Rethinking the Military-Industrial Complex

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"What if the object [of analysis] is irrational? What if events are being willed by no single causative historical logic ('the increasingly aggressive military posture of world imperialism,' etc.)—a logic which then may be analyzed in terms of origins, intentions, or goals, contradictions or conjunctures—but are simply the product of messy inertia? This inertia may have drifted down to us as a collocation of fragmented forces (political and military formations, ideological imperatives, weapons technologies)… " Edward Thompson, "Notes on Exterminism, the Last Stage of Civilization," *New Left Review* 121, May/June 1980, p.7.

Peace activists long have used the term "military-industrial complex" for purposes both analytical and polemical. The concept was brought to prominence at the height of the Cold War by one of the preeminent architects of the immense constellations of institutions it describes, U.S. general and president Dwight D. Eisenhower. But like those institutions, the concept of the military-industrial complex has drifted down to us as much by inertia as by volition, a tool picked up when convenient, but seldom sharpened, modified, re-tooled.

In the post-Cold War period, peace and disarmament advocates have sought to build broader coalitions by stressing the diversion of resources from human needs to military spending and by highlighting the ability of military-industrial complex organizations to deploy their economic power to sustain spending on armaments and a militarized foreign policy. These efforts had little success. We are now in a time clearly distinguishable from the immediate post-Cold War period, one characterized by the relative decline of U.S. power, the rise or resurgence of its nuclear-armed adversaries, and a climate of intense international economic and geopolitical competition in a fragile, crisis-ridden global economy. If the concept of the military-industrial complex is to be useful, it must be re-thought in this moment. This would be a major undertaking, requiring the work of many; I can do no more in this piece than to suggest some relevant questions and considerations.

The U.S. military-industrial complex has been portrayed as diverting resources from human needs, shaping the path of technology and economic development in ways that make it less democratic and less ecologically sustainable, and increasing the risk of war. The ability of military-industrial complex institutions to do all this has been attributed to their economic power and its deployment in a money-driven political system, although some critics highlight their ideological influence as well. The national laboratories, arms contractors, and universities that constitute the "civilian" side of the complex long have been seen as occupying the commanding heights of the economy, conducting cutting edge research, skimming off the best resources, and spinning off products that sparked waves of civilian technology development, from passenger aircraft to semiconductors to the internet. The U.S. military-industrial complex also is seen as a primary tool for risky long-term technology investment, planning, and macroeconomic

management in a country whose political classes seldom acknowledge the need for any such public functions.

All of this has been true—but to different degrees at different times. The massive armed bureaucracies, military industries, and supporting intellectual apparatus we refer to as the military industrial complex have been with us for three-quarters of a century, spanning the rise of U.S. military power to its apex and the beginnings of its decline. Its birth preceded and helped to engender and sustain the Cold War, but it survived both the Cold War's end and a period, quite brief in retrospect, of ideological disarray in a "post-Cold-War" era now definitively in the past. The era of the military-industrial complex also has encompassed the rise of the U.S. economy to its greatest heights in technology leadership, manufacturing capacity, and dominance of international markets—and its decline as well, now more pronounced than the waning of U.S. military preeminence.

The role of the military-industrial complex could not have remained the same through all this. While the long-term role of the military-industrial complex in shaping the economy is important, the most urgent task of this moment is, once again as it was during the Cold War, reducing the near-term risk of war among nuclear-armed great powers. So the question we must ask is whether invoking the "military-industrial complex" and focusing on profit-driven interests and direct, money-driven political influence should continue to be so strongly emphasized in organizing for peace, or whether doing so ignores other important aspects of this moment.

Periodicizing the Military Industrial Complex

We must consider that the military-industrial complex has developed through at least four distinct phases. The first was that constructed by the society-wide effort of World War II. This military-industrial complex centered on assembly line mass production, employing tens of millions to produce hundreds of thousands of airplanes, vehicles, and watercraft to support millions of soldiers. It also initiated the age of massive, institutionalized government-funded research and development, of which the atomic bomb project was only the leading example. After a post-war lull, the Cold War military-industrial complex continued to mass produce weapons systems to serve military forces with millions under arms, while at the same time conducting a nuclear arms race served and driven by a complex of government, corporate, and university research efforts. U.S. political leaders used military spending as a tool of post-war economic management, and initiated immense infrastructure projects like the interstate highway system in the name of national defense. This was Eisenhower's military-industrial complex. It reached peak levels of activity and spending during the Korean and Vietnam Wars, when the United States was both conducting large-scale land wars and continuing to develop and expand a massive nuclear arsenal.

