

# Crony Capitalism, Empire and America's Military Industrial Complex

(Or Why You Should be Voting as Green as Possible)

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*In his 1960 farewell address, the moderate Republican President Dwight D. Eisenhower tried to warn us naïve and trusting Americans about the nefarious agendas of the amoral, pro-corporate, pro-war, imperialistic military/industrial (i.e., corporate)/national security/congressional complex (especially the weapons industries, the Pentagon, the CIA, and the FBI) that Ike had seen acquiring excessive power during his administration.*

Americans after WWII were feeling increasingly prosperous and optimistic about the future because the nation's infrastructure, industries, productivity, markets and non-military citizens had not been victimized or blasted to smithereens like their economic competitors in Europe and Asia. Ike's prescient warnings were essentially ignored or censored out of the public's consciousness by nefarious anti-democratic entities that were operating behind the scenes.



Eisenhower had experienced the horrors of wars up close, and he despised them, and he was therefore no Hawk, unlike so many of the pro-war Republican bigwig Chicken Hawks that followed him in positions of power in that political party. He had managed to keep the US out of war during his 8 years in office, and he never could see the justification for the US military's use of nuclear weapons against Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Ike knew that Japan had already lost the war well before the atom bombs were dropped on those unarmed, innocent civilian populations.

Eisenhower was also one of the last Republican presidents that understood the dangers of unregulated corporate power when it was combined with unrestrained governmental/military power. He probably knew better than most how the Italian dictator to Benito Mussolini defined fascism (*"Fascism should...be called corporatism as it is a merger of state and corporate power"*)

Sometime after Ike's speech, between the political assassinations of the liberal political leaders JFK, MLK and RFK (during the 1960s) and the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, progressives have felt increasingly distrustful of the emerging far-right, pro-corporate, pro-militarist, pro-wealth, anti-intellectual, Christian fundamentalist-influenced agendas of the Republican

Party. And justifiably so.

Many progressives have frequently felt betrayed by the right-ward shift of the national Democratic Party which has been increasingly influenced by pro-corporate, pro-militarist, pro-wealth agendas. The national Democratic Party, despite its often honorable past fighting for the rights of the little guy (with their party platforms frequently supporting children's rights, worker's rights, women's rights, voting rights, civil rights, etc) seems to have abdicated those honorable stances to the American Green Party. (See the list of Green Party values at: <http://www.gp.org/tenkey.php>.)

I mourn the rapidly disappearing years when progressive Minnesotans could feel good about being able to vote for courageous, ethical, liberal democratic candidates like Hubert Humphrey, Walter Mondale, Eugene McCarthy and Paul Wellstone. Democratic President Back in the 1940s, Harry Truman warned Democrats about promoting agendas that appealed to the wealthy, the corporations and the militarists when he said *"If a voter has a choice between a Republican and a Democrat who acts like a Republican, he'll vote for the Republican every time."*

But Republicans like Richard Nixon, Spiro Agnew, Henry Kissinger, Ronald Reagan, the Bushes, Newt Gingrich, ad nauseum, kept getting elected; and we citizens - just like the naïvely trusting place-kicker Charlie Brown when the devious Lucy jerked the football away - always seem to realize too late that we have been bamboozled again. Of course the group of politicians above usually wound up discrediting themselves over their warmongering in Vietnam or Lebanon or Granada or Nicaragua or El Salvador or Columbia or because of their greedy inclinations to maintain their power, prestige, prerogative and the need to serve their anonymous paymasters.

The consequences of living in a corporatized, militarized, national security-obsessed nation has always made me especially wary of the GOP, and the more neo-fascist that that party leans and the more it is influenced by excessively wealthy special interest groups that profit from war and globalization, the more I distrust and fear it.

The 12 years of unrestrained crony capitalism during the anti-democracy mis-leadership of Republican presidents Ronald Reagan and George H. W. Bush tricked most of us into naively believing in their fraudulent "Trickle-down Economics". Simultaneously those administrations tried to freak us out into going along with their agendas by endlessly exaggerating the military (and economic) threats from the Soviet Union. Reagan called the USSR the "Evil Empire" and they called Ronald Wilson Reagan (old "666" himself) the "The Great Satan". Both monikers seemed justified to many.

