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The Weapons Oligarchy

Federal Taxes Reward 8-Figure Pentagon Fraud Spree

JOHN LaFORGE
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With the Pentagon having secured its annual 47 percent of the April 15 federal tax haul (\$1,335 billion out of a total of \$2,890 billion) it's a good time to consider the mountains of money being wasted on useless weapons or just plain stolen.

Without a public uproar, U.S. could spend more than \$600 billion on nuclear weapons over the next 10 years, according to Alicia Godsberg of Peace Action and others.^[1]

President Obama has famously mouthed support for “a world without nuclear weapons,” and “a world where these weapons will never again threaten our children,”^[2] but his nuclear weapons budget says bombs, bombs and more bombs.

For 2014, the President plans a nuclear weapons spending increase over the current level of \$7.227 billion. Where's the money to come from? Taking a page from the Reagan/Thatcher play book, Obama plans to get it from the nuclear non-proliferation budget. According to a report by Jeffery Smith and Douglas Birch in Foreign Policy April 9, the president has proposed a \$460 million cut from the nuclear non-proliferation program — so it can boost nuclear weapons building programs by exactly \$500 million.^[3]

Since 2011, Obama has been pushing a plan to spend \$85 billion over 10 years to rebuild thousands of H-bombs — bombs that should be retired and abolished. The president has also proposed pouring \$125 billion over 10 years into a new fleet of nuclear-armed submarines, new nuclear bombers and new land-based ICBMs.^[4]

One plan is to return 200 B61 gravity H-bombs from five U.S. bases in Europe, where they are unwanted, and to replace their warheads and tail fins. Today, Germany, The Netherlands, Italy, Turkey and Belgium are debating whether they want the U.S. bombs ousted permanently, yet the Pentagon plans to return them to European fighter bases with new “life extension.” Europeans by the millions are demanding that the B61s be withdrawn forever.

The H-bomb program, known as the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA), estimated last year that the B61 make-work plan would cost \$7 billion and produce its first replacement bomb in 2019. The Pentagon countered that it would cost \$10.4 billion and take until 2022. Daryl Kimball and Tom Collina reported April 11 in Arms Control Now that 400 new B61-12s are planned, at roughly \$25 million-per bomb.^[5] Boeing Corp. hopes to make hundreds of millions working on the 50-kiloton devices,^[6] each one capable of a Hiroshima massacre times four.

Joe Cirincione, of the Council on Foreign Relations and president of the Ploughshares Fund, charged April 21 that “lavishing” billions on the B61 “is criminal.”^[7]

According to Edward Aguilar of Project for Nuclear Awareness, cancelling construction of the new submarines, reducing the current number of such subs, and retiring rather than replacing nuclear warheads and a couple hundred ICBMs would save \$270 billion.

Billions for unneeded, unusable weapons

As every combat or terror casualty since 1950 proves, our nuclear weapons cannot protect us. So what is this spending for?

One answer was revealed on March 14, 1992, when the Associated Press reported on a study — by Admiral Bruce DeMars — that made clear that the purpose of new submarines was “to protect the vast industrial facilities and skilled workers needed to build them, not because the submarines themselves were needed.”^[8] Today’s plans are precisely the same. With its 5,000 ready and reserve nuclear weapons, the US can pulverize every major city on earth with over 200 each.

The NNSA calls Obama’s new warhead production “modernization” or “refurbishment” or “life extension.” This is just euphemism, deception, deceit and disinformation used to help rob the taxpayers, and it has no purpose but to pamper billionaire industrialists and string out some cancer-causing careers.

Because fear moves taxpayers to send half their federal taxes to the Pentagon and to a militarized space program and Energy Department, the deceptions extend to the manufacture of threats too. Thus, North Korea’s nuclear nothing somehow endangers the Pentagon colossus. On April 3, the

New York Times said North Korea might have “6 to 8” nuclear weapons. Four days earlier it noted two salient facts on its page one: North Korea’s missiles cannot reach the U.S.; and there is no evidence that its bombs can be made small enough to fit on a missile. Even the Wall St. Journal admitted that Pyongyang “isn’t thought to be capable of following through.”[9]

With \$1 billion being spent on new “missile interceptors” in Alaska “to foil North Korea,” cynical fear mongering has reached absurd heights. Experts have reported for decades that money spent on missile defense is wasted. Even the cold-blooded Margaret Thatcher said, “I am a chemist. I know it won’t work.”^[10]

Mr. Cirincione said Pentagon contracts for useless weapons are “clearly aimed at buying senators’ votes.”[11] Two years ago, the Government Accountability Office found a staggering \$70 billion in Pentagon spending that was nothing but waste.^[12] In the realm high crimes, it takes a lot of bribery, larceny, robbery, kickbacks and embezzlement to steal that much money and then to protect so much theft from the law.

The weapons oligarchy appears to be a racketeering-influenced and corrupt organization. Luckily, the RICO Act provides for heavy criminal penalties for such death-dealing corruption.

Notes.

- [1] “The Bloated Nuclear Weapons Budget,” *New York Times*, editorial, Oct. 11, 2011; & Alicia Godsberg, letter, *New York Times*, Sept. 30, 2011
- [2] Joe Cirincione, interviewed on Rachel Maddow, MSNBC, April 21, 2013, <<http://ploughshares.org/>>
- [3] R. Jeffrey Smith & Douglas Birch, “Obama Proposes Shifting Funds from Nuclear Nonproliferation to Nuclear Weapons,” *Foreign Policy.com*, April 9, 2013, http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2013/04/09/obama_proposes_shifting_funds_from_nuclear_nonproliferation_to_new_nuclear_weapon
- [4] “The Bloated Nuclear Weapons Budget,” *New York Times*, editorial, Oct. 30, 2011
- [5] *Daryl G. Kimball and Tom Z. Collina, Arms Control Now, April 11, 2013*, <http://armscontrolnow.org/2013/04/11/nnsa-nuclear-weapons-budget-ignores-fiscal-realities-congress-should-re-examine-b61-project/>
- [6] Hans M. Kristensen, “B61-12: Contract Signed for Improving Precision of Nuclear Bomb,” *Federation of American Scientists*, Nov. 28, 2012; <http://blogs.fas.org/security/2012/11/b61-12contract/>
- [7] Julian Borger, “Obama accused of U-turn as guided weapons plan emerges,” *The Guardian*, April 21, 2013 <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2013/apr/21/obama-accused-nuclear-guided-weapons-plan>
- [8] Associated Press, “Navy seeks to preserve submarine shipyards: In doing so it would buy some vessels it may not need,” *Milwaukee Journal*, March 14, 1992
- [9] *Wall St. Journal*, March 29, 2013, p. A12

[10] “Margaret Thatcher, ‘Iron Lady’ Who Set Britain on New Course, Dies at 87,” *New York Times*, April 9, 2013, p. A11

[11] *Ibid*, n. 7

[12] Christopher Drew, “Audit of Pentagon Spending Finds \$70 Billion in Waste,” *New York Times*, March 30, 2011