

H-Diplo ROUNDTABLE XXIII-8

Michael Brenes. *For Might and Right: Cold War Defense Spending and the Remaking of American Democracy*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2020. ISBN: 9781625345219 (hardcover, \$90.00); 9781625345226 (paperback, \$29.95).

25 October 2021 | <https://hdiplo.org/to/RT23-8>

Editor: Diane Labrosse | Production Editor: George Fujii

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INTRODUCTION BY THOMAS MADDUX, CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY NORTHRIDGE, EMERITUS

In his 1961 “Farewell Address” to the nation President Dwight Eisenhower warned about the military-industrial complex as a threat to American democracy. Michael Brenes points out that Eisenhower also affirmed his support for a strong defense in the Cold War conflict with Communism. (132-133). Eisenhower lifted the “veil” over the impact of the Cold War on democracy and pointed to the challenges that the United States would face in its role as the leading world power dealing with both international issues and challenges and at the same time maintaining the essentials of democracy. Brenes addresses this challenge, as other scholars have done, by using the concept of a “Cold War coalition” that emerged out of the initial impact of World War II defense mobilization and escalated as the Cold War spread from Europe to Asia in the Korean War and beyond to a global conflict by the 1960s.¹ Brenes defines the Cold War coalition broadly to include defense workers, contractors, military leaders, and “local, state, and national politicians” who “became joined in their efforts to ensure America’s global fight against communism served their respective interests and ends.” (4) It was an “intermestic” coalition, Brenes emphasizes, in which members focused on economic, political, personal, and ideological Cold War issues and interacted with national leaders with similar concerns oriented more towards the external Cold War (4-10, 247-248).²

In 1991 the Soviet Union’s empire collapsed, China shifted under the Chinese Communist Party to a more traditional, authoritarian regime with emphasis on state/party control of an expanding economy. and the United States declared victory. Did this Cold War “victory” justify the enormous expenses, human casualties, and impact on the domestic side in the United States? Brenes’s conclusion is that the domestic consequences to democracy, the economy, politics, and racial and class inequality were too pervasive even if they were not totally negative (239-244). This conclusion is reinforced by Brenes’s argument that reliance on defense spending continued, benefitting educated whites the most while reducing industrial opportunities for workers and racial minorities. The “War on Terror” after 2001 reinforced the military-industrial complex as Brenes notes: “the national security state continues to serve as an engine of employment while at the same time contributing to long-term inequality” (246).

The reviewers are impressed with the research in Brenes study, the extensive coverage that he provides of the Cold War coalition and the critical conclusions that are advanced on the debilitating impact of the coalition. Amy Rutenberg suggests that the study “significantly adds to our understanding of the adaptability and longevity of Cold War militarization” and “offers a rational explanation for why such a diverse, indeed, contradictory coalition of people could all come together to advocate increased defense spending.” Rosella Cappella Zielinski also praises Brenes’s concept of a Cold War coalition and how this coalition, despite its diversity, was able to manage its disagreements and influence continuing military spending during the Cold War and afterwards. “Brenes’s narrative,” Zielinski argues, “is a critical addition” to the existing literature by treating the “Cold War coalition as a fluid and changing group of actors that are both responsive to national security and economic events and shaped by them.” Brian Casserly agrees on the coalition concept and that Brenes has overall provided a “valuable contribution to the political history of defense spending.” In describing Brenes’s book as “provocative” and challenging to interpretations on U.S. conservatism by demonstrating a lack of unity as well as highlighting the role of Cold War seminars organized to mobilize support for defense spending, Chris Foss also emphasizes the extensive secondary and

¹ Michael Sherry, *In the Shadow of War: The United States since the 1930s* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995); Laura McEnaney, *Civil Defense Begins at Home: Militarization Meets Everyday Life in the Fifties* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000); Alex Roland, *The Military-Industrial Complex* (Washington, D.C.: American Historical Association, 2001); Aaron Friedberg, *In the Shadow of the Garrison State: American Anti-Statism and Its Cold War Grand Strategy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000); and Paul C. Koistinen, *State of War: The Political Economy of American Warfare, 1945-2011* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2012).

² See Aaron Donaghy’s *The Second Cold War: Carter Reagan, and the Politics of Foreign Policy* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2021) for an example of how President Jimmy Carter was persuaded to abandon his desire to reduce defense spending as he approached re-election in 1980 as well as for President Ronald Reagan’s shifts in his stance on dealing with the Soviet Union before the 1984 election. Both Carter and Reagan recognized the political benefits of making adjustments.

primary research that bolsters the study, including presidential and senatorial papers, private archives, major periodicals, and newspapers.

Casserly and Foss do point to areas that are not covered in terms of the coalition. Casserly suggests that military installations such as the Navy's Puget Sound Shipyard and naval sites in Norfolk, Virginia, and San Diego as well as U.S. nuclear laboratories and plants should have received attention. Foss praises Brenes's demonstration of how Senator George McGovern and President Ronald Reagan "tailored their electoral ambitions to the anti-military and pro-military voting blocs, respectively," but argues that Senator Henry Jackson of Washington, who is viewed as a Cold Warrior and pro-defense spending, may have been more flexible than Brenes suggests.

Participants:

Michael Brenes is Associate Director of the Brady-Johnson Program in Grand Strategy and Lecturer in History at Yale University. He is the author of *For Might and Right: Cold War Defense Spending and the Remaking of American Democracy* (University of Massachusetts Press, 2020). He is currently working on a history of the War on Terror.

Brian Casserly is an Associate Professor in the History Department at Bellevue College, where he teaches U.S. history, military history, and the history of the Pacific Northwest region. He received his PhD. in history from the University of Washington in 2007. His research interests focus on the relationships between military installations and adjacent civilian communities. He is the author of "Puget Sound's Security Codependency and Western Cold War Histories, 1950–1984," *Pacific Historical Review* 80 (May 2011).

Chris Foss is an adjunct instructor of history at Washington State University Vancouver. He received his Ph.D. in U.S. foreign relations history from the University of Colorado Boulder. His book, *Facing the World: Defense Spending and International Trade in the Pacific Northwest Since World War II*, was published by Oregon State University Press in 2020. Foss contributed a chapter to Andrew L. Johns and Mitchell B. Lerner, eds., *The Cold War at Home and Abroad: Domestic Politics and US Foreign Policy Since 1945* (The University Press of Kentucky, 2018). His work has also been published in *Passport*, *The History Teacher*, *H-Diplo*, *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, *The Oregon Encyclopedia*, and *Pacific Northwest Quarterly*. Foss is working on a new project on the career of Oregon U.S. Representative Edith Green, for which he won the Donald J. Sterling Senior Fellowship for research at the Oregon Historical Society.

Amy J. Rutenberg is an Assistant Professor of History at Iowa State University. She is the author of *Rough Draft: Cold War Military Manpower Policy and the Origins of Vietnam-Era Draft Resistance* (Cornell University Press, 2019), and she is currently working on a book on antimilitarist activism and military service in the 1970s and 1980s. Her work has appeared in *Cold War History*, the *New York Times*, and *The Atlantic*.

Rosella Cappella Zielinski is an Assistant Professor of Political Science at Boston University and a non-resident fellow at The Brute Krulak Center for Innovation and Creativity at Marine Corps University. She specializes in study the political economy of security. She is the author of *How States Pay for Wars* (Cornell University Press, 2016) winner of the 2017 American Political Science Association Robert L. Jervis and Paul W. Schroeder Best Book Award in International History and Politics. Her other works can be found in the *Journal of Peace Research*, *Conflict Management and Peace Science*, *Security Studies*, *European Journal of International Relations*, *Journal of Global Security Studies*, as well as *Foreign Affairs*, *Texas National Security Review*, and *War on the Rocks*. Her current book project explores how wartime coalition members coordinate supply, the institutions set up to facilitate coordination, and the legacies of these institutions one the war ends.