The wealthy investor classes and financial markets loved the Reagan-era's tax cuts for the wealthy, the unrestrained borrowing, spending and permanently indebteding of America (to the tune of 4 trillion dollars [in 1980 dollars] just during the Reagan years) , and the US Treasury has ever since, been paying out hundreds of billions of dollars of interest annually to the wealthy investors on Wall Street).

One of the doctrines of American conservatism is a strong and well-funded military/national security apparatus (in order to protect private and corporate investments abroad). The mass purchases (using borrowed money, not tax money) of unaffordable, often useless (and sometimes unwanted, even by the Pentagon) weapons systems were justified by appealing to America's orchestrated mass paranoia about the arms races with the USSR, including, of

course, huge amounts of borrowed money for “modernizing” and enlarging America’s destabilizing nuclear arsenals.

### Seeing Through the Myths of the GOP’s “Compassionate Conservatism” and its “Big Tent”

A campaign image that cunning GOP strategists in the past have tried to convey is the notion that Republicans are “Compassionate Conservatives” with a “Big Tent” that welcomes everybody, when most of the national and state party platforms, especially those in Bible Belt states, espouse exclusivist agendas that are anything but welcoming or compassionate towards racial and ethnic minorities, religious minorities, gays and lesbians, women (especially pregnant women and those with children), disadvantaged children, immigrants, war refugees, anti-war activists, peacemakers, the environment and the sick, poor, hungry, under-employed and homeless.

Cunning Republican strategists and their politicians were perpetrating the lie that their party, which attracts virulent nationalists, pro-war militarists, war profiteers of every ilk, anti-environmentalists, sociopathic billionaires, compassionless corporations, union breakers, racists, climate change deniers, holocaust deniers, anti-intellectuals, sexists, liberal-haters like the KKK and Aryan Nation, homophobes, xenophobes, sexists, people who believe in the Rapture (!), people who believe that the earth is less than 10,000 years old (and therefore insist on teaching pseudoscientific creationism to their children as real science) and other right-wing groups.

That is a partial list of who is already in the fictional “Big Tent”. People of conscience will not feel welcome there because true liberals with open-minds have already been fingered as mortal enemies.

Most progressive thinkers wouldn’t want to be rubbing elbows with some of the folks in the Big Tent, especially the ones who refuse to listen to reason, who refuse to give any credence to the scientific method or who disbelieve established and documented facts.

The GOP Big Tent Myth is a Big Lie propaganda trick that is designed to get the brain-washed and the dis-informed to believe something that isn’t true so that they can be convinced to vote against their own best interests.

Near the end of this essay are two important lists of reasons to be wary when voting in an election that is dominated by the two major parties in America that have hundreds of millions of dollars to spend on mostly inane, repetitive, often negative TV advertising. Further below are a number of quotes from well-known conservative Republicans. They should give every thinking voter pause.

The term “thinking voter” reminds me of a story about the brilliant Democratic Party politician Adlai Stevenson, who was the endorsed Democratic Party candidate for president who twice ran unsuccessfully against the war hero Eisenhower. He was known for giving powerful, highly reasoned and humorous campaign speeches. During one such speech, a woman in the crowd called out “Senator, you have the vote of every thinking person!” Stevenson simply smiled and replied, “That’s not enough, madam, we need a majority!”

I am afraid that we are in an era where the majority of Americans are 1) too distracted (with sports, entertainment, drug or celebrity addictions) to vote intelligently, are 2) too poor,

oppressed, malnourished, disinterested or disillusioned with both parties even to want to vote or 3) are too under-informed or ignorant of the issues to figure out which party or candidate best represents their children's interests.

If such eligible voters actually do tear themselves away from the mass entertainment media or their "I don't give a damn" drugs long enough to actually vote, many of them will vote for the candidate with the most expensive or most meaningless or negative campaign ads on TV and not for the party or candidate that espouses agendas that would be best for their children, themselves, the survival of the planet or the nation. It's obvious that most voters don't fully appreciate that the best candidates might be the ones that don't have enough money to even pay for one TV ad or even purchase lawn signs (which, unfortunately, is true for many worthy Green Party candidates).

America still has a thinking problem. And that is why propaganda and million dollars per minute commercials, that only the rich can afford to purchase, continue to effectively sell plastic crap a person doesn't really need, including hidden political agendas.

