

Military Resistance 14K1

MilitaryTimes



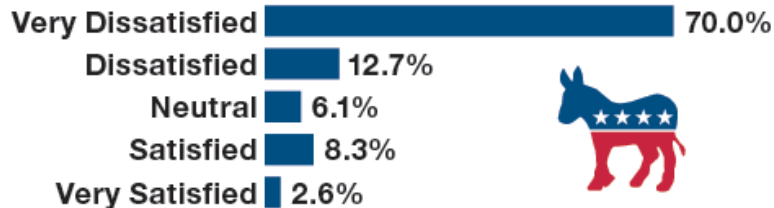
SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY
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TROOPS' SATISFACTION WITH THE PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES

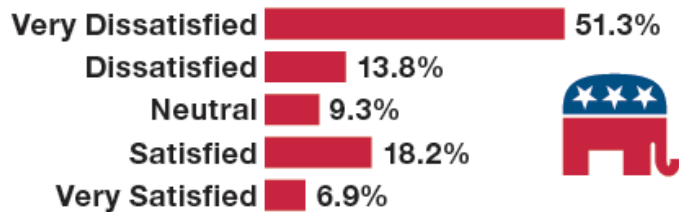
How satisfied are you with the major parties' nominees for president?



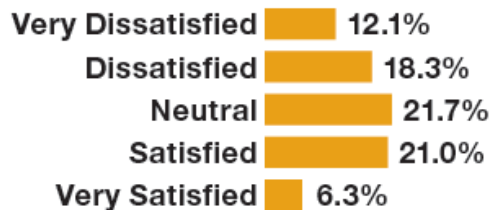
Clinton



Trump



Johnson



The survey, conducted Oct. 12-14, elicited responses from 2,486 active-duty service members, with results weighted to make them more representative of the actual military population. The results have a margin of error of roughly 2 percent.

Source: Military Times-IVMF Poll

October 22, 2016 Military Times

Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency To Reanimate Eisenhower's Corpse In Time For Presidential Election:

“The Overwhelming Consensus Of The Troops Is That The Idea Of Either Current Major Party Candidate Being The Next Commander In Chief Makes Most In Uniform ‘Want To Suck-Start A Shotgun’”



The thought of the next Commander in Chief either being a probable felon who couldn't protect national secrets if her life depended on it, or a blustering buffoon who “knows more about war than the generals” is just not that appealing, according to Stein, especially to the men and women who “will unfortunately have to execute whatever ill-conceived, cockamamie, fucking war that one of those two will inevitably get them into.”

November 3, 2016 by SaltySam, The Duffle Blog

THE PENTAGON — The Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency is attempting to bring President Dwight D. Eisenhower back to life, sources familiar with the top secret plans say.

“Let's be honest,” said Dr. Frank Stein, the head of DARPA's reanimation directorate. “We haven't had a decent President since Eisenhower.

“After Ike, it's either been them all getting us into endless wars or dipping their quills in every goddamn inkwell they can find.”

According to sources, the DOD has spent the past six months polling the military, and the overwhelming consensus of the troops is that the idea of either current major party candidate being the next Commander in Chief makes most in uniform “want to suck-start a shotgun.”

The thought of the next Commander in Chief either being a probable felon who couldn't protect national secrets if her life depended on it, or a blustering buffoon who “knows more about war than the generals” is just not that appealing, according to Stein, especially to the men and women who “will unfortunately have to execute whatever ill-conceived, cockamamie, fucking war that one of those two will inevitably get them into.”

It was reported that Eisenhower was chosen over all preceding presidents due to his overwhelming popularity, the relative peace and prosperity experienced during his tenure, and his unimpeachable character.

However, sources close to the project indicate that Eisenhower's prescient words upon leaving office, “beware the military-industrial complex,” have many inside the Pentagon concerned.

“That dead bastard Eisenhower will totally screw the sweet deal I have going with Lockheed, Boeing, and General Dynamics,” Frank Kendall, undersecretary of defense for acquisition, technology and logistics, told reporters. “I have to put the kibosh on this.”

In response to DARPA's announcement, the Clinton campaign released the following statement:

“If our troops are looking for leadership from among the walking dead, they needn't look any further. Secretary Clinton sold her soul to the devil decades ago.”

Not to be outdone, Donald Trump tweeted, “Eisenhower was a hack. I like leaders who don't die, ok?”

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

2 U.S. Troops Killed In Kunduz Province, Afghanistan: 26 Civilians Killed By U.S. Air Operations;

“Residents Later Carried More Than A Dozen Corpses Of The Dead, Including Children, Toward The Local Governor’s Office In A Show Of Rage”

November 3, 2016 By: Michelle Tan; Army Times & NBC News [Excerpts]

Two U.S. service members, 26 civilians and three local troops were killed and four others were wounded Thursday during operations in Kunduz province, Afghanistan, military officials have said.

The soldiers were working to clear a Taliban position and disrupt the group’s operations in a Kunduz district.

Two senior U.S. military officials told NBC News on Thursday that Afghan troops and U.S. military advisers were on a night raid against an unspecified Taliban target when they came under attack from gunfire after their helicopters landed in darkness. U.S. jets responded with air support, they said.

Afghan officials said they were still investigating the attack and its civilian casualties, some of which may have been caused by the airstrikes.

Residents later carried more than a dozen corpses of the dead, including children, toward the local governor’s office in a show of rage a year after American forces attacked an area hospital.

Kunduz official Mohammad Yousf Ayoubi and parliament member Malim Chari both told The Associated Press that civilians were killed in the fighting, though they had few details.

Dr. Mohammad Naim Mangal, the director of a Kunduz hospital, said his facility received the bodies of a dead man and a child and treated 30 people, including children, wounded in the fighting.

