

"Exposing the true costs of war"

The War Crimes Times

WarCrimesTimes.org

A publication of



Vol. VI No. 2

Spring 2014

Donations Welcome

Trained to obey, but not to think

The Menace of the Military Mind

by Chris Hedges

I had my first experience with the U.S. military when I was a young reporter covering the civil war in El Salvador. We journalists were briefed at the American Embassy each week by a U.S. Army colonel who at the time headed the military group of U.S. advisers to the Salvadoran army. The reality of the war, which lasted from 1979 to 1992, bore little resemblance to the description regurgitated each week for consumption by the press. But what was most evident was not the blatant misinformation—this particular colonel had apparently learned to dissemble to the public during his multiple tours in Vietnam—but the hatred of the press by this man and



Gunnery Sergeant Shawn D. Angell is a Platoon Sergeant at the Officer Candidate School aboard Marine Corps Base Quantico, Va., dedicated to training, educating, evaluating and screening the many candidates who go through the course and turning them into Marine leaders. (USMC photo)

most other senior officers in the U.S. military. When first told that he would have to meet the press once a week, the colonel reportedly protested against having to waste his time with those "limp-dicked communists."

(continued on page 4)

The misuse of American might, and the price it pays

by Andrew J. Bacevich

The U.S. military is like the highly skilled, gadget-toting contractor who promises to give your kitchen a nifty makeover in no time whatsoever. Here's the guy you can count on to get the job done. Just look at those references! Yet by the time he drives off months later, the kitchen's a shambles and you're

stuck with a bill several times larger than the initial estimate. Turns out the job was more complicated than it seemed. But what say we take a crack at remodeling the master bath?

That pretty much summarizes the American experience with war since the

(continued on page 6)

America's Secret War in 134 Countries

The Special Ops Surge

by Nick Turse

They operate in the green glow of night vision in Southwest Asia and stalk through the jungles of South America. They snatch men from their homes in the Maghreb and shoot it out with heavily armed militants in the Horn of Africa. They feel the salty spray while skimming over the tops of waves from the turquoise Caribbean to the deep blue Pacific. They conduct missions in the oppressive heat of Middle Eastern deserts and the deep freeze of Scandinavia. All over the planet, the Obama administration is waging a secret war whose full extent has never been fully revealed—until now.

Since September 11, 2001, U.S. Special Operations forces have grown in every conceivable way, from their numbers



Paratroopers with the Special Troops Battalion, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division, during a Joint Operation Access Exercise on Fort Bragg, N.C., 14 Feb 2011. (U.S. Army photo)

to their budget. Most telling, however, has been the exponential rise in special ops deployments globally. This presence—now, in nearly 70% of the world's nations—provides new evidence of the size and scope of a secret war being waged from Latin America to the backlands of Afghanistan, from training missions with African allies to information operations launched in cyberspace.

(continued on page 8)



Navy Seal securing his surrounding area.

In this issue:

For the United States of America, every problem is a military problem—the Ukraine is simply the latest example. By "absolving the people from meaningful involvement" (Bacevich, p.6) through elimination of the military draft, reliance on elite "special ops" forces (Turse, p.1), drones (pp.10-11), and a subservient press, the military mentality has won the ideological battle (Hedges, p.1). But would it make a difference to the American people if they knew that since World War II, our military-minded foreign policy was responsible for the equivalent of three to five Holocausts (Lucas, p.1) and other violations of international law (Rosal, p.12; Ford, p.18)? Would knowledge of blatant hypocrisy (Gamage, p.16) or budget tradeoffs (Gagnon, p.14) help restore sanity? We can only hope so and keep trying to inform the people of the true costs of war and militarism.

Next issue: The myths, deceptions, and lies that perpetuate our culture of war.

The following issue: The WWI Christmas Truce of 1914.

The American public probably is not aware

Deaths In Other Nations Since WW II Due To U.S. Interventions

by James A. Lucas

After the catastrophic attacks of September 11, 2001, monumental sorrow and a feeling of desperate and understandable anger began to permeate the American psyche. A few people at that time attempted to promote a balanced perspective by pointing out that the United States had also been responsible for causing those same feelings in people

in other nations, but they produced hardly a ripple. Although Americans understand in the abstract the wisdom of people around the world empathizing with the suffering of one another, such a reminder of wrongs committed by our nation got little hearing and was soon overshadowed by an accelerated "War on Terrorism."

(continued on page 5)

THE WALL

To Jerry Genesis

Descending into this declivity
dug into our nation's capitol
by the cloven hoof
of yet another one
of our country's tropical wars

slipping past the names of those
whose wounds refuse to heal
past the panel where my name
would have been
could have been
perhaps should have been

down to The Wall's greatest depth
where the beginning meets the end
I kneel

stare through my own reflection
beyond the names of those
who died so young

and know now that
The Wall has finally found me:
fifty-eight thousand
thousand-yard stares
have fixed on me
as if I were their Pole Star

as if I could guide
their mute testimony
back into the world

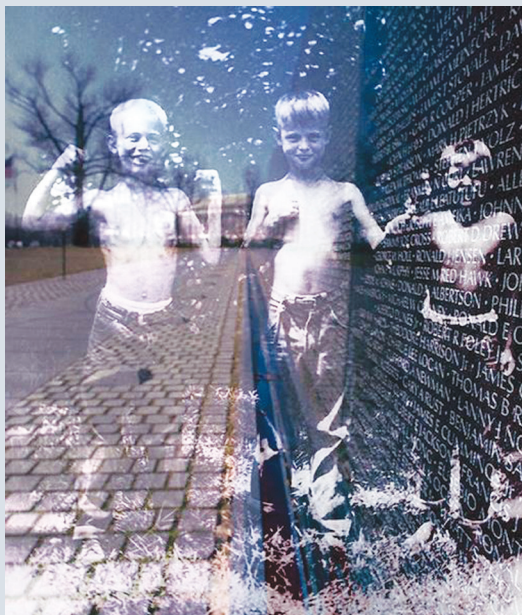
as if I could connect
all those dots
in the night sky

as if I could tell them

the reason why

—Doug Rawlings

Poet's note: Jerry is the "godfather" of Veterans For Peace. We went to DC in the mid eighties to protest the wars in Central America and took a side trip to The Wall. Jerry's brother's name is on The Wall. I wrote this poem on the bus ride back to Maine.



An overlay of images: three young boys superimposed on the Vietnam Memorial—better known as The Wall. (by Hank Miller)

Letters

more -->

Oldie but Goodie

Years ago I bought my grandparents home, and with it came a box of *Reader's Digests* from the Depression and World War II era. On page 48 of the December 1946 issue was an article titled "Peace Begins on Our Street," which I've included. I think it's worth sharing with others in the *War Crimes Times*, if the *Reader's Digest* would allow a reprinting.

Wes Davey
St. Paul, MN

The RD graciously granted permission to the WCT. See page 3.

—Ed.

Letter within a Letter

Locally we still see proud Vietnam vets who are proud of their sons' coming home from Iraq or Afghanistan wounded, minus legs, etc. It's one thing for a Cold War vet like me to be antiwar, but quite another for someone of Kurt Vonnegut's status to write what he did on behalf of his son. The letter is one of many in the book *Kurt Vonnegut Letters* edited by Dan Wakefield:

November 28, 1967

To Draft Board #1,
Selective Service,
Hyannis, Mass.

Gentlemen:

My son Mark Vonnegut is registered with you. He is now in the process of requesting classification as a conscientious objector. I thoroughly approve of what he is doing. It is in keeping with the way I have raised him. All his life he has learned hatred for killing from me.

I was a volunteer in the Second World War. I was an infantry scout, saw plenty of action, was finally captured and served about six months as a prisoner of war in Germany. I have a Purple Heart. I was honorably discharged. I am entitled, it seems to me, to pass on to my son my opinion of killing. I don't even hunt or fish any more. I have some guns which I inherited, but they are covered with rust.

This attitude toward killing is a matter between my God and me. I do not participate much in organized religion. I have read the Bible a lot. I preach, after a fashion. I write books which express my disgust for people who find it easy and reasonable to kill.

We say grace at meals, taking turns. Every member of my family has been called upon often to thank

God for blessings which have been ours. What Mark is doing now is in the service of God, Whose Son was exceedingly un-warlike.

There isn't a grain of cowardice in this. Mark is a strong, courageous young man. What he is doing requires more guts than I ever had—and more decency.

My family has been in this country for five generations now. My ancestors came here to escape the militaristic madness and tyranny of Europe, and to gain the freedom to answer the dictates of their own consciences. They and their descendants have been good citizens and proud to be Americans. Mark is proud to be an American, and, in his father's opinion, he is being an absolutely first-rate citizen now.

He will not hate.

He will not kill.

There's no hope in that. There's no hope in war.

Yours truly,

Kurt Vonnegut, Jr.

I just thought this letter might be an antidote to the local Vietnam and Iraq vets who still take "pride" (the sin of Lucifer) in their "service" and "heroism" in fighting our illegal wars.

Bernard Berg
Easton, PA

Friendly Thank You

Thank you so much for the spread on Quaker House in the *War Crime Times*. We appreciate it so much—the more we can get the word out that we're here, the more we can help our service members. We've had some pretty sad cases come to us lately, it's just a tragedy how some of these folks are being treated.

Lynn and Steve Newsom
Quaker House
Fayetteville, NC

Another Letter within a Letter

This is number 108 in the series "Great and near-great unpublished letters to the *New York Times*." When the *War Crimes Times* prints these letters, I feel that they reach an audience that understands.

Letter to the Editor
The New York Times
Feb. 6, 2014

As President Obama reviews his Afghanistan policy he should consider the wisdom of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. ("Old Tensions Resurface...", article, Feb. 5, page A6). In his 1967 Riverside Church speech, Dr. King said we must shift from a thing-oriented society to a person-oriented society. Afghanistan is thought of as a thing, an American problem to be solved, instead of a place where almost 30 million human beings live.

The Afghan people have suffered through 35 years of war. The Pakistani military used this war to gain some measure of control over Afghanistan. Our government silently agreed to this, but whatever Pakistan gains through this bargain, the Afghans lose.

The basic needs of millions of Afghans take a back seat to the needs of our politicians and generals to salvage their reputations. Afghans need food, clothing, shelter, and peace. By helping them we will help ourselves to salvage our national reputation and our soul.

How to explain that "War Is a Lie" in 150 words or less, and still the *New York Times* feels that it's not "Fit to Print"?

Bill Distler
Bellingham, WA

WCT has higher standards than the NYT. We print truths that, apparently, they consider unfit for print.

—Ed.

The *War Crimes Times* is published and distributed quarterly by volunteer members of Veterans For Peace in North Carolina, Florida, and California and is funded entirely by donations from readers and from organizations that distribution the paper locally.

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We welcome submissions (guidelines at WarCrimesTimes.org) of original articles, poetry, artwork, cartoons, and letters at editor@WarCrimesTimes.org or **War Crimes Times, PO Box 10664, Greensboro, NC 27404.**

Please note that our contributors' viewpoints may not always be entirely consistent with those of the *War Crimes Times*, but their topics address our concerns.

Editor-in-chief: Kim Carlyle. Graphics editor: Mark Runge. Editorial team: Susan Carlyle, Lyle Petersen, and Robert Yoder. Distribution team from VFP Chapter 099 includes Chris Berg, Ed Brown, Jim Brown, Claire Hanrahan, Ronald Harayda, Susan Oehler, Bruce Roth, Charlie St.Clair, Coleman Smith, and Gerry Werhan.

An Exceptional Teacher

As a result of my over 14 years as a substitute teacher in every subject in every grade in the over 20 schools on the eastern side of the Big Island (Hawaii), I was heartened to read the account of American Exceptionalism by William Blum in your Winter 2014 issue. I have written a few thousand pages on my teaching experiences, and years ago concluded that the Dept. of “Education’s” primary purpose is to serve the agenda of our government.

Not encouraging critical thinking greatly retards real education in this country. Teaching that this country is the best in the world results in accepting our ever-increasing loss of freedoms. In all grades in all schools, the pledge of allegiance precedes all classes at the start of the day and in many classrooms it is broadcast over loudspeakers. By the time elementary school children understand the words they are saying, they are ready to accept any reason for war.

I worked as an electrical engineer in Central America’s largest cannery when I lived in Nicaragua during the war with this country—a war in which the U.S. murdered over 60,000 children, women, and men—many tortured to death.

Shortly after this country again took control of Nicaragua, I returned to Hawaii, where I found work as a substitute teacher. Having experienced war reality in Nicaragua, I was appalled to see the military promote war on campus by bringing in heavy equipment like tanks and helicopters where students in all grades could enjoy pretending to kill each other, staff, and teachers.

If I told students that this country had murdered some of my relatives who were just going to vote, they would laughingly reply, “Well, they must have been bad people.” If I tried to show them information on a classroom computer from the School of Americas Watch (SOAW), an American flag would appear with the words saying this was a forbidden web site as it was put out by a terrorist organization. Virtually no teacher or school administrator has objected to the fact that, under the “No Child Left Behind Act,” all data on students in grades 6-12 is given to the military for recruitment purposes.

Finally, after 14 years of substitute teaching, I was banned from all schools in June 2006. However, I was amazed that I had had a very positive effect on some students. For instance in one school,

some students contributed money for Nicaragua and, at the same school, graduating students hid black arm bands under their sleeves to protest the wars. On stage to receive their diplomas, they then showed them in unison in spite of the principal having said she would not let them graduate if they did this. She then said she was proud of them for standing up for their rights.

Paul Patnode
Volcano, Hawaii

War and Christianity

I read my first issue of *WCT*; the focus of the issue was American Exceptionalism, a topic of great interest to me. I was, however, saddened by Brian Willson’s reference (in “American Exceptionalism—The Rhetoric and the Reality”) to Christianity as an intolerant religion on page 15 and Mike Hastie’s references (in “The God Willing Will To Resist”) to “the Zionist God” and “good Christian men” on page 13. It is only because of Christ that I am a pacifist and a member of Veterans For Peace.

Scott Smith
Greensboro, NC

Brian Willson responds: Indeed, Christianity, as with other organized religions, reveals a long record of explicit intolerance for other human beings who claim other belief systems, or who claim no particular belief systems. This is the pattern of self-righteousness that has been the basis for many historical wars, including the CRUSADES a thousand years ago. This is hardly a controversial position. Christ’s teachings, as opposed to the dogma of the organized church called Christianity, are two different matters altogether. The record of our Eurocentric ancestors as they purged Native Americans is an unspeakable savagery, often justified by claiming the Indians were “heathens.”

