

Study Questions Combat-Suicide Link

CHICAGO (AP) — Combat appears to have little or no influence on suicide rates among U.S. troops and veterans, according to a military study that challenges the conventional thinking about war's effects on the psyche.

Depression and other types of mental illness, alcohol problems and being male — strong risk factors for suicide among civilians — were all linked to self-inflicted deaths among current and former members of the military.

But the researchers found deployment and combat did not raise the risk.

"The findings from this study are not consistent with the assumption that specific deployment-related characteristics, such as length of deployment, number of deployments, or combat experiences, are directly associated" with suicides, the authors wrote.

The results echo smaller studies focusing on a specific branch of the military, but this is the first to look at a sampling from the entire military population, said lead author Cynthia LeardMann, a researcher with the Naval Health Research Center in San Diego.

Washington Post Sale Offers Optimism

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Jeff Bezos turned selling books online into a multibillion-dollar business that has changed retailing forever. Many are now anxious to see if Bezos can do the same for the media industry, after the Amazon.com founder announced he is buying The Washington Post and other newspapers for \$250 million.

Monday's news of the sale to the 49-year-old pioneer of Internet commerce came as a shock to observers, many of whom thought the Graham family would never sell. It also sparked hope among the ranks of reporters beset by seemingly endless cutbacks.

Among his champions are the members of the family selling the paper, including publisher Katharine Weymouth, who promised to stay on as publisher.

As some journalists shed tears, others expressed optimism.

"Jeff Bezos seems to me exactly the kind of inventive and innovative choice needed to bring about a recommitment to great journalism," said Carl Bernstein, whose co-reporting of the Watergate scandal in the early 1970s cemented the newspaper's identity as a political watchdog.

Egypt Urged To Release Prisoners

CAIRO (AP) — Two U.S. senators urged Egypt's military-backed government to release detained members of the Muslim Brotherhood before starting negotiations with the group, warning of worsening relations "if Egypt is not moving to democracy."

But Egypt's interim presidency denounced "foreign pressure" in a sign of its growing impatience with international mediations.

Sens. John McCain and Lindsey Graham spoke after meeting with top military and civilian leaders in Cairo as part of a flurry of international efforts to resolve a standoff between the government and supporters of the ousted president, Mohammed Morsi.

McCain said "we urge the release of political prisoners," referring to Brotherhood members who were detained after the military ousted Morsi, an Islamist, a month ago.

"In democracy, you sit down and talk to each other," Graham said, adding, "it is impossible to talk to somebody who is in jail."

Python's Strangling Of Boys Investigated

TORONTO (AP) — A 100-pound (45-kilogram) python blamed in the strangling deaths of two Canadian boys apparently escaped from its enclosure, slithered through a ventilation system and fell through the ceiling into the room where the young brothers were sleeping, authorities said Tuesday.

A snake expert said it was possible that the python was spooked and simply clung to whatever it landed on. Police are treating the deaths in Campbellton, New Brunswick, as a criminal investigation.

Autopsies on Noah Barthe, 5 and his brother Connor Barthe, 7, were being performed Tuesday.

The brothers had been visiting the apartment of a friend whose father owned an exotic pet store on the floor below, Royal Canadian Mounted Police Sgt. Alain Tremblay said at a news conference in Campbellton. Tremblay said the African rock python was being kept inside the second floor apartment, not inside the pet store as authorities had previously stated.

Steve Benteau, a spokesman for the provincial Natural Resources Department, said no permit was issued for an African rock python and the province wasn't aware it was being kept at the apartment. The department said the snake is generally only permitted in accredited zoos, unless there is a special permit.

BY NOMAAN MERCHANT
AND PAUL J. WEBER

Associated Press

FORT HOOD, Texas — Maj. Nidal Malik Hasan fired the last of 146 bullets in his assault on Fort Hood, then walked outside where he met two civilians who asked about the commotion and the laser-sighted pistol in his hand.

Hasan told one person not to worry. He assured the other it was just a training exercise and the gun shot only paint. He let both live.

