

Deputy Chief Of Nuclear Command Fired

WASHINGTON (AP) — The deputy commander of U.S. nuclear forces, Vice Adm. Tim Giardina, was notified Wednesday that he has been relieved of duty amid a military investigation of allegations that he used counterfeit chips at an Iowa casino, the Navy said.

The move is exceedingly rare and perhaps unprecedented in the history of U.S. Strategic Command, which is responsible for all U.S. nuclear warfighting forces, including nuclear-armed submarines, bombers and land-based missiles.

The Navy's top spokesman, Rear Adm. John Kirby, said Giardina, who had held the job since December 2011, is being reassigned to the Navy staff pending the outcome of the probe by the Naval Criminal Investigative Service, which originated as a local law enforcement investigation in Iowa in June.

As a consequence of being removed from his post at Strategic Command, Giardina falls in rank to two-star admiral. He had been suspended by Gen. Robert Kehler, the top commander at Strategic Command, on Sept. 3, although that move was not disclosed publicly until Sept. 28.

After his suspension Giardina remained at Strategic Command but was not allowed to perform duties that required use of his security clearance.

Lawmakers Squabble, Shutdown Goes On

WASHINGTON (AP) — Its approval ratings scraping bottom, Congress took no discernible steps Wednesday to end the nine-day partial government shutdown or to head off a threatened default by the national Treasury.

Instead, the House passed legislation that the Obama administration already had rendered unnecessary, while Speaker John Boehner and Democratic leader Nancy Pelosi met face-to-face — and promptly disagreed even about which side had requested the get-together.

Across the Capitol, the Senate marked time under 18th century rules, focusing its attention on a test vote — next weekend — on a \$1 trillion increase in the debt limit to avert a default.

"Enough is enough," said Barry Black, the Senate chaplain who has delivered a series of pointed sermonettes in recent days as lawmakers career from crisis to crisis. Evidently not.

Charity To Pay Military Death Benefits

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Obama administration, scrambling to tamp down a controversy over suspended death benefits for the families of fallen troops, announced Wednesday that a charity would pick up the costs of the payments during the government shutdown.

"The Fisher House Foundation will provide the families of the fallen with the benefits they so richly deserve," Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel said in a statement, adding that the Pentagon would reimburse the foundation after the shutdown ended.

Hagel said Fisher House, which works with veterans and their families, had approached the Pentagon about making the payments. The Defense Department typically pays families about \$100,000 within three days of a service member's death, but officials say the shutdown was preventing those benefits from being paid.

A senior defense official said the government could not actively solicit funds from private organizations but could accept an offer. The official was not authorized to publicly discuss the offer by name and insisted on anonymity.

The failure to make the payments has stirred outrage on Capitol Hill and at the White House. Obama spokesman Jay Carney said Wednesday that the president was "disturbed" when he found out the death benefits had been suspended and demanded an immediate solution.

Gunman Fires At Courthouse In W.Va.

WHEELING, W.Va. (AP) — A man with an assault-type rifle fired up to two dozen rounds at the federal court building in a West Virginia city on Wednesday before security officers returned fire, critically wounding the gunman, the U.S. Marshals Service said.

One security officer within the Wheeling Federal Building was injured by flying debris, but there were no other injuries, said Chief Deputy Mike Claxton of the Marshals Service in northern West Virginia.

The gunman, whose name was not released, was hospitalized with life-threatening injuries, Claxton said.

He said investigators were seeking a search warrant for the gunman's home in hopes of determining the motive and if he acted alone.

Asked if the gunman had any beef with the U.S. government, Claxton said, "We're really digging hard at this point to find out."

Woman Denied Help Gives Birth On Lawn

MEXICO CITY (AP) — An indigenous woman squats in pain after giving birth, her newborn still bound by the umbilical cord and lying on the ground. It's a photograph that horrified Mexicans because of where it took place: the lawn outside a medical clinic where the woman had been denied help, and it struck a nerve in a country where inequity is still pervasive.

The government of the southern state of Oaxaca announced Wednesday that it has suspended the health center's director, Dr. Adrian Cruz, while officials conduct state and federal investigations into the Oct. 2 incident.

The mother, Irma Lopez, 29, told The Associated Press that she and her husband were turned away from the health center by a nurse who said she was only eight months pregnant and "still not ready" to deliver.

The nurse told her to go outside and walk, and said a doctor could check her in the morning, Lopez said. But an hour and a half later, her water broke, and Lopez gave birth to a son, her third child, while grabbing the wall of a house next to the clinic.