The second phase came after the brief post-Vietnam period of detente between the United States and the Soviet Union. The United States ramped up arms research and production again at the beginning of the 1980s, developing new generations of nuclear weapons and delivery systems and pursuing a variety of technologies for ballistic missile defense. The U.S.S.R. responded in kind, to the extent that it was capable. During this period, the vast network of

weapons laboratories and factories, already entrenched for decades, seemed to drive the arms race in a way not reducible to the financial interests of the arms makers, the ideologies of the competing superpowers, or the long-term thrust of U.S. expansion as the world's dominant economic power. Edward Thompson wrote as the decade began:

> Viewed in this way, the USA and the USSR do not have military-industrial complexes: they are such complexes. The 'leading sector' (weapons-systems and their supports) does not occupy a vast societal space, and official secrecy encourages low visibility; but it stamps its priorities on the society as a whole. It also inflects the direction of growth.[1]

Despite the immense momentum of the Cold War arms race and the apparent dominance by the military-industrial complex of the commanding heights of the economy, military spending as a percentage of gross domestic product already was on the downslope, with the highest level of spending in the 1980s never matching the 1950s and 1960s peaks.[2] This decline stemmed from a variety of factors, including economic growth that diminished the relative share of military expenditures. Other significant developments during this period included the substitution of significantly smaller numbers of more complex, capable ships, aircraft, and military vehicles and smaller uniformed forces for the mass armies and mass-produced machines of World War II through Vietnam. This period also saw a notable consolidation of the armaments industry into smaller numbers of larger, more diversified firms.

The collapse of the Soviet Union and its alliance system deprived the immense, permanently mobilized military apparatus of its main *raison d'etre*. The end of the Cold War brought a decade of military budgets below Cold War levels even in absolute terms, further diminishing the military-industrial complex economic share. This period was characterized by further consolidation of the arms industry, now dominated by a small number of very large firms. During this brief interregnum the organizations of the military industrial complex were in ideological disarray. This constituted a distinct third phase of the military-industrial complex, lasting until the September 11, 2001 attacks, which triggered the resurgence of spending for conventional armaments and expanded forces to fight a shifting array of wars of occupation and counter-insurgency on a global scale.

It could be argued that the post-9/11 fourth iteration of the military-industrial complex has two sub-phases, or perhaps that we are moving into a new and distinct fifth phase. During the early 2000s the U.S. military was focused on the classic problems of managing a far-flung empire: how to prevail against greater numbers of less-organized adversaries in many locales by employing advantages in mobility, communications, surveillance, and firepower, at a cost politically acceptable at home. At some point since, no later than the Obama administration's "Pacific pivot" and the onset of the Ukraine war, U.S. national security state elites and the military-industrial complex have once again begun to prepare in earnest for direct confrontations with other nuclear-armed great powers.

Rethinking the Military-Industrial Complex

The return of great power tensions and strategic arms racing, however, does not mean the reemergence of a U.S. military-industrial complex that much resembles any of its past versions.

Too much has changed in the armed forces and armaments deployed by the most powerful states. Even more has changed, perhaps, in the structure of the global economy, and the role and relative economic power of the United States. All of this affects the capacity of the United States to sustain its military dominance. But it also may affect the relative power of the military-industrial complex in the U.S. economy and polity, and the ability of U.S. elites to use the military-industrial complex effectively as a tool for technology development and economic management. These changes are of such magnitude and complexity that they can only be sketched here.

From the 1970s onward, military spending as a percentage of gross domestic product has trended steadily downward, reaching a low of about 3 percent in the late 1990s. The military budget increased drastically in the 2000s, almost doubling as a percentage of GDP during the post-9/11 "war on terror" military buildup and the invasions and occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan, but still never matching peak Cold War shares of the U.S. economy.

