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NATIONAL THE COST OF AMERICAN MILITARISM INSECURITY

MELVIN A. GOODMAN



NATIONAL INSECURITY

The Cost of American Militarism

Melvin A. Goodman



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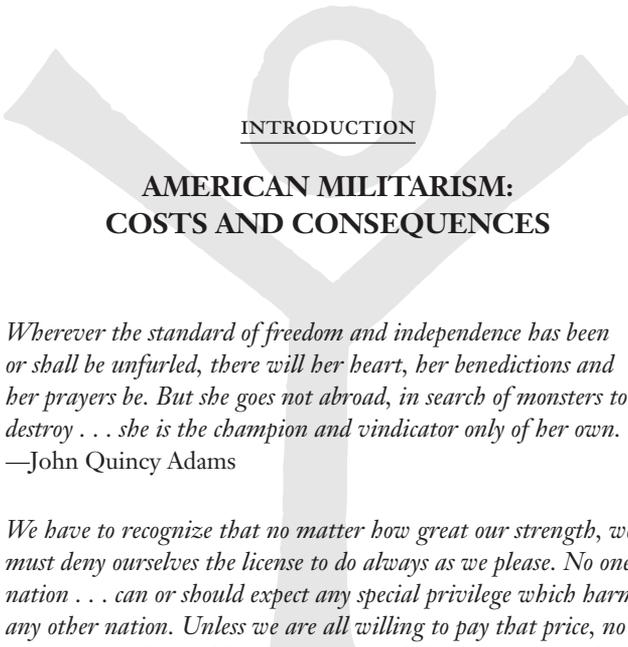
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INTRODUCTION

**AMERICAN MILITARISM:
COSTS AND CONSEQUENCES**

Wherever the standard of freedom and independence has been or shall be unfurled, there will her heart, her benedictions and her prayers be. But she goes not abroad, in search of monsters to destroy . . . she is the champion and vindicator only of her own.
—John Quincy Adams

We have to recognize that no matter how great our strength, we must deny ourselves the license to do always as we please. No one nation . . . can or should expect any special privilege which harms any other nation. Unless we are all willing to pay that price, no organization for world peace can accomplish its purpose. And what a reasonable price that is! —President Harry S. Truman

We in the United States have created a land of illusion. We have the world's best medical facilities, but also its highest medical costs, and we still lack genuine universal health care coverage. Our costs for entitlements such as Medicare and Social Security are out of control, but we are unwilling to discuss reform. Our corporations and the wealthy classes pay the lowest taxes in the industrial world, but we adamantly oppose raising tax rates that could alleviate one-quarter to one-third of our deficit problem. We have the most expensive and lethal military force in the world, but we face no existential threat; nonetheless, liberals and conservatives alike declare the defense budget sacrosanct.

A reasonable reduction in the amount of money we spend on defense would enable us to reduce our debt and invest in the peaceful progress and development of a civilian economy.

The United States has the most secure geopolitical environment of any major nation, but sustains a defense budget that equals the combined budgets of the rest of the world. Cuts in the defense budget over the next five years, announced in January 2012, were extremely modest, amounting to a minuscule 1 percent real cut when factoring in inflation. The cuts in Army and Marine personnel over a five-year period ending in 2017 will leave these services larger than they were in 2005. The mere lowering of recruitment quotas and the retirement of officers and noncommissioned officers will cover the modest reduction of the 92,000 troops.

Those who criticize even these modest reductions fail to recognize that, over the past two decades, the Cold War has ended and the greatest strategic threat to the United States—the Soviet Union—has dissolved. Nevertheless, we barricade ourselves behind a national missile defense, fight wars in which no vital national security interests are at stake, and post hundreds of thousands of troops overseas. U.S. nuclear forces, which have no utilitarian value, remain the same, although President Obama persistently claims to support arms control and disarmament. The United States has become that militarized nation that President Dwight D. Eisenhower presciently warned against in his farewell address more than fifty years ago.