U.S. Brig. Gen. Charles Cleveland, briefing journalists in Brussels during a teleconference, said three Afghan troops were killed in the assault. Mohammad Radmanish, a deputy spokesman at the Afghan Defense Ministry, offered the same figure.

In a later statement, Cleveland said that "friendly forces received direct fire and airstrikes were conducted to defend themselves" and an investigation was underway.

He earlier described the assault as "not a common event," without elaborating.

**POLITICIANS REFUSE TO HALT THE
BLOODSHED**

**THE TROOPS HAVE THE POWER TO STOP THE
WAR**

Resistance Action

Nov 5 (AP)

KABUL, Afghanistan -- An Afghan official says one person has been killed after a sticky bomb targeted a district chief's vehicle in the country's east.

Attaullah Khogyani, spokesman for the provincial governor in Nangarhar province, said Saturday that the bomb was attached to the vehicle of Ghalib Mujahid, chief of the Bati Kot district. Mujahid's driver was killed, and Mujahid and another person were wounded.

Elsewhere four people were wounded by a second sticky bomb attached to a police vehicle in the Afghan capital, Kabul, according to the office of the Kabul police chief.

US Military Assessment Of Taliban Control Of Afghan Districts Is Flawed:

**“The US Military’s Estimate Does Not
Explain How The Taliban Is Able To
Support Multiple Concurrent Offensives
Across The Country And Threaten Five
Provincial Capitals”**

November 2, 2016 By Bill Roggio, The Long War Journal. [Excerpts] Bill Roggio is a Senior Fellow at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies and the Editor of The Long War Journal.

The US military says that the Taliban “influences” at least 25 of Afghanistan’s 407 districts and controls only 8 more.

The numbers are at odds with an assessment by The Long War Journal of Taliban control in Afghanistan.

The US military’s estimate does not explain how the Taliban is able to support multiple concurrent offensives across the country and threaten five provincial capitals.

TABLE 3.6

DISTRICT CONTROL WITHIN THE 34 AFGHANISTAN PROVINCES AS OF AUGUST 28, 2016						
Control Status	Districts		Population		Area	
	Number	%	In millions	%	Sq Km	%
GIROA			22.0	68.5%	394,586	61.3%
Control	88	21.6%				
Influence	170	41.8%				
CONTESTED	116	28.5%	7.3	22.7%	182,686	28.4%
INSURGENT			2.8	8.7%	66,517	10.3%
Control	8	2.0%				
Influence	25	6.1%				
Total	407	100%	32.1	100%	643,789	100%

Note: GIROA = Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan; sq km = square kilometers.

Source: USFOR-A, response to SIGAR data call, 8/30/2016.

The US military’s estimate of Taliban control and influence of Afghan districts was reported by the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, or SIGAR, in its quarterly report to Congress that was released on Oct. 30. The data are current as of Aug. 28, 2016.

“[O]f the 407 districts within the 34 provinces, 258 districts were under government control (88 districts) or influence (170), 33 districts (in 16 provinces) were under insurgent control (8) or influence (25), and 116 districts were ‘contested,’ SIGAR noted, based on discussions with US Forces-Afghanistan, or USFOR-A.

“USFOR-A described contested districts as having ‘negligible meaningful impact from insurgents,’” SIGAR continued.

It is unclear if the so-called contested districts have a “negligible meaningful impact” from the Afghan government.

The names of the Taliban controlled and influenced districts, as well as those that are contested, were not disclosed by USFOR-A.

Additionally, USFOR-A said that the Afghan government controls or influences 68.5% of the population (~22.0 million) and controls 61.3% of Afghanistan’s territory (~350,000 square kilometers), and the Taliban controls or influences 8.1% (~2.8 million) and controls 8.7% of the ground (~66,000 square kilometers). The remaining 28.5% of the

population (~7.3 million) and 22.7% of the land (~183,000 square kilometers) is contested.

The Long War Journal believes that the US military's assessment of the state of play in Afghanistan's districts is flawed.

A study by The Long War Journal estimates the Taliban controls 42 Afghan districts and contests (or influences) another 55. (Note, USFOR-A's definition of "influence" matches that of LWJ's definition of "contested." The term "influenced/contested" will be used for clarity to describe these districts. LWJ does not assess districts that are defined by USFOR-A as "contested," which means neither the Taliban or Afghan government hold sway.)

The number of Taliban controlled and influenced/contested districts has risen from 70 in October 2015 to 97 this month.

Districts under Taliban command are typically being administered by the group, or the group controls the district center. Additionally, districts where the district center frequently changes hands are considered Taliban-controlled. In influenced/contested districts, the Taliban dominates all of the areas of a district except the administrative center.

A map created by LWJ lists the districts thought to be controlled or influenced/contested by the Taliban.

For instance, the Taliban has traditionally held significant sway in many districts in eastern and northeastern Afghanistan, however the status of these districts cannot be assessed based on open source information.

Without USFOR-A's list of Taliban controlled or influenced/contested districts, it is difficult to compare the discrepancies between the US military and LWJ's assessments.

However, USFOR-A did provide information on one province which reveals that the military is providing a best-case scenario of the situation on the ground.

According to SIGAR, USFOR-A said that only 21% of Helmand province is controlled or influenced/contested. This means that, according to USFOR-A, only 3 of Helmand's 14 districts are Taliban controlled or influenced/contested.

However, numerous local and international press reports indicate that all of Helmand remains a battleground, and the Taliban controls or influences/contests far more than three districts.

Based on these reports, LWJ has assessed that of Helmand's 14 districts, six are known to be controlled by the Taliban (Now Zad, Nawa, Musa Qala, Baghran, Dishu, and Khanashin), and another seven, including the provincial capital, are heavily influenced/contested (Lashkar Gah, Nahr-i-Sarraj, Kajaki, Nad Ali, Marjah, Garmsir, and Sangin). The status of Washir district is uncertain as new reports from the district are scarce. Nearly all of Helmand has been controlled or influenced/contested for well over a year.