REVIEW BY BRIAN CASSERLY, BELLEVUE COLLEGE

In *For Might and Right: Cold War Defense Spending and the Remaking of American Democracy* Michael Brenes focuses on the politics of the ‘Cold War Coalition,’ which was made up of a variety of groups at the national and local levels of the United States with a vested interest in defense spending. The book makes a valuable contribution to the political history of defense spending during the Cold War and especially to understandings of how various interest groups sought to harness defense spending for their own economic and ideological purposes.³ Brenes argues that this coalition became increasingly powerful in American politics in support of the Military-Industrial Complex. The book particularly examines how, for members of the coalition, defense spending became a surrogate form of the welfare state, providing benefits to those dependent on defense spending justified by ideas about national security and especially anti-communism.

Over the course of five chapters that cover the roughly forty-year period of the Cold War, *For Might and Right* analyzes how the Cold War Coalition adapted to changes in the Cold War and American politics. Brenes traces the rise of defense spending in the 1930s and during World War II. During the 1940s and 1950s, high levels of spending on the military became the norm and communities across the U.S. became increasingly reliant on military Keynesianism as a means of securing economic prosperity. He describes how “the national security state became the biggest federal apparatus, responsible for delivering full employment, economic growth, and regional development to Americans” (69). Anti-Communism became the important justification for maintaining large defense budgets and was used to keep money flowing to defense-dependent communities.

The context of the Vietnam War in the late 1960s and the 1970s created challenges for the Cold War coalition. Antimilitarism emerged as a significant force in American society and posed a major challenge to the Cold War coalition. As the war wound down, the political left sought to reduce defense spending and free up funds for domestic programs. In the face of this challenge, the Cold War coalition doubled down on its relationship with political leaders who remained committed to high levels of defense spending. In the 1970s, conservative politicians such as Ronald Reagan garnered support from the Cold War coalition by supporting continued high levels of defense spending in order to solidify Republican political power and shift American politics to the right.

It is unfair to demand that a monograph address every aspect of its broad topic but *For Might and Right* does point to issues that need further exploration and which would throw further light on the complexities of the political history of Cold War defense spending. Brenes argues that the Cold War Coalition was made up of “defense workers, community boosters, executives of military contractors, labor union leaders and rank-and-file workers, current and retired members of the military, political activists, and local, state, and national politicians” (4). The book, largely focuses, however, on just part of the coalition: defense contractors, political leaders, intellectuals, and think tanks. There is relatively little analysis of the local elements of the Cold War Coalition and how they reacted to and sought to shape, and sometimes oppose, defense spending in their communities. Labor, local business and community groups, and active-duty military personnel posted to military installations around the nation are not analyzed extensively and are usually portrayed as being subject to decisions about defense spending made in Washington, D.C. rather than as agents who were actively trying to influence them. Brenes acknowledges the complexity of motivations and attitudes on the part of various members of the coalition, but does not examine that complexity in significant detail at the local level. This would be a fruitful field for further research into the complexities of the politics surrounding defense-spending decisions.

At times Brenes portrays the Cold War Coalition as monolithic and does not delve into some of the more nuanced and complex set of reactions by defense-dependent communities to new defense programs or installations particularly by the

³ For historical analysis of Cold War defense spending see, for example, Ann Markusen, Peter Hall, Scott Campbell, and Sabina Deitrick, *The Rise of the Gunbelt: The Military Remapping of Industrial America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991); Roger W. Lotchin, *Fortress California, 1910-1961: From Warfare to Welfare* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992); Kari Fredrickson, *Cold War Dixie: Militarization and Modernization in the American South* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2014).

1970s and 1980s when concerns about military spending, a backlash against the Vietnam War, a growing environmental awareness, and concerns about nuclear weapons influenced some Americans to be more skeptical of military spending. A related issue with the book is that its analysis of Cold War liberal politicians is sometimes one-dimensional. For example, Senator Henry M. Jackson of Washington State was a staunch member of the Cold War Coalition until his death in 1983. Over the course of his career he fought assiduously to both increase the U.S. defense budget overall and to ensure that a substantial portion of that budget made its way to defense industries and military installations in Washington State. Jackson's approach was a mixture of political pragmatism – keeping defense dollars flowing to Washington helped to ensure his regular reelection – and his strong ideological commitment to anti-Communism.

By the end of the 1960s, however, key 'Cold Warriors' like Jackson realized that public support for defense spending had become more nuanced. Considerable numbers of highly vocal constituents remained heavily dependent on defense budgets and the development of new military facilities or weapons systems and demanded that Jackson maintain the flow of military dollars to their communities. At the same time, other voters became increasingly critical of military spending and urged the senator to oppose a large overall defense budget or specific defense projects in Washington state. This opposition was built on concerns about the necessity of defense spending, fears that it contributed to the nuclear arms race, and worries about its environmental impacts. As a pragmatic politician, Jackson, was aware of, and influenced by, public opposition to the siting of the Anti-Ballistic Missile in the Greater Seattle area and to the development by the U.S. Navy of the Trident Ballistic Missile submarine base at Bangor across Puget Sound from Seattle.

In addition, Jackson's support for federal funding for Boeing's Supersonic Transport, which would have been built in the Seattle area, faced opposition from some locals on the basis of cost and its environmental impacts. Even in defense-dependent communities in the Pacific Northwest of the U.S., some voters expressed a new skepticism about Cold War spending due to residual concerns about U.S. military force emerging from the war in Vietnam, fear of nuclear weapons, and growing worries about the environmental consequences of defense spending. Other residents of defense-dependent communities continued to recognize and support military spending as part of their economic prosperity but worried about some of the effects of that spending in terms of population growth and related social and environmental problems. This latter group often demanded government assistance in dealing with these issues as part of their support for defense spending in their communities.⁴ It is likely that there were important regional variations of the Cold War Coalition but this deserves further research to determine if Jackson's experience was shared by politicians who supported the Cold War Coalition in other parts of the nation.

Brenes uses evidence from a variety of archival collections to support his analysis. These range from the papers of Harry Truman and other presidents to those of the National Association of Manufacturers, to the records of various anti-Communist groups. The book also relies extensively on evidence from newspapers with a more 'national' circulation, such as the *New York Times*. A greater focus on local experiences and variations of the Cold War Coalition would benefit from analysis of more regional and local publications.

There are a number of smaller issues with the book. Most of the defense industries Brenes that analyzes were located in New York, New England, or California and most are corporations that produced military equipment of various kinds. As a historian of the Pacific Northwest and of the region's military installations, it struck this reviewer as odd that the cover photo of the book is of the U.S. Navy's *USS Ohio*, a Trident ballistic missile submarine, undergoing modification at the

⁴ For the complexities of how communities reacted to Cold War defense spending see, for example, Gretchen Heefner, *The Missile Next Door: The Minuteman in the American Heartland* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2012); John M. Findlay and Bruce Hevly, *Atomic Frontier Days: Hanford and the American West* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2011); Len Ackland, *Making a Real Killing: Rocky Flats and the Nuclear West* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1999); Michael D'Antonio, *Atomic Harvest: Hanford and the Lethal Toll of America's Nuclear Arsenal* (New York: Crown Publishers, 1993); Brian G. Casserly, "Securing the Sound: The Evolution of Civilian-Military Relations in the Puget Sound Region, 1891-1984," PhD. Dissertation (University of Washington, 2007).

Puget Sound Naval Shipyard. Military facilities like the shipyard were a major part of defense budgets throughout the Cold War but, despite the cover photo, there is little mention of naval or other military installations in the book itself. The only beneficiary of defense budgets in the Northwest that is discussed is Boeing, and some of the issues the author raises about the company have more to do with civilian airliner production than military hardware. Similarly, other key parts of the nation's defense infrastructure, such as the major naval industries and installations around Norfolk, Virginia or San Diego, California also receive little or no analysis. The complex of laboratories and plants supporting the development and production of U.S. nuclear weapons would be another area whose links to the Cold War Coalition would be of interest.

One final critique relates to the author's argument that domestic issues around the social safety net played a key role in the Cold War Coalition. It is surprising therefore, that in his analysis of the decision by President Lyndon B. Johnson to send U.S. combat troops to war in Vietnam, there is little or no mention of the context of Johnson's concerns about the potential impact on his Great Society programs of a failure to prevent communist expansion in Southeast Asia.⁵

Overall, Brenes has produced a useful study of Cold War politics which leave many questions that need to be investigated by further scholarship.

