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Empire Over Life

The Military and the Dead

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Did you know that 85 to 90 percent of war's casualties are non-combatant civilians? That is the conclusion reached by a nine-person research team in the June 2014 issue of the *American Journal of Public Health*. The deaths of soldiers who are fighting the war are a small part of the human and economic cost. Clearly, wars do not protect the lives of civilians. The notion that soldiers are dying for us is false. Non-combatants are the main victims of war.

Keep that in mind for July 4th, which is arriving in six weeks.

July 4th is America's most important national holiday celebrating American independence from Great Britain. On July 4th, 1776, America's Founding Fathers declared that the Thirteen Colonies were no longer colonies but an independent country in which the Rights of Englishmen would prevail for all citizens and not only for King George's administrators. (Actually, the Second Continental Congress voted in favor of independence on July 2, and historians debate whether the Declaration of Independence was signed on July 4 or August 2.)

In this American assertion of self-determination citizens of Great Britain were not allowed to vote. Therefore, according to Washington's position on the votes in Crimea and in eastern

Ukraine—the former Russian territories of Donetsk and Luhansk—America’s Declaration of Independence was “illegitimate and illegal.”

On July 4th all across America there will be patriotic speeches about our soldiers who gave their lives for their country. To an informed person these speeches are curious. I am hard pressed to think of any examples of our soldiers giving their lives for *our* country. US Marine General Smedley Butler had the same problem. He said that his Marines gave their lives for United Fruit Company’s control of Central America. “War is a racket,” said General Butler, pointing out that US participation in World War I produced 21,000 new American millionaires and billionaires.

When General Butler said “war is a racket,” he meant that war is a racket for a few people getting rich on the backs of millions of dead people. According to the article in the *American Journal of Public Health*, during the 20th century 190 million deaths could be directly and indirectly related to war.

190 million is 60 million more than the entire US population in the year that I was born.

The only war fought on US territory was the war against Southern Secession. In this war Irish immigrants fresh off the boat gave their lives for American Empire. As soon as the South was conquered, the Union forces were set loose on the Plains Indians and destroyed them as well.

Empire over life. That has always been Washington’s guiding principle.

America’s wars have always been fought elsewhere—Cuba, Haiti, Mexico, Philippines,

Japan, Germany, Korea, Vietnam, Panama, Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, Syria, and Somalia. Washington even attacks countries with which the US is not at war, such as Pakistan and Yemen, and engages in proxy wars. The article cited above reports: “The United States launched 201 overseas military operations between the end of World War II and 2001, and since then, others, including Afghanistan and Iraq.”

Not a single one of these wars and military operations had anything whatsoever to do with defending the US population from foreign threats.

Not even Japan and Germany posed a threat to the US. Neither country had any prospect of invading the US and neither country had any such war plans.

Let’s assume Japan had conquered China, Burma, and Indonesia. With such a vast territory to occupy, Japan could not have spared a single division with which to invade the US, and, of course, any invasion fleet would never have made it across the Pacific. Just as was the fate of the Japanese fleet at Midway, an invasion fleet would have been sitting ducks for the US Navy.

Assume Germany had extended its conquests over Europe to Great Britain, Russia and North Africa. Germany would have been unable to successfully occupy such a vast territory and could not have spared a single soldier to send to invade America. Even the US superpower was unable

to successfully occupy Iraq and Afghanistan, countries with small land areas and populations in comparison.

Except for its wars against the South, the Plains Indians, Haiti, Spain, Panama, Grenada, and Mexico, the US has never won a war. The Southern Confederates, usually outnumbered, often defeated the Union generals. Japan was defeated by its own lack of military resources. Germany was defeated by the Soviet Union. The allied invasion of Normandy did not occur until June 6, 1944, by which time the Red Army had ground up the Wehrmacht.

