ranges between 500 and 5,500 kilometers," while the U.S. currently fields one type of conventional GLBM with a range of 70 to 300 kilometers and no GLCMs, the report said.

In some respects, China is also ahead on integrated air defense systems with a mix of Russian-built and homegrown systems, the report said.

"The PRC has one of the world's largest forces of advanced long-range surface-to-air systems" — including Russian-built S-400, S-300, and domestically-produced anti-air systems — making up "part of its robust and redundant integrated air defense system," the report said.

Despite the advances, the PLA "remains in a position of inferiority" to the U.S. in overall military strength, said Chad Sbragia, the deputy assistant secretary of Defense for China.

The 173-page DoD report "does not claim that China's military is 10 feet tall," but the Chinese Communist Party wants it to be, and has the plan and resources to reach that goal, Sbragia, a retired Marine officer, said at an American Enterprise Institute forum on China's military.



Chinese military vehicles carrying DF-17 ballistic missiles roll during a parade to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the founding of Communist China in Beijing, Tuesday, Oct. 1, 2019. (AP Photo/Mark Schiefelbein)

At an earlier Pentagon briefing on the report, Sbragia said Beijing's military strategy was driven by the view that the U.S. has decided upon a long period of confrontation to counter the global spread of China's influence.

He said that China "increasingly views the United States as more willing to confront Beijing on matters where the U.S. and PRC interests are inimical."

"The CCP leaders view the United States' security alliances and partnerships -- especially those in the Indo-Pacific region -- as destabilizing and irreconcilable with China's interests," Sbragia said.

The DoD report, titled "Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China" comes about two weeks before Congress is set to return from recess to convene a Senate-House Conference Committee on the National Defense Authorization Act and the defense budget for Fiscal Year 2021.

Defense Secretary Mark Esper has acknowledged downward pressures on the defense budget to offset the enormous costs of the COVID-19 response while arguing for sustained increases of 3-5% in defense spending in future years to maintain U.S. superiority and readiness.

The 20th annual report on China by DoD noted the "staggering" improvements in China's ability to build, coordinate and project power since the first report was issued.

"DoD's first annual report to Congress in 2000 assessed the PRC's armed forces at that time to be a sizable but mostly

5 THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT JAPAN'S WORLD WAR II SURRENDER

2 Sep 2020 | The Associated Press | By Mari Yamaguchi

TOKYO -- World War II ended 75 years ago, but not all countries commemorate it on the same day. Wednesday is the anniversary of the formal Sept. 2, 1945, surrender of Japan to the United States, when documents were signed officially ending years of bloody fighting in a ceremony aboard the USS Missouri in Tokyo Bay. It's known as V-J Day in some countries.

But some nations mark Aug. 15 as the war's end, the day Japan's emperor made a speech announcing the surrender.

Five questions and answers about Japan's surrender:

Q: What is V-J Day?

A: An abbreviation for Victory over Japan Day, marked by the United States and its allies in the war and by the Asian victims of Japan who won their liberation from years of atrocities and oppression. Some countries, including Britain, Australia, the Netherlands and the Koreans, mark Japan's surrender on Aug. 15. Others, including the United States, mark the day on Sept. 2, while the Philippines, China and Russia observe Sept. 3.

Japan mourns for its war dead on Aug. 15 in a solemn ceremony attended by the emperor, political leaders and veterans' families.

Q: Why are there different dates?

A: The countries that observe Aug. 15 mark Japan's public announcement of its surrender. Others commemorate Sept. 2, when Japan formally signed its surrender, ending a conflict that lasted, in various degrees, nearly half a century in parts of Asia. Then-U.S. President Harry Truman said that the V-J Day proclamation had to wait until Japan officially signed the surrender terms.

Countries also mark different dates for political and historical reasons. In 2014, China set Sept. 3 as a newly formalized historical day to annually mark the Victory Day of the Chinese People's War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression. The country celebrates with a military march.

The Philippines also observes Sept. 3, the day in 1945 when Japanese Gen. Tomoyuki Yamashita surrendered in that country.

Russia, which declared war against Japan on Aug. 9, took military action against Japan until early September.

Q: What happened on Aug. 15, 1945?

A: At noon on Aug. 15, days after the U.S. atomic bombings of Hiroshima on Aug. 6 and Nagasaki on Aug. 9, Japanese Emperor Hirohito broadcast a surrender message to his people on the radio. The broadcast came one day after Japan told the United States and its allies that it was surrendering, and Hirohito and Japanese ministers signed the Imperial Rescript on Surrender.