Mike Hastie responds: I truly believe that the greatest downfall of Christianity as a religion, is the belief that only Christians are going to heaven. Of course, not all Christians believe this, but the vast majority do. And, the outcome of this deep-seated belief is that it becomes a political statement. It is much easier to kill people who don’t believe what you do, especially concerning one’s concept of God. This insanity is so deep-rooted in the American culture, and that’s why 5% of the world’s population controls 30% of the world’s wealth.



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Lynn and Steve Newsom, Directors

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I am always glad to hear of a soldier becoming a Christian; I am always sorry to hear of a Christian becoming a soldier. If there be anything clear in the Scriptures, it does seem to me that it is for a Christian to have nothing to do with carnal weapons. May the day come when war shall be regarded as the most atrocious of all crimes, and when for a Christian man either directly or indirectly to take part in it shall be considered as an abjuration of his principle.

—Charles Haddon Spurgeon

Peace Begins on Our Street

For many years Miss Ann Grace Sawyer of Elgin Avenue in Forest Park, Ill., had watched small boys play cops and robbers and later Japs and Commandos on her street. She saw one generation of boys grow up and go off to war. For them, “Bang, you’re dead,” turned into reality.

Then one day when a small overalled figure streaked through her garden aiming his ack-ack gun at pursuers, this frail, 68-year-old lady called him to her. As all the boys gathered around, she talked to them of war, of guns, of the senseless shedding of men’s blood. She spoke glowingly of peace and great adventures it offers. She talked them into leaving their guns in heaps and helping themselves instead to baseball bats, footballs, croquet sets, and games which she had provided.

Next day a formal petition was drawn up and signed by Miss Sawyer and the boys. It read, “Peace begins on our street. Our world would be better without guns and with more fairness and kindness. Elgin Avenue Boys’ Peace Club.” The little ceremony was concluded with a bonfire – the burning of all discarded ammunition.

Miss Sawyer looked proudly at her little band of ex-Commandos. “Peace begins on our street,” she murmured.

—Reader’s Digest, December 1946



The Menace of the Military Mind



(continued from page 1)

Image by Stuart McMillen via supernormalstimuli.com

For the next 20 years I would go on from war zone to war zone as a foreign correspondent immersed in military culture. Repetitive rote learning and an insistence on blind obedience—similar to the approach used to train a dog—work on the battlefield. The military exerts nearly total control over the lives of its members. Its long-established hierarchy ensures that those who embrace the approved modes of behavior rise and those who do not

the way of one's career. The military is the worst in this respect. In the military, whether at the Parris Island boot camp or West Point, you are trained not to think but to obey. What amazes me about the military is how stupid and bovine its senior officers are. Those with brains and the willingness to use them seem to be pushed out long before they can rise to the senior-officer ranks. The many Army generals I met over the years not only

In the military, whether at the Parris Island boot camp or West Point, you are trained not to think but to obey. What amazes me about the military is how stupid and bovine its senior officers are. Those with brains and the willingness to use them seem to be pushed out long before they can rise to the senior-officer ranks.

are belittled, insulted, and hazed. Many of the marks of civilian life are stripped away. Personal modes of dress, hairstyle, speech, and behavior are heavily regulated. Individuality is physically and then psychologically crushed. Aggressiveness is rewarded. Compassion is demeaned. Violence is the favorite form of communication. These qualities are an asset in war; they are a disaster in civil society.

Homer in *The Iliad* showed his understanding of war. His heroes are not pleasant men. They are vain, imperial, filled with rage, and violent. And Homer's central character in *The Odyssey*, Odysseus, in his journey home from war must learn to shed his "hero's heart," to strip from himself the military attributes that served him in war but threaten to doom him off the battlefield. The qualities that serve us in war defeat us in peace.

Most institutions have a propensity to promote mediocrities, those whose primary strengths are knowing where power lies, being subservient and obsequious to the centers of power, and never letting morality get in

lacked the most rudimentary creativity and independence of thought, but nearly always saw the press, as well as an informed public, as impinging on their love of order, regimentation, unwavering obedience to authority, and single-minded use of force to solve complex problems.

So when I heard James R. Clapper Jr., a retired Air Force lieutenant general and currently the federal government's director of national intelligence, denounce Edward Snowden and his "accomplices"—meaning journalists such as Glenn Greenwald and Laura Poitras—before the Senate Intelligence Committee on January 29 I was not surprised. Clapper charged, without offering any evidence, that the Snowden disclosures had caused "profound damage" and endangered American lives. And all who have aided Snowden are, it appears, guilty of treason in Clapper's eyes.

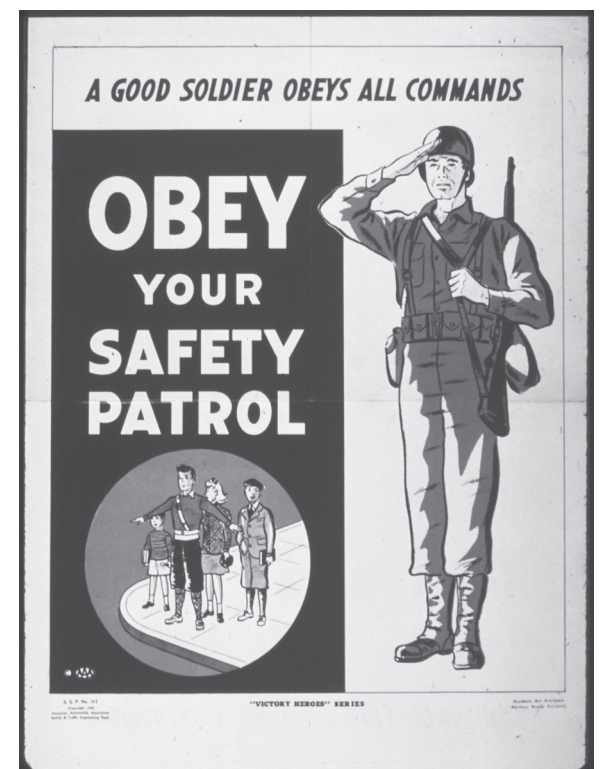
Clapper and many others who have come out of the military discern no difference between terrorists and reporters, and by reporters I am not referring to the boot-licking courtiers on television and in Washington who

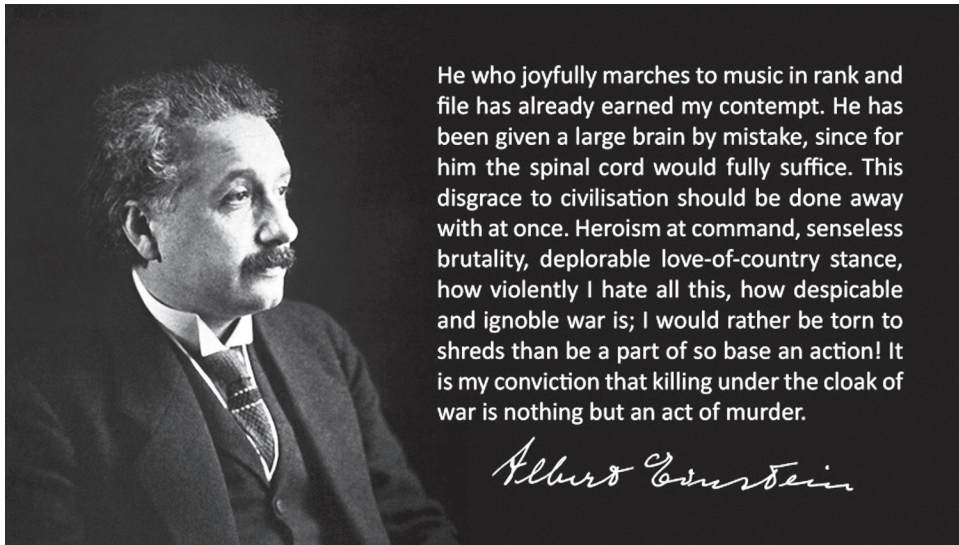
masquerade as reporters. Carry out an interview with a member of al-Qaida, as I have, and you become, in the eyes of generals like Clapper, a member of al-Qaida. Most generals I know recognize no need for an independent press. The munchkins who dutifully sit through their press briefings or follow them around in preapproved press pools and publish their lies are the generals' idea of journalism.

When I was in Central America, the U.S. officers who were providing support to the military of El Salvador or Guatemala, along with help to the Contra forces then fighting the Sandinista government in Nicaragua, did not distinguish between us journalists and the rebel forces or the leftist Sandinista government. We were one and the same. The reporters and photographers, often after a day or two of hiking to reach small villages, would report on massacres by the Salvadoran army, the Guatemalan army, or the Contras. When the stories appeared, the U.S. officers usually would go volcanic. But their rage would be directed not at those who pulled the triggers but at those who wrote about the mass killings or photographed the bodies.

This is why, after Barack Obama signed into law Section 1021 of the National Defense Authorization Act, which permits the U.S. military to seize U.S. citizens who "substantially support" al-Qaida, the Taliban, or "associated forces," to strip them of due process and to hold them indefinitely in military detention centers, I sued the president. I and my fellow plaintiffs won in U.S. District Court. When Obama appealed the ruling it was overturned. We are now trying to go to the Supreme Court. Section 1021 is a chilling reminder of what people like Clapper could do to destroy constitutional rights. They see no useful role for a free press, one that questions and challenges power, and are deeply hostile to its existence. I expect Clapper, if he has a free hand, to lock us up, just as the Egyptian military has arrested a number of Al-Jazeera journalists, including some Westerners, on terrorism-related charges. The military mind is amazingly uniform.

The U.S. military has won the ideological war. The nation sees human and social problems as military problems. To fight terrorists, Americans have become terrorists. Peace is for the weak. War is for the strong. Hyper-masculinity has triumphed over empathy. We Americans speak to the world exclusively in the language of force. And those who oversee our massive security and





He who joyfully marches to music in rank and file has already earned my contempt. He has been given a large brain by mistake, since for him the spinal cord would fully suffice. This disgrace to civilisation should be done away with at once. Heroism at command, senseless brutality, deplorable love-of-country stance, how violently I hate all this, how despicable and ignoble war is; I would rather be torn to shreds than be a part of so base an action! It is my conviction that killing under the cloak of war is nothing but an act of murder.

Albert Einstein

surveillance state seek to speak to us in the same demented language. All other viewpoints are to be shut out. “In the absence of contrasting views, the very highest form of propaganda warfare can be fought: the propaganda for a definition of reality within which only certain limited viewpoints are possible,” C. Wright Mills wrote. “What is being promulgated and reinforced is the military metaphysics—the cast of mind that defines international reality as basically military.”

This is why people like James Clapper and the bloated military and security and surveillance apparatus must not have unchecked power to conduct wholesale surveillance, to carry out extraordinary renditions, and to imprison Americans indefinitely as terrorists. This is why the nation, as our political system remains mired in paralysis, must stop glorifying military values. In times of turmoil the military always seems to be a good alternative. It presents the façade of order. But order in the military, as the people of Egypt are now learning again, is akin to slavery. It is the order of a prison. And that is where Clapper and his fellow generals and intelligence chiefs would like to place any citizen who dares to question their unimpeded right to turn us all into mindless recruits. They have the power to make their demented dreams a reality. And it is our task to take this power from them.

Chris Hedges is an award-winning journalist, activist, and author of a dozen books. As a foreign correspondent, he has covered wars and reported from more than 50 countries. His latest book is Days of Destruction, Days of Revolt.

A Good Soldier

Young man, the lowest aim in your life is to be a good soldier. The good soldier never tries to distinguish right from wrong. He never thinks; never reasons; he only obeys. If he is ordered to fire on his fellow citizens, on his friends, on his neighbors, on his relatives, he obeys without hesitation. If he is ordered to fire down a crowded street when the poor are clamoring for bread, he obeys, and sees the gray hairs of age stained with red and the life-tide gushing from the breasts of women, feeling neither remorse nor sympathy. If he is ordered off as one of a firing squad to execute a hero or benefactor, he fires without hesitation, though he knows the bullet will pierce the noblest heart that ever beat in human breast.

A good soldier is a blind, heartless, soulless, murderous machine. He is not a man. He is not even a brute, for brutes only kill in self-defense. All that is human in him, all that is divine in him, all that constitutes the man, has been sworn away when he took the enlistment oath. His mind, conscience, aye, his very soul, are in the keeping of his officer.

No man can fall lower than a soldier—it is a depth beneath which we cannot go.

A Good Soldier has been attributed to Jack London. Some historians claim he denied writing it. But does it matter? Isn't it the thought that counts?

Deaths in Other Nations

(continued from page 1)

But we must continue our efforts to develop understanding and compassion in the world. Hopefully, this article will assist in doing that by addressing the question “How many September 11ths has the United States caused in other nations since WWII?” This report contains estimated numbers of such deaths in 37 nations as well as brief explanations of why the U.S. is considered culpable.

The causes of wars are complex. In some instances, nations other than the U.S. may have been responsible for more deaths, but if the involvement of our nation appeared to have been a necessary cause of a war or conflict, it was considered responsible for the deaths in it.

In other words, they probably would not have taken place if the U.S. had not used the heavy hand of its power. The military and economic power of the United States was crucial.

This study reveals that U.S. military forces were directly responsible for about

10 to 15 million deaths during the Korean and Vietnam Wars and the two Iraq Wars. The Korean War also includes Chinese deaths while the Vietnam War also includes fatalities in Cambodia and Laos.

The American public probably is not aware of these numbers and knows even less about the proxy wars for which the United States is also responsible. In the latter wars there were between nine and 14 million deaths in Afghanistan, Angola, Democratic Republic of the Congo, East Timor, Guatemala, Indonesia, Pakistan, and Sudan.

But the victims are not just from big nations or one part of the world. The remaining deaths were in smaller ones which constitute over half the total number of nations. Virtually all parts of the world have been the target of U.S. intervention.

The overall conclusion is that the United States most likely has been responsible, since WWII, for the deaths of between 20 and 30 million people in wars and conflicts scattered over the world.

To the families and friends of the victims it makes little difference whether the causes were U.S. military action, proxy military forces, the provision of U.S. military supplies or advisors, or other ways, such as economic pressures applied by our nation. They had to make decisions about other things such as finding lost loved ones, whether to become refugees, and how to survive.

