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The Oppression of Arms

When taxes are high, when income is low, a nation's people may be consoled by the remembrance that their tax money is invested in such government services as health care and education and transportation and protection. But of these benefits, the American government places absurdly large financial emphasis upon the protection of their people's interests abroad. Even under President Barack Obama, awarded the Nobel Peace Prize by a globe that anticipated his professed pacifistic agenda, the US has spent an inordinate amount of the nation's Gross Domestic Profit on military spending. For instance, for the Fiscal Year 2011, \$708.3 billion was requested for the defense budget (Olson).

A land's people are safeguarded by their military. Stability is provided. But while an army is necessary, a country in possession of an over-strong armed force is like an average person driving a racecar. A racecar owner pays for a car of unnecessary force, a racecar owner's resources are drained by its upkeep, and a racecar owner is forever tempted to utilize their possession's fullest potential. In such cases, a person's trip to the grocery store could turn to a speeding road rage, leaving in their wake a trail of bent fenders, burnt rubber, and shattered windshields. Similarly, countries with expensive, perhaps excessive, militaries like the US—militaries as overqualified for the task of defense as a racecar running local errands—will use their surplus forces to pursue “political and bureaucratic interests” that distract from the more needful concerns of the nation (Kimes).

An example of this was the sale of 84 US planes to Saudi Arabia—a nation the US criticizes “for human rights abuses”—last summer (Kimes). Because of America's interest in Middle Eastern politics—due to the nations' oil reservoirs—these lands are currently “teeming with American-made arms” (Kimes). These arms extend from the tear gas bottles used on the rebelling Egyptian people, to the old F-14 fighter jets America sold to Iran in the 1970s—which the US is currently “systematically” destroying to “keep them out of Iran's hands” (Kimes). Despite such nations as Iran now posing a threat to US interests with US weapons, America irrationally continues marketing munitions to unstable political climes.

Instead of dedicating its economy to the creation of machines that are Armageddon's horsemen, America should focus on technologies of life—such as green energy, or curing AIDS. As former US President and General, Dwight Eisenhower, said, every weapon created “signifies in the final sense a theft from those who hunger and are not fed, those who are cold and not clothed.” As the world's resources are squandered on over-inflated armies, many of our worldwide fellowmen remain hungry and abused—whether they are the poor and unemployed in the US who do not receive proper aid, or they are victims of genocide in Darfur. The world's money is misspent. Anyone who truly cherishes peace knows there is no real profit in arming the oppressors of men, but all men profit in the oppression of arms.

Works Cited

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