But moments earlier, dozens of uniformed soldiers received no quarter from Hasan, prosecutors said Tuesday as the Army psychiatrist's long-delayed trial began in a Texas military court-room.

With his life hanging in the balance, Hasan made little effort to defend himself. Acting as his own attorney, he calmly told the jury that he killed 13 people and wounded 32 others in the 2009 attack.

"The evidence will clearly show that I am the shooter," he said in an opening statement that lasted little more than a minute. The evidence, he added, would "only show one side."

His only utterance of regret was an acknowledgement that he was among "imperfect Muslims trying to establish the perfect religion."

"I apologize for any mistakes I made

Yemen Again At Forefront Of Terror Fight

BY AHMED AL-HAJ
AND MATTHEW LEE

Associated Press

SANAA, Yemen — Yemen was thrust back into the forefront of the international fight against terrorism Tuesday when the U.S. and Britain evacuated embassy staff due to a threatened attack, a suspected U.S. drone killed four alleged members of al-Qaida, and militants shot down a Yemeni army helicopter.

As Westerners flew out of the country, Yemeni authorities launched a wide investigation into the al-Qaida threat to multiple potential targets in the impoverished Arab nation. Security officials said they believed the terror network was seeking retaliation for a U.S.-backed military offensive that has dealt serious setbacks to the terror network's most active branch, including the death earlier this year of its No. 2 leader.

The Yemeni army, meanwhile, surrounded foreign installations, government offices and the airport with tanks and troops in the nation's capital, Sanaa, as well as the strategic Bab al-Mandeb straits at the entrance to the Red Sea in the southern Arabian Peninsula, drawing parallels with security measures following the 2000 bombing of the USS Cole in Aden harbor that killed 17 American sailors.

Authorities also set up checkpoints across Sanaa, searching cars and individu-

Yemen

One of the poorest countries in the Arab world, Yemen has become a major base for Islamic militants after a crackdown closed al-Qaida training bases in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Country facts

Size 203,850 sq. mi. (527,970 sq. km)

Population 25 million (July 2013)

Major religion Islam

GDP per person \$2,300 (2012)

Poverty 45.2% (2003)

Government Republic, formed by merger of the north and the Marxist-dominated south in 1990

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Source: BBC, CIA World Factbook

Al-Qaida in Yemen

Oct. 12, 2000 Suicide attack on the USS destroyer Cole kills 17 U.S. military personnel

Sept. 17, 2008 Two car bombs outside U.S. embassy in Sanaa kill 19; no American casualties

Jan. 2009 Saudi and Yemeni al-Qaida branches announce they have merged to form the Yemen-based al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula

Sept. 30, 2011 U.S.-born cleric Anwar al-Awlaki is killed in a U.S. drone strike

Aug. 4, 2013 Embassies and consulates closed in Africa and the Middle East after message intercepted from al-Qaida chief to deputy in Yemen

als, especially after night fell. Top government officials, along with military and security commanders, were told to stay vigilant and limit their movements.

Although the immediate threat seemed to be focused on Yemen, the U.S. has temporarily shut down 19 diplomatic posts in the Middle East and Africa. A U.S. intelligence official and a Mideast diplomat told The Associated Press that the closures were triggered by the interception of a secret message between al-Qaida chief Ayman al-Za-

wahri and Nasser al-Wahishi, the leader of the Yemen-based al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula, about plans for a major terror attack. The officials spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to discuss the matter publicly. Zawahri also made a public statement on July 30 that exhorted Muslims to kill Americans "in every spot on Earth."

Yemeni investigators looking into the threat said they believe the motive of the attack was retaliation for the killing of Saudi-born Saeed al-

researched Taliban leaders' call to wage holy war.

The government has also said Hasan sent more than a dozen emails starting in December 2008 to Anwar al-Awlaki, a radical U.S.-born Islamic cleric killed by a drone strike in Yemen in 2011.

The shooting happened about three weeks after Hasan learned he would be deploying to Afghanistan. Upon getting the orders that he was going overseas, Hasan told a base doctor that, "They've got another thing coming if they think they are going to deploy me," Henricks said.