And the pain and anger is spread even further. Some authorities estimate that there are as many as 10 wounded for each person who dies in wars. Their

visible, continued suffering is a continuing reminder to their fellow countrymen.

It is essential that Americans learn more about this topic so that they can begin to understand the pain that others feel. Someone once observed that the Germans during WWII “chose not to know.” We cannot allow history to say this about our country. The question posed above was “How many September 11ths has the United States caused in other nations since WWII?” The answer is: possibly 10,000.

Comments on Gathering These Numbers

Generally speaking, the (much smaller) number of Americans who have died is not included in this study, not because they are not important, but because this report focuses on the impact of U.S. actions on its adversaries.

The overall conclusion is that the United States most likely has been responsible since WWII for the deaths of between 20 and 30 million people in wars and conflicts scattered over the world.

An accurate count of the number of deaths is not easy to achieve, and this collection of data was undertaken with full realization of this fact. These estimates will probably be revised later either upward or downward by the reader and the author. But undoubtedly the total will remain in the millions.

The difficulty of gathering reliable information is shown by two estimates in this context. For several years I heard that three million Cambodians had been killed under the rule of the Khmer Rouge. However, in recent years the figure I heard was one million. Another example is that the number of persons estimated to have died in Iraq due to sanctions after the first U.S. Iraq War was over 1 million, but in more recent years, based on a more recent study, a lower estimate of around a half a million has emerged.

Often information about wars is revealed only much later when someone decides to speak out, when more secret information is revealed due to persistent efforts of a few, or after special congressional committees make reports.

Both victorious and defeated nations may have their own reasons for underreporting the number of deaths. Further, in recent wars involving the United States, it was not uncommon to hear statements like “we do not do body counts” and references to “collateral damage” as a euphemism for dead and wounded. Life is cheap for some, especially those who manipulate people on the battlefield as if it were a chessboard.

To say that it is difficult to get exact figures is not to say that we should not try.

(continued on page 7)

The misuse of American might, and the price it pays

(continued from page 1)

end of the Cold War. By common consent, when it comes to skills and gadgets, U.S. forces are in a league of their own. Yet when it comes to finishing the job on schedule and on budget, their performance has been woeful.

Indeed, these days the United States absolves itself of any responsibility to finish wars that it starts. When we've had enough, we simply leave, pretending that when U.S. forces exit the scene, the conflict is officially over. In 2011, when the last American troops crossed from Iraq into Kuwait, President Obama proudly de-

A pronounced infatuation with armed might has led senior civilian officials, regardless of party, and senior military leaders, regardless of service, to misunderstand and misapply the military instrument.

clared that he had made good on his campaign promise to end the Iraq war. Sometime late this year, when the U.S. terminates its combat role in Afghanistan, he will waste no time consigning that war to the past as well.

Yet the Iraq war did not end when the United States withdrew. Even with Washington striving mightily to ignore the fact, the violent ethno-sectarian struggle for Iraq triggered by the 2003 U.S.-led invasion continues. In recent days, events such as Al Qaeda's ferocious welcome-to-the-new-year assault on the cities of Fallujah and Ramadi—roughly the equivalent of a Confederate army laying siege to Gettysburg sometime during the presidency of Ulysses S. Grant—have made it impossible to pretend otherwise.

Events in Afghanistan are likely to follow a similar trajectory. No serious person thinks that the war there—launched even earlier, back in 2001—will end just

because U.S. troops are finally packing up to go home. No doubt the American public will forget Afghanistan as quickly as it forgot Iraq. Yet as with Iraq war, the struggle to determine Afghanistan's fate will continue, its duration and outcome no less uncertain.

The truth is something few people in the national security establishment are willing to confront: Confusing capability with utility, the United States knows how to start wars but has seemingly forgotten how to conclude them. Yet concluding war on favorable terms—a concept formerly known as victory—is the object of the exercise. For the United States, victory has become a lost art. This unhappy verdict applies whether U.S. forces operate conventionally (employing high-tech “shock and awe” tactics) or unconventionally (“winning hearts and minds”).

As a consequence, instead of promoting stability—perhaps the paramount U.S. interest not only in the Islamic world but also globally—Washington's penchant for armed intervention since the end of the Cold War, and especially since 9/11, has tended to encourage just the opposite. In effect, despite spilling much blood and expending vast amounts of treasure, U.S. military exertions have played into the hands of our adversaries, misleadingly lumped together under the rubric of “terrorists.”

How can we explain this yawning gap between intention and outcomes? Fundamentally, a pronounced infatuation with armed might has led senior civilian officials, regardless of party, and senior military leaders, regardless of service, to misunderstand and misapply the military instrument. Force is good for some things, preeminently for defending what is already yours. Not content to defend, however, the United States in recent decades has sought to use force to extend its influence, control and values.

In a world divided between haves and have-nots, between postmodern and pre-modern, and between those for whom God is dead and those for whom God remains



Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Martin Dempsey, speaks with Senator Thad Cochran, April 10, 2013, at the Pentagon. (DoD photo)

omnipresent, expecting coercion to produce reconciliation, acceptance, or submission represents the height of folly. So force employed by the United States in far-away places serves mostly to inflame further resistance, a statement that is true whether we're talking about putting “boots on the ground” or raining down Hellfire missiles from the heavens.

What then is to be done? That which Washington is least capable of undertaking: Those charged with formulating policy must think anew. For starters, that means lowering expectations regarding the political effectiveness of war, which is demonstrably limited.

Take force off the metaphorical table to which policymakers regularly refer. Rather than categorizing violence as a preferred option, revive the tradition of treating it as a last resort. Then get serious about evaluating the potential for employing alternative forms of power, chiefly economic and cultural, to advance American interests. The result won't be a panacea. But it won't cost as much as open-ended war. And rather than creating new problems, this alternative approach just might solve some old ones.

Andrew J. Bacevich is a professor of history and international relations at Boston University. This article is reprinted with permission.

Review by Thomas G. Palaima, The University of Texas

Breach of Trust: How Americans Failed Their Soldiers and Their Country

by Andrew J. Bacevich

New York: Metropolitan Books, 2013. Pp. 238. ISBN 978-0-8050-8296-8.

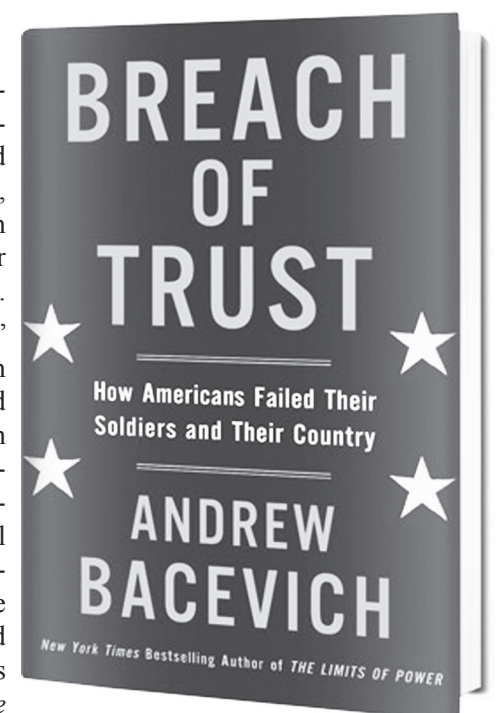
The approach this nation has taken to waging war since Vietnam (absolving the people from meaningful involvement), along with the way it organizes its army (relying on professionals), has altered the relationship between the military and society in ways that too few Americans seem willing to acknowledge. Since 9/11, that relationship has been heavy on symbolism and light on substance, with assurances of admiration for soldiers displacing serious consideration of what they are sent to do or what consequences ensue. (14)

In *Breach of Trust*, Andrew Bacevich (Boston Univ.)¹ asks how and why the current American military system came to be, “who benefits and who suffers

as a consequence” (14), and what should be done about it. He contrasts how the United States has “gone to war” in Vietnam, Iraq, and Afghanistan with the country's responses to calls to war in 1861, 1917, and 1941 (98), and suggests what features of America's past war-making should never have been abandoned and need to be revived. He is especially concerned with the packaging of and commentary on more recent wars² by public intellectuals, politicians, media pundits, and military leaders, including officers who have retired into lucrative positions as consultants (effectively lobbyists) for military contractors.³ He defines the standards to which he holds such influential men and women in a democracy in an opening epigraph taken from Edward

Gibbon's *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*: “In the purer ages of the commonwealth, the use of arms was reserved for ... citizens who had a country to love, a property to defend, and some share in enacting those laws which it was in their interest, as well as duty, to maintain” (ix).

Bacevich believes the United States' wars over the last twenty years have been inspired neither by patriotism nor the need to protect property and loved ones from enemy threats. In the same period, Americans have shown no great desire to preserve their civic freedoms by meaningful involvement in the processes of government. John and Jane Q. Public live as the policies of their leaders have encouraged them to: committed to what Bacevich calls the three no's: “we will not change ... we



will not pay ... we will not bleed" (190–91). The reason is that, in former general Stanley McChrystal's phrase, they have no "skin in the game" (122). They lack the sense of either compelling self-interest or devotion to the common good of society (115–96) that might inspire "shared sacrifice" (19) in time of war. Bacevich identifies a missing moral sensibility: Americans simply do not see the wars their country wages as *their* wars.

Since World War II, the author argues, American military actions have not been "people's wars" (17–27). Sadly missing has been the moral imperative summed up in 1944 by then Undersecretary of War Robert Patterson, himself a veteran of World War I: "In a democracy, all citizens have equal rights and equal obligations. When the nation is in peril, the obligation of saving it should be shared by all, not foisted on a small percentage" (19). Up through World War II, the United States



Richard Nixon saw ending the draft as an effective political means to undermine the anti-Vietnam war movement.

was well served by two kinds of soldiers: armed citizen-soldiers like the "embattled farmers" who won the war for national independence and long-service regulars who "between big wars fought small ones while enforcing America's writ throughout an ever expanding imperium." These regulars invaded Mexico, seized California, tamed the American West, "put paid to Spain's crumbling empire" in Cuba and in the Philippines, and "helped suppress the Boxer Rebellion" (48–49).

The definitive turning point, Bacevich writes, was "Dick's trick," a characteristically Nixonian political maneuver during the social and political unrest of the late 1960s, when "questions regarding the army's nature and purpose along with the ordinary soldier's relationship to American society had acquired unusual urgency" (56). While campaigning for the presidency in 1968, Nixon opposed the draft and stressed that the arbitrary nature of the lottery system then being used to provide troops for the Vietnam War could not "be squared with our whole concept of liberty, justice and equality under law" (56). Once Nixon was elected, the so-called Gates

Commission report (204n21) gave him the political cover to end the draft in December 1972.

Joseph Califano, a former special assistant to President Lyndon Johnson, warned that "by removing the middle class from even the threat of conscription, we remove perhaps the greatest inhibition on a President's decision to wage war" (57–58). (Note the assumption that the president, not Congress, decides whether the United States goes to war.) General William Westmoreland likewise insisted that "deeply embedded in the American ethos is the idea that every citizen is a soldier." But, as Bacevich sees it, "Vietnam had destroyed whatever remained of that ethos along with whatever credibility the general had once possessed" (57–58). Senior officers at the time traced the indiscipline and reduced fighting effectiveness caused by, in historian Robert Griffith's words, "imports from society" like drug and alcohol abuse, as well as divisiveness and dissent among soldiers, to draftees and "unwilling draft-motivated volunteers" (58).

In the two decades between the Gates Commission report (1970) and Operation Desert Storm (1991), the U.S. military establishment transformed "the last vestiges of 'Elvis's army'—the draftee force that had deployed to Southeast Asia" into a professional army that would have pleased the late General Creighton Abrams, that is, one controlled by its own high-ranking officers, who were determined to avoid "long, drawn-out, inconclusive conflicts" in

"By removing the middle class from even the threat of conscription, we remove perhaps the greatest inhibition on a President's decision to wage war"

"some Third World Country" (82), and to fight the kinds of war they had been trained for (82).

The perceived ongoing threat posed by the USSR and the Warsaw Pact countries enabled the Pentagon to convince Congress and the American people of the need to maintain military appropriations, force levels, and preparedness at high levels (82–83). With the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War, Army leaders, under chief of staff General Gordon R. Sullivan (1991–95), lobbied to take "the best army in the world and make it the best army in a different world" (85).

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Deaths in Other Nations

(continued from page 5)

Effort was needed to arrive at the figures of six million Jews killed during WWII, but that number is now widely acknowledged and it has fueled the determination to prevent future holocausts. That struggle continues.

37 Victim Nations

[Editor's note: These numbers were compiled in 2007. Since then, the U.S. has added to its total through attacks on other nations including Libya, Yemen, and Somalia; with its drone program; with the residual political instability from past actions in Afghanistan and Iraq; and likely from secret special operations—see Nick Turse's page 1 story.]

Afghanistan. The U.S. is responsible for between 1 and 1.8 million deaths during the war between the Soviet Union and Afghanistan, by luring the Soviet Union into invading that nation. In 1998, in an interview with the Parisian publication *Le Nouvel Observateur*, Zbigniew Brzezinski, adviser to President Carter, admitted that he had been responsible for instigating aid to the Mujahadeen in Afghanistan which caused the Soviets to invade. In his own words:

According to the official version of history, CIA aid to the Mujahadeen began during 1980, that is to say, after the Soviet army invaded Afghanistan on 24 December 1979. But the reality, secretly guarded until now, is completely otherwise. Indeed, it was July 3, 1979 that President Carter signed the first directive for secret aid to the opponents of the pro-Soviet regime in Kabul. And that very day, I wrote a note to the President in which I explained to him that in my opinion this aid was going to induce a Soviet military intervention.

Brzezinski justified laying this trap, since he said it gave the Soviet Union its Vietnam and caused the breakup of the Soviet Union. "Regret what?" he said. "That secret operation was an excellent idea. It had the effect of drawing the Russians into the Afghan trap and you want me to regret it?"

The CIA spent 5 to 6 billion dollars on its operation in Afghanistan in order to bleed the Soviet Union. When that 10-year war ended, over a million people were dead.

The U.S. has been responsible directly for about 12,000 deaths in Afghanistan, many of which resulted from bombing in retaliation for the attacks on U.S. property on September 11, 2001. Subsequently U.S. troops invaded that country.