⁵ See, for example, Francis M. Bator, "No Good Choices: LBJ and the Vietnam/Great Society Connection," *Diplomatic History* 32:3 (June 2008): 309-340.

REVIEW BY CHRIS FOSS, WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY VANCOUVER

United States President Dwight D. Eisenhower famously discussed the ‘military-industrial complex’ in his final White House address in January 1961.⁶ Whether Eisenhower was really against or actually supportive of the ties between big business and the Pentagon, it was the most explicit occasion wherein a U.S. chief executive acknowledged the link between the two. Scholars have since spent much time investigating, analyzing, and judging the so-called ‘complex.’ Some historians have examined the effects of defense spending upon particular locations.⁷ A few others have looked at the national narrative of the vagaries of defense spending.⁸ Still others have looked at how Congress has politicized what has come to be called the ‘national security state’.⁹ In *For Might and Right*, Michael Brenes synthesizes this literature while getting at an important question that others have either missed, or only implicitly addressed: how did Cold War defense spending affect the course of American democracy? He does all of this in a compact narrative of under 250 pages. The result is a provocative work that should get wide attention.

The major argument Brenes proffers throughout *For Might and Right* is that U.S. military spending, which began even before World War II and continues to the present, created a coalition of special interests “whose major goal was to keep the military-industrial complex thriving” (4). This “Cold War coalition” included the military, defense workers, military contractors, organized labor, lobbyists, and local, state, and national politicians (4). All of them sought not just to win the Cold War, but in doing so, to “ensure America’s global fight against communism served their respective interests and ends” (4). In the process, “Cold War defense spending remade participatory politics and American democracy,” leading to “a new political economy” which “transformed Americans’ politics and political choices” (4). Those choices “created strange bedfellows [...] in ways that made American citizens increasingly look to military spending, rather than to social welfare programs, to alleviate unemployment and economic turmoil” (4). In the process, Cold War defense spending altered American democracy, because what Brenes dubs a “warfare state” functioned as the social welfare state, protecting American citizens at home and abroad (4). Whether or not people knew it or wanted it that way, national security was hardly the exclusive province of white male elites—it affected many American men and women, white and non-white alike.

Perhaps the most striking facet of the introduction, however, is its pushback against decades of scholarship on U.S. conservatism.¹⁰ To be sure, Brenes does not dismiss the important work demonstrating the return of a conservative

⁶ Dwight D. Eisenhower, Farewell Radio and Television Address to the American People, January 17, 1961, The American Presidency Project, <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/node/234856>.

⁷ For example, see Roger W. Lotchin, *Fortress California 1910-1961: From Warfare to Welfare* (Oxford University Press, 1992); Brian Casserly, “Securing the Sound: The Evolution of Civilian-Military Relations in the Puget Sound Area, 1891-1984” (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Washington, 2007); Gretchen Heefner, *The Missile Next Door: The Minuteman in the American Heartland* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2012); Christopher P. Foss, *Facing the World: Defense Spending and International Trade in the Pacific Northwest Since World War II* (Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 2020).

⁸ For example, see Ann Markusen, Peter Hall, Scott Campbell, and Sabina Deitrick, *The Rise of the Gunbelt: The Military Remapping of Industrial America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991); Michael Sherry, *In the Shadow of War: The United States since the 1930s* (Cambridge: Yale University Press, 1997).

⁹ For example, see Robert David Johnson, *Congress and the Cold War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005); Julian Zelizer, *Arsenal of Democracy: The Politics of National Security—From World War II to The War on Terrorism* (New York: Perseus, 2010).

¹⁰ For examples of the historiography that Brenes challenges, see Lisa McGirr, *Suburban Warriors: The Origins of the New American Right* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000); Rick Perlstein, *Before the Storm: Barry Goldwater and the Unmaking of the American Consensus* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2001); Donald Critchlow, *The Conservative Ascendancy: How the GOP Right Made*

Republican Party to power at the end of the twentieth century. In the context of the Cold War coalition, however, Brenes contends there was no real “conservative movement” because “a movement would imply unity” (19). Much is known about national security divisions among Democrats, but relatively little work has been done on Republican and conservative schisms highlighted by the Cold War.¹¹ Per Brenes, many Cold War conservatives, to be sure, railed against government expansion and sought to slash the federal budget. Rhetoric belied reality when it came to the Cold War, however, because these conservatives sought increased military spending. Some of them were anti-Soviet ideologues, but for most, it all came down to domestic politics: the growth of the welfare state through the military allowed the Right to pull voters toward them, even if it seemed against their best interests to vote against domestic welfare programs. Defense spending “bankrolled weapons building, but also health care benefits to veterans, housing subsidies and education grants for military families, and companies that invested in scientific research and development” (5). Going even further, Brenes says that “defense spending transformed industry and the labor market across the United States” as “jobs in infrastructure, manufacturing, clerical work, and research and development followed, as did a host of businesses (both large and small) that catered to the consumerist needs of defense workers” (5). Throughout the country there were many towns and even some big cities where “the proverbial coffee shop, pharmacy, or department store was just as reliant upon military spending as the workers in the plants” (5). In the end, “the Cold War thus created a large group of Americans who sought to capitalize on the financial incentives offered by a large defense budget” who were co-opted by the Republicans (5).

Brenes contends the Cold War coalition started to form in the 1930s, when Americans allowed the problems of the world to come to them; not merely out of an urge to solve them, but because it was in the best interests of their pocketbooks. The successive threats of Nazi Germany, imperial Japan, and the Soviet Union created an opening for the administrations of Presidents Franklin D. Roosevelt and Harry S. Truman to advocate for increased federal spending, ostensibly for national security purposes, but also to aid Americans who were seeking to escape poverty. These liberal Democrats saw their ambitions thwarted by Republicans who embraced national security as their main post-World War II credential come election time. Democrats countered the resurgent GOP by embracing “military Keynesianism” as a way to keep bringing federal funding home to their constituents (18). Consequently, “wanting to keep the ‘American Dream’ alive in their districts and states, local and national politicians subsidized the defense industry to serve their respective political agendas” (27). Instead of destroying the New Deal state, Republicans used it to further their ideological ends, perverting the strengthened executive branch, national security bureaucracy, and national defense industry to undermine the explicitly non-military elements of the New Deal. As Brenes puts it, “the Right worked within the Cold War state to secure influence among the American people and positions of power in the federal government. In propounding anticommunist discourse and policies, Republican antistatism was a means toward statist ends” (37-38).

As the Republicans took over Congress between 1947 and 1949, and then again from 1953 to 1955, the defeat of Fair Deal social welfare programs proposed by Truman cemented the turn of ordinary Americans to the government to increased defense spending as a way to improve their economic prospects. But Brenes expertly argues in the first chapter—and throughout the rest of the book—that defense spending was a false hope for the majority of working-class Americans. Defense contracts were increasingly awarded to big businesses, typically those based in the southern and western United States. Right-to-work laws put in place in those states after the Republicans passed the Taft-Hartley Act in 1947 meant that defense contractors were more apt to locate in the so-called Sunbelt in large part because they did not have to deal with unions. Workers were thus affected by the loss of jobs in the northern and eastern parts of the country, the fact that the jobs that were established were non-union, and by the increasing specialization of those jobs. White-collar defense jobs shut out less-skilled Black and white workers. As technology advanced in the defense sector, automation increased, leaving fewer jobs

Political History (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2007); Kim Phillips-Fein, *Invisible Hands: The Making of the Conservative Movement from the New Deal to Reagan* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2009).

¹¹ A notable exception Brenes highlights is Andrew L. Johns, *Vietnam’s Second Front: Domestic Politics, the Republican Party, and the War* (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 2010).

overall. All of this should have, in theory, led to declining public support for the military-industrial complex; quite the opposite happened, however, as Brenes demonstrates in succeeding chapters.