The United States lacks a strategic vision for a world without an enemy, and it continues to spend far more on defense, homeland security, and intelligence than the rest of the world combined. We are the only nation in the world that deploys its military primarily to support foreign policy rather than to defend our borders and people. U.S. corporations dominate the sales of military equipment, selling extremely sophisticated

weapons to countries such as Saudi Arabia that have the hard currency to pay for them but lack the skill to use them. We have more than 700 military bases and facilities around the world; few other countries have any. We can deploy eleven aircraft carriers; among our rivals only China even plans to deploy one—and that is a revamped Ukrainian aircraft carrier, a carryover from the ancient Soviet inventory.

U.S. militarization, reliance on the military to pursue foreign policy objectives better achieved by other means, has continued to expand since the end of the Cold War, when we might have expected and experienced a peace dividend. Military expansion during the Cold War, especially during peaks in the U.S. arms buildup against the Soviets and during the Vietnam War, at least had as its rationale the spectre of an aggressive Soviet Union. The administrations of Bill Clinton, George W. Bush, and Barack Obama, facing no existential threat, have given the Pentagon an unprecedented position of power and influence, including huge increases in defense spending and a dominant voice in the making of national security and foreign policies. The key contributions to the Pentagon's enhanced role have been President Bush's doctrine of preemptive attack and the permanent War on Terror, or the Long War; the misuse of power in Iraq; and President Obama's initial expansion of the war in Afghanistan. The Bush and Obama administrations have made sure that military figures dominate national security positions, and both administrations have failed to use the tools of diplomacy to deal effectively with foreign policy conflicts in the Middle East or with Iran or North Korea.

The roots of the militarization of U.S. foreign policy lie in the year 1947, with the beginning of the Cold War. Passage of the National Security Act in 1947 made the U.S. armed forces an inherent part of national security policy in peacetime. Previously, the Pentagon had rarely asserted itself in the

policy process, even in wartime. Military influence grew over the next four decades, leading to the Defense Reorganization Act of 1986, commonly referred to as the Goldwater-Nichols Act, which made the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff the “principal military adviser to the President, the National Security Council, and the Secretary of Defense.”

One of the consequences of U.S. militarization and unilateralism has been an unwillingness to join international agreements and conventions designed to foster moderate actions in the global community. The United States, for example, joined the so-called “rogue states” (Algeria, China, Libya, Iran, Iraq, and Sudan) in opposing creation of the International Criminal Court (ICC), which extended the scope of international law and provided a means of bringing the world’s worst human rights violators, such as Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic, to justice. Every member state of the European Union, including all of America’s NATO allies, favored the ICC, as did President Clinton initially. Clinton ultimately deferred to the Pentagon and Senator Jesse Helms (R-NC), who argued that the Court would expose U.S. soldiers to international justice. This was a red herring, as the member states of the ICC have the right to try any of their own citizens charged with international crimes in their own courts, which is exactly what the United States has done in the past. Thus, as with the creation of the League of Nations in 1919, a major step forward in international law was taken without the endorsement and participation of the United States, which had prided itself on its support of international justice since the Nuremberg trials after World War II.

The United States has also been out of step with the global effort to ban the use of landmines, an effort that political conservatives and the Pentagon have opposed because of U.S. deployment of landmines near the border between North and South Korea. Although anti-personnel mines have killed and

mained thousands of civilians, including children, all over the world—Afghanistan, Angola, Bosnia, Cambodia, El Salvador, Mozambique, and elsewhere—the marginal advantage of their deployment in South Korea has been used to justify U.S. refusal to adhere to the convention. Not even the possibility of warmer relations between the two Koreas has led the United States to take a new position on the issue.

Since the 9/11 attacks of 2001, the United States, using the pretense of a global war on terror, has gone to war in Iraq and Afghanistan and has used military force in Pakistan, Libya, Somalia, and Yemen. It is no surprise that we now find ourselves overcommitted in the Middle East, North Africa, and Southwest Asia, which has become an “arc of crisis” for the United States. President George W. Bush helped to create this arc with his wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Although President Obama has undertaken military disengagement in both countries, he has widened covert action throughout the area as the Pentagon and the CIA conduct assassination programs against insurgents and terrorists. The United States may be closing down the arrogantly named “Camp Victory” in Iraq, but it is building secret facilities in Ethiopia, Djibouti, the Seychelles, and the Arabia Peninsula (presumably in Yemen or the United Arab Emirates) as bases for Predator and Reaper drone aircraft. These drones have been used against targets in Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, Pakistan, Yemen, and Somalia, according to State Department cables obtained by WikiLeaks, an anti-secrecy group.¹

