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24 June 2013



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Pentagon Assesses Leaked Documents

By Army Sgt. 1st Class Michael J. Carden
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON, July 26, 2010 – The Pentagon today condemned the actions of the group WikiLeaks.org, which released thousands of classified U.S. military documents on its website last night.

"The leaking of classified information is something we take very seriously," Marine Corps Col. Dave Lapan, a Pentagon spokesman, told reporters today.

"We are in the process right now of assessing the documents," Lapan added.

The documents, reportedly given to several U.S. and international media weeks ago, are said to detail field reports from Afghanistan, as well as Pakistan relationships with the Taliban. The more than 90,000 documents cover the period from January 2004 through December 2009, according to news reports.

The Pentagon has yet to confirm the impact of the reports, as it's still early in the assessment process, Lapan said.

"As they are made available, we will be looking at them to try to determine potential damage to lives of our servicemembers and our coalition partners; whether they reveal sources in methods and any potential damage to national security," he said. "Since this was just released last night, we're still in the process going through that assessment."

Of the reports the Pentagon has seen, they fall into a category of basic, unit-level reporting, Lapan said.

"We've only seen a fraction of the documents that are reported to be out there, so until we get a look at all of them, we can't know exactly what the extent of the damage may be," he said.

It could take the Pentagon weeks to make such determinations, Lapan said. But much of what the Pentagon has discovered early in the investigation is that the documents are classified at a "secret" level, and not "top-secret," which is reserved for more sensitive material, he said.

The disclosed documents reveal "the type of reporting that goes on at the tactical level on a routine basis," the colonel said, noting examples such as roadside bomb incidences, civilian and military casualty reports and intelligence and information gathering.

"There's nothing we've seen so far that is particularly relevant," Lapan added.

At this point, he said, the Pentagon is concentrating on the information that's been made public, and is not investigating the source of the leak. Lapan explained that any number of military and civilian defense employees have access to such documents.

Also, the Pentagon is not looking to limit the number of people with access to "secret" material, he said.

"We have lots of systems in place," Lapan said. "And at the very top of that is the responsibility that those who are entrusted with access to that type of information protect that from unauthorized disclosure."

The Pentagon, however, will eventually attempt to narrow down the source of the leak, he said. However, Lapan could not disclose whether a formal investigation on the matter would take place.

"As we've said, we put a great deal of trust and confidence in individuals not to betray their oath to their country," Lapan said.

COMMENTS

Article is closed to new comments.

The opinions expressed in the following comments do not necessarily reflect those of the U.S. Department of Defense.

7/27/2010 2:09:20 AM

This story does not serve to inform the public that Coalition partners are making some progress given the constant danger ISAF is facing in Afghanistan. If the founder of WikiLeaks.org, a former hacker, really wanted to inform then why not show both sides for the Coalition's past mistakes and success? The young women of Afghanistan have schools today that they didn't have under the Taliban as a result of hard ISAF work. The long hours the instructors have been putting in to build a National Police and Army from the ground up. It will a change from the inside out, the Afghans all choosing person by person to take charge of their country then they will drive out the Taliban and Al Qaeda fighters out of their country to improve Afghanistan from a pre-9/11/01 to a stable sovereign nation. Lastly, I wonder what Wikileaks founder would think, to have his secrets, such as how he get ahold of this information, exposed to the world he loves to share with? Informing or privacy violations?

- Michael Villacres, Queens, NY

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Wikileaks publishes Afghan war secrets

Updated Mon Jul 26, 2010 3:41pm AEST

The White House has attacked online whistleblowing site Wikileaks after it published some 200,000 pages of secret American military files about the war in Afghanistan.

The files, published online by The Guardian, the New York Times and Germany's Der Spiegel, include details of 144 incidents in which Coalition forces have killed civilians.

The Guardian says the leaks show that troops killed hundreds of civilians in previously unreported incidents.

In one example cited by the British paper, French troops fired at a bus full of children, injuring eight.

A US patrol was involved in a similar incident that wounded or killed 15 passengers, and in 2007 Polish troops fired mortars at a village, apparently in a revenge attack, killing guests at a wedding party which included a pregnant woman.



