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## **Marketing War: the Incessant Drumbeat of Mortal Danger**

by [Paul Atwood](#)



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The claim that the national security of the United States requires that more than half the nation's discretionary budget must be devoted to the maintenance of armies, global strategic bases and massive armaments is false. Until we can convince the majority of the public of this fiction, and surmount the wall of disinformation, nothing will change and we will continue down the road to a hellish future.

This statement of course contradicts the incessant indoctrination emanating from Washington and the corporate media that U.S. foreign policy is devoted to the maintenance of global peace and a "liberal" and just world order in the face of enemies who wish to destroy that order. The facts controvert such declarations yet to emphasize them is to be accused of disloyalty, a lack of patriotism, and conspiracy mongering.

The U.S. propaganda system relentlessly broadcasts the malevolent machinations of Russia, Iran or North Korea or Syria and China as well as of armed gangs like ISIS, al Qaeda and the Taliban. The drumbeat that mortal danger is on our doorstep is so ceaseless and all-encompassing that the public either accepts the claims as true or remains blind to very real dangers posed by our government's own militarized policies that call forth various forms of opposition to those policies.

The reality is that all of the wars, assassinations, and coups carried out by Washington of the last half century have been matters of choice based not on genuine threats to our national security but on jeopardy to the profits of giant arms manufacturers and their allies- the so-called military industrial complex that extends its tentacles into every major institution in American life—Congress, the CIA,

the media and universities. The complex requires at the very least the implied threat of war to ensure its existence.

How many citizens are aware that at the end of World War II the chief of wartime production exclaimed that the country needed a “permanent war economy.” His rationale centered on the fact that in the absence of massive war production, and the guaranteed profits that flowed from war contracts, numerous corporations that had grown to gargantuan proportions would suddenly be bankrupted. There was also the problem of millions of returning veterans who would be in no mood to stand in bread lines again. Since a permanent war economy required a permanent enemy Washington hawks duly asserted that the nation needed a “national security state” and a renamed Department of War to contain the new purported threat to global peace and security, namely the Soviet Union and international communism. The reality was that the USSR was extremely weakened by its overwhelming losses in the war and posed no military threat anywhere and was relatively easily contained. So unthreatening was the world environment in reality that Washington deliberately chose war in Korea to set the permanent warfare state in motion. Secretary of State Dean Acheson was even heard to exclaim “Thank God, Korea came along” in gratitude that he could then salvage the tripling of the so-called defense budget.

Understand that both world wars were emerging well before widespread and all-out conflict erupted. The Great Game was the same then as it is now and always revolves around the issue of which nation and which national oligarchy is to profit most from the control of resources, markets and access to the cheapest sources of labor at the expense of rivals. Massive arms races co-evolved with this economic competition and soon led to worldwide conflagration. As the world fractures into ultra-nationalism yet again, and mutual distrust and suspicion intensifies, it is no exaggeration to warn that our very species is at stake

Total defense spending since 9-11 has more than *doubled* almost to a trillion dollars annually. Thus as accelerated arms spending has coupled with bellicose policies masquerading as “defense,” we witness that alleged adversaries and enemies have *quadrupled*. Since 9-11 military operations employing the latest and most expensive high-tech weapons began in Afghanistan and have since spread to Iraq to Libya to Syria to Yemen and to various nations in Africa. The U.S. maintains more than 800 military bases around the world, American naval fleets patrol all oceans, and U.S. troops and missiles are now in many eastern European nations including on the *very borders of Russia itself*. Only the other day Kay Bailey Hutchison, ambassador to NATO, declared that the U.S. should “take out” certain missiles in Russia. Last week reports surfaced that American B-52 bombers are overflying areas in the South China Sea claimed by China. This week a U.S. Navy destroyer entered the same area, thereby deliberately increasing tensions with that growing superpower. Meanwhile the beneficiaries of investments in the arms industries, like Massachusetts own Raytheon corporation, enjoy ever fast-tracked profits from missiles rained down on Yemen. They quite literally are making a killing from killing.

Mounting public pressure against Washington’s support for the illegal Saudi war against Yemen almost led to the de-certification of the pending sale of 120,000 precision-guided missiles by Raytheon to the Saudis and United Arab Emirates. The *Wall Street Journal* recently revealed that the Acting Assistant Secretary of State, was a longtime lobbyist for Raytheon, and played a key role in salvaging this two billion dollar arms deal for the company.

In the aftermath of the depression of 2008 the Federal Reserve Bank injected trillions of dollars fabricated out of thin air into the largest banks including those that had caused the financial breakdown, and which then refused to loan it to ordinary Americans who had been ruined by the crisis and who needed it most. How much of the nation’s \$13.2 trillion of household debt could have been remedied with such a sum or the \$1.5 trillion in unsustainable student debt? Such an amount could have financed free college, universal health care, federal jobs programs, aid for underwater mortgages, and clean energy and many more socially necessary projects. The reprehensible existence of mass homelessness and hungry children could be resolved.

A government dominated by the merchants of death drains the lifeblood of civil society, and portends another economic collapse, and ultimately threatens all with global war.

Until we can persuade the public to face these harsh facts honestly nothing will change. The stakes are nothing less than critical.