

Opinion

MILITARY SPENDING:

By Matthew Evangelista, Tim Gardner, and Murray Gold

Twenty years ago this January, Dwight D. Eisenhower warned America of the dangers of the "military-industrial complex." His concerns were prompted by a \$50 billion military budget, which "Ike"—a Republican President who placed a high value on balance federal budgets—thought excessive. And yet, last year's military budget reached \$160 billion, and Ronald Reagan, who claims to favor decreasing federal spending, has submitted a military budget of more than \$220 billion. Why has the United States spent over \$1 trillion on the military since 1945? Why will we spend another trillion just between now and 1985? And what are the consequences of this kind of spending, for our economy and for our security?

Eisenhower defined the military-industrial complex as the "conjunction of an immense military establishment with a large arms industry." In so doing, he singled out only two of the more significant factors responsible for ever increasing military spending. Senator William Proxmire was perhaps more to the point in posting "a military-industrial-bureaucratic-labor-intellectual-technical-academic complex."

The Pentagon is the most obvious proponent of high military spending. To a large extent, the Pentagon's acquisitiveness stems from its own organizational logic. Rivalries between the services encourage each—the Army, Navy, and Air Force—to push for programs that will strengthen their relative positions. One of the most unfortunate results of this inter-service rivalry was the development of multiple nuclear warheads for missiles or MIRVs.

The MIRV program was originally considered necessary to counter the extensive anti-ballistic missile systems

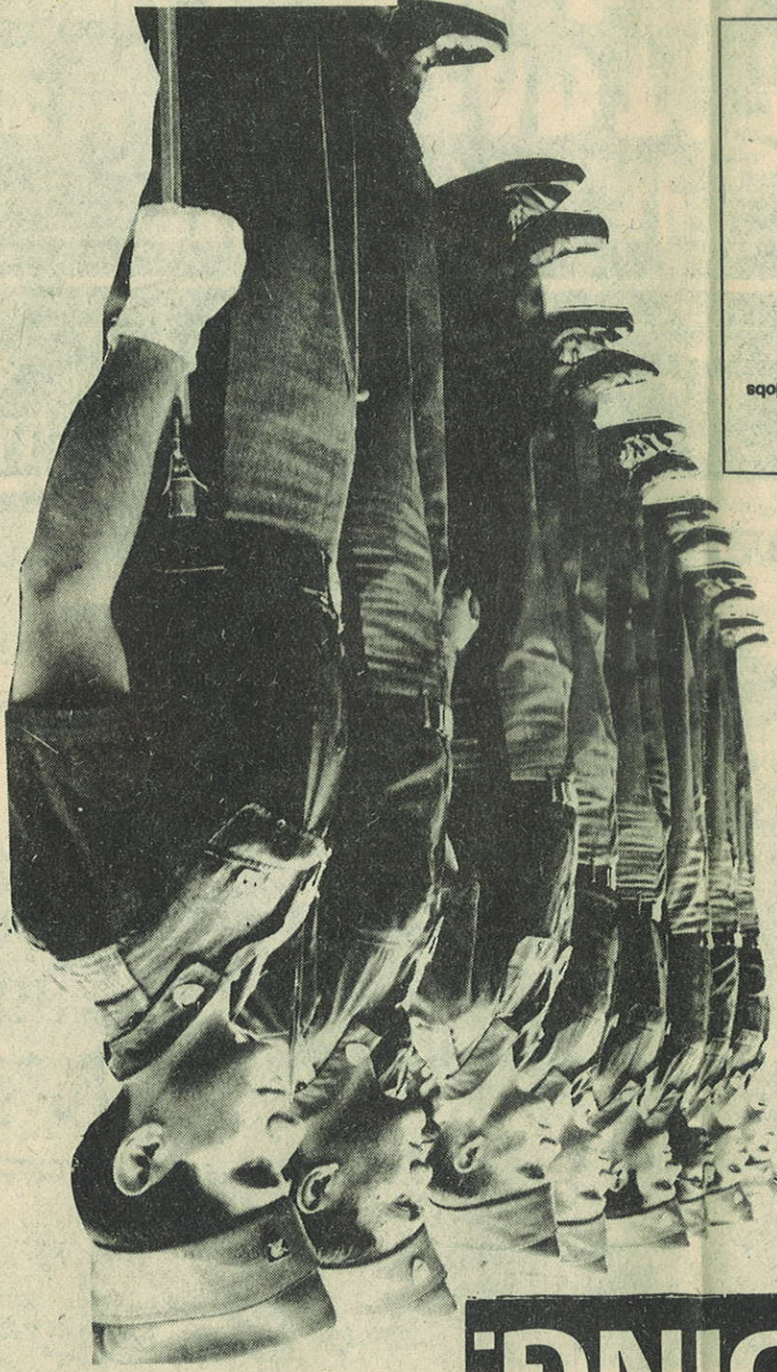
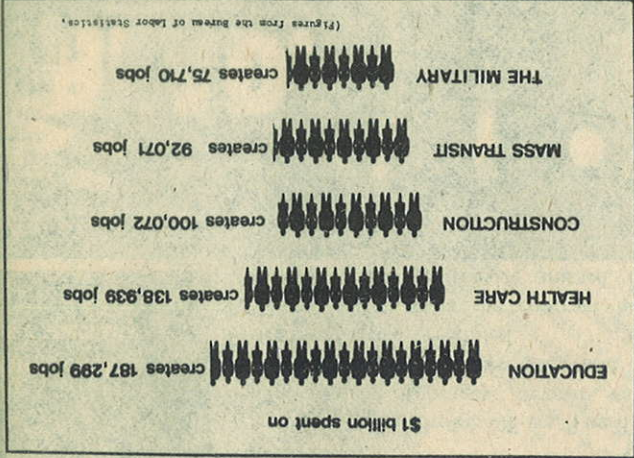
Why We