The situation in Helmand is so bleak that the Taliban has effectively surrounded the provincial capital of Lashkar Gah for well over a year, and have launched several forays into the city.

Less than three weeks ago, the Taliban ambushed a large convoy of Afghan troops after they negotiated their safe passage from their base on the outskirts of Lashkar Gah. More than 200 Afghan troops were killed, wounded, captured, or surrendered

The Taliban has also attacked four other provincial capitals: Kunduz City, Tairn Kot, Maimana, and Farah City over the past several months.

Additionally, last week, the Taliban cut off the main roads to Maidan Wardak, the capital of Wardak province just outside of Kabul.

In order to threaten these provincial capitals, the Taliban has deliberately sought to control the rural districts surrounding them.

These districts are vital to the Taliban's insurgency.

The areas are used to recruit and train fighters, raise funds, resupply, and launch attacks into the population centers. This strategy was explained by Mullah Aminullah Yousuf, the Taliban's shadow governor for Uruzgan, in April 2016.

Despite the success the Taliban has had employing this strategy, General John Nicholson, the commander of US forces in Afghanistan and Resolute Support, NATO's mission in the country, has downplayed the Taliban's control of rural areas.

**Former Afghan President Hamid Karzai Denounces Slaughter Of Civilians By U.S. Airstrikes:
“I Saw The Photos Of The Victims. There Were Children From 6 Months To Toddlers, Near-Teens And Elders. Why?”
“Is This Really A War Against Terror, Or Is It Something Else In Which The Lives Of Afghans Don't Matter?”**

November 4 By Pamela Constable, Washington Post [Excerpts]

KABUL — Hamid Karzai, the former Afghan president, was in high dudgeon Friday morning. His children were playing hide-and-seek on the lawn outside his book-lined study, and a waiter had brought in trays of tea and cakes, but his mind was on a deadly NATO [translation: U.S. government] airstrike that killed 30 civilians in northern Kunduz province early Thursday.

“I spoke to the families yesterday. I saw the photos of the victims. There were children from 6 months to toddlers, near-teens and elders. Why?” Karzai demanded angrily. A few moments later, he turned to an aide and asked, “Was there any mention of this mass tragedy on CNN, on BBC? I didn’t see anything.”

The exact events in Kunduz were still unclear Friday, but Afghan officials confirmed an updated death toll of 30 civilians and at least 25 wounded in airstrikes launched outside the embattled provincial capital after a firefight with Taliban forces.

The civilian deaths sparked protests by victims’ relatives in Kunduz and denunciations by some rights groups, including Amnesty International. A recent U.N. report found that casualties attributed to pro-government forces here have jumped by 42 percent in the past year.

As Karzai saw it, the fatal bombings Thursday were further proof of his long-standing contention that the U.S. military role in Afghanistan has been misguided, needlessly deadly and possibly motivated by a cynical agenda that he believes has subordinated Afghan lives and sovereignty to strategic international goals.

“I am not an anti-Western person, but what has made me outspoken and angry at America are the casualties,” he said.

“Just show me one example of a bombing that has taken Afghanistan one step closer to peace. Fifteen years on, do we have more Taliban or less, more radicalization or less, more terror or less? Is this really a war against terror, or is it something else in which the lives of Afghans don’t matter?”

**Afghanistan:
The War Trump And Clinton Have
Ignored;
“Neither Of The Candidates’ Websites,
Which Usually Go Into Detail On Policy
Matters, Have A Mention Of The U.S.**

Military Presence In Afghanistan Or What To Do About It”

November 3, 2016 By: Robert Burns and Deb Riechmann, The Associated Press
[Excerpts]

WASHINGTON — Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton have said next to nothing about how they would handle the war in Afghanistan.

That’s remarkable, given the enormous U.S. investment in blood and treasure over the past 15 years — including two American deaths on Thursday — the resilience of the Taliban insurgency and the risk of an Afghan government collapse that would risk empowering extremists and could force the next president’s hands.

In addition to the two service members killed on Thursday, four others were wounded while assisting Afghan forces in the northern city of Kunduz.

President Barack Obama escalated the war shortly after he took office, but he fell short of his goal of compelling a political settlement between the Taliban and the Afghan government. The next president will face a new set of tough choices on Afghanistan early in his or her term, including whether to increase or reduce U.S. troop levels and, more broadly, whether to continue what might be called Obama’s minimalist military strategy.

The difficulty of these choices may explain, at least in part, why Trump and Clinton have been largely silent on Afghanistan.

They ignore it while campaigning; it came up only in passing during the first Trump-Clinton debate and was not mentioned at all during second and third debates.

Neither Trump nor Clinton has offered more than broad clues about their intentions toward Afghanistan.

Trump has called for an end to U.S. "nation-building" efforts.

Clinton has said she would "deal with" the Islamic State affiliate in Afghanistan and "stem the flow of jihadists" to and from Afghanistan.

Neither of the candidates’ websites, which usually go into detail on policy matters, have a mention of the U.S. military presence in Afghanistan or what to do about it.

Washington has praised Afghan President Ashraf Ghani as a more effective U.S. partner than his predecessor, Hamid Karzai.

But the political dimensions of Afghanistan’s problems are in some ways as worrisome as those on the military and security side.

The so-called unity government set up in 2014 is led by Ghani and Chief Executive Abdullah Abdullah, who have been bickering since they took office. The rift has

threatened to send the country further into chaos. Afghans are increasingly convinced the double-headed government cannot endure.

