

## Spat Between Turkey, Russia Escalates

NEW YORK (AP) — A tug-of-war over a Russian warplane downed by a Turkish fighter jet at the border with Syria escalated Thursday, with Moscow drafting a slew of economic sanctions against Turkey and the Turkish president defiantly declaring that his military will shoot down any new intruder.

The spat reflected a clash of ambitions of two strongman leaders, neither of whom appeared willing to back down and search for a compromise.

Turkey shot down the Russian Su-24 military jet on Tuesday, insisting it had violated its airspace despite repeated warnings. The incident marked the first time in half a century that a NATO member shot down a Russian plane, raising the threat of a military confrontation between the alliance and Moscow.

Russian President Vladimir Putin denounced the Turkish action as a “treacherous stab in the back,” and insisted that the plane was downed over Syrian territory in violation of international law.

“Until that moment, we haven’t heard a clear apology from Turkey’s top political leadership, or an offer to compensate for the damage or a promise to punish the criminals,” he said at the Kremlin while receiving credentials from several ambassadors. “It gives an impression that the Turkish leadership is deliberately driving Russian-Turkish relations into a deadlock, and we regret that.”

## Trump Called Out For Alleged Mocking

WASHINGTON (AP) — Donald Trump denied Thursday that he mocked a reporter with a disability in a South Carolina speech, despite appearing to imitate mannerisms of the “poor guy” and make fun of him.

A statement posted on his Twitter account said Trump doesn’t know the reporter personally or what he looks like and was only mocking his journalism. The *New York Times* reporter, Serge Kovaleski, “should stop using his disability to grandstand,” the statement quoted Trump as saying.

Kovaleski has a congenital condition that affects joint movement. In a speech Tuesday in South Carolina, Trump said, “Poor guy, you oughta see this guy,” and gestured in a jerky fashion as if imitating Kovaleski’s movements.

Trump was challenging recollections by Kovaleski and many others about the 9/11 aftermath. Trump has made unsubstantiated claims that thousands of Muslims in New Jersey were seen celebrating the attacks.

In 2001, Kovaleski, then with *The Washington Post*, and another Post journalist wrote a week after the 9/11 attacks about authorities in New Jersey detaining and questioning “a number of people who were allegedly seen celebrating the attacks.” The story did not suggest “thousands” were celebrating, as Trump claimed, and a story then by *The Star-Ledger* in Newark, New Jersey, said the reports of such celebrations by Muslims proved unfounded.

## Chicago Teen Had Troubled Family

CHICAGO (AP) — A black teenager shot 16 times by a white Chicago police officer was a ward of the state when he died, having spent years being shuttled between different relatives’ homes and foster care from the time he was 3.

Laquan McDonald, whose name demonstrators have shouted for two days and will shout again during a planned rally to disrupt the city’s famed Magnificent Mile shopping corridor Friday, lived a troubled, disadvantaged life and had at least one previous brush with the law.

School officials and the McDonald family lawyer say there were signs Laquan was trying to get his life in order, though prosecutors say he had drugs in his system and was burglarizing cars on Oct. 20, 2014 — the night a squad-car video captured officer Jason Van Dyke shooting him.

“It takes a while to get a life back on track,” said Thomas Gattuso, the principal at the alternative high school that McDonald was attending. “With Laquan, we unfortunately never got to finish his story.”

## Big Balloons, Heavy Security For Parade

NEW YORK (AP) — Americans paused Thursday to celebrate their blessings despite terrorism fears and racial tensions over fatal police shootings across the country. A record number of police officers patrolled the Macy’s Thanksgiving Day Parade in New York, while St. Louis resumed its annual parade, canceled last year amid protests over Michael Brown’s death.

At the White House, President Barack Obama spent a quiet holiday with a traditional meal.

## Miss. Man Accused Of ‘Fast Food’ Attack

NEW ORLEANS (AP) — Authorities say a man faces charges in Louisiana accusing him of killing his father and stabbing his mother because they ordered fast food and didn’t get any for him.

Ronald Pritchett, 32, of Purvis, Mississippi, faces charges of second-degree murder, attempted second-degree murder and auto theft in the New Orleans suburb of Jefferson Parish, said Col. John Fortunato, spokesman for the sheriff there.