On the day of the attack, Hasan sat among his fellow soldiers who were preparing to go overseas. He tried to clear the area of civilians, even walking over to a civilian data clerk to tell her she was needed elsewhere in the building because a supervisor was looking for her. The prosecutor said the clerk thought that was odd but went anyway.

"He then yelled 'Allahu akbar!' and opened fire on unarmed, unsuspecting and defenseless soldiers," Henricks told the jury of 13 officers.

During Tuesday's proceedings, Hasan mostly looked down or straight ahead, occasionally leaning through paperwork while seated at the defense table. He spoke politely from his wheelchair, talking so softly at times that families of victims leaned forward to hear him.

Shihri, who was released from the U.S. prison in Guantanamo Bay after nearly six years and later became the No. 2 al-Qaida leader in Yemen. Al-Shihri was critically wounded in a November drone strike and later died of his wounds, the militant group acknowledged.

The terror network has suffered a series of setbacks after the military launched an offensive in June with the help of U.S. forces that has succeeded in uprooting it from strongholds in the south. The group had taken advantage of the instability after the Arab Spring wave of revolutions that led to the resignation of Yemen's long-time leader, Ali Abdullah Saleh.

Yemen's current president, Abdo Rabbay Mansour Hadi, met with President Barack Obama at the White House last week, where both leaders cited strong counterterrorism cooperation.

Pentagon Press Secretary George Little said the U.S. Air Force transported State Department personnel out of Sanaa early Tuesday. The department said in a travel warning that it had ordered the departure of non-emergency U.S. government personnel "due to the continued potential for terrorist attacks," adding that U.S. citizens should leave immediately because of an "extremely high" security threat level.

County

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is provide quite a bit of continuity, even if we were to have a change in our finance officer."

Wilcox said that consolidation in a less-populated county where there may not be a full-time workload for each elected official could save money. However, that doesn't seem to be the case in more-populated counties.

"In my opinion, I don't believe we saved money," Hipple offered about Hughes County.

After about 30 minutes of discussion, the commission and several Yankton County department heads wrapped up their questions for the two men.

"I think it is good information to have," Commissioner Mark Johnson said. "It gives us the perspective of the reasons it was done in those counties and the benefits they've seen."

Moore noted that saving money would likely not be something Yankton County would realize from such a move.

"The only benefit would be (continuity) if you're hav-

ing difficulty keeping people in office," he said. "We don't seem to have that problem in Yankton County."

Commission Chairman Bruce Jensen said that Yankton County's system is not broken so there is no need to change it.

"We do know there is another option in the future if it does break," Moore said.

In other business Tuesday, the commission:

- heard a funding request from Dan Fox, one of the lawyers with Fox, Youngberg and Lewno. The county contracts with the office for public defender services. The contract amount has been \$9,000 per month since 2009. Fox said that is substantially lower than public defender services in similar counties and requested it be increased to \$15,000 per month in 2014. The commission will consider including the proposed increase in its 2014 budget at the next meeting;

- approved a \$20,159 supplement from the 911 Fund to assist with labor costs for operating the joint Yankton/Yankton County dispatch center. The additional assistance will allow the city to cover a previously unbudgeted maintenance cost for software;
- was told by Sheriff Jim

Vlahakis that the jail recently had a record-high daily population of 110 inmates, due largely to a contract with the Bureau of Indian Affairs to hold some of its prisoners. The population is putting a strain on the jail's sewage system, which may require some upgrades; and

- denied a conditional-use permit that would allow for the construction of two-family homes, or duplexes, along Violet Drive west of Yankton. Johnson argued that multi-family homes cannot be built anywhere in the county without a conditional-use permit and that the area was probably the best place for them. However, the three other commissioners felt that a duplex would not be compatible with the existing single-family homes and further contended that approving a conditional-use permit would open a "Pandora's box" for other requests, such as four-plexes and apartments. The motion to deny was approved in a 3-1 vote, with Johnson dissenting. Commissioner Donna Freng was absent from Tuesday's meeting.

You can follow Nathan Johnson on Twitter at twitter.com/AnInlandVoyage

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