
National News

Wars Bankrupting Military Services?

According to a GAO report released yesterday, the \$65 billion appropriated last year for the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan is going to prove to be about \$12.3 billion short of what the military services need for 2004, and the services are taking various measures to deal with that shortfall, including deferring maintenance in equipment used in Iraq, deferring or reducing training activities, and other measures to reduce costs. The Pentagon is also looking for additional authority to transfer funds between accounts. The GAO blames assumptions about the Iraq occupation that proved wrong, including that the U.S. force level there would decline from 130,000 to 99,000 by the end of Fiscal 2004; that the Defense Department would be able to make greater use of cheaper sealift as opposed to airlift; and that fewer armored vehicles would be needed. Instead, the force level will remain at 138,000 troops for the foreseeable future, with more armor than plans had originally called for.

The GAO further shows that logistics and support costs are also rising, in the form of the Logistics Civil Augmentation Program (LOGCAP), which is run by Halliburton. "LOGCAP costs have grown significantly as contractors replaced soldiers providing complex support functions," the report says.

West Nile Virus Early This Year

Surveillance statistics released on July 15 by the Centers for Disease Control confirmed EIR's early June warning: West Nile Virus has hit the United States hard and earlier this year. As of July 15 there were 108 human cases of WNV, 61 of which (or 56%) are of the most severe type—a neuroinvasive disease. Hardest hit states continue to be California, Arizona, and Colorado. Human cases exist in 10 states, while 24 additional states have active avian, animal, or mosquito-positive cases. That is, 34 states, or 68% of the country now have early and active West Nile. Since 1999 when WNV first

hit the United States, its cycle has begun in late July, peaking in late-August and early September.

After the July 15 CDC data release, Arizona reported its human cases doubled in the week to July 22, from 66 to 113. For all of last year's WNV season, Arizona had a total of 13 human cases. Thus the state's infection rate is already 8.7 times greater so far this season than last.

Of the 10,000 human cases reported last year, 2,866 people were struck with the more severe type of WNV, leaving them with long-term neurological damage. Despite these realities, the CDC and officials continue to promote only "precaution" as the solution. The nation needs an eradication program bringing back DDT, to wipe out the mosquitoes rather than allow thousands of Americans to become needlessly infected.

College Dems Was Founded To Back FDR

According to the College Democrats of America website on July 18: "CDA was founded in 1932 to boost the Presidential campaign of Franklin Delano Roosevelt. From the 1940s to the 1960s, it was the largest student political organization in the nation.

The growing LaRouche Youth Movement, founded to back candidate LaRouche representing the FDR policy legacy, is mobilizing youth in the Democratic Party today.

Governors Fear Losing Their Guard Troops

One of the traditional means that state governors have had to respond to natural disasters and other emergencies is the National Guard. Now, however, with 40% of the occupation force in Iraq being made up of reserve and National Guard troops, some governors are worried that they may not have the resources they need to respond to those kinds of emergencies. They made their concerns known at a National Governors Association meeting on July 18 in Seattle with Undersecretary of Defense for Personnel

and Readiness David Chu and commander of U.S. Northern Command Gen. Ralph Eberhardt.

"This has had a huge impact," said Washington Gov. Gary Locke; 62% of Washington's National Guard is deployed, including the majority of the best-trained firefighters, just as the forest fire season is getting under way. A spokesman for Idaho Gov. Dirk Kempthorne noted that, in the past, the state has been able to call on the National Guard, but "We may not be able to call on these soldiers for firefighting capabilities," this year, because they simply aren't there.

As of July 21, a total of 153,599 reservists and National Guardsmen are on active duty, of which, 126,856 are Army Reserve and Army National Guard.

Schwarzenegger Can't Take the Pressure

With the budget deadline of July 1 past and no agreement on his borrowing-based budget in sight, California's Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger went on a "beast-man" rampage on July 16, going on the road to mobilize enraged boomers against Democrats in the state legislature. Whipping up shopping-mall crowds of white, middle-class Boomers, Arnie railed against "the special interests," unions and trial lawyers, "dug in... like Alabama ticks, and we can't get rid of them." He is calling on the crowds to be "Terminators" of legislators holding up the budget.

In an appearance on July 17 in Sacramento, Schwarzenegger raged, "Anyone that pushes me around, I will push back, including the Democrats and the special interests. Trust me." The next day, at a stop at a mall in Ontario, he referred to legislative opponents as "girlie men," drawing intense return fire from many leading Dems and most of the state's press. The *Los Angeles Times* titled a July 20 editorial, "Governor Girlie Man," writing that the Governor's opponents, who have resisted some of his cuts, "have showed more guts than he." The *San Jose Mercury News*' editorial asked, "Heat getting to you, Governor?" And the *San Francisco Chronicle* editorial said, "Schwarzenegger's locker-room shtick is unbecoming of a governor."