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## Interview: Rear Admiral C.A. Hill, Jr.

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# 'Military industrial complex should be active politically'

*Rear Adm. C.A. (Mark) Hill, Jr. (USN-ret.) is the vice president for government affairs of the Association of Naval Aviation (ANA). Rear Admiral Hill is well known in Washington, D.C. as an outspoken advocate for the professional military and their counterparts in government and industry. EIR's national security correspondent, Herbert Quinde, interviewed Rear Admiral Hill on June 29.*

**EIR:** You were one of the first to publicly criticize the raid on the Pentagon, on the CNN "Crossfire" TV program. The Soviet press has lauded the action. Why do you think the Kremlin is so happy?

**Hill:** I appeared on the "Crossfire" TV program in an effort to support the issue, as professional naval officers see it, with re

strongly that the "user," the active duty military, must have complete communication with the manufacturer, whether it be General Dynamics, McDonnell Douglas, Grumman, etc. They must have freedom of communication so they can build the kind of weapons systems that we need to defend this country.

I did not in any way criticize the attempt to make certain that the whole Pentagon was purged of any true wrongdoing. I see no reason why a handful of individuals should be used as an example to castigate the entire industrial base and military organizations that are so vital in defending, not just this country, but the entire free world.

If the Kremlin is happy that we are generating headlines that indicate that there is waste, fraud, and abuse rampant, it is because of the media slant on this thing. Let me emphasize that the entire investigation started within the U.S. Navy by the Naval Investigative Services two years ago. It was the military doing exactly what the law enjoins them to do to—make certain there is no corruption. Mind you, we don't know there is any corruption, yet. The media immediately pounced on this, giving the impression worldwide, that the Pentagon is nothing except one loosely run porkbarrel. This is absolutely false.

**EIR:** Numerous editorials in the press have expressed concern about the seemingly unconstitutional aspects of the methods and procedures used in the investigation. Editors of *EIR* have experienced this lack of due process. Do you think the grand jury system is abused for political purposes?

**Hill:** When you pin it down to this particular case, I must at least wait until we have more information. If you say, in general, is the grand jury system used in an abusive way, I would say there is not much question about that going on in our government at the present time. People can be on both sides of this issue. I am on the side of supporting the active duty military and government servant and corporate officers of our major industrial base in thinking that they are for the most part, honest, sincere individuals, trying to do the right thing. I will use the Iran-Contra affair as an example <sup>given to</sup> the people in the National Security Council and the President were carrying out the policies of the U.S. government to the best of their ability. To use special prosecutors, grand juries, and so forth against those people is a travesty.

In this present instance . . . I personally have some reservations about the methods used in this investigation. . . .

I think the media and the politicians pick up on things of this sort for their own purposes almost immediately. This encourages the leaks. For example, I said on the "Crossfire" program, that John Lehman was a vigorous and powerful person in pushing the buildup of the 600-ship, 15-carrier battle group Navy when he was secretary; in doing so, he stepped on a lot of toes. Those toes were not all political. Some of them were in industry. He really knocked heads in industry, too, if you will, to get General Electric to work with Pratt & Whitney, and that sort of thing. All kinds of pressures are being brought to get information out that will do somebody's political dirty work. If it looks like someone such as John Lehman is getting close to the seat of power in the next election, I can see where the leaking is encouraged to impugn his honor, long before there is any indictment, long before there is a hearing, long before there is any conviction. They are looking for the big names. . . .

**EIR:** Leonardo da Vinci was one of the biggest “defense contractors” of his day. He believed that the development of military technologies was a singular catalyst for scientific and technological progress serving society at large. Do you sympathize with his view?

**Hill:** Would that we had Leonardo da Vinci today. There is hardly anything that we have on the drawing boards that he did not think about. In the military, we are constantly pushing to the far edge, to the horizons of technology. To do so requires more and more communication between all areas involved.

Consequently, at a time when we need more communications than ever before, we are beset by voices claiming that this is the antithesis of the free enterprise system. That argument is pure nonsense.

**EIR:** Marxists have given the “military industrial complex” a bad name. What is the positive role of the Association of Naval Aviation?

