What’s at stake:
“Spawned by our global military involvements, the military-industrial complex has become a powerful force for the perpetuation of those involvements.” J. William Fulbright, The Crippled Giant (252). (Fulbright’s books are as relevant today as they were during the ‘60s and ‘70s, except that today he would write: corporate-Pentagon-congressional-executive-corporate media-secrecy-surveillance complex. He knew this actuality, but used the short-hand phrase “military-industrial” because President Eisenhower had made it familiar. – Dick).

“Most Americans remain as blissfully oblivious to the theft of their hard-earned tax dollars by the military industrial complex as to the theft of their government by legalized bribery. The same system of secrecy and propaganda shields legalized bribery, plutocracy, militarism, and war crimes from public scrutiny, permitting them all to thrive like bacteria in the dark.” Davies, “From Ohlendorf to Obama.”

“Of all the enemies to public liberty, war is, perhaps, the most to be dreaded, because it comprises and develops the germ of every other. War is the parent of armies; from these proceed debts and taxes. . . .” James Madison, “Political Observations,” April 20, 1795.

There’s a lot in this, yet it only touches some points from 1981 to present. Try the first reading, and if you like it, read on when you have more time. We need many more people who know enough to be outraged and undaunted.


Davies, “From Ohlendorf to Obama.” 2013. (“inverted totalitarianism”).


Steve Horn, Revolving Door. 2017.


**TEXTS: US MILITARY-INDUSTRIAL (CORPORATE-EXECUTIVE-CONGRESSIONAL) COMPLEX NEWSLETTER #3**

**ORIGINS OF US AGGRESSION**

*The Hidden Structure of Violence: Who Benefits from Global Violence and War*


Acts of violence assume many forms: they may travel by the arc of a guided missile or in the language of an economic policy decision that contaminates drinking water, and they may leave behind a smoldering village or a starved child. The all-pervasive occurrence of violence makes it seem like an unavoidable, and ultimately incomprehensible, aspect of the human world, particularly in a modern era. But, in this detailed and expansive book, Marc Pilisuk and
Jennifer Rountree demonstrate otherwise. **Widespread violence, they argue, is in fact an expression of the underlying social order, and whether it is carried out by military forces or by patterns of investment, the aim is to strengthen that order for the benefit of the powerful.**

**The Hidden Structure of Violence** marshals vast amounts of evidence to examine the costs of direct violence, including military preparedness and the social reverberations of war, alongside the costs of structural violence, expressed as poverty and chronic illness. It also documents the relatively small number of people and corporations responsible for facilitating the violent status quo, whether by setting the range of permissible discussion or benefiting directly as financiers and manufacturers. The result is a stunning indictment of our violent world and a powerful critique of the ways through which violence is reproduced on a daily basis, whether at the highest levels of the state or in the deepest recesses of the mind. Because of its inter-disciplinary approach, **The Hidden Structure of Violence** will be valuable for scholars and students in a range of fields, but especially psychology, macro-economics, sociology, international relations, history, journalism, peace studies, military science, community development, and social change.

**Bibliography for Hidden Structure of Violence**

An encyclopedic and yet highly focused analysis of the causes and consequences of violence and wars ... This is a sober book that nonetheless leaves us with hope for future generations.

—G. William Domhoff, Research Professor in Psychology and Sociology, University of California, Santa Cruz; author, *Who Rules America?* One of the most comprehensive—and programmatic—discussions of the sources and nature of global violence in years.

—Tom Hayden, author, *Inspiring Participatory Democracy*. This is a rare book: It speaks the truth about the causes of war, and cuts through the veil of theories that mystify and obscure rather than explain the causes ... a scholarly work, fully referenced and documented, yet accessible to the general public ... a forthright and hard-hitting critique of the power elite’s control of government, foreign policy, and the media.

—Milton Schwebel, Emeritus Dean and Professor, Graduate School of Applied & Professional Psychology, Rutgers University; Founding Editor, *Peace and Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology*; Former President, Psychologists for Social Responsibility

There are painful truths here for Americans about the role our government plays in perpetuating global violence—but some readers will be inspired to follow the authors’ advice on what can be done about it.