National Intelligence Director James Clapper earlier this year told Congress that Afghanistan is "at serious risk of a political breakdown in 2016."

One measure of the intractable nature of the war is the language American officials have used to describe it. As far back as February 2009 the top American commander in Afghanistan said the U.S. and its Afghan partners were "at best, stalemated" against the Taliban. Seven years later, in September 2016, Gen. Joseph Dunford, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, told a congressional committee the war was "roughly a stalemate."

There is no consensus view on how much longer the U.S. would need to keep troops there to help Afghan forces avoid defeat.

Cases Of 8 Afghans Examined In Guantanamo: US Accused Of Gross Errors; “The Afghans Have Been Imprisoned For Years On The Basis Of Tenuous Evidence, ‘Fantastical Allegations’ And Hearsay”

Nov 03 2016 By Khaama Press

The Afghanistan Analysts Network (AAN), an independent, non-profit research group, examined the cases of eight of the longest-serving Afghan detainees in Guantanamo, accusing US of ‘gross errors’.

According to the research group, the Afghans have been imprisoned for years on the basis of tenuous evidence, “fantastical allegations” and hearsay.

AAN in its report said the U.S. military had been unable to substantiate accusations against any of them, warning that their cases underlined the danger that arbitrary detention could lead to “gross miscarriages of justice”.

The report also added that the “obvious, multiple mistakes” the US committed have not only harmed the eight detainees, but have inadvertently provided fuel for the insurgency in Afghanistan, which the US has been unable to suppress after 15 years of war.

“None of these eight Afghans were captured on the battlefield,” said Kate Clark, the author of the study, titled *Kafka in Cuba*. “Six were handed over by Pakistan or Afghan forces and two were detained after tip-offs from unknown sources. The basis for their detentions is intelligence only and that intelligence is threadbare.”

Clark further added “Judges have accepted hearsay, debated whether testimony obtained from those who were tortured could be heard and allowed the state to present secret evidence and repeatedly delay proceedings. They have utterly failed to hold the executive to account.”

One of the detainees, Bostan Karim, for example, a seller of plastic flowers from Khost, was detained by the ISI as he crossed the border into Pakistan in 2003 and handed over to the US, according to AAN.

The ISI claimed he matched the description of an al Qaeda terrorist and the broken satellite phone in his possession was being used as a detonator for IEDs.

Karim’s judge in his habeas petition took this allegation at face value – as the US military had done before him. In those days, there was no landline or a mobile cell network in Karim’s province and satellite phones were in common use by those who could afford them.

Yet the judge failed to question whether holding a satellite phone was indeed proof of terrorist intent, or indeed why a terrorist would be taking a ‘detonator’ out of Afghanistan.

Harun, court documents reveal, was a low-level Hezb-e Islami commander, with a maximum of 30 men under his command; it is not clear why he was taken to Cuba. Rahim was detained by the ISI and handed over to the CIA and was the last ‘participant’ in the agency’s global torture and rendition programme.

He was kept in a black site in Afghanistan and subject to sleep deprivation; on three occasions, he was forcibly kept awake for four days and once for almost six days.

The CIA failed to get any useful intelligence from him, but still announced it had captured ‘Bin Laden’s translator’ when he was transferred to Guantanamo.

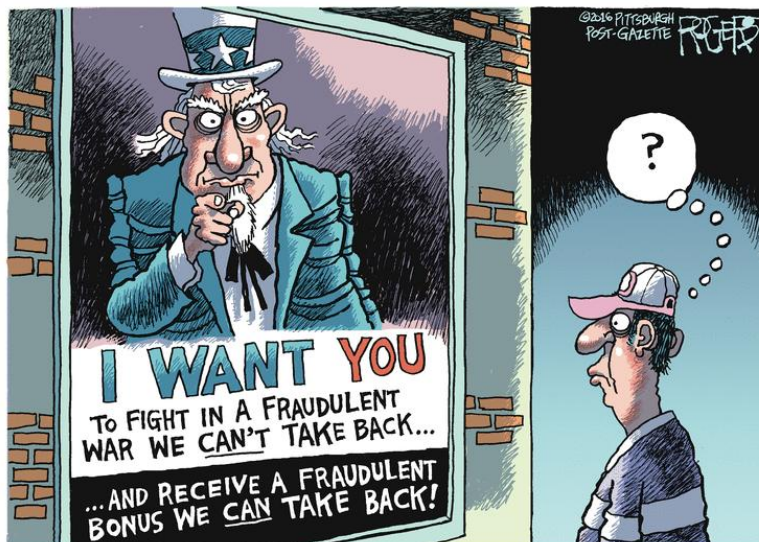
As Guantanamo is about to enter its fifteenth year of existence, AAN’s new study raises serious questions about the state of US intelligence and US justice.

“Looking into the files of these Afghans was like being in a Kafka novel,” said Clark. “It’s been a puzzling, disturbing experience. After years of holding these men in detention, the US has yet to present a coherent case for holding any of them.”

MILITARY NEWS

California National Guard Says It Can't Find 4,000 Soldiers Who Received Improper Payments: "The Vast Majority Of The 9,700 Current And Former California Guard Soldiers Who Received Improper Payments Did So 'Unknowingly' And Enlisted 'In Good Faith At A Time Of War'"

"It's Profound Incompetence," Sholtis Said, "Mixed With Indifference"



[Thanks to SSG N (ret'd) who sent this in. She writes: "How the economic draft works."]

October 31, 2016 By David S. Cloud, Los Angeles Times

The California National Guard can't locate more than 4,000 of the 9,700 soldiers caught up in the military enlistment bonus scandal that has rocked one of the nation's largest Guard organizations, according to its commander.

In an internal memo obtained by The Times, Maj. Gen. David Baldwin said the California Guard needed help finding thousands of soldiers who received improper enlistment bonuses or other incentives at the height of the Iraq and Afghanistan wars a decade ago.

