

Nuke Launch Officers Face Illegal Drug Charges

BY ROBERT BURNS

AP National Security Writer

WASHINGTON — Two more Air Force nuclear missile launch officers have been charged with illegal drug use in cases stemming from an investigation that led to the disclosure last year of a separate exam-cheating scandal, the Air Force said Friday.

1st Lt. Michael Alonso and 1st Lt. Lantz Balthazar, both members of the 12th Missile Squadron at the 341st Missile Wing at Malmstrom Air Force Base in Montana, face hearings to determine whether they will be court-martialed. One of their fellow missile officers who was a target of the same investigation pleaded guilty to illegal drug use in January and was kicked out of the Air Force.

The Malmstrom missile wing operates 150 of the Air Force's 450 Minuteman 3 intercontinental ballistic missiles, or ICBMs. Launch officers are trained to operate ICBMs that are armed with nuclear warheads and are on constant alert for possible launch.

Alonso was charged with violations of the Uniform Code of Military Justice for illegal possession, use and distribution of ecstasy and for "conspiracy related to the drug offenses," according to Malmstrom spokesman Josh Aycock.

Balthazar was charged with illegal possession, use and distribution of ecstasy and cocaine and for conspiracy related to the drug offenses. He also was charged with illegal use of Pentadone, which Aycock said is commonly called bath salts.

Both officers were charged April 17.

Aycock said their cases will be reviewed at Article 32 hearings, which are akin to a civilian grand jury proceeding, to determine whether there is enough criminal evidence to warrant a court-martial. The hearings have not been scheduled, Aycock said.

Alonso and Balthazar were among three Minuteman 3 launch officers at Malmstrom who were under investigation for illegal drug use. The other, 2nd Lt. Nicole Dalmazzi, was charged in December and court-martialed in January.

Dalmazzi, a member of the same squadron, pleaded guilty to illegal use of ecstasy and was dismissed from the Air Force and sentenced to a month of confinement in a Montana jail. The Air Force had also charged her with obstructing the Air Force Office of Special Investigations probe by allegedly dyeing her hair to alter the results of hair-follicle drug tests, but that charge was later dropped.

The cases at Malmstrom stem from a drug investigation that began in August 2013 at Edwards Air Force Base in California. When investigators examined the cellphones of two airmen at Edwards they found text messages to or from 11 other Air Force officers at several other air bases, including Malmstrom. The messages allegedly detailed specific illegal drug use and led to the discovery that some had also improperly exchanged answers to ICBM launch officer proficiency tests.

The ICBM force, which also operates from bases in Wyoming and North Dakota, has been under the public spotlight in recent years for a series of embarrassing missteps related to low morale, disciplinary problems, a lack of resources, training lapses and leadership failures. Last November, then-Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel announced plans for top-to-bottom changes in management of nuclear forces and said the Pentagon would spend \$8 billion to fix it.

In testimony to a Senate panel this week, an administration official who headed a detailed review of the nuclear forces for Hagel last year said her group believed that as much as \$25 billion could be needed to fix an array of problems.

"The problems that we found were worse and they were much more systemic" than expected, Madelyn Creedon said in her testimony Wednesday.

Creedon, who was head of the Pentagon's nuclear policy shop at the time and is now principal deputy administrator of the National Nuclear Security Administration, said her review found that morale in the nuclear Air Force was "not good." Nuclear missile crews told her they "felt trapped" in their job.

"They would say, 'Well, I have the nuclear stink on me so I don't have much of a future in the rest of the Air Force,'" she said.

The Air Force says it has begun to change that attitude by implementing a range of changes and improvements that are being felt across the force.

Poland Bans 'Provocative' Russian Loyal Putin Bikers

BY VANESSA GERA

Associated Press

WARSAW, Poland — Polish authorities said Friday they will not allow a nationalistic Russian motorcycle group loyal to President Vladimir Putin to enter Poland, but insisted the move is not political and was made in part because Polish authorities would not be able to guarantee their security.

The Night Wolves group had planned to enter Poland next week to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the end of World War II. Their plan was to cross several countries on their way to Berlin, following a path taken by the Red Army in its defeat of Adolf Hitler's Germany.

Many Poles reacted angrily to the plan for the symbolic drive through their country at a time of deep strains between Russia and the West. Prime Minister Ewa Kopacz recently called it a "provocation."

The Foreign Ministry in Warsaw said that it was refusing to let the bikers enter Poland because it did not receive precise information from them about their route and schedule, information

"necessary to ensure proper security for the participants."

The ministry said it also received information about the group's plans too late. The decision was relayed to the Russian Embassy in Warsaw in a diplomatic note on Friday.

Ministry spokesman Marcin Wojciechowski insisted that the decision was not politically motivated.