Fortunato Percival Pritchett, 58, and his wife, Renitta Pritchett, 57, were stabbed Wednesday at their home in unincorporated Gretna. Renitta Pritchett was treated and released, University Medical Center spokeswoman Aleis Tusa said.

Fortunato said in a news release that Pritchett became enraged about food. Asked by email for more details, he replied, “They ordered food from a fast food restaurant and didn’t include him.”

Pritchett was arrested Thursday at a relative’s home near the town of Purvis, Mississippi, and waived extradition to Louisiana, Lamar County Sheriff Danny Rigel said.

He said deputies checked several relatives’ homes before locating Percival Pritchett’s tan Chevrolet Suburban at a house where detectives were told Ronald Pritchett was in a “mother-in-law” outbuilding.

After evacuating the house, he said, the tactical team and K-9 units surrounded the smaller building.

Rigel said Pritchett refused to come out, so a dog was sent in. Pritchett was treated for minor bites before being booked as a fugitive into the Lamar County jail, Rigel said.

Fortunato said other relatives told investigators that Pritchett became enraged about the food, grabbed a knife and went upstairs to confront his parents.

They had locked their bedroom door against him, but he allegedly kicked it open and began stabbing them, Fortunato said.

He said both parents were stabbed multiple times, Percival Pritchett in the chest and Renitta Pritchett in the head.

# Russia, France To Tighten Cooperation Against IS

BY SYLVIE CORBET  
Associated Press

MOSCOW — The presidents of France and Russia agreed Thursday to tighten cooperation in the fight against the Islamic State group, although they remained at odds over their approach toward Syrian President Bashar Assad.

IS has claimed responsibility for deadly attacks against both of the countries’ citizens in recent weeks: Nov. 13 shootings and suicide bombings in Paris which killed 130 people, and the Oct. 31 bombing of a Russian passenger jet over Egypt’s Sinai Peninsula that claimed 224 lives.

French President Francois Hollande has been on a diplomatic drive since the Paris attacks to increase cooperation in tackling IS, which holds swathes of territory in both Syria and Iraq. He has met this week with President Barack Obama, German Chancellor Angela Merkel and Italian Prime Minister Matteo Renzi before flying to Moscow on Thursday for talks with Russian President Vladimir Putin.

Hollande and Putin agreed on increasing intelligence sharing, intensifying their airstrikes against IS in Syria and cooperating on selecting targets — two days after Turkey downed a Russian warplane near the Syrian border.

“We agreed on a very important issue: To strike the terrorists only, Daesh and the jihadi groups only, and not to strike the forces and the groups that are fighting against the terrorists,” Hollande said after the meeting, referring to IS by its Arabic acronym. “And we are going to exchange some information about that: what can be struck, and what must not be struck.”

But the two countries remain at odds in their approach toward Assad, with Hollande saying the Syrian head of state “does not have his place in Syria’s future,” and Putin stressing that “the Syrian president’s fate should be entirely in the hands of the Syrian people.”

Putin described Assad’s army as a “natural ally” in the fight against IS — an essential force capable of battling the extremist group on the ground. He added that Russia was ready to cooperate with other groups ready to fight IS.

Russia has been Assad’s staunchest ally, and has come under criticism for targeting some rebel groups who are fighting against both IS and Assad in Syria’s multifaceted and complex civil war.

Obama, after meeting with Hollande, had said Russian cooperation in the fight against IS would be “enormously helpful.” The U.S. has also insisted that a political transition in Syria must lead to Assad’s departure.

“We view the U.S.-led coalition with respect and stand ready to cooperate with it,” Putin said. “We believe that we would better create a single, united coalition as it would be easier, simpler and more efficient to coordinate our work that way.”

However, he said, “if our partners



OLIVIER DOULIERY/ABACA PRESS/TNS

**French President Francois Hollande is shown speaking at the French Embassy on Tuesday in Washington. On Thursday, Hollande and Russia’s Vladimir Putin agreed Thursday to tighten cooperation in the fight against the Islamic State group.**

aren’t ready for that, OK, we are ready to work in a different format that is acceptable to our partners. We are ready to cooperate with the U.S.-led coalition.”

