

# STARS AND STRIPES®

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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

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## Marines told of WWII atomic bomb mission

BY JENNIFER HLAD

*Stars and Stripes*

SAN DIEGO — Second Lt. Raymond “Speedy” Biel knew he was participating in a top-secret mission on Aug. 6, 1945, when, as a co-pilot of a B-29 Superfortress, he flew over Nagasaki, Japan, to report the weather. But it wasn’t until he returned to the island of Tinian that he learned the mission was to drop an atomic bomb.

On Wednesday, Biel told Marines at Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego the story of how he ended up participating in both of the missions to drop atomic bombs on Japan, effectively ending World War II.

Born in Chicago, Biel graduated from high school in 1940 and followed his girlfriend to college in Michigan. He was a freshman when Japan attacked Pearl Harbor, and he soon enlisted in the U.S. Army Air Forces to avoid being drafted, he said.

Though he originally was told he would be able to finish college, Biel, 92, said his “deferment was deferred,” and he was sent to flight school. He was chosen to be a co-pilot on a new kind of plane, the B-29, and was

sent to Fairmont, Neb., where training facilities and runways had been built hastily.

Just before the B-29s finally arrived, Biel’s pilot gave him the plane’s manual, which was “about the size of a phone book.” Biel got his call sign when he delivered the book back to the pilot three days later, and the pilot marveled at how quickly the young lieutenant had read it.

Col. Paul Tibbets — the pilot whose plane, the *Enola Gay*, dropped the bomb on Hiroshima — chose 15 crews from Nebraska for the secret mission and took them to Wendover, Utah. After training in the desert and in Cuba, the crews began shipping out to Tinian, a tiny island some 100 miles north of Guam.

Tinian had been secured by the Marines in the late summer of 1944, and the Japanese had been building an airfield when the battle began. By August 1945, the airfield on Tinian was the busiest in the world, Biel said, with planes taking off every minute from each of the four runways.

On Aug. 6, Biel’s plane and two others started off low — about 2,500 feet — then began climbing to 30,000 feet once they reached Iwo Jima, he said. The

three weather planes recorded the atmospheric conditions, and all three potential targets were clear. Three other planes went to Hiroshima to deliver the bomb; one additional plane was parked on Iwo Jima as a backup.

When the planes returned to the airfield, Biel said, they were told about the atomic bomb, and Tibbets was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross on the spot.

Three days later, Biel was in the backup plane parked on Iwo Jima while six other B-29s flew to Japan. They first flew to Kokura, the site of one of Japan’s largest munitions plants, but the weather was cloudy, Biel said. After circling for about an hour, the planes decided to go to the secondary target, Nagasaki.

Nagasaki also was cloudy, Biel said, and the pilots had decided to use radar to drop the bomb, but just before they did, a hole appeared in the clouds. The plane dropped the bomb there, missing the original target by about three miles, he said. Later, the men found out that if they had hit the planned target, they would have destroyed a prisoner-of-war camp, killing 12,000 British prisoners.

At the time, Biel said he and

the rest of the crew of his plane were sitting on Iwo Jima, worried. After three hours, they heard that the plane had landed on Okinawa and immediately ran out of fuel. Two of the plane’s engines died on the runway, he said.

Though Biel didn’t know before the first mission what kind of bomb they would be dropping, he said he and the other airmen were happy when they found out the details because they “knew the war was going to end.”

Retired Navy Capt. Richard Suttie, a friend of Biel’s who served as an interviewer at the event, said an invasion of Japan already had been planned in case the bombing did not prompt Japan to surrender, and that casualties for that attack were expected to be about 80 percent.

Col. Mark Tull, commander of Headquarters and Service Battalion at the recruit depot, said the Japanese had sworn to “fight to the last man,” and that the planned landings would have involved 40 divisions.

“Those weapons saved lives,” Tull said, “and, frankly, saved the world.”

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## Pentagon budget seeks to replenish war supplies

*Bloomberg News*

WASHINGTON — The Pentagon will seek \$20.4 billion more for weapons and research in its proposed budget for the fiscal year that begins Oct. 1 than Congress approved this year.

The blueprint calls for \$177.5 billion in procurement and research spending and includes funds to replenish weapons used in Iraq, Syria and Afghanistan, from Lockheed Martin’s Hellfire missiles to combat vehicles made by Oshkosh Corp.

The details are spelled out in the Defense Department’s annual weapons cost report that will be released when President Barack Obama sends his budget proposal to Congress on Feb. 2. A final draft of the Defense Department report was obtained from an official briefed on the spending plans.

