

Beating the Drums of War. US Troop Build-up: Army & Marines authorize "Involuntary Conscription"

The Timing of U.S. Troop Build-up: Iran and the Broader Middle East

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U.S. Army & Marines are recalling thousands of Inactive Servicemen

If one places a frog in a kettle of boiling water, the frog will immediately jump and try to escape, but if you place the frog in a kettle of cold water then heat the kettle gradually, the frog will obliviously, without any notice, remain in the kettle as the temperature of the water rises and the frog eventually boils to death. The significance of this is that gradual change can be and is believed to be unperceivable. This strategy and concept can likewise be used on societies and groups in a variety of manners.

It is now being specified and openly stated that the U.S. Marines have started recalling or legally summoning thousands of 'inactive servicemen' to serve in Iraq and the Middle East, where the number of U.S. troops and contracted security personal are dropping towards hap-hazardous levels that seem to be worrying American commanders in Iraq and the Pentagon's military planners, especially in light of the recent escalation and intensifying tension(s) and resistance to Anglo-American occupation in the Middle East and Afghanistan. The U.S. Army too, undermined by shortfalls in manpower, has ordered over a reported 14,000 'inactive servicemen' back to fight in what is cited as the 'War on Terror,' as opposed to the 'fighting in Iraq or Afghanistan.'¹ Already thousands of servicemen have dissented, even applying for refugee status in Canada, and thousands more are AWAL (absent without authorized leave).

The compulsory recall to military service has come about and materialized in almost complementary and balancing—if one can use these words for what seem to be actions of an adversarial nature—coordination with the timing of several other and important international events. The compulsory recall of 'inactive servicemen' in the United States might even go unnoticed in North America and most the world until analysts, historians and later generations look back at the present events unfolding in these contemporary times, years from now and place them into focus within a larger matrix of events. This could just be the 'tip of the iceberg,' but this seems to be nothing less than a watered down and concealed 'military draft' and it is only the continuation of a systematic conscription of military troops and former servicemen in a stealthy and cautious manner. This looks as if it is an unprecedented event in the recent military history of the United States; something that has not happened since the 'full draft' during the American war in Vietnam and the World Wars. The obligation of military service or military conscription was not initiated after the tragic events of 9/11—the trigger that augmented and accelerated the aggressive militarization of American foreign policy—nor during the Anglo-American invasion of Iraq in 2003. In fact the only time a draft has seriously been mentioned or entertained publicly is in the circumstances and likelihood that the United States should find itself attacking Iran or both Iran and Syria.

The Timing of the U.S. Troop Build-up: Iran, and the Broader Middle East

A look at the international events unfolding concurrently within the same timeline and the same or flanking geographic setting(s) of the Marine Corps deployment is something that can be forgiven for arousing certain suspicion(s) in individuals about the strategic methodology of such a move or rather series of moves. Firstly the official multi-faceted Iranian response has been announced by Ali Larijani, the Secretary-General of the Supreme National Security Council of Iran, and by the Iranian government, via diplomatic channels in Tehran to all the Permanent Members (the P5) of the Security Council and Germany, in regards to the so-called EU-3 (French, British, and German) package of incentives offered to the Iranians if Iran should forfeit its legal right—which is guaranteed under the Non-Proliferation Treaty and international law—to produce nuclear fuel. Secondly, the large scale war games being held throughout Iran and adjacent to U.S., American-led Coalition, and NATO forces are unfolding under a very well planned and strategic timetable as were the large scale military exercises held by Iran in April 2006². Thirdly the Israeli siege of Lebanon—which seems to have entered a new phase of low spectrum warfare under the veil of the United Nations Security Council resolution which was catered to Israeli requirements—seem to have simmered down, but with the likely projection of being protracted, continued, and tied to other regional trials, players, and events, including Syria. Fourthly, the United Nations Security Council deadline set for Iran to halt its uranium enrichment is drawing to an end, with only days till August 31, 2006. These events and manoeuvres appear to all be the ingredients of a conflict that is and has been fermenting and building; for all its dramatics and

repartee 'the Middle East is a powder keg waiting to be disturbed'—even further.

