

Drones Evolving As Key Weapon: Their Use Can Threaten Civilian Control of Military & Our Constitutional Rights

As public support plummets for the massive deployment of conventional forces to fight the war on terror, Obama has embraced greater use of pilot-less, hunter-killer aircraft known as "Reaper" drones. In 2010, the number of drone strikes by the U.S. more than doubled to 114 and this year drone strikes have expanded further. So far, we have used drone strikes in six countries and new drone bases are being established in both Ethiopia and Seychelles in the Indian Ocean.

A secret Justice Department memo which approved the long distance killing of American citizens by drones was leaked after two

Americans who were jihadists were killed by a drone strike in Yemen. (One of the two was suspected of actually plotting the failed bombing of a US plane over Detroit.) The memo authorizes the summary execution of citizens who are suspected of plotting terrorism against the US from abroad and aren't subject to arrest. There is no provision for an independent evaluation of incriminating evidence.

This growing reliance on drones, many of which are guided by technicians based at Creech air base in Nevada, also threaten to weaken the control that elected officials have over military operations. After 9/11, Bush authorized the CIA



to move the testing of armed drones from Nevada to Afghanistan. Since its operations are shrouded in secrecy, public officials may have less ability to control the CIA's activities than it would have over military commanders.

Citizen Soldier works as part of the Global Network Against Space Weapons to expose the threat posed by these weapons and to demand transparency in our military operations.



267 Fifth Avenue, Suite 901 • New York, NY 10016
phone: (212) 679-2250 • www.citizen-soldier.org

Citizen Soldier

Iraq and Afghan Wars: estimated to cost \$4 TRILLION!

CITIZEN SOLDIER REPORTS 2012

Entering the Second Decade of these Wars!

One in five of the 2.2 million (440,000) veterans who have served in Iraq and/or Afghanistan currently suffer from mental health problems. They constitute more than half of the 712,000 vets who've already sought help from the VA. (Their suicide rate is already 3.2 times higher than that of the general population).

"A large number of these veterans have mental health impacts and I'm deeply concerned that we're not ready to help them," commented Senator Patty Murray (D-WA) Chair, Senate Veterans Affairs Committee recently. Just five years ago, the VA was

planning for only 50,000 new patients from these wars. If the current rate of new cases continues, over one million will need VA help by 2013!

Citizen Soldier has organized three national PTSD conferences so far to help publicize this enormous need that exists for mental health care among our veterans. We are currently working with the Coffee Strong GI project at Ft Lewis, WA to co-host an all-day conference near the base in February 2012. Veterans and their families will share information with mental health providers and strategize about building a movement to pressure the VA.



Mrs Ashley Joppa-Hagen with her son, whose husband committed suicide after twice deploying to Iraq and receiving no mental help upon returning home.

Fighting Recruiting Abuse that Kills or Harms Recruits



Glenn Wilsey



PVT Joey Banker

Glenn Wilsey, of Vermillion, OH was told by Army recruiters that he would have to drop one third of his body weight if he was to pass their entrance physical. They coached him on extreme measures including pills and a rubberized whole-body suit. Just pounds short of his goal, he suffered a fatal heart attack, which an autopsy attributed to rapid weight loss. Citizen Soldier is assisting the family's civilian attorney as he plans a federal lawsuit for this tragic death.

Recruiters told PVT Joey Banker, of upstate New York, that he would have to stop taking the medication that controlled his bipolar disorder if he hoped to pass the Army's drug tests. Joey succumbed to their pressure but then suffered a nervous breakdown after training. Citizen Soldier intervened after the Ft Drum command threatened Joey with court martial for going AWOL. We will continue our advocacy for young recruits when unscrupulous recruiters try to exploit their vulnerability.

Working to Expose Marine Corps Racism, Which May Have Caused Soldier's Death

Marine Private Hamson Daniels, 21, had phoned his family on Staten Island, NY in October 2010 describing his fear of racist Marines who had threatened him on his Okinawa base, using the "N word." Later, a physical fight with one of his tormentors led to him losing rank at a non-judicial disciplinary hearing on the base.

In March, 2011, his parents were told to go to the Army's "burn unit" in San Antonio where their son had been taken from Okinawa after he allegedly had attempted suicide by setting fire to gasoline, which he had dumped over his body. Eighteen days later, Hamson died without ever regaining consciousness. So far, the Marine Corps has released only a one-page, bare-bones casualty report that was written by their investigators.

Citizen Soldier is demanding a Congressional or independent investigation of this incident, given the evidence of a history of racial antagonism and intimidation prior to the alleged suicide.



Traumatic Brain Injuries: Diagnosis and Treatment Lags

The Pentagon has reported a 17% increase in the planting of Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) in Afghanistan from May through July of this year. One Brookings Institute analyst observed; "This indicates that the insurgency is well supplied and is not giving up. We face a very resilient opponent." These weapons presents a serious threat to US and NATO troops since they must conduct daily foot patrols through villages, farm lands and mountains where these hidden mines are buried.

A RAND study two years ago estimated that as many as 300,000 war veterans may suffer from varying degrees of Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI). This injury is brought on by concussions to the brain and can be difficult to diagnose and treat. As one recent study of professional football players reported, years can pass before symptoms begin to appear.

The VA has been slow to respond to this growing health problem among veterans and we are working with independent scientists to pressure the VA to make effective use of new research and treatment modalities.

The VA has been slow to respond to this growing health problem among veterans.