OMNI NEWSLETTER ON THE US WAR DEPARTMENT: IT’S THE WAR DEPARTMENT, March 23, 2011, compiled by Dick Bennett [This entire Blog seeks to expose the enormous lie of the “Defense Department” and to return it to its proper title, the “War Department.”]

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PEACE STUDIES
I read the other day that Johan Galtung, maybe the world's greatest thinker about peace studies, said that Security Studies were for domination and wars, and Peace Studies for alternatives and solutions. (www.transcend.org)

IT’S THE WAR DEPARTMENT
(This was written around 2000. US empire and aggressions have escalated since then, and in 2011, now under a Democratic president, our nation occupies two large countries and is bombing three more —Pakistan, Yemen, and Libya.)

We can all name instances of U.S. generosity for the world. But the nation has a dark history also.

In 1947, gearing up for the Cold War, the U. S. created its National Security Apparatuses and changed the name of the Department of War to the Department of Defense. This name change was one of the greatest Orwellian doublespeak deceptions of all time, for since the creation of the National Security Act the U.S. has illegally violated the sovereignty of dozens of nations in a multitude of ways—from air war and armed invasion to covert subversion--, all under the guise of “defense.” The National Security Act with its creation of domestic and global McCarthyism transformed the U. S. government into an increasingly covert semi-dictatorship. Let us return to the true name of the Department of “Defense”: The WAR DEPARTMENT.

William Blum in Killing Hope discusses 54 US military and CIA invasions and interventions since WWII. Following are my categories of those wars against health, prosperity, and peace with some examples from his book.

1. Violent land and air invasions in violation of international laws and treaties and against U.S. laws resulting in the overthrow of a sovereign nation: Guatemala, Grenada, Panama, 2nd Iraq War.

Violation of the War Powers Clause of the Constitution (Article I, Section 8); violation of the War Powers Resolution of 1973 (50 USCA Sec. 1541-1548. Sec. 2 ©); violation of treaties (UN Charter) which are “the supreme law of the land” (Article VI, Section 2).

2. Violent land and air invasions in violation of international laws and treaties and against U. S. laws
not resulting in the overthrow of the nation but causing enormous suffering and property damage:
North Vietnam, Nicaragua (Cuba much less damage).

3. Chemical Warfare in violation of numerous treaties: Korean War, Vietnam War, 1\textsuperscript{st} and 2\textsuperscript{nd} Iraq Wars.
See Endicott and Hagerman, and numerous books on the Vietnam War.

4. Terroristic bombings of sovereign nations in violation of international laws and treaties:
Laos, Libya, Iraq, Sudan, Afghanistan, Iraq.

5. Assistance to a military coup in toppling a foreign government disliked by the US.:
Iran, Chile.

6. Assisting a right-wing government to repress a rebellion:
Greece, Peru, Nicaragua, El Salvador, the Philippines, Columbia, Argentina.

7. Assassination of the leader of a foreign nation, directly or in complicity:
Diem of South Vietnam, Allende of Chile.
Violation of Executive Order prohibiting assassination or conspiracy to assassinate (Exec. Order 12,333, Sec. 2-305; see also US Army Field Manual 27-10 [1956]).

8. Attempted assassination:
Castro of Cuba, Kaddafi of Libya, Saddam Hussein of Iraq.
Violation of Executive Order prohibiting assassination or conspiracy to assassinate (Exec. Order 12,333, Sec. 2-305; see also US Army Field Manual 27-10 [1956]). Blum, \textit{Killing Hope}, p. 453, lists 33 foreign leaders the US government tried to kill, some of them several times.

9. Overthrow of the government of a foreign nation via electoral subversion:
Italy, Equador, Indonesia, Jamaica, Guyana, Costa Rica.

10. Training of foreign soldiers for repression in their countries resulting in atrocities: The School of the Americas, Fort Benning, GA.

11. Attempted alteration of a foreign government via electoral subversion:
too many to list!

None of these actions had anything to do with defense of the United States, but everything to do with the \textit{arrogance of power} and US economic advantage. Bring back its true name: THE WAR DEPARTMENT.

Note on the “just war” doctrine of 8 principles:
The doctrine requires that for the licit employment of lethal force, four criteria must be present simultaneously: 1) the damage inflicted by the aggressor on the nation or community of nations must be lasting, grave, and certain; 2) all other means of putting an end to it must have been shown to be impractical or ineffective (violence the last resort); 3) there must be serious prospects of success; and 4) the use of arms must not produce evils and disorders graver than the evil to be eliminated. Not one of the above depredations meets these criteria.