The Russian Foreign Ministry later issued a statement saying: "The authorities spoiled this memorial action under the far-fetched pretext of 'presenting late and insufficient information'. This is an obvious lie."

Night Wolves leader Alexander Zaldostanov, known as "The Surgeon," was quoted by the Interfax news agency as saying the run would begin as planned on Saturday. "If we give up on our ride, then let's give up on everything. Let's give up on May 9, let's give up on our graves, our history and our past," he was quoted as saying.

Asked when the Night Wolves might try to cross the border into Poland, he said "I don't want to reveal all our plans."

UN: High Civilian Toll In Yemen Conflict; 550 Dead

BY AHMED AL-HAJ AND MAGGIE MICHAEL

Associated Press

SANAA, Yemen — With combatants fighting in neighborhoods and Saudi-led coalition warplanes pounding Iran-backed rebels from the sky, Yemen's war is wreaking a particularly bloody toll among civilians: more than 550 have been killed in the past month, including 115 children, the U.N. said Friday.

Amnesty International said in a new report that some of the airstrikes it examined in the capital of Sanaa and four other cities raise "concerns about compliance with international law," saying they appeared to have failed to take precautions to avoid civilian casualties.

The air campaign that began March 26 "has transformed many parts of Yemen into a dangerous place for civilians," the report said. "Millions of people have been forced to live in a state of utter terror, afraid of being killed in their homes." It said about 150,000 people have fled their homes the past month.

So far, relatively muted criticism from world leaders has been unable to force an end to the violence in the Arab world's poorest country. More civilian areas were hit Friday by warplanes, including a stadium in the southern town of Zinjibar and a courthouse in the town of Lahj, witnesses said. Casualties were not immediately known.

Saudi Arabia leads a coalition of other Gulf countries, Egypt and Sudan, in the campaign against Iranian-allied Shiite rebels, known as Houthis, who have taken over much of Yemen.

The Sunni Arab countries in the coalition and its Western supporters say the Houthis get their arms from Shiite power-house Iran. Tehran and the rebels deny that, although the Islamic Republic has given political and humanitarian support to the Shiite group.

The Houthis are allied with military units loyal to former President Ali Abdullah Saleh against the coalition and the forces of President Abed Rabbo Mansour Hadi. Although Hadi is the internationally recognized leader, he was forced to

flee his southern stronghold of Aden last month as the Houthis advanced toward the port, and he is now in the Saudi capital of Riyadh.

On Friday, Saleh urged the Shiite rebels to comply with a U.N. resolution that obligates them to withdraw from the cities they occupy so that peace talks can begin. But military units loyal to him also are on the front lines fighting alongside the Houthis, and Saleh made no mention of them ceasing fire.

Saleh, a staunch U.S. ally, made a veiled accusation that Hadi was allied with Yemen's active and dangerous al-Qaida branch, saying that "all militias, al-Qaida and armed men affiliated to Hadi should withdraw from all provinces."

On Tuesday, the coalition announced its campaign was entering a new phase. It said the strikes had achieved their goal of weakening the Houthis and their allies, and would be scaled down. But fighting did not stop: The rebels continued to press their offensive on Aden, and after a brief easing, airstrikes have revved back up again.

ASK THE EXPERTS

Family Medicine

Q. How has nutrition changed in the past 30 years and what do I need to do?



Jeffrey Johnson, M.D.

A. Over the last 30 years we exchanged our high fat diet for a high carbohydrate diet. Researchers associated fat with heart disease. Particularly the bad fats of LDL and VLDL. Thus, they recommended no more than 30% of our caloric intake come from fat. We certainly did achieve this exchanging fat for carbohydrate. Remember Snackwells? The end result however, was an increase in HTN Diabetes, Obesity, Heart Disease and Metabolic Syndrome. The carbohydrates specifically involved in the fiasco are sucrose (which is half glucose and half fructose) and high fructose corn syrup. It turns out that these carbohydrates (fructose and HFCS) are not easily metabolized by the liver. These produce toxic byproducts that are ultimately stored in the liver and in the fat tissue. So if you want to improve your diet, get the fructose and HFCS out of it.

If you have concerns about your health we are happy to discuss this you. Call Lewis & Clark Family Medicine at 260-2100.



2525 Fox Run Pkwy., Lewis & Clark Medical Plaza, Yankton 260-2100

Chiropractic

Q. How do you define health?



Sheila Fitzgerald, D.C.

A. We are trained to live in a blood culture. What are my blood chemistries and what do I need to do to make them normal. The blood is the transport medium which delivers the medicine to make my blood chemistry better. Am I healthy when my numbers are right? Or, is there another way to attain health. Chiropractic teaches that the nervous system is the master system that controls all aspects of our health. Adjustments of the spine improve the way the nervous system operates. When the nervous system works better, the body can work better. Most of us have control over what we can do that makes us healthier or not. Have the conversation with your health professional. Visit us for more details about your health options.



