

War Is a Racket

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Let's dispense with some myths. There is no Santa Claus, no Easter Bunny, and the US does not go to war for altruistic reasons. Our wars are not to spread democracy, protect innocent lives, or keep us safe. Our wars are fought for profit. Let's review the words of the greatest American war hero that you never heard of, Marine Corps Major General Smedley Butler. He won our nation's highest award, the Medal of Honor, in two separate wars, in addition to winning the highest award a Marine can receive, the Brevet medal.

You never heard of him because of quotes like this: "I helped make Mexico, especially Tampico, safe for American oil interests in 1914. I helped make Haiti and Cuba a decent place for the National City Bank boys to collect revenues in. I helped in the raping of half a dozen Central American republics for the benefits of Wall Street. The record of racketeering is long. I helped purify Nicaragua for the international banking house of Brown Brothers in 1909-1912. I brought light to the Dominican Republic for American sugar interests in 1916. In China I helped to see to it that Standard Oil went its way unmolested."

He also said: "The trouble with America is that when the dollar only earns 6 percent over here, then it gets restless and goes overseas to get 100 percent. Then the flag follows the dollar and the soldiers follow the flag." Got it? We go to war to protect the profits of the billionaires. Yes, it is that simple.

Lately, it doesn't even matter that we win the war and install a government favorable to our corporate interests, although the profits are better that way. No, just having the war itself is extremely profitable, in fact, it's the single best way to transfer wealth from the middle and working classes to the already obscenely wealthy. We fund the war and the wealthy make huge profits on their ownership of the military-industrial-media complex. It's difficult for decent people to understand that we go to war just so someone can make money, but that's the truth.

The US is an empire and has been at war 222 years out of the 239 since 1775. That means, in our entire existence, we haven't been in a war for only 17 years. That doesn't even count simple coups, like in Chile, Iran, and Iraq (just to name a few of the dozens of coups that we've sponsored). We have a military budget greater than the next nine countries combined, including Russia and China. We have bases in more than 80 countries around the world, at an annual cost of over \$156 billion.

Martin Luther King said that the United States was "The Greatest Purveyor of Violence in the World Today," and he was right. Because of our military budget, we have insufficient money for college, healthcare, our infrastructure, and the environment.

We have to decide as a people if we want to rule the world or be a good citizen of it, but first we need to educate our citizens on why we're at war all the time.