Angola. In 1977, an Angolan government was recognized by the UN, although the U.S. was one of the few nations that opposed this action. In 1986, Uncle Sam approved material assistance to UNITA, a group that was trying to overthrow the government. Even today this struggle,

which has involved many nations at times, continues. U.S. intervention was justified to the U.S. public as a reaction to the intervention of 50,000 Cuban troops in Angola. However, according to Johns Hopkins University history professor Piero Gleijeses, the reverse was true. The Cuban intervention came as a result of a CIA-financed covert invasion via neighboring Zaire and a drive on the Angolan capital by the U.S. ally, South Africa. Estimates of deaths range from 300,000 to 750,000.

Argentina. See South America: Operation Condor.

Bangladesh. See Pakistan.

Bolivia. Hugo Banzer was the leader of a repressive regime in Bolivia in the 1970s. The U.S. had been disturbed when a previous leader nationalized the tin mines and distributed land to Indian peasants. Later that action to benefit the poor was reversed. Banzer, who was trained at the U.S.-operated School of the Americas in Panama and later at Fort Hood, Texas, came back from exile frequently to confer with U.S. Air Force Major Robert Lundin. In 1971, he staged a successful coup with the help of the U.S. Air Force radio system. A few years later, the Catholic Church denounced an army massacre of striking tin workers. Banzer, assisted by information provided by the CIA, was able to target and locate leftist priests and nuns. He has been accused of being responsible for 400 deaths during his tenure. (Also see South America: Operation Condor.)

Brazil. See South America: Operation Condor

Cambodia. U.S. bombing of Cambodia had already been underway for several years in secret under the Johnson and Nixon administrations, but when President Nixon openly began bombing in preparation for a land assault on Cambodia, it caused major protests in the U.S. against the Vietnam War. Immense damage was done to the villages and cities of Cambodia, causing refugees and internal displacement of the population. This unstable situation enabled the Khmer Rouge, led by Pol Pot, to assume power. Over the years we have repeatedly heard about the Khmer Rouge's role in the deaths of millions in Cambodia without any acknowledgement being made that this mass killing was made possible by the U.S. bombing which destabilized the nation by death, injuries, hunger, and dislocation of its people. The U.S. bears responsibility not only for the deaths from the bombings, but also for those resulting from the activities of the Khmer Rouge—a total of about 2.5 million people. (Also see Vietnam.)

Chad. An estimated 40,000 people in Chad were killed and as many as 200,000 tortured by a government, headed by Hissen Habre who was brought to power in June 1982 with the help of CIA money and arms. He remained in power for eight

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Left: Fireworks in Florida. Pyrotechnic display over Cinderella Castle at closing hour. Disneyworld, Orlando, 2010 (Jorge Royan photo); Above: Fireworks in Fallujah. Iraq, 2004. An air strike takes out an identified insurgent stronghold during Operation Al Fajr (New Dawn). (USMC photo)

Breach of Trust

(continued from page 7)

In Sullivan's words, this new best army would participate in a global strategic mandate as the United States' "principal instrument for the projection of carefully modulated military force.... [C]apable of decisive victory, [it would meet] national objectives quickly and with minimal expenditure of national wealth and resources" (89, 210nn25–26, 28–29).

Just as Josef Goebbels proved how well the big lie could work, General Sullivan's goals for the U.S. Army demonstrated that "As for aspirations, bigger is always better" (92). The new model army required no national

The new model army required no national mobilization, no sacrifices of loved ones, no changes of life pursuits, not even a second thought. So it was that, shortly after 9/11, President George W. Bush could urge his countrymen to "enjoy America's great destination spots. Get down to Disney World in Florida. Take your families and enjoy life, the way we want it to be enjoyed."

mobilization, no sacrifices of loved ones, no changes of life pursuits, not even (I will add) a second thought. Such was the fairy tale spun by army officers and political leaders and readily believed by those few Americans who were even paying attention.

So it was that, shortly after 9/11, President George W. Bush could urge his countrymen to "enjoy America's great destination spots. Get down to Disney World in Florida. Take your families and enjoy life, the way we want it to be enjoyed" (30). As Bacevich laments, this was a far cry from the national mobilization of citizens and soldiers in World War II or John F. Kennedy's "stern inaugural charge" ("ask not ...") in 1961, when the Cold War was about to heat up in Cuba, Berlin, and southeast Asia.

During the first Gulf War, too, Bacevich trenchantly notes, President George H.W. Bush had also advised Americans to go on enjoying their lives and leave waging war to the experts. He likens the claim that U.S. ground forces in 1991 had defeated "the fourth largest army in the world in 100 hours" to the pitches of car salesmen: "careful selection and sculpting determine the facts that count.... Treating assertions as if they were facts enhances their persuasiveness" (92). The facile 100-hour calculation omits the "weeks of uncontested aerial bombardment" of Iraqi forces before the ground attack was launched and

the fact that "the war didn't really end when George H.W. Bush ordered coalition forces to cease operations" (93).

Indeed, not till 2011, twenty years after Desert Storm and eight after George W. Bush had declared

"mission accomplished," were U.S. forces finally leaving Iraq, as President Barack Obama proclaimed, "with their heads held high, proud of their success, and knowing that the American people stand united in support of

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The Special Ops Surge

(continued from page 1)

In the waning days of the Bush presidency, Special Operations forces were reportedly deployed in about 60 countries around the world. By 2010, that number had swelled to 75, according to Karen DeYoung and Greg Jaffe of the *Washington Post*. In 2011, Special Operations Command (SOCOM) spokesman Colonel Tim Nye told TomDispatch.com that the total would reach 120. Today, that figure has risen higher still.

In 2013, elite U.S. forces were deployed in 134 countries around the globe, according to Major Matthew Robert Bockholt of SOCOM Public Affairs. This 123% increase during the Obama years demonstrates how, in addition to conventional wars and a CIA drone campaign, public diplomacy and extensive electronic spying, the U.S. has engaged in still another significant and growing form of overseas power projection. Conducted largely in the shadows by America's most elite troops, the vast majority of these missions take place far from prying eyes, media scrutiny, or any type of outside oversight, increasing the chances of unforeseen blowback and catastrophic consequences.

Growth Industry

Formally established in 1987, Special Operations Command has grown steadily in the post-9/11 era. SOCOM is reportedly on track to reach 72,000 personnel in 2014, up from 33,000 in 2001. Funding for the command has also jumped exponentially as its baseline budget, \$2.3 billion in 2001, hit \$6.9 billion in 2013 (\$10.4 billion, if you add in supplemental funding). Personnel deployments abroad have skyrocketed, too, from 4,900 "man-years" in 2001 to 11,500 in 2013.

A recent investigation by TomDispatch, using open source government documents and news releases as well as press reports, found evidence that U.S. Special Operations forces were deployed in or involved with the militaries of 106 nations around the world in 2012-2013. For more than a month during the preparation of that article, however, SOCOM failed to provide accurate statistics on the total number of countries to which special operators—Green Berets and Rangers, Navy SEALs and Delta Force commandos, specialized helicopter crews, boat teams, and civil affairs personnel—were deployed. "We don't just keep it on hand," SOCOM's Bockholt explained in a telephone interview once the article had been filed. "We have to go searching through stuff. It takes a long time to do that." Hours later,

just prior to publication, he provided an answer to a question I first asked in November of last year. "SOF [Special Operations forces] were deployed to 134 countries" during fiscal year 2013, Bockholt explained in an email.

Globalized Special Ops

Last year, Special Operations Command chief Admiral William McRaven explained his vision for special ops globalization. In a statement to the House Armed Services Committee, he said:

"USSOCOM is enhancing its global network of SOF to support our interagency and international partners in order to gain expanded situational awareness of emerging threats and opportunities. The network enables small, persistent presence in critical locations, and facilitates engagement where necessary or appropriate..."

While that "presence" may be small, the reach and influence of those Special Operations forces are another matter. The 12% jump in national deployments—from 120 to 134—during McRaven's tenure reflects his desire to put boots on the ground just about everywhere on Earth. SOCOM will not name the nations involved, citing host nation sensitivities and the safety of American personnel, but the deployments we do know about shed at least some light

on the full range of missions being carried out by America's secret military.

Last April and May, for instance, Special Ops personnel took part in training exercises in Djibouti, Malawi, and the Seychelles Islands in the Indian Ocean. In June, U.S. Navy SEALs joined Iraqi, Jordanian, Lebanese, and other allied Mideast forces for irregular warfare simulations in Aqaba, Jordan. The next month, Green Berets traveled to Trinidad and Tobago to carry out small unit tactical exercises with local forces. In August, Green Berets conducted explosives training with Honduran sailors. In September, according to media reports, U.S. Special Operations forces joined elite troops from the 10 member countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations—Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Brunei, Vietnam, Laos, Myanmar (Burma), and Cambodia—as well as their counterparts from Australia, New Zealand, Japan, South Korea, China, India, and Russia for a U.S.-Indonesian joint-funded counterterrorism exercise held at a training center in Sentul, West Java.

In October, elite U.S. troops carried out commando raids in Libya and Somalia, kidnapping a terror suspect in the former nation while SEALs killed at least one militant in the latter before being



As seen through a night-vision device, U.S. Special Operations Command soldiers participate in realistic urban-warfare training scenarios at multiple sites along Florida's Gulf Coast on March 15, 2010. (USAF photo)

driven off under fire. In November, Special Ops troops conducted humanitarian operations in the Philippines to aid survivors of Typhoon Haiyan. The next month, members of the 352nd Special Operations Group conducted a training exercise involving approximately 130 airmen and six aircraft at an airbase in England and Navy SEALs were wounded while undertaking an evacuation mission in South Sudan. Green Berets then rang in the new year with a January 1st combat mission alongside elite Afghan troops in Bahlozi village in Kandahar province.

Deployments in 134 countries, however, turn out not to be expansive enough for SOCOM. In November 2013, the command announced that it was seeking to identify industry partners who could, under SOCOM's Trans Regional Web Initiative, potentially "develop new websites tailored to foreign audiences." These would join an existing global network of 10 propaganda websites, run by various combatant commands and made to look like legitimate news outlets, including CentralAsiaOnline.com, Sabahi which targets the Horn of Africa; an effort aimed at the Middle East known as Al-Shorfa.com; and another targeting Latin America called Infosurhoy.com.

SOCOM's push into cyberspace is mirrored by a concerted effort of the command to embed itself ever more deeply inside the Beltway. "I have folks in every agency here in Washington, D.C.—from the CIA, to the FBI, to the National Security Agency, to the National Geospatial Agency, to the Defense Intelligence Agency," SOCOM chief Admiral McRaven said during a panel discussion at Washington's Wilson Center last year. Speaking at the Ronald Reagan Library in November, he put the number of departments and agencies where SOCOM is now entrenched at 38.

134 Chances for Blowback

Although elected in 2008 by many who saw him as an antiwar candidate, President Obama has proved to be a decidedly hawkish Commander in Chief whose policies have already produced notable instances of what in CIA trade-speak has long been called blowback. While the Obama administration oversaw a U.S. withdrawal from Iraq (negotiated by his predecessor), as well as a drawdown of U.S. forces in Afghanistan (after a major military surge in that country), the president has presided over a ramping up of the U.S. military presence in Africa, a reinvigoration of efforts in Latin America, and tough

talk about a rebalancing or "pivot to Asia" (even if it has amounted to little as of yet).

The White House has also overseen an exponential expansion of America's drone war. While President Bush launched 51 such strikes, President Obama has presided over 330, according to research by the London-based Bureau of Investigative Journalism. Last year, alone, the U.S. also engaged in combat operations in Afghanistan, Libya, Pakistan, Somalia, and Yemen. Recent revelations from National Security Agency whistleblower Edward Snowden have demonstrated the tremendous breadth and global reach of U.S. electronic surveillance during the Obama years. And deep in the shadows, Special Operations forces are now annually deployed to more than double the number of nations as at the end of Bush's tenure.

In recent years, however, the unintended consequences of U.S. military operations have helped to sow outrage and discontent, setting whole regions aflame. More than 10 years after America's "mission accomplished" moment, seven years after its much vaunted surge, the Iraq that America helped make is in flames. A country with no al-Qaeda presence before the U.S. invasion and a government opposed to America's enemies in Tehran now has a central government aligned with Iran and two cities flying al-Qaeda flags.



Key to the Map of U.S. Special Operations Forces around the world, 2012-2013: Red markers: U.S. Special Operations Forces deployment in 2013; Blue markers: U.S. Special Operations Forces working with/training/advising/ conducting operations with indigenous troops in the U.S. or a third country during 2013; Purple markers: U.S. Special Operations Forces deployment in 2012; Yellow markers: U.S. Special Operations Forces working with/training/advising/ conducting operations with indigenous troops in the U.S. or a third country during 2012.

A more recent U.S. military intervention to aid the ouster of Libyan dictator Muammar Qaddafi helped send neighboring Mali, a U.S.-supported bulwark against regional terrorism, into a downward spiral, saw a coup there carried out by a U.S.-trained officer, ultimately led to a bloody terror attack on an Algerian gas plant, and helped to unleash nothing short of a terror diaspora in the region.

And today South Sudan—a nation the U.S. shepherded into being, has supported economically and militarily (despite its reliance on child soldiers), and has used as a hush-hush base for Special Operations forces—is being torn apart by violence and sliding toward civil war.

The Obama presidency has seen the U.S. military's elite tactical forces increasingly used in an attempt to achieve strategic goals. But with Special Operations missions kept under tight wraps, Americans have little understanding of where their troops are deployed, what exactly they are doing, or what the consequences might be down the road. As retired Army Colonel Andrew Bacevich, professor of history and international relations at Boston University, has noted, the utilization of Special Operations forces during the Obama years has

decreased military accountability, strengthened the "imperial presidency," and set the stage for a war without end. "In short," he wrote at TomDispatch, "handing war to the special operators severs an already too tenuous link between war and politics; it becomes war for its own sake."

Secret ops by secret forces have a nasty tendency to produce unintended, unforeseen, and completely disastrous consequences. New Yorkers will remember well the end result of clandestine U.S. support for Islamic militants against the Soviet Union in Afghanistan during the 1980s: 9/11. Strangely enough, those at the other primary attack site that day, the Pentagon, seem not to have learned the obvious lessons from this lethal blowback. Even today in Afghanistan and Pakistan, more than 12 years after the U.S. invaded the former and almost 10 years after it began conducting covert attacks in the latter, the U.S. is still dealing with that Cold War-era fallout: with, for instance, CIA drones conducting missile strikes against an organization (the Haqqani network) that, in the 1980s, the Agency supplied with missiles.