When the allies landed in Normandy, three-fourths of the German Army was on the Russian front. The allied invasion was greatly helped by Germany's shortage of fuel for mobilized units. If Hitler had not allowed hubris to lead him into invading the Soviet Union and, instead, just sat on his European conquests, no allied invasion would have been possible. Today Germany would rule all of Europe, including the UK. The US would have no European Empire with which to threaten Russia, China, and the Middle East.

In Korea in the 1950s, General Douglas MacArthur, victorious over Japan, was fought to a standstill by third world China. In Vietnam American technological superiority was defeated by a third world army. The US rolled up mighty Grenada in the 1980s, but lost its proxy war against the Sandinistas in Nicaragua.

Is there anyone so foolish as to think that Grenada or the Sandinistas were a threat to the United States, that North Korea or North Vietnam comprised threats to the United States? Yet, the Korean and Vietnam wars were treated as if the fate of the United States hung in the balance. The conflicts produced voluminous dire predictions and strategic debates. The communist threat replaced the Hitler threat. The American Empire was at risk from third world peoples. Dominoes would fall everywhere.

Currently Washington is at work overturning President Reagan's accomplishment of ending the Cold War. Washington orchestrated a coup that overthrew the elected government of Ukraine and installed a stooge government. Washington's stooges began issuing threats against Russia and the Russian speaking population in Ukraine.

These threats resulted in those parts of Ukraine that were formerly part of Russia declaring their independence. Washington blames Russia, not itself, and is stirring the pot, demonizing Russia and recreating the Cold War with military deployments in the Baltics and Eastern Europe. Washington needs to reinvent the Cold War in order to justify the hundreds of billions of dollars that Washington annually feeds the military/security complex, some of which recycles in political campaign donations. In contrast to Washington's propaganda, an honest view of the events in Ukraine can be found here: <http://www.claritypress.com/LendmanIII.html>

In the United States patriotism and militarism have become synonyms. This July 4th find the courage to remind the militarists that Independence Day celebrates the Declaration of Independence, not the American Empire. The Declaration of Independence was not only a declaration of independence from King George III but also a declaration of independence from

unaccountable tyrannical government. The oath of office commits the US officeholder to the defense of the US Constitution from enemies "foreign and *domestic*."

In the 21st century Americans' worst enemies are not al Qaeda, Iran, Russia, and China. America's worst enemies are our own presidents who have declared repeatedly that the orchestrated "war on terror" gives them the right to set aside the civil liberties guaranteed to every citizen by the US Constitution. Having stripped US citizens of their civil liberties, executive branch agencies are now stocking up vast amounts of ammunition, and the Department of Agriculture has placed an order for submachine guns. The Department for Homeland Security has acquired 2,717 mine-resistant armored personnel carriers. Congress and the media are not interested in why the executive branch is arming itself so heavily against the American people.

During the entirety of the 21st century—indeed, dating from the Clinton regime at the end of the 20th century—the executive branch has declared its independence from law (both domestic and international) and from the Constitution, Congress, and the Judiciary. The executive branch, with the help of the Republican Federalist Society, has established that the office of the executive is a tyranny unaccountable to law, domestic or international, as long as the executive declares a state of war, even a war that is not conducted against another country or countries but a vague, undefined or ill-defined war against a vague stateless enemy such as al Qaeda, with which the US is currently allied against Syria.

Al Qaeda now has a dual role. Al Qaeda is Washington's agent for overthrowing the elected Assad government in Syria and al Qaeda is the evil force against which US civil liberties must be sacrificed.

The illegitimate power asserted by the Office of the President is not only a threat to every American but also to every living being on planet earth. As the article cited above reports: "Approximately 17,300 nuclear weapons are presently deployed in at least 9 countries, many of which can be launched and reach their targets within 45 minutes."

It only takes one fool—and Washington has thousands of fools—and all life on earth terminates in 45 minutes. The neoconservative belief that the United States is the exceptional, indispensable country chosen by history to rule the earth is a belief full of the arrogance and hubris that lead to war.

Keep your likely fate in mind as you watch the military bands and marches on July 4th and listen to the hot air of militarism.