Reductions of the military budget during the 1990s were accompanied by an acceleration of consolidation in the arms industry, and also by several rounds of closures of U.S. domestic military bases.[3] Both reduced the pervasive geographic and economic presence of the military and the arms industry. The professionalization of the armed forces and changes in military technology resulted in smaller forces equipped with smaller numbers of more capable, complex, and expensive weapons systems. Due to long-term developments stretching back to the latter phases of the Cold War, the budget increases during the 2000s did not bring an expansion in the domestic footprint of the military-industrial complex. It did, however, spawn a new array of foreign bases large and small to fight the decades-long "small wars" and covert counterinsurgency campaigns of the "War on Terror."

The declining military-industrial complex share of the economy may also mean it will have less impact as a leading sector in technology development and as a tool for management of the economy as a whole. The Defense Department's role in scientific research and in technology research and development has declined significantly since the Cold War.[4] Research and technology development benefits from proximity with manufacturing facilities in related industries. Off-shoring of U.S. manufacturing has reduced the opportunities for such synergies. In addition, off-shoring of manufacturing means that innovations flowing from military-related research and development are less likely to create domestic manufacturing jobs.[5]

Attempts to use military spending as a means for macroeconomic management, and particularly to create jobs throughout the economy, seem likely to be less successful than in the past. In an increasingly polarized global and domestic economy, older, smaller industrial centers and rural hinterlands have been largely left behind. More components of expensive, high-tech weapons systems are likely to be purchased from enterprises clustered in the metropolitan areas where the newer technology industries have developed, areas already well-integrated into an increasingly insular top tier of global trade and investment. New areas of military spending, such as private contracting in intelligence and information technologies, also are likely to be concentrated in successfully "globalized" cities. It seems unlikely that military spending in the old industrial heartlands will diffuse far beyond the immediate locales of military bases and

industries with plants and supply chains long-established in particular regions. And while the more diversified and globalized metropolitan areas may be the recipients of a significant amount of military spending, it constitutes a smaller slice of their economies.

There are some counter-trends. The general decline in U.S. manufacturing may mean that military-related industries will continue to play an outsize role in that sector. It also is important to note that foreign military sales always have played a key role in the U.S. armaments industry. Foreign sales typically are more profitable than domestic military contracting, and also somewhat counter-cyclical, helping to keep production lines open and companies profitable when U.S. military acquisitions dip.[6] The expansion of quasi-military "homeland security" functions ranging from pervasive surveillance to the militarization of state and local police both provides additional outlets for military-grade technologies and integrates internal security more closely with the military. It seems unlikely, however, that these latter developments are primarily driven by the political or market power of the military-industrial complex. Rather, they likely are a consequence of elite demands for more state repression capacity in a society characterized by growing polarization of wealth, top-down attacks on an already-threadbare welfare state, and a political system dominated by big money.

There are also countertrends shaped by the interplay of the distinctive political geography of the United States and its changing economic landscape. In rural areas and older, secondary industrial zones, military bases and arms factories may be among the few enterprises that provide hope for economic growth and for stable, decent-paying jobs that are not easily off-shored. The rounds of base closures in the 1990s and early 2000s further concentrated U.S. active military bases in the Southeast.[7] The structure of the U.S. Congress and the electoral college gives disproportionate weight to states with low population, and years of Republican domination of state politics have allowed them to craft safe districts where they are strong—which includes many encompassing military bases and arms facilities. All of this likely gives the military-industrial complex additional weight in the political process, mitigating the decline of its purely economic significance. It also contributes to the polarization and deadlock of US politics, and provides a staunch long-term base for those who would appeal to nationalism and militarism.

Trump's views on the military cryptically reflect these developments. His positions were perhaps less designed than discovered on the campaign trail. Trump's main political skill is an intuitive grasp of the anger of crowds. His disconnected, fragmentary style of speech and thought makes a particular kind of sense in the context of a mass rally of adoring supporters. He drifts memes over his audience to see what gets a rise, and then a roar. During the campaign and after Trump thrived in the kinds of places where the military-industrial complex is strong—but also where the human impacts of the decades-long wars are felt, the accumulating stream of the dead and the greater, hidden toll of the gravely injured and disabled. In these interactions we can see the roots of Trump's contradictory pronouncements on military matters, promising immense expenditures for forces and arms, while bemoaning the cost in blood and treasure of the actual wars the U.S. has been fighting for a quarter century. All of this is rendered even less coherent by an overlay of crude nationalism, impulsivity, and an obsession with his personal fortunes above all else.

