

- 1) 14% of military personnel were heavy drinkers of alcohol; 9% were alcohol dependent.
- 2) 18% of all military personnel experienced one or more "serious consequences of alcohol use" within the past 12 months (these include work impairment, physical damage, need for detoxification, etc.)
- 3) 42% of DoD personnel had used one or more drugs for nonmedical purposes.
- 4) 9% had used drugs other than marijuana in the past 30 days.

Applying these percentages to the total number of US armed forces personnel led to the conclusion that in 1982, 295,000 personnel were heavy drinkers, 190,000 alcohol dependent and approximately 190,000 monthly users of drugs other than marijuana.

Alcoholism is known to be a widespread problem in the Soviet Union and reported estimates of alcohol dependency in the Soviet military vary from 18 to 30 per cent, which would put them on a level comparable with their US counterparts. In addition, it seems likely that drug problems in the Soviet military have increased since the invasion of Afghanistan, for reasons similar to those which caused increased drug use in the US military during the Vietnam War. The Soviet troops are fighting against relatively popular Afghan guerrillas who are not directly attacking the Soviet Union. They are fighting a drawn-out war with ill-defined objectives, in a foreign country, which, like Vietnam, is an opium-producer.

Specific data exist showing the extent of human reliability problems in the US *nuclear* military. From 1975 to 1984, approximately 5100 people per year were removed from ongoing nuclear duties, and roughly two-thirds of these removals were for drug and alcohol abuse or psychological reasons.

Working conditions in the nuclear military entail stress, boredom and isolation which adversely affect normal human beings, let alone those with drug, alcohol or psychological problems. Workers are placed at electronic consoles or in silos for hours on end, or sent out to submerged submarines for months at a time. They are isolated from humanity at large, and trained to destroy it. Although they are constantly practising for destruction, they are never allowed to follow through. Each of these conditions produces stress.

The "dulling effects of routine" are dangerous when operators have to deal with situations which suddenly become critical. For example, during the Three-Mile Island nuclear power accident, operators continued their routine tasks in the face of unusual conditions. Moscow party chief Boris Yeltsin said that human error was the cause of the Chernobyl accident.

Social psychologist Irwin Altman, has observed laboratory simulations of isolation. Group isolation, especially on long missions, has been shown "to