

***Truth in Recruiting* – "Don't Believe the Hype!"**

The Tulsa Peace Fellowship's Counter-Recruitment Update/Digest, for Oct 2011

(scroll down for details about any story)

Lead Story since the last edition of TPF's *Truth in Recruiting*:

file under: worth repeating

Okla VFW commander says "Bring the troops home"

--The list of Oklahomans killed overseas continues to get longer. Emmitt Humphrey, the state commander of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, says enough is enough.

related:

Veterans for Peace passes Resolution in favor of Impeachment of Obama for Unauthorized Use of Force

page 1

featured book review:

***We Meant Well: How I Helped Lose the Battle for the Hearts and Minds of the Iraqi People* by Peter Van Buren**

Review author: Realist — Published: Sep 15, 2011

quote:

"If Joseph Heller's war began in 2004 instead of 1944, this would be the book entitled *Catch-22*. Once I picked up *We Meant Well: How I Helped Lose the Battle for the Hearts and Minds of the Iraqi People* (available September 27), I could not put the book down. I could not believe so much that appears to be fictional satire could instead relate actual events. Author Peter Van Buren, a career State Department Foreign Service Officer (FSO), could have been Heller's Yossarian, a traveler adrift in a sea of official insanity, whose survival depends on pretending it is all as it should be until he can escape."

file under: modern warfare and the end of heroism

Pentagon: IED Use Soaring Worldwide

IED Defeat chief says no way to defeat IEDs

related:

Zillion Dollar War Against IEDs: Fail

Unless you are a war investor, says Andrew Cockburn

file under: the militarization of civilian life

5 Household Brands Making a Killing on America's Wars

Learn which so-called "civilian" companies are making big bucks on today's wars.

facts & figures:

Chances are, if you've ever sent a package overnight, bought a PC or a can of soda, you've paid your hard-earned money to a major Pentagon contractor.

file under: the militarization of civilian life

Super Committee Senator Rules Out Military Spending Cuts

Sec'y Panetta seeks to reassure arms makers that, despite civilian budget crunch, the U.S. is still the greatest purveyor of violence in the world today

facts & figures:

According to the terms of the deal struck between Republicans and Democrats this summer, defense-related cuts of up to \$600 billion are to kick in if Congress fails by the end of the year to find at least \$1.2 trillion more in deficit reduction over the same period. The 12 congressional Democrats and Republicans serving on the super committee have until November 23 to forge a deficit-reduction deal that a majority can support.

If they fail, about \$1.2 trillion in spending cuts over 10 years, divided equally between domestic and defense programs, would automatically begin in 2013.

Proponents of lower spending on the U.S. military --already 10 times greater than any other industrialized nation in the world-- are now in the position of hoping the Super Committee fails to do its job, so that the defense cuts actually happen as they should.

related story:

Senators want commission to consider overseas base closings

--call for the closing of dozens of overseas military bases, could save billions in wasteful spending

related Letter to the Editor

Bruce Fein on Defense Spending

quote:

"If the nation embraced the founding fathers' creed of 'Millions for defense, but **not one cent for empire**,' the national security budget could be slashed by 75% to \$300 billion annually without impairing the safety of the United States from foreign attack. It would still leave America with the largest defense budget in the world while diminishing its foreign enemies — precisely because the vast majority of our enemies become such because they resent the U.S. for doing things like propping up foreign despots and using predator drones to indiscriminately kill people."

~Bruce Fein, noted conservative and constitutional expert

featured op/ed from North Texas:

False patriotism: Why Americans should boycott military service

-- Libertarians reject coercion, intimidation and fraud. There is no patriotism in wars of aggression.

quote:

"There is no patriotism in being used as a pawn in a politician's game of self-important strutting on a world stage."



featured radio program: Talk of the Nation 
Soldiers Say It's Hard To Return To Civilian Life

quote:

"I went out into the job market and I'm trying to convey to them that I'm the tip of the spear in medical care, but to be a medic in the Army doesn't transfer out. They were telling me that they were not hiring me because of the lack of [civilian] certification. You don't realize that what the civilian world doesn't care what you learn in the military."

Veterans' unemployment outpaces civilian rate

--Since leaving the Army in 2008, Joseph has found that the rigorous training he gained during 18 years of military service means little to civilian employers.

Dozens of US parachutists injured in German exercise

--Forty-seven US soldiers were injured during a parachuting exercise at a US military base in southern Germany.

file under: SNAFU

Jet with Uranium Ammunition On Board Crashes in Germany

file under: SNAFU 2

Helicopter Crashes in Hawaii , Kills 1 marine and Released Radioactive Material

backpage

US Spy Plane Downed by North Korean 'Jamming'

South Korea Report Says Plane Had to Make Emergency Landing

Red Crescent workers shot in Syria: three volunteers wounded

Motives for the shootings were unclear

UN Secretary General: Palestinian statehood is 'long overdue'

Ban Ki-moon says supports two-state solution for Middle East peace, adding that it was up to UN members whether or not to recognize an independent Palestinian state.

file under: Israel's crimes on the Mediterranean high seas

Turkish premier slams Obama for silence on Israel's Gaza flotilla raid

--Erdogan reiterates Ankara's intent to refer legality of Israel's blockade on Gaza (part of Palestine) to The Hague, saying the world will see 'who is standing alongside the victims'.

related:

Turkish Paper Lists Israelis It Says Were in Flotilla Raid

— A Turkish newspaper published the names and photographs of more than 140 Israeli soldiers who the paper said took part in the raid on a Turkish flotilla to Gaza last year that ended with the death of nine passengers, including one Turkish-American

facts & figures:

Turkey, which holds the Israeli government responsible for the nine deaths, has downgraded diplomatic ties with Israel and expelled the Israeli ambassador in Ankara, the Turkish capital. It says it is prepared to seek legal action against the Gaza blockade in the International Court of Justice.

related event:

Tulsa Peace Fellowship

monthly peace vigil, occupying the corner of 41st & Yale

U.S. OUT OF AFGHANISTAN NOW!

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 5TH, 2011

REMEMBER, REMEMBER, THE 5TH OF NOVEMBER!