The Role of Mercenaries in Iraq

There has been a steady U.S. troop build up in occupied Iraq that has been going on for months now, without even studying the unofficial numbers and concealed figures of mercenaries and private security contractors. In mid-August most the members of an approximately 380 member U.S. Army brigade from Alaska, 172nd Stryker Brigade, who were sent home from a military tour of duty that was already extended by the Pentagon in war dilapidated and fatigued Anglo-American occupied Iraq were ordered and forced to return to their posts in the Baghdad area after just returning to the United States.³ U.S. troops have also slowly been marshalled into Iraq from neighbouring Kuwait and other places where they are not urgently vital or needed. The citizens of Iraq were also expecting Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri Al-Malaki to establish a timetable for the departure of American, British, and Coalition troops from Iraqi territory during his visit to Washington D.C., but have instead saw the Prime Minister fully agree with the American programme for Iraq and non-commitment to a troop withdrawal timetable for Iraq; instead the Iraqi Prime Minister accepted and committed himself publicly for an increase of American forces in and around the Iraqi capital, Baghdad, in the thousands, along with Iraqi forces as security and auxiliary. Prior even to the arrival of the Iraqi Prime Minister in Washington D.C., the U.S. Secretary of Defence, Donald H. Rumsfeld, stated that the number of troops in the Baghdad area had increased from approximately a force of 40,000 to 55,000 troops.

In contingent with the U.S. troop build up, mercenaries, which reportedly make the second largest group after American troops in Iraq, have also been proliferating into Anglo-American occupied Iraq and NATO garrisoned Afghanistan, but what is more noteworthy is the overflow of these groups into places of close geographic proximity in the region. Many young men from within the United States and around the world seeking American citizenship or green cards have also been lured into the circuits of the U.S. military and mercenary groups. After the U.S. launched the 'War on Terror, the Bush Jr. Administration made it easier for foreign-born residents living in the United States who joined the military to gain full American citizenship as a way to boost the militaries demographics. A whole set of obstructions to American citizenship were instantly removed to make enrolment and recruitment in the U.S. military more desirable and appealing. The Asia Times has reported that "of the 15,000 new US citizens who were naturalized in the week of July 4, hundreds were from the military. Foreign legal residents make up 2% to 3% of the US military, but they are becoming citizens in record numbers. The largest number of foreigners in the US forces is from the Philippines (25 %). According to the Migration Policy Institute, 410 Indians were actively serving the US military in the year 2004."⁴

For example, Blackwater, a private security firm founded by a former U.S. Navy SEAL and specialized in "military, law enforcement, peacekeeping, and stability operations challenges"⁵ is an American firm of mercenaries that has been contracted by the Pentagon to work and guard American officials and facilities in both Iraq and Afghanistan, but has also been contracted to work in Iran's northwestern neighbour, the Republic of Azarbaijan under the *raison d'être* of supporting the special naval commando forces of the Caucasian state. This is something that is imaginably something neither the Russian Federation nor Iran are delighted with because of the Republic of Azarbaijan's westward political orientation towards the United States and NATO.

Troop Build-Up in Baghdad and the Green Zone

Baghdad is being reinforced with more and more U.S. troops as is pivotally important Green Zone (also called the International Zone). The Green Zone is the world's largest gated community in central Baghdad and is the heavily guarded diplomatic and governmental area of closed-off streets in central Baghdad that accommodates the multitudes of Americans and British officials, including Zalmay Khalilzad, the powerful U.S. Ambassador to Iraq, U.S. and Coalition military commanders, and the executives and representatives of major foreign corporations contracted or operating in Iraq. The U.S. Embassy alone has been reported to employ at least 5, 500 individuals being by far the largest American diplomatic mission in the world. The current new embassy complex being built is also the largest American embassy complex in the world; the compound will be comprised of 21 buildings across 104 acres. In the event of the outbreak of a war or any possible violent conflict between the United States and Iran, the Green Zone in Baghdad will certainly be a priority to defend for the United States and separately a possible target attacked by order of probability by ballistic missiles, Iranian air power, the Iraqi groupings allied with Iran, and finally Iranian troops.