Consternation about military Keynesianism was not confined to the blue-collar Rust Belt: in the Eisenhower administration, budget hawks in the government worried about the impact of increased military spending on the federal budget. From here through the end of the Cold War, successive presidential administrations, Democratic and Republican, attempted to reduce military expenditures. Brenes argues that members of the Cold War coalition banded together and used lobby groups, pressure mail to their Congressional representatives, and high-level connections to the Pentagon to successfully ward off wholesale defense cuts, while also selling the general public at large on the importance of a strong military, both as a good in and of itself, and as a jobs engine. In so doing, Brenes uncovers alarming evidence about some of these coalition members, particularly organizers of “Cold War seminars,” whom he argues were racists as well as anti-Communists (81). This combination was a vital part of the coalition going forward, as the staunchest Cold Warriors came from the U.S. South. The seminars went ahead somewhat underneath the radar in the 1960s and 1970s, and surreptitiously allowed a public-private partnership to influence the beliefs of Americans about the necessity of fighting the Cold War.

Despite the efforts of the seminar organizers, the budget hawks found a powerful ally in U.S. Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara. Serving under Presidents John F. Kennedy and Lyndon B. Johnson, McNamara sought high-tech tools for the military, but also started the slow, decades-long process of eliminating what were deemed excess military installations. Beyond McNamara, Brenes documents the rise of Congressional “antimilitarists” alongside that of the New Left, whose ideas eventually infiltrated much of the Democratic Party (112). He particularly focuses on 1972 Democratic presidential candidate George McGovern, who sought to extricate the U.S. from the Vietnam War while redirecting defense spending toward peacetime economic conversion. Brenes argues McGovern was too unspecific in what he meant by conversion. Democrats and New Leftists never came up with an effective response to the Cold War coalition ideology—flawed as it was—of maintaining or increasing employment via military Keynesianism. Furthermore, the fusion of racist and militarist ideas continued to have strong currency after the 1960s. Republicans like President Richard M. Nixon successfully encouraged white coalition voters to equate military cuts with spending on social welfare programs which would not help them because these were aimed at the poor and racial minorities.

Nixon vanquished McGovern in 1972, but defense spending still went down, and the U.S. withdrew from Vietnam as it pursued détente with the Soviet Union and China. The Cold War coalition, seething at these developments, turned to former California Governor Ronald Reagan as its new standard-bearer. Foreign policy does not often play a major role in U.S. elections, but Brenes convincingly demonstrates that Reagan’s opposition to détente enabled him to nearly defeat President Gerald Ford for the 1976 GOP presidential nomination. Reagan channeled the increasingly loud and numerous voices from the Cold War coalition, telling his followers that not only were antimilitarist Democrats against their interests, but so too were the pro-détente elements in the Ford Administration. After Ford lost the general election to former Georgia Governor Jimmy Carter, who, as president floundered between détente and a more aggressive stance toward the Soviet Union, Reagan carved out a winning coalition that included both Republicans and Democrats in finally capturing the presidency in 1980. While liberals in the press and the scholarly community have long criticized Reagan for sharply increasing federal spending on defense and cutting social welfare programs, Brenes shows that Reagan merely represented the climax of a decades-long process. The Cold War coalition continued to have a winning formula despite diminishing returns: for example, the Strategic Defense Initiative, while employing relatively few people, nonetheless became a successful symbol of the peace through strength approach to Moscow propounded by the Reagan administration. And despite his big increases in defense spending, Reagan was still able to say, “government is not the solution to our problems: government is the problem,” with a straight face, as those left behind by the narrowness of that spending increasingly blamed the federal government for their plight.¹²

¹² Ronald Reagan, Inaugural Address, January 20, 1981, The American Presidency Project, <https://www.presidency.ucs.edu/node/246336>.

For Might and Right is a very good book, in part because of the depth of the source base. Over fifty pages of footnotes reveal multiple primary and secondary sources per citation, evidence that Brenes consulted multiple points of view. He consulted the library of nearly every president since the Cold War began. He viewed the personal papers of other important politicians from the era, including Republican U.S. Senator Robert Taft of Ohio, and Democratic Senators Hubert Humphrey of Minnesota and Henry Jackson of Washington. He consulted the archives of the American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations and the National Association of Manufacturers. He cites major periodicals and newspapers (and many minor ones) to get a sense of how public opinion matched up with the efforts of political and business movers and shakers to mold Americans into Cold Warriors. He undertook no multiarchival work outside of the U.S., but it was not necessary for this purely domestic topic. Someday there may be a comparative work on how another Cold War ally or foe built its own Cold War coalition, but that is clearly beyond the scope of this book.

Future work in political history or biography can build on the arguments of *For Might and Right* by utilizing the Cold War coalition as a frame of analysis. Brenes does a good job examining how politicians like McGovern and Reagan tailored their electoral ambitions to the anti-military and pro-military voting blocs, respectively, that they were trying to win over. Jackson was a far more complex figure, one whose story dispels the notion that Cold War politicians are easily classifiable in one of those camps. Indeed, as Brenes suggests, Jackson was more of a malleable politician than a fiery anti-Communist (259 footnote 84). His biographer, who lauds his foreign policy record, chides Jackson for pushing too strongly for détente with China while ignoring or downplaying its human rights record.¹³ In Washington State, Jackson generally sought to bring federal dollars to his constituents as a card-carrying member of the Cold War coalition. Yet at the same time that two of his top aides, Richard Perle and Paul Wolfowitz, wrote policy papers for the Committee to Maintain a Prudent Defense Policy, Jackson had Seattle taken off the list of cities for potential deployment of the anti-ballistic missile system (127). His surprising not-in-my-backyard mentality was no doubt driven by the complaints of well-connected constituents who did not want to see missiles deployed near tony Bainbridge Island.¹⁴ Although Jackson kept his feelings close to the vest—even in his personal papers—he was perhaps not quite the dogmatic figure Brenes makes him out to be.

Brenes makes a few overly broad statements about Jackson and public opinion that should be noted here. His contention that “Jackson experienced a barrage of attacks from his Washington State constituents over Vietnam and his Cold War liberalism” and that “Washingtonians urged Jackson to renege on his support for the war” is something of an overstatement (161). The Jackson papers at the University of Washington contain an enormous amount of constituent mail, both for and against the war in Vietnam. Certainly, as the years went on, the antiwar mail increased. But Jackson did not turn against the war until almost the very end, as the pro-war mail kept coming from his more conservative constituents, including in the Tri-Cities region of Washington where the Hanford Nuclear Reservation was located.¹⁵ Jackson relied on conservatives, in fact, to turn away a primary challenge from progressive lawyer Carl Maxey in 1970.¹⁶ All of this is less to criticize *For Might*

¹³ Robert G. Kaufman, *Henry M. Jackson: A Life in Politics* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2000): 7.

¹⁴ For more on Jackson and the ABM, see Christopher P. Foss, “Bringing Home the (Irradiated) Bacon: The Politics of Senator Henry M. Jackson’s Support for Nuclear Weapons and Energy during the Cold War,” *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 109:1 (Winter 2017/2018), 12.

¹⁵ For more on the cozy relationship between Jackson and Hanford, see John M. Findlay and Bruce Hevly, *Atomic Frontier Days: Hanford and the American West* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2011); C. Mark Smith, *Community Godfather: How Sam Volpentest Helped Shape the History of Hanford and the Tri-Cities* (Richland: Etcetera Press, 2013); Foss, “Bringing Home the (Irradiated) Bacon”.

¹⁶ The 1970 primary is recounted in William W. Prochnau and Richard W. Larsen, *A Certain Democrat: Senator Henry M. Jackson: A Political Biography* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1972).

and Right and more to point out the need for historians to do more in-depth work on how political figures interfaced with the Cold War coalition.

In this vein, the contention that Democratic Missouri Senator (and former World War I veteran and Secretary of the Air Force) Stuart Symington had become an antimilitarist by the end of the 1960s seems a bit of a stretch (127). He was opposed to Boeing receiving federal money, but in the context of the development of its commercial supersonic transport, which, as Brenes points out, was an extraordinarily expensive venture. When Symington opposed lobbying by Jackson for military spending, it was often in the context of home-state rivalry, as Missouri competed with Washington State for federal defense dollars. If Symington drifted toward the antimilitarist camp by the Vietnam era, it seems more like a position taken over pork than policy.

