

**WEAPONRY.** Most agree that killing is horrible. So why do we fight wars? We invented weapons. Those weapons must be tested and improved, so they need to be used - and for many companies and nations they're a much counted-on source of income. **C**onflicts must be acknowledged - no sooner were humans equipped with mind than the existence of conflicts was assured. **B**ut the presence of weaponry determines the methods conflicts are dealt with. Since guns are available, we consider their use the best means to solve conflicts. Yet, were we to abolish weapons, we would indeed still have conflict, but we wouldn't have war. **M**any regimes rely on strong military for survival, and most governments manipulate their citizenry into believing that 'defence' - and its obscene costs - are an overwhelming necessity\*. **T**hus the ruling forces - often under pressure from big business - resist a cutback of weaponry, for political and economic reasons. **B**ut once the world's colossal military spending is channelled into infrastructure and debt relief, the world has a chance for peace. **T**o eliminate weaponry is in humankind's interest; to fight and kill will not lead to peace - rather to yet more fighting and killing.

*“War is a racket. It always has been. It is possibly the oldest, easily the most profitable, surely the most vicious. It's the only one international in scope. It is the only one in which the profits are reckoned in dollars, and the losses in lives.”*

Smedley Darlington Butler

*In his 1935 book War is a Racket Butler described the workings of the military-industrial complex. S. D. Butler was a Major General in the U.S. Marine Corps and at the time of his death the most decorated Marine in U.S. history.*

\* The US of A are the world leader in weaponry spending: *“In the early two thousands, the US accounted for only five per cent of world population, but just under half of all global military spending.* Another way of putting it is that the US spent almost as much on defence as the other 190 countries of the world put together.” Spoilt West invites its own decline, Peter Hartcher, SMH, 13 June 2012

*The American singer and peace activist Jackson Browne said: “When they go to war in the USA, business elites are doing business - they are going to work.”*