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- 1. [VFW Calls Out TIME Columnist.](#)** The national commander of the nation's largest war veterans organization is outraged that a TIME magazine columnist has called for the resignation of Veterans Affairs Secretary Eric Shinseki. "Freedom of the press isn't a license for Joe Klein to twist reality about someone who has volunteered virtually his entire life to serve his country," said John E. Hamilton, who leads the 2 million-member Veterans of Foreign Wars of the U.S. and its Auxiliaries. Klein's column, entitled "Ten Years After: A National Disgrace," is posted on the magazine's website and is being published in its March 25 edition. "Secretary Shinseki has one of the toughest jobs in America," said Hamilton, a combat wounded Marine Corps rifleman in Vietnam. "It is his responsibility to heal, help and ...
- 2. [Time Column Unfair to Veterans Secretary.](#)** In its current edition, Time Magazine has featured an opinion piece ("Ten Years After: A National Disgrace," Mar. 25) demanding the ouster of the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, Eric Shinseki. Time's columnist, Joe Klein, opines that Secretary Shinseki has failed veterans miserably, especially those who served and are still serving in our wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. DAV (Disabled American Veterans), an organization of 1.2 million wounded and injured war veterans, respectfully disagrees. The VA Secretary occupies probably the most thankless job in Washington. On the one hand the Secretary is expected to seamlessly provide the plethora of benefits and services a grateful nation offers veterans who have sacrificed body and mind in military service, and to those who need transition services. On the other, the Secretary must
- 3. [The Hypocrisy of Time's Joe Klein](#)** *"Every man thinks meanly of himself for not having been a Soldier, or not having been at sea."* **Samuel Johnson** Most men, anyway. But not Joe Klein, a journalist, kind of, who clearly thinks very, very highly of himself. In his most recent self-promoting crusade, Klein calls for the resignation of the Secretary of the Department of Veterans Affairs, Eric K. Shinseki. Why? According to Klein, Shinseki should "take the fall" for the VA claims backlog, he's "old-school military" (whatever that means), "stoic," and "wary of the press" (wonder why); he doesn't have the "creativity and leadership skills" to deal with VA challenges, and because unnamed detractors

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4. [Legion defends VA chief against columnist.](#) The leader of The American Legion has come out swinging in defense of Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric Shinseki. Shinseki, a retired four-star Army general and decorated Vietnam War combat veteran, is the primary target of a scathing, yet-to-be-published TIME Magazine piece penned by prominent columnist Joe Klein. The article, titled “Ten Years After: a National Disgrace” lambastes Shinseki for maintaining a low public profile while veterans of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan suffer mass unemployment and stigma related to widespread and misleadingly alarming media reports of emotional distress among the young former servicemembers. Klein also pins responsibility, at least in part, on Shinseki for the Department of Veterans Affairs’ large and continuing benefits claims backlog, and the ...
  
5. [SVA Reaffirms Support of Secretary Shinseki.](#) SVA stands with the American Legion and VFW in defense of Secretary Shinseki against calls for his resignation by Time Magazine columnist Joe Klein. SVA's executive director issued this statement: "I concur with my Veterans Service Organizations ...
  
6. [AMVETS Announces Support For Shinseki, Rejects Calls To Resign.](#) [The Herald | HeraldOnline.com](#) In the wake of calls from a few vocal critics in the media and veterans' community for Department of Veterans Affairs Secretary Eric K. Shinseki to resign, AMVETS National Executive Director ...
  
7. [GOP-dominated House passes budget plan promising slashing cuts, balance in 10 years.](#) **Washington Post:** The Republican-controlled House on Thursday voted to keep the government running for the next six months while pushing through a tea-party flavored budget for next year that would shrink the government by another \$4.6 trillion over the next decade, but Veteran health programs will get their scheduled increases.
  
8. [VA contractor charged in Texas with fraud.](#) **Houston Chronicle (AP):** A Department of Veterans Affairs contractor has been charged with fraud over a \$2 million agreement for work at a Texas hospital.
  