Additionally, in his discussion of antimilitarism, Brenes omits one key figure: Republican Senator Mark Hatfield of Oregon. It is understandable that *For Might and Right* is not comprehensive. But Hatfield reveals the answer to a question Brenes evades in his analysis: what about politicians and states neither dependent on nor chasing military dollars? When Hatfield came to the Senate in 1967, Oregon had clearly lost out to Washington in the battle for who was going to get the balance of defense monies sent to the Pacific Northwest. In the Senate, Hatfield famously never voted for a defense appropriations bill. Locally, he was never punished for his antimilitarist stance; not only did Oregon not have major military bases, but Hatfield directed federal funds to infrastructure, health, and education in Oregon. He was ultimately more successful at defense conversion than McGovern.¹⁷ The question of whether he was an outlier deserves more thorough research.

Another avenue in terms of defense conversion that Brenes does not address are the ways in which local, state, and federal politicians attracted international trade and foreign direct investment, either to make up for the loss of defense dollars, or to stem the overall downward economic tide of the U.S. starting in the 1960s. When Henry Jackson was not boosting for Hanford or Puget Sound naval installations, he was courting officials from the People's Republic of China to bring trade and investment opportunities to Washington. During the 1980s, U.S. state governors from Victor Atiyeh in Oregon to Thomas Kean in New Jersey pushed China, Japan, and other Pacific Rim countries to buy more products and to locate subsidiary factories in their states that would bring back lost manufacturing jobs. Their records were decidedly mixed. Honda began manufacturing cars in Marysville, Ohio, but also established its factories in areas where the labor-organizing tradition was weak, paralleling the discussion by Brenes of the anti-union policies of Sunbelt defense contractors. Efforts by Atiyeh in Oregon, meanwhile, yielded some more purchases of raw agricultural goods, plus a few hundred mainly white-collar jobs at high-tech subsidiaries for Japanese companies Epson, Fujitsu, and NEC. Political efforts to enhance trade and foreign investment failed to arrest the overall manufacturing and jobs declines that Brenes synthesizes in *For Might and Right*.¹⁸

In the end, the shortcomings identified here are mainly intended to offer historians material to develop further work on the politics of the military-industrial complex. Because Brenes essentially concludes that the Cold War never ended from the standpoint of the jobs-and-dollars-starved coalition, this topic has ongoing salience, and deserves more scrutiny from

¹⁷ For more on the efforts of Hatfield to redirect converted federal defense dollars to Oregon, see "Hatfield Projects," *The Oregonian*, 29 September 1996, A16; Mark Hatfield as told to Diane Solomon, *Against the Grain: Reflections of a Rebel Republican* (Ashland: White Cloud Press, 2001); Foss, *Facing the World*: 93-135.

¹⁸ Works that discuss the attempts of local and state officials to boost their struggling economies via international trade and foreign direct investment include Alvin Felzenberg, *Governor Tom Kean: From the New Jersey Statehouse to the 9/11 Commission* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2006); Christopher P. Foss, "'I wanted Oregon to have something': Governor Victor G. Atiyeh and Oregon-Japan Relations," *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 118:3 (Fall 2017); Andrew McKevitt, *Consuming Japan: Popular Culture and the Globalizing of 1980s America* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2017); Christopher P. Foss, "Senator Henry 'Scoop' Jackson and the Intersection between Domestic Politics and Foreign Relations in the Postwar Era", in Andrew L. Johns and Mitchell B. Lerner, eds., *The Cold War at Home and Abroad: Domestic Politics and US Foreign Policy Since 1945* (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 2018).

historians of U.S. foreign relations and politics. Journalists, graduate students, and scholars seeking to understand in greater depth why America has been unable to shake the habit of defense spending will profit greatly from the breadth and depth in his analysis, while not being overwhelmed by its length. Brenes covers a range of material including the highest political office to the precinct level, from the most powerful people on earth to ordinary citizens, asking challenging questions, and providing provocative arguments that productively add to the debate about how to extricate the U.S. from decades of emphasis on military spending.

REVIEW BY AMY RUTENBERG, IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY

When I think of militarization in the United States during the second half of the twentieth century, I tend to picture an amoeba (or maybe the Blob), expanding here, contracting there, absorbing this, spitting out that. In describing the complexities of a political economy based on defense spending, Michael Brenes's *For Might and Right* significantly adds to our understanding of the adaptability and longevity of Cold War militarization, including into the post-Cold War years.¹⁹ Ultimately, this book provides a new and important framework for understanding people's choices and the impact of those choices.

Brenes successfully argues that a wide swath of Americans from different economic strata, political positions, and ideological stances supported the growth of the military-industrial state because they believed such growth to be in their own best interests. How they defined those interests varied significantly, ranging from hawkish anti-Communism to the simple fear of job loss. Republicans, Democrats, intellectual elites, local community boosters, factory executives, and defense workers all came together in what Brenes terms the 'Cold War coalition.'

Although unlikely bedfellows, the various constituents of the Cold War coalition collaborated to reshape local and national politics. Together, they created a political economy that supported increased defense spending, which, in turn, both encouraged muscular foreign policy and grew the coalition, creating a feedback loop and deepening the hold of militarization. And, like the phenomenon of militarization, the Cold War coalition and its aims were not static. They flexed and morphed with time, circumstance, and political manipulation.

For Might and Right outlines this complex process of creation and change. In the years immediately following World War II, Democrats increasingly supported militarization as a buffer against withering Republican accusations of weakness. As President Harry S. Truman's Fair Deal lost political traction and the Korean War pushed defense spending to fifteen percent of GDP, Brenes argues, Democrats turned to defense spending as a way to ensure more Americans the benefits that came with good employment when their social welfare agenda could not. Essentially, defense spending became a major part of the nation's social safety net. Antimilitarist dissenters from the left and nationalist dissenters from the right were pushed from their respective political parties.

Once communities received lucrative defense contracts, local boosters worked tirelessly to keep the money rolling in. Federal money was not evenly spread, however, so workers and politicians in neglected regions lobbied for increased defense spending through the 1950s and early 1960s. In this, their local interests coincided with those of anti-Communist ideologues, who argued that social welfare spending was not only wasteful but also dangerous, as it left the U.S. militarily unprepared to counter Communist attacks abroad and vulnerable to creeping communism at home. All of these interests came together in venues such as federally funded Cold War seminars, at which members of pro-business organizations and the military as well as defense intellectuals taught participants about the dangers of international communism. As a result, diverse constituencies came together to advocate an aggressive foreign policy, increased defense spending, and cuts to social welfare programs.

In the early 1960s, President John Kennedy's shift to flexible response over former president Dwight Eisenhower's policy of deterrence led to a contraction of the defense budget. As workers lost jobs, they blamed the federal government for cutting contracts. According to Brenes, therefore, anti-statism and activist foreign policy ironically went hand in hand. Members of the Cold War coalition advocated increased defense spending at the same time that they blamed the government for

¹⁹ The touchstone text on militarization in post-war America is Michael Sherry, *In the Shadow of War: The United States since 1930* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995). See also Laura McEnaney, *Civil Defense Begins at Home: Militarization Meets Everyday Life in the 1950s* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000); Lisa M. Munday, *American Militarism and Anti-Militarism in Popular Media, 1945-1970* (Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland and Company, 2012); Jennifer Mittelstadt, *The Rise of the Military Welfare State* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2015)

spending too much on domestic programs. Federal welfare programs, they argued, directed limited funds to the undeserving poor and siphoned money away from the defense budgets that maintained workers and their communities. But military Keynesianism could only function if the nation's need for more missiles, more tanks, more planes, more ships, and more men to outfit never faltered.