Without a clear picture of where the military's covert forces are operating and what they are doing, Americans may not even recognize the consequences of and blowback from our expanding secret wars as they wash over the world. But if history is any guide, they will be felt—from Southwest Asia to the Mahgreb, the Middle East to Central Africa, and, perhaps eventually, in the United States as well.

In his blueprint for the future, SOCOM 2020, Admiral McRaven has touted the globalization of U.S. special ops as a means to "project power, promote stability, and prevent conflict." Last year, SOCOM may have done just the opposite in 134 places.

Nick Turse is the managing editor of TomDispatch.com and a fellow at the Nation Institute. An award-winning journalist, his work has appeared in the New York Times, the Los Angeles Times, the Nation, on the BBC and regularly at TomDispatch.

He is the author most recently of the New York Times bestseller Kill Anything That Moves: The Real American War in Vietnam (just out in paperback).

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Afghan Commandos and U.S. Special Forces Soldiers wait to board a CH-47 Chinook helicopter before an operation to rid insurgents from PanjwaŌi District, Oct. 15, 2010, in Kandahar Province, Afghanistan. (U.S. Army)



“American Legacy” by Steve Fryburg:
 “The cloud of an atomic bomb, a weapon that allows the near annihilation of an enemy without exposure to the horror and suffering inflicted, is in the background. The Predator Drones flying in the foreground are today’s latest way of extending the distance between us and ‘the enemy’—so that the horrors of war can be isolated to those on the receiving end.

“It has been said that the A-Bomb saved the lives of 50,000 or more soldiers and today the killer drone is said to keep soldiers out of harm’s way. If we can impose our wrath without exposure or apparent risk, it is easier for war and state terrorism to continue with the blessings of the citizens.

“The oil rig is an icon for the resources that U.S. corporations have pillaged, and are still pillaging, from other countries under the shadow of America’s military might. And the cross is for the pseudo-Christians who wallow in self-righteousness in the U.S., but fail miserably to live up to the ideals of the man who died on that cross after teaching such things as ‘Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God’ ...”



Pakistani demonstrators shout anti-U.S. slogans during a protest in Multan in January. A UN investigator said U.S. drone attacks on militants based in Pakistan violate that country’s sovereignty.

S.S MIRZA / AFP/GETTY IMAGES



San Diego Veterans For Peace and Code Pink demonstrate near the General Atomics Headquarters

“So I speak from analogous firsthand experience [having survived the 2003 bombing of Iraq] when I say that airborne killing and destruction typified by the weaponized drone – whether in Somalia, Yemen, Pakistan, or Afghanistan — are terrifying. And I speak first hand when I say that the Trespass and Disordered Conduct of those drones are not a defense against terrorism, but rather embody terrorism and may well generate retaliatory terrorism – an endless cycle of violence.”

CLOSING STATEMENT at trial of the “Hancock 17”: Ed Kinane tells judge why he protested drone killing.



Across Pakistan, Yemen, and Somalia, the Obama administration has launched more than 390 drone strikes in its first five years—eight times as many as were launched in the entire Bush presidency. These strikes have killed more than 2,400 people, at least 273 of them reportedly civilians. Obama’s first attack killed at least nine and the lone survivor, 14-year-old Fahim Qureshi, sustained horrific injuries including shrapnel wounds in his stomach, a fractured skull, and a lost eye.

Serle, Jack. (January 23, 2014). *Drone Warfare, More than 2,400 dead as Obama’s drone campaign marks five years.* Retrieved from The Bureau of Investigative Journalism website thebureauinvestigates.com

“It was an unexpected diagnosis. For decades the model for understanding PTSD has been ‘fear conditioning’: quite literally the lasting psychological ramifications of mortal terror. But a term now gaining wider acceptance is ‘moral injury.’ It represents a tectonic realignment, a shift from a focusing on the violence that has been done to a person in wartime toward his feelings about what he has done to others—or what he’s failed to do for them. The concept is attributed to the clinical psychiatrist Jonathan Shay, who in his book *Achilles in Vietnam* traces the idea back as far as the Trojan War. The mechanisms of death may change—as intimate as a bayonet or as removed as a Hellfire—but the bloody facts, and their weight on the human conscience, remain the same. Bryant’s diagnosis of PTSD fits neatly into this new understanding. It certainly made sense to Bryant. ‘I really have no fear,’ he says now. ‘It’s more like I’ve had a soul-crushing experience. An experience that I thought I’d never have. I was never prepared to take a life.’”

from *Confessions of a Drone Warrior* by Matthew Powers, GQ, October 2013



Images by Steve Fryburg—above: *Blowback*; below: *Humane War*

TO THE GRADUATING CLASS OF 2014

If they got you thinking about signing up
just to kill you some time
(since nothing else is going down)
you better be getting ready
to kill you some women
and some children too

and you better be getting ready
to kill you some time
doing time
doing some long time
locked up
in their screams

—Doug Rawlings



The Chenagai madrassa after the Predator strike. [Source: BBC]

October 30, 2006: Drone and Helicopter Strike Hits Religious School in Pakistan; No Important Militants Killed

The U.S. launches a Predator drone missile strike on a madrassa (religious school) in the Bajour district of Pakistan’s tribal region, then Pakistan sends in helicopters to attack the survivors. The aim is to kill al-Qaeda second-in-command Ayman al-Zawahiri, but he is not there. Pakistani officials initially claim that a number of al-Qaeda operatives are killed, including Abu Ubaida al-Masri, an operational leader. But the next day they only say that some Taliban members are killed. [ABC News, 10/30/2006 and 10/31/2006] The attack is said to have killed 82, many of them students at the madrassa located in Chenagai, a hamlet of Damadola village, which had been hit by a Predator strike earlier in the year. [London Times, 11/26/2006]



Guatemala: Resisting Impunity and Taking on New Challenges

by María Luisa Rosal

Guatemala is one of the most violent and exclusionary countries in the region. Between 1962 and 1996, an estimated 200,000 Guatemalans were killed; one million internally displaced; 45,000 disappeared; 200,000 became refugees; and over 600 massacres were committed according to the 1999 Historical Clarification Commission report. This recent history, marked by silence and a culture of fear, has changed in the past few decades, beginning with the transition to democracy in 1985 and consolidated with the signing of the Peace Accords in 1996.

Since 1996, however, Guatemala has experienced a process of re-militarization and an escalation of violence, exacerbated by repression by extractive industries and new economic policies where those most affected continue to be *campesino* and indigenous communities, women and children. The historic trial against general Efraín Ríos Montt, former dictator and SOA grad, and José Mauricio Rodríguez Sánchez, his former head of intelligence—for the genocide of the Ixil Maya, and for crimes against humanity—is perhaps one of the most significant milestones in the demands for the rule of law, the respect for human rights, along with respect for and observance of due process.

In May 2013, a Guatemalan high court sentenced Ríos Montt to 80 years in prison for the genocide of the Ixil Maya and crimes against humanity, but the sentence was annulled shortly after. The trial is set to reconvene in 2015, rolling back the entire process to where it was in November 2011, but the Centre for Human Rights Legal Action and the Association for Justice and Reconciliation, partner organizations in the case, are appealing this decision. This trial occurred under the government of Otto Pérez Molina, SOA

What is SOA?

The School of the Americas (SOA) is a combat training school for Latin American soldiers, located at Fort Benning, Georgia, renamed in 2001 the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation (WHINSEC). Since 1946, the SOA has trained over 64,000 Latin American soldiers in counterinsurgency techniques, sniper training, commando and psychological warfare, military intelligence, and interrogation tactics. These graduates have consistently used their skills to wage a war against their own people.

Former Panamanian president Jorge Illueca stated that the School of the Americas was the “biggest base for destabilization in Latin America.” Since the SOA have left a trail of blood and suffering in every country where its graduates have returned, it has been historically dubbed the “School of Assassins.”

What is SOA Watch?

SOA Watch (soaw.org) is an independent organization, founded by Maryknoll priest Fr. Roy Bourgeois in 1990, that seeks to close the U.S. Army School of the Americas—under whatever name it is called—through vigils, fasts, demonstrations, and nonviolent protest, as well as media and legislative work.

SOA Watch has launched a new project inspired by a strategy: that without students, there can be no school. At its core, the SOA Watch Legal Initiative aims to look into legal and institutional alternatives that will

halt the sending of Latin American troops to SOA/WHINSEC. As a first step to this new strategy, SOA Watch has decided to start in Guatemala, and looks forward to contributing to ending a culture of impunity!

María Luisa Rosal, SOA Watch Field Organizer, was born in Guatemala during the worst intensification of the internal armed conflict. She and her family fled into exile to the United States, where they received political asylum. Her father was disappeared by the Guatemalan state on August 12, 1983. Before joining the SOA Watch staff, María Luisa worked on issues ranging from HIV prevention programs and positive youth development programs among Latino youth, to broader issues like torture, enforced and involuntary disappearances, historical memory, and human rights in Guatemala. María Luisa holds a Bachelor's Degree in Political Science from Virginia Commonwealth University and a Master's Degree in Human Rights and Democratization in Latin America and the Caribbean from the Universidad Nacional de San Martín in Buenos Aires. Under the conviction that without truth, there is no justice, she is enthusiastically committed to contributing to the growth and mobilization of this continental movement!

James Rodríguez is an independent U.S.-Mexican documentary photographer based in Guatemala since 2004 focusing on a long-term documentary photography project involving land tenure disputes, human rights violations, post-war processes, and extractive industries' conflicts with local populations in Latin America. To view more of his work and to contact, please visit his personal website at mimundo.org.

PHOTOS. Top: Guatemala City, Guatemala. March 26, 2013. People holding signs that read, “Yes, there was Genocide,” protest outside Guatemala’s Constitutional Court, the highest in the land, demanding the continuation of the landmark genocide trial against former de facto ruler Efraín Ríos Montt and his head of Intelligence José Mauricio Rodríguez Sánchez. Both are accused of genocide and crimes against humanity committed against the Ixil Mayan people during their reign from March 1982 to August 1983. Center: Guatemala City, Guatemala. May 9, 2013. Efraín Ríos Montt, former de facto head of state accused of Genocide against the Ixil Mayan people, finally takes the stand as spectators look on. Bottom: Nebaj, Quiché, Guatemala. May 03, 2005. The remains of an Ixil Mayan wartime victim are prepared for burial after numerous skeletal remains were recovered through a mass grave exhumation carried out by forensic anthropologists. The first half of the 1980s was a particularly brutal period where dozens of massacres were carried out primarily by the armed forces against the Ixil Mayan civilian population who were considered the base for the powerful guerrilla in the Quiché region.



Who is the criminal?

Is it that woman walking from an abortion clinic,
who was raped, eyes full of tears?
Or that Bible-thumping misled man,
chanting “murderer,” and ensuring she hears?

That Southern man in his pickup truck,
mouth full of chew, and a rebel flag,
whose racism was learned from an early age,
as he’s beaten by mom and dad?

Or the teenage girl whose children he fathered,
before he left them high and dry,
who now works stripping trying to make ends meet,
but because of crack can barely scrape by?

Is it her dealer in the tricked out car,
fronts in his mouth, and a matching gold chain
who despite straight As, no college would take him,
‘cause to survive he ran with a gang?

Or that angry cop who arrested him,
ten years ago, who refused to help him
who was so mentally drained from giving a shit,
that this kid was no different from the rest of ‘em?

Maybe the life partners who were well off,
loving each other and wanting to share their life
were told they couldn’t adopt a child,
because to the law they’re not man and wife?

Maybe some young soldier fighting to survive,
who was enticed by the governments lies,
who lost a leg, a wife, and child,
because at night, he hears his victims’ cries?

Or is it the Bradley Manning who released war crimes,
to instigate worldwide debate,
who now sits in prison accused of treason,
where he quietly accepts his fate?

Maybe the “terrorist” in another land
who we were sent off to hunt and kill
by some old grey-haired beady eye,
whose rotten stench fills Capitol Hill

like the politician who makes these laws,
that tend to cause so many pain

who strangles the life and fight right from us,
with his financial and political reign?

Who’s the criminal in society? I ask myself,
and I think that you should too
Think about who you look at this way.....
or who looks this way at you.....

—Ethan McCord

Deaths in Other Nations

(continued from page 7)

years. Human Rights Watch claimed that Habre was responsible for thousands of killings.

Chile. The CIA intervened in Chile’s 1958 and 1964 elections. In 1970, socialist candidate Salvador Allende was elected president. The CIA wanted to incite a military coup to prevent his inauguration, but the Chilean army’s chief of staff, General Rene Schneider, opposed this action. The CIA then planned, along with some people in the Chilean military, to assassinate Schneider. This plot failed and Allende took office. President Nixon was not to be dissuaded and he ordered the CIA to create a coup climate: “Make the economy scream,” he said. Guerilla warfare, arson, bombing, sabotage, and terror followed. IT&T and other U.S. corporations with Chilean holdings sponsored demonstrations and strikes. Finally, on September 11, 1973, Allende died either by suicide or by assassination. At that time Henry Kissinger, U.S. Secretary of State, said regarding Chile: “I don’t see why we need to stand by and watch a country go communist because of the irresponsibility of its own people.” During 17 years of terror under Allende’s successor, General Augusto Pinochet, an estimated 3,000 Chileans were killed and many others were tortured or “disappeared.” (Also see South America: Operation Condor.)

China. An estimated 900,000 Chinese died during the Korean War (see Korea).

Colombia. An estimated 67,000 deaths have occurred since the 1960s due to U.S. support of Colombian state terrorism. According to a 1994 Amnesty International (AI) report, more than 20,000 people were killed for political reasons in Colombia since 1986, mainly by the military and its paramilitary allies. AI alleged that “U.S.-supplied military equipment, ostensibly delivered for use against narcotics traffickers, was being used by the Colombian military to commit abuses in the name of ‘counter-insurgency.’” The 1996 Human Rights Watch report *Assassination Squads in Colombia* revealed that CIA agents went to Colombia in 1991 to help the military to train undercover agents in anti-subversive activity. In 2002, it was estimated that 3,500 people die each year in a U.S.-funded civil war in Colombia.

Cuba. In the three-day Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba which began on April 18, 1961, 114 of the invading force were killed, 1,189 were taken prisoners, and a few escaped to waiting U.S. ships. Some people estimate that the number of Cuban forces killed range from 2,000 to 4,000. Another estimate is that 1,800 Cuban forces were killed on an open highway by napalm. This appears to have been a precursor of the Highway of Death at the end of the Persian Gulf War in 1991 when U.S. forces mercilessly annihilated large numbers of Iraqis on a highway.

