



disarmed
debt

WWW.PRAGERU.COM

DISCUSSION & REVIEW QUESTIONS:

- At the beginning of the video, Major Hegseth contends that, “If the Nobel Peace Prize was given out to people who truly made the world a more peaceful place, one group would win every year. The United States military.” Why do you think that the Nobel Peace Prize isn’t always awarded to the U.S. military? Do you think that the U.S. military is worthy of such a prize? Why or why not?
- Later in the video Major Hegseth points out that, “...it’s not just the open conflicts the American military resolves, it’s the not-wars – all the conflicts that were never fought because our adversaries feared the consequences of American military involvement.” Why, exactly, do you think that U.S. adversaries fear American military involvement? Explain. President George Washington said in his 1793 State of the Union address, “...if we desire to secure peace, one of the most powerful instruments of our rising prosperity, it must be known that we are at all times ready for war.” Later, a pillar of President Reagan’s foreign policy was this same notion of ‘peace through strength.’ Do you agree that this policy is effective and should continue to be implemented? Why or why not?
- Major Hegseth goes on to explain that, “The reason Iowa soybeans can be shipped from Seattle to Shanghai, or coffee from Columbia to Cleveland is because the American military, specifically the Navy, stands guard over the world’s shipping lanes. Block those lanes and the price of everything skyrockets- and international commerce grinds to a halt. Like it or not, the US military has been, and remains, as close to a global sheriff as exists on planet earth- on the beat, keeping the peace.” Considering that the U.S. military keeps the peace and provides for global commerce to commence, do you think that their work merits thanks and acknowledgment? Why or why not?
- Later in the video, Major Hegseth notes that, “...across the globe for the last 100 years and more, the bad guys have been thwarted— not only by the American military, of course, but in every major conflict American military force has been decisive.” Why is this fact so important, in terms of the U.S. military’s effectiveness in ‘policing’ the world today? Explain. What factors do you think have contributed to the U.S. military’s overwhelming success? Explain.
- At the end of the video, Major Hegseth concludes that, “We have been in their [the U.S. military] debt for so long, it’s easy to take what they did – what they risked and what they sacrificed – for granted. We shouldn’t. Veterans Day is meant to remind us. This year, don’t forget.” Why are we in debt to the U.S. military? What exactly has the U.S. military risked and sacrificed? Will you be thanking a veteran anytime soon? Why or why not?

EXTEND THE LEARNING:

CASE STUDY: The U.S. Military

INSTRUCTIONS: Read the article “Securing the World’s Commercial Sea Lanes,” then answer the questions that follow.

- What is the main reason that the United States is a superpower? Which navies represent the greatest threat to the U.S. navy? How many ships did President Reagan manage to get built by the end of his presidency? Why did President Reagan double the defense budget by 1989? What happened to the USS Yorktown and the USS Caron in 1988 when they entered the Black Sea? What did both governments do after this incident? What was Operation Praying Mantis, and what resulted from it? What principle did President Reagan have to defend in the Mile East? Who kept Iran and Libya from disrupting freedom of navigation in the 1980’s? How many dollars worth of cargo transits the South China Sea?
- Why do you think that certain countries have challenged the U.S. military in recent decades? Do you think that the U.S. will continue to keep the peace in most places around the world? Why or why not?
- Do you think that most U.S. citizens are aware of how dangerous and how hard the work is that the U.S. military does? Explain.



QUIZ

WHO SHOULD WIN THE NOBEL PEACE PRIZE?

1. If the Nobel Peace Prize was given out to people who truly made the world a more peaceful place, which group would win every year?

- a. The Irish Republican Army
- b. Hezbollah
- c. The United States Military
- d. The Islamic Revolutionary Guard

2. The United States Military saved _____?

- a. the free world from German domination in the First World War
- b. the free world from Japanese and German Fascism in the Second World War
- c. the free world from Communism in the Cold War
- d. All of the above.

3. National security is the product of the hard work of American military men and women who stand guard 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, every year.

- a. True
- b. False

4. The United States military has _____ stationed in free South Korea to protect it from un-free North Korea.

- a. 20,000 troops
- b. 30,000 troops
- c. 40,000 troops
- d. 50,000 troops

5. Why can Iowa soybeans be shipped from Seattle to Shanghai and coffee from Columbia to Cleveland?

- a. Because the United Nations enforces economic treaties signed by the U.S. and other nations .
- b. Because multinational corporations pay bribes to lower-level government officials to let their goods pass through customs inspections.
- c. Because the American military, specifically the Navy, stands guard over the world's shipping lanes
- d. None of the above.



QUIZ - ANSWER KEY

WHO SHOULD WIN THE NOBEL PEACE PRIZE?

1. If the Nobel Peace Prize was given out to people who truly made the world a more peaceful place, which group would win every year?

- a. The Irish Republican Army
- b. Hezbollah
- c. The United States Military
- d. The Islamic Revolutionary Guard

2. The United States Military saved _____?

- a. the free world from German domination in the First World War
- b. the free world from Japanese and German Fascism in the Second World War
- c. the free world from Communism in the Cold War
- d. All of the above.

3. National security is the product of the hard work of American military men and women who stand guard 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, every year.

- a. True
- b. False

4. The United States military has _____ stationed in free South Korea to protect it from un-free North Korea.

- a. 20,000 troops
- b. 30,000 troops
- c. 40,000 troops
- d. 50,000 troops

5. Why can Iowa soybeans be shipped from Seattle to Shanghai and coffee from Columbia to Cleveland?

- a. Because the United Nations enforces economic treaties signed by the U.S. and other nations .
- b. Because multinational corporations