—William A. Gamson, Professor of Sociology, Boston University; author, *Talking Politics* and *The Strategy of Social Protest*. The authors have cast their net over the threats to world peace and ecological balance, pulling in not only fish but monsters of the deep. After painting a picture gloomier than any canvas by Bosch or Goya, they offer a glimmer of hope for a planet suffering from a life-threatening disease. Indeed, no recent book presents today's pathologies so clearly nor provides potential remedies with such brilliant articulation.
—Stanley Krippner, Professor, Saybrook Graduate School; co-author, *Haunted by Combat*. This important book is a tour de force of erudition and scholarship, lucid exposition and organization, cogent reasoning, psychological depth, and compassionate motivation. It is written in clear, accessible language and a warm, humane voice. Each proposition is supported by well-documented evidence, including historical case studies. Through ‘uncovering a destructive system,’ the authors aspire to inform, inspire, and empower readers to take part in the just transformation of this violence-ravaged world. In other words, this book’s purpose is to empower activists for peace, human rights, and ecological sustainability. It is a guidebook to the intricate, highly organized networks that dominate and are destroying so much of the world in which we live.

—Mitch Hall, author, *Peace Quest*. In a few words, it can be said that the book tells it like it is—it describes the vast governmental-industrial-legislative complex that controls our lives via war and violence. This is not conspiracy theory any longer—it is rooted in fact and record. The authors cite names, organizations, places, and dates that not only promote war, but also benefit from it financially. The world is the victim! This is a must read and I call it to your attention.

—Anthony Marsella, editor, *Amidst Peril and Pain: The Mental Health and Well-being of the World’s Refugees* and *Understanding Terrorism: Psychosocial Roots, Consequences, and Interventions*

**PENTAGON BUDGET, ECONOMIC COMPLEX, WAR INDUSTRY, PROFITEERING.** THE COMPLEX USA:

Corporate-Pentagon-White House-Congress-Mainstream Media-Secrecy-Surveillance-National Security State

Some of the countless manifestations of the MIC (references in chronological order):

**MILITARY CONGRESSIONAL WHITE HOUSE INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX**

[Just as the leaders of the tobacco companies knew all along of the poison in their product, and they didn’t care but covered it up, and the leaders of the fossil fuels industry knew all along of the poison in their product, and they didn’t care but covered it up, the political leaders of the USA knew all along of the poison in their nationalism and militarism and patriotism that has killed millions of people, and they didn’t care, but couldn’t cover it up. Because our scholars and investigative reporters had exposed the truth. —D]


This is the first systematic study of the relationship between government and defense contractors, examining in detail the political impact of the eight most powerful defense
contractors. It details ways in which Boeing, General Dynamics, Grumman, McDonnell Douglas, Northrop, Rockwell International, and United Technologies influence government, from their basic contract activity, corporate structure, and research efforts, to their Washington offices, Political Action Committee campaign contributions, hiring of government personnel, and membership on federal advisory committees. Adams concludes with specific recommendations for changes in disclosure requirements that would curb some of the political power corporations can wield. It also suggests specific ways in which the Iron Triangle can be made subject to wider congressional and public scrutiny.


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Social Studies of Science
Vol. 16, No. 2, May, 1986
Science and Technolo...

JOURNAL ARTICLE

Review: Science and Technology Studies and the Question of the Military

Reviewed Works: The Militarization of High Technology by John Tirman; Military Enterprise and Technological Change: Perspectives on the American Experience by Merritt Roe Smith
Review by: Donald MacKenzie
Social Studies of Science
Published by: Sage Publications, Ltd.
Stable URL: http://www.jstor.org/stable/285212
Page Count: 11

The New Nuclear Danger | The New Press
https://thenewpress.com › books › new-nuclear-danger

Military power needs to be financed and economic development is often shaped by military conflict, thus the interaction of military and economy, power and money is central to the modern world. This book provides an accessible introduction to the economics of the use of organized force, with a wide range of historical and current examples.


The Shadow World www.theshadowworldbook.com/ About the Book. Pulling back the curtain on the secretive world of the global arms trade, Andrew Feinstein reveals the corruption and the cover-ups behind weapons deals . . .

