

Making the World Safe for War Profiteers

By [Stephen Lendman](#)

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Theme: [Global Economy](#), [Militarization and WMD](#)

Adam Smith said governments are “instituted for the defense of the rich against the poor.” Wars are waged to make them richer.

Howard Zinn called war “terrorism magnified a hundred times.” Make it many thousands of times.

Michael Parenti said “the best way to win a Nobel Peace Prize (is) to wage war or support those who wage (it) instead of peace.”

In his book titled “[The Face of Imperialism](#),” he discusses a richly financed military/industrial complex. Peter Phillips and Mickey Huff call it the “military-industrial media complex.”

Waging wars requires selling them. Public support is needed. Edward Herman and Noam Chomsky call it “[Manufacturing Consent](#).”

Propaganda works as intended. Minds are manipulated to support war. Truth is suppressed. Fear is stoked. Patriotism, national security, and democratic values are highlighted.

Longstanding US policy facilitates earning obscene amounts from militarism, wars, homeland security, and related operations.

Doing so has nothing to do with external or internal threats. It’s unrelated to spreading democracy. It isn’t about humanitarian intervention.

It about advancing America’s imperium. Parenti calls the process “the most powerful force in world history over the last four or five centuries. (It) “carves up whole continents.”

“(T)he dominant politico-economic interests of one nation expropriate for their own enrichment the land, labor, raw materials, and markets of another people.”

Capitalist imperialism differs from earlier forms. It dominates other economies and political systems. It accumulates enormous amounts of wealth.

It uses money to make more of it. It gains market control. It exploits resources and labor.

According to Marx and Engels:

Bourgeois capital “chases over the whole surface of the globe. It must nestle everywhere, settle everywhere, establish connections everywhere...It creates a world after its own image.”

Societies are destroyed and remade to do it. Nations are pillaged for profit. Populations

become disenfranchised. Workers become serfs. Local cultures become mass-market consumer ones.

Agribusiness replaces local farming. Competitive industries are eliminated. Foreign investment crowds out local capital.

Dominance legitimizes capital's divine right. Plunder assures obscene profits. Capital accumulation demands more. Profiteering becomes a be-all-and-end-all.

Businesses price according to what the market will bear. Profiteers take advantage of emergency or other out-of-ordinary conditions to cash in excessively.

WikiLeaks calls profiteering "a pejorative term for the act of making profit by methods considered unethical."

Price fixing is illegal. Price gouging reflects grabbing all you can. It's charging more than what's considered reasonable and fair.

War profiteers are in a class by themselves. They thrive on war. They depend on it. Their businesses require conflicts and instability to prosper. The more ongoing, the greater the potential profits.

Lot of players profit from wars. Companies develop technologies with military applications. Black marketeers cash in.

Politicians taking campaign contributions, special favors or bribes benefit handsomely. Nations do by acquiring control over territory, resources and exploitable people.

Private military contractors include companies offering a wide range of services. They provide everything from tactical combat to security to consulting to logistics to technical support.

In his book titled "[Halliburton's Army: How a Well-Connected Texas Oil Company Revolutionized the Way America Makes War](#)," Pratap Chatterjee describes a company tainted by sweetheart deal no-bid contacts, bribes, kickbacks, inefficiency, shoddy work, corruption, fraud, gross overcharging, worker exploitation, and other serious offenses.

Other companies operate the same way. Military spending is hugely wasteful. Fraud and abuse are rampant. War is extremely profitable. Why else would so many be waged.

Mercenaries are guns for hire. They're for sale to the highest bidder. They're in it for the money. They're unchecked, unaccountable and unprincipled.

Arms and munitions companies benefit most. Amounts spent are mind-boggling.

Bloomberg says defense budgets "contain hundreds of billions of dollars for new generations of aircraft carriers and stealth fighters, tanks that even the Army says it doesn't need and combat vehicles too heavy to maneuver in desert sands or cross most bridges in Asia, Africa, or the Middle East."

According to BusinessWeek, redundancy wastes lots of money. "One need only spend 10 minutes walking around the Pentagon or any major military headquarters to see" it.

Why doesn't Congress trim fat? Because politicians want lots of pork for constituents. It's a great vote-getter.