PHOTO: Secret war: Wikileaks has published some 200,000 pages of secret American military files about the war in Afghanistan

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According to the New York Times they also "suggest that Pakistan, an ostensible ally of the United States, allows representatives of its spy service to meet directly with the Taliban."

Describing the talks as "secret strategy sessions," the newspaper said they "organise networks of militant groups that fight against American soldiers in Afghanistan, and even hatch plots to assassinate Afghan leaders."

The Guardian says the files revealed a secret black-ops unit which hunts down Taliban leaders for "kill or capture" without trial; how the US covered up evidence of surface-to-air missiles acquired by the Taliban; and how the Taliban have caused growing carnage with their roadside bombing campaign, killing more than 2,000 civilians to date.

US national security adviser James Jones says the publication of the documents puts the lives of soldiers and civilians at risk.

"The United States strongly condemns the disclosure of classified information by individuals and organisations which could put the lives of Americans and our partners at risk and threaten our national security," he said in a statement.

"Wikileaks made no effort to contact us about these documents - the United States government learned from news organisations that these documents would be posted."

Much of the information is not new, but what has angered officials in Washington is the detail and the scope of the information.

The New York Times said it, along with the Guardian and Der Spiegel, had received the leaked material several weeks ago from Wikileaks, a secretive web organisation headed by Australian Julian Assange.

The news organisations agreed to publish their reports, based on the files "used by desk officers in the Pentagon and troops in the field when they make operational plans," on Sunday.

"Most of the reports are routine, even mundane, but many add insights, texture and context to a war that has been waged for nearly nine years," the Times said in a note to readers describing the leaks.

"Overall these documents amount to a real-time history of the war reported from one important vantage point - that of the soldiers and officers actually doing the fighting and reconstruction."

- ABC/wires

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First posted Mon Jul 26, 2010 10:33am AEST

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WikiLeaks: Evidence of War Crimes in Afghan Docs

WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange said Monday he believes there is evidence of war crimes in the thousands of pages of leaked U.S. military documents relating to the war in Afghanistan.

The remarks came after WikiLeaks, a whistle-blowing group, posted some 91,000 classified U.S. military records over the past six years about the war online, including unreported incidents of Afghan civilian killings and covert operations against Taliban figures.

The White House, Britain and Pakistan have all condemned the release of the documents, one of the largest unauthorized disclosures in military history.

[Wikileaks Reveals Grim Afghan War Realities](#)
[Report: Pakistan Aiding Afghan Insurgency](#)

Assange told reporters in London that "it is up to a court to decide really if something in the end is a crime. That said ... there does appear to be evidence of war crimes in this material."

Assange compared the impact of the released material to the opening of the East German secret police archives. "This is the equivalent of opening the Stasi archives," he said.

The documents cover much of what the public already knows about the troubled nine-year conflict: U.S. special operations forces have targeted militants without trial, Afghans have been killed by accident, and U.S. officials have been infuriated by alleged Pakistani intelligence cooperation with the very insurgent groups bent on killing Americans.

WikiLeaks posted the documents Sunday. The New York Times, London's Guardian newspaper and the German weekly Der Spiegel were given early access to the records.

White House national security adviser Gen. Jim Jones said the release "put the lives of Americans and our partners at risk." In a statement, he then took pains to point out that the documents describe a period from January 2004 to December 2009, mostly during the administration of President George W. Bush. And, Jones added, before President Obama announced a new strategy.

Pakistan's Ambassador Husain Haqqani agreed, saying the documents "do not reflect the current on-ground realities," in which his country and Washington are "jointly endeavoring to defeat al Qaeda and its Taliban allies."

The U.S. and Pakistan assigned teams of analysts to read the records online to assess whether sources or locations were at risk.

Pakistan's powerful spy agency, Inter-Services Intelligence, said Monday that the accusations it had close connections to Taliban militants were malicious and unsubstantiated.