12:00 NOON TO 2:00 PM

BRING YOUR OWN PROTEST SIGN, OR BRANDISH ONE OF OURS

Passers-by are encouraged to 'honk for peace', or flash us a peace sign.

epitaph for this edition of "Truth in Recruiting"

War is the most comprehensive social experiment people are capable of engaging in, when the circumstances to which they must conform change. It doesn't even take an order or the special command structure of an army for people to be able to shoot at anything that moves. All it takes is for the benchmarks of what is considered appropriate and correct to change.

Not everything can be blamed on the circumstances. Even under conditions of extreme violence, there are always individuals who defy the prevailing morality of the group. In most cases, and for good reason, it is outsiders who display the kind of behavior one would expect from people with a normal upbringing.

In one of the best-documented cases of a war crime, the massacre in the Vietnamese village of My Lai by American GIs in March 1968, it was a helicopter pilot who kept his fellow soldiers from committing even more murders. It was only when Warrant Officer Hugh Thompson threatened to have his men shoot at their fellow GIs that they stopped their killing spree.

~Jan Fleischhauer, on rape, murder and genocide in times of war
<http://www.spiegel.de/international/germany/0,1518,755385-6,00.html>

The Tulsa Peace Fellowship's Counter-Recruitment Update/Digest, for Oct 2011
lead story

State VFW commander calls for our troops to come home

Aug. 17, 2011

Emmitt Humphrey, the state commander of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, says enough is enough. Humphrey talked to KRMG just before Monday's funeral for Staff Sgt. Kirk Owen in Sapulpa. He told us it is time to bring our boys home.

"This has gone on for ten years and we've lost way too many individuals. I may be criticized for saying that, but I don't really care."

Humphrey is no stranger to war. He served in Vietnam in 1969.

"We spent way too many years over there but not ten like our young men and women have been today. It's gone on for too long."

<http://www.krmg.com/news/news/local/state-vfw-commander-calls-our-troops-come-home/nDKXd/>

select comments, from facebook users:

Randy Smith : The VFW said that? Wow, that's really big.

Rodney Boegel : Its PAST TIME to bring them home. Bravo for the VFW!

Veterans for Peace passes Resolution for the Impeachment of President Barack H. Obama For War Crimes

Resolution passed at their August plenary meeting:

Whereas, President Obama, on 19 March 2011, committed a criminal act by ordering the U.S. military to war in Libya without first obtaining the consent of the U.S. Congress in a direct violation of the U.S. Constitution, and

Whereas, the illegal U.S. invasion, bombing and occupation of Iraq initiated by the Bush administration continues under the Obama administration; and

Whereas, the U.S. government is currently engaged in illegal wars in Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Yemen, Somalia, and Libya, and President Obama pledged to increase the number of military personnel and tax dollars spent on the these wars, and

Whereas, the U.S. military used and continues to use depleted uranium munitions, cluster bombs and white phosphorous in densely populated areas in violation of U.S. laws and international laws and treaties prohibiting the indiscriminate killing of civilians; and,

Whereas, the Geneva Conventions specifically prohibit the use of especially injurious weapons and materials causing unnecessary harm that remain active and lethal after battle, and over large areas of land, and

Whereas, large numbers of babies born in Iraq and Afghanistan suffer life-long illness and deformity like severe disfigurements and brain damage, Down's syndrome, and weak hearts doctors state are caused by the U.S. military's massive and widespread use of toxic and radioactive materials, and

Whereas, millions upon millions of Iraqi, Afghani, Pakistani, Yemeni, Somali, and Libyan civilians have been maimed, poisoned, displaced from their homes, and killed in a direct result of ongoing, illegal acts of war by the United States, and

Whereas, illegal, immoral and counterproductive detainee torture and brutalization at the hands of the U.S. military's Immediate Reaction Force continue at Guantanamo under the Obama administration and in particular, the torture of Pfc. Bradley Manning at Quantico, Virginia, and

Whereas, President Obama is an accessory after the fact in obstructing justice by failing to order the Department of Justice to initiate investigations into numerous and blatant U.S. war crimes committed by the Bush administration, [etcetera]

http://veteransforpeace.org/convention_resolutions_2011a.vp.html

Book Review: *We Meant Well: How I Helped Lose the Battle for the Hearts and Minds of the Iraqi People* by Peter Van Buren

Author: Realist — Published: Sep 15, 2011

If Joseph Heller's war began in 2004 instead of 1944, this would be the book entitled Catch-22. Once I picked up *We Meant Well: How I Helped Lose the Battle for the Hearts and Minds of the Iraqi People* (available September 27), I could not put the book down. I could not believe so much that appears to be fictional satire could instead relate actual events.

Author Peter Van Buren, a career State Department Foreign Service Officer (FSO), could have been Heller's Yossarian, a traveler adrift in a sea of official insanity, whose survival depends on pretending it is all as it should be until he can escape. He relates tales of incredible hubris, inedible military rations, of status-seeking superiors and shady local grifters, corrupt "businessmen" both native and contracted, of brass-polishing officers and resigned enlisted personnel. All of these people are assigned to distribute massive mounds of Your Money in a poorly-researched and badly-managed effort to convert Iraq from an ancient tribal culture into a clone of suburban America while mired in a war with cultural and religious overtones. Yet the most basic needs of the local people are completely ignored in the incompetent planning of some incredibly expensive community development projects intended to nation-build Iraq.

The FSOs justify all of this frantic activity to their superiors via fabricated reports (as directed and edited by their superiors) through claiming spectacular successes with projects intended to meet local needs; in reality, the outcomes constitute failures that even the local residents understand to be exercises in lavishly expensive foolishness. This is described in a project intended to both employ idle Iraqis and to improve security for patrols by removing trash from the streets. Each night, all of the removed trash would be returned to the streets for the next day's effort. No lasting results get produced, and no one ever follows up to see where all the money really went. The only requirement is that once a project is approved and funded, it must all be spent — quickly! There would be hell to pay if there was anything left unissued. Then the project is stamped completed and abandoned.