In addition to drone bases, U.S. secret facilities support special operations against dozens of countries from South America to Central Asia. Army Rangers, Navy Seals, and CIA personnel operate out of them. Military personnel are deployed throughout the Middle East and North Africa, and the Pentagon and the Department of State are training special forces from dozens of countries in the art of counterinsurgency. The *New Yorker's*

Seymour Hersh has been reporting for several years that the United States is conducting special operations in Iran, and the *Wall Street Journal* has reported that Pentagon and CIA teams are conducting covert operations to stop the smuggling of Iranian arms into Iraq.² Such operations contribute to the increase in anti-Americanism throughout the region.

U.S. response to the attacks of 9/11 has brought a new dimension to the national security state: the increase in largely unaccountable security contractors, such as the notorious Blackwater (now brandishing the benign corporate name of Academi LLC), and consulting agencies that act as intermediaries between the federal government and defense contractors. They operate without any apparent code of conduct, and the uncontrolled violence of Xe, another of Blackwater's incarnations, is well known. Working with these contractors has involved huge payments to consulting agencies managed by former administration officials such as Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, national security adviser Stephen Hadley, directors of homeland security Michael Chertoff and Tom Ridge, and CIA director Michael Hayden.

More than one-third of the personnel in the intelligence community are private contractors, with the relatively new Department of Homeland Security and Office of National Intelligence relying most extensively on them. Private contracts now consume 70 percent of the intelligence budget, and private contractors represent more than half of the employees at the new National Counterterrorism Center. The overwhelming U.S. presence in Iraq is largely contractual, and in 2011, for the first time, deaths among contractors in Afghanistan exceeded fatalities of U.S. soldiers and military personnel.

The U.S. reliance on military force has damaged U.S. national interests at a time when the world is facing severe economic stress. The Iraq and Afghan Wars have been costly in

terms of blood and treasure, and they have not made America more secure. The war on terror has created more terrorists than it has eliminated, and the war is expanding in the Persian Gulf and Africa, particularly in Yemen and Somalia. The United States is no longer seen as a beacon of liberty to the world, but as an imperialistic bully with little respect for international law. The economic costs of our emphasis on the military have been enormous, coming at a time of necessary constraint for U.S. expenditures and investment policy.

As the military expands, the Department of State declines, losing resources and influence; it is no longer able to provide robust diplomatic alternatives to militarization. During the crucial decision-making in 2009 to determine troop levels in Afghanistan, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton merely echoed the positions taken by Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates, making no effort to question the strategic and geopolitical implications of a wider war in Southwest Asia. The budget of the Department of Defense, exceeding levels reached during the worst days of the Cold War, needs to be significantly constrained. The United States devotes little attention to one of the greatest losses in wartime, the civilian casualties that have taken place in Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, and Pakistan over the past decade. As General Tommy R. Franks infamously said during the first years of the Afghan War, “We don’t do body counts.”³ In view of the scale of destruction that has taken place at the hands of the U.S. military, particularly in Afghanistan and Iraq, we certainly should. The United States prefers to ignore the loss of civilian life as it does the destruction of the civilian economy, let alone schools, infrastructure, and even hospitals. The U.S. military failed to understand that the lack of security provided to civilians in Iraq led to greater success and recruitment for militias and insurgent groups. The lack of U.S. understanding of Afghan opposition to midnight raids and house-to-house searches has compromised

Washington's relations with the government of Hamid Karzai. The U.S. killing of two dozen Pakistani soldiers in November 2011 and the belated unwillingness to apologize exposed a cavalier attitude toward loss of human life and further damaged the troubled U.S.-Pakistani relationship.