The Shadow World: Inside the Global Arms Trade by Andrew Feinstein...

https://www.theguardian.com/books/2012/.../shadow-world-andrew-feinstein-review

Nov 27, 2012 - In 2010, global military expenditure was $235 for every person on the planet. Greece apparently spends more on weapons than any other nation in the EU. Feinstein’s compelling book exposes the "parallel world of money, corruption, deceit and death" behind the trade in arms. In forensic detail (there are ... “The Shadow World: Inside the Global Arms Trade,” by Andrew Feinstein

https://www.washingtonpost.com/...shadow-world...feinstein/...glQAh7R6mM_story....

Oct 25, 2011 - That the world is awash in weapons is not news. But the way weapons large and small flow from the United States, Britain and other producers to the world's villains is ever astonishing. In "The Shadow World," Andrew Feinstein gives us a sweeping and troubling story of how this happens, who benefits, and ...

The Shadow World: Inside the Global Arms Trade, By Andrew Feinstein

www.independent.co.uk › Culture › Books › Reviews

Nov 18, 2011 - Arms manufacturers do particularly well when they sell to both sides. Even better is when one side uses lots of expensive weaponry to destroy the other's. That way the arms dealer can make decent profits re-vamping the victor's arsenals. On very rare occasions things turn out even better, especially if the ...
FEINSTEIN SPEAKS ABOUT THE ARMS TRADE, AND AN INTERVIEW
The Shadow World - Andrew Feinstein - YouTube
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yG09qjWYwuk
Oct 10, 2011 - Uploaded by Penguin Books UK
http://www.penguin.co.uk/nf/Book/Book... Pulling back the curtain on the secretive world of the global arms ...

US ARMS TRADE IN FEINSTEIN PP. 237-239

FILM BASED ON THE BOOK
Shadow World, film: Shocking Inside Story of Global Arms Trade - PBS
www.pbs.org/independentlens/films/shadow-world/
Based on book The Shadow World: Inside the Global Arms Trade, the acclaimed book by Andrew Feinstein, the film explores how governments, their militaries and intelligence agencies, defense contractors, arms dealers and agents are inextricably intertwined with the international trade in weapons, and how that trade fosters ...

NICOLAS J. S. DAVIES, “FROM OHLENDORF TO OBAMA.” Z MAGAZINE (September 2013). The US political and economic system of legalized bribery and inverted totalitarianism promotes leaders who support the Complex and can win the votes of the public while serving the interests of the wealthy. –Dick

JOSEPH GAINZA. “MAKE WAR UNPROFITABLE.” SPACE ALERT! (Fall 2013). A call for an investigation into the arms industry. –Dick
http://www.fredsakademiet.dk/library/Space%20Alert%2028.pdf

The Responsibility of Intellectuals Redux: Humanitarian Intervention and the Liberal Embrace of War in the Age of Clinton, Bush and Obama

In a New York Times op-ed following the public's rejection of president Barack Obama’s call for air strikes on Syria, Michael Ignatieff, a professor at the Harvard Kennedy School and former leader of the Canadian liberal party, sought to reaffirm the doctrine of humanitarian intervention, stating that while the public had become weary over the failure of wars in Iraq,
Afghanistan and Libya, Western democracies had a responsibility to protect civilians when they are threatened with mass killing. In his view, the use or threat of force may be “illegal but legitimate,” and the US sometimes needs to “go at it alone to stop atrocity crimes…..Rebuilding popular democratic support for the idea of our duty to protect civilians when no one else can or will,” thus represents “a critical challenge in the years ahead.”