Read full review online: <http://blogcritics.org/books/article/book-review-we-meant-well-how/>

Pentagon: IED Use Soaring Worldwide

IED Defeat chief says no way to defeat IEDs

by Jason Ditz, October 19, 2011

In comments which likely don't augur well for his organization's future, Lt. Gen. Michael Barbero, the head of the Joint Improvised Explosive Device Defeat Organization, suggested there was no real way to defeat improvised explosive devices.

“If we think its going away after Iraq and Afghanistan, we’re dreaming,” Barbero said, noting that Pentagon stats show the weapons’ use soaring across the world, more than doubling in the past three years.

“It’s going to confront us operationally for decades,” Barbero added, terming the use of IEDs an “enduring threat.” The cheap, virtually impossible to detect explosives have become a major thorn in the side of the US military.

<http://news.antiwar.com/2011/10/19/pentagon-ied-use-soaring-worldwide/>

related story:

Zillion Dollar War Against IEDs: Fail

Unless you are a war investor, says Andrew Cockburn

Cockburn interviewed by Scott Horton, antiwar.com
October 19, 2011

Andrew Cockburn, author of [*Rumsfeld: His Rise, Fall and Catastrophic Legacy*](#), discusses his article “[Search and destroy: The Pentagon’s losing battle against IEDs](#),” the \$70 billion “Manhattan Project” to combat \$20 homemade landmines – that remain as effective as ever; how the military rejects cheap low-tech solutions and keeps the cash flowing to defense contractors

Interview available on demand as MP3 file

[MP3 here](#). (19:31)

<http://antiwar.com/radio/2011/10/19/andrew-cockburn-3/>

FedEx and Pepsi Are Top Defense Contractors?

5 Corporate Brands Making a Killing on America’s Wars

Learn which "civilian" companies are making big bucks on today's wars.

September 3, 2011

By Nick Turse

Chances are, if you’ve ever sent a package overnight, bought a PC or a can of soda, you’ve paid your hard-earned money to a major Pentagon contractor.

Tens of thousands of “civilian” companies, from multi-national corporations hawking toothpaste and shampoo to big oil behemoths and even local restaurants scattered across the United States, all supply the Pentagon with the necessities used to carry on day-to-day operations and wage America’s wars. And they’ve made a killing doing it since 9/11.

Chris Hellman of the National Priorities Project, writing recently at TomDispatch.com, noted that since the 9/11 attacks, the United States has spent about \$8 trillion on national security. Even accounting for all the funds paid out for troop salaries, overseas base construction and the training and equipping indigenous allies in Iraq and Afghanistan, among many other costs, it's clear that vast sums of Pentagon money are flowing somewhere other than to the top weapons-makers. Unknown to most U.S. taxpayers and even many Pentagon-watchers, some of the largest and most recognizable corporations in the world have also been getting rich on America's wars. Below are five examples of "civilian" companies that have reaped major rewards from the Pentagon during its last decade at war:

1. BP: The oil giant, perhaps most famous for dumping 206 million gallons of crude into the Gulf of Mexico last year, is also a perennial power when it comes to Pentagon contracts. Back in 2001, BP nabbed a cool \$357 million in contracts from the Department of Defense. Last year, the number hit \$1 billion and it's no secret why. As defense-tech writer Noah Shachtman noted at Foreign Policy last year, the U.S. military burns "22 gallons of diesel [fuel] per soldier per day in Afghanistan, at a cost of more than \$100,000 a person annually."
2. FedEx: The overnight shipping giant is a long-time defense-contracting powerhouse that has also seen an exponential increase in contract dollars since September 10, 2001, when its stock was trading at just under \$40 per share. By the end of that year, FedEx had been awarded about \$211 million in contracts from the Pentagon. In 2010, the company received \$1.4 billion from the Department of Defense and this year, with its stock closing in on \$80 per share, has already passed the \$1 billion mark, again. This includes a \$182 million deal, inked in August, to pack and ship fresh fruit and vegetables to U.S. military bases overseas and a joint agreement, which also includes United Parcel Service (UPS) and Polar Air Cargo, which could last up to five years and potentially net the companies a combined \$853 million.
3. Dell: If you're in the military and you want to pilot a drone, transfer supplies or write a memo, you need a computer. That's just what Dell provides. The desktop- and laptop-maker has been plying the Pentagon with computers for many years and, just like Lockheed, Boeing and Northrop Grumman, has done especially well by the Department of Defense since 2001. That year, Dell was awarded \$65 million in Pentagon contracts. By 2009, that number had jumped to \$731 million and, over the course of the decade, has added up to a total of \$4.3 billion in contracts for the PC manufacturer.
4. Kraft – From A-1 steak sauce, their signature mayonnaise and Oreo cookies to Oscar Meyer hot dogs, Planters peanuts and Wheat Thins crackers, this company ranks as one of the largest and best known food concerns in the world. Not surprisingly, it also does a brisk business with the Pentagon which has grown ever larger during the last decade. Back in 2001, Kraft inked \$148 million in deals with the Department of Defense, by 2010, its yearly take had risen to \$373 million.
5. Pepsi – Once upon a time it was the "choice of a new generation." These days, it's the choice of the Pentagon. In 2010, PepsiCo washed down \$217 million in Defense Department contract dollars, compared to the mere \$61 million in deals it inked back in 2001. Earlier this year, the company continued the trend by signing a multi-million dollar deal to provide the Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps with "bag-in-box beverages." (That very same day, Coca-Cola also received a slightly larger contract to provide drinks for the military.)

Other big-name firms that are regularly awarded large, lucrative deals from the Defense Department include tire titans Goodrich and Goodyear, oil giants Shell and Exxon Mobil, big food suppliers like Nestle, General Mills, Tyson, ConAgra and Campbell's Soup, and tech and telecom stalwarts including

AT&T, Oracle, Sony and Verizon.

