

Holder Offers Legal Justification For Killings

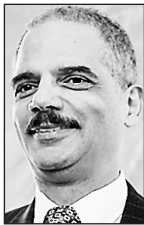
WASHINGTON (AP) — Attorney General Eric Holder said Monday that the decision to kill a U.S. citizen living abroad who poses a terrorist threat "is among the gravest that government leaders can face," but justified lethal action as legal and sometimes necessary in the war on terror.

Holder's comments broke the administration's silence on the legal justifications for its decision to kill American-born al-Qaida operative Anwar al-Awlaki five months ago in Yemen. In a speech at Northwestern University law school in Chicago, he described al-Awlaki as concocting plans to kill Americans but he never explicitly acknowledged the administration responded by targeting the cleric for death.

Instead the attorney general outlined a three-part test for determining when a targeted killing against a U.S. citizen is legal. He said the government must determine after careful review that the citizen poses an imminent threat of violent attack against the U.S., capture is not feasible and the killing would be consistent with laws of war.

The Obama administration has refused to release the Justice Department legal opinion on al-Awlaki's killing under the Freedom of Information Act and is in court opposing efforts to have it made public.

Responding to criticism from civil libertarians, Holder flatly rejected the suggestion that the Constitution's due process protections require the president to get permission from a federal court before taking lethal action.



Holder

Riot Police Break Up Anti-Putin Protest

MOSCOW (AP) — An attempt by Vladimir Putin's foes to protest his presidential election victory by occupying a Moscow square ended Monday with riot police quickly dispersing and detaining hundreds of demonstrators — a stark reminder of the challenges faced by Russia's opposition.

The harsh crackdown could fuel opposition anger and bring even bigger protests of Putin's 12 years in power and election to another six, but it also underlined the authorities' readiness to use force to crush such demonstrations.

The rally marked a change of tactics for the opposition, which has been looking for ways to maintain the momentum of its demonstrations that flared in December. Alexei Navalny, a popular blogger and one of the most charismatic protest leaders, was the first to suggest that supporters remain on Moscow's streets and squares to turn up the heat on Putin.

For Putin, the opposition move raised the specter of the 2004 Orange Revolution in Ukraine, where demonstrators camped on Kiev's main square in massive protests that forced officials to throw out a fraud-tainted election victory by the Kremlin-backed candidate.

The government's response Monday night was fast and brutal. Lines of officers in full riot gear marched into tree-lined Pushkin Square and forced protesters into waiting police buses. About 250 people were detained around the city, police said.

Indiana Baby Buried With Parents, Siblings

SALEM, Ind. (AP) — A 15-month-old Indiana girl who clung to life for two days after being scooped up by a tornado that killed her parents and two siblings was buried Monday in a snow-covered cemetery, a poignant end to what had seemed to be a miracle story of survival.

An American flag hung at half-staff as relatives of Angel Babcock gathered for the private burial. Angel, her mother and her 2-month-old sister were buried in one casket. Her father and 2-year-old brother were in another.

The little girl died Sunday at Kosair Children's Hospital in Louisville, Ky., after suffering severe head injuries when a tornado struck her family's home in New Pekin, Ind., and swept her into the field. Her death is one of 40 from the tornadoes that ripped through the Midwest and South on Friday.

The miracle survivor amid widespread devastation wrought by the storms, Angel captivated the world with her fight to live. Though found critically injured, she was opening her eyes when she arrived at the hospital in Kentucky, which workers said was a hopeful sign.

But her condition deteriorated Saturday as her brain swelled, chief nursing officer Cis Gruebbel said. As the day went on, Angel's eyes stopped moving, and there was no sign of brain activity. Her grandmother said the family decided to take her off life support, after hospital workers said there was nothing else they could do.

Insurgents In Disguise Kill 25 Police In Iraq

BAGHDAD (AP) — Assaults waving the battle flag of al-Qaida gunned down 25 policemen Monday in a brazen and well-orchestrated challenge to government control over a strategic town fraught with Iraq war symbolism.

The attack replicated tactics used by Sunni insurgents during the war and appeared aimed at reasserting al-Qaida's grip now that the Iraqis can no longer rely on American help.

The attackers drove through the town of Haditha claiming to be government officials and methodically executed guards and commanders. After half an hour they escaped into the desert, leaving a terrified populace demanding protection. Local authorities imposed a curfew and deployed troops.

AP Survey

Economic Optimism Growing

BY CHRISTOPHER S. RUGABER

AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — The U.S. economy is improving faster than economists had expected. They now foresee slightly stronger growth and hiring than they did two months earlier — trends that would help President Barack Obama's re-election hopes.

Those are among the findings of an Associated Press survey late last month of leading economists. The economists think the unemployment rate will fall from its current 8.3 percent to 8 percent by Election Day. That's better than their 8.4 percent estimate when surveyed in late December.

By the end of 2013, they predict unemployment will drop to 7.4 percent, down from their earlier estimate of 7.8 percent, according to the AP Economy Survey.

The U.S. economy has been improving steadily for months. Industrial output jumped in January after surging in December by the most in five years. Auto sales are booming. Consumer confidence has reached its highest point in a year. Even the housing market is

showing signs of turning around.