Note on the alleged threat to the U.S. from “international terrorism”, nuclear attack, chemical, and
biological warfare:
One reaps what one sows. Our leaders, by massively and repeatedly attacking the world, have created the precedent for attacks upon us. If the U.S. is in danger from terrorist attacks, its leaders should ask why, and get at the root of it, which is our own international terrorism since 1945, when we began the use of weapons of mass destruction. U.S. leaders have demonstrated their willingness to destroy others in every possible way; they should not be surprised when they are paid in kind; unfortunately, it will be the people who will suffer the retaliation.

See below for a short list of books that examine the US “War Department.”

To receive an “It’s the WAR Department” bumper sticker, send a stamped and addressed envelope to Dick Bennett, 2582 Jimmie Ave., Fayetteville, AR, 72703-3420. E-mail: jbennet@uark.edu

PERMANENT WAR
https://mail.google.com/mail/?hl=en&shva=1#inbox/12ee137d606475cc
John Cory writes: "War is so normal, so mundane, that we just accept it - like checking the daily weather report - cloudy, with a chance of gloom and death ... No worries though, this will be a short intervention. A matter of days and then it will be handed off to NATO supervision. A few missiles, a few bombs on carefully selected targets and it will all be over. Clean. Distant. Uninvolved. Death by technology. No muss, no fuss. Long war, short war, and in-between war. One size fits all. Step right up. War is our new normal."

The Civilian and the Military by Arthur A. Ekirch, Jr.
By elaborating on the role of the civilian and the military in American history up through the mid-twentieth century, the author helps us understand why the growing power and importance of the armed forces over many aspects of national and international policy is alarming for thoughtful citizens and policy makers today.

Despite Talk of Cuts, Pentagon Spending Still Going Up
Nancy A. Youssef, McClatchy News
Excerpt: "The proposal still foresees military spending growing by three percent next year, to $553 billion, not including spending on the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan." [Pentagon budget alone for 2010-2011 is $600 billion, not including the wars or nuclear weapons.]
READ MORE https://mail.google.com/mail/?hl=en&shva=1#inbox/12d61f36821e4aeb

Defense Spending Is Much Greater than You Think
By Robert Higgs
Saturday April 17, 2010 at 2:50:18 PM PDT
When President Obama presented his budget recently for fiscal year 2011, he proposed that the Pentagon’s outlays be increased by about 4.5 percent beyond its estimated outlays in fiscal 2010, to a total of almost $719 billion. Although many Americans regard this enormous sum as excessive, few appreciate that the total amount of all defense-related spending greatly exceeds the amount budgeted for the Department of Defense.

In fiscal year 2009, which ended last September, the Pentagon spent $636.5 billion. Lodged elsewhere in the budget, however, other lines identify funding that serves defense purposes just as surely as—sometimes even more surely than—the money allocated to the Department of Defense. On occasion, commentators take note of some of these additional defense-related budget items, such as the Department of Energy’s nuclear-weapons program, but many such items, including some extremely large ones, remain generally unrecognized.

Since the creation of the Department of Homeland Security, many observers probably would agree that its budget ought to be included in any complete accounting of defense costs. After all, the homeland is what most of us want the government to defend in the first place.

Other agencies also spend money in pursuit of homeland security. The Justice Department, for example, includes the Federal Bureau of Investigation, which devotes substantial resources to an anti-terrorist program. The Department of the Treasury claims to have “worked closely with the Departments of State and Justice and the intelligence community to disrupt targets related to al Qaeda, Hizballah, Jemaah Islamiyah, as well as to disrupt state sponsorship of terror.”

Much, if not all, of the budget for the Department of State and for international assistance programs ought to be classified as defense-related, too. In this case, the money serves to buy off potential enemies and to reward friendly governments who assist U.S. efforts to abate perceived threats. About $5 billion of annual U.S. foreign aid currently takes the form of “foreign military financing,” and even funds placed under the rubric of economic development may serve defense-related purposes indirectly. Money is fungible, and the receipt of foreign assistance for economic-development projects allows allied governments to divert other funds to police, intelligence, and military purposes.

Two big budget items represent the current cost of defense goods and services obtained in the past. The Department of Veterans Affairs, which is authorized to spend about $124 billion in the current fiscal year, falls in this category. Likewise, a great deal of the government’s interest expense on publicly held debt represents the current cost of defense outlays financed in the past by borrowing from the public.