A decade of waging wars abroad, from Iraq and Afghanistan to Pakistan and Libya to Yemen and Somalia hasn't been kind to average Americans. As the United States poured nearly \$8 trillion into national security spending, and the national debt ballooned from \$6 trillion to \$14.3 trillion, the official unemployment rate has more than doubled -- from 4.5% to 9.1%. Meanwhile the number of children living in poverty in the U.S. has jumped nearly 20% since 2000, according to the National Center for Children in Poverty. And for older Americans, the risk of hunger has spiked almost 80% since 2001, according to a recent report by AARP. But from car companies to candy makers and even the biggest brands in organic food, so many of the world's favorite companies have, over these years, cashed in on America's wars.

In his famous 1961 farewell address, President Dwight Eisenhower warned of the "acquisition of unwarranted influence" by what he called the "military-industrial complex." Today, however, the "large arms industry" that Eisenhower warned about is only part of the equation. Civilian firms such as FedEx and PepsiCo form the backbone of what more accurately can be described as a military-corporate complex of "civilian" businesses that enable the Pentagon to function, to make war and to carry out foreign occupations.

Almost a decade after Eisenhower's farewell address, there were still only about 22,000 prime contractors doing business with the Department of Defense. Last year, according to U.S. government records, the number stood at almost 135,000. The reasons why are simple. Big war budgets and ever-increasing national security spending have made the Pentagon's deep, taxpayer-filled pockets especially attractive as a stable source of income in economically uncertain times.

http://www.alternet.org/story/152295/fedex_and_pepsi_are_top_defense_contractors_5_corporate_brands_making_a_killing_on_america%E2%80%99s_wars?page=entire

Super Committee Senator Rules Out Military Spending Cuts

Panetta Seeks to Reassure Arms Makers of Budget
by Jason Ditz, September 09, 2011

Various arms makers meeting with Defense Secretary Leon Panetta, have been reassured that he is firmly against the cuts, which he termed a "doomsday mechanism." (sic)

The US military's budget, as it stands, is the largest in the history of mankind. That each year going forward will be an even bigger budget is taken as a matter of course by the committee, and Sen. Kyl's anger stems primarily from concerns that those future record budgets won't be big enough increases over the previous year.

<http://news.antiwar.com/2011/09/09/super-committee-senator-rules-out-military-spending-cuts/>

TPF: Of course U.S. senators in heavily militarized districts are going to stomp and scream if military budgets are cut; they are in office only because of defense industry campaign funders. This is what Eisenhower warned us about: the military-industrial-congressional complex.

more facts & figures:

President Obama's 2012 official budget request:

The baseline request for the Department of Defense (DOD) is \$558 billion. The supplemental request to fight the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq is \$118 billion. The request for the Department of Energy's development and housing of nuclear weapons is \$19.3 billion. DOD has \$7.8 billion requested for "Miscellaneous." The State Department requests \$8.7 billion for counterterrorism programs. An additional \$71.6 billion is requested for homeland security counterterrorism, including \$18.1 billion for DOD and \$53.5 billion for the Department of Homeland Security, the Department of Justice and the Department of Health and Human Services. National Intelligence Programs are budgeted for \$53.1 billion. The Department of Veterans Affairs requests \$129.3 billion to treat wounded veterans, a figure that is climbing exponentially as soldiers return from Iraq and Afghanistan with mental and emotional traumas.

The foreign affairs budget, including both its military and counterterrorism components, is \$18 billion. Payments to military and DOD civilian retirees are budgeted at \$68.5 billion. Interest on the national debt attributed to past borrowing to fund the Pentagon is \$185 billion.

This brings the national security budget of the United States for FY 2012 to a **staggering total exceeding \$1.2 trillion**, or approximately one-third of the entire budget and almost 100 percent of the projected budget deficit.

related story:

Senators want commission to consider overseas base closings

by Leo Shane III, for *Stars and Stripes*
October 19, 2011

WASHINGTON — A pair of U.S. senators are calling for full review of the costs of overseas military bases, saying that closing dozens of the foreign facilities could save billions in wasteful spending.

Sens. Jon Tester, D-Mont., and Kay Bailey Hutchison, R-Texas, on Wednesday introduced legislation to create a new commission to "scrutinize the necessity of the United States' current overseas basing structure" and do a cost-benefit analysis of closing multiple overseas bases.

Earlier in the week, the pair sent a letter to the congressional supercommittee charged with trimming \$1.2 trillion in government spending, urging them to make significant cuts in future overseas military construction projects.

In particular, the letter called into question U.S. military projects in Europe and on Guam, saying the Defense Department has not justified the need for billions more in base spending there.

The National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform earlier this year estimated that "responsible" overseas base closings could save taxpayers \$8.5 billion in the next four years. The

president's own Commission on Debt Reduction put that figure closer to \$9 billion.

<http://www.stripes.com/news/senators-want-commission-to-consider-overseas-base-closings-1.158192>

featured op/ed from North Texas:

False patriotism: Why Americans should boycott military service

Garry Reed, *Libertarian News Examiner*

October 16, 2011

Libertarians reject coercion, intimidation and fraud, whether from government or individuals. Government, after all, is ultimately just a collection of individuals.

America's politicians - those individuals of government - fight wars of aggression, wars of empire, wars of personal ego, and give us fraudulent reasons for doing so.

There is no longer any shred of justification for the traditional mindless authority-idolizing government-worshipping knee-jerk patriotism paraded by the political right and opportunistically mimicked by the political left.

Soldiers today are not serving their country; they are simply serving their corrupt politicians.

The American military is supposed to be our protection against invasion from foreign aggressors. Instead, it has become nothing more than a plaything of the political classes.

While you're taking shrapnel in foreign lands your politician is eating caviar in the backseat of his limo on his way to his vacation condo that your stolen tax dollars bought for him.

While you're learning to walk on a prosthetic leg your politician is sending his son to Harvard with the tax money he stole from your parents.

While you're burying your buddies with flags and bugles and 21-gun salutes the politician who sent them to their deaths is having afternoon sex with his mistress.

And while your dead young body is rotting in its grave your politician is writing his self-serving ego-preening memoirs.

The only true patriotism a soldier can claim is fighting against foreign invaders who would enslave or kill his family and friends.

There is no patriotism in wars of aggression.