Democratic Republic of Congo (formerly Zaire). The U.S. is responsible for more than 3 million deaths. In 1960, the Congo became an independent state with Patrice Lumumba as its first prime minister. He was assassinated, with the CIA being implicated, although some say that his murder was actually the responsibility of Belgium. Nevertheless, the CIA was planning to kill him. In recent years there has been civil war within the Democratic Republic of Congo, fomented often by the U.S. and other nations. In April 1977, *Newsday* reported that the CIA was secretly supporting efforts to recruit several hundred mercenaries in the U.S. and Great Britain to serve alongside Zaire’s army. In that same year, the U.S. provided \$15 million of military supplies to the Zairian President Mobutu to fend off an invasion by a rival group operating in Angola. In May 1979, the U.S. sent several million dollars of aid to Mobutu who had been condemned 3 months earlier by the U.S. State Department for human rights violations. During the Cold War, the U.S. funneled over 300 million dollars in weapons into Zaire and provided \$100 million in military training.

Dominican Republic. In 1962, Juan Bosch became president and advocated for land reform and public works programs. This did not bode well for his future relationship with the U.S. After only seven months in office, he was deposed by a CIA coup. In 1965, when a group was trying to reinstall him to his office, President Johnson said, “This Bosch is no good.” Assistant Secretary of State Thomas Mann replied “He’s no good at all. If we don’t get a decent government in there, Mr. President, we get another Bosch. It’s just going to be another sink-hole.” Two days later, a U.S. invasion started and 22,000 soldiers and marines entered the Dominican Republic and about 3,000 Dominicans died during the fighting. The cover excuse was that this was done to protect foreigners there.

East Timor. In December 1975, Indonesia invaded East Timor—the day after U.S. President Gerald Ford and Secretary of State Henry Kissinger had left Indonesia where they had given President Suharto permission to use American arms, which under U.S. law, could not be used for aggression. The result was an estimated 200,000 dead out of a population of 700,000. Sixteen years later, on November 12, 1991, two hundred and seventeen East Timorese protesters in Dili, many of them children, marching from a memorial service, were gunned down by Indonesian Kopassus shock troops who were headed by U.S.-trained commanders. Trucks were seen dumping bodies into the sea.

El Salvador. The civil war from 1981 to 1992 was financed by \$6 billion in U.S. aid given to support the government in its efforts to crush a movement to bring social justice to the people in that nation of about 8 million people. In 1981, about 900 villagers were massacred in the

(continued on page 15)



\$115 billion more for war making

New War Budget and Strategy Announced by Obama Team

by Bruce K. Gagnon

On February 25, Secretary of War Chuck Hagel announced the Obama administration's Pentagon budget proposal for the coming year. Despite mandates for cuts in military spending after agreements with Congress under sequestration, Hagel actually calls for an increase of more than \$115 billion for war making.

The Hagel budget basically calls for cuts in Army ground forces and cut-backs in military pay, housing, and commissary facilities on bases. Life for the enlisted will become more difficult. The Pentagon is also calling for the closing of a few National Guard posts in some states.

Hagel calls for 'sustaining' the Pentagon's nuclear triad—air, ground, and sea delivery systems of nuclear weapons. Also called for is an increase in drones and robotic forces as well as significant expansion in cyber warfare capabilities.

Wall Street immediately reacted by joyfully giving Lockheed-Martin all-time high stock gains. The writing on the wall is clear—cuts in troop levels and increase in high-tech, space-directed, war-making capability.

We will see an expansion of U.S. "hidden" wars in the near future and the Obama budget reflects this reality. While Hagel wants to pare back the size of the active-duty military by 13% and the reserves by 5% in coming years, he would boost the size of Special Operations forces by about 6%. The plan is to add more than 3,000 personnel to the kinds of special ops forces teams that reportedly killed Osama bin Laden in Pakistan.

These same clandestine forces now operate in more than 75 countries around the world. In his film *Dirty Wars*, investigative journalist Jeremy Seahill reports on the largely unaccountable Joint Special Operations Command (JSOC) that is now doing targeted assassinations, destabilization, and training of right-wing and terrorist forces used by the U.S. in places like Ukraine, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Libya, Yemen, Somalia, Syria, Venezuela, and beyond. The corporate oligarchy is moving rapidly to consolidate their total control of the people around the world and the U.S. is playing its role of "security export" rather well.

Mainstream media reports of the Hagel announcement also tag two key places on the planet that will receive special emphasis from this new budget—the African continent and the Asia-Pacific. This is where the long-range military operations planning and funding are heading.

Our peace organizing (no matter whether it is local, regional, national, or international) needs to take into account this very fundamental direction

Breach of Trust (continued from page 8)

our troops." Bacevich scathingly comments: "Apart from a handful of deluded neoconservatives, no one believes that the United States accomplished its objectives in Iraq, unless the main objective was to commit mayhem, apply a tourniquet to staunch the bleeding, and then declare the patient stable while hastily leaving the scene of the crime" (94).

General Sullivan's post-Cold-War force has evolved into the instrument of America's open-ended global war on terrorism, entailing brief doses of "shock and awe" followed by protracted commitments of U.S. forces to Vietnam-like fighting conditions in Iraq and Afghanistan. The manpower limitations of the all-volunteer forces have necessitated the regular use of private security contractors (PSCs), "aka mercenaries and war profiteers" (126). The statistics Bacevich provides on costs to our government and profits for the PSC firms (127–29)—twenty-two of which won over 50 percent of all contracts from government agencies—prove that, alongside Joseph Heller's Yossarian, Milo Minderbinder is alive and prospering as amorally or immorally as ever.⁴

"Apart from a handful of deluded neoconservatives, no one believes that the United States accomplished its objectives in Iraq, unless the main objective was to commit mayhem, apply a tourniquet to staunch the bleeding, and then declare the patient stable while hastily leaving the scene of the crime."

Bacevich pillories "the odd military officer stricken in retirement with Smedley's syndrome" (190), that is, who spent his entire career implementing policies he then criticizes in retirement. He applies essayist Randolph Bourne's criticisms of intellectuals during World War I to those commenting on today's operations in Iraq and Afghanistan: "For a particular category of intellectuals, entranced by the aphrodisiac of power, independence is a pose willingly abandoned when the prospect of 'relevance' beckons" (151). Bacevich's fullest case studies are of Stanley McChrystal (115–23), columnist David Brooks (142–48), and eminent British military historian John Keegan (187–88).

Since Vietnam, matters have now devolved to the point where "All it takes to bomb Belgrade, invade Iraq, or send Navy SEALs into Pakistan is concurrence among a half dozen people

and a nod from the president" (125). When their elected representatives fail even to deliberate whether to declare war, it can be no surprise that American citizens are unprecedentedly disengaged from the political process.

Bacevich sometimes idealizes the sense of duty and self-sacrifice for the greater good in Americans of the World War II era (Tom Brokaw's "Greatest Generation"). As he himself notes, Franklin Roosevelt and his advisers set limits on what could be asked of the American people. As General George C. Marshall flatly put it, "A democracy cannot fight a Seven Years War" (23). Nor were people in 1941–45 eager to send their able-bodied fathers, sons, husbands, brothers, and cousins off to places as unknown to them as Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iran, and Syria are to most U.S. citizens today. And, too, the people of other nations had it worse than Americans: after the Great Depression of the 1930s, came steady employment for millions of U.S. citizens in the war industries of the 1940s. "The war that exhausted other belligerents and left untold millions in want around the world found Americans becoming not only wealthier but also more equal" (24–25).

Breach of Trust describes the era from the 1840s into the early twentieth century, when long-service regular soldiers expanded the U.S. imperium in the American West, Mexico, the Philippines, Cuba, and China. However, its author nowhere mentions that this aggressive exertion of power required the passive acquiescence of American citizens, even as some prominent congressmen strongly objected to such abuses as "the murder of Mexicans on their own soil" and the president's "usurping the war-making power."

Notes:

1. A U.S. Military Academy graduate, he served as an Army officer from 1969 to 1992.

2. More precisely, congressionally authorized presidential uses of military force.

3. These include Smedley Butler, Franklin Roosevelt, George C. Marshall, William Westmoreland, Richard Nixon, Creighton Abrams, George H.W. Bush, H.R. McMaster, William Jefferson Clinton, Gordon R. Sullivan, Lee Butler, George W. Bush, Donald Rumsfeld, Eric Shinseki, Tommy Franks, William G. Boykin, David Petraeus, Barack Obama, Stanley McChrystal, Randolph Bourne, John Keegan, Richard Cohen, and David Brooks.

4. *The Commission on Wartime Contracting in Iraq and Afghanistan* in 2011 documented that contractor fraud alone cost the U.S. government "\$12 million every day for the past ten years" and that the "backlog of unaudited incurred costs" would "exceed \$1 trillion by 2016" (128, 218nn8–9, 11).

This review first appeared on the online journal Michigan War Studies Review 2014-014 and is reprinted with permission.

the Obama-supported military complex is tacking toward.

In addition it is important that we all talk more about jobs. It will be hard to cut military spending because of the local jobs issue. We must speak to this fundamental concern that is wrapped in fear, as everyone knows that jobs are scarce these days.

The growing conversion [from destructive war industries to constructive peaceful industries] movement across the nation indicates that more and more groups are making these job connections. Imagine

We will see an expansion of U.S. "hidden" wars in the near future. The plan is to add more than 3,000 personnel to the kinds of special ops forces teams that reportedly killed Osama bin Laden in Pakistan.

if military production workers and the peace movement were to stand hand-in-hand calling for conversion of the military industrial complex. In the early 1990's that was indeed happening across the nation when William Winpisinger served as President of the International Association

of Machinists and Aerospace Workers. He vigorously took on the responsibility to link military production workers with peace groups in order to successfully demand conversion after the end of the Cold War. That promised "peace dividend" though never came to be as new "enemies" were created in the Middle East and Central Asia. The conversion issue was deflated—but not defeated.

Many of us across the nation have stayed on message during these darker years. We've kept talking about conversion and linking jobs. We are eternally grateful to the Department of Economics and Political Economy Research Institute (PERI) at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst. They've continued to give us the empirical evidence that proves military production is the very worst way to create jobs. In every other case—rail, wind, solar, conservation, teachers, hospitals, or even tax cuts—more jobs are created.

The jobs issue is the long-sought buried treasure that we've been looking for—right before our eyes. Pick it up.

Bruce Gagnon is coordinator of the Global Network Against Weapons & Nuclear Power in Space (space4peace.org).

Twenty years to achieve readiness

Where does the Pentagon's money go? The exact answer is a mystery. That's because the Pentagon's books are a complete mess. They're so bad that they can't even be officially inspected, despite a 1997 requirement that federal agencies submit to annual audits—just like every other business or organization.

[T]he Government Accountability Office dryly notes, the Pentagon has "serious financial management problems" that make its financial statements "inauditable." Pentagon financial operations occupy one-fifth of the GAO's list of federal programs with a high risk of waste, fraud, or inefficiency.

Critics also contend that the Pentagon cooks its books by using unorthodox accounting methods that make its budgetary needs seem more urgent. The agency insists it will "achieve audit readiness" by 2017.

Fun fact: The Pentagon operates more than more than 170 golf courses worldwide.

—source: MotherJones.com

Heroes

This is an age without heroes.

True heroes will not accept the title, those who accept the title are not true heroes.

This is an age without heroes.

—Joe Michaud

Deaths in Other Nations

(continued from page 13)

village of El Mozote. Ten of the twelve El Salvadoran government soldiers cited as participating in this act were graduates of the School of the Americas operated by the U.S. About 75,000 people were killed during that civil war. A 1993 United Nations' Truth Commission linked graduates of the School of the Americas to many notorious killings. In 1996, the White House Oversight Board issued a report that supported many of the charges against that school made by Rev. Roy Bourgeois, head of the School of the Americas Watch. That same year the Pentagon released formerly classified reports indicating that graduates were trained in killing, extortion, and physical abuse for interrogations, false imprisonment, and other methods of control.

Grenada. The CIA began to destabilize Grenada in 1979 after Maurice Bishop became president, partially because he refused to join the quarantine of Cuba. The campaign against him resulted in his overthrow and the invasion of Grenada by the U.S. in 1983. About 277 people died.

Guatemala. In 1951, Jacobo Arbenz was elected president. He appropriated some unused land operated by the United Fruit Company. In 1954, a CIA-orchestrated coup put him out of office and he left the country. During the next 40 years, various regimes killed thousands of people. In 1999, the *Washington Post* reported that an Historical Clarification Commission concluded that over 200,000 people had been killed during the civil war and that the U.S. government and the CIA had pressured the Guatemalan government into suppressing the guerilla movement by ruthless means.

Haiti. From 1957 to 1986, Haiti was ruled by Papa Doc Duvalier and later by his son. During that time their private terrorist force killed between 30,000 and 100,000 people. Millions of dollars in CIA subsidies flowed into Haiti during that time, mainly to suppress popular movements, although most American military aid to the country, according to William Blum, was covertly channeled through Israel. Reportedly, governments after the second Duvalier reign were responsible for an even larger number of fatalities, and the influence on Haiti by the U.S., particularly through the CIA, has continued.

Honduras. In the 1980s, the CIA supported Battalion 316, which kidnapped, tortured, and killed hundreds of its citizens. Torture equipment and manuals were provided by CIA Argentinean personnel who worked with U.S. agents in the training of the Hondurans. Approximately 400 people lost their lives. Declassified documents and other sources show that the CIA and the U.S. Embassy knew of numerous crimes, including murder and torture, yet continued to

support Battalion 316 and collaborate with its leaders.

Hungary. In 1956 Hungary, a Soviet satellite nation, revolted against the Soviet Union. During the uprising, broadcasts by the U.S. Radio Free Europe into Hungary sometimes took on an aggressive tone, encouraging the rebels to believe that Western support was imminent, and even giving tactical advice on how to fight the Soviets. Their hopes were raised then dashed. The Hungarian and Soviet death toll was about 3,000 and the revolution was crushed.