It is past time to hold a national debate on the role and purpose of U.S. power in today's global environment. It is time to define a new international policy that recognizes the constraints and limitations of military power. A good start would be to heed the arguments of realists such as Dean Acheson and George Kennan, who opposed extended military involvements. Over the past four decades, the United States has deployed large numbers of forces to Vietnam, Iraq, and Afghanistan with no gains for national security and huge setbacks to U.S. interests. We must understand how the United States reached the point of willingness to expand its national security interests to all areas on the globe. There are no national security interests, let alone vital interests, in areas that we have invaded and occupied for the past fifty years: twelve years in Vietnam; eight in Iraq, where the U.S. military withdrawal is mostly complete; and more than a decade in Afghanistan, where a modest withdrawal has begun.

Nevertheless, Admiral William H. McRaven, the commander of the Special Operations Command (SOCOM), is pressing for a larger role for his elite units and more personal autonomy to position his forces in troubled areas. McRaven, who oversaw the operation that killed Osama bin Laden in May 2011, wants to deploy 12,000 special forces around the world at all times to strike terrorist targets and rescue hostages.⁴ The Command has doubled in size since 2001, currently at a level of 66,000 military and civilian personnel, and its budget has more than doubled, from \$4.2 billion to \$10.5 billion. Greater authority for SOCOM would reduce the influence of the State

Department in dealing with difficult political situations as well as the authority of the Pentagon's regional commanders. The heightened secrecy would complicate the problem of congressional oversight.

Exaggeration of the threat has been a critical component in the militarization of national security policy. Such exaggeration fostered the huge strategic buildup during the Cold War, the unprecedented peacetime buildup by the Reagan administration, and massive increases in defense spending during the Bush II administration. In an effort to assure their own self-preservation, according to Harvard professor Daniel Yergin, nations often "push the subjective boundaries of security outward to more and more areas, to encompass more and more geography and more and more problems."⁵ This often leads to a paradox—an expanded perception of threat rather than a greater sense of security. The United States has created such an environment. We now view each example of terrorist activity as an existential threat, and we are in the process of exaggerating the threat of China.

The global war on terror is the latest example of the use of unilateral and hegemonic power, described by British theorist Edmund Burke in the eighteenth century. Burke was concerned with the British exercise of such power. The sovereign state came fully into its own in the seventeenth century, signaled by the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648, which ended Europe's religious wars and saw the final breakup of a universally Catholic Europe. No longer were territories ruled by multiple jurisdictions of empire, nationality, fiefdom, church, and holy orders, united by common language and common religion. A new system was established, consisting of separate and exclusive sovereignties. Each nation had its own economy, society, laws, established borders, national church, bureaucracy—and the armed forces to protect them.

At the end of the eighteenth century, however, England, whose navy “ruled” the seas, could dream of establishing English hegemony, a Pax Britannica of English law and English economics for Indian, Hottentot, and Irishman alike. It could look to a future of English economics and an English language spoken around the world. The vision of American superiority and hegemony advocated by the proponents of unilateralism and exceptionalism in the wake of the Cold War is little different than the dreams of Englishmen over two hundred years ago.

In fact, the world has never before seen a disparity of military power comparable to that now existing between the United States and the rest of the world. According to Paul Kennedy, the author of *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers*, Pax Britannica was “run on the cheap,” particularly compared to the hugely expensive U.S. arsenal.⁶ The British army in the nineteenth century was much smaller than the armies of Europe, and the Royal Navy was equal only to the next two navies combined. Today, the U.S. Navy is superior to the naval fleets of the entire global community; its aviation and power projection capabilities are beyond comparison. Kennedy observes that there has never been a military hegemony to match that of the United States. After all, he points out, “Charlemagne’s empire was merely Western European in its reach.” The Roman empire stretched farther afield, but it competed with a great empire in Persia and an even larger one in China.