To estimate the size of the entire de facto defense budget, I gathered data for fiscal 2009, the most recently completed fiscal year, for which data on actual outlays are now available. In that year, the Department of Defense itself spent $636.5 billion. Defense-related parts of the Department of Energy budget added $16.7 billion. The Department of Homeland Security spent $51.7 billion. The Department of State and international assistance programs laid out $36.3 billion for activities arguably related to defense purposes either directly or indirectly. The Department of Veterans Affairs had outlays of $95.5 billion. The Department of the Treasury, which funds the lion’s share of military retirement costs through its support of the little-known Military Retirement Fund, added $54.9 billion. A large part of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration’s outlays ought to be regarded as defense-related, if only indirectly so. When all of these other parts of the budget are added to the budget for the Pentagon itself, they increase the fiscal 2009 total by nearly half again, to $901.5 billion.

Finding out how much of the government’s net interest payments on the publicly held national debt ought to be attributed to past debt-funded defense spending requires a considerable amount of calculation. I added up all past deficits (minus surpluses) since 1916 (when the debt was nearly zero),
prorated according to each year’s ratio of narrowly defined national security spending—military, veterans, and international affairs—to total federal spending, expressing everything in dollars of constant purchasing power. This sum is equal to 67.6 percent of the value of the national debt held by the public at the end of 2009. Therefore, I attribute that same percentage of the government’s net interest outlays in that year to past debt-financed defense spending. The total amount so attributed comes to $126.3 billion.

Adding this interest component to the previous all-agency total, the grand total comes to $1,027.8 billion, which is 61.5 percent greater than the Pentagon’s outlays alone.

In similar analyses I conducted previously for fiscal 2002 and for fiscal 2006, total defense-related spending was even greater relative to Pentagon spending alone – it was 73 percent greater in fiscal 2002 and 87 percent greater in fiscal 2006. In fiscal 2009, the ratio was held down in large part by the reduced cost of servicing the government’s debt, owing to the extremely low interest rates that prevailed on government securities. This situation cannot last much longer. As interest rates on the Treasury’s securities rise, so will the government’s cost of servicing the debt attributable to past debt-financed defense outlays.

For fiscal 2010, which is still in progress, the president’s budget estimates that the Pentagon’s spending will run more than $50 billion above the previous year’s total. Any supplemental appropriations made before September 30 will push the total for fiscal 2010 even farther above the trillion-dollar mark.

Although I have arrived at my conclusions honestly and carefully, I may have left out items that should have been included—the federal budget is a gargantuan, complex, and confusing collection of documents. If I have done so, however, the left-out items are not likely to be relatively large ones. (I have deliberately ignored some minor items, such as outlays for the Selective Service System, the National Defense Stockpile, and the anti-terrorist activities conducted by the FBI and the Treasury.

For now, however, the conclusion seems inescapable: the government is currently spending at a rate well in excess of $1 trillion per year for all defense-related purposes. Owing to the financial debacle and the ongoing recession, millions are out of work, millions are losing their homes, and private earnings remain well below their previous peak, but in the military-industrial complex, the gravy train speeds along the track faster and faster.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>National Security Outlays in Fiscal Year 2009 (billions of dollars)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Department of Defense</td>
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<tr>
<td>Department of Energy (nuclear weapons &amp; environ. cleanup)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Department of State (plus intern. assistance)</td>
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<td>Department of Veterans Affairs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Department of Homeland Security</td>
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<tr>
<td>Department of the Treasury (for Military Retirement Fund)</td>
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<tr>
<td>National Aeronautics &amp; Space Administration (1/2 of total)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Net interest attributable to past debt-financed defense outlays</td>
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<td>Total</td>
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Source: Author’s classifications and calculations; basic data from U.S. Office of Management and Budget, *Budget of the United States Government, Fiscal Year 2011* and U.S. Bureau
RESISTANCE TO WAR SPENDING

[Actually, every revelation of facts and truth, every exposure of the Pentagon and US militarism to the light of their destructive consequences, are resistance.]

ONGOING COST OF WAR SIGN

There is a link within the email about how to set one up in your own town. They have outlined what they did - http://www.binghamtonbridge.org/?q=node/1131

WHY WARS, WHY MASS SLAUGHTER? NATIONALISM and the WAR DEPARTMENT

*Nations Have the Right to Kill: Hitler, the Holocaust, and War* by Richard Koenigsberg

But what if destruction and self-destruction are the fundamental purpose of warfare? This is the conclusion that I have reached. More precisely, perhaps warfare is undertaken as a form of sacrifice—a gigantic potlatch—whereby human beings give over their bodies and possessions to objects of worship with names like France, Germany, Japan, America, etc.