Indonesia. In 1965, a coup replaced General Sukarno with General Suharto. The U.S. played a role in that change of government. Robert Martens, a former officer in the U.S. embassy in Indonesia, described how U.S. diplomats and CIA officers provided up to 5,000 names to Indonesian Army death squads in 1965 and checked them off as they were killed or captured. Martens admitted, "I probably have a lot of blood on my hands, but that's not all bad. There's a time when you have to strike hard at a decisive moment." Estimates of the number of deaths range from 500,000 to 3 million. From 1993 to 1997, the U.S. provided Jakarta with almost \$400 million in economic aid and sold tens of million of dollars of weaponry to that nation. U.S. Green Berets provided training for the Indonesia's elite force which was responsible for many of atrocities in East Timor.

Iran. Iran lost about 262,000 people in the war against Iraq from 1980 to 1988 (see Iraq). On July 3, 1988, the U.S. Navy ship, the USS *Vincennes*, was operating within Iranian waters providing military support for Iraq during the Iran-Iraq war. During a battle against Iranian gunboats it fired two missiles at an Iranian Airbus, which was on a routine civilian flight. All 290 civilians on board were killed.

Iraq 1980-88. During the Iraq-Iran War, there were about 105,000 Iraqi deaths according to the *Washington Post*. According to Howard Teicher, a former National Security Council official, the U.S. provided the Iraqis with billions of dollars in credits and helped Iraq in other ways, such as making sure that Iraq had military equipment including biological agents. This surge of help for Iraq came as Iran seemed to be winning the war and was close to Basra. The U.S. was not adverse to both countries weakening themselves as a result of the war, but it did not appear to want either side to win.

Iraq 1990-2003. The U.S.-Iraq War and Sanctions. When Iraq invaded Kuwait on August 2, 1990, the U.S. demanded that Iraq withdraw, and four days later the UN levied international sanctions. Iraq believed that the U.S. would not object to its invasion of Kuwait, since U.S. Ambassador to Iraq, April Glaspie, had told Saddam Hussein that the U.S. had no position on the dispute that his country had with Kuwait.

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Calling the kettle black

U.S. refusal to probe and account for its own 'War Crimes' appalling

by Daya Gamage

When the United States was forced to withdraw the draft resolution against Sri Lanka in September 2011 as a result of the strategic diplomatic maneuvers of the members of the Sri Lanka team at UNHRC [United Nations Human Rights Council] in Geneva, the U.S. Ambassador for Human Rights in Geneva threatened the then team leader Tamara Kunanayakam,

"We'll get you next time!"

Well, Sri Lanka is facing the U.S. diplomatic assault in March this year [see box below] while the United States itself has refused to investigate and account for its own human rights violations and war crimes during its "War on Global Terror," completely ignoring the slogans "accountability" and "transparency" it is using to bring Sri Lanka to the "Geneva Dock," fulfilling one of the "agenda items" of the separatist pro-Eelam elements within the Global Tamil Diaspora.

"The [U.S.] violations in the 'war on terror' have been many and varied, and the government has exploited a long-standing reluctance of the USA to commit itself fully to international law..."

Amnesty International in its December 2008 report [USA: Investigation, prosecution, remedy—Accountability for human rights violations in the 'war on terror'] on America's culpability to war crimes noted, "There is not a single fix that will bring the USA's actions on counterterrorism into compliance with international law."

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U.S. Senators call for War Crimes investigations in Sri Lanka

From a February 10, 2014, press release:

With the March session of the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) approaching, U.S. Senators Richard Burr (R-NC) and Bob Casey (D-PA) introduced a resolution calling for an independent investigation into allegations of war crimes during the Sri Lankan conflict and urging the Government of Sri Lanka to uphold media freedoms.

"This resolution calls for the establishment of an independent international accountability mechanism that would hold responsible those who have committed war crimes and crimes against humanity," said Senator Burr. "I believe ensuring a lasting peace in Sri Lanka is in the interest of the Sri Lankan people, the United States, and the broader international community."

"Four years since the end of the conflict in Sri Lanka, there has yet to be real progress made on reconciliation and accountability through domestic processes," said Senator Casey. "Human rights violations continue, and the Sri Lankan government has failed to bring to justice the perpetrators of attacks against journalists, religious and ethnic minorities, and opposition politicians. As the March session of the UNHRC approaches, I believe another UNHRC resolution is warranted."

The violations in the 'war on terror' have been many and varied, and the government has exploited a long-standing reluctance of the USA to commit itself fully to international law, including in relation to recognizing the full range of its international obligations with respect to torture or other cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment. The question of accountability and remedy for violations in the 'war on terror' must therefore be part of a new commitment by the USA to international law."

The London *Guardian* gave a startling revelation on January 23 when it said "America's professional association of psychologists has quietly declined to rebuke one of its members, a retired U.S. army reserve officer, for



"The American people need to know what was done in their name."

his role in one of the most brutal interrogations known to have taken place at Guantánamo Bay."

The decision not to pursue any disciplinary measure against John Leso, a former army reserve major, is the latest case in which someone involved in the post-9/11 torture of detainees has faced no legal or even professional consequences.

In a December 31 letter obtained by the *Guardian*, the American Psychological Association said it had "determined that we cannot proceed with formal charges in this matter. Consequently the complaint against Dr Leso has been closed."

But the APA did not deny Leso took part in the brutal interrogation of the suspected 20th 9/11 hijacker, Mohammed al-Qahtani, whose treatment the Pentagon official overseeing his military commission ultimately called "torture."

Leso was identified as "MAJ L" in a leaked log, published by *Time* magazine in 2005, of Qahtani's marathon interrogation in November 2002. With Leso recorded as present for at least some of the session, Qahtani was forcibly hydrated through intravenous drips and prevented from using the bathroom until he urinated on himself, subjected to loud music, and repeatedly kept awake while being "told he can go to sleep when he tells the truth."

Documents that emerged from a (U.S.) Senate armed services committee torture inquiry detailed Leso's involvement in an early "Behavioral Science Consultation Team" at Guantánamo, which was instrumental in crafting torture techniques out of measures taught to U.S. troops to withstand brutal treatment.

Then we have several other U.S. violations of international humanitarian law not brought before the UNHRC in Geneva. And no 'truth commission' within the U.S. system to probe such dastardly crimes.

Gul Rahman died in the early hours of November 20, 2002, after being shackled to a cold concrete wall in a secret CIA prison in northern Kabul, Afghanistan, known as the Salt Pit. He was suspected of links to the terrorist group al-Qaida. Rahman is the only detainee known to have died in a CIA-run prison.

Al-Jamadi, another enemy combatant under interrogation in the hands of Americans, died in 2003 at the Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq. A military autopsy declared al-Jamadi's death a homicide.

At Abu Ghraib prison, instead of turning al-Jamadi over to the Army, CIA officers took him to a shower stall. They put a sandbag over his head, cuffed his hands behind his back and chained his arms to a barred window. When he leaned forward, his arms stretched painfully behind and above his back.

The Obama administration's Attorney General Eric Holder on August 30 last year officially announced

that no one would be prosecuted for the deaths of these prisoners, one in Afghanistan in 2002 and another in Iraq in 2003, eliminating the last possibility that any criminal charges will be brought as a result of the brutal interrogations carried out by the CIA.

In its refusal to investigate the Bush-era torture practices—President Obama himself declaring that he prefers to look forward, not backward—the Obama administration announced on June 30, 2011, that it would shut down 99 investigations into deaths of prisoners in U.S. custody during the "War on Terror," leaving only two investigations with the potential to develop into criminal prosecutions.

What Eric Holder announced on August 30 last year was the dismissal of the last two remaining torture-death investigations under the watch of the CIA. Mr. Holder had previously ruled out any charges related to the use of waterboarding and other methods that most human rights experts consider to be torture. His announcement closes a contentious three-year investigation by the Justice Department.

"Based on the fully developed factual record concerning the two deaths, the department has declined prosecution because the admissible evidence would not be sufficient to obtain and sustain a conviction beyond



"Based on the fully developed factual record concerning the two [CIA torture] deaths, the department has declined prosecution..."

a reasonable doubt,” Holder’s statement said. It said the investigation “was not intended to, and does not resolve, broader questions regarding the propriety of the examined conduct.”

“It is hugely disappointing that with ample evidence of torture, and documented cases of some people actually being tortured to death, that the Justice Department

The UC Davis study declares: “These policies and practices are outrages upon human dignity, and are subject to criminal prosecution under both national and international law.”
[U.S. policies and practices, that is.]

has not been able to mount a successful prosecution and hold people responsible for these crimes,” said Elisa Massimino, president of Human Rights First. “The American people need to know what was done in their name.”

She said her group’s own investigation of the deaths of prisoners showed that initial inquiries were bungled by military and intelligence officers in charge of prisons in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Rendition of enemy combatants—meaning sending terrorist suspects who are in the custody of the United States to countries which are notorious for their torture chambers—was an established practice in the Bush-Cheney administration. That administration itself developed the “enhanced interrogation” regimen that was widely accepted as torture. It included the simulated drowning technique called waterboarding (an established torture method), a practice which Dick Cheney even now still supports.

Then comes transparency and accountability under the Obama administration.

The United States—which stands for transparency and accountability in other nations monitoring those nations’ domestic battles—has shown absolute minimal preparedness when it comes to its own transparency and accountability.

Shunning accountability and transparency since the advent of the Obama administration as an attempt to suppress the brutality of enhanced interrogation—which is widely known as torture, prisoner rendition, and other violations of international humanitarian law (IHL) and international human rights law (IHRL)—has now become an official policy.

U.S. call for Accountability in Sri Lanka

At a press conference on the premises of the American Embassy in Colombo, Sri Lanka, on May 4, 2011, winding up his three-day visit, the assistant secretary for

South and Central Asian Affairs of the State Department Robert Blake said, “The United States has continually expressed to the Government of Sri Lanka the importance of implementing a credible and independent process to ensure accountability. Domestic authorities have responsibility to ensure that those responsible for violations of international humanitarian law are held accountable. International mechanisms can become

appropriate in cases where states are either unable or unwilling to meet their obligations.”

That is exactly the intention of the United States, well-supported by the separatist-Eelamist elements within the Global Tamil Diaspora, to go beyond the UNHRC in Geneva toward an “international mechanism.”

Previously on March 14, 2011, Mr. Blake, addressing the Asia Society in New York that discussed the developments in Sri Lanka, warned, “Accountability is an essential part of any reconciliation process. Without it an enduring peace will remain elusive as unhealed wounds fester. Primary responsibility for implementing a credible and independent process through which individuals who may have violated human rights and international humanitarian law are held accountable for their actions lies with Sri Lanka itself. Our strong preference is that the Sri Lankan government establish its own transparent process that meets international standards. However, in the absence of such a mechanism, there will be mounting pressure for an international mechanism.”

Bringing pressure and forcing Sri Lanka to undertake accountability for what occurred during the final stages (January to May of 2009) of the battle between the Tiger cadres and Sri Lankan military has been the corner stone policy of the U.S. State Department since the demise of the LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam]. This has helped pro-separatist/Tamil Tiger lobbies in Washington and in other European Capitals build a global voice to isolate Sri Lanka in order to achieve the bifurcation of the nation that the LTTE failed for twenty-six years to accomplish. This State Department “accountability and transparency” call led Sri Lanka to face scrutiny in Geneva before the UN Human Rights Commission in previous years, and now this March.

Truth, Accountability in the U.S.

Truth, accountability, reform, and reconciliation are milestones in the road to security. And they are milestones that must be reached in that order. For truth is the foundation of all else. Without it, accountability is

abusive, reform is blind, and reconciliation is hollow. And accountability and reform are preconditions for reconciliation as well. For, without them, the victims have no reason to believe that the crimes will not be revisited, upon them or upon others, in the future. Consequently, they will continue to be on guard. Worse yet, they may feel that the period of abuse has not really ended, and they will not be delivered from the temptation to retaliate.

The above paragraph was taken from a study, *Truth, Accountability, Reform and Reconciliation: The Road to Security and the Restoration of American Values*, done by the Center for the Study of Human Rights in the Americas at the University of California at Davis. The study highlights the violation of International Humanitarian Laws [IHL] and universally-accepted human rights practices by the United States since the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, in Washington and New York.

The UC Davis study undertaken by academics and professionals in their final report outlines the violation of IHL and universally-accepted human rights as: “According to credible information, the practices and policies enacted since 9/11 have involved international alliances with criminal armed groups; human trafficking; civilian arrests without warrants; denial of the writ of habeas corpus; secret detention; life-threatening, open-air, holding pens; medical neglect; interference of interrogation on medical treatment; fatal, disabling, and disfiguring beatings; hanging by the wrists; threats of death or bodily harm; mauling by military dogs; torture by proxy (extraordinary rendition); controlled drowning (waterboarding); sensory deprivation; sensory assault; forced nudity; temperature and dietary manipulation; sleep deprivation; disorientation in space and time; positional torture (stress positions and prolonged standing); binding torture (tight shackling or cuffing); solitary confinement; indefinite detention; severe humiliation; sexual assaults; assaults with excreta; forced feeding; interference with religious practices; verbal abuse; and the exploitation of cultural idiosyncrasies and personal phobias.”

The study declares: “These policies and practices are outrages upon human dignity, and are subject to criminal prosecution under both national and international law.”

This is exactly what the announcement of U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder dismissed—the accountability, transparency, and truth the United States always urges other nations to adhere to.

Truth, Accountability, Reform and Reconciliation: The Road to Security and the Restoration of American Values recommends:

What are the prospects that these recommendations will be heeded? At present, they are next to nil. Invoking pragmatism, President Obama has called on us to look forwards rather than back, thus failing to realize that we cannot look forwards without looking back. Restoring our values, repairing our image, and curbing terrorism are goals that we must achieve in the future. Yet, none of these goals may be reached if we do not face the past first and objectively assess what has been done in the name of the American people. As far as we can see, this can best be done through an independent, non-partisan, transparent, and thorough investigation into the facts, circumstances, and policies employed in response to the September 11 attacks.

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HYPOCRISY

(Image: d'amour hypocrite. Allégorie de l'hypocrisie. by TwoWings)

Obama's War Against Civilization

by Glen Ford

The U.S. is in a frenzy of regime-changing aggression, aimed at destabilizing or destroying sovereign states. Obama's signature is written in blood around the world, as he pursues "full spectrum, no-holds-barred, war-without-boundaries against all potential resistance to U.S. imperial rule, anywhere on the planet."