Military Power from Bush I to Obama

In 1991, when the Soviet Union collapsed and the post-Cold War era began, the unilateralists initially lost momentum. But three leading neoconservatives at the Pentagon (Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney, his longtime aide Lewis “Scooter” Libby, and Pentagon intellectual leader Paul Wolfowitz) authored their “Defense Policy Guidance,” recommending unilateralism

as the guiding principle of U.S. foreign policy. These men did not want to return to the arms control and disarmament table, and they wanted no cuts in the defense budget. Along with U.S. intelligence and defense planners, they had been unprepared for the collapse of the Berlin Wall, the Warsaw Pact, and the Soviet empire, and they wanted to justify continued huge defense expenditures. Written after the extremely short and destructive Gulf War against Iraq, the “Guidance” advocated permanent U.S. dominance by preventing the rise of any potentially hostile power. It defended the preemptive use of force against states suspected of developing weapons of mass destruction, which became the ostensible justification for U.S. preemption against Iraq in 2003. Ironically, the Desert Storm war in 1991 had destroyed Iraq’s capability to manufacture weapons of mass destruction, and Saddam Hussein had not restored it.

When then-Senator Joe Biden (D-DE) read the “Guidance,” he was appalled, denouncing it as a prescription for a Pax Americana. The Cheney-Libby-Wolfowitz document advocated a reversal of the bipartisan moderation and multilateralism endorsed by U.S. administrations since the end of World War II. Throughout the post-war period, the United States had made numerous efforts to pioneer a system of world diplomacy, including the United Nations, that looked to increased cooperation among nations along a broad front of peacekeeping and political-economic cooperation. The United States fostered a peaceful, viable Western Europe, which helped prevent the spread of Soviet-sponsored communism and encouraged efforts to provide a democratic life for its citizens. Economic aid was used to increase the stability of such vulnerable nations as Greece and Turkey, and a rich tapestry of international law was sponsored to protect human rights. Finally, both Democratic and Republican administrations endorsed and participated in a series of arms control agreements that were designed to curb the proliferation

of nuclear weapons, limit the number of nuclear powers, and create an international and verifiable arms control regime.

The objectives and policies of the neoconservatives challenged all these goals. Fortunately, the “Guidance” was leaked to the *Los Angeles Times*, provoking a backlash and prompting President George H.W. Bush, National Security Adviser Brent Scowcroft, and Secretary of State James Baker to mothball it. Various right-wing think tanks, such as the Heritage Foundation, the American Enterprise Institute, the Center for Security Policy, and the Project for the New American Century kept alive the ideological premises of unilateralism and preemptive attack, however. These groups had been impatient with the Cold War’s “rules of the game,” which had deterred the United States and the Soviet Union from aggressive moves that risked confrontation. With the exception of the Cuban missile crisis in 1962, the Soviet Union had avoided steps that might cause confrontation with the United States. The United States, even when it resorted to the use of military power, as in the Vietnam War, has avoided gratuitous provocations aimed at the Kremlin.

The policies and personnel of the Project for a New American Century were central to the “Bush Doctrine,” which marked a departure from the practices of every post-Cold War president, including George W. Bush’s own father. The neoconservatives of his administration, particularly Vice President Cheney and Department of Defense figures Wolfowitz, Douglas Feith, and Steve Cambone (along with Richard Perle from the department’s advisory group), wanted the United States to exploit its political-economic-military superiority to expand its influence. While the 9/11 attacks and the false charges of weapons of mass destruction became the pretexts for the use of force in Iraq, Bush, Cheney, and Rumsfeld would have pursued the war even without terrorist attacks against the United States. The increase in military, security, and intelligence spending had

begun even before 9/11: The objective was creation of unquestioned U.S. military preeminence that could not be challenged by any nation or group of nations. The group never determined how to turn military power into political influence, however. Meanwhile, the U.S. military has become a liability in the Middle East and Southwest Asia, and the influence of U.S. diplomacy has declined.

Frustration with the policies of the Clinton administration had led neoconservatives and influential members of the defense community to form the Project for a New American Century in 1997. The Project was the natural heir of the Coalition for a Democratic Majority and the Committee on the Present Danger, which were formed in the 1970s to challenge the foreign policies of the Carter administration, particularly the president's commitment to arms control, disarmament, and conflict resolution in the Third World. The Bush I administration had frustrated the neoconservatives, but the Clinton administration drove them to distraction. President Clinton and Vice President Al Gore supported international cooperation on climate change and controlling AIDS; humanitarian intervention and peacekeeping in the Balkans; nation-building; and the creation of the International Criminal Court. All of these were anathema to Cheney, Perle, and Wolfowitz. Clinton's policies were called "globaloney" for their reputed failure to deal with the new realities of power in the post-Cold War world.