Last week, Hollande called for the U.S. and Russia to set aside their policy divisions over Syria and “fight this terrorist army in a broad, single coalition.” But his office acknowledges that “coordination” sounds like a far more realistic goal.

While pledging closer cooperation, Putin also harshly criticized Washington for failing to prevent the downing of a Russian warplane engaged in airstrikes in Syria by NATO member Turkey on Tuesday — an action which underscored the complex military landscape in Syria, where a sprawling cast of countries and rebel groups are engaged on the battlefield and in the skies overhead, sometimes with minimal coordination.

Turkey said it shot down the Russian Su-24 bomber after it flew into its airspace for 17 seconds despite repeated warnings. Putin dismissed the Turkish claim of intrusion and held the U.S. responsible for failing to rein in its ally, saying that Russia had informed the U.S. about its military flights in the area in advance.

Putin denounced the Turkish action, saying it “thoughtlessly and rudely” destroyed friendly ties between the two countries. Russia will protect its warplanes from now on with long-range S-400 air defense missiles deployed at its air base in Syria, as well as escort fighters and electronic countermeasures, he said.

Hollande described the shoot-down as a “serious incident, obviously regrettable” that underlined the need for closer coordination between nations fighting IS.

“It is crucial in that period to avoid any risk, any incident, and prevent any escalation,” Hollande said. “The only goal we must have is fighting Daesh and neutralize the terrorists. There is no other goal.”

In Germany, Merkel’s Cabinet decided to send reconnaissance aircraft, tanker planes and a warship to help in the fight against IS. Defense Minister Ursula von der Leyen said the government had also agreed to provide satellite surveillance.

During Merkel’s visit in Paris on Wednesday, Hollande had said it would “be a very good signal in the fight against terrorism” if Germany could do more against IS in Syria and Iraq.

## Pope Warns Of Catastrophe If Climate Talks Fail

NAIROBI, Kenya (AP) — Pope Francis warned Thursday that it would be “catastrophic” for world leaders to let special interest groups get in the way of a global agreement to curb fossil fuel emissions as he brought his environmental message to the heart of Africa on the eve of crucial climate change talks in Paris.

Francis issued the pointed warning in a speech to the U.N.’s regional office here after celebrating his first public Mass on the continent. The joyous, rain-soaked ceremony before 300,000 faithful saw the Argentine pope being serenaded by ululating Swahili singers, swaying nuns, Maasai tribesmen and dancing children dressed in the colors of Kenya’s flag.

Francis has made ecological concerns a hallmark of his nearly 3-year-old papacy, issuing a landmark encyclical earlier this year that paired the need to care for the environment with the need to care for humanity’s most vulnerable. Francis argues the two are interconnected since the poor often suffer the most from the effects of global warming, and are largely excluded from today’s fossil-fuel

based global economy that is heating up the planet.

On Thursday, Francis repeated that message but took particular aim at those who reject the science behind global warming. In the United States, that includes some Republican presidential candidates and lawmakers, who have opposed steps President Barack Obama has taken on his own to cut greenhouse gas emissions.

“It would be sad, and dare I say even catastrophic, were special interests to prevail over the common good and lead to manipulating information in order to protect their own plans and interests,” Francis said.

He didn’t elaborate, but in the United States at least, there has been a well-funded campaign that rejects the findings of 97 percent of climate scientists that global warming is likely man-made and insists that any heating of the Earth is natural. Politicians have cited these claims in their arguments that emissions cuts will hurt the economy.

Francis’ message was praised by NASA historian Erik Conway, who co-wrote the 2010 book “Merchants of Doubt,”

which detailed the attempts by far-right institutions and like-minded scientists to discredit the science behind global warming and spread confusion in the public.

Conway said it was difficult to determine today how much money is still being directed into climate change denial since much of it goes through foundations.

“But what that funding has achieved is the nearly complete conversion of Republican Party leadership into denial of human-caused climate change as well

as public confusion over the content of the science,” he said in an email.

Francis, who has said global warming is “mainly” man-made, said the world was faced with a stark choice in Paris: either improve or destroy the environment. He said he hoped the Paris talks would approve a “transformational” agreement to fight poverty and protect the environment by developing a new energy system that depends on minimal fossil fuel use.

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