Engage In It

How It Threatens

Our Economy

and Security



wonder the Pentagon so willingly finds Soviet family suffered a loss during the war, and every Soviet city today maintains a prominent memorial to those millions who lost their lives between 1941-1945. The war has indeed marked the Soviet conscience very deeply, but not at all in the perverse and inhumane manner that Technologies Corporation, the nation's third-largest defense contractor.

clear United States superiority in nuclear weapons, Kennedy was able to use their coercive effects to force show-downs in crises over Berlin and Cuba. Today, with a relative nuclear "parity" established between the United States and the Soviet Union, such blatant uses of nuclear weapons as threats are not longer credible. Instead, the concept of nuclear superiority is important only in the

and Pershing II missiles for Europe, Trident submarine missile systems, and an extremely accurate new warhead for the Minuteman III missiles.

The most recent strategic products of military-academic collaboration are the notions of a new "need" for a U.S. "counterforce capability"—the ability to destroy Soviet missiles in their underground hardened-concrete silos—and of a "limited nuclear-war-fighting capability."

As one RAND analyst has observed, however, the counterforce strategy is severely flawed, because it ignores both Soviet perceptions of these U.S. innovations and the fact that the "counterforce balance" is, and will remain, in the United States' favor. The most frightening aspect of the U.S. pursuit of a counterforce capability is the possible Soviet reaction. The deployment of faster, more accurate counterforce weapons may serve only to increase Soviet reliance on a launch on warning concept. Under such a policy, the Soviets would launch their land-based ICBMs at the slightest hint of a U.S. attack for fear of having them destroyed on the ground.

The Soviets have made clear that they do not share the notion of a limited nuclear war. As president Brezhnev has many times reiterated, "Any attempt to launch a nuclear missile attack on our country would be met by devastating retaliation."

With every new nuclear weapons program, whether intended to implement a limited-war policy or a counterforce strategy, our security is actually diminished. No Pentagon official could claim that 35 years of nuclear weapons programs have made us any more secure than we were after the world's only two atomic bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The nuclear arms race and the destabilizing nature of the latest generation of nuclear weapons has only brought us closer to disaster. The arms race and excessive military spending threaten our security in ways that even those who are more concerned with the struggle

once. Yet even after ABM systems were limited to two for each country in the SALT I treaty, and then one for each in the 1974 Vladivostok Accords, the MIRV program continues in full force. One author suggests that the real reason behind MIRV deployment was rivalry between the Navy and the Air Force, and the latter's desire to have the ability to win a nuclear war, by developing a first-strike capability.

Inter-service rivalries continually compel the upgrading of the strategic nuclear "triad" (bombers, land-based missiles, and submarine-launched missiles). Although the Navy already has a perfectly adequate Poseidon submarine force with more than 5,000 virtually invulnerable nuclear warheads, this soon will be augmented by the astronomically expensive Trident submarines. (Each sub, without any missiles, is estimated to cost \$1.2 billion.)