Baldwin also wrote that the vast majority of the 9,700 current and former California Guard soldiers who received improper payments did so “unknowingly” and enlisted “in good faith at a time of war.”

His Oct. 27 memo is one of the first unequivocal statements by a senior military official since the bonus scandal surfaced that most California Guard soldiers did not know they were getting money improperly. It suggests most may be eligible to have some or all of their debts forgiven under a Pentagon review.

But the new Pentagon inquiry already appears mired in confusion.

Despite Baldwin’s assertions, the Treasury Department tracked down some of the 4,000 soldiers long ago through tax returns and forced them to repay their bonuses, raising questions about whether the Pentagon will now return the money.

Brett Sholtis, who left the California Guard in 2007 and now lives in York, Pa., received a letter from the Treasury Department in 2015 ordering him to repay \$2,500.79 that he was given after he first enlisted in 2001.

When he refused to pay, the Treasury Department garnished his wages and claimed his 2015 federal tax refund until the debt was paid last spring, he said.

“I was one of those soldiers who couldn’t be located,” Sholtis said Monday. “They made a weak effort and then immediately proceeded to step two — turning it over to Treasury.”

A Los Angeles Times report this month about the enlistment bonus repayment demands to California Guard soldiers and veterans, including some who were wounded in battle, sparked a public furor about what many viewed as an injustice.

Four days later, Defense Secretary Ashton Carter suspended the debt recovery program and ordered faster appeals for soldiers and veterans seeking relief from the debts. He set a July 1 deadline next year to complete the process.

The Pentagon’s efforts to recover the money have brought hardship to many soldiers and veterans, Baldwin said, “who signed up for incentives based on misinformation about their eligibility.”

The supposedly missing soldiers in Baldwin’s memo are likely to have retired, changed addresses, moved to Guard units in other states or transferred to the active-duty Army, officials said.

The affected soldiers did not respond to letters sent by the California Guard to addresses on file for them, the officials said.

Baldwin asked current and former California Guard members for help locating the soldiers. He directed them to the Soldier Incentives and Assistance Center, an office set up in Sacramento to help soldiers appeal to the Pentagon for waivers of some or all of the debts.

With the center's help, "hundreds of soldiers ... have had their debts forgiven or have corrected their records," he wrote. "Unfortunately, more than 4,000 Soldiers with errors in their incentive packets have not had the same opportunity."

In 2010, after the Sacramento Bee first reported corruption in the California Guard enlistment payments, an FBI investigation found that officials had given millions of dollars in bonuses and student loan payments to soldiers who did not qualify for them, or who were approved despite paperwork errors.

A California Guard audit of the enlistment contracts, completed in September, concluded that 9,700 soldiers had received improper bonuses and other payments.

Army Master Sgt. Toni Jaffe, the California Guard's incentive manager, pleaded guilty in 2011 to filing false claims of \$15.2 million and was sentenced to 30 months in federal prison. Three officers also pleaded guilty to fraud and were put on probation after paying restitution. Nearly 100 California Guard members have been disciplined for knowingly paying or accepting improper bonuses.

A senior California Guard official, Col. Darrin Bender, blamed the improper payments on the pressure recruiters faced to fill Army ranks starting in about 2005, when the Pentagon was engaged in bitter fighting in both Iraq and Afghanistan.

"To increase soldier retention, the Army funded a number of very generous bonus programs," Bender, the California Guard's director of government relation, wrote in an email last week to members of the California Legislature.

"These programs were implemented far too quickly, without the appropriate institutional checks and balances," and recruiters were under "extreme pressure" to meet "high enlistment and reenlistment quotas," he wrote. Though a small number of soldiers knew they were committing fraud, the "vast majority acted on good faith resulting from bad information from recruiters and others in positions of authority," he added.

Sholtis, the former California Guard member who moved to Pennsylvania, is skeptical about the government's efforts to help veterans like him.

The California Guard's attempt to find him consisted of a registered letter sent to his old California address informing him of a problem with his 2001 enlistment bonus, he said.

It told him to get in touch with the soldiers' assistance center in Sacramento that was handling the repayments.

When he did not reply, California Guard officials forwarded his name to the Defense Finance Accounting Service, the Pentagon agency that handles recovery of the bonuses.

They found no record that he was still in the military and sent his name to the Treasury Department, which used tax records to locate him.

Sholtis, who is now a reporter, refused to repay the debt, which included an automatic \$500 penalty. He contacted the California Guard to find out why he owed the money.

It turned out the paperwork for his \$2,000 enlistment bonus was missing.

The Treasury Department garnished his paycheck, taking \$320 every month and his entire tax refund for 2015.

He recently was denied pre-approval for a Veterans' Affairs home loan, partly because the former bonus debt is on his credit report.

"It's profound incompetence," Sholtis said, "mixed with indifference."

MORE:

If You're A California Guard Veteran And You Owe Bonus Money, Here's Who To Call

October 31, 2016 By: Meghann Myers; Army Times

Now that Defense Secretary Ash Carter has ordered the Defense Department to stop seeking repayment of improperly doled out enlistment bonuses, the California Army National Guard is trying to get the word out to more than 4,000 soldiers who are still on the hook.

Carter on Oct. 26 ordered the Pentagon to suspend collecting millions in bonuses and streamline its process for appealing debts, but according to a letter from the California Guard's adjutant general, soldiers will still have to apply for relief to release their debts.

The state's Soldier Incentives and Assistance Center has been helping guardsmen get their bonus repayments forgiven since 2011, according to Maj. Gen. David Baldwin, and that process is how soldiers can apply to have their debts forgiven or their payments reimbursed.