On the surface, the power of the U.S. military-industrial complex appears undiminished. Trump's initial staff and cabinet choices suggest a thoroughly militarized foreign policy. Trump chose career military officers as Defense Secretary, National Security Advisor, and White House Chief of Staff, positions most commonly held by civilians. He appointed executives from weapons contractors to key posts in the Defense Department, including top executives from Lockheed Martin, Boeing, Raytheon, and Textron.[8] Trump's pick to run the Energy Department, which designs and builds U.S. nuclear bombs and warheads, Rick Perry, a former Texas governor, had so little relevant experience that prior to his nomination he didn't know the Energy Department was responsible for maintaining the nuclear stockpile, and previously had called for the department's elimination.[9] With no informed leadership at the top, nuclear weapons policy will come virtually unfiltered from the long-term inhabitants of the nuclear weapons complex, led by the laboratories at Livermore and Los Alamos. This is reflected in Trump's February 2018 Nuclear Posture Review, which expanded Obama's already ambitious modernization program to include new low-yield nuclear weapons options.

There also is no significant opposition to massive military expenditures in the U.S. Congress. Amidst the growing political chaos surrounding the Trump presidency, the willingness of a majority of both parties in Congress to increase military spending virtually without limit was the main force impelling the February 2018 deal raising spending ceilings for both domestic and military programs, authorizing military budgets of $700 billion and $716 billion for this fiscal year and the next.[10]

The Task Before Us

If we are to form effective strategies to prevent wars and to move towards a more peaceful, fair, and ecologically sustainable global society, we must do more than merely describe the power of the military-industrial complex. We must try to understand its role in this particular moment—its weaknesses and irrationalities as well as its economic and political strength. We also must consider whether the "military-industrial complex" is as defining a feature of this moment as many thought it to be during the Cold War—or whether other drivers of war have as much or more weight.

Today, as has been the case since the end of the Cold War, the military-industrial complex appears in U.S. political discourse most often as a "guns vs. butter" argument. Peace and disarmament groups hoping to build larger coalitions try to connect to environmental and social justice movements by comparing military expenditures to social spending. We must consider the possibility, however, that organizations looking for ways to increase public spending for the environment and human needs might see other, less challenging opportunities to redirect resources. Restructuring the health care system so that its share of GDP is close to that of other wealthy countries, for example, could free up close to a trillion dollars annually, equal to the more expansive estimates of total military spending.[11] A very modest financial transactions tax, sufficiently mainstream to have been included in a Congressional Budget Office list of revenue options, would raise more than $70 billion per year—far more than the estimated annual cost of maintaining and modernizing the U.S. nuclear arsenal.[12] The recent round of tax cuts

were a political choice to reduce federal revenues by more than twice that amount, about $146 billion annually over the next decade.[13]

The constellations of organizations that benefit from maintaining the status quo in these areas of government policy no doubt would resist. But environmental and social justice campaigners appear to feel that taking them on is more feasible that confronting the military establishment and the national security state. It seems likely that many who work on environmental and social justice issues believe that addressing even the relatively narrow issue of military spending is likely to alienate supporters, weakening rather than strengthening their coalitions. The reason for this is that the United States, after three-quarters of a century of permanent mobilization for war, has fallen into the grips of full-blown militarism. As Alfred Vagts framed it in his classic history of the phenomenon, militarism "covers every system of thinking and valuing and every complex of feelings which rank military institutions and ways above the ways of civilian life, carrying military mentality and modes of acting and decision into the civilian sphere."[14] Polling data consistently shows that Americans have more trust and confidence in the military than in any other public or private institution.[15] But one does not need to turn to polling data to see that is so. Quasi-religious worship of all things military is omnipresent in American society, from overflights of military aircraft at premier sporting events to pervasive advertising tropes to the ritual celebration of The Troops by politicians of all stripes and the playing of the military card to trump all arguments in contexts ranging from the federal budget to racial injustice.[16]

If we want to move the United States towards a more peaceful path, we need to find ways to directly address this deeply entrenched militarism, which is the domestic ideological face both of the military-industrial complex and of a hegemonic foreign policy long underwritten by military force. We also need to make honest economic arguments; we cannot, for example, suggest to people clinging to military-industrial complex enterprises and jobs in regions otherwise abandoned by the top-tier organizations of private capital and the State that a better future for them requires anything less than a profound transformation of the economy as a whole.