**Hill:** It has been the goal of the ANA to reestablish the communication that we had between the aerospace industry, the shipbuilding industry, and the user before World War II. In the early days, the great pioneers from different companies in aviation would sit around a table on a Saturday and discuss all the aspects of their technology as they knew it. It was this transfer of information in an informal way that allowed any corporation to step in and take over when we really needed production during World War II. In addition, few people realize that most of the machine tools that were used to build airplanes in World War II and subsequently, until recent times, were owned by the military, by the Bureau of Aeronautics, now Air Systems Command. They owned a tremendous store of machine tools that industry could draw on. We made sure that the transfer of technology between various companies was sufficient to allow uninterrupted production of ships or airplanes.

We really continued that pretty much until the Kennedy administration and the McNamara regime, which, in my opinion, attempted to substitute for this direct communication between the uniformed military and the industrial base, substituting a middle management to bring about, in their words, “a more efficient use of resources.” . . .

I was part of the so-called “whiz kid” organization, working for Alan Enthoven, individuals for whom I have a great deal of personal respect. That notwithstanding, the shift from the Navy Department base of information and what they needed, into a handful of analysts around the Secretary of Defense was not good.

**EIR:** Is defense procurement fraud, as we are reading about in the media, a red herring?

**Hill:** To the degree that no laws were broken, it is a red herring. To the degree that laws were broken, so disciplinary action must be taken. I'd also point out that we have had

some 75 new laws on defense procurement from the Congress in the last two years. It is my understanding that it takes about 14 months to get changes implemented through the procurement system, as a result of the new laws. Anytime you get a complexity of laws, regulations, boards, and auditors, you have the opportunity to create the appearance of fraud, even though none exists. . . .

If someone really wants to build an airplane and get it through the system in a relatively short period of time, shortcuts may sometimes be demanded. We have many examples of this, when shortcuts for the safety of the nation were so great that we bypassed as many different rules on procurement as we could. A case in point is the Polaris system, a perfect example. The direction for the Polaris system came directly from President Dwight Eisenhower. . . . It was the direction from him to the Chief of Naval Operations that brought about the special management system that put Polaris on line, years before it could have been done under any other method.

**EIR:** The present investigation is similar to the General Dynamics case, which led to the indictment of James Beggs, former head of NASA. Although Beggs was vindicated, the indictment indirectly led to the Shuttle disaster. Can you foresee a similar impact on our defense capabilities?

**Hill:** Less so than in the case of Mr. Beggs and General Dynamics. That case indeed was a travesty. Let me reference how we run things in our military organizations. We emphasize the requirement to have trained replacements to take over any job, at any time, based on any contingency. I think the strength of our defense organizations, whether it be a secretary of the navy or a four star officer, is that we have waiting in the wings adequately trained replacements. So I think the chances of our defense being hurt by individuals having their reputations tarnished is far less than in other agencies in the government. NASA, in comparison, is a relatively small organization.

**EIR:** Many of the procurement programs under scrutiny, such as the F-18, impact on our NATO, Middle East, and Asian allies. In the context of the INF treaty, could a payoff-style scandal disrupt U.S. relations with our allies?

**Hill:** This, of course, is a very delicate area. There really are only one or two countries that look askance at a payoff for a contract, one of them being the United States. Anyone who has dealt in foreign sales, military or otherwise, knows that combinations which we consider illegal or unlawful in this country are considered a perfectly natural way of life in other areas of the world. I faced this when I was chief of the naval mission to Brazil, in trying to assist U.S. corporations in their dealings with the Brazilian military in certain contracts that we thought would be helpful for both nations. We saw the combination that was arrayed against the U.S. and U.S. manufacturers by England, France, Germany, and Italy, to

which a cartel is a way of life. For example, we might be dealing in a single weapon system; a U.S. company would be constrained by the anti-trust laws with putting together a combination package to be sold to another country. But those laws do not constrain England, France, or Germany. . . .