We would prefer not to know that this is the case. We still exist within the heart of the storm. Nationalism is a living religion, so powerful that we barely conceive of it as a religion. Yet Carolyn Marvin in her ground-breaking *Blood Sacrifice and the Nation* (1999) develops a theory similar to the one I present in this book. She shows how warfare and sacrifice function to support and sustain the idea of the nation.

I explore this idea in Chapter III of this book, “As the Soldier Dies, So the Nation Comes Alive,” as well as in Chapter V, in which I examine parallels between the First World War and the Aztec performance of warfare as a ritual sacrifice. Are we in the Western World similar to the Aztecs in that we sacrifice human beings in the name of our Gods?

Sadly, it would appear that this is the case. The difference is that the Aztecs were aware that warfare was a sacrificial ritual, whereas we in the West are not yet aware of this. One objective of this book is to help us to become conscious of the central role of sacrifice in our political rituals.

Marvin writes about blood sacrifice in war as the “totem secret.” The fact that nations create warfare as a sacrificial ritual is something that we are not supposed to know. Indeed, we don’t wish to know that this is the case. What would it mean if people were to become aware that warfare is an institution whose purpose is to sacrifice—or kill—people?

Hitler nearly understood this. He realized that nations have the right to kill. The purpose of this book is to provide documentation showing how nations act in the name of killing or sacrificing people. We understand that nations have the right to kill, but assume there are specific reasons why states find it necessary to go to war.

But what if it turns out that the production of sacrificial violence and victims is an essential function of the nation-state? What if wars are waged not for specific reasons, rather in order to produce opportunities for killing and dying? What if it turns out that killing (producing sacrificial victims) is one of the fundamental purposes of collective acts of violence? If we become capable of knowing this, will it make a difference?
EXAMPLE OF THE WAR DEPARTMENT WARRIOR OF US NATIONAL SECURITY STATE
“Richard Holbrooke represented the worst side of the foreign policy establishment”
by Stephen Zunes, Huffington Post (15 December 2010)
The many accolades coming out following the sudden death on Monday of veteran diplomat Richard Holbrooke and his death bed conversion in opposing the Iraq war have overshadowed his rather sordid history of supporting dictators, war criminals and military solutions to complex political problems.
Holbrooke got his start in the Foreign Service during the 1960s in the notorious pacification programs in the Mekong Delta of South Vietnam. This ambitious joint civilian–military effort not only included horrific human rights abuses, but also proved to be a notorious failure in curbing the insurgency against the US-backed regime in Saigon. This was an inauspicious start in the career of someone Obama appointed as his special envoy to Afghanistan and Pakistan to help curb the insurgency against those US-backed governments.
In the late 1970s, Holbrooke served as assistant secretary of state for East Asian and Pacific affairs. In this position, he played a major role in formulating the Carter administration's support for Indonesia's occupation of East Timor and the bloody counterinsurgency campaign responsible for up to a quarter-million civilian deaths. Having successfully pushed for a dramatic increase in US military aid to the Suharto dictatorship, he then engaged in a cover-up of the Indonesian atrocities. He testified before Congress in 1979 that the mass starvation wasn't the fault of the scorched-earth campaign by Indonesian forces in the island nation's richest agricultural areas, but simply a legacy of Portuguese colonial neglect.
Later, in reference to his friend Paul Wolfowitz, then the US ambassador to Indonesia, Holbrooke described how "Paul and I have been in frequent touch to make sure that we keep [East Timor] out of the presidential campaign, where it would do no good to American or Indonesian interests."
In a particularly notorious episode while heading the State Department's East Asia division, Holbrooke convinced Carter to release South Korean troops under US command in order to suppress a pro-democracy uprising in the city of Kwangju. Holbrooke was among the Carter administration officials who reportedly gave the O.K. to Gen. Chun Doo-Hwan, who had recently seized control of the South Korean government in a military coup to wipe out the pro-democracy rebels. Hundreds were killed.
He also convinced President Jimmy Carter to continue its military and economic support for the Marcos dictatorship in the Philippines.
In the late 1990s, as the US ambassador to the United Nations, Holbrooke criticized the UN for taking leadership in conflict resolution efforts involving US allies, particularly in the area of human rights. For example, in October 2000 he insisted that a UN Security Council resolution criticizing the excessive use of force by Israeli occupation forces against Palestinian demonstrators revealed an unacceptable bias that put the UN "out of the running" in terms of any contributions to the peace process.
As special representative to Cyprus in 1997, Holbrooke unsuccessfully pushed the European Union to admit Turkey, despite its imprisonment of journalists, its ongoing use of the death penalty, its widespread killing of civilians in the course of its bloody counterinsurgency war in its Kurdish region, and other human rights abuses.
Holbrooke is perhaps best known for his leadership in putting together the 1995 Dayton Accords, which formally ended the conflict in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Though widely praised in
some circles for his efforts, Holbrooke remains quite controversial for his role. For instance, the agreement allowed Bosnian Serbs to hold on to virtually all of the land they had seized and ethnically cleansed in the course of that bloody conflict. Indeed, rather than accept the secular concept of national citizenship that has held sway in Europe for generations, Holbrooke helped impose sectarian divisions that have made the country - unlike most of its gradually liberalizing Balkan neighbors - unstable, fractious and dominated by illiberal ultra-nationalists.