There is no patriotism in being used as a pawn in a politician's game of self-important strutting on a world stage.

The only way to make the politicians stop using military personnel as their own private battlefield fodder is for young people to boycott the military until the politicians have no choice but to stop their empire building and return to defending America.

This is why truly patriotic Americans who believe in freedom and decency and justice are saying, "[The World Can't Wait](#)," "[We Are Not Your Soldiers!](#)" and "[Do Not Join The Military](#)."

<http://www.examiner.com/libertarian-news-in-national/false-patriotism-why-americans-should-boycott->

military-service

Talk of the Nation



Soldiers Say It's Hard To Return To Civilian Life

October 10, 2011, 1:00 PM

[LISTEN NOW](#)

It's a rare time in U.S. military history: During the longest period of sustained warfare, members of the military make up just one-half of 1 percent of the U.S. population. With fewer people sharing the burden, many veterans are having a difficult time adjusting to civilian life.

Guests

Spc. Nick Colgin, out-of-work veteran

Paul Taylor, executive vice president, Pew Research Center

Gen. Mike Davidson, retired Army major general

<http://www.wbur.org/npr/141213271/soldiers-say-its-hard-to-return-to-civilian-life>

Veterans' unemployment outpaces civilian rate

by Michael A. Fletcher

CLEVELAND — Despite the marketing pitch from the armed forces, which promises to prepare soldiers for the working world, recent veterans are more likely to be unemployed than their civilian counterparts.

Veterans who left military service in the past decade have an unemployment rate of 11.7 percent, well above the overall jobless rate of 9.1 percent, according to fresh data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

The elevated unemployment rate for new veterans has persisted despite repeated efforts to reduce it.

A Pew Research Center survey released this month found that 44 percent of veterans who served in the past decade called the transition back to civilian life difficult — nearly double the rate of veterans who served before them.

Veterans receive preference when applying for federal and a wide range of other government jobs. They qualify for government-funded education and job training. Industry groups such as the U.S.

Chamber of Commerce host job fairs aimed at veterans. And a host of firms target veterans for jobs they consider hard to fill.

But such programs have not significantly reduced the jobless rate among veterans.

“There are not that many people who have a military background, and they need to go about the process of learning how military skills relate to other jobs,” said Bill Scott, a vice president at Bradley-Morris, a career placement firm that focuses on veterans.

Trenton Marshall, 25, shipped out for the Navy in 2005. He was in Jacksonville, Fla., for most of that time, training and working as an aviation machinist’s mate. Now he is out of work, waiting to start school at Cleveland State University, where he plans to use his veteran’s benefits to train as a physician’s assistant.

“I hit the revolving door,” he said. “In interviews, people are all smiles. ‘Thank you for your service. You did a great deed.’ All of that. But then you’d get a letter saying you are unqualified, and you sit there like ‘say what?’”

© The Washington Post Company

http://www.washingtonpost.com/business/economy/veterans-unemployment-outpaces-civilian-rate/2011/10/04/gIQA1qLepL_print.html

Dozens of US parachutists injured in German exercise

Oct 6, 2011, *Deutsche Press-Agentur*

Regensburg, Germany - Forty-seven US soldiers were injured during a parachuting exercise at a US military base in southern Germany, a newspaper reported Thursday.

'They have been well trained, but it's not unusual for there to be injuries with these kinds of jumps,' a military spokeswoman told the daily *Mittelbayerische Zeitung*.

Of those reporting injuries, 23 were hospitalized in Regensburg.

The spokeswoman said that some Polish troops had also participated in the exercise, but none of them had sustained injuries.

http://www.monstersandcritics.com/news/europe/news/article_1667229.php/Dozens-of-US-parachutists-injured-in-German-exercise

Jet with Uranium Ammunition on board crashed, in Germany

A-10 Thunderbolt II crashes near Spangdahlem Air Base

By Kevin Dougherty and Marcus Klöckner
for *Stars and Stripes*
April 1, 2011

KAISERSLAUTERN, Germany — A U.S. Air Force A-10 Thunderbolt II aircraft crashed near Spangdahlem Air Base on Friday afternoon while on a routine training mission. The pilot was injured, complained of back pains, and taken to a nearby hospital.

Air Force investigators and firefighters were on the scene, according to a 52nd Fighter Wing news release.

“The jet crashed on a field roughly 250-300 meters away from the town,” said Laufeld Mayor Karl-Josef Junk, who was standing outside his house when the plane crashed.

<http://www.stripes.com/news/europe/germany/a-10-thunderbolt-ii-crashes-near-spangdahlem-air-base-1.139749>

file under: SNAFU 2

Helicopter Crashes in Hawaii , Kills 1 marine and Released Radioactive Material

Environmental activist Carroll Cox says a helicopter that crashed onto the Kaneohe Sandbar on the evening of March 29, killing one marine and injuring three others, released radioactive material into the surrounding area. Cox says he was informed a week-and-a-half ago by military sources that the CH-53D Sea Stallion helicopter contained a device known as an In-flight Blade Inspection System, or IBIS. Within the device are six half inch pellets that contain the radioactive isotope strontium-90, a known carcinogen with a half life of 29 years that's easily absorbed by human bones. "I'm told by sources that some did contaminate, that meant that these capsules were breeched," Cox said in an interview with Khon2. "I would like to see is an independent entity sample that area." Cox believes the popular three acre sandbar should be off-limits ahead of the Labor Day weekend until the state Health Department and the Department of Land and Natural Resources can guarantee there is no risk to the public. "Sacrifice one holiday rather than sacrificing the untold numbers out there that may become exposed," he said. DLNR spokeswoman Deborah Ward said testing of the sandbar where the helicopter went down would proceed Friday morning in an effort to reassure the public that all is safe. "We'll go out and do an assessment and make a determination later that day," said Ward.

Late Thursday, Marine Corps Base Hawaii spokesman Maj. Alan Crouch said testing of the sandbar had already been performed and no radiological contamination was found at the crash site. Crouch confirmed low levels of radiation were found during the nine days that crews worked to remove wreckage of the helicopter off the sandbar. "During the recovery efforts, some aircraft components were found to have a low level of contamination," Crouch said in a written statement. "All materials found to be contaminated were decontaminated or appropriately contained here on base. All personnel involved in the handling of any contaminated material were screened to verify they were not contaminated."