With colleagues such as Nicholas Kristof of the New York Times and Samantha Power, US ambassador to the UN and author of the book, “A Problem From Hell,” which criticizes the US for failing to intervene historically to halt genocide, Ignatieff has for years been an influential liberal intellectual championing military intervention on humanitarian grounds. He and his associates in the “cruise missile left,” as Edward S. Herman labeled them, have often been more hawkish than neo-conservatives, championing wars in Libya, Syria and initially Iraq as well as escalation in Afghanistan-Pakistan. In their race to “protect,” they seem oblivious to the mass killing that inevitably accompanies each of these interventions. Their analysis is deeply flawed furthermore in that it grossly oversimplifies the nature of international conflicts, always painting one side (the US side) as good and the other evil. They ignore the legacy of colonialism and the structural and economic variables underlying Western military intervention throughout history, including desire to access military bases and raw materials and to undercut challenges to Western hegemony. They also ignore US and Western complicity in major human rights violations through arms sales, and military and police training programs. This essay seeks to critically scrutinize the doctrine of humanitarian intervention, discussing how Ignatieff and colleagues seeking a useable past distorted history and served a useful function for what C. Wright Mills termed the “power elite” by allowing them to appropriate a human rights rhetoric that in the 1960s was adopted by liberal antiwar activists to condemn America aggression in Vietnam. Replicating the role played by their predecessors in World War I, liberal interventionists helped to save the US military-industrial complex from oblivion by building public consensus for dubious military interventions that Ignatieff now laments threaten to reinvigorate the pacifist and isolationist sentiments of the 1930s.

MORE http://www.japanfocus.org/-Jeremy-Kuzmarov/4132

“We’re Profiteers”

http://monthlyreview.org/2014/07/01/were-profiteers/

“You whore it out to a contractor,” Major Tim Elliott said bluntly. It was April 2012, and I was at a swank hotel in downtown London attending “Forward Operating Bases 2012,” a conference for contractors building, supplying, and maintaining military bases around the world. IPQC,
the private company running the conference, promised the conference would “bring together buyers and suppliers in one location” and “be an excellent platform to initiate new business relationships” through “face-to-face contact that overcrowded trade shows cannot deliver.” Companies sending representatives included major contractors like General Dynamics and the food services company Supreme Group, which has won billions in Afghan war contracts, as well as smaller companies like QinetiQ, which produces acoustic sensors and other monitoring devices used on bases. “We’re profiteers,” one contractor representative said to the audience in passing, with only a touch of irony.

Other than the corporate representatives and a couple of journalists, a few officers from NATO member militaries were on hand to speak. Major Elliott of the Royal Scots Brigades had offered his stark assessment while explaining how to build a military base that allows a base commander to “forget the base itself”—that is, the work of running the base—and instead maximize his effectiveness outside the base.

Of course, Elliott said, in wartime you won’t get contractors to run a base without “a shitload of money.” At times, he said, this has meant vast amounts of “time, effort, and resources” are going “just to keep a base running.” In Afghanistan, Elliott said he saw situations so bad that on one base there were private security guards protecting privately contracted cooks who were cooking for the same private security guards…who were protecting the privately contracted cooks…who were cooking for the private security guards…who were protecting the privately contracted cooks, and on it went.

By the end of 2014 in Afghanistan, the U.S. military will have closed, deconstructed, or vacated most of what were once around 800 military installations, ranging from small checkpoints to larger combat outposts to city-sized bases. Previously, the military vacated 505 bases it built or occupied in Iraq.

Despite the closure of these 1,000-plus installations, the U.S. military will still occupy around 800 military bases outside the fifty states and Washington, D.C. In addition to more than 4,000 domestic bases, this collection of extraterritorial bases is undoubtedly the largest in world history.

As the *Monthly Review* editors and others have pointed out, U.S. bases overseas have become a major mechanism of U.S. global power in the post-Second World War era. Alongside postwar economic and political tools like the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, and the United Nations, the collection of extraterritorial bases—like colonies for the European empires before it—became a major mechanism for “maintaining [U.S.] political and economic hegemony,” advancing corporate economic and political interests, protecting trade routes, and allowing control and influence over territory vastly disproportionate to the land bases actually occupy. Without a collection of colonies, the United States has used its
bases, as well as periodic displays of military might, to keep wayward nations within the rules of an economic and political system favorable to itself. Building and maintaining this global base presence has cost U.S. taxpayers billions of dollars. While the military once built and maintained its forts, bases, and naval stations, since the U.S. war in Vietnam, private military contractors have increasingly constructed and run this global collection of bases, foreshadowing and helping to fuel broader government privatization efforts. During this unprecedented period, major corporations—U.S. and foreign—have increasingly benefitted from the taxpayer dollars that have gone to base contracting.