The problem is not that we must choose between guns and butter. The monies spent on armaments pale in comparison to the quantities accumulated by the top tier of wealthy organizations across the rest of a relatively lightly regulated economy with a weak welfare state. The choice we face is between the path we are on and a society that is fair, humane, and sustainable. The root of the connections between a movement for peace and against militarism and other movements is not that too much is spent on the military, but that an economy whose animating principle is endless competition for wealth among immense, authoritarian organizations is inimical to democracy, justice, and the ecological requisites of human survival. The risk of war among great powers in a nuclear-armed world poses an existential threat to humanity. We must find a way to talk about these fundamental realities in a way that works in this moment, in this place.

Edward Thompson saw the immediate danger of catastrophic war in the 1980s as rooted in the Cold War confrontation in Europe. He advocated strategies first to mitigate that tension, and eventually to bring it to a close. Rather than concentrating narrowly on the economic roots of

the military-industrial complex, he thought it useful in that moment to highlight the dangers of its inexorable thrust towards disaster, while assembling broad coalitions to oppose particularly dangerous developments, such as the deployment of intermediate range cruise and ballistic missiles in Europe. Thompson also stressed the crucial role of an internationalism grounded in people-to-people connections across the frontiers of a divided continent, in both reducing tensions and eroding the ideological underpinnings of both sides of the Cold War. By doing so, he hoped to contribute to the ending of the Cold War, and the opening up of the space for a new politics that might democratize both the polities of the East and the economies of the West. Thompson was correct, at least in the immediate result. The collapse of the Soviet Union brought an end to that era of superpower confrontation, and to the nuclear danger of that time. His hopes for deeper change, however, proved unfounded, swept away in the long wave of capitalist triumphalism that prevailed until the system-wide collapse of 2008.

This time around, the task of holding off catastrophe may be more difficult. The impetus provided by the residual power of the military-industrial complex augmented by increased military spending under Trump is only one vector pushing towards war. There are reasons to believe that other factors play a stronger, more immediate role. Competition for resources and markets is reminiscent of early 20th century struggles among great powers, another moment when a long round of industrial expansion, accumulation and concentration of wealth, and globalization of trade and investment reached its limits. The opening of the old Communist bloc countries as a frontier offering new markets and cheap skilled labor was a factor keeping great power conflict in abeyance in the immediate post-Cold War period. So too was the relative weakness of the ruling strata in Russia and China amidst the ideological and economic disruption that followed the collapse of the Soviet Union. But today, ruling elites in both countries are seeking to assert a greater degree of control over both their own economies and their near abroad.

The contradictory dynamics underlying the current state of the U.S. military-industrial complex reflect a deeper mismatch between the power of a still-dominant U.S. military and a U.S. economy in relative decline. It is this more fundamental disjuncture that seems likely to impel dangerous behavior by the ruling economic and political classes in the United States. Rulers who believe their country has reached its apex and is declining relative to its principal adversaries may be tempted to push their waning military advantage to the utmost, risking wars if not starting them intentionally.[17]

Even after Trump is gone, the forces that brought him to power will remain. The increased difficulty for those who rule in the United States of extracting their customary wealth share from the global economy while distributing enough to maintain domestic peace is leading to riskier political strategies at home. The creep of blood-and-soil nationalism from the political margins to center stage may reflect an anxiety about U.S. decline among growing numbers of its elites. The polarization of wealth, the erosion of democracy, and the ceaseless attacks on social protections provide an enormous well of resentment to draw upon. Militarism and extreme nationalism provide ideological resources to displace this rage while justifying repression at home and more confrontational policies abroad.

The acuteness of this danger is open to debate. Both Russia and China face daunting obstacles in their own development paths, including unprecedented problems posed by global resource limits and ecological decline. This may mean that military and political leadership in the United States will see the challenges they pose as less pressing, containable with relatively cautious policies. But it also raises the risk of a fatal collision, particularly in the event of another global economic downturn that might tempt all their leaderships to deploy nationalist and militarist strategies that once again displace blame outward, justify repression, and place masses of discontented young people under military discipline.

