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Drone strikes and Pakistan; the White House on bioweapons; development in Playa Vista

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Down on drones

[Re "Drone plan opens new war front," Dec. 14](#)

Using our Predator drones to attack targets in a "sprawling city" of 850,000, The Times says, "risks rupturing Washington's relationship with Islamabad."

I'll tell you very clearly: It will guarantee a rupture between my government and myself and cost the president what little shred

of faith I still have in him.

The Times reports, in sterile, coldblooded terms, that our military has carried out 48 attacks by unmanned Predator and Reaper aircraft this year alone. Yet 10 is the number of supposedly high-level Taliban leaders you estimate we've killed.

Were the remaining targets empty buildings? Or have we already taken hundreds, perhaps thousands, of lives through our cowardly actions?

*Jon Williams
Goleta*

International law recognizes the use of aerial attacks only for hardened military targets. The use of the drones to kill people is extrajudicial execution, which is banned by international law.

*Michael Haas
Los Angeles*

Biological weapons hazards

[Re "Defenseless on bioweapons," Editorial, Dec. 12](#)

Characterizing the Obama administration's decision to not support international monitoring of the Biological Weapons Convention as "ducking the issue" manifests a serious misunderstanding of how to reduce biological weapons threats.

Bioweapons are as serious a danger as nuclear weapons. They can be made anywhere and moved

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everywhere, and could be used repeatedly to cause widespread terror and death. A contagious agent would spread to the United States from wherever it's released.

Last week, the administration set forth a detailed global strategy for countering biotreats that focuses on strengthening global public health, overseeing bioscience advances and strengthening law enforcement.

Many experts agree with the administration that installing a biological weapons monitoring system won't work. The techniques for controlling nuclear weapons do not apply to bioweapons. For crucial international security policies, one size does not fit all.

Biological weapons are a real threat that demands a set of realistically effective policies. After eight years of dithering in this arena, the United States is at long last advocating progress.

Barry Kellman
Wilmette, Ill.

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