The Mystery of Coalition Casualty Figures, the Inverse Relationship(s) between Civilian Deaths and Coalition Deaths, Sectarian Violence, and Balkanization

There also seems to be a apprehensive and guarded inverse relationship in the 'official numbers' of casualties and fatalities of U.S. troops and Iraqi civilians, which could mean a numerous amount of arguments on the hypothetical and practical levels; there is growing sectarian violence in Iraq, the sectarian violence is causing the insurgents to fight each other rather than the occupation forces (e.g.,

U.S. troops), figures are being doctored/falsified/hidden, and/or the United States has—tactically speaking—progressed in its operations in Iraq, but there is more to this picture. Emerging from Iraq are formal and informal reports and voices saying other than what the White House and Pentagon are claiming. There are diffidently, without question, hidden figures and numbers on the mercenaries—termed as security contractors for public relations reasons—being brought into Iraq from Latin America⁶ and all over the world—a by-product of the role of globalization in modern warfare—whose deaths do not get counted as American casualties and thus help marginalize the real human costs of the war for the United States and non-Iraqi denizens. The fact that there are scores of unaccounted dead—besides the phenomenally large amount of Iraqis—is verified by Robert Frisk one of the world's most highly decorated foreign correspondents and the corresponding journalist on the Middle East for the British newspaper, The Independent, has written with Patrick Cockburn that “At least 18 000 mercenaries, many of them tasked to protect U.S. troops and personnel, are now believed to be in Iraq, some of them earning \$1,000 (U.S.) a day. But their companies rarely acknowledge their losses unless—like the four American murdered and mutilated in Fallujah three weeks ago—their deaths are already public knowledge. (...) many of the heavily armed Western security men are working for the U.S. Department of Defence—and most of them are former Special Forces soldiers - they are not listed as serving military personnel. Their [the mercenaries] losses can therefore be hidden from public view.”⁷

Robert Fisk has also written in regards to the Iraqi sectarian violence that it seems like a deliberate approach through American subsidized terrorism “to provoke an Iraqi civil war so that Sunni Muslim [Arabs] insurgents spend their energies killing their Shia [Arab] co-religionists [fellow Muslims] rather than soldiers of the Western occupation forces” through staged terrorism.⁸ One can not be blamed for thinking that there is considerations on dividing the nation-state of Iraq like a planned demolition. The President has repeatedly ruled it out, but politicians have been none to say one thing and to move in another direct. After all the balkanization and the subsequent finlandization⁹ of states has proven a sturdy tool in the past Yugoslavia. US’ stated objective to help and promote Yugoslav unity but divided it. One can merely look at the benefits of divide and conquer historically in the colonial era in Africa—which is still suffering from the artificial drawn and manipulated boundaries in more ways than one—and India and at the Balkans and the former Soviet Union in the post-Cold War era

Deceiving the Public on the Military Agenda from Woodrow Wilson to Bush Jr.

U.S. Congressmen Ron Paul (Republican Party) of Texas wrote in an article titles ‘The Crime of Conscription,’ in November 26, 2003, that “Woodrow Wilson orchestrated our entry into World War I by first promising during the election of 1916 to keep us out of the European conflict [World War I], then a few months later pressuring and manoeuvring Congress into declaring war against Germany. Whether it was the Spanish American War before that or all the wars since, U.S. presidents have deceived the people to gain popular support for ill-conceived military ventures. Wilson wanted the war and immediately demanded conscription to fight it. He didn’t have the guts even to name the program a military draft; instead in a speech before Congress calling for war he advised the army should be “chosen upon the principle of universal liability to service.” Most Americans at the time of the declaration didn’t believe actual combat troops would be sent. What a dramatic change from this early perception, when the people endorsed the war, to the carnage that followed (...) Many of our [American] reservists and National Guardsmen cannot wait to get out [of Iraq or Afghanistan] and have no plans to re-enlist. The odds are that our [the U.S.] policy of foreign intervention, which has been with us for many decades, is not likely to soon change. (...) To get more troops, the draft will likely be reinstated. The implicit prohibition of “involuntary servitude” under the 13th Amendment to the Constitution has already been ignored many times so few will challenge the constitutionality of the coming draft.”