When it is important to our defense to supply our allies with what they really want, to defend themselves, it is U.S. weapons systems that they want. We are up against a kind of competition from our industrial allies that makes it difficult for us to respond effectively. On that basis it is very hard for a U.S. company, being pushed by the State Department or members of the Congress . . . to face that kind of competition without acceding to what we in the U.S. call the "payoff" route. I am not saying that they should do so. I am merely pointing out that the pressures are tremendous and we should understand that the global marketplace is not controlled by U.S. laws.

**EIR:** The anti-defense lobby has been supported by powerful insurance and banking interests. The Grace Commission followed by the Packard Commission have recommended severe austerity. Is budget-driven austerity a threat to maintaining our national defense?

**Hill:** We all would like to see the budget deficit kept under control. The important thing to remember is that the defense share of the the total GNP is only 6-7%, the total defense budget is only in the 21-22% of the total national budget. There is no reason to apportion to defense any greater share of the deficit than their share of the budget. . . . I do not believe that we can defend this country and the free world with anything less than 3% real growth in the defense budget on an annual basis.

I was involved with Mr. Grace in an exchange, at the time he headed the Grace Commission, because he represented the monumental failure of the outsider to understand how the system works. In attacking certain areas of the military—for example, fringe and retirement benefits and pay—it was apparent to us that Mr. Grace was really reaching into the public sector to grab monies on behalf of the private sector, specifically to remove the military commissaries and replace them with privately run supermarket management.

The insurance companies would dearly love to be able to manipulate the fund we have for military retirement, Social Security, funds of that ilk. If you look at the Grace Commission recommendations, to make their case, they became part of the anti-defense lobby from the standpoint of its attempt to cut manpower and personnel. They attempted to portray military pay and retirement pay as a huge porkbarrel. The Grace Commission found itself as part of the anti-defense lobby by virtue of its recommendations.

**EIR:** Is the Strategic Defense Initiative threatened by this anti-defense hysteria? Is a Conventional Defense Initiative a militarily acceptable and cost-efficient alternative?

**Hill:** That is a fascinating question because it gets to the heart of what I said about the role of the military in pushing to the horizons of new technologies. Contrary to a lot of liberal thinking, everything that we have that can be considered a rapid or a substantial advance in technology is generated by the military, including in the field of medicine. The sonogram that we use to look inside the human body is an adaptation of the sonar developed for anti-submarine warfare. The first major jet transport, the 707, was a derivative of the military KC-135 tanker, and there are many more examples. We will continue doing this.

The Strategic Defense Initiative is just that sort of combination of technologies that is going to affect everything else that follows. I like to use the phrase "serendipity factor." We are looking for something, and we find something else. And that something else is far better than that which we were originally searching for. So, when people try to separate the Conventional Defense Initiative from the Strategic Defense Initiative, they don't understand the mission, or the facts, in the first place.

The SDI is theoretically a way for us to protect ourselves from incoming ballistic missiles. But you are not protecting the country, if you have an umbrella over the country while you let sea-skimming cruise missiles come in underneath. Therefore, there is no SDI without a CDI. They are intertwined. If you get an adequate CDI below the atmosphere, you'll only get it as a spinoff from the research being done on SDI. CDI means nothing without SDI and vice versa. This is just a game aimed at discrediting SDI research, development, and some deployment. . . . When people suggest we should abandon SDI and just concentrate on conventional build-up, I point out that it will cost four to five times more than what we are doing right now, alone and in isolation from our nuclear defense capabilities.

**EIR:** In this election year, do you think the "military industrial complex" should lay low or seek support politically from the American people?

**Hill:** Quite clearly I think that the "military-industrial complex" is an absolutely vital part of our defense and they should be active politically. It should be making the point that a vital requirement for defending this country is an industrial base. I think it is also important that when people think of real economic wealth being created by jobs that produce, there is often a tendency to think that the man who works on the production line in General Motors and turns out a Chevrolet is producing more than the man on the production line at, say Grumman, that produces an A-6, our standard all-weather attack aircraft. Quite the contrary, both provide as much real wealth in what they do; indeed, I'd say possibly the man working on the A-6 is producing something of more lasting value. We started producing that airplane in 1957 and some in the fleet are 30 years old. We have far fewer 30-year-old Chevys on the road.