As with previous US officials regarding their relations with Iraq's Saddam Hussein and Panama's Manuel Noriega, Holbrooke epitomizes the failed US policy toward autocratic rulers that swings between the extremes of appeasement and war. For example, during the 1996 pro-democracy uprising in Serbia, Holbrooke successfully argued that the Clinton administration should back Milosevic, in recognition of his role in the successful peace deal over Bosnia, and not risk the instability that might result from a victory by Serb democrats. Milosevic initially crushed the movement. He also failed to back the nonviolent resistance campaign for independence in Kosovo, then led by the moderate Ibrahim Rugova.

In response to increased Serbian oppression in Kosovo just a couple years later, however, Holbrooke became a vociferous advocate of the 1999 US-led bombing campaign, leading to victory of the hard-line KLA in Kosovo. Meanwhile, in Serbia, the bombing creating a nationalist reaction that set back the reconstituted pro-democracy in Serbia movement once again. The pro-democracy movement finally succeeded in the nonviolent overthrow of the regime, following Milosevic's attempt to steal the parliamentary elections in October 2000, but the young leaders of that movement remain bitterly angry at Holbrooke to this day.

Scott Ritter, the former chief UN Special Commission (UNSCOM) inspector, who correctly assessed the absence of weapons of mass destruction in Iraq and predicted a disastrous outcome for the US invasion, observed, "not only has he demonstrated a lack of comprehension when it comes to the complex reality of Afghanistan (not to mention Pakistan), Holbrooke has a history of choosing the military solution over the finesse of diplomacy." Noting how the Dayton Accords were built on the assumption of a major and indefinite NATO military presence, which would obviously be far more problematic in Afghanistan and Pakistan than in Europe, Ritter added: "This does not bode well for the Obama administration."

Ironically, back in 2002-2003, when the United States had temporarily succeeded in marginalizing Taliban and al-Qaeda forces, Holbrooke was a strong supporter of redirecting American military and intelligence assets away from the region in order to invade and occupy Iraq. Obama and many other Democrats presciently criticized this reallocation of resources at that time as likely to lead to the deterioration of the security situation in the country and the resurgence of these extremist groups, but Holbrooke instead sided with the Bush administration in supporting the disastrous invasion and occupation.

It was unclear, then, why Obama chose someone like Holbrooke for such a sensitive post. Indeed, as the past two years have shown, Holbrooke's efforts in Afghanistan and Pakistan appear to have little to show for them. Perhaps more than any other appointment, Holbrooke epitomized the tragedy of Obama's foreign policy: instead of bringing hope and change, he brought in some of the most notorious figures of the foreign policy establishment to continue to pursue failed and immoral policies.

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/stephen-zunes/richard-holbrooke-represe_b_796447.html

BOOKS (a few published up to 2005)
In Killing Hope: U.S. Military and CIA Interventions Since World War II (Monroe, Me: Common
Courage, 1995), the author William Blum lists all of the instances of use of US armed forces abroad from 1798 to 1945 (pp. 444-452).


NOTE FROM A VIETNAM VET FRIEND
This was a popular phrase among GI's in Vietnam when he was there.
"we are the unwilling, led by the unqualified, doing the unnecessary, for the ungrateful".

END OF NEWSLETTER ON THE US WAR DEPARTMENT MARCH 23, 2011