Before concluding, I want to add that, in my opinion, Stuart Mills, the One Trick Pony and GOP-endorsed candidate for Minnesota's District 8 US House of Representatives has none of the qualities necessary to be a credible, independently thinking member of the US Congress. Mills would undoubtedly be a simple drone in Congress, a me-too voter for the low corporate tax agenda and anti-Obama Congressional gridlock of Speaker of the House John Boehner.

Mills would undoubtedly be totally beholden to his many out-of-state financial supporters that include the Koch Brothers cabal, the mining corporations, the supporters of the democracy-killing Citizen's United ruling (allowing corporate personhood and unlimited, anonymous campaign bribery), the nefarious American Legislative Exchange Council and the National Rifle Association (which is another One Trick Pony that cares not one iota for any parts of the US Constitution except for the mis-interpreted 2<sup>nd</sup> Amendment). I say One Trick Pony because Mills, the NRA and the wealthy gun manufacturing corporations that fund the NRA are all irrationally (and laughably) paranoid about the ridiculous Fox News-promulgated myth that Democrats want to take away their hunting rifles and shotguns.

I hasten to add that Mills might be a qualified candidate (and far less harmful to our democracy) if he were running for the assistant executive directorship of Northern Minnesota's NRA; but please, not for Congress!

Green Party candidate Skip Sandman and DFL candidate Rick Nolan both beat Mills all hollow on every issue that is important to common folks, but Sandman is better than both on anti-corporate issues, anti-war issues, on the sustainability of the planet and on the cautious approach that is essential before potentially "game over" sulfide mining near the Boundary Waters Canoe Area in Northern Minnesota is allowed to proceed. The out-of-state mining company PolyMet has an unproven (for safety) plan to mine copper, nickel, zinc and rare earth metals in environmentally-sensitive northern Minnesota, a plan which opens up the distinct possibility of disastrous, irreversible, irremediable and century's long deadly poisoning of the habitat, the drinking water, the ground water, rivers, lakes and wild rice beds in northern Minnesota, much of which is on native American land and thus in violation of native treaty rights.

What I say about Stuart Mills can be said for Becky Hall, the GOP-endorsed candidate for

state house of representatives in House District 7A. Hall is another one of those cute, smiley-faced, blond Republican females (and well-groomed for remembering talking points) that have emerged in abundance in the Republican Party over the years. She is a Tea Party favorite (like Sarah Palin), a pro-NRA candidate and a naïve believer in everything that the sociopathic mining corporation PolyMet has told her.

One of Hall's endorsements has come from a minor entity of the pro-Big Business, pro-PolyMet, Minnesota Chamber of Commerce. Like Stuart Mills, Hall would be a lapdog legislator, (hopefully, but unlikely to be, somewhat uncomfortable with the various co-opted folks that are beholden to the party bosses who call the shots). If elected, Hall would likely be absorbed into the GOP caucus and be expected to vote for every anti-democracy, pro-corporate agenda item at the capitol. Green Party candidates for House District 7A (Duluth, MN) Kriss Osbakken and Jennifer Schultz both beat Hall on every issue that is important to common folks.

Immediately below are two important "voter guide" lists that expand on what I have been saying above. They were posted recently on [www.npr.org](http://www.npr.org): <http://www.npr.org/2014/10/18/356942426/in-alaska-race-for-governor-democrats-try-an-unusual-tactic-dropping-out>

*If you believe corporations are people, vote Republican.*

*If you believe money is Free Speech, vote Republican.*

*If you believe only Republicans should vote in elections, vote Republican.*

*If you believe our government should take care of Corporations & Foreign Countries First, vote Republican.*

*If you believe Unions are your enemy, vote Republican.*

*If you believe trickle-down economics has been successful, vote Republican.*

*If you believe only the Rich, CEO's & Politicians should have Health Insurance, vote Republican.*

*If you believe Corporations that make Billions in Profits should be Tax Free, vote Republican.*

*If you believe gay people do not deserve equal rights, vote Republican.*

*If you believe the minimum wage should be eliminated, vote Republican.*

*If you believe the EPA should be eliminated, vote Republican.*

*If you believe sick people who cannot afford health care should die in the street, vote Republican.*