A senior ISI official said they were from unverified raw intelligence reports and were meant to impugn the reputation of the spy agency. He spoke on condition of anonymity in line with the agency's policy.

Hamid Gul, a former head of the ISI who is mentioned many times in the documents, also denied allegations that he'd worked with the insurgents.

Assange said his group also had many more documents on other subjects, including files on countries from across the globe.

"We have built up an enormous backlog of whistleblower disclosures," he said. "We have in this backlog ... files that concern every country in the world with a population of over 1 million."

He refused to go into detail, but said the information included "thousands of databases and files about all sorts of countries."

Assange said that he believed more material would flood amid the blaze of publicity.

"It is our experience that courage is contagious," he said. "Sources are encouraged by the opportunities that they see before them."

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Overruled1 says:

My Posting was removed between last night and now.

I broke no rules with my posting.

It seems I may be on the right side of facts of the US rogue government.

We have been betrayed and lied to from every administration since WW2,(Pentagon Papers), now Wikileaks has courageously exposed the lies.

I am considering not posting on CBSNEWS.COM ever again...This is shameful since I have as much right to the 1st amendment as anyone.

I will be seen instead joining a new political affiliation since we cannot trust either of the dominant parties in power.....I may just step aside and move away from this dying country.

Along with my missing post is the replies to it and my response to them.

Shame on the US Government, shame on CBS, shame on you all for allowing our country to be taken so easily without repercussions.

The constitution has been used as tissue paper for too long.

Wikileaks has worked to inform us of the facts, not the lies we've been accustomed to believing.....see you on the front.

reply

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zoeymaddy says:

not to beat a dead horse, but you are so right, if the president of the United States, or the vice president could be so callous as to leak Valerie's name as a get back to her husband, WHAT else are they capable of? Politics was always politics but ever since 2000, it has been don't cross me or question what I do or did or you will pay. I do believe the previous administration should be very closely investigated and if they did wrong they must pay!!!!

reply

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baboooph says:

The dependency on the centrally & fully controlled "news" in the States broke down a bit here-there is also foreign news "adapted" by the propaganda system that really shows how the US public is brainwashed.

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pinchebill says:

TIME TO WAKE UP PEOPLE. THIS WAR IS SAME SAME VIETNAM. A TOTAL LOSS OF LIVES OF OUR SOLDIERS. THEIR DEATHS IS FOR WHAT? OH YOU SAY THE SURGE WORKED IN IRAQ, YEAH RIGHT WE ARE NOT OUT OF THERE YET AND WHEN WE DO LEAVE IT WILL BE IN DEFEAT. STILL HAVE NOT FOUND THEM WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION. YOU ALL ARE CRYING ABOUT OUR ECONOMY AND NATIONAL DEBT. MONEY IS BEING WASTED ON UNNECESSARY WARS. WHY DO WE STILL OCCUPY GERMANY? WHY ARE WE IN KOREA? WHY ARE WE STILL JAPAN? YET WE NEED ROADS, BRIDGES, DAMS, AND INTER CITIES REPAIRED. WE HAVE TOO MANY PEOPLE UNEMPLOYED. OH YEAH YOU RIGHT THE WARS PROVIDE JOBS FOR THE UNDERTAKERS. WHEN I RECIEVED THE BRONZE STAR I WAS TOLD THAT IT AND A QUARTER WOULD GET ME A CUO OF COFFEE. I AM ASHAME OF THE SERVICE I GAVE THIS NATION AND HOPE THE LORD WILL FORGIVE ME.

reply

zoeymaddy replies:

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i may be wrong but since that fateful day of september 11, 2001, and it came out alquida and bin laden was responsible for it i thought our first target should have been saudi arabia. this being that most of the evildoers were from there, oh but wait OIL was in saudi arabi. yes afganistan HAD a major role in it, and i had no major qualms goin there. my one problem was GI george and ensign cheney couldn't wait to get into iraq, so thus we fabricated information, dropped the ball, bragged about riding the world of the taliban, lied, cheated and stole just to get into iraq. i do believe that OUR government committed war crimes and it makes me sick to think that, but if they did, then yes they SHOULD be brought up on war crimes charges. so if this leads to the truth then i say thank-you yo the brave men, and or women who finally had the guts to bring this out in the open

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noloyalisti says:

This is just like the last illegal, immoral and unnecessary occupation in Vietnam. What do we expect people when we let rich, greedy big corporations take over the country to run it for their own profits?