Obama called for an end to sequestration, the automatic spending cuts that apply to both defense and domestic programs in a speech to House Democrats on Thursday. Pentagon spend-

ing is popular with many Republicans and is spread across hundreds of congressional districts, and the prospect of averting automatic cuts in it is key to the White House strategy, said two defense officials who asked not to be identified to discuss internal deliberations.

The Pentagon will propose a base defense budget of \$534 billion for fiscal 2016, about \$34 billion more than sequestration would allow. The budget totals and potential cuts are sep-

arate from procurement funds in the supplemental \$51 billion being proposed for war spending. The Defense Department has indicated that those funds also would be cut if the military had to live with sequestration.

A Pentagon assessment of program impacts published in April estimated that \$20.5 billion would have to be cut from weapons modernization if sequestration resumes after a two-year break, including \$16.7 billion from procurement.

# Jordan awaits proof pilot hostage is alive

*The Associated Press*

TOKYO — The fates of a Japanese journalist and Jordanian military pilot were unknown Friday, a day after the latest purported deadline for a possible prisoner swap passed with no further word from the Islamic State group holding them captive.

“Government institutions are working around the clock on the case of pilot Muath al-Kaseasbeh,” Jordanian military spokesman Mamdouh al-Ameri said in a statement. “We will inform you of any developments in due time.”

He urged Jordanians not to listen to rumors.

Jordan has said it will only release an al-Qaida prisoner from death row if it gets proof the pilot is alive and so far has received no such evidence from the hostage-takers.

Officials in Tokyo also said they had no progress to report.

“There is nothing I can tell you,” said government spokesman Yoshihide Suga, reiterating Japan’s “strong trust” in the Jordanians to help save the Japanese hostage, freelance journalist Kenji Goto.

Suga said the government was in close contact with Goto’s wife, Rinko Jogo, who released a statement late Thursday pleading for her husband’s life.

An audio message purportedly posted online by jihadis said the pilot, Lt. Muath al-Kaseasbeh, would be killed if Sajida al-Rishawi, the al-Qaida prisoner, was not delivered to the Turkish border by sunset on Thursday, Iraq time. It was not clear from the recording what would happen to Goto if the Iraqi woman was not turned over by the deadline.

## Kissinger urges US restraint in Mideast, Ukraine

*Bloomberg News (TNS)*

WASHINGTON — Former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger cautioned against deeper U.S. military engagement in the Middle East and Ukraine without a better understanding of the potential consequences.

In a rare appearance on Capitol Hill, the former top foreign policy strategist for Republican

President Richard Nixon counseled restraint Thursday at a Senate Armed Services Committee hearing on global security challenges facing the U.S.

While the most immediate challenge is to defeat Islamic State fighters in Iraq and Syria, Kissinger said, “We must not let that degenerate into another war that we don’t know how to end.”

He also stopped short of endorsing a call by the committee chairman, Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., for providing defensive weapons to Ukraine’s military as it battles Russian-backed separatists.

“I’m uneasy about beginning a process of military engagement without knowing where it will lead us and what we’ll do to sustain it,” said Kissinger, 91.

Much of the hearing seemed like a flashback to the 1970s and 1980s, as Kissinger was joined by two other elder statesmen — former Secretaries of State George Shultz, who served under President Ronald Reagan, and Madeleine Albright, the top diplomat in the Clinton administration — to offer their views of national security strategy.

## Poll: Afghans want US role to be greater than planned

*The Washington Post*

KABUL — Many Afghans would like to see a greater American role after this year than is currently planned, while a majority believe that last year’s run-off election that led to a U.S.-brokered power-sharing government was “mostly fraudulent,” according to a national poll released Thursday.

The poll, conducted in November by the Afghan Center for Socio-Economic and Opinion Research in collaboration with New York-based firm Langer Research Associates, was based on a random sample of 2,051 Afghan men and women in most parts of the country.

In the poll, 46 percent said they would like to see a greater commitment by U.S. forces than currently in place.

In recent weeks, senior Afghan officials also have indicated that they would like to see a greater U.S. presence after this year. Only 29 percent of Afghans said they preferred fewer or no U.S. forces to remain, according to the poll, which had a margin of sampling error of plus or minus 3 percentage points. Two-thirds of Afghans favored a significant role by U.S. and international forces in training Afghan forces in the future, the poll found.

Six in ten rated their security from crime and violence as at least “somewhat good” in November. But concerns about growing violence and insecurity may have increased in recent weeks as the Taliban Islamist insurgency has mounted attacks in the capital Kabul and other areas.

## Ex-soldier charged with stealing \$250K in benefits

*The Associated Press*

SEATTLE — A former Idaho National Guard soldier who is also an official in the Washington city of Snoqualmie has been indicted on charges that he lied his way to a Purple Heart and more than \$250,000 in government benefits.