"I didn't want to deliver like this. It was so ugly and with so much pain," she said, adding she was alone for the birth because her husband was trying to persuade the nurse to call for help.

A Historic Selection

Obama Nominates Yellen For Fed Chairman

BY MARTIN CRUTSINGER AND JIM KUHNHENN
 Associated Press

WASHINGTON — In a history-making selection, President Barack Obama nominated Janet Yellen to be chairman of the Federal Reserve, a critical post as the nation continues its fitful economic recovery. If confirmed she would be the first woman to lead the powerful central bank.

Yellen, who currently holds the No. 2 spot at the Fed, would replace Ben Bernanke, whose eight-year tenure at the helm of the Fed ends Jan. 31.

Obama introduced Yellen as a "proven leader." "And she's tough, not just because she's from Brooklyn," he said. He credited her for being a consensus builder, adding: "She understands the human cost when people can't find a job."

Before selecting Yellen, Obama had considered nominating former Treasury Secretary Lawrence Summers, who had been a close



OLIVIER DOULIERY/ABACA PRESS/MCT
 President Barack Obama announces his intent to nominate Dr. Janet Yellen as Chair of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System during a press conference in the State Dining Room of the White House Wednesday in Washington, D.C.

Obama adviser during the first years of his presidency. But Summers withdrew in the face of opposition over his temperament and past support for bank deregulation.

Obama heaped praise on Bernanke for taking "bold action" at the height of the financial crisis in 2008 to "shore up our banks and get credit flowing again."

"Ben Bernanke is the epitome of calm, and against the volatility of global markets

he's been a voice of wisdom and a steady hand," Obama said.

The central bank reaches into the lives of millions of Americans. Its two main missions are fostering maximum employment and stabilizing prices. With its power to regulate the supply of money and set interest rates, it influences economic activity, hiring and inflation. It also is the leading regulator of banks and plays a crucial role as the country's lender

of last resort when banks can't get their money elsewhere.

In accepting the nomination, Yellen said more still needs to be done to strengthen the recovery. She said the past six years have been tumultuous for the economy and challenging for many Americans. She said that while the recovery is not complete, "we have made progress, the economy is stronger and the financial system is sounder."

U.S. Cutting Hundreds Of Millions In Aid To Egypt

BY DEB RIECHMANN
 Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The United States on Wednesday cut hundreds of millions of dollars in aid to its Mideast ally Egypt, responding to the military ouster last summer of the nation's first democratically elected president and the crackdown on protesters that has sunk the country into violent turmoil.

While the State Department did not provide a dollar amount of what was being withheld, most of it is linked to military aid. In all, the U.S. provides \$1.5 billion in aid each year to Egypt.

Officials said the aid being withheld included 10 Apache helicopters at a cost of more than \$500 million, M1A1 tank kits and Harpoon anti-ship missiles. The U.S. also is withholding \$260 million in cash assistance to the government until "credible progress" is made toward an inclusive government set up through free and fair elections. The U.S. had already suspended the delivery of four F-16 fighter jets and canceled biennial U.S.-Egyptian military exercises.

In Cairo, military spokesman Col. Ahmed Mohammed Ali declined immediate comment. Before the announcement, Gen. Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi, the Egyptian military leader, described his country's relations with the United States as "strategic" and founded on mutual interests. But he told the Cairo daily, Al-Masry al-Youm, in an interview published on Wednesday that Egypt would not tolerate pressure, "whether through actions or hints."

Neighboring Israel also has indicated concern. The Israelis consider the U.S. aid to Egypt to be important support for the peace agreement between Egypt and Israel.

The State Department stressed that the long-stand-

ing U.S. partnership with Egypt would continue and U.S. officials made it clear that the decisions are not permanent, adding that there is no intent by the Obama administration to end any specific programs. Still, the decision puts ties between the U.S. and Egypt at their rockiest point in more than three decades.

"The United States continues to support a democratic transition and oppose violence as a means of resolving differences within Egypt," State Department

spokeswoman Jen Psaki said. "We will continue to review the decisions regarding our assistance periodically and will continue to work with the interim government to help it move toward our shared goals in an atmosphere free of violence and intimidation."

The U.S. will continue to provide support for health and education and counterterrorism, spare military parts, military training and education, border security and security assistance in the Sinai Peninsula where

near-daily attacks against security forces and soldiers have increasingly resembled a full-fledged insurgency.

The U.S. officials providing the details did so only on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to comment by name.

Other details about what military assistance is being cut were not immediately known, and the State Department declined to give an indication of how severe the impact of the cuts in assistance might be in Egypt.

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