The best thing to happen is for the masses to see what war is really all about since the military-industrial complex is hiding it from its people.

reply

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talkaboutit says:

I was against the war from the beginning, but like every war all will never go well. The White House should look into a breach of National Security with violatng the right of WikiLeaks. This person can't be concerned about the country, if so he would have only released certain info. His ASS should be locked up.

reply

noloyalisti replies:

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Call Congress to tell your rep not to approve any more funding for the occupation. Except to get them home now.

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ibsteve2u says:

A few problems, here...

There is the technology issue...just because somebody can make big bucks selling the g'ment and the military technology that has more functionality than a teletype doesn't mean that it is wise to permit technology with more functionality than a teletype if the additional technology is not necessary to get the job done. Those hard and removable drives appear to be...problematic.

Then there is the personnel issue...I wonder, for example, if security would be any better if the professional leakers in the Pentagon were identified and eliminated?

You see, I often wonder if the increasingly sloppy security exhibited over the last few decades can be traced back to political scum (in or out of uniform) who feel the need to ensure that information that passes before their eyes "could" have leaked somewhere else.

That strikes me as being particularly likely in light of a recent Administration whose culpability in the intentional leaking of a covert CIA operative's name was just barely concealed.

When such behavior comes from the very top...and involves individuals who had been in our government for so very long...years spent grooming allies and pawns, demanding and gaining allegiances...decades of carefully selecting who would be promoted based upon the behavior that the latter could be expected to exhibit and tolerate...

Well, it is all too easy to believe that the last Administration and/or their carefully-chosen-for-the-right-"political allegiances" appointees and/or their favorites in the military authorized and ordered some counter-productive actions that may very well have been criminal.

After all, if it walks like a duck, quacks like a duck, has feathers like a duck, and has routinely stuck our country with the bill in the past...

Shame, though, that so very many have to pay that bill.

reply

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hatshepsut2 says:

Sorry, my mistake. The redoubtable 22-year-old "analyst" Julian Assange is with Wikileaks. I feel more secure, already. Let's see, where was he five years ago? Well, at least now he can "analyse" the Christopher Columbus myth and inform us on that issue.

reply

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raoulz says:

why is everyone so afraid to know the truth?? ...and to my knowledge, pakistan or Irak or Afganistan never attaked the US, so what is the point of these wars? Wars are fought when peoples are attacked..but if not..they why do you go to war?..

The US policies around the world are "Equivocadas".. a seven year old kid could make better foreing policy than the US and that is sad.

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[link icon](#) [report icon](#) [email icon](#)
[choices have consequences](#) says:

It may be true that there is no reason to doubt this material, but that isn't the way we operate in this country. Maybe in Australia, one is guilty until proven otherwise, but here, in America, we tend to follow the code that proof precedes a finding of guilt, and we must be presented with a reason, not to doubt but, to believe. Unsupported, undifferentiated raw materials that have not been subjected to scrutiny or validation or tests of reliability or credibility and cross referenced with other materials are the stuff of grocery counter rags, not journalism of the American tradition. It is a small difference, but we like it. Those of us who remember it.

As for the notion that when one rag publishes something, others will follow in a sign of courageous reporting, you'd think a guy from Australia would know a little more about the courage of sharks during a feeding frenzy.

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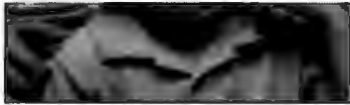
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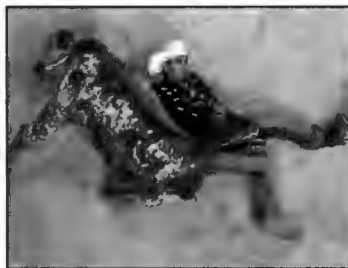
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