The Authority to involuntarily conscript individuals in the Ongoing War: What does that mean?

The ‘cloaked draft(s)’ or ‘back-door draft(s)’ seem to be new, but it reality are actually in keeping with a long line of practices the United States government has been using since the Anglo-American occupation of Iraq started in 2003. These practices include systematically barring U.S. troops in the Marine Corps and U.S. Army from leaving the proximity or near proximities of Iraq or Afghanistan, called ‘stop loss orders’ and/or prolonging military tours of duty beyond what was established/understood/promised to or with American servicemen and/or assigning multiple/consecutive military tours of duty and/or obstructing/delaying the retirement of American servicemen. These compulsory orders for involuntary duty are not a new norm, but rather a reoccurring norm.

Marine Colonel Guy Stratton, the officer in charge of the Marine Corps section responsible for ‘man-power,’ has indicated that “the service [Marine Corps] is short some 1,200 volunteers over the next 18 months to fill roles in the War on Terrorism.”¹⁰ It should be noted that the fighting in Iraq is

referred to in military terminology and jargon as 'the War on Terror/Terrorism;' this gives some insight on the objectives of the ongoing military engagements and their mandates in the Iraq and Afghanistan—simply put the theatre of military operation(s) is flexible and can be expanded.

The presidential authorization of the involuntary recalls is hypothetically also applicable to any war(s) with Syria or Iran or Sudan if such action is cited or justified as an expansion or rather continuation of the stated mission of waging a 'War on Terror.' The War on Terror is a war destined to proliferate beyond Afghanistan and Iraq, it was destined to be a global war that the public has constantly been told to expect to last past their lifetimes—it is an open ended concept that gives flexibility to equally valuable maneuvering room to those fighting it.

Colonel Stratton is quoted as saying that, "the authority [to power to involuntarily conscript individuals] is until G.W.O.T. [the Global War on Terror] is over with" and "until we're told to do otherwise [stop], we'll use it [the power to involuntarily conscript individuals] force."¹¹ While the length of each activated servicemen's tour of duty is theoretically restrict, this is not a tangible principle; there are military service men that have done three separate tours of military duty in Iraq. There is also no finite limit set on the authorization of the Marine Corps to involuntarily recall or conscript Marines for jobs in the ongoing 'War on Terror.'

A presidential order from the commander-in-chief has sanctioned the Marine Corps to issue involuntary recall orders to members of the Individual Ready Reserve (IRR), part of the non-active force of ex-military personal. Marines serve for four years on active military duty and after under the guidelines of service generally serve another four years in the Primary Reserve where they have the option of volunteer to return to active duty to fill vacant stations and posts. Unlike the servicemen in the Primary Reserves who keep active by continuing their training and drills those ex-military personnel who are listed under IRR must be ready to serve the United States if they are all called up in case of a national emergency or an attack on the United States. There are currently 59,000 former Marines serving in the Individual Ready Reserve.¹² The servicemen who decide to leave active duty or retire automatically become members of the IRR which is generically a standardized system used by military organizations in their defensive procedures around the world. The presidential authorization allows the IRR's activation to be open-ended, which means thousands of former and retired Marines, with a demographic number of 35,000, will be called back to active service in both Anglo-American occupied Iraq and Afghanistan.

