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THE COST OF LOYALTY

DISHONESTY, HUBRIS, AND FAILURE IN THE U.S. MILITARY

BY TIM BAKKEN · RELEASE DATE: FEB. 18, 2020
A West Point professor deconstructs the many failures of America’s most beloved institution: the armed forces.

Bakken—the first civilian hired to teach law at West Point who was also a whistleblower and won a retaliation case against the U.S. military—delivers an angry polemic, arguing that America’s military is commanded by men of limited intelligence but self-serving loyalty to their institution. This didn’t matter before World War II, when peacetime forces were tiny and neglected. Since 1945, however, they have swollen massively, dominating civil society and operating free of constitutional restraints thanks to several Supreme Court decisions and fawning civilian leaders. Fervently admired—approval in polls never drops below 70%—the military has attained untouchable status from its commander in chief. Every president after Dwight Eisenhower has proclaimed unqualified esteem, and Congress, which last declared war in 1942, has surrendered its authority. Yet despite performing with spectacular incompetence in most wars since WWII, no general has been fired. Bakken places much blame on the service academies (West Point et al.), mediocre institutions awash in money whose draconian discipline and teaching methods date from their founding. Most instructors are junior officers with no specialty in their subject who rotate through for a few years, following a rigid syllabus from which they cannot deviate. Readers may pause in their fuming to recall that brilliant people rarely choose a career in the military—or law enforcement. Rather, members of the military join for the action and value courage and loyalty above all. They consider themselves a band of brothers, indispensable defenders of the nation, most of whose effete citizens lack their selfless dedication. Warriors have always believed this, which is a mostly harmless situation unless they are calling the shots, which the author states is happening—and they are making a mess of it.

A provocative, disturbing argument that a democracy is in trouble when it venerates the military unconditionally.
About The Cost of Loyalty

A courageous and damning look at the destruction wrought by the arrogance, incompetence, and duplicity prevalent in the U.S. military—from the inside perspective of a West Point professor of law.

Veneration for the military is a deeply embedded but fatal flaw in America's collective identity. In twenty years at West Point, whistleblower Tim Bakken has come to understand how unquestioned faith isolates the U.S. armed forces from civil society and leads to catastrophe. Pervaded by chronic deceit, the military's insular culture elevates blind loyalty above all other values. The consequences are undeniably grim: failure in every war since World War II, millions of lives lost around the globe, and trillions of dollars wasted.

Bakken makes the case that the culture he has observed at West Point influences whether America starts wars and how it prosecutes them. Despite fabricated admissions data, rampant cheating, epidemics of sexual assault, archaic curriculums, and shoddy teaching, the military academies produce officers who maintain their privileges at any cost to the nation. Any dissenter is crushed. Bakken revisits all the major wars the United States has fought, from Korea to the current debacles in the Middle East, to show how the military culture produces one failure after another.

The Cost of Loyalty is a powerful, multifaceted revelation about the United States and its singular source of pride. One of the few federal employees ever to win a whistleblowing case against the U.S. military, Bakken, in this brave, timely, and urgently necessary book, and at great personal risk, helps us understand why America loses wars.

Reviews

"Brave . . . [The Cost of Loyalty] should land like a grenade. Unlike the myriad critiques of the military that wash over the institution from outside the Blob, this one is written by a professor with 20 years on the inside. He knows the instructors, the culture, the admissions process, the scandals, the cover-ups, and how its legendary "warrior-scholars" have performed after graduation and on the battlefield . . . if the real sausage is made at the military academies, then Bakken has invited us in on some of the more distasteful elements going right on under our noses." — The American Conservative

“A provocative, disturbing argument that a democracy is in trouble when it venerates the military unconditionally.” — starred review, Kirkus Reviews

“A scalding account of the self-rewarding ethos that permeates (and weakens) today's military leadership from West Point to the Pentagon, Tim Bakken's The Cost of Loyalty should be required reading for all members of Congress.” — Lloyd C. Gardner, author of THE WAR ON LEAKERS NATIONAL SECURITY AND AMERICAN DEMOCRACY, FROM EUGENE V. DEBS TO EDWARD SNOWDEN

“The Cost of Loyalty articulates a glaring and unflattering dilemma within the armed forces, where loyalty is often the principal value chosen over the military services' common core values. Leaders of character must continue to train and educate the force, and this book is a must read for every military institution—if not all Congressional members and staff.” — Major General Antonio Taguba, U.S. Army

II. REVIEWS

West Point Prof Pens Blistering Takedown of U.S. Military ...

www.theamericanconservative.com › Articles › Military & Defense

5 days ago - Tim Bakken's The Cost of Loyalty: Dishonesty, Hubris and Failure in the ... “the military's loyalty to itself and determined separation from society ...
This whistleblower from West Point is exploding the myths surrounding the US military. He points to constant failure as well as widespread corruption and incompetence. While all of this is no doubt true, the foundational problem is the misuse of the military as a tool of aggression seeking to create US dominance and the ability for US corporations to profit from cheap natural resources and low-wage workers. The US military budget needs to be dramatically cut as part of shrinking the military so it is truly only a defensive force. Since the US has never been attacked by another country since the attack on Pearl Harbor, a defensive force can be quite small. This means closing all US foreign bases and bringing troops home from abroad.