The work of understanding today's military-industrial complex is only beginning, and must be undertaken with an eye to informing the strategies we need. Much is different from the Cold War moment, but certain grim similarities remain. We must recognize that preventing catastrophic war once again must be our main priority. Trump's ascendance has served only to remind us of the peril we face. The central unchanging reality of military industrial complexes is permanent mobilization for war of potentially civilization-destroying magnitude. As both Thompson and C. Wright Mills told us long ago, "'the immediate cause of World War III is the preparation of it.'"[18] Not one more nickel needs be spent on bases, forces, or modernized nuclear weapons to put in place the mechanism for our collective annihilation; it is already there.

Notes

* Andrew Lichterman is a Senior Research Analyst at the Western States Legal Foundation. Some material in this paper appeared under the title "Der militärisch-industrielle Komplex" in *Wissenschaft und Frieden* 1/2018

[1] Edward Thompson, "Notes on Exterminism, the Last Stage of Civilization," *New Left Review* 121, May/June 1980, p.23

[2] See U.S. Department of Defense, *National Defense Budget Estimates for FY 2018,* August 2017, Table 7-7: Defense Shares of Economic and Budgetary Aggregates, p.252. These figures arguably do not reflect the full cost of military spending as a portion of the U.S. economy, but likely are reliable concerning the trend of total expenditures as a share of the larger economy. For an accounting of current military more broadly defined, encompassing, for example, foreign military assistance, costs of veterans programs, and the military portions of homeland security spending, see William Hartung, "A Guide to Trump's $1 Trillion Defense Bill," *The Nation,* July 25, 2017.

[3] The consolidation of the U./S. arms industry began during the Cold War, one effect of the trend towards fewer, more complex and capable weapons systems, and accelerated after the fall of the Soviet Union. See Tarja Cronberg, Anders Aeroe, and Eric Seem, *Technological Powers in Transition: Defense Conversion in Russia and the U.S. 1991-1994* (Copenhagen: Afademisk Forlag A/S, 1996) pp.94 et seq.

[4] "A workforce with robust science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) capabilities is critical to sustaining U.S. preeminence. Today, however, the activities of the Department of Defense (DOD) devoted to science, technology, engineering, and mathematics are a small and diminishing part of the nation's overall science and engineering enterprise. One consequence is that DOD cannot significantly impact the nation's overall STEM workforce—and therefore, with a few exceptions, DOD should focus its limited resources on fulfilling its own special requirements for STEM talent." Committee on Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics Workforce Needs for the U.S. Department of Defense and the U.S. Defense Industrial Base; Division on Engineering and Physical Sciences; Board on Higher Education and Workforce; Policy and Global Affairs; National

Academy of Engineering; National Research Council, *Assuring the U.S. Department of Defense a Strong Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Workforce* (Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press, 2012), p.1.

[5] On these trends, see Linda Weiss, *America Inc.? Innovation and Enterprise in the National Security State (*Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2014), pp.203-207.

[6] Ann Markusen and Joel Yudken, *Dismantling the War Economy* (New York: Basic Books, 1992), pp. 79, 211.

[7] Chris Kromm, "Base Closings and the South," *Facing South,* May 13, 2005

[8] William D. Hartung and Catherine Lutz, "The Military Budget and the Costs of War: The Coming Trump Storm," Costs of War Project, Watson Institute, Brown University, April 12, 2017 http://watson.brown.edu/costsofwar/files/cow/imce/4.12%20Hartung%20Lutz_Military%20Budget%20and%20the%20Costs%20of%20War.pdf; See Harry Blain, "2017 Was a Banner Year for the Arms Industry," *Foreign Policy in Focus,* December 19, 2017, http://fpif.org/2017-banner-year-arms-industry/

[9] Coral Davenport, "Rick Perry Regrets Call to Close Energy Department," *The New York Times,* January 19, 2017.