Investigators wrote that in claims for benefits, Darryl Lee Wright said that because of an injury suffered in Iraq, he was unable to tie his shoes, prepare meals or pay attention to anything for more than 5 to 10 seconds.

In reality, he’s the chairman of the planning commission in Snoqualmie, a former City Council candidate, a high school basketball coach and a rec league basketball player, according to an indictment unsealed

in federal court in Tacoma.

Some of the money was spent on homes, cars, travel and a country club membership, the U.S. attorney’s office said.

Wright pleaded not guilty in U.S. District Court in Tacoma on Thursday to charges of wire fraud, mail fraud and making false statements, and he was released with conditions pending a trial set for March.

“You could certainly say that we’ll be contesting the charges,” said his attorney, Christopher Black. “I don’t want to get into any specifics, though.”

Wright’s sister, Karen M. Bevins, of Duvall, was also charged. She’s accused of receiving payments as his supposed caregiver. Together, they were bringing in more than \$10,300 per month in fraudulently obtained benefits, the indictment said.

## Djokovic to meet Murray in Aussie final

The Associated Press

MELBOURNE, Australia — Novak Djokovic reached a fifth Australian Open final, avenged a long and arduous loss to Stan Wawrinka and ensured he'd renew an old rivalry with Andy Murray.

The top-ranked Djokovic was so absorbed in the moment, he lost track of the score during Friday's semifinal. His mental lapse after the third set probably cost him the fourth, but the four-time Australian Open champion recovered with three service breaks in the fifth set to beat defending champion Wawrinka 7-6 (1), 3-6, 6-4, 4-6, 6-0.

"Sometimes these things happen, you get carried away by a moment," Djokovic said, trying to explain his perplexed expression after he'd taken a lead of two sets to one. "I was very confused when I saw the security on the court."

The previous two meetings between Djokovic and Wawrinka at the Australian Open had gone to five sets and lasted a combined nine hours. Friday's match lacked that kind of intensity and memorable moments.

At times Wawrinka got on top of Djokovic, who sometimes looked lethargic. Despite dropping serve in four of the five sets, Djokovic kept his composure in the 3-hour, 30-minute match as Wawrinka blasted 42 winners but offset that with 69 unforced errors.

# Super Bowl WRs fly under radar

The Associated Press

PHOENIX — Doug Baldwin led the Seattle Seahawks in catches and yards receiving.

He ranked 42nd in the NFL in both categories.

Forty-second.

It's no surprise that Hall of Famer and the NFL Network's Deion Sanders dissed Baldwin and the rest of Seattle's receiving group.

Few analysts give them any credit. So after Baldwin had six catches for 106 yards in the NFC championship game against Green Bay, he directed one of his rants toward Sanders.

"That's just what 'pedestrian, average, mediocre' receivers do. What's up, my man Deion Sanders?" Baldwin said right after the game.

Criticism of Seattle's receivers comes from ex-players-turned-broadcasters, other reporters and plenty of fans on social media.

"It's thrown in my face day in and day out," Baldwin said. "I have friends that text-message me whatever is out there. I don't mind it because I use it for extra motivation. I have a shirt underneath my sweatshirt that says, 'Pedestrians with attitude.' We enjoy the label because we embrace it."

The New England Patriots aren't saying anything this week to motivate Baldwin even more going into Sunday's Super Bowl.

"They work hard, they play hard and they are very passionate," Patriots safety Patrick Chung said of Seattle's receivers. "I see that on film. I'm not going to label

them. You can say what you want to say about them, but they are here for a reason. They are here because they are good and they can make plays."

Baldwin has calmed down as the Big Game approaches. He even said he'd rather Marshawn Lynch win the MVP award on Sunday.

"We are not about statistics here, obviously," Baldwin said. "We only care about winning games and winning championships. We know the formula that we have put in place is if Marshawn wins the MVP then we have done our job on offense. That means that we have controlled the pace of the game."

There's no Megatron, Dez Bryant or A.J. Green on the Patriots, either. They also have an unheralded group of receivers.

Julian Edelman led New England with 92 catches, but he was 25th in the league in yards receiving with 972. Brandon LaFell had 74 catches for 953 yards. Tom Brady has only had one elite receiver — Randy Moss — in his career and they set records together during New England's 16-0 regular season in 2007.

"It's a really selfless group, guys that are always putting the team first," Brady said. "Everybody has a little different skillset. I think that once we hit our stride and everybody found a role for themselves, they really embraced their role. None of them have really played in a Super Bowl before. Hopefully we bring our excitement and as much enthusiasm as possible and we go out and play as best as we possibly can."