*If you believe the poor should starve to death, vote Republican.*

*If you believe pregnancy via rape is "God's will", vote Republican.*

*If you believe we should eliminate Women's reproductive rights and return to the days of back alley abortions, vote Republican.*

*If you believe Women do not deserve equal pay for equal work, vote Republican.*

*If you believe we should have a legal system based on biblical law, vote Republican.*

*If you believe our schools should be teaching creationism instead of evolution, vote Republican.*

*If you believe we should eliminate the social safety net and let Americans suffer, vote Republican.*

*If you believe Americans on Social Security should get 1% raises each year while Congress gets Thousands of Dollars in Raises, vote Republican.*

*If you believe all baby's should be born but do not care if they starve, go homeless, or without health insurance, vote Republican.*

*If you believe every problem in America that W., his daddy & Reagan caused is*

*Obama's fault, vote republican.*

*If you believe the Republican Lie that we hear in every election, "Elect us & we will bring all the good paying American jobs back to America", vote Republican.*

*If you believe there should be Less Laws for the Rich & Big Business & More Laws for everyone else, vote Republican.*

*If you don't believe that man is adding to global warming, vote Republican.*

*If you don't believe in science, vote Republican.*

*If you believe the environment doesn't need to be taken care of, vote Republican.*

*If you believe the EPA needs to be dismantled because big business will do what right and not pollute, vote Republican.*

*If you believe the FDA needs to be dismantled because Big Agribusiness and Big Food won't sell us contaminated foods, vote Republican.*

*If you believe regulations on everything need lifting because nobody in another country would sell us contaminated toys any more than our own companies, vote Republican*

*If you believe Big Business would never do anything to compromise safety and kill people, vote Republican.*

*If you believe that tort reform doesn't set a fixed price on American lives and keeps insurance rates down and doesn't restrict your right to a fair trial, vote Republican.*

*If you believe that "job creators" need to pay less taxes at the same time that pay rates and tax revenues are on the decline, vote Republican.*

**BUT IF YOU ESPOUSE GREEN VALUES, YOU WILL REJECT EACH OF THE FOLLOWING SCENARIOS AND YOU WILL TRY TO VOTE AS GREEN AS POSSIBLE THIS ELECTION CYCLE:**

*If you want more war: vote democrat or republican*

*If you want more crony capitalism: vote democrat or republican*

*If you want billions given to autocratic governments: vote democrat or republican*

*If you support the NSA spying on US citizens: vote democrat or republican*

*If you support the war on drugs, vote democrat or republican.*

*If you love the military/industrial complex, vote democrat or republican.*

*If you believe people who disagree with your politics are stupid and/or evil: vote democrat or republican*

*If you support targeted assassinations of US citizens abroad without due process, vote democrat or republican.*

*If you support indefinite detention: vote democrat or republican.*

*if you support the drone war, vote democrat or republican*

*If you support a complicated federal tax code that tries harder to socially engineer our choices instead of just raising revenue, vote democrat or republican.*

*If you want bureaucrats and lawyers to run US education policy, vote democrat or republican.*

*If you LOVE having the lesser of two evils in office, vote democrat or republican.*

*If you LOVE the status quo, vote democrat or republican.*

And here is a revealing list of quotes from famous conservative Republicans. Read them before you go to the polls

#### A Small Sampling of Quotes From American "Big Tent" Conservatives

"We are grateful to the Washington Post, The New York Times, Time magazine and other great publications whose directors have attended our (Trilateral Commission) meetings and respected their promises of discretion for almost 40

years. It would have been impossible for us to develop our plan for the world if we had been subjected to the lights of publicity during those years. But the world is now more sophisticated and prepared to march toward a world government. The supranational sovereignty of an intellectual elite and world bankers is surely preferable to the national auto-determination practiced in past centuries.” — David Rockefeller (R-New York) billionaire banker, in a speech, given to the Trilateral Commission in 1991)

“Some people believe we Rockefellers are part of a secret cabal working against the best interests of the United States, characterizing my family ... as ‘internationalists’ and of conspiring with others around the world to build a more integrated global political and economic structure - one world, if you will. If that’s the charge, I stand guilty, and I am proud of it.” — David Rockefeller (R-NY)

“If the American people had ever known the truth about what we Bushes have done to this nation, we would be chased down in the streets and lynched.” — Ex-president George H. W. Bush (R-Texas)