The Project for a New American Century sponsored a letter to President Clinton in January 1998 declaring that "we may soon face a threat in the Middle East more serious than any we have known since the end of the Cold War. We urge you to enunciate a new strategy that would secure the interests of the United States and our allies around the world." The "threat" that the group referred to was Saddam Hussein's weapons of mass destruction, which, in fact, no longer existed. The signers

of the letter included major players in the administrations of both Bush I and Bush II: Elliott Abrams, John Bolton, Perle, Rumsfeld, and Wolfowitz. A year earlier, the right-wing Center for Security Policy had drafted a statement endorsing the deployment of a national missile defense. Again, major Bush players signed the statement, including Rumsfeld and Cheney. The Center gathered politicians and defense executives together in a way that President Eisenhower had anticipated in his warning about the military-industrial complex more than fifty years earlier.

The New American Century and the Center for National Security were buttressed by a collection of right-wing groups and think tanks committed to the militarization of policy and the use of military power. The failure of the use of force in Iraq and Afghanistan over a ten-year period has done nothing to mitigate the exhortations of the American Enterprise Institute and the Heritage Foundation, whose members regularly write op-eds for major newspapers, including the *Washington Post* and the *New York Times*. Their style is coercive, dismissive, and arrogant in describing both a world where U.S. force prevails, and a United States where military power is the measure of our health and global sway. They dismiss multilateralism and international law in favor of aggressive unilateralism and U.S. economic dominance.

Even liberal organizations are attracted to these policies. The Brookings Institution and Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, and their scholars—Michael O’Hanlon and Robert Kagan, respectively—have advocated the use of military power in Iraq and Afghanistan. All are opposed to reduced defense spending. In his most recent book, Kagan argued that “when American power declines, the institutions and norms American power supports will decline too.”⁷ He contends that Americans have “developed a degree of satisfaction in their special role” overseas, and suggests that the silent prayer offered

during the seventh-inning stretch of baseball games reflects pride in the nation's role "around the world."

The election of President George W. Bush was a welcome relief to the neoconservative community. President Bush and Vice President Cheney were unwilling to permit the facts on the ground to block their goal of overthrowing Saddam Hussein. Although Bush campaigned on the basis of moderation in foreign policy, multilateralism, and the so-called "new world order," he and Cheney moved quickly to establish a "wartime presidency." He campaigned on the basis of a modest buildup of the defense establishment, but doubled the defense budget during his presidency. Bush appointed only one moderate, Colin Powell, to a key position, but the general-statesman was thoroughly ignored by the neoconservatives who dominated Bush's presidency. While the administrations of Bush I and Bill Clinton were wary of the use of force, Bush II relished brandishing military symbols and took advantage of every opportunity to define himself as a "wartime president." His memoir notes his regret over the fulsome use of military language such as "bring 'em on," "mission accomplished," and "dead or alive," but offers no regret about the actual use of force.

Members of right-wing groups became key players in the administration of George W. Bush, occupying the positions of vice president, secretary of defense, and UN ambassador; they also were key staffers at the National Security Council and the Department of Defense. Right-wingers played key roles in the intelligence community, where ideologues such as Congressman Porter Goss became director of central intelligence. When the CIA refused to distort the intelligence to suit the conclusion the Bush administration was seeking, the Office of Special Plans was created at the Pentagon under associates of Cheney such as Douglas Feith, William Luti, and Abram Shulsky with the task of making the case for war against Iraq.

President Bush enunciated his doctrine of preemptive war in Iraq and, by declaring a counterproductive “war on terror,” assured that the Pentagon would be the leading policy agency in combating terrorism around the world. His policy of unilateralism, proclaimed at West Point in 2002, marked a radical turn in U.S. foreign policy. President Bush ineffectually relied on saber-rattling against the nuclear programs of Iran and North Korea. He abrogated the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, the cornerstone of deterrence since 1972, and he funded a national missile defense system that is not workable but remains the largest line item for a weapons system in the current defense budget. The Bush administration’s politicization of the intelligence community reached its nadir in 2002, when the CIA prepared the specious National Intelligence Estimate that was used to justify the war against Iraq.

