

# THE SOUL OF OUR NATION - WAR

This is how it works.

The US has been providing Egypt with nearly [\\$2 billion a year in "aid"](#) since 1979. Most of this is military aid. That "aid" is then used to buy weapons from American corporations. So in reality most of US foreign aid becomes more welfare programs for the military industrial complex.

Because of current civil war conditions in Egypt the Obama team is having to hold off on providing more aid to that embattled nation. A recent Pew Research Center poll found that 51% of respondents said it's better to cut off military assistance to Egypt, while 26% backed continued aid.

The "aid" now on temporary hold would include: F-16 fighter jets from Lockheed Martin; M1A1 tanks from General Dynamics; and Apache attack helicopters made by Boeing Co.

CBS News reported on August 20: "The billion dollars in aid Congress approved for Egypt does not go directly to Cairo, it goes to places such as Archbald, Pennsylvania. The General Dynamics factory there makes parts for the M1A1 tank. General Dynamics is filling an order for 125 tank kits for the Egyptian Army. One-hundred-thirty people work at the Archbald facility."

You can imagine the workers at the Archbald facility want this "aid" to continue. Archbald Mayor Ed Fairbrother says the jobs are "extremely important" to the community. "They are some of the best jobs we have in the community," he says. "Those are the kinds of jobs that sustain communities and families."

There are 44 companies in Pennsylvania involved in production of the M1A1. The interesting thing is that Egypt does not need the tanks and many of the "kits" are still in crates after being delivered to their military.

American communities have become addicted to war spending and military production. As most traditional manufacturing industry has moved overseas seeking cheaper labor the best jobs in most parts of the nation are building weapons. It's thus no coincidence that the #1

industrial export product of our nation is weapons. And what is our global marketing strategy for that product line? Hello Syria!

An attack on Syria will at the least expend lots of Tomahawk cruise missiles. When daddy Bush launched a cruise missile attack on Iraq in the early 1990's these missiles cost \$1 million each. The Pentagon used 100 of them in the initial attack. McDonnell Douglas (now owned by Boeing Co.) had their factory in Titusville, Florida working round-the-clock to replace them. At the start of George W. Bush's Iraq attack in 2003 it was the Tomahawk cruise missile that fired the first shots from the USS Cowpens. The ship is a Ticonderoga-class guided missile cruiser. The ship is named after the Battle of Cowpens, a major American victory near Cowpens, South Carolina, in the American Revolution. It was built at the Bath Iron Works in Maine.

Years ago I spoke to a peace group here in Maine and I noticed a young woman in the audience with a look in her eyes that I immediately recognized. After my talk she hung around near my literature table but waited until everyone was gone before she approached Mary Beth and I. She told us she was an Iraq War veteran. We had not had dinner yet so invited her to come along with us. Over the years we became like family with this wonderful former Navy Lieutenant who was the Officer on the Deck responsible for positioning the [USS Cowpens](#) when it launched the very first Tomahawk cruise during "shock and awe" in 2003.

Today this young woman suffers from severe war trauma. She told us the story of seeing the series of missiles launch right before her eyes. After her shift was over she went below to see the crew watching a TV with images of a burning Baghdad. The crew was cheering. She was in a daze and stumbled to her bunk. At her first opportunity she got out of the Navy and today has a tough time functioning in the "real world".

Today these same missiles cost up to \$3 million each. So a similar attack on Syria will keep the factories humming back home. We've become a killer nation. We have to have endless war, like a drunk needs a drink at the bar, in order for American workers to put food on the tables for their families.

What does this say about the soul of our nation?

Bruce K. Gagnon

Coordinator

Global Network Against Weapons & Nuclear Power in Space