The Vietnam War both renewed the need for military material and gave antimilitarists a larger platform, particularly within the Democratic Party. By the early 1970s, détente appealed to a larger swath of Americans than it had in decades. As the economy faltered in the same years, however, antimilitarists were not able to offer a viable alternative to a militarized economy. Moral concerns gave way to economic fears. In Brenes's words, "the economics and parochial politics behind Cold War defense spending ultimately became a viable counterforce to antimilitarism" (154). Antimilitarists offered defense reconversion plans, hoping to stimulate the economy in other ways, but these plans failed to resonate with the electorate. Ultimately, Republican presidential candidate Ronald Reagan's bellicose 1976 foreign policy platform and constituents' needs pushed President Jimmy Carter and congressional 'Watergate Babies' to give up on détente.

Reagan, once president, used renewed tensions with the Soviet Union and high-cost, high-tech defense programs like the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI, aka 'Star Wars') both to stimulate the economy and as an excuse to cut welfare costs. Since so many Americans depended on defense jobs, most elected Democrats were limited in how hard they could push for a less pugnacious foreign policy. Brenes concludes that SDI, "reinvigorated Cold War militarism and temporarily derailed a rapprochement between the superpowers that could have begun earlier in the decade." It was "a public works agency more than a deterrent to nuclear war" (217).

For Might and Right also makes the case that America's militarized political economy exacerbated racial and regional tensions and led to the anti-statism espoused by most current Republicans. As previously mentioned, defense contracts were not evenly distributed across the nation. Ultimately, the Northeast and Midwest suffered as a disproportionate number of dollars flowed into the Sunbelt. In the South, law and custom kept Black Americans from accessing defense jobs and sharing in the wealth. In the North and Midwest, unskilled laborers of all races were the first to be cut, leaving African Americans, who disproportionately clustered in unskilled jobs, particularly vulnerable. Working-class white workers, who lost their jobs as contracts dwindled and programs became more technical, blamed the government for abandoning them rather than the corporations that refused to diversify. In places like Long Island and Connecticut, where taxes and cost of living were high, the Republican Right's proposals of "direct job creation through defense, tax cuts to alleviate the cost of living, and an aggressive foreign policy to keep military contractors afloat" proved more attractive to displaced workers than costly reconversion or social welfare plans (232).

For Might and Right tells a complex story. In fact, its complexity is both its greatest strength and its greatest weakness. At times, its narrative gets bogged down in detail, losing its argumentative thread. On one page, for example, Brenes claims both that "defense spending increased during the second half of the 1950s" and that "defense spending...decrease[d] during Eisenhower's presidency" (78). But just as "the Cold War coalition became greater than the sum of its parts," this book is more than a collection of details or a chronological narrative (244). In its ambition, it provides a path-breaking way to look at the broad sweep of American political, economic, and social systems in the second half of the twentieth century.

Brenes offers a new framework for understanding political change between the 1940s and 1990s that pushes beyond political polarization.²⁰ His conception of the Cold War coalition transcends region, political affiliation, social class, and, at times,

²⁰ Others have also pushed these boundaries. For example, see the essays in Brent Cebul, Lily Geismer, and Mason B. Williams (eds), *Shaped by the State: Toward a new Political History of the Twentieth Century* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2018). The preponderance of work relating to era, however, focuses on the decline of liberalism and the rise of the New Right, both politically and culturally. See, for example, Robert O. Self, *All in the Family: The Realignment of American Democracy Since the 1960s* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2013); Lisa McGirr, *Suburban Warriors: The Origins of the New American Right*, updated ed. (Princeton: Princeton University Press 2015); Meg Jacobs, *Panic at the Pump: The Energy Crisis and the Transformation of American Politics in the 1970s* (New

race. It offers a rational explanation for why such a diverse, indeed, contradictory, coalition of people could all come together to advocate increased defense spending, and it demonstrates the incredible power of that advocacy. When anti-Communist ideologues with a national audience, state-level politicians, local community leaders, business executives, and defense workers all called for large defense budgets undergirded by activist foreign policy, national politicians had no choice but to listen. And once these constituencies came together, the resultant political and economic systems entrenched a political economy based on defense spending. The coalition strengthened, even as it evolved. In other words, the Cold War coalition was just as contradictory, malleable, and long-lasting as the militarization that spawned it and that it fed.

It is too soon to know whether all of the elements of *For Might and Right*'s argument will hold up over time, but that is what makes this book so exciting. Like Steve Fraser and Gary Gerstle's *New Deal Order*, the Cold War coalition demands further investigation.²¹ This book sparkles when Brenes focuses on local stories, and it opens the door to more local and regional research. This work provides a broad framework. It will be up to others to flesh out that framework. Regardless of whether later research affirms, complicates, or undermines Brenes's conclusions, historians of the post-war United States will have to reckon with them. I can't think of any greater praise than that.

York: Hill and Wang, 2016); Natasha Zaretsky, *Radiation Nation: Three Mile Island and the Political Transformation of the 1970s* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2018).

²¹ Steve Fraser and Gary Gerstle, eds., *The Rise and Fall of the New Deal Order, 1930-1980* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990).

REVIEW BY ROSELLA CAPPELLA ZIELINSKI, BOSTON UNIVERSITY

In 2020, for the first time in Gallup's more than 50 years of asking the question – "Do you think we are spending too little, about the right amount, or too much [on national defense] – half of Americans regarded U.S. defense spending as "about right." Critically, most of the recent shifts in opinions about national defense have been among Republicans. In 2016, 23% of Republicans thought the U.S. was spending the right amount on defense. Today, 72% do, with much of that increase (23 points) observed in the past year.²² Indeed, former president Donald Trump embraced hyperbolic military spending rhetoric. In January 2020, for example, in an apparent effort to deter an Iranian response after Iranian Military Officer Qasem Soleimani's death, he stated "The United States just spent Two Trillion Dollars on Military Equipment . . . We are the biggest and by far the BEST in the World! If Iran attacks an American Base, or any American, we will be sending some of that brand new beautiful equipment their way ... and without hesitation!"²³

At first blush, one might attribute the favorable shift in public opinion, particularly the shift in conservative public opinion, on military spending and Trump's rhetoric to partisanship. Yet, that would be missing the larger story, as many Democrats also view military spending favorably. In a 2019 Pew Research Center Poll, respondents were asked, "If you were making up the budget for the federal government this year, would you increase spending, decrease spending or keep spending the same for military defense?" 29% Democrats responded they would increase spending (compared to 54% for Republicans).²⁴

For Might and Right: Cold War Defense Spending and the Remaking of American Democracy by Michael Brenes unpacks how the United States got to this point – a bipartisan coalition in favor of increased military spending with right-wing rhetoric at the helm. Through the exploration of almost five decades of military spending, 1950 through the end of the Cold War, Brenes argues that a dynamic and diverse coalition comprised of right-wing conservatives, active-duty and retired military, prime and sub-prime defense contractors, and congressmen and women whose districts and or states benefitted from military spending, worked tirelessly to promote military spending during the Cold War. This 'Cold War coalition,' as Brenes terms it, was both shaped by and capitalized on anti-Communist narratives, economic downturns, and desires to cut social welfare spending.

Brenes starts his story in the 1940s with right-wing groups such as the America First Party, which wanted a strong national security state. Vehemently anti-Communist, such groups believed that the defeat of Communism could only be realized by an 'America First' foreign policy that disregarded the concerns of the international community in favor of American nationalism (45). Military spending was a necessity and should thus be prioritized over other federal responsibilities, particularly social programs that went to minorities. Community activists served as a bridge between such right-wing groups and the military. For example, in response to military spending cuts during the Eisenhower years, 'Cold War seminars' were held around the country to, as one Colonel put it, highlight the "relationship between the national economy and the military power necessary to America's security in the face of perilous world conditions" (82). Critically, these seminars were financed by the Department of Defense and pro-business groups such as the Chamber of Commerce and were led by a bipartisan team, as the organizers and speakers were a mixture of southern Democrats and Republican defense hawks.

²² Jeffrey M. Jones, "Record High Says U.S. Defense Spending is 'About Right.'" *Gallup News*, 16 March 2020, <https://news.gallup.com/poll/288761/record-high-say-defense-spending-right.aspx>.