"Unfortunately, more than 4,000 Soldiers with errors in their incentive packets have not had the same opportunity because the Cal Guard's SIAC has been unable to contact them," he wrote in a Thursday letter addressed to guard members.

Soldiers who have been hit with a collection letter should take this opportunity to file an appeal, via phone at 855-751-4087 or online, Baldwin wrote.

He also implored commanders to reach out to their own troops and as many of their former soldiers as possible to spread the word.

The Defense Department expects its repayment pause and review to last until the end of the year, according to a Pentagon spokesman.

"However, it's until the secretary of defense has decided that we are in a good place and we are ready to move forward with the waiver process," Maj. Jamie Davis told Army Times on Monday.

From there, the plan is to streamline the relief process to have all of the waivers through by July 1.

Thousands of California guardsmen who signed up or reenlisted between 2004 and 2010 were caught up in a scam in which recruiters offered upwards of \$15,000 cash or student loan repayment to new soldiers, many of whom didn't go into jobs that were approved for bonuses, to boost their own numbers.

By 2011, a whistleblower had come forward to expose the scheme, and an audit of more than 14,000 records found 9,700 instances of improper bonuses or loan repayments, according a bonus recoupment fact sheet put together by the California National Guard.

Of those, Davis said, 1,200 were absolutely improperly paid out, while 5,400 had minor paperwork errors that could be fixed, and that is where the backlog has occurred.

Anyone who believes they've been wrongfully sent repayment notices, or anyone who has repaid back a portion or all of their debt, should apply for a waiver, Davis added.

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS



“At a time like this, scorching irony, not convincing argument, is needed. Oh had I the ability, and could reach the nation’s ear, I would, pour out a fiery stream of biting ridicule, blasting reproach, withering sarcasm, and stern rebuke.

“For it is not light that is needed, but fire; it is not the gentle shower, but thunder.

“We need the storm, the whirlwind, and the earthquake.”

“The limits of tyrants are prescribed by the endurance of those whom they oppose.”

Frederick Douglass, 1852

“We have it in our power to begin the world over again.” -- Thomas Paine

Full Disclosure



Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Portland, Oregon. Photo by Mike Hastie

From: Mike Hastie
To: Military Resistance Newsletter
Sent: October 27, 2016
Subject: Full Disclosure

**The Wall is like a character in a play,
whose silence makes all the other**

characters speak.
William Broyles Jr.
Vietnam Veteran

Photo and caption from the portfolio of Mike Hastie, US Army Medic, Vietnam 1970-71. (For more of his outstanding work, contact hastiemike@earthlink.net)

One day while I was in a bunker in Vietnam, a sniper round went over my head. The person who fired that weapon was not a terrorist, a rebel, an extremist, or a so-called insurgent.

The Vietnamese individual who tried to kill me was a citizen of Vietnam, who did not want me in his country. This truth escapes millions.

Mike Hastie
U.S. Army Medic
Vietnam 1970-71
December 13, 2004

Writer Comments In 1891 On The 2016 U.S. Election

March 18, 1891 Friedrich Engels, Introduction to The Civil War In France [Excerpts]

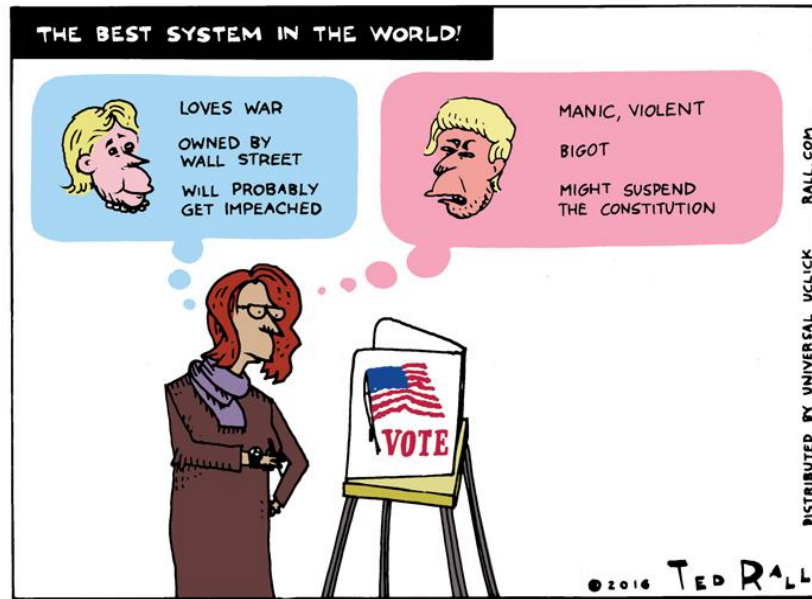
Nowhere do 'politicians' form a more separate and powerful section of the nation than precisely in North America.

There, each of the two major parties which alternately succeed each other in power is itself in turn controlled by people who make a business of politics, who speculate on seats in the legislative assemblies of the Union as well as of the separate states, or who make a living by carrying on agitation for their party and on its victory are rewarded with positions.

It is well known how the Americans have been trying for thirty years to shake off this yoke, which has become intolerable, and how in spite of it all they continue to sink ever deeper in this swamp of corruption.

It is precisely in America that we see best how there takes place this process of the state power making itself independent in relation to society, whose mere instrument it was originally intended to be.

[We] find here two great gangs of political speculators, who alternately take possession of the state power and exploit it by the most corrupt means and for the most corrupt ends--and the nation is powerless against these two great cartels of politicians, who are ostensibly its servants, but in reality dominate and plunder it.



