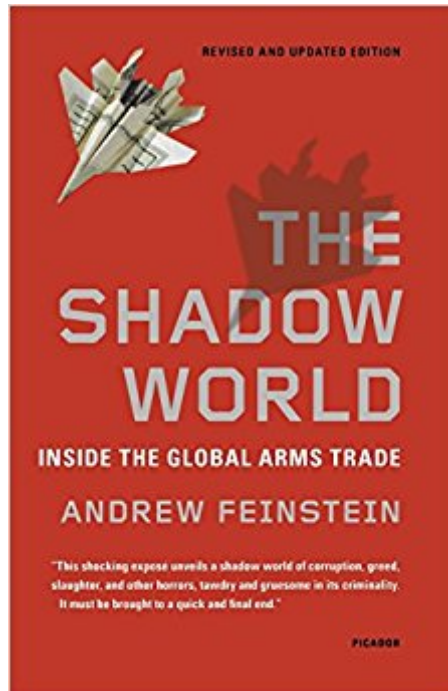




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The Shadow World: Inside The Global Arms Trade



Synopsis

"An authoritative guide to the business of war. Chilling, heartbreaking, and enraging."---Arundhati Roy
The Shadow World is the behind-the-scenes tale of the global arms trade, exposing in forensic detail the deadly collusion that all too often exists among senior politicians, weapons manufacturers, felonious arms dealers, and the military---a situation that compromises our security and undermines our democracy. Andrew Feinstein reveals the cover-ups behind a range of weapons deals, from the largest in history---between the British and Saudi governments---to the guns-for-diamonds deals in Africa and the current \$60 billion U.S. weapons contract with Saudi Arabia. Based on pathbreaking reporting and unprecedented access to top-secret information, The Shadow World takes us into a clandestine realm that is as vitally important as it is shocking.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This is a formidable account of the global arms trade. It's not a pretty picture. It's laden with corruption and shoddy characters making millions of dollars. Hardly any of them pose the moral question: "why am I doing this"? What is the purpose of all these deals for faster jets and small arms that number in the hundreds of thousands? The money and the killing fields are ever-expanding. It's all outlined, in sometimes excruciating detail, in Andrew Feinstein's book. The United States is selling, by the dozens, high-tech jets to Saudi Arabia - the richest authoritarian country on the planet. Saddam died a few years ago - what do they need so many for? It's almost like these

immoral states (Saudi Arabia, Libya) are collectors - lining up their tanks, planes, artillery... for an impressive show. The sordidness of all these transaction sales are given in detail; for instance - purportedly Poland sells weapons to Latvia, some end up there and the rest are re-routed to Somalia. And this is a simple outline. As Mr. Feinstein well illustrates any weapons deal implicates bribes in the millions of dollars - it's the standard protocol. I worked for a medium-sized company and after SOX auditing was introduced, any code changes to the accounting systems - no matter how insignificant - had to be signed off by managers, accountants... I learnt from this book that the Pentagon, which deals in billions of dollars, has not been audited for twenty years! The U.S. has a parallel government running within Congress - the Pentagon - and the private companies supplying armaments that are not accountable to the taxpayer. Billions of dollars are spent and wasted in this self-perpetuating cycle which is corroding democracy in the U.S. - and by extension the rest of the world.

In summer 2011, having become convinced that the machinations of what Dwight Eisenhower called the "military-industrial complex" represents one of the most serious threats to peace and freedom everywhere, I set about trying to find a book on it. Nothing really seemed to deal with that subject directly, although there were books on particular weapons, wars, and companies. Then I found *The Shadow World* by Andrew Feinstein: it looked like a close fit. As for being up to date, it was not even yet published; I had to preorder it. So I did. The book duly arrived in November, and I started reading it in December. One thing that impressed me off the bat was an endorsement on the back cover by Desmond Tutu. "How did he get that?" I wondered. Because I removed the dust jacket without reading the flap blurb, I had to wait until about 100 pages into the book to learn that Mr. Feinstein had been a member of the African National Congress and a Member of Parliament for South Africa. In that capacity he had had occasion to investigate improprieties in arms deals there, and became something of an expert on the topic, as well as a passionate critic of the arms trade generally. Over the following 10 years or so Mr. Feinstein, with the help of a research team, dug into the arms business from multiple angles: its history, its leading suppliers, its personalities, specific arms deals large and small, government involvement, notable attempted prosecutions; and some of its key outputs: body counts, forced migrations, perpetual political instability, and widespread impoverishment. Aristophanes satirized how the sword- and shield-makers of ancient Athens were militant and pro-war; and that phenomenon has not changed in any way except scale.

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