²³ Erica Werner and Aaron Gregg, "Trump Overstates Military Spending and Readiness in Face of Iran Conflict." *The Washington Post*, 6 January 2020, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/us-policy/2020/01/06/trump-overstates-military-spending-readiness-potential-iran-conflict-looms/>.

²⁴ "How Republicans and Democrats View Federal Spending," *Pew Research Center*, 11 April 2019, <https://www.pewresearch.org/politics/2019/04/11/how-republicans-and-democrats-view-federal-spending/>.

The defense industry supported this coalition. Unlike right-wing groups that were actively organizing for more military spending, until the late 1950s the industry had the Pentagon and Congress on its side and relied on the presumption that it could maintain seamless connections with the federal government without complication (133). The rising tide of anti-militarization in response to the Vietnam War, however, forced the industry to increase its lobbying efforts and find allies in Congress and amongst civilians at the Department of Defense. While the defense industry broadly advocated for more defense spending, its contribution to the Cold War coalition varied by sector and, accordingly, by geography. For example, in the late 1950's, when President Dwight Eisenhower's New Look policy emphasized nuclear deterrence, companies such as Boeing, Convair, Lockheed, and Northrop all saw production and profits skyrocket. Indeed, Los Angeles became the "aerospace capital of the world" during this time (78-79). But California's gain was New York's loss. By 1957, the top five defense contractors on Long Island announced massive job cuts, including Grumman, which cut five hundred workers in that year (78). Here is where the staunchest defenders of the Cold War coalition were born. When local cuts came, the specific companies who were affected, along with defense workers and members of the community, combined to organize protests and lobby their congressperson for protection. If that protection did not come, the representatives were voted out of office.

This Cold War coalition was particularly successful at increasing military spending during economic downturns. Americans internalized the lesson of World War II and reconfirmed it with the Korean War—military spending equaled job security. Unlike social welfare programs, however, the virtue of military spending was that it meant a large injection of federal money into the local workforce but kept the government out of the region on local matters involving race (95). For politicians however, military spending as welfare spending was a slippery slope. Military spending was so enticing to both Democrats and Republicans that many politicians campaigned on it. The apex of Brenes's story is the election of President Ronald Reagan. The 1976 Republican Presidential Primary serves as an example. While Reagan lost the primary to presidential incumbent Gerald Ford, he learned the power of the Cold War coalition. In March of 1976 he won the North Carolina primary by six percentage points where he was overwhelming the favorite in counties where defense workers were located (184). Despite its enticing nature, the danger of equating military spending with job security was that when such spending abated, it was the federal government's fault and not the defense industry or even a change in the external threat environment. Thus, any attempt to seriously cut military spending was politically detrimental.

Finally, the Cold War coalition was responsive to changes in the external security environment and capitalized on perceived weaknesses to American military strength. Here anti-Communist ideology was in full force. The 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis provides an example. Many anti-Communist figures were not satisfied with the Kennedy Administration's resolution of the crisis, criticizing it for what they saw as a willingness to capitulate to Soviet intimidation. Communism would continue to spread throughout Latin America, the logic went, because the government was trying to stop Communism with "illusionary projects and schemes" (92). Moreover, they argued that liberals were to blame for the crisis given that they mismanaged foreign policy due to their preoccupation with civil rights and other domestic reforms (93). The solution was to spend more on defense rather than social programs.

What emerged from this Cold War coalition, decades in the making, was a warfare rather than welfare state that overwhelming benefited skilled white labor.

In many ways Brenes's narrative is familiar to those who study military spending in the United States. Historians, political scientists, economists, sociologists, and anthropologists have long explored the multiheaded hydra – the relationship between industry, the military, politicians, and communities that rely on defense dollars – that contributes to militarization of the American economy.²⁵ That said, Brenes's narrative is critical addition to the literature. Instead of telling an origin

²⁵ See for example Rebecca U. Thorpe, *The American Warfare State: The Domestic Politics of Military Spending* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2014); Jennifer Mittelstadt, *The Rise of the Military Welfare State* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2015). David Vine, *The United States of War: A global History of America's Endless Conflicts, from Columbus to the Islamic State* (Oakland:

story or highlighting the perpetuation of special interests, he treats the Cold War coalition as a fluid and changing group of actors who were both responsive to national security and economic events and shaped by them. Moreover, his book adds a political economy angle to the ways in which right-wing groups have used national security politics to further their interests.

The time is ripe to read *For Might and Right*. As the United States recovers from the COVID-19 recession, faces an all-time high (and climbing) budget deficit of \$3.3 trillion and a public debt of \$20.3 trillion, exhaustion of twenty years of the 'forever wars,' and a new administration, spending cuts may be coming.²⁶ Brenes's work sheds light upon the groups that will come together to both thwart attempts to cut military spending and the means by which they will use national security ideology and rhetoric to shape the nature of the cuts.

University of California Press, 2020), Arnold Kanter, *Defense Politics: A Budgetary Perspective* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979), Alex Mintz, *The Political Economy of Military Spending in the United States* (New York: Routledge, 1992).

²⁶ Congressional Budget Office <https://www.cbo.gov/topics/budget>.

 RESPONSE BY MICHAEL BRENES, YALE UNIVERSITY

I want to thank Rosella Capella Zielinski, Brian Casserly, Chris Foss, and Amy Rutenberg for taking the time to write such thoughtful responses to my book. Having enviously and avidly read so many H-Diplo roundtables since my graduate school days, it is a real honor to have an H-Diplo roundtable dedicated to *For Might and Right*, and particularly by four scholars whose work I admire a great deal. I am especially pleased that both historians and political scientists were recruited as reviewers. The book's origins lie in the scholarship of political scientists such as Ann Markusen, economists like Seymour Melman, and historians as diverse as Alex Roland, Lisa McGirr, Judith Stein, and Jeremi Suri.²⁷ I'm grateful that the interdisciplinary foundations of the project are reflected in the makeup of the roundtable.

At its core, *For Might and Right* addresses the unshakable question posed by Werner Sombart over a hundred years ago: "Why is there no socialism in the United States?"²⁸ Defense spending, I argue, incentivized Americans to support—or acquiesce to—a national security state, and to disincentivize a welfare state, given how defense spending served social democratic ends in the United States during the Cold War and beyond. I also explore how anti-democratic institutions (military contractors, and the military overall) shape American democracy. On most days, I consider myself a diplomatic historian of American political history—the history of U.S. foreign relations allows me to explain political phenomenon that, I think, eludes scholars of political history, and vice versa. I wanted the book to address issues that I felt were overlooked in the historiography of both fields.

I am therefore pleased that the reviewers found the book to be an important contribution to the scholarship. I also want to thank them for capturing the arguments of the book so well, and for providing thorough overviews of the narrative. I am pleased to respond to their criticisms too, all of which are productive and insightful, and should lead to further research.

Rutenberg, Foss, and Casserly raise concerns about the scope of the book, arguing that I try to do too much, or not enough, with the narrative I have written. Rutenberg states that the complexity of the book "is both its greatest strength and greatest weakness." I nodded in agreement as I read her comment. When this book started as a dissertation, I was warned by some scholars (and friends) that I should not write a history of the entire Cold War; that I should avoid writing about a "Cold War coalition" in national terms and focus on the 1960s alone, or just study one area of the country. I chose not to do that. That left me writing a book that I knew would be sweeping, and perhaps unwieldy, but would try to reconceptualize American politics within a "broad framework," as Rutenberg mentions.

I chose this methodology out of interest in questions that I (still) think need answering. As Rutenberg acknowledges, scholars have recently started to grapple with whether the "rise of American conservatism" in the postwar period was really a story of American liberalism.²⁹ I was, and remain, intrigued by this historiographical framing and thought I could contribute

²⁷ Ann Markusen, Peter Hall, Scott Campbell, Sabina Deitrick, *The Rise of the Gunbelt: The Military Remapping of Industrial America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991); Seymour Melman, *Pentagon Capitalism: The Political Economy of War* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1970); Alex Roland, *The Military-Industrial Complex* (Washington, D.C.: American Historical Association, 2001); Lisa McGirr, *Suburban Warriors: the Origins of the New American Right* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000); Judith Stein, *Pivotal Decade: How the United States Traded Factories for Finance in the 1970s* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010); Jeremi Suri, *Power and Protest: Global Revolution and the Rise of Détente* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003).