**“One Of The Main Elements Of
Military Hypnosis Is The Faith
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“There Is Obviously Discontentment In The Ranks And A Vague Feeling Of Sympathy For The ‘Rebels’”

From “Up To The Ninth Of January,” 1905; By L. Trotsky [Excerpts]

The exact moment when maneuvers turn into a battle will depend on the numbers and revolutionary solidarity of the masses who have taken to the streets, on the thickening atmosphere of universal sympathy and support that these masses are breathing, and on the attitude of the troops that the government will send against the people.

These three elements of success must govern our preparatory work.

The revolutionary proletarian masses are already at hand. Across the whole of Russia, we must be able to summon these masses into the streets and unite them with a single slogan.

There is hatred for tsarism in every stratum and class of society, which means there is also sympathy for the liberation struggle. We must focus this sympathy on the proletariat as the only revolutionary force whose appearance at the head of the popular masses can secure the future of Russia.

Finally, the attitude of the army is less and less able to inspire the government with confidence.

In recent years, there have been numerous alarming symptoms: the army is grumbling, discontented, and in a state of ferment.

When the masses move decisively, we must do everything possible to ensure that the army does not see its own fate linked to that of the autocracy.

A successful political strike by the proletariat imperatively requires that it be transformed into a revolutionary popular demonstration.

The second important condition is the attitude of the army.

There is obviously discontentment in the ranks and a vague feeling of sympathy for the ‘rebels’.

There is also no doubt that only a small part of this sympathy is directly due to our agitation among the troops.

Most of it results from the practice of using the army in clashes with the protesting masses.

All of the correspondents who have described battles between tsarist forces and the unarmed people emphasise that the great majority of soldiers resent the role of executioner.

The great mass of ordinary soldiers fire into the air.

All one can say in that regard is that anything else would simply be unnatural.

At the time of the general strike in Kiev, the Bessarabsky regiment was ordered to march on Podol.

The regimental commander replied that he could not guarantee the mood of his troops.

Then an order went out to the Kherson regiment, but there too not a single half-company of troops would comply with the orders coming from their officers.

In that respect, Kiev was no exception.

Correspondents report that during the 1903 general strike in Odessa, soldiers frequently did not rise to the occasion. For example, in one case, they were posted to guard a doorway through which demonstrators had been driven, but they simply took it upon themselves to look the other way when those under arrest fled through adjoining doorways.

As a result, between 100 and 150 people escaped.

Workers were seen chatting peaceably with the soldiers, and there were cases where they disarmed them with no particular resistance.

That is how things stood in 1903.

Then came the year of warfare.

It is obviously impossible to say with any numerical precision how the past year has affected the consciousness of the army, but there is no doubt that its impact has been colossal.

One of the main elements of military hypnosis is the faith energetically promoted among the soldiers that they are invincible, mighty, and superior to all the rest of the world.

The war has killed that faith everywhere.

Tired Of Choosing The Lesser Evil?

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Navy Shocked That Sailors Didn't Immediately Embrace Killing A 200-Year-Old Tradition:

“At Press Time, The Navy Was Apparently ‘Extremely Jealous’ Of The Army’s Recent Move To Demand Its Soldiers Repay Bonuses They Were Promised”



Photo Credit: Dvids

October 27, 2016 by SaltySam, The Duffle Blog

THE PENTAGON — Following the Navy’s unpopular decision last month to end the rating system that has identified sailors by their functional job, branch leadership is reportedly shocked to learn sailors are not total morons who will immediately embrace an idea killing a 200-year-old tradition.

“We figured that once we made our decision, the fleet would simply shut up and color,” said Cmdr. Marco Guevara, a Navy spokesperson.

“Not because we think sailors are disciplined professionals who follow the chain of command, but really because we assumed they’re all too dumb to know that we think they’re idiots and we like to fuck with them.”

According to sources, the Secretary of the Navy’s staff was surprised not only by the overwhelming backlash that erupted by the loss of terms such as “yeoman,” “fireman,” and “corpsman” in both traditional and social media, but when they learned of a White House petition against the move that had garnered nearly 100,000 signatures, Secretary

Ray Mabus reportedly remarked, "Wow, maybe sailors aren't mindless robots who will blindly accept any cock and bull story we feed them."

When asked what the actual reason behind the change was, Guevara told reporters: "Obviously, our primary job here on the Secretary of the Navy's staff is to really shit on the fleet's morale. Well, over the years, we've learned that one of the best ways to accomplish that is by making sweeping changes to long-held Navy customs. In doing so, you really strip sailors of any sense of tradition and belonging they may have."

Sources indicate that Navy leadership was really hopeful this plan would go through unimpeded. Additionally, it was reported that they felt this one was "a real twofer" and "a humdinger of a way to mess with sailors and tell them how to think all at the same time."

"We were able to cram it down their throats under the guise of making the fleet more 'progressive' and 'inclusive', which come on, nobody is stupid enough to argue against these days," Guevara said.

However, when pressed on that issue, specifically given the fact that female sailors have roundly rejected the decision, Guevara bucked such critiques.

"If you think we think sailors are dumb, well, let me tell you: we really think female sailors are dumb," he said.

"Look, maybe most of them don't mind, don't even care, or don't want to buck this tradition, but we were confident that in this case, we could assure them that the word 'man' was such a micro-aggression, that female sailors didn't even know they were being oppressed. And, hell, that's the real beauty of it; we could convince them that they need us to tell them how they feel."

At press time, the Navy was apparently "extremely jealous" of the Army's recent move to demand its soldiers repay bonuses they were promised. "Wow, what a kick-ass way to fuck with your people. Wish we'd thought of that," Secretary Mabus said.

YOUR INVITATION:

Comments, arguments, articles, and letters from service men and women, and veterans, are especially welcome.