Top Ten Countries by Pentagon Spending, Funds Fiscal Year 2002–April 2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Total (billions)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Iraq</td>
<td>89.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Afghanistan</td>
<td>69.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Kuwait</td>
<td>37.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Germany</td>
<td>27.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. South Korea</td>
<td>18.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Japan</td>
<td>15.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. United Kingdom</td>
<td>14.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. United Arab Emirates</td>
<td>10.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. Bahrain</td>
<td>6.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>10. Italy</td>
<td>5.8</td>
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Continued at: [http://monthlyreview.org/2014/07/01/were-profiteers/](http://monthlyreview.org/2014/07/01/were-profiteers/)

**MILITARY BUDGET**

A friend wrote the following note about the normalizing function of advertising. Say something often enough, attractively enough—for US security and built efficiently and affordably, bombing indiscriminately, stealthily is acceptable—it becomes like the neighborhood, like the breakfast at home and next door. —D

**MILITARY-INDUSTRIAL-CONGRESSIONAL COMPLEX: ARKANSAS**
“Womack Tours Illinois Air Base.” *NADG (10-30-16).* As a member of the House Defense Appropriations Subcommittee, US Rep. Steve Womack R-AR, “frequently visits military installations.” He is praised by Rep. Bost, R-IL, for seeking “understanding of the critical role that Scott AFB plays in America’s military readiness” and to “better ensure” funding for the base. Womack also visited two submarines recently as guest of the Navy—in the Arctic to observe Navy exercises, and in the Pacific to observe an unarmed Trident II (D5) missile launched. [And of course he nursed into full killing operation the new drone base at Ebbing AFB, Fort Smith, AR., and fully supports the MIC growing in AR. OMNI needs a full-time US /AR Militarism Watcher! Out of a third of a million population in NWA surely there’s one citizen with the will to perform this important task. Wars have been humanitarian and ecological calamities. Will someone expose this Womack militarist in a daily or at least weekly bulletin? –D]

Womack supported Citizens United & Corporate Personhood. He openly endorsed this democracy-eroding institution in line with Romney (despite 85% of Americans opposing that ruling in a 2010 *Washington Post* poll). In my mind, the issue of democracy vs. corporate rule is the most fundamental. Until we eliminate the massive corporate campaign financing and the army of corporate lobbyists, progress on all the other issues is nearly insurmountable. Cheers! Abel

It is heinous to advertise such war technology on the same page that will be rented out next week for new cars or designer shoes. It is insidious. AND on the heels of a report about cluster bombs (made in USA by Textron Industries), being used by the Saudis in Yemen, casualties including many women and children. Cluster bombs, like anti-personnel mines should be (if they aren't already) banned worldwide. [See the following article from Codepink. So, WTF are we doing promoting this Machinery of Death and putting it on a par with a box of Wheaties??? Gerry S]

**BAN CLUSTER BOMBS: Textron**

**CODEPINK**

Dick --

On April 18, peace activists from across New England will gather in front of Textron Industries headquarters in Providence, Rhode Island, to call on the company to stop selling cluster bombs to Saudi Arabia that it is using to kill civilians in Yemen!

[Sign our petition to Textron Industries CEO Scott C. Donnelly asking Textron to stop selling cluster bombs to Saudi Arabia!](https://www.codepink.org/petition/textron-industries-ceo-stop-selling-cluster-bombs-to-saudi-arabia)

Textron is the manufacturer of cluster bombs that are sold to Saudi Arabia for its war of aggression on the people of Yemen. A total of 118 countries have banned cluster munitions due to the threat they pose to nearby civilians at the time of attack and afterward. Even worse, Textron’s
weapons fail to meet the standards for malfunction rates set in U.S. export law – according to Human Rights Watch – so their sale to Saudi Arabia is both illegal and will leave unexploded munitions scattered across Yemen, threatening civilians for years to come. **Saudi Arabia is committing war crimes in Yemen and has created a humanitarian crisis.** Yet, Textron continues to provide its bombs for the war, even after more than 3,000 innocent Yemeni civilians have been killed. President Obama will visit Saudi Arabia next week and should press the Saudi government to permanently end the attacks against Yemen.