9. [Obama urged to step in to fix VA backlog.](#) **NBC News:** The benefit-claims backlog that has ensnared nearly 600,000 younger veterans — many with war wounds — has reached a crisis point inside the Department of Veterans Affairs, and the hour has come for President Barack Obama to become personally involved in unclogging the quagmire, two of the nation's leading veterans advocates told NBC News Thursday.

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10. [Obama Has 'Enormous Concern' Over VA Claims Backlog](#). **NextGov** White House press secretary Jay Carney told reporters Tuesday that President Obama receives weekly updates on the Veterans Affairs Department's disability claims backlog and it is an "issue is of enormous concern to the President."
11. [Congress spares military's tuition assistance program from budget cuts](#). **Washington Post** Congress has spared a program that provides tuition aid to active duty military from the budget knife and during the debate Senator Inhofe pointed out that the nation's young veterans face high unemployment when they leave the military.
12. [Appeals Court Considers Sanctions Against Veterans Department](#). **Wall Street Journal**: A federal appeals court said Thursday it was considering sanctions against the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs for failing to live up to its word in a case involving veterans' benefits.
13. [VA Highlights Calif. Productivity Gains, More Veterans Wait for Benefits](#). **KNTV-TV**: A top Department of Veterans Affairs official told a congressional committee today that the agency's decision to temporarily shutter and retrain staff at its troubled Oakland office proved so successful that the agency has employed the same tactics to speed the delivery of benefits to disabled veterans in Los Angeles and Baltimore.
14. [State House moves to create veterans services hub](#). **WKZO**: A State House committee this week approved the allocation of three million dollars for the creation of a Veterans Service Delivery initiative.
15. [Still Serving Veterans receives grant to help expand programs statewide](#). **AL.com**: A Huntsville-based organization that assists veterans in making a successful transition from military to civilian life has been awarded a grant designed to expand the program across the state.
16. **VA / VSO-MSO Hearings as March 23, 2013:**
  - **April 10, 2013.** The House Committee on Veterans' Affairs, Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs, will conduct a hearing entitled "Sustaining the Sacred Trust: An Update on our National Cemeteries." 2:30 P.M.; 334 Cannon
  - **April 18, 2013.** HAC-MILCON-VA FY14 Budget Hearing. 10:30 A.M. - 1:00 P.M.; H-140, Capitol
  - **April 18, 2013.** SAC-MILCON-VA FY14 Budget Hearing. 2:00 P.M. - 5:00 P.M.; 125 Dirksen

## 17. Today in History:

- [1775 – American Revolutionary War: Patrick Henry](#) delivers his speech – "[Give me Liberty, or give me Death!](#)" – at [St. John's Church](#) in [Richmond, Virginia](#).

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- [1801](#) – [Tsar Paul I of Russia](#) is struck with a sword, then [strangled](#), and finally trampled to death in his bedroom at [St. Michael's Castle](#).
- [1806](#) – After traveling through the [Louisiana Purchase](#) and reaching the [Pacific Ocean](#), explorers [Lewis and Clark](#) and their "[Corps of Discovery](#)" begin their arduous journey home.
- [1821](#) – [Greek War of Independence](#): Battle and fall of city of [Kalamata](#).
- [1848](#) – The ship [John Wickliffe](#) arrives at [Port Chalmers](#) carrying the first [Scottish](#) settlers for [Dunedin](#), [New Zealand](#). [Otago](#) province is founded.
- [1857](#) – [Elisha Otis](#)'s first [elevator](#) is installed at 488 [Broadway New York City](#).
- [1862](#) – The [First Battle of Kernstown](#), Virginia, marks the start of Stonewall Jackson's Valley Campaign. Though a Confederate defeat, the engagement distracts Federal efforts to capture Richmond.
- [1879](#) – [War of the Pacific](#): The [Battle of Topáter](#), the first battle of the war is fought between [Chile](#) and the joint forces of [Bolivia](#) and [Peru](#).
  