2507 Fox Run Parkway, Yankton, SD, 665-8073

Fitness/Health

Q. I am working to lose weight for summer, how much can I plan to lose by June?



Angie O'Connor
Clinical Exercise Specialist

A. There is still time to shed a few pounds before swimsuit season arrives, but it's important to be healthy about it. Getting to a healthy weight isn't all about the scale. A healthy weight, while partly attributed to the number on the scale, should be considered equally along with body composition. This is the amount of body fat you have compared to lean body mass and something that can help determine a healthy weight rather than picking a number from a chart or out of thin air. You can get that number by working with a personal trainer and reviewing recommended percentages by age and gender. A healthy weight loss on the scale should be between 1-2 pounds per week. Looking at the calendar, that could give you about a ten pound loss before June if you need to lose that much. Weight loss is all about calories in and calories out. Both diet and exercise are equally important when it comes to success!



501 Summit, Yankton • 668-8357

Funeral & Cremation

Q. How do I find out what a funeral or Cremation service will cost me or my family?



Jim Goglin

A. Just call or go to your local Funeral homes and ask. FTC. (federal Trade Commission) requires that all funeral homes give out there prices either in writing or over the phone. When you go to a funeral home ask for there general price list or there GPL and they will give it to you. FTC requires them to. It should contain all there prices. Or call them on the phone and they will either tell you there prices or offer to send you a general price list. You are not required to give them your name if you don't want to. You might be surprised at the differences between each funeral homes prices.

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Pharmacy/Nutrition

Allergies



Kim Kortje

Allergy season, they're a rite of spring (and fall) for many of us. Plants will be sending their pollen into the air. This pollen attacks our immune systems causing the nose, eyes, and lungs to release histamine, thus leading to the symptoms. Start early to prevent the symptoms and carry thru the season. What are my options? By prescription montelukast will help with tightening of the chest and mucus formation. Herbs and supplements such as Quercetin and Butterbur may be helpful. Control your environment. Trees usually pollinate in the morning, so plan activities outside later in the day. Wear a pollen mask while gardening. Use a HEPA filter to clean the air in your house. Remove the pollen and dust from your sinuses with a nasal saline flush. Oral histamines such as Benadryl, Claritin, Zyrtec and Allegra can be gotten without a prescription and will help alleviate those symptoms. Now two nasal steroid sprays, Flonase and Nasacort, are available over the counter. This combined with an oral histamine will do the best at attacking multiple symptom allergies. And if it is your eyes only, try an eye drop.

Many are available without prescription.

Welcome Spring!



Pharmacy • 665-8261

Ear, Nose & Throat

Q. Dr. Neugebauer, I've heard ringing in my ears for many years. I have heard and seen several advertisements for tinnitus on TV. Are these products effective or what do you recommend?



Kendra Neugebauer,
Au.D. CCC-A

A. I too have seen several of these tinnitus (ringing in the ears) advertisements and they are very concerning to me. Tinnitus is a highly complicated issue rooted deeply in our neural pathways. The facts are that there are no silver bullets or magic pills which have been clinically proven to reduce, let alone eliminate tinnitus. Research and our experience with our patients have taught us a lot about tinnitus but have not provided a quick, easy cure. I would refer you to our website www.yanktonent.com or the American Tinnitus Association's website: www.ata.org. There you will find strategies to help you cope with tinnitus. Just know there are things you can do to help your tinnitus, but remember anything that sounds too good to be true, probably is.

David Wagner, M.D.
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Podiatry

Q. My son plays soccer and has heel pain. How do I know when it is serious?



Terence Pederson,
D.P.M.

A. Kids are skeletally immature. The growth plates in the heel are still open and still growing and maturing - until they're about 13 to 14. The growth plate usually develops around 10 years old, and usually matures around 14 years old. The constant running associated with soccer places excessive stress on the growth plate in the heel. Quick starts and quick stops, and moving side to side in soccer cleats (that are little more than hard moccasins with spikes) is a recipe for irritation and pain to the growth plate. This is known as apophysitis.

Symptoms of apophysitis include pain and swelling of the heel. The soccer player may walk on the ball the foot and avoid the heel. The pain is usually worse after physical activity stops. Treatment usually involves rest, ice, and medications such as Motrin. If the pain does not improve, we will use arch supports, walking boots, physical therapy, and occasionally casting and crutches.

It's okay for the kids to play on a sore heel as long as it's not causing them to limp. If the limping and the pain worsens, and does not resolve after one or two weeks, your child should be evaluated. There is always a chance of fracture or stress fracture of the growth plate and this should be treated appropriately.



Christine Wiarda,
D.P.M.

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