

IN THE NEWS

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World News

Russia is continuing to enhance its military image. For instance, one report indicates the Russian bombing of Islamic terrorist targets in Syria is resulting in ground gains for the President Bashar al-Assad controlled government [1]. For example, the Syrian President thanked Russia for its help in retaking the town of Salma [2]. However, the war in Syria is far from over. Case in point, advances by the Islamic State in Deir Ezzor (located in northern Syria) left hundreds dead [3].

In Asia, China continues to expand its influence. For example, one study suggests the South China Sea will become the equivalent of a Chinese lake [4]. Another piece credits Vietnam for pointing out China has moved an oil drilling rig into contested waters [5]. What's more, China is warning that it will consider militarization of the South China Sea depending on what it perceives as a threat level [6].

One report indicates that of the 708 million people the TSA screened last year, 14 million stood in line for 20 minutes or more [7]. To put this in a different context, there are 8,760 hours in a regular year and 8,784 in a leap year. That is, 35,064 hours in a 4-year period. If we assume a total life expectancy of a person is 80 years; that works out to 701,280 hours. Or just under 7 life expectancies are lost waiting for TSA screening. We could say, the cost for TSA security to combat terrorism is 7 lives per year lost.

1. Sly, Liz, Washington Post, *Russian airstrikes are working in Syria – enough to put peace talks in doubt*, January 19, 2016.
2. Isachenkov, Vladimir, AP, *Syrian government thanks Russia for help capturing key town*, January 22, 2016.

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Special points of interest:

- More Taliban terrorist attacks

Security

The latest exploit of commercial business comes from the hotel industry. One report indicates Hyatt found malware at 250 of its hotels [1].

In the area of security patch management, the race is on to fix bugs. For instance, Cisco released a patch to fix a bug that could allow devices to be taken over [2]. Additionally, Microsoft released fixes to correct 9 security bugs [3]. Then Oracle release patches to fix

248 bugs [4].

1. Robinson, Teri, SC Magazine, *Hyatt discovers malware at 250 hotels*, January 15, 2016.
2. Davis, Jeremy Seth, SC Magazine, *Cisco patched critical bugs; would allow device takeover*, January 14, 2016.
3. Olenick, Doug, SC Magazine, *Patch Tuesday: Microsoft rings in new year with nine bulletins*, January 2, 2016.
4. Davis, Jeremy Seth, SC Magazine, *Oracle patches 248 bugs*, January 20, 2016.

I'm tired, but proud—

Norman Rockwell

(Continued from page 1)

3. Alhkshali, Hamdi, and Lister, Tim, CNN, *Hundreds dead as ISIS makes gains in strategic Syrian city*, January 23, 2016.
4. Denyer, Simon, Washington Post, *By 2030, South China Sea will be 'virtually a Chinese lake,' study warns*, January 20, 2016.
5. Hunt, Katie, CNN, *South China Sea: Vietnam says China moved oil rig into contested waters*, January 20, 2016.
6. Reuters, *Beijing says South China Sea militarization depends on threat level*, January 21, 2016.
7. Washington Times, *TSA seizes record number of firearms in 2015*, January 21, 2016.

World News

China Sea militarization depends on threat level,
January 21, 2016.

7. Washington Times, *TSA seizes record number of firearms in 2015*, January 21, 2016.

Terrorism

The Taliban claimed responsibility for a suicide attack on a polio vaccination center in Pakistan that left at least 16 people dead [1]. The terrorist organization also claimed responsibility for an attack on the Bacha Khan University that left at least 19 dead [2]. Furthermore, the Taliban launched a suicide attack against an Afghan media group, killing at least 7 people [3].

Not to be outdone, the Islamic State (IS) claimed responsibility for a suicide bombing in Istanbul, Turkey, that killed at least 10 people, most of them German tourists [4]. The German loss the deadliest abroad in 13 years [5].

Then in Indonesia, terrorists launched an attack that killed at least two people [6]. It was later determined to be the result of the IS terrorist organization [7]. Finally, the Islamic State also claimed responsibility for an attack in Egypt that left at least 5 police dead [8].

Finally, in Somalia, another terrorist attack made the news. The Islamic extremist group al-Shabab claimed responsibility for a restaurant attack that left at least 20 people dead [9].

1. Mehsud, Ihsanullah Tipu, New York Times, *At least 16 dead in suicide attack outside Pakistan polio vaccination center*, January 13, 2016.
2. Yackley, Ayla Jean, Reuters, *Suicide bomber kills 10 people, mainly Germans, in Istanbul*, January 12, 2016.
3. Lee, Ian. Et. al;., CNN, *Istanbul suicide bombing: Deadliest attack on Germans in 13 years*, January 13, 2016.
4. Botelho, Greg, et. al., CNN, *ISIS militant ordered Jakarta attack from abroad, police chief says*, January 15, 2016.
5. Ford, Dana, and McKirdy, Euan, CNN, *Bhruun Naim: mastermind behind Jakarta attacks?*, January 15, 2016.
6. Saifi, Sophia, et. al., CNN, *At least 19 killed in attack on Bacha Khan University in Charsadda, Pakistan*, January 20, 2016.
7. Salahuddin, Sayed, Washington Post, *Suicide blast targets major Afghan media group*, killing 7, January 7, 2016.
8. AP/ABC News, *IS Claims Attack on Egypt Checkpoint That Killed 5 Police*, January 21, 2016.
9. Guled, Abdi, AP, *Over 20 killed as Somali forces end siege of restaurant*, January 22, 2016.

*The walls of Sparta were
its young men, and its
borders the points of their
spears—King Agesilaos*

Economy

In past newsletters, we provided references that 94 million Americans are not counted in the work force. The known unknown is how many of these people should be counted as unemployed? One survey indicates that 40% of the uncounted have given up looking for work [1]. That is, over 36 million Americans that would like to work but have given up. However, the official number of 5.0% is determined by using 7.904 million unemployed out of a base of 157.833 million people [2]. If we add in the people that have given up looking for work, the calculation becomes approximately 45 million in the numerator and 195 in the denominator. This gives a more realistic rate of 23% unemployment. Moreover, this does not include the number of people under employed.

Rater than focus on Depres-

sion area 23% unemployment rates, much of the reporting focuses on first time unemployment claims. For instance, according to the Labor Department, the number of first time unemployment claims for the week ending January 9 was 284,000 [3]. For the following week, the number was 293,000 [4].

In another sign of economic stress, Wal-Mart announced plans to shutter 269 stores, including 154 within the US [5]. Meanwhile, the Congressional Budget Office is predicting less growth and more debt over the next decade [6].

1. Meyer, Ali, Washington Free Beacon, *Americans Giving Up on Jobs*, January 18, 2016.
2. Holodny, Elena, Business Insider, *The US unemployment rate fell to 5.0078%*, January 9, 2016.
3. Mutikani, Lucia, Reuters,

U.S. jobless claims rise; import prices sharply weaker, January 14, 2016.

4. Morath, Eric, Wall Street Journal, *U.S. Jobless Claims Edge Up, But Remain Near Historic Lows*, January 21, 2016.
5. D’Innocenzio, Anne, AP, *Wal-Mart to Shutter 269 stores, 154 of them in the US*, January 15, 2016.
6. Meyer, Ali, Washington Free Beacon, *CBO Projects More Debt, Less Growth Over Next Decade*, January 20, 2016.

*That which is not good for
the bee-hive cannot be good
for the bees—Marcus
Aurelius*
