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## *The Internal Crisis of the Empire*

All the data point in the same direction: the capitalism of death that oppresses us is in the phase of causing genocide because of the desperation caused by the systemic changes underway.



Reaffirming the idea that empires collapse from within, when their contradictions cause their decline or facilitate conquest by their enemies, we observe how the armed forces of the United States are having enormous difficulties in recruiting members.



U.S. media say the military is facing "the worst draft crisis since the Vietnam War ended," since conscription was eliminated, according to Politico in July (<https://politi.co/3C1t5zF>). With just two months to go until the end of the fiscal year, the military had reached just 66 percent of its recruitment goal. Gen. Joseph Martin told the House military affairs committee that the military could lose more than 20,000 troops, from 466,000 troops to just 445,000, because of difficulties in finding recruits.

However, as the Tom Dispatch report notes, the force offers "enlistment bonuses of up to \$50,000" to candidates who decide to join the ranks (<https://bit.ly/3R0I4mF>). The other forces also offer bonuses, but all face the same problem in incorporating fighters, with the air force facing the greatest difficulties after the army.



The reasons must be sought in a broken society, in frayed institutions and in a nation with no other north than to continue dominating the world.

Only 23 percent of Americans between the ages of 17 and 24 can be elected to the military, up from 29 percent in previous years, NBC News (<https://nbcnews.to/3dS6Ib1>) reports. The rest, more than three-quarters of youth, are automatically disqualified for obesity, criminal history, drug use, and physical or mental problems.

In the U.S. there is a real epidemic of obesity, which has skyrocketed in recent years and grows five times faster than before among children, which kills 300,000 people every year.



The suicide rate is the highest among rich countries (14 deaths per 100,000 inhabitants), doubles that of the United Kingdom and is largely due to mental illness, forming what are called "deaths of despair", which also includes deaths from drug overdoses, international health reports reveal. The US has the lowest life expectancy among the 38 oecd countries. Indeed, a Commonwealth Fund report reports that "Americans live shorter, less healthy lives because the health care system is not working as well as it could" (<https://bit.ly/3wsS7Jt>). However, the US spends more on health than any other OECD country (17 percent of GDP in 2018), because it squanders on private insurance, while public care is in deficit.

Mental health is another big problem, affecting one in five young women and one in 10 men before the age of 25. These are conditions typical of inequalities based on wealth and skin color, in a country where the concentration of income does not stop growing and the Afro-descendant population is severely punished by repression and lack of prospects.

There is an additional problem, internal to the armed forces. Of the population fit to become a combatant, only 9 percent have any propensity to enlist, because of the risk of

physical injury or death, the possibility of post-traumatic stress and other psychological disorders. In addition, 34 percent of young people answered a survey saying they do not like the military lifestyle and 28 percent pointed to the possibility of sexual harassment or assault, details Politico (<https://politi.co/3Clt5zF>).



Many more data could be added that testify to the decline of the empire, and now also the difficulty of sustaining its armed forces. This does not mean that they will give up, far from it. It indicates that more and more private armies will be created, such as the famous Blackwater, now renamed Academi, a private mercenary company.

The so-called "private armies" are actually paramilitary organizations that reach beyond state armies, but governments do not pay the political costs of sending their soldiers. Britain's G4S Secure Solutions, for example, intervenes in 125 countries, has 620,000 employees, recruits serial criminals and has excelled in personality killings, among many other crimes (<https://bit.ly/3clRuul>).

All the data point in the same direction: the capitalism of death that oppresses us is in the phase of causing genocide because of the desperation caused by the systemic changes underway.

It is up to the movements to decide what to do, as there are no reliable institutions when the known world collapses. When those at the top only think of them, it is the we that must organize itself in order to survive.

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