In a post-accident report obtained by Cox and dated August 31, the Marine Corps notes the release of jet fuel, oil and hydraulic fluid from the downed helicopter, but there's no mention of strontium-90. David Henkin, chairman of the Kahaluu Neighborhood Board, said it's disappointing the military chose to keep the release of radioactive material a secret, even if it posed no risk to the public. "It's disappointing that the marines didn't report that to the community," said Henkin, a Honolulu attorney. "We're about to go into the Labor Day weekend and there's going to be a lot of families out there; we want to make sure that they're safe." Cox said the first thing that came to mind after learning about the presence of strontium-90 at the crash site was the welfare of those who rushed to the scene, which included personnel from the U.S. Coast Guard, the Marine Corps and the Honolulu Fire Department. "The biggest concern I had was for the first responders, the City and County of Honolulu fire fighters," said Cox. "I'm informed that they were not told."

HFD spokesman Capt. Terry Seelig said he could not confirm whether fire fighters knew about the possible presence of a radiological substance while headed to the crash site. He said that information would be available Friday at the earliest. Khon2 and other media have been invited to Friday's inspection of the sandbar by DLNR and state Health Department staff. Look for that report Friday evening.

<http://hisz.rsoe.hu/alertmap/index2.php>

More coverage:

Kaneohe sandbar deemed safe after radiological testing

Reported by: Andrew Pereira

Published: 2nd Sept 2011

KANEOHE (Hawaii) -- A sweep of the Kaneohe sandbar Friday by six members of the state's Indoor and Radiological Health Branch turned up no evidence of radiological contamination from a helicopter crash five months ago.

"We got mainly background radiation," said Jeff Eckerd, IRHB's program manager. "We did not get any hits or spikes."

The testing was ordered Thursday after environmental activist Carroll Cox received information that the CH-53D Sea Stallion helicopter that crashed onto the sandbar March 29, killing one marine and injuring three others, contained an In-flight Blade Inspection System. Within the device are six half inch pellets that contain 500 microcuries of strontium-90, a radioactive substance known to be harmful if ingested.

"It's a bone seeker," explained Eckerd. "It can get in and possibly cause bone cancer in high quantities."

The six member team held Geiger counters above two feet of water that covered the sandbar at low tide. They ended up near the site of the helicopter crash and reported back to State Land Director William Aila.

"We're asking for more information from Marine Corps Base Hawaii in terms of the levels of contamination that they found immediately after (the crash) and all of the reports regarding the recovery of materials," Aila told Khon2.

Marine Corps Base Hawaii spokesman Maj. Alan Crouch stressed that the amount of strontium-90 released into the environment as crews removed the helicopter off the sandbar was not a “reportable quantity.” He said some military personnel were exposed, but at minimal levels.

“All personnel involved in the recovery exposed to low level contamination were interviewed and appropriately evaluated,” Crouch wrote in an email. “Given the small amount of potential contamination, if anyone exposed were contaminated, it would be very minimal, roughly similar to the radiation from two chest X-rays.”

However Aila expressed concern DLNR was not immediately notified about the presence of strontium-90 on the downed helicopter, even if it posed no risk to first responders or state conservation officers.

“This is state land, it's not Marine Corps base land,” said Aila. “We certainly registered some strong feelings about not being kept in the loop. We are in some very stern discussions with the Marine Corps base right now and working to ensure that situation doesn't occur in the future.”

Due to rigorous standards, officials at Marine Corps Base Hawaii carved out asphalt that came into contact with strontium-90 after a raft used to collect the helicopter’s IBIS system was placed on what’s known as the waterfront ops area.

“As a part of the mitigation, approximately 65 square feet of asphalt was removed from an area where contaminated components were temporarily located and isolated,” said Crouch. “Thorough inspections were done at all aircraft component locations - both during and after recovery and salvage operations - to confirm there was no remaining contamination.”

First responders who rushed to the scene of the crash included personnel from Marine Corps Base, Hawaii, the U.S. Coast Guard and Honolulu Fire Department.

HFD spokesman Capt. Terry Seelig believes fire fighters were never in any danger. “The material that was present, even in its entirety if it was all out of the capsules, wasn’t that much to cause a concern,” he said.

Cox however is still not satisfied with the military’s response to the release of strontium-90 and is demanding further testing.

“Create an effort to go and address this problem because people can be sickened,” said Cox. “People can die from this neglect of duty.”

The state Health Department is checking whether the Marine Corps was required to report the release of strontium-90 to the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, which monitors the use of radiological substances.

“That is what we're checking with the NRC,” said Eckerd, “to see if an actual notification was submitted to them.”

<http://www.khon2.com/news/local/story/Kaneohe-sandbar-deemed-safe-after-radiological/hWB71NHZkkqBJgVGe5ZI3w.csp?rss=1803>

more coverage still:

KHON also reported that there will be a further inspection today (Friday) of the sandbar prior to the Labor Day holiday when the sandbar is expected to be crowded with families including children.

Khon2 and other media have been invited to Friday's inspection of the sandbar by DLNR and state Health Department staff. Look for that report Friday evening.

Most likely, given the span of time since the crash, any contamination has washed into the waters of Kaneohe Bay.

<http://www.disappearednews.com/2011/09/kaneohe-sandbar-helicopter-crash-site.html>

The Tulsa Peace Fellowship's Counter-Recruitment Update/Digest, for Oct 2011
backpage

US Spy Plane Downed by North Korean 'Jamming' During March Drill

South Korea Report Says Plane Had to Make Emergency Landing
by Jason Ditz, September 09, 2011

According to officials, the plane's GPS system failed because of jamming signals broadcast in North Korea's cities of Haeju and Kaesong. It was forced to land just 45 minutes after it took off.

Tensions between North and South Korea had been rising during the period, and South Korean officials repeatedly announced new military drills along the tense naval border for several months leading up to the incident.