“God told me to smite Osama bin Laden, so I invaded Afghanistan. Then He told me to smite Saddam Hussein, so I invaded Iraq. Now he wants me to work on the Middle East problem...” — Ex-President George W. Bush (R-Texas)

“I’m the commander—see, I don’t need to explain—I don’t need to explain why I say things. That’s the interesting thing about being the President. Maybe somebody needs to explain to me why they say something, but I don’t feel like I owe anybody an explanation.” — George W. Bush (R-Texas)

“I don’t understand how poor people think.” — George W. Bush (R- Texas)

“What Christians have got to do is take back this country, one precinct at a time, one neighborhood at a time and one state at a time. I honestly believe that in my lifetime, we will see a country once again governed by Christians...and Christian values.” “I want to be invisible. I do guerilla warfare. I paint my face and travel at night. You don’t know it’s over until you’re in a body bag. You don’t know until election night.” — Ralph Reed (R-Georgia) past associate of Jesse Helms, Jack Abramhoff, Grover Norquist and Tom DeLay and Christian Coalition executive director 1987-1989

“The illegal we do immediately. The unconstitutional takes a little longer.” Henry Kissinger (R-CT), unindicted international war criminal.

“The individual is handicapped by coming face to face with a conspiracy so monstrous he cannot believe it exists.” J. Edgar Hoover (R-deceased head of the FBI and probable co-conspirator in the JFK assassination)

“I tell people don’t kill all the liberals. Leave enough so we can have two on every campus—living fossils—so we will never forget what these people stood for.” — Vitriolic talk show host Rush Limbaugh (R-NY)

“This guy (President Obama) is, I believe, a racist.” - Fox News commentator Glenn Beck (R-Texas)

“I’m thinking about killing Michael Moore, and I’m wondering if I could kill him myself, or if I would need to hire somebody to do it. ) - Glenn Beck (R-Texas)

“Emotional appeals about working families trying to get by on \$4.25 an hour are hard to resist. Fortunately, such families do not exist.” — Rep. Tom DeLay (R-Texas)

"I know this is painful for the ladies to hear, but if you get married, you have accepted the headship of a man, your husband. Christ is the head of the household and the husband is the head of the wife, and that's the way it is, period." — Pat Robertson (R-Va) 700 Club founder, who once predicted that the end of the world was coming in October or November 1982.

"In my opinion, the right to privacy doesn't exist in the United States Constitution." — Sen. Rick Santorum (R-Pa.)

"Environmentalists are a socialist group of individuals that are the tool of the Democrat Party. I'm proud to say that they are my enemy. They are not Americans, never have been Americans, never will be Americans." — Rep. Don Young (R-Alaska)

"We're going to keep building the party until we're hunting Democrats with dogs." — Sen. Phil Gramm (R-Texas)

"Probably nothing." — Jeb Bush, (R-Florida), when asked what he would do for black people if elected.

"George W. Bush is in the White House because God put him there for a time such as this." — Lt. General William G. Boykin, (R-Va) Christian Fundamentalist, current executive vice president at Family Research Council and retired Deputy Undersecretary of Defense.

"We need to execute people like John Walker in order to physically intimidate liberals, by making them realize that they can be killed, too. Otherwise, they will turn out to be outright traitors." — Ann Coulter (R-Fla) Talk Show Host, speaking at the Conservative Political Action Conf., 02-26-02.FoxNews.

"I don't want to abolish government. I simply want to reduce it to the size where I can drag it into the bathroom and drown it in the bathtub." — Grover Norquist (R-DC) President of Americans for Tax Reform.

"Two things made this country great: White men & Christianity. The degree these two have diminished is in direct proportion to the corruption and fall of the nation. Every problem that has arisen can be directly traced back to our departure from God's Law and the disenfranchisement of White men." — Rep. Don Davis (R-NC)

"Why should we hear about body bags and deaths and how many, what day it's gonna happen? It's not relevant. So why should I waste my beautiful mind on something like that?" — Barbara Bush, (R-Tx), Ex-First Lady, on the day before the Iraq war started.

"I want you to remember that no bastard ever won a war by dying for his country. He won it by making the other poor dumb bastard die for his country." — Gen. George Patton (R-deceased Commander of 3<sup>rd</sup> Army, WWII)

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