In turn, the Air Force must have its new program—the MX missile—and, in compensation for the cancelled B-1, will probably get a new strategic bomber as well. And the Army, which already controls "tactical" nuclear weapons in Europe, will take charge of the new Pershing II and cruise missiles stated for deployment by NATO. The three services' ability to institute their individual programs, regardless of necessity, lends credence to John Kenneth Galbraith's warning to "never doubt the extraordinary power of the bureaucracy of the military establishment."

The arms industry is a second major advocate of increased military spending. Arms manufacturers are paid on a cost-plus basis and make guaranteed profits on arms sales. Weapons procurement will provide arms producers with some \$40 billion worth of business in 1981.

Arms manufacturers vigorously protect and pursue their business interests by lobbying for new military programs.

Lobbying is not the only means employed by the arms industry to encourage support for new weapons programs. There also exists a more direct connection to the military bureaucracy itself. Since weapons manufacturers frequently offer retired military officials lucrative positions after they leave the service, it is no

tragic consequences. Virtually every Union with a profound sense of war's Second World War left the Soviet contemporary Soviet history. The both common sense and the lessons of direct connection to the military programs. There also exists a more evidence from the post-World War II years when the United States held a monopoly on nuclear weapons (until 1949) and then a virtual monopoly on intercontinental delivery systems (until late in the 1950s). Truman threatened to use nuclear weapons in both Iran and Korea, and Eisenhower again threatened in Korea. During the era of

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At a time when the United States possesses over 30,000 nuclear warheads and the Soviet Union 20,000, the concept of "nuclear superiority" in a military sense is meaningless. When Robert S. McNamara was Secretary of Defense in 1968, he suggested that an adequate deterrent would be 400 nuclear warheads capable of surviving a surprise attack. As late as 1977, Jimmy Carter recommended 200 warheads as a sufficient deterrent.

At this point the United States continues to manufacture nuclear weapons at an average rate of three warheads per day—not for military purposes but for their political utility. The most obvious use of nuclear weapons for political purposes consists in threatening their use in order to achieve political objectives. This type of coercion was employed during the years when the United States held a monopoly on nuclear weapons (until 1949) and then a virtual monopoly on intercontinental delivery systems (until late in the 1950s). Truman threatened to use nuclear weapons in both Iran and Korea, and Eisenhower again threatened in Korea. During the era of

programs that always expects a Soviet invasion of the Persian Gulf or of Western Europe, and blames the Soviets for every indigenous revolutionary movement anywhere in the world. Most of these ideas about funding for research and development since 1945 fully 80% of government support of "nonessential" research. Each in the 1974 Vladivostok Accords, the MIRV program continues in full force. One author suggests that the real reason behind MIRV deployment was rivalry between the Navy and the Air Force, and the latter's desire to have the ability to win a nuclear war, by developing a first-strike capability.

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weapons programs are used to enhance the United States' image of international strength. It should go without saying, however, that his pursuit of a fictitious superiority is an extremely expensive and dangerous substitute for diplomacy and is a poor rationale for increased military spending.

Every election year, with surprising regularity, the "Soviet threat" is lead the world, our civilian industries are faltering in their competition with West Germany and Japan, which have renounced high military spending in favor of supporting civilian industry—the incumbent, or by a Democratic challenger trying to appeal to more traditional Republican voters.

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics has found that \$1 billion in federal funds spent on the military creates over 100,000 fewer jobs than the same amount spent on education, over 60,000 fewer than that amount spent on health care, fewer jobs still than the same amount spent on construction or mass transit. Partly due to the boom-and-bust nature of defense contracting, military spending is a much less effective tool for stimulating economic growth than that government spending which provides steady jobs.

Faced with the dangerous effects of excessive military spending on our economy and our security, the United States must seek a definition of national security in terms other than those of force. With the realities of modern weaponry, war can no longer be considered a panacea for political problems. True national security is determined not by numbers of tanks or missiles, but by a strong and healthy economy which provides adequate employment; a sane energy policy which emphasizes self-sufficiency; a just and equitable approach to dealing with Third World countries; and a diplomacy based on cooperation and consultation, not intimidation and threats. At this point, the greatest threat to American national security is posed, not by the Chinese, the Cubans, or the Iranians, but by our own excessive military spending, its deleterious effect on our economy, and the new weapons programs which ultimately threaten our own destruction.

Matthew Evangelista '80-4, Murray Gold '80-4, and Tim Gardner '84 are writing a pamphlet dealing with Harvard's relation to the military.