The profit must be taken out of war. Weapons makers should be socialized so they are part of the government without the exorbitant salaries of executives and returns for investors. Weapons should only be made for defensive purposes not as a profit center or tool of domination. The military should be audited annually. It has only been audited once and failed that audit. There should be accountability and consequences for the misuse of funds and audit failures.

Not only is the US military losing wars, it is creating chaos and insecurity around the world. It is causing mass deaths and mass migration which is causing problems in neighboring countries as far away as in Europe from US wars in Asia, the Middle East and Africa. The United States has tremendous needs at home. There is a desperate need for affordable housing throughout the country. College education should be free and graduates suffering from student debt should have that
debt erased. Infrastructure repairs are needed and transition to a clean energy economy is urgent. Senior citizens are living in poverty because of inadequate Social Security payments which should be tripled. Poverty impacts tens of millions of people in the United States. These are just some of many of the needs at home. The trillion dollars spend on weapons and war needs to be ended so that human needs can be met and environmental degradation can be confronted.

This whistleblower is another wake-up call that the US military needs a complete rethinking, shrinking and change in mission KZ

What do you call a civilian law professor who, after successfully filing for federal whistleblower status to keep his job teaching at West Point Military Academy, proceeds to write a bombshell book about the systematic corruption, violence, fraud, and anti-intellectualism he says has been rampant at the historic institution for over a hundred years?

Well, if you are part of the military leadership or an alumnus of the storied military academy, you may call him a traitor. But if you are anyone searching for reasons why the most powerful military in the world has not won a war in 75 years, you might call him a truth-teller. And a pretty brave one at that.

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EDUCATE!
A West Point professor deconstructs the many failures of America’s most beloved institution: the armed forces. Bakken—the first civilian hired to teach law at...

III. LOYALTY MATERIALS

This article, with a statement signed by 70 former U.S. Senators including 18 Republicans and 52 Democrats, seems quite significant. America is beginning to turn into a dictatorship. https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/former-us-senators-the-senate-is-failing-to-perform-its-constitutional-duties/2020/02/25/b9bdd22a-5743-11ea-9000-f3cffee23036_story.html?

Art Hobson

Trump’s Party

“An Unqualified Loyalist.” (Washington Post). NADG (2-24 -20). Richard Grenell appointed acting director of national intelligence “is manifestly unqualified for the job.” Nevertheless he has “won the president’s favor in a familiar way: by loudly praising him and his agenda…."

WOMACK AT WEST POINT


“Womack Reelected to West Point Post.” NADG (3-1-2020). To his 4th term as chairman of the Board of Visitors (2017-), first appointed to the board in 2012 by Republican Speaker John Boehner. Womack served 30 years in the AANG, retiring as a colonel in 2009. His brother Jim graduated from West point.

RELATED MILITARISM NEWSLETTERS

Military Industrial Complex MIC

GRASSROOTS
FASCISM

US Military-Industrial (Corporate-Wall Street--White House-Congressional) Complex (Dems and Repubs One War Party)

MILITARY-INDUSTRIAL Newsletter #1, Feb. 19, 2012
http://jamesrichardbennett.blogspot.com/2012/02/military-industrial-complex-newsletter.html

Contents MIC Newsletter #1 Feb. 19, 2012
Ike’s MIC Speech
Ledbetter, Eisenhower and the MIC
Hartung, Lockheed Martin
De Rugy, “Today we are living Ike's nightmare.”
Kaul, “We’re the most war-prone people on earth.”
CodePink Protest

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Corporations-Pentagon-Congress-White House-Mainstream Media-Empire Complex
Meier and Martin: Weapons Industry Promotes Weapons Via Video Games
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Danielle Ivory: BP Contracts Suspended
Weissman, Oil Companies and Pentagon
Gainza:, Nationalize the US Weapons Industry
Swanson Book, MIC (+C, MM, E) at 50
Turse, Why the Military Invades Our Everyday Lives
Giroux, Military-Academic Complex
Google Search
# 3 in preparation

• GRASSROOTS MILITARISM, ARKANSAS, NEWSLETTER #3, February 18, 2017

• Compiled by Dick Bennett for a Culture of Peace, Justice, and Ecology
Introduction

Northwest Arkansas Regional “Our Community” Phone Directory/Yellow Pages 2016-2017, the Cover for Veterans

_The Rise of the Military Welfare State_ by Jennifer Mittelstadt

Local Newspaper Record of Grassroots Militarism


American “Valor” and Honoring “Heroes” (2009-2016)

State of Arkansas Tax Support

State of Arkansas Medical Support

Benton County Support: Veterans Services Office

Local Military Industrial Complex

Militarism Promotion in Schools and Universities

Businesses and other Institutions Supporting Militarism

Public Officials Promoting Militarism

NEWSLETTER ON FASCISM, TOTALITARIANISM USA #4, March 6, 2019


END US CULTURE OF WAR NEWSLETTER #1

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