Write to Box 126, 2472 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10025 or email contact@militaryproject.org:

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Obamacare Rotten To The Core:

The News About The Back-Breaking Insurance Premium Hikes Shows What Happens When The Government Puts Insurance Company Profits;
“The Increase Will Spell Hardship For The Millions Of Workers Who Don’t Qualify For Subsidies Or Have Insurance Through An Employer”
“Many People Say That While They Now Have Insurance For The First Time, The Deductibles Are So High That They Can’t Afford To Use It”

November 3, 2016 by Elizabeth Schulte, Socialist Worker [Excerpts]

It’s like building a house out of sugar and then acting surprised that there’s a problem when it rains.

In the case of the Affordable Care Act (ACA), popularly known as Obamacare, the sugar is the for-profit insurance industry, the rain is the people who need health care, and the whole thing is melting into air.

The Obama administration announced last week that average premiums for the millions of people who purchased mid-level health insurance plans available on the ACA’s HealthCare.gov exchanges are rising, by as much as 25 percent just in the next year.

The increase will spell hardship for the millions of workers who don’t qualify for subsidies or have insurance through an employer--and therefore face a harsh financial penalty of as much as \$700 next year if they don’t buy a policy through the health care "marketplace" established by the ACA.

According to the Department of Health and Human Services, the average monthly premium for a 27-year-old could rise from \$242 to \$302--an additional \$60 a month, or

\$720 a year, simply to keep insurance policies that typically have high deductibles and holes in coverage.

In some states, it's even worse. In Arizona, the projected average increase for 2017 premiums was 116 percent; the average in Phoenix was 145 percent.

"It's beyond ridiculous," Leslie Rycroft, a Scottsdale resident who paid \$1,100 a month this year for a UnitedHealthcare plan with a \$13,000 annual deductible for her family of four, told the New York Times.

All of a sudden you're paying \$26,000 a year, just for catastrophic health insurance."

"Many People Say That While They Now Have Insurance For The First Time, The Deductibles Are So High That They Can't Afford To Use It"

As Rycroft suggests, it's a whole other question if you want to use your insurance. Many people say that while they now have insurance for the first time, the deductibles are so high that they can't afford to use it.

While the 25 percent increase in premiums is astonishing, the fact that Obamacare is translating in higher costs for workers isn't a surprise at all to opponents of for-profit health care who warned all along that this would be the outcome of the ACA.

Advocates of a universal single-payer health care system--a nationalized system to cover each and every person in the U.S., similar to what exists in other industrialized health and often described by its advocates here as "Medicare for all"--argued that incorporating private insurance companies into the ACA meant that it was doomed from the beginning.

The Obama administration's stated motivation for pursuing reform was that millions of people went without health care in the U.S. But while the ACA included welcome regulations banning some industry practices, barring companies refusing to cover people for pre-existing conditions, the main problem--for-profit health care--wasn't touched.

In fact, the for-profit system was woven into the fabric of the ACA as insurance giants like Aetna and UnitedHealthcare were invited to sell policies to the uninsured through the "exchanges" set up under the law.

Workers without health care from employers were forced under the "individual mandate" to buy these policies or pay a tax penalty.

The problem with depending on for-profit insurance companies is exactly that--they're for profit. Since the ACA went into effect, several major insurers have claimed they're losing money being part of the exchanges--and pulled out of the marketplaces in many states, leaving the newly insured high and dry.

Some five states may have only one "choice" for an insurance provider in 2017, and nine more states may have just two.

If anyone is worried about the insurance industry losing money--besides the politicians they shower with money, that is--don't be. They're making plenty.

A Salon.com analysis of regulatory filings found that the top five health insurers--UnitedHealthcare, Anthem, Aetna, Humana and Cigna--spent nearly \$30 billion on stock buybacks and dividends from 2013 to 2015.

Despite the right's complaint that Obamacare damaged the health care system, the stock prices for these companies rose after the law was passed--because they gained access to a captive market for their defective products.

Workers are paying a higher and higher price--not just those in the Obamacare system, but everyone who has health insurance, including employee-provided plans.

According to a study by the Kaiser Family Foundation, the average deductible for people whose employer covered their insurance rose \$303 to \$1,077 between 2006 and 2015.

Earlier this year, a much-needed debate began, not just about whether Obamacare had failed, but what kind of health care system would best serve the people who need it.

Bernie Sanders' campaign for the Democratic presidential nomination introduced the idea of a single-payer, Medicare-for-all system to a new audience of people and gave confidence to those who long supported it.

The eventual nominee, Hillary Clinton, was forced to discuss the idea of single-payer. Unable provide an adequate defense for her support of for-profit health care, her campaign instead characterized Sanders' position as wanting to "dismantle Obamacare, dismantle the CHIP program, dismantle Medicare and dismantle private insurance," as Chelsea Clinton falsely claimed in February.

Now, with the presidential election winding to a close, that discussion seems a million years old.

Sanders isn't bringing up single-payer anymore--because he's backing the Democratic nominee Clinton who he thinks will make an excellent president. Any critique of the ACA from the left has been discouraged in the interest of electing Clinton.

As a result, criticism of the ACA has been confined to the right.

Donald Trump responded to news of the premium increase by telling reporters that Obamacare needed to be "repealed and replaced."

Bill Clinton himself went off-script last month, calling Obamacare "the craziest thing in the world"--only to have to reverse his comments a week later and promise that he supported the gains of the ACA.

According to New York Times columnist Jacob Hacker, a liberal coalition has come together in the Progressive Change Campaign Committee to try to convince Clinton and congressional Democrats to introduce a "public option" into the ACA exchanges--similar to a proposal that Democrats bargained away during negotiations with Republicans about the health care law.

But if the proposal is anything like the debate over the watered-down public option in 2009, the health care industry has little to worry about.

Workers won't get the health care they deserve until there's a real debate--and real action--about a system where the first priority is meeting people's needs, not making sure the health care industry's profits are preserved.



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