All Signs lead to more Militarization and possibility for Conflict in the Middle East

Even the term being used by some mainstream media, G.W.O.T seems to be the innovation of the public relations firms that the Pentagon and White House have so heavily relied on in selling or hiding their wars from the American public and a great deal of the world. This is how negative perception is controlled and being managed so that there is no significant surge in domestic anger. With careful public relations campaigning, propaganda, and rhetoric such as terminology that is warped or replaced to disassociate or de-link meanings the Pentagon has been covering its tracks on the domestic front in the United States and treading inch by inch towards a developing 'back-door draft;' one that will be definitely be needed if there is to be ensuing conflict with Iran and Syria in a yet another Middle Eastern war. The White House and other organs of government have been continuously saying one thing in regards to the fighting in Iraq and the continued promises or hopes of troop pullouts/disengagement from Iraq, but actually doing the opposite. The statements of troop pullouts and diplomacy are merely posturing to keep the public at bay, while their seems to be no real desire for any long term U.S. military disengagement and departure from the Middle East. The Pentagon has authorized the building of permanent super-bases in Iraq, while working on the domestic campaign in the United States with the White House to systematically desensitize the American population and let them gradual without perception accept the long-term interests of the U.S. military agenda in the Middle East and Central Asia. At the same time more U.S. troops and contracted mercenaries are slowly being sent into Iraq, Afghanistan, and the in areas adjacent to Iran. There is a manifesting build up of U.S. manpower in Iraq while in Afghanistan the forces of NATO are freeing up American forces and resources to head to Iraq and facilitating the American concentration of troops. Even in other NATO countries, such as Canada, there is silent mobilization of troops and reserve forces.

Notes

¹ The Times (U.K.), August 23, 2006, US orders Marines back into service

<http://www.timesonline.co.uk/article/0,,3-2324785,00.html>

² April, 2006 military games occurred when Iran had successfully enriched uranium for the first time and crossed the threshold that the United States had threatened it not to dare to cross.

³ The Seattle Times, August 15, 2005, 300 soldiers from Alaska called back to Baghdad

http://seattletimes.nwsourc.com/html/nationworld/2003199268_iraqdig15.html

USA Today, August 15, 2005, Army recalling 300 troops to Iraq who just arrived home in Alaska

http://www.usatoday.com/news/washington/2006-08-14-troops-return_x.htm

⁴ Asia Times, July 30, 2005, In the US Army now

http://www.atimes.com/atimes/South_Asia/GG30Df03.html

⁵Blackwater's own advertisement, <http://www.blackwaterusa.com>

⁶ Reuters, August 21, 2006, Iraq, Afghanistan lure poor Latin American guards

<http://today.reuters.co.uk/News/CrisesArticle.aspx?storyId=N14198783>

Note: Reuters conveniently does not mention the number of presumed casualties on the part of what it terms as 'security guards'

⁷ Information Clearing House, April 13, 2004, Deaths of scores of Mercenaries not reported

<http://www.informationclearinghouse.info/article6031.htm>

⁸ The Independent, 28 April, 2006, Seen through a Syrian lens, 'Unknown Americans' are provoking civil war in Iraq

<http://news.independent.co.uk/world/fisk/article360624.ece>

Note: there are various other articles on the subjects, ones that also talk about British and Israeli roles in creating sectarian and ethnic divisions in Iraq and a balkanization agenda for Iraq and the Middle East; the allegedly Iranian dominated so-called 'Shia Crescent' that is getting increasingly popular mention in the lexicon of the Western analysts and Arab dictators alike seems to be one of the devices and concepts used to create a sectarian wedge between Muslim populations

⁹ Finlandization is a political term originating in Germany used to denote a nation that is pacified or neutral/neutralized and collaborated with the wants of its more powerful neighbours; such as the relationship of Finland during the Cold War vis-à-vis with the Soviet Union

¹⁰Reuters, August 22, 2006, Marine Corps to start involuntary troop recalls

¹¹ Reuter, August 22, 2006, Marine Corps to start involuntary troop recalls

¹² ABC News, August 22, 2006, Marines Ready to Call Back Thousands of Reservists

<http://abcnews.go.com/US/story?id=2344628&page=>

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