Jermaine Kearse, Seattle's No. 2 wide-out, had 38 catches for 537 yards and one TD in the regular season. But Kearse had three catches for a career-best 129 yards and one TD in a 31-17 playoff win over

Carolina. Kearse then caught a 35-yard TD pass in overtime to win the NFC championship game.

"It's just about maximizing opportunities," Kearse said. "Just whenever you have an opportunity you've got to make the most of it. I just try to go out there and compete no matter what the stage is if it's regular season or it's a preseason game or it's a playoff game."

The Seahawks thought they got a legitimate No. 1 receiver when they acquired Percy Harvin from Minnesota in March 2013 for a trio of draft picks, including a first-rounder.

But Harvin missed the first 2½ months that year and was traded to the New York Jets last October. His departure opened the way for Baldwin and Kearse.

"Obviously we would get more opportunities because we were down a guy, but it was just business as usual for us," Baldwin said.

Golden Tate was Seattle's top wideout last year. He had 64 catches for 898 yards and one TD in an offense built on Lynch's running and Russell Wilson's scrambling.

Tate signed a lucrative deal in free agency with Detroit and made his first Pro Bowl this year after catching 99 passes for 1,331 yards and four TDs. Since Tate proved he could thrive in a pass-heavy offense, perhaps Baldwin will try to do the same in two years when he's an unrestricted free agent.

For now, earning another Super Bowl ring is all that matters.

"I'm just trying to focus on the task at hand and living in the moment," Baldwin said. "I don't really think I will be able to fathom what we are doing yet (until) a couple years down the line."

## No. 1 Kentucky gets past Mizzou; Buckeyes roll

The Associated Press

COLUMBIA, Mo. — The way his team rolled over Missouri when they met a couple of weeks ago, Kentucky coach John Calipari anticipated the Tigers throwing a few haymakers in the rematch.

They wound up playing so physically that three Tigers fouled out.

The top-ranked Wildcats took advantage of their parade to the foul line, too, racking up free points during a decisive second-half run that gave them a 69-53 victory Thursday night.

"It's going to be like you saw today. We just have to play through the physical play," said Calipari, whose team waxed the Tigers by 49 points on Jan. 13. "You don't beat somebody like we did there and — they came back and played like I would have expected them to play."

In other words, a whole lot better. But still not good enough.

Andrew Harrison had 15 points and twin brother Aaron Harrison had 11 for the Wildcats, who improved to 20-0 for the third time in school history. They are just five wins away from matching the record start achieved by Adolph Rupp's team in 1953-54.

As usual, Kentucky (7-0 SEC) won with

defense. Missouri turned the ball over 15 times and shot just 38 percent from the field in the second half, when the game was largely decided.

"We beat them pretty bad last time," Andrew Harrison acknowledged, "but we know they're a better team than they played at Rupp, so we had to come in and play as hard as we could."

Wes Clark scored 19 points for the Tigers (7-13, 1-6), who have lost six straight for the first time since 2006. Johnathan Williams III added 10 points and five rebounds.

Five players fouled out in the mucky game, resulting in a combined 57 free throws.

"I'm not happy losing, but we played a lot better," Tigers coach Kim Anderson said. "All I can ask is these guys keep fighting, and that's what they do, that's what they've done. And it's not always pretty, but they didn't quit. They kept fighting."

Kentucky only hit two three-pointers, one each from Aaron Harrison and Dominique Hawkins. The Tigers only hit four from the arc, three of those from Clark. The majority of the game was played in the paint, where the teams combined for 48 points.

**Ohio State 80, No. 16 Maryland 46:** Marc Loving matched his career high with 19 points and D'Angelo Russell added 18 points and 14 rebounds to lead host Ohio State to a victory over No. 16 Maryland on Thursday night.

The Buckeyes (17-5, 6-3 Big Ten), at times a timid bunch on the boards this season, dominated the Terrapins (18-4, 6-3) on the glass (51-32) and on defense.

Jae'Sean Tate, starting his third game in a row, added 16 points and eight rebounds for the Buckeyes, who have won three in a row — including the last two over ranked opponents at home.

Dez Wells had 12 points and Jake Layman 10 for Maryland, which had won four of five.

**No. 3 Gonzaga 64, Portland 46:** Kevin Pangos launched a long three-pointer that missed early in the second half against Portland.

But third-ranked Gonzaga rebounded the ball and it came back out to Pangos, who shot from about the same place and sank that three to help break open a close game and lift the host Bulldogs to a victory Thursday night.

