

Pentagon Contradictions and Imperialist Decline

The U.S. military budget is larger than those of the rest of the world put together. This is a superprofit subsidy to the wealthiest CEOs and stockholders of the military corporations.

At the same time, twenty million people a year in the U.S. get sick from contaminated water. Forty percent of the water is dangerously polluted. This is a sign of infrastructure decay reaching life-threatening proportions.

Boiling our drinking water is the real cost of the Pentagon budget, along with the millions who were unemployed, even before the global capitalist crisis. Now, since the global crash, there is more than 20 percent unemployment and over 50 percent for Black and Latino/a youth.

**Half of all our federal taxes go to the Pentagon.
The total amount and the military proportion of the
budget go up, up and up every year. Yet no serious
debate, discussion or challenge is allowed.**

The largest prison population in the world is a byproduct of the Pentagon budget. And so is the one-third of youth who don't graduate from high school. As Hurricane Katrina exposed, in a natural disaster tens of thousands of people have nowhere to turn and racism is intensified. All of these social catastrophes while 1 trillion dollars this year alone is spent on U.S. wars — past, present and future.

U.S. war — profitable but unwinnable

This is supposedly the richest country in the world. U.S. workers have the highest rate of productivity and yet the workers are becoming paupers. They are getting a smaller and smaller share of what they produce.

Every year while the Pentagon gets more, in order to balance the budget, there are cuts of 10 to 15 percent a year in what goes to states and cities as block grants. This creates crises in health clinics, homeless shelters, schools, transit systems.

Congress or the White House, regardless of who is in office, won't challenge funds to the largest corporations, or their fraudulent cost overruns — hundreds of billions a year in government handouts or super-profits — without producing anything of value or use.

Corporate power is addicted to it. This is an unsolvable contradiction of imperialism today.

If it doesn't get this giant subsidy, the entire capitalist system will go into crisis. It can't do without it, but it is killing them. The sheer weight of the military is dragging the capitalist system down.

Decades of handing billions of dollars to the military-industrial complex has gone from being a stimulant to the capitalist economy to a sick addiction.

The giant funds to the military are no longer enough to soak up capitalist overproduction, to sponge up huge surpluses. They are no longer enough to restart the capitalist economy the way they once were able to.

Military spending does not create jobs. It destroys millions of jobs in the civilian economy.

When the global capitalist crisis hit in October 2008, the system needed a direct infusion of an additional \$700 billion just to provide immediate life-support to the biggest banks.

As the Marxist theoretician Sam Marcy explained, this huge military apparatus and the corporations dependent on it overwhelm all civilian institutions and endlessly press toward military solutions.

The Pentagon is the largest military machine on the planet. There are over 1,000 bases and fantastic high-tech weapon systems that can destroy the earth.

But they can't defeat the poorest country in world — Afghanistan. Why can't they pull it off?

They are incapable of improving any of the conditions of life, or bringing any progressive social change. It is impossible to win hearts and minds if you can only destroy. The think tanks and planners can't solve it or change it.

The imperialist military is built to serve the profit system, to provide super-profits and to enforce exploitation. Now it is so thoroughly corrupt and bloated that it can no longer function effectively to defend the system.

There are more contractors and mercenaries in Iraq and Afghanistan than there are U.S. military forces. A recent Congressional committee couldn't find out how many contractors there were or where they were or what they were doing, except getting paid.

The Pentagon militarizes the very air we breathe, increasing repression many-fold. Police and military units are everywhere. They intentionally create fear.

The targeting of Muslims in the U.S. and the charges of terrorism and manufactured government stings are all to justify a climate of war, racism and demonization.

On Nov. 13, 2009, the big news story was the seizure of four mosques, Islamic schools and an Islamic charity. Federal prosecutors claimed they were secretly controlled by the Iranian government. They bragged it was the biggest collection of counterterrorism seizures in U.S. history. This attack was timed to coincide with new sanctions on Iran.

This is ominously part of the continuing danger of a massive strike against Iran. There are continuing drone attacks on Paki-stan that are widening the war. Along with continuing massive military aid to Israel is an effort to stamp out the heroic Palestinian resistance.

But it is not succeeding anywhere. It is igniting more resistance everywhere.

The future of their global system of imperialist domination is unraveling. That makes them more dangerous, desperate and unpredictable. But the Pentagon does not have enough soldiers, and they don't have enough collaborators or "allies" to fight their wars.

We have to link the fight against endless war and militarism with the fight for jobs, against foreclosures, for health care and the struggle for everything we need and have a right to.

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