The emperor's radio statement was prerecorded on Aug. 14 in secrecy. Palace officials protected the records from army officials who stormed the palace to steal them. The emperor's voice, which



In this Sept. 5, 1945, file photo, some of the 2,600 Japanese POWs, who comprised the enemy garrison on the island of Rota, are lined up in a prisoner of war stockade on Guam, in the Marianas Islands. They were brought from their island holdout 50 miles away. Wednesday, Sept. 2, 2020, is the anniversary of the formal Sept. 2, 1945, surrender of Japan to the United States. *(Pool Photo via AP)*

most Japanese were hearing for the time time, was muffled and nearly inaudible because of poor sound quality.

Q: What happened on Sept. 2, 1945?

A: A formal signing of Japan's surrender was held aboard the battleship USS Missouri in Tokyo Bay, where in 1854 Navy Commodore Matthew Perry had signed a treaty with Japan to open up the feudal nation for trade with the United States. Aboard the Missouri, Japanese Foreign Minister Mamoru Shigemitsu and Gen. Yoshijiro Umezumi signed the Instrument of Surrender. The two men were later convicted of war crimes.

Gen. Douglas MacArthur, also Supreme Commander of Allied Forces, signed for the United Nations, with Fleet Adm. Chester Nimitz signing for the U.S. Delegates from other allied nations, including Britain, France, Australia, Canada, the Netherlands, New Zealand, China and the Soviet Union, witnessed the half-hour ceremony.

Q: What happened afterward?

A: The official signing of Japan's surrender ordered that the country must cease all military actions, liberate prisoners of war and others in captivity, and follow other terms. It also launched a seven-year U.S. occupation that lasted until the San Francisco Peace Treaty took effect in April 1952, allowing Japan's return to the international community. Japan has since become a major U.S. ally in defense and other areas.

Since 1954, Japan has spent tens of billions of dollars in development aid, initially meant as war compensation, for the region. But it took more than two decades for Japan to normalize diplomatic ties with some of its wartime Asian foes. It restored ties with South Korea in 1965, and with China in 1972, though disputes over wartime history continue to affect Japan's ties with its neighbors.

Japan has yet to sign a peace treaty with Russia because of territorial disputes and has not established diplomatic ties with North Korea.

CHINA'S MILITARY *(Continued from page 8)*

archaic military that was poorly suited to the CCP's long-term ambitions," the report said.

In 2000, "the PLA lacked the capabilities, organization, and readiness for modern warfare," the report said. But the CCP, it added, recognized the shortcomings and set about with determination to "strengthen and transform its armed forces in a manner commensurate with its aspirations to strengthen and transform China."

"More striking than the PLA's staggering amounts of new military hardware are the recent sweeping efforts taken by CCP leaders that include completely restructuring the PLA into a force better suited for joint operations" and for "expanding the PRC's overseas military footprint."

The PLA has already established its first overseas military base in Djibouti, about a mile from U.S. Africa Command's main base on the Horn of Africa.

In its commentary on the DoD assessment, the American Enterprise Institute noted that the report also stressed that "The PRC has likely considered locations for PLA military logistics facilities in Myanmar, Thailand, Singapore, Indonesia, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, United Arab Emirates, Kenya, Seychelles, Tanzania, Angola, and Tajikistan."

Despite the progress made by China's military over the past two decades, "major gaps and shortcomings remain" in readiness and operational capability, the report said, but China's leaders are acutely aware of the problems and have detailed plans to overcome them.

"Of course, the CCP does not intend for the PLA to be merely a showpiece of China's modernity or to keep it focused solely on regional threats," the report said.

"As this report shows, the CCP desires the PLA to become a practical instrument of its statecraft with an active role in advancing the PRC's foreign policy, particularly with respect to the PRC's increasingly global interests and its aims to revise aspects of the international order," it added.

SAFE TRAVELS —WHAT TO KNOW ABOUT MEDICARE WHEN TRAVELING ABROAD:



In general, Medicare will not pay for health care services or supplies if you travel outside the United States. Please go to the following website to see Medicare Traveling Rules:

<https://www.medicare.gov/coverage/travel?>

The September meeting of Post 373, scheduled for Sunday, September 13th at 10:00 am will be held either by phone or videoconference. See page 1 for more details.