- [1901](#) – [Emilio Aguinaldo](#), only President of the [First Philippine Republic](#), was captured at [Palanan, Isabela](#) by forces of General [Frederick Funston](#).
- [1905](#) – [Eleftherios Venizelos](#) calls for [Crete](#)'s union with [Greece](#), and begins what is to be known as the [Theriso revolt](#).
- [1908](#) – American diplomat [Durham Stevens](#) is attacked by [Korean](#) assassins [Jeon Myeong-un](#) and [Jang In-hwan](#), leading to his death in a hospital two days later.
- [1909](#) – [Theodore Roosevelt](#) leaves [New York](#) for a post-presidency [safari](#) in [Africa](#). The trip is sponsored by the [Smithsonian Institution](#) and [National Geographic Society](#).
- [1918](#) – [First World War](#): On the third day of the German [Spring Offensive](#), the 10th Battalion of the [Royal West Kent Regiment](#) is annihilated with many of the men becoming [Prisoners Of War](#)
- [1919](#) – In [Milan, Italy](#), [Benito Mussolini](#) founds his [Fascist](#) political movement.
- [1931](#) – [Bhagat Singh](#), [Shivaram Rajguru](#) and [Sukhdev Thapar](#) are hanged for murder during the [Indian](#) struggle for independence.
- [1933](#) – The [Reichstag](#) passes the [Enabling Act of 1933](#), making [Adolf Hitler](#) [dictator](#) of [Germany](#).
- [1935](#) – Signing of the [Constitution](#) of the Commonwealth of the [Philippines](#).
- [1939](#) – The [Hungarian](#) air force attacks the headquarters of [Slovak air force](#) in the city of [Spišská Nová Ves](#), kills 13 people and began the [Slovak–Hungarian War](#).
- [1942](#) – [World War II](#): In the [Indian Ocean](#), [Japanese](#) forces capture the [Andaman Islands](#).
- [1956](#) – [Pakistan](#) becomes the first [Islamic republic](#) in the world. ([Republic Day](#) in Pakistan)
- [1962](#) – [NS Savannah](#), the first [nuclear-powered](#) cargo-passenger ship, is [launched](#) as a showcase for [Dwight D. Eisenhower](#)'s [Atoms for Peace](#) initiative.
- [1965](#) – [NASA](#) launches [Gemini 3](#), the [United States](#)' first two-man space flight (crew: [Gus Grissom](#) and [John Young](#)).
- [1978](#) – The first [UNIFIL](#) troops arrived in [Lebanon](#) for [peacekeeping mission](#) along the [Blue Line](#).
- [1980](#) – Archbishop [Óscar Romero](#) of [El Salvador](#) gives his famous speech appealing to men of the El Salvadoran armed forces to stop killing the Salvadorans.

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- [1982](#) – [Guatemala](#)'s government, headed by [Fernando Romeo Lucas García](#) is overthrown in a military coup by right-wing General [Efraín Ríos Montt](#).
- [1983](#) – [Strategic Defense Initiative](#): President [Ronald Reagan](#) makes his initial proposal to develop technology to intercept enemy missiles.
- [1991](#) – The [Revolutionary United Front](#), with support from the special forces of [Charles Taylor](#)'s [National Patriotic Front of Liberia](#), invades [Sierra Leone](#) in an attempt to overthrow [Joseph Saidu Momoh](#), sparking a gruesome 11-year [Sierra Leone Civil War](#).
- [1994](#) – At an election rally in [Tijuana](#), [Mexican](#) presidential candidate [Luis Donaldo Colosio](#) is assassinated by [Mario Aburto Martínez](#).
- 1994 – A [United States Air Force](#) (USAF) [F-16](#) aircraft collides with a USAF [C-130](#) at [Pope Air Force Base](#) and then crashes, killing 24 [United States Army](#) soldiers on the ground. This later became known as the [Green Ramp disaster](#).
- [1996](#) – [Taiwan](#) holds its [first direct elections](#) and chooses [Lee Teng-hui](#) as [President](#).
- [1999](#) – Gunmen assassinate [Paraguay](#)'s [Vice President Luis María Argaña](#).
- [2001](#) – The [Russian Mir](#) space station is [disposed of](#), breaking up in the atmosphere before falling into the southern [Pacific Ocean](#) near [Fiji](#).
- [2003](#) – [Battle of Nasiriyah](#), first major conflict during the [invasion of Iraq](#).
- [2005](#) – [Texas City Refinery explosion](#): During a test on a distillation tower liquid waste builds up and flows out of a blowout tower. Waste fumes ignite and explode killing 15 workers.