[10] See Seamus P. Daniels and Todd Harrison, "Making Sense of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018 and What It Means for Defense," Center for International and Strategic Studies, February 20, 2018, https://www.csis.org/analysis/making-sense-bipartisan-budget-act-2018-and-what-it-means-defense; regarding the FY2019 budget level see also Letter, Nick Mulvaney, Director, Office of Management and Budget, to Paul Ryan, Speaker of the House of Representatives, regarding addenda to the FY2019 President's Budget request, Febrary, 12, 2017, https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/Addendum-to-the-FY-2019-Budget.pdf

[11] The United States devotes about 17% of GDP to health care spending, Germany 11.3%, France 11.5%, and Canada 10.4%. World Bank Data, Table, Health expenditure, total (% of GDP), derived from World Health Organization Global Health Expenditure database, https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SH.XPD.TOTL.ZS accessed February 1, 2018. U.S. GDP is about $19.7 Trillion. A reduction of 5% of GDP in U.S. health care spending—still leaving levels of expenditure above that of comparable countries—would reduce health care spending by about $985 billion. This is comparable to the more inclusive accounts of U.S. military spending; see, e.g., William Hartung, "A Guide to Trump's $1 Trillion Defense Bill," *The Nation,* July 25, 2017.

[12] Congressional Budget Office, "Impose a Tax on Financial Transactions," Options for Reducing the Deficit: 2017 to 2026, Revenues Option 41, December 8, 2016, https://www.cbo.gov/budget-options/2016/52287. The CBO estimate is based on a financial transactions tax of .1 percent of security value. The $70 billion per year revenue estimate is conservative; the CBO estimates that it would take several years of market adjustment for revenues from the tax to stabilize at around $100 billion or more per annually.

The CBO estimates that sustaining and modernizing U.S. nuclear forces will cost $1.2 trillion over 30 years, or about $40 billion annually. They estimate the modernization component of this spending at about $400 billon, or $13.3 billion annually. See U.S. Congressional Budget Office, "Approaches for Managing the Costs of U.S. Nuclear Forces, 2017 to 2046,", October 2017, p.1 https://www.cbo.gov/system/files/115th-congress-2017-2018/reports/53211-nuclearforces.pdf.

[13] See U.S. Congress, Joint Committee on Taxation, "Macroeconomic Analysis of the Conference Agreement for H.R.1, The 'Tax Cuts and Jobs Act,'" December 22, 2017, p.1.

[14] Alfred Vagts, *A History of Militarism* (Meridian Books, rev. ed. 1959) p.17.

[15] "Americans have given the military the highest confidence rating of any institution in American society for nearly two decades. Asked to explain these positive views, Americans cite their perceptions of the professional and competent way in which the military has executed its responsibilities, followed by a focus on the importance of what the military does for the country." Frank Newport, "U.S. Confidence in Military Reflects Perceived Competency,"

Gallup News, July 27, 2017. http://news.gallup.com/poll/214511/high-confidence-military-reflects-perceived-competency.aspx

[16] see, e.g., Donald Trump invoking the military in his attacks on National Football League players who engaged in silent protests for racial justice during the national anthem:

> "I don't think you can disrespect our country, our flag, our national anthem," Trump said. "Many people have died," he added, referring to fallen military members.
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> "Many people are so horribly injured," he added, before recalling a recent visit to Walter Reed National Military Medical Center.
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> "I saw so many great young people and they are missing legs and they're missing arms and they're so badly injured. They were fighting for our country, they were fighting for our flag, they were fighting for our national anthem," Trump said.
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> "For people to disrespect that by kneeling during the playing of national anthem I think is disgraceful," he said.
> Adam Edelman, "Trump: I 'Felt Ashamed' After 'Disgraceful' NFL Protests," NBC News online, September 26, 2017 https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/donald-trump/trump-i-felt-ashamed-after-disgraceful-nfl-protests-n804901

[17] This a view held by some international relations theorists of the realist school. See generally Dale C. Copeland, *The Origins of Major War* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2000). International relations realism does sometimes stray into the realm of self-fulfilling prophecy, but the dangers it identifies are nonetheless often real ones. This is perhaps true in part because, as one critic of IR theory remarked, IR realism can best be understood as "a theoretical articulation of the spontaneous ideology of state managers." Alex Callinicos, in Alex Callinicos and Justin Rosenberg, "Uneven and combined development: the social-relational substratum of 'the international'? An exchange of letters," Cambridge Review of International Affairs, 21:1 (2008), 77 – 112, 83-84.

[18] Edward Thompson, "Notes on Exterminism, the Last Stage of Civilization," *New Left Review* 121, May/June 1980, p.22, quoting C. Wright Mills, *The Causes of World War III,* New York 1958, p.47.