"The economy is finally starting to gain some steam, with consumers and businesses more optimistic about prospects in 2012," said Chad Moutray, chief economist at the National Association of Manufacturers.

On Friday, the government will issue the jobs report for February. Economists expect it to show that employers added a net 210,000 jobs and that the unemployment rate remained 8.3 percent.

The AP survey collected the views of two dozen private, corporate and academic economists on a range of indicators. Among their forecasts:

— Americans will save gradually less and borrow more, reversing a shift toward frugality that followed the financial crisis and the start of the Great Recession.

— Obama deserves little or no credit for declining unemployment. Only one of the 19 economists who answered the question said Obama should get "a lot" of credit. They give most of the credit to U.S. consumers, who account for about 70 percent of economic growth, and businesses.

— The economy has begun a self-sustaining

period in which job growth is fueling more consumer spending, which should lead to further hiring.

— European leaders will manage to defuse their continent's debt crisis and prevent a global recession. But the economists think Europe's economy will shrink for all of 2012.

— The economy will grow 2.5 percent this year, up from the economists' earlier forecast of 2.4 percent. In 2011, the economy grew 1.7 percent.

The brighter outlook for jobs follows five straight months of declining unemployment. Employers added more than 200,000 net jobs in both December and January. The unemployment rate is at its lowest level in nearly three years.

One reason the rate has fallen so fast is that fewer out-of-work Americans have started looking for jobs. People out of work aren't counted by the Labor Department as unemployed unless they're actively seeking jobs.

Many economists have been surprised that the stronger economy hasn't led more people without jobs to start looking for work. If many more were looking, the unemployment rate would likely be higher.

Decision 2012

GOP Braced For Super Tuesday Showdown

BY DAVID ESPO

AP Special Correspondent

WASHINGTON — On the eve of their Super Tuesday showdown, Mitt Romney and Rick Santorum strained for an edge in Ohio Monday and braced for the 10 primaries and caucuses likely to define the race for the Republican presidential nomination.

Newt Gingrich, though winless for more than a month, campaigned in Tennessee and issued a stream of signals that he intended to stay in the race.

In a race marked by unpredictability, Romney's superior organization and the support of an especially deep-pocketed super PAC allowed him to compete all across the Super Tuesday landscape and potentially pick up more than half of the 419 delegates at stake.

Santorum cast the race in biblical terms, his David vs. Romney's Goliath. Even that "is probably a little bit of an understatement," he added.

By contrast, Romney projected confidence. "I hope that I get the support of people here in Ohio tomorrow, and in other states across the country. I believe if I do, I'll get the nomination," he said.

Primaries in Ohio, Georgia, Massachusetts, Vermont, Virginia, Oklahoma and Tennessee plus caucuses in Idaho, North Dakota and Alaska make Tuesday the busiest day of the primary season.

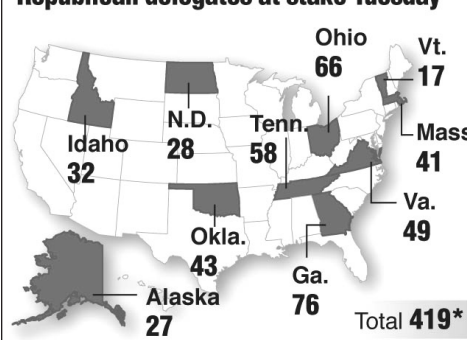
Unlike previous Republican campaigns, when a primary winner would typically win all of a state's delegates, allocations this year generally reflect the split in the popular vote. As a result, several candidates may be able to claim

Super Tuesday

ELECTION 2012

Americans in 10 states head to the polls March 6 to choose their party's presidential nominee. Democrats will choose President Barack Obama, but the Republican candidate is still undecided.

Republican delegates at stake Tuesday



Where they stand

Delegates won so far by the leading contenders

Needed for nomination **1,144**

Romney **203**

Santorum **92**

Gingrich **33**

Paul **25**

*Total does not include 16 unpledged delegates included in state totals; these delegates are usually party officials and are not bound to a specific candidate

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success once the Super Tuesday results are known.

Romney kept his focus on the economy in a final sprint across Ohio, the state that has drawn the most attention and television advertising. Pre-primary polls show him with momentum in a close race with Santorum.

"Other people in this race have debated about the economy, they've read about the economy, they've talked about it in subcommittee hearings," Romney said dismissively of his opponents. "But I've actually been in it. I've worked in business, and I understand what it takes to get a business successful and to thrive."

Santorum, who narrowly lost Michigan to Romney last week, said that no matter how much his rival spends, "conservatives will

not trust him, will not rally around him this primary season. ... We will be the nominee."

He said he looked forward to the day when Gingrich drops out and clears the way for him to challenge Romney one-on-one. "And when we do that, we'll win," Santorum said.

Gingrich, the former speaker of the House, was having none of it.

Seemingly confident of a primary victory in Georgia, where he launched his political career more than three decades ago, he unveiled a new television commercial in Tennessee promising to reduce the rising cost of gasoline. Eager to demonstrate his staying power, he said the commercial would soon begin running in Alabama and Mississippi, which hold primaries next week, and he announced a list of

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- Peanut Butter Bacon Burger
- Mega Blue Burger
- Jarlsberg Cheese Burger

Served 4-8PM

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