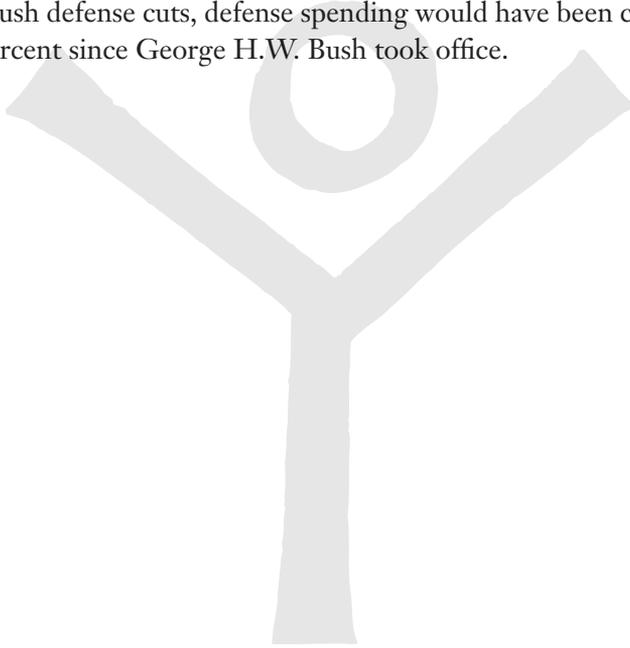
Even before the end of the Cold War, there had been an unfortunate tendency for U.S. presidents, in their first year in office, to use military or paramilitary power as an instrument of policy, perhaps to prove their mettle. President John F. Kennedy used the CIA against Cuba (the infamous Bay of Pigs), an operation that backfired and tarnished his administration. President Lyndon B. Johnson escalated the war in Vietnam in 1965, although, in his campaign the previous year, he had argued against sending American boys to fight an Asian war. President Nixon escalated the war in Vietnam and fought a secret war in Cambodia. President Gerald Ford used force in response to the seizure of a U.S. freighter, although the crew had already been released. There were more U.S. forces killed and wounded in that action than there were crew members of the merchant ship, the *Mayaguez*. And the intelligence community sent the rescue team to an obscure island rather than to the mainland, where the crew had been held. President Jimmy Carter actually avoided the use of military force until his last year in office. Even in

the wake of 9/11, when George Bush and Dick Cheney significantly increased the defense budget, Senator Lieberman argued that the additional funds were “not nearly enough to meet the military’s essential needs for procurement and transformation.”⁸ Senator Lieberman was the classic reincarnation of the late Senator Henry “Scoop” Jackson (D-WA), liberal on domestic social issues but far to the right on national security and defense issues. The Lieberman link to the politics of Republican Senators John McCain of Arizona and Lindsay Graham of South Carolina has been a powerful force on behalf of the military-industrial complex for two decades.

President George H.W. Bush made no one happy during his stewardship of U.S. national security policy. Liberals believed that he could have taken better advantage of the end of the Cold War to address inflated defense spending and unnecessary U.S. deployments abroad. Neoconservatives believed that he did not expand the defense budget sufficiently and was absurdly dovish in not occupying Iraq and driving Saddam Hussein from power. Secretary of Defense Cheney was sympathetic with the policies of the neoconservatives and, by the time he joined the administration of George W. Bush as vice president, he was a full-fledged war hawk supporting not only wars against Iraq and Afghanistan, but military action against the nuclear facilities of Syria and Iran.

At his last State of the Union address in 1992, Bush senior seemed to provide an endorsement of President Eisenhower’s farewell address when he urged that the collapse of the Soviet Union be used to “accelerate” cuts in defense spending as well as increased domestic spending. In many ways, Bush was a traditional fiscal conservative who was not in favor of great increases in defense spending. Secretary of Defense Cheney was sympathetic with this position, but, after his employment by the defense contractor Halliburton in the 1990s, he returned to

government in order to open the floodgates of defense spending. If Bush's successor, President Clinton, had followed the pace of the Bush defense cuts, defense spending would have been cut by 30 percent since George H.W. Bush took office.



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