President Barack Obama discusses the Ukraine situation with members of his National Security Staff in the Oval Office on 28 February 2014. (White House photo)

The world is learning what U.S. senatorial candidate Barack Obama meant on October 2, 2002, when he told a Chicago crowd that he did not oppose all wars. "What I am opposed to is a dumb war. What I am opposed to is a rash war." We now know that President Obama is committed to full spectrum, no-holds-barred, war-without-boundaries against all potential resistance to U.S. imperial rule, anywhere on the planet—a project he

considers neither rash nor dumb. At stake is survival—not of the people and government of the United States, which face no existential threat from any quarter, but of an empire whose self-defined strategic interests encompass the entire globe. There is a terrifying logic to Washington's frenzy: when the systemic structure is collapsing, it must be propped up everywhere.

President Obama's contribution to the disintegration of the global order is awesome; he is a great innovator. Whereas other U.S. leaders were content to simply violate international law with regularity, Obama has rewritten the statutes. The very concept of national sovereignty has been discarded in favor of a kind of universal parole status overseen by a pyramidal "international community" with the United States at the top. National self-determination—the bedrock of international law—is now treated as a franchise, to be issued or withdrawn at the whim of any coalition the U.S. is able to assemble. For Haiti, a simple troika of the U.S., Canada, and France constituted a quorum empowered to erase 200 years of independence. For Libya, the recognized government's capital crime was its threat to quell a jihadist revolt in one of its cities. The Syrian state has been condemned for resisting tens of thousands of foreign-financed killers who recognize no earthly law whatsoever. The U.S. backs a coup against the lawfully elected government of Ukraine by the direct descendants of Nazis. Simultaneously, Obama

threatens the democratically elected government of Venezuela with dire consequences if it harms a hair on the head of rioters bankrolled and directed by Washington.

It is almost moot to accuse the Obama administration of interfering with the internal affairs of other nations, since this president does not recognize the elementary rights of nation states. National sovereignty has been replaced, in the Age of Obama, by an arbitrary "humanitarian" interventionist imperative that can only be exercised by the most powerful. This is not law, but its opposite: "anti-law," promulgated by a decaying, outlaw empire.

If nations have no sovereign rights, then their inhabitants have no right to self-determination—which is the point of Obama's imperial project. Washington's bid to render all the world's peoples subject to its "humanitarian" veto of their self-determinationist rights represents a devolution of civilization.

In liquidating the fundamental tenets of international law, Obama normalizes the most diabolical crimes: crimes against peace. He has redefined war, for U.S. purposes, as limited to conflicts in which Americans are killed in action. Thus, he told Congress in 2011, the massive bombing of Libya did not constitute a war, or even "hostilities," since no Americans were killed.

No rules of sovereignty, no rules of war, no individual or national rights that a superpower is bound to respect. The United States, under Obama's leadership, is building an infrastructure for fascism on a planetary scale.

Now you know why the U.S. is spying on all the peoples of the Earth: it's trying to put our species on lockdown. That's Obama's mode of war.

Glen Ford is executive editor of the Black Agenda Report (BlackAgendaReport.com) where this article first appeared.

This is what imperialism is all about: to give yourself the right to intervene in far away places and to project power in every corner of the globe, including the arctic, and to disregard world public opinion. Imperialism is to have the temerity to lecture and hector Russia about the evils of intervention in the affairs of its neighbor, Ukraine, where the U.S. and EU are blatantly conspiring against Russian interests there. Imperialism is not only, the highest stage of capitalism, it is the worst and most savage forms of capitalism. Obama sends drones around the world to kill people, including Americans, who have never been put on trial and yet sounds like a peaceful dove when offering lessons to Russia. Basically the U.S. is objecting to attempts by Russia to play a smaller and even far less aggressive version of its own world game. Obama has not noticed what century we are living in.

—As'ad AbuKhalil, professor of political science at California State University. March 01, 2014. Retrieved from The Angry Arab News Service/ angryarab.blogspot.com

History Repeated Sideways

The superior destroying the inferior.
Such was the racism that Nazi Germany built its empire.
I was raised in the military.
My family lived in Germany from 1953-1955.
My father was an Army officer.
While we were there we went through the notorious
Nazi concentration camp at Dachau.
As a nine-year-old child, it shocked me.
Many years later, I was to learn that in 1948,
700,000 Palestinians were violently driven off
their homeland by the Israeli military.
That occupation has never ended.
Just before we left the Dachau concentration camp in 1954,
I stood next to a statue of an emaciated Jewish prisoner.
There was an inscription at the base of the statue by George Santayana:
"Those who do not remember the past are condemned to repeat it."
It is so easy to take on the attributes of the enemy,
because it is so easy to justify the end results.
When I was in Palestine in November 2013,
I was catapulted back to Vietnam,
because I Did remember the past.
I was the enemy in Vietnam.

—Mike Hastie
Army Medic Vietnam
February 10, 2014



Israeli soldiers questioning Palestinian man. West Bank (Hebron), November 2013. (Mike Hastie photo)

Deaths in Other Nations

(continued from page 15)

So the green light was given, but it seemed to be more of a trap. As a part of the public relations strategy to energize the American public into supporting an attack against Iraq, the daughter of the Kuwaiti ambassador to the U.S. falsely testified before Congress that Iraqi troops were pulling the plugs on incubators in Iraqi hospitals. This contributed to a war frenzy in the U.S. The U.S. air assault started on January 17, 1991, and it lasted for 42 days. On February 23, President George H.W. Bush ordered the U.S. ground assault to begin. The invasion took place with much needless killing of Iraqi military personnel. Only about 150 American military personnel died compared to about 200,000 Iraqis, many of whom were mercilessly killed on the Highway of Death. Sanctions were imposed on Iraq from August 1990 until May 2003. In 1995, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN reported that UN sanctions against on Iraq had been responsible for the deaths of more than 560,000 children since 1990. Leslie Stahl on the TV program *60 Minutes* in 1996 mentioned to Madeleine Albright, then U.S. Ambassador to the UN, “We have heard that a half million children have died. I mean, that’s more children than died in Hiroshima. And, and you know, is the price worth it?” Albright replied “I think this is a very hard choice, but the price—we think is worth it.”

Iraq 2003-present. While in some other wars we learned much later about the lies that were used to deceive us, some of the deceptions that were used to get us into this war became known almost as soon as they were uttered. There were no weapons of mass destruction, we were not trying to promote democracy, we were not trying to save the Iraqi people from a dictator. The total number of Iraqi deaths that are a result of our current Iraq War is 654,000, of which 600,000 are attributed to acts of violence, according to Johns Hopkins researchers. Since these deaths are a result of the U.S. invasion, our leaders must accept responsibility for them.

Israel-Palestine. About 100,000 to 200,000 Israelis and Palestinians, but mostly the latter, have been killed in the struggle between those two groups. The U.S. has been a strong supporter of Israel, providing billions of dollars in aid and supporting its possession of nuclear weapons.

Korea, North and South. The Korean War started on June 25, 1950, when, according to the Truman administration, North Korea invaded South Korea. Since then, another explanation emerged which maintains that the attack by North Korea came during a time of many border incursions by both sides. The U.S. started its attack before a UN resolution was passed supporting intervention, and our military forces added to the war’s mayhem by introducing the use of napalm. The bulk of the war’s deaths were South Koreans, North Koreans, and Chinese. Sources give death counts ranging from 1.8 to 4.5 million.



Laos. From 1965 to 1973 during the Vietnam War, the U.S. dropped over two million tons of bombs on Laos—more than was dropped in WWII by both sides. Hundreds of thousands were killed. U.S. military intervention in Laos actually began much earlier. A civil war started in the 1950s when the U.S. recruited a force of 40,000 Laotians to oppose the Pathet Lao, a leftist political party that ultimately took power in 1975. (Also see Vietnam.)

Nepal. Between 8,000 and 12,000 Nepalese have died since a civil war broke out in 1996. The death rate, according to *Foreign Policy in Focus*, sharply increased with the arrival of almost 8,400 American M16 assault rifles and U.S. advisers. In 2002, after another civil war erupted, President George W. Bush pushed a bill through Congress authorizing \$20 million in military aid to the Nepalese government.

Nicaragua. In 1981, the Sandinistas overthrew the Somoza government in Nicaragua and, until 1990, about 25,000 Nicaraguans were killed in an armed struggle between the Sandinista government and Contra rebels (anti-communist guerillas) who were formed from the remnants of Somoza’s national government. In November 1981, the U.S. began providing covert military aid to the Contras. After Congress prohibited the CIA, Defense Department, and any other government agency from providing any further covert military assistance, the National Security Council, which was not explicitly covered by the law, raised private and foreign funds for the Contras.

Pakistan. In 1971, West Pakistan, an authoritarian state supported by the U.S., brutally invaded East Pakistan (now Bangladesh). Millions of people died during that brutal struggle, referred to by some as genocide committed by West Pakistan. That country had long been an ally of the

U.S., starting with \$411 million provided to establish its armed forces which spent 80% of its budget on its military. During the war, \$15 million in arms flowed into West Pakistan. Estimates of numbers of dead vary from 1.5 million to 3 million.

Panama. In December 1989, U.S. troops invaded Panama, ostensibly to arrest president Manuel Noriega, who for a number of years had worked for the CIA but fell out of favor partially because he was not an opponent of the Sandinistas in Nicaragua. It has been estimated that between 500 and 4,000 people died.

Paraguay. See South America: Operation Condor

Philippines. The U.S. has funded and otherwise helped various Philippine governments which sought to suppress the activities of groups working for the welfare of its people. In 1969, the Symington Committee in the U.S. Congress revealed how war material was sent there for a counter-insurgency campaign. U.S. Special Forces and Marines were active in some combat operations. The estimated number of persons that were executed and disappeared under President Fernando Marcos was over 100,000.

South America: Operation Condor. This was a joint operation, established in Chile in 1975, of six despotic South American governments (Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay) to share information about their political opponents, during which an estimated 13,000 people were killed. According to U.S. embassy political officer, John Tipton, the CIA and the Chilean Secret Police were working together (although the CIA did not set up the operation) to make this collaboration work. Reportedly, it ended in 1983. On March 6, 2001, the *New York Times* reported the existence of a declassified State Department document revealing that the U.S. facilitated communications for Operation Condor.

Sudan. Since 1955, when it gained its independence, Sudan has been involved in civil war. As of 2003, approximately 2 million people had been killed. Human rights groups have complained that U.S. policies have helped to prolong the Sudanese civil war by supporting efforts to overthrow the central government in Khartoum. In 1999, U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright met with the leader of the Sudan People’s Liberation Army. She said that she offered him food supplies if he would reject a peace plan sponsored by Egypt and Libya. In 1978, the vastness of Sudan’s oil reserves was discovered and within two years it became the sixth largest recipient of U.S. military aid. In August 1998, the U.S. bombed Khartoum with 75 cruise missiles, saying that the target was a chemical weapons factory. Actually, the plant had been that poor nation’s sole supplier of pharmaceutical supplies. Tens of thousands may have died because of the lack of medicines to treat malaria, tuberculosis and other diseases.

Uruguay. See South America: Operation Condor

Vietnam. The U.S. opposed an election for a unified North and South Vietnam and supported the Diem government in South Vietnam. In August 1964, the CIA and others helped fabricate a phony Vietnamese attack on a U.S. ship in the Gulf of Tonkin and this was used as a pretext for greater U.S. involvement. According to a Vietnamese government statement in 1995, the number of deaths of civilians and military personnel during the Vietnam War was 5.1 million. Since deaths in Cambodia and Laos were about 2.7 million (See Cambodia and Laos), the estimated total for the Vietnam War is 7.8 million.

Yugoslavia. During the Cold War, this socialist federation of several republics gained some support from the U.S. because it refused to be closely tied to the Soviet Union. But when the U.S.S.R. dissolved, Yugoslavia’s usefulness to the U.S. ended, and the U.S. and Germany worked to convert its socialist economy to a capitalist one by a process primarily of dividing and conquering. Ethnic and religious differences were manipulated by the U.S. to cause several wars which resulted in the country’s dissolution. Yugoslavia split into several independent nations whose lowered income, along with CIA connivance, has made it a pawn in the hands of capitalist countries. Various estimates of deaths follow. All wars: 107,000; Bosnia and Krajina: 250,000; Bosnia: 20,000 to 30,000; Croatia: 15,000; and Kosovo: 500 to 5,000.

James A. Lucas, a retired social worker, is an anti-war and anti-imperialist activist member of the September 11 Coalition/Dayton Peace Action. In 2010, he was the recipient of the first Dayton Peace Hero Award granted by the Dayton International Peace Museum.

This article was edited for size. Find a link at WarCrimesTimes.org to the original, more detailed version which includes source notes.

Shame

There are some of us who are ashamed of our patrimony, ashamed of our culture, sometimes ashamed of the nation that bore us.

Indeed, it is because we are kind-hearted and have been raised to empathize with those that suffer, that we feel dishonored by the crimes of our leaders.

It used to be Nazi Germany, fascist Italy, imperial Japan, Stalinist Russia, and Maoist China that were held up to us as paragons of evil.

But now it's our country that the world fears.

We were once symbolized as a knight in shining armor, now we're the Four Horsemen

of the Apocalypse. Each freedom that is taken away from another, enslaves me. Each indignity suffered at our hands, belittles me. Each death from above by drone, each home invasion, each kidnapping, each rendition by our armed representatives, causes me to die a little, causes me to feel ashamed for the crimes of others.

Our leaders lack empathy, lack conscience, lack compassion. They are driven by lust for money, power, and fame. They are embarrassed not so much by their deeds, as by their revelation.

—Joe Michaud
VFP chapter 161, Iowa City
1/16/2014



Tanker's Nightmare

“Let the first act of every morning be to make the following resolve for the day:

- I shall not fear anyone on Earth.
- I shall fear only God.
- I shall not bear ill will toward anyone.
- I shall not submit to injustice from anyone.
- I shall conquer untruth by truth. And in resisting untruth, I shall put up with all suffering.”

— Mahatma Gandhi

ON WAR MEMORIALS

Corporate America be forewarned:
We are your karma
We are your Orion
rising in the night sky
We are the scorpion
in your jackboot

Corporate America be forewarned:
We will not buy
your bloody parades anymore
We refuse your worthless
praise
We reject
your war memorials

Images on this page by Mark Runge

Menis

Corporate America be forewarned:
We will not feed you
our bodies
our minds
our children
anymore

Corporate America be forewarned:
If we have our way
(and we will)
the real war memorials
will rise
from your ashes

—Doug Rawlings

Iraqi Knights



“You have peace,” the old woman said, “when you make it with yourself.”

—Mitch Albom, *The Five People You Meet in Heaven*