Domantas Sabonis had 13 points and 11 rebounds as the Bulldogs extended the

nation's longest home winning streak to 37 games dating to 2012.

Przemek Karnowski added 10 points and 11 rebounds for Gonzaga (21-1, 10-0 West Coast Conference), whose only loss was in overtime at then-No. 3 Arizona. It is the best start in program history.

Kyle Wiltjer scored 11 points and Pangos had 10 for Gonzaga, which has won 14 straight games and beaten Portland in 37 of their last 39 meetings.

Bryce Pressley and Bobby Sharp each scored nine points to lead Portland (12-10, 3-7), which has lost five of six. The Pilots shot just 30 percent (18-for-61) in the game, 22.6 percent in the second half.

**UCLA 69, No. 11 Utah 59:** Norman Powell scored 23 points and the host Bruins defeated the Utes for their first win over a Top 25 opponent this season.

Bryce Alford had 14 points and seven assists, and Isaac Hamilton added 11 points for the Bruins (12-9, 3-5 Pac-12). UCLA held a 33-30 halftime advantage and led the entire second half.

Delon Wright scored 15 points and Brandon Taylor had 14 for the Utes (16-4, 6-2). Utah has not beaten UCLA in Los Angeles since 1961.



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# Lakers spoil return to LA for Bulls' Gasol

*The Associated Press*

LOS ANGELES — When the Los Angeles Lakers blew a nine-point lead in 70 seconds late in regulation, they certainly seemed to be careening straight toward another loss in overtime.

That's when the young, patchwork Lakers discovered a poise they've never had before — just in time to avoid a historic defeat.

Jordan Hill scored 26 points and forced the second overtime with a clutch jumper, and the Lakers snapped their nine-game losing streak in thrilling fashion with a 123-118 victory over the Chicago Bulls on Thursday night.

Wayne Ellington scored 23 points and rookie Jordan Clarkson added 18 for the Lakers, who held off the Bulls for their first victory since Jan. 9. With big late baskets from everybody in their unassuming lineup, the Lakers avoided matching the 1994 squad coached by Magic Johnson for the longest skid in the 16-time champion franchise's history.

"We can surprise a lot of people out there if we keep playing like we did tonight," Hill said.

Carlos Boozer had 16 points against

his former team for the Lakers, who got their first win since Kobe Bryant was lost for the season with a torn right rotator cuff.

And it was fairly packed with drama. After longtime Lakers big man Pau Gasol tied it with 11 seconds left in regulation, Hill's short hook shot at the buzzer rattled out. Hill hit a tying 20-footer with 16 seconds left in the first overtime, and Derrick Rose badly missed his 20-footer at the first OT buzzer.

"It felt good to have the win, but I wish it didn't have to go two overtimes," Clarkson said after his latest precocious performance. "I should have taken care of the ball and been more aggressive, but we got it done."

Ellington hit two early shots in the second overtime to put the Lakers up for good. Los Angeles made five of its seven shots in the second OT while holding on.

All-Star Jimmy Butler matched his career high with 35 points for the Bulls, who rallied to force the first overtime, but couldn't finish it.

Gasol had 20 points and 10 rebounds in his Staples Center return against the Lakers, and he forced the first overtime with the tying tip-in. Rose added 17 points before missing

that potential game-winner at the first overtime buzzer for the Bulls, who flopped after their thrilling win at Golden State on Tuesday.

"In this league, if one team is playing with great intensity and the other one lets up just a slight bit, the players in this league are too good," Bulls coach Tim Thibodeau said. "We've played low-energy (basketball), and then it came down to a miracle comeback to get it to overtime."

## **Grizzlies 99, Nuggets 69:**

Zach Randolph had 15 points and 17 rebounds, Jeff Green added 13 points and host Memphis won its fifth straight.

The Grizzlies held the Nuggets to 11 points in the first quarter and were never threatened the rest of the way as Randolph recorded his 10th consecutive double-double.

Courtney Lee, Nick Calathes and Beno Udrih, starting in place of the injured Mike Conley, scored 11 apiece, while Marc Gasol had 10 points.

Wilson Chandler and Kenneth Faried each scored 10 points for Denver, which lost for the eighth time in the last nine.

## **Bucks 115, Magic 100:**

Jerryd Bayless scored 19 points, Jared

Dudley and Khris Middleton had 17 apiece and Milwaukee ended a 17-game losing streak in Orlando.

The Bucks never trailed and placed seven players in double figures, including all five starters. Brandon Knight had 16 points and eight assists, O.J. Mayo scored 13 points and John Henson had 12 points and 11 rebounds.

The Magic have lost seven straight and 13 of their last 15 games. Victor