BusinessWeek explained more, saying:

"Why is sensible military budgeting so difficult? Because lawmakers, including small-government Republicans, protect defense business in their home states with the ferocity of Spartans."

"Even if the Pentagon offered up (sensible) cuts...Congress would almost certainly reject them."

"The senators and representatives don't have the political courage to face voters and tell them that the republic simply does not need the weapon under construction in their hometown."

Trillions of dollars are spent. Former Defense Secretary Leon Panetta once said DOD "is the only major federal agency that cannot pass an audit today."

Even during October's 16 day shutdown, huge amounts of wasteful spending continued.

Ralph Nader calls now the time to address bloated military spending. Let's "start shutting down the waste and fraud in our military budget," he stresses.

Billions get tossed around mindlessly. Profiteers never had it better. Government watchdogs identify hundreds of billions of potential savings from unneeded weapons, defective ones, no-bid excess, overpayments, and outright fraud.

The [Stockholm International Peace Research Institute](#) (SIPRI) conducts research on security, war and peace.

"A world in which sources of insecurity are identified and understood, conflicts are prevented or resolved, and peace is sustained," it says.

It reports on "recent trends in military expenditure(s)."

Amounts spent are huge. In 2012, nominal [global military spending](#) exceeded \$1.7 trillion. It's around historic highs.

In real terms, it exceeds peak amounts spent during the Cold War. Post-9/11, spending increased sharply. America led the way.

In 2012, [15 nations](#) accounted for over 80% military spending. SIPRI lists them as follows:

America: \$682 billion - 39%

China: \$166 billion - 9.5%

Russia: \$90.7 billion - 5.2%

Britain: \$60.8 billion - 3.5%

Japan: 59.3 billion - 3.4%

France: \$58.9 billion - 3.4%

Saudi Arabia: \$56.7 billion - 3.2%

India: \$46.1 billion - 2.6%

Germany: \$45.8 billion - 2.6%

Italy: \$34 billion - 1.9%

Brazil: \$33.1 billion - 1.9%

South Korea: \$31.7 billion - 1.8%

Australia: \$26.2 billion - 1.5%

Canada: \$22.5 billion - 1.3%

Turkey: \$18.2 billion - 1%

Others 18%

SIPRI calculates nominal military spending. Amounts America spends far exceeds annual defense authorizations.

Other allocations are for the Energy Department, State Department, Department of Veterans Affairs, Homeland Security, Treasury, NASA, military construction, various categories related to security, and interest attributable to past defense outlays.

Black intelligence, Pentagon and other budgets add many tens of billions more. So do supplemental military allocations. Foreign aid is mostly military related.

The [Library of Congress](#) listed the top 10 2012 recipients and amounts as follows:

Israel: \$3.075 billion

Note: Israel gets special benefits provided no other nations.

They include annual \$3 billion + direct appropriations, undisclosed additional amounts, state-of-the-art weapons and technology, billions in loan guarantees, military loans as grants, privileged contracts for Israeli companies, trade exemptions, and more.

Special allocations are buried in various agency budgets. Low or no-interest loans are provided. Some are never repaid. Most often, whatever Israel wants it gets.

Afghanistan: \$2.327 billion

Pakistan: \$2.102 billion

Iraq: \$1.683 billion

Egypt: \$1.557 billion

Jordan: \$676 million

Kenya: \$652 million

Nigeria: \$625 million

Ethiopia: \$580 million

Tanzania: \$531 million

US defense related spending exceeds \$1.5 trillion annually. It's half or more what other nations spend in total.

Militarism defines America. So do permanent wars. They're a national addiction. They're part of the national culture.

Violence is the American way. Wars are glorified. Pacifism is considered sissy. Peace is deplored. Conflicts persist with no end.

War profiteers gorge themselves at the public trough. Their operations thrive on war. They depend on it.

They're waged for profit and dominance. They continue without end. Peace is verboten. It's a convenient illusion.

Howard Zinn once asked "(h)ow can you have a war on terrorism when war itself is terrorism?"

"There is no flag large enough to cover the shame of killing innocent people."

Why most Americans put up with it they'll have to explain. Doing so lets Washington get away with mass murder and then some. It lets war profiteers benefit at our expense.

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