<http://news.antiwar.com/2011/09/09/us-spy-plane-downed-by-north-korean-jamming-during-march-drill/>

Red Crescent workers shot in Syria

Published: Sept. 9, 2011

HOMS, Syria, Sept. 9 (UPI) -- Three volunteers with the Syrian Red Crescent Society were wounded when their ambulance was fired upon in Homs, the Red Cross said.

The International Committee of the Red Cross said three volunteers with the Syrian Arab Red Crescent were wounded, one seriously, when their ambulance was fired upon after it ran over downed power lines.

"The Syrian Arab Red Crescent, the International Committee of the Red Cross and the International

Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies join in calling on all those involved in the violence to do their utmost to facilitate Red Crescent efforts to come to the aid, in a fully impartial manner, of those in need," the ICRC said in a statement.

The ICRC said circumstances surrounding the shootings were unclear.

Damascus has faced increasing international isolation for its violent crackdown on anti-regime demonstrators. More than 2,000 people have been killed, allegedly by Syrian forces, since the uprising against Syrian President Bashar Assad began early this year.

ICRC President Jakob Kellenberger met with Assad this week following a visit to the central prison in Damascus.

http://www.upi.com/Top_News/Special/2011/09/09/Red-Crescent-workers-shot-in-Syria/UPI-23271315584656/

UN Secretary General: Palestinian statehood is 'long overdue'

Ban Ki-moon says supports two-state solution for Middle East peace, adding that it was up to UN members whether or not to recognize an independent Palestinian state.

By Haaretz

Sept 9th, 2011

The Palestinian people are "long overdue" in their quest for an independent state, United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon said on Friday, ahead of a Palestinian push for statehood in the UN planned for later this month.

Ban's comments came a day after Palestinian activists launched a campaign for the recognition of a Palestinian state in the United Nations.

In a letter addressed to Ban's Ramallah office, Palestinian activists urged the leader of the international community to "exert all possible efforts toward the achievement of the Palestinian people's just demands."

Speaking on Friday, the UN chief was quoted by the French news agency AFP as saying he fully supported Palestinian statehood: "The two state vision where Israel and Palestinians can live... side by side in peace and security -- that is a still a valid vision and I fully support it."

"And I support also the statehood of Palestinians; an independent, sovereign state of Palestine. It has been long overdue," Ban told reporters in Canberra, adding that a "recognition of a state is something to be determined by the member states."

Ban stressed the point further, saying, according to AFP, that it was not a decision to be made "by the Secretary General so I leave it to the member states to decide to recognize or not to recognize."

Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas said the Palestinian request for recognition of statehood within the 1967 borders had reached a point of no return and he could not retract it.

<http://www.haaretz.com/news/diplomacy-defense/un-secretary-general-palestinian-statehood-is-long-overdue-1.383504>

Erdogan slams Obama for silence on Israel's Gaza flotilla raid

Turkish premier reiterates Ankara's intent to refer legality of Israel's blockade on Gaza to The Hague, saying the world will see 'who is standing alongside the victims'.

By DPA and Haaretz

10th Sept 2011

Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan reiterated on Saturday his country's intent to refer the legality of Israel's Gaza blockade to The Hague, adding a criticism of U.S. President Barack Obama's position regarding Israel's 2010 of a Turkish Gaza-bound flotilla.

Speaking a convention of businessmen in the central Turkish city of Kayseri broadcast live on Turkey's state news channel TRT Erdogan vowed to continue the legal struggle for justice for the nine people killed in the raid [including one American killed].

Erdogan was also deeply critical of the United States position on the Mavi Marmara incident, pointing out that he had to point out to Obama how the attack had left nine Turks dead from wounds inflicted by 35 bullets mostly fired from close range, one of them an American passport holder.

"I asked President Obama whether the reason he showed no interest in one of his nationals being killed was because [the victim] was [ethnically] Turkish - he didn't reply," said Erdogan.

Erdogan's comments came a week Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu first indicated that Turkey was to appeal the International Court of Justice in The Hague as soon as next week in order to probe the legality of Israel's naval blockade on the Gaza Strip, saying that Turkey could not "accept the blockade on Gaza."

"We cannot say that the blockade aligns with international law," he said, adding that the stance taken by the Palmer Commission Report was the author's "personal opinion, one which does not correspond with Turkey's position."

He added: "We are bound by the International Court of Justice. We say that the ICJ decides."

<http://www.haaretz.com/news/diplomacy-defense/erdogan-slams-obama-for-silence-on-israel-s-gaza-flotilla-raid-1.383618>

Turkish Paper Lists Israeli Soldiers It Says Were in Flotilla Raid, Complicit in Crime on High Seas

By Sebnem Arsu

September 26, 2011

New York Times

ISTANBUL — A Turkish newspaper published the names and photographs on Monday of more than 140 Israeli soldiers who the paper said took part in the raid on a Turkish flotilla to Gaza last year that ended with the death of nine passengers and created a diplomatic standoff between Turkey and Israel.

The newspaper, Sabah, said the Turkish government began searching for the soldiers' identities after the Israeli authorities failed to cooperate in an investigation that prosecutors in Turkey said could lead to legal action.

The newspaper report received scant attention in Israel, where officials declined to comment. Others there described it as a recycled conglomeration of similar lists that have been circulating on the Internet.

Television analysts in Israel noted that the list included some well-known Israeli figures who had long since left the military, which they said gave some indication of its accuracy. There is, however, real concern in Israel about Turkey's threats of legal action over the raid.

The newspaper, a pro-government daily, reported that a senior Turkish prosecutor had authorized the investigation, which filtered all available film and other visuals from the flotilla raid for facial images that could be matched to photographs on social networks like Facebook and Twitter.

Some of the names, Sabah said, were provided by flotilla passengers who were interrogated by the Israelis after the lead ship was towed in May 2010 to the port of Ashdod, in Israel. Others were gleaned from public postings and the Web links they contained.

Sabah said the list would be forwarded to the Israeli military for confirmation before any legal action was taken in Turkey or abroad.