²⁸ Werner Sombart, *Why is There No Socialism in the United States?* <https://link.springer.com/content/pdf/bfm%3A978-1-349-02524-4%2F1.pdf>. For a good analysis of Sombart's essay and how it has shaped historical scholarship, see Eric Foner, *Who Owns History: Rethinking the Past in a Changing World* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2002), chapter 6.

²⁹ See the essays in Brent Cebul, Lily Geismer, and Mason Williams, editors, *Shaped by the State: Toward a New Political History of the Twentieth Century* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2019).

to a conversation about the Cold War as a liberal project, a project, in the words of Mary Dudziak, “of state-building akin to the New Deal era.”³⁰ The book ultimately tries to explain the history of Cold War liberalism and how its attributes were appropriated, and its limits exploited, by the American Right. This, to me, required taking on the entirety of the Cold War, and a bit of the post-Cold War period too.

In writing that broad narrative, I also found it difficult to not tread too much on familiar territory. Cappella Zielinski notes that while the book makes an intervention in the field of History, my narrative will be familiar to scholars in a range of other disciplines: Anthropology, Sociology, Economics, and her field, Political Science. I hope, to some degree, that this appears intentional. The book tried to capture the insights of political scientists in a historical narrative, and also tried to introduce, or refamiliarize, the work of political scientists to historians, at least in the footnotes. I also sought to cover historical events that I think political scientists have missed in doing some excellent quantitative research on the political economy of military spending.³¹

Foss and Casserly suggest that I misconstrue, or altogether miss, important points related to the political economy of defense spending, particularly in the Pacific Northwest. Both reviewers point to congressional figures like Washington State Senator Henry Jackson, who, Casserly notes, comes across in the book, along with other members of the Cold War coalition, as “monolithic” and “one dimensional.” Jackson’s positions on military spending and the Cold War are more complex than I show in the book, they imply.

Foss and Casserly are certainly right that Henry Jackson is a much more contradictory, elusive figure than many historians have made him out to be. Jackson, Casserly notes, equivocated on the need for greater military spending during the 1960s and 1970s, and balanced environmental concerns and fears of a nuclear arms race with what was best for defense jobs in Washington State and the financial health of Boeing.

I concede to their expertise on the defense economy of the Pacific Northwest, but will just add that there are other congressional Democrats in the book, like New York Democratic Representative Thomas Downey, who embodied the same contradictions as Jackson, and who are discussed in depth since they had a greater impact on my narrative. Jackson’s vacillation on defense spending was not atypical for Cold War liberals, particularly in Congress. I could, and indeed do, point to other congressional liberals who felt conflicted in their support for defeating global Communism and a grand strategy that relied upon endless military spending to win the Cold War: Hubert Humphrey, William Fulbright, and Wayne Morse come to mind. But in the end, Jackson believed that the militarization of American foreign policy was a net good for the United States, and that the country needed to maintain a large military budget, despite opposing specific defense programs or foreign policy decisions during his time in Congress. I also did not have space to include the multiple nuances of Democrats such as Missouri Senator Stuart Symington’s or Henry Jackson’s thoughts on Cold War defense spending. This is another way of saying that more research is needed on Congress and U.S. foreign policy.³²

I also wish that I engaged with more advocates of “defense conversion,” including Senator Mark Hatfield, whom Foss mentions in his review. Foss is indeed correct: Hatfield was an ardent proponent of defense conversion, and sometimes a successful one. I will simply point readers of this roundtable to Foss’s book, *Facing the World*, which provides a solid review

³⁰ Mary Dudziak, *War Time: An Idea, Its History, Its Consequences* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 91.

³¹ Rebecca U. Thorpe, *The American Warfare State: The Domestic Politics of Military Spending* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 2014).

³² See Robert David Johnson, *Congress and the Cold War* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

of Hatfield's approach to defense conversion.³³ Hatfield, like Democratic Senator from South Dakota and presidential candidate George McGovern, embodied the best of the 'anti-militarist' moment in Congress during the early 1970s, one that had the potential to reshape the relationship between social welfare and defense spending.

Casserly also wanted the book to focus more on how defense spending influenced specific localities, on "the local elements of the Cold War Coalition." But I state in the introduction that *For Might and Right* "is ultimately a national story," incomplete as it may be (4). The local actors that appear in my book do so to tell a broader story of electoral politics and participatory democracy on a national scale.

I also knew I did not want to write a local study (or a case study) of the military-industrial complex. That has already been done—and done well.³⁴ While I could have written a comparative history of defense communities, doing what J. Mills Thornton did for the civil rights movement in Selma, Montgomery, and Birmingham, I chose to avoid that route for the reasons stated above.³⁵

But I hope somebody writes that book. There is an interesting history to be written that compares sites of defense dependency. I found too much in my research to do justice to the specific, and manifold, social, political, and cultural issues that shaped defense communities in Long Island, New York and how these differed from defense communities, for example, in St. Louis and its surrounding suburbs, even as the political economy of the defense industry created countless similarities between the two areas.

Casserly also wonders why I leave out certain topics, including the Great Society and its relationship to military spending for the Vietnam War. While the book dedicates an entire chapter to Vietnam, I was too focused on a politics of anti-militarism during the Vietnam era (particularly after 1968), and how members of the Cold War coalition campaigned to increase defense spending when anti-militarism coincided with creeping economic austerity, and when many Americans believed the United States should not expand its military budget (or even fight the Cold War) given the quagmire in Southeast Asia. Historians must make choices about what to leave out of their books and this was one of them.

Not that I did not find the topic fascinating. In the process of researching the book I found some intriguing documents on how defense contractors took advantage of Great Society programs to train Black workers and boost Black employment in a traditionally segregated industry. There is a good story to be told on how military contractors enthusiastically accepted funds from Great Society programs, engaging in racial tokenism in service of larger profits and better public relations, all while decrying the influence of the federal government in private industry. But I didn't think that story fit well with the one I wanted to tell. There are other scholars working on the relationship between the War on Poverty and military

³³ Christopher P. Foss, *Facing the World: Defense Spending and International Trade in the Pacific Northwest Since World War II* (Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 2020).

³⁴ Roger W. Lotchin, *Fortress California, 1910-1961: From Warfare to Welfare* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992); Bruce Schulman, *From Cotton Belt to Sunbelt: Federal Policy, Economic Development, & the Transformation of the South, 1938-1980* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1994); Catherine Lutz, *Homefront: A Military City and the American 20th Century* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2001); Kari Fredrickson, *Cold War Dixie: Militarization and Modernization in the American South* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2014).

³⁵ J. Mills Thornton, *Dividing Lines: Municipal Politics and the Struggle for Civil Rights in Montgomery, Birmingham, and Selma* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2002).

Keynesianism who will address these issues.³⁶ I am especially encouraged by the work of Tim Barker, who will write a better dissertation (and book) on the history of military Keynesianism than I did.³⁷

It is now up to scholars like Barker to show where I was wrong, where I neglected key individuals and events, and where I failed to ask important questions. I sincerely hope, as Rutenberg suggests, that other historians will fill in the gaps I missed. I can think of no greater honor than to have the arguments in my book be challenged, and perhaps overturned, in the coming years.

³⁶ See, for example, Tim Keogh, *Suburbs in Black and White: Struggling to Live and Work in Postwar Long Island* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, forthcoming).

³⁷ Tim Barker, "Cold War Capitalism: The Political Economy of American Military Spending, 1949-1989," (Ph.D. dissertation in progress, Harvard University). See also Barker, "Macroeconomic Consequences of Peace: American Radical Economists and the Problem of Military Keynesianism, 1938-1975," *Research in the History of Economic Thought and Methodology*, May 2019, 11-29; Barker, "It Doesn't Have to Be a War," *Dissent*, March 20, 2020, https://www.dissentmagazine.org/online_articles/coronavirus-defense-production-act-industrial-policy.