At the protest on Monday, activists will attempt to hand-deliver your signature to Textron personnel. **Sign our petition to CEO Scott C. Donnelly TODAY calling on Textron to stop sending these horrible weapons to Saudi Arabia!**

**In solidarity,**

Alice, Alli, Ariel, Chelsea, Janet, Jodie, Marwa, Medea, Michaela, Nancy, Rebecca, Sam and Tighe

**P.S.** Once you’ve signed the Textron petition, **sign our petition asking President Obama to meet with Saudi human rights activists during his trip next week!**

**P.P.S.** Show your support for demilitarization and bringing our war dollars home **with a CODEPINK t-shirt!**

Have your change make change! MyChange rounds up your credit and debit card purchases to the next dollar, and sends your spare change to CODEPINK! [Click here to get started.](https://www.desmogblog.com/2017/07/05/dakota-access-tigerswan-james-spider-marks-los-angeles-riots)

**DAKOTA ACCESS**

**VERSATILE US MILITARY: Abroad and at Home**

Recycling our military. They have been protecting corporate America's interests abroad; now they are working for the same masters against their fellow citizens.

Joyce

[https://www.desmogblog.com/2017/07/05/dakota-access-tigerswan-james-spider-marks-los-angeles-riots](https://www.desmogblog.com/2017/07/05/dakota-access-tigerswan-james-spider-marks-los-angeles-riots)

Retired Major General James “Spider” Marks chairs the advisory board for TigerSwan, a private security firm hired by Energy Transfer Partners to help police protests of the Dakota Access pipeline — an approach for which Marks has shown vocal support.

DeSmog has found that Marks also headed up intelligence efforts for the task force which brought over 10,000 U.S. military troops to police the 1992 riots following the acquittal of Los Angeles Police Department members involved in beating Rodney King. In addition, Marks, a long-time military analyst for CNN, led intelligence-gathering efforts for the U.S. military’s 2003 “shock and awe” campaign in Iraq, which was dubbed “Operation Iraqi Liberation.”

In recent months, Marks has endorsed Dakota Access and its southern leg, the Bayou Bridge pipeline. He has shown this support by writing op-ed pieces published in various newspapers and on the website of a pro-Dakota Access coalition run by a PR firm funded by Energy Transfer Partners.

“I spent a good portion of my adult life in Iraq, and I must tell you that the similarities are stark,” Marks said in November of the anti-Dakota Access encampment set up by the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe.

Marks, according to The Washington Times, traveled to Standing Rock “as an adviser to the Midwest Alliance for Infrastructure Now” (MAIN), a pro-pipeline front group run by the Republican Party public relations firm, DCI Group.

“General Marks is still an adviser to the coalition. He is given a modest stipend for his time and expertise,” DCI Group’s Craig Stevens told DeSmog of Marks’ relationship with MAIN. “TigerSwan is not a member of the Coalition nor does the Coalition receive any funding from them.” Stevens manages public relations efforts for MAIN and is the crisis management lead for DCI.

In February, Marks traveled to Louisiana to speak in favor of the Bayou Bridge pipeline at a Louisiana Department of Natural Resources hearing.

Neither Marks nor TigerSwan responded to requests for comment for this story. TigerSwan has recently come under fire by the North Dakota Private Investigative and Security Board for operating in the state without a permit, with the Board filing a legal complaint about the matter. Energy Transfer Partners says TigerSwan is no longer working on its behalf in North Dakota.
Pentagon Pundits

Among his numerous public appearances, writings, and television pit stops, Marks has failed to disclose his advisory board position for TigerSwan. Failure to disclose affiliations, though, is not unusual for Marks.

As a military pundit for CNN, both The New York Times and the watchdog group Public Accountability Initiative (PAI) have documented that Marks has often appeared on cable TV while not disclosing his ties to military weapons companies. The 2008 New York Times Pulitzer Prize-winning investigation — "Behind TV Analysts, Pentagon’s Hidden Hand" — covered Marks and explained that he and over 75 others were paid by the George W. Bush administration to give seemingly independent, pro-Iraq War analyses on cable TV outlets beginning in early 2002.