The Turkish government holds Israel responsible for the deaths of the nine passengers. The Israeli government has refused to officially apologize for the raid on the flotilla, which was trying to break Israel's blockade of Gaza. Turkey has said an apology is a condition for the normalization of relations, and it is demanding that Israel provide compensation for relatives of the dead and that it lift the Gaza embargo.

Turkey, which has downgraded diplomatic ties with Israel and expelled the Israeli ambassador in Ankara, the capital, says it is prepared to seek legal action against the Gaza blockade in the International Court of Justice.

Isabel Kershner contributed reporting from Jerusalem.

http://www.nytimes.com/2011/09/27/world/europe/turkish-paper-names-israelis-it-says-were-in-flotilla-raid.html?_r=1&partner=rss&emc=rss

The Tulsa Peace Fellowship's Counter-Recruitment Update/Digest, for Oct 2011
masthead

who we are:

***The Tulsa Peace Fellowship** is the activist wing of the peace movement in Eastern Oklahoma, building the left-right antiwar alliance. TPF offers citizens and community groups tools and resources to participate personally in our democracy, to help shape federal budget and policy priorities, and to promote peace, social and economic justice, and human rights. TPF is a registered non-profit organization and a non-partisan civic-sector organization, loosely affiliated with the Unitarian Universalist Church of the Restoration, north side of Tulsa.*

"Waging Peace One Person at a Time".

Through its counter-recruitment task force, TPF is a member of the **National Network in Opposition to the Militarization of Youth (NNOMY)** representing some 188 counter-recruitment groups in cities and towns across the country. On the web: http://www.nnomy.org/joomla/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=216&Itemid=91

Tulsa Peace Fellowship is open to members of third parties, independents, progressives, Democrats, Republicans, Libertarians, Green Party members, etc. If you have not already done so, please join the **new social networking tool for TPF on Ning**, in lieu of TPFtalks on yahoogroups, which has fallen into disuse. Thank you! You can check out our new tool here: <http://tulsapeacefellowship.ning.com> (new for 2011) Also still going strong: our announcement list on yahoo! tulsapeace@yahoogroups.com (since 2002) Go to: <http://groups.yahoo.com/> and search for "tulsapeace"

If you enjoyed this news digest and/or found this update useful, please consider making a donation of time, money, or effort to the Tulsa Peace Fellowship.

TPF needs your support.

You can donate online via PINC (pull down menu for US\$ donations)
<http://www.pincgiving.com/donate/organization/1202854>

Or, please mail a check or money order made out to the "Tulsa Peace Fellowship" to :

The Tulsa Peace Fellowship
c/o UU Church of the Restoration,
1314 N. Greenwood Ave, Tulsa Oklahoma. 74106-4854
Find on a map: [Google Maps link](#)

Contributions to TPF are not tax deductible at the present time. Details on tax status available.

The next monthly anti-war demo in Tulsa is scheduled for
Saturday Nov 5th, 2011, 12noon to 2pm, with the theme: "U.S. Out of Afghanistan Now!"

The next regularly scheduled business meeting of the Fellowship will be held
on Thursday, Nov 10th 2011, 6:15 PM – 7:30 PM @ the UU Church of the Restoration, in Tulsa, just north of downtown
--including members from other local non-partisan groups such as Veterans for Peace, Pax Christi, and the Quakers
Come join us! Especially parents, guardians, and students in the Tulsa Public Schools system who are interested in countering the presence of military recruiters on school grounds.

An archive of TPF counter-recruitment updates and other related TPF material is available to members online:

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/tulsapeace/>

You must sign in to yahoo! groups to see the archived "message history"

TPF messages have been archived online since 2002

TPF was founded some 30 years ago.

Current membership online: 692 subscribers

The information provided in this digest/update herein is for non-profit use only, according to "fair use" doctrine. Copyright and all commercial exploitation rights remain with the various authors/publishers cited above. The Tulsa Peace Fellowship does not necessarily endorse the views expressed in the articles appearing herein.

further information

IN ACCORDANCE WITH TITLE 17 U.S.C. SECTION 107, THIS MATERIAL IS DISTRIBUTED WITHOUT PROFIT TO THOSE WHO HAVE EXPRESSED A PRIOR INTEREST IN RECEIVING THE INCLUDED INFORMATION FOR RESEARCH AND EDUCATIONAL PURPOSES. Tulsa Peace Fellowship HAS NO AFFILIATION WHATSOEVER WITH THE ORIGINATOR OF THESE ARTICLES NOR IS Tulsa Peace Fellowship ENDORSED OR SPONSORED BY THE ORIGINATORS.

SOURCE ARTICLE LINKS ARE PROVIDED AS A CONVENIENCE TO OUR READERS AND ALLOW FOR VERIFICATION OF AUTHENTICITY. HOWEVER, AS ORIGINATING PAGES ARE OFTEN UPDATED BY THEIR ORIGINATING HOST SITES, THE VERSIONS POSTED MAY NOT MATCH THE VERSIONS OUR READERS VIEW WHEN CLICKING THE SOURCE ARTICLE LINKS, OR INDEED, THE WEBPAGES MAY NO LONGER EVEN EXIST.

Strength Through Peace: Out of Iraq & Afghanistan

Accountability: Indict & Imprison Bush & Cheney for War Crimes

JROTC: Out of Our Schools

Schools as Military-Free Zones

Alternatives to War: Department of Peace & cabinet-level Secretary of Peace

THE 10 REASONS

Ten excellent reasons not to join the military:

- a.. You Oct Be Killed, Even By Mistake
- b.. You Oct Kill Others Who Do Not Deserve to Die
- c.. You Oct Be Injured
- d.. You Oct Not Receive Proper Medical Care
- e.. You Oct Suffer Long-term Health Problems
- f.. You Oct Be Lied To
- g.. You Oct Face Discrimination
- h.. You Oct Be Asked to Do Things Against Your Beliefs
- i.. You Oct Find It Difficult to Leave the Military
- j.. You Have Other Choices, including the Choice to Learn a Marketable Skill

for more info:

<http://www.10reasonsbook.com/medicare.htm>