The catch: The public was never informed that these pro-war pundits were on the Pentagon’s payroll and often on the payroll of military weapons companies as well. MORE https://www.desmogblog.com/2017/07/05/dakota-access-tigerswan-james-spider-marks-los-angeles-riots

“If such [high-tech] weaponry is being endlessly developed for our safety and security, and that of our children and grandchildren, why is it that one of our most successful businesses involves the sale of the same weaponry to other countries? Few Americans are comfortable thinking about this.” Engelhardt, The American Way of War, 5.

2018 Looks Like an Arms Bonanza

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http://www.tomdispatch.com/post/176372/tomgram%3A_william_d._hartung%2C_2018_looks_like_an_arms_bonanza/#more

“War Pay:
Another Good Year for Weapons Makers Is Guaranteed “

By William D. Hartung

As Donald Trump might put it, major weapons contractors like Boeing, Raytheon, and Lockheed Martin cashed in “bigly” in his first year in office. They raked in tens of billions of dollars in Pentagon contracts, while posting sharp stock price increases and healthy profits driven by the continuation and expansion of Washington’s post-9/11 wars. But last
year's bonanza is likely to be no more than a down payment on even better days to come for the military-industrial complex.

President Trump moved boldly in his first budget, seeking an additional $54 billion in Pentagon funding for fiscal year 2018. That figure, by the way, equals the entire military budgets of allies like Germany, France, the United Kingdom, and Japan. Then, in a bipartisan stampede, Congress egged on Trump to go even higher, putting forward a defense authorization bill that would raise the Pentagon's budget by an astonishing $85 billion. (And don’t forget that, last spring, the president and Congress had already tacked an extra $15 billion onto the 2017 Pentagon budget.) The authorization bill for 2018 is essentially just a suggestion, however -- the final figure for this year will be determined later this month, if Congress can come to an agreement on how to boost the caps on domestic and defense spending imposed by the Budget Control Act of 2011. The final number is likely to go far higher than the staggering figure Trump requested last spring.

And that's only the beginning of the good news for the big weapons companies. Industry officials and Beltway defense analysts aren't expecting the real increase in Pentagon spending to come until the 2019 budget. It's a subject sure to make it into the mid-term elections. Dangling potential infusions of Pentagon funds in swing states and swing districts is a tried and true way to influence voters in tight races and so will tempt candidates in both parties.

President Trump has long emphasized job creation above much else, but if he has an actual jobs program, it mainly seems to involve pumping more money into the Pentagon and increasing overseas arms sales. That such spending is one of the least effective ways to create new jobs evidently matters little. It is, after all, an easy and popular way for a president to give himself the look of stimulating economic activity, especially in an era of steep tax cuts favoring the plutocratic class and attacks on domestic spending.

Trump’s much-touted 1 trillion infrastructure plan may never materialize, but the Pentagon is already on course to spend $6 trillion to $7 trillion of your taxes over the next decade. As it happens though, a surprising percentage of those dollars won’t even go into the military equivalent of infrastructure. Based on what we know of Pentagon expenditures in 2016, up to half of such funds are likely to go directly into the coffers of defense contractors rather than to the troops or to basic military tasks like training and maintenance. . . . MORE
http://www.tomdispatch.com/post/176372/tomgram%3A_william_d._hartung%2C_2018_looks_like_an_arms_bonanza/#more

Genuine opposition to runaway Pentagon spending may yet emerge, if, as expected, President Trump, Paul Ryan, and the Republican Congress follow up their trillion-dollar tax giveaway with an assault on Medicare and Social Security. At that point, the devastating domestic costs of overspending on the Pentagon should become far more difficult to ignore.
This year will undoubtedly be a banner year for arms companies. The only question is: Might it also mark the beginning of a future movement to roll back unconstrained weapons expenditures?

William D. Hartung, a TomDispatch regular, is the director of the Arms and Security Project at the Center for International Policy and the author of Prophets of War: Lockheed Martin and the Making of the Military-Industrial Complex. Copyright 2018 William D. Hartung

AIR SHOWS, FEAR MONGERING, AND SALES IMPORTANT TO THE US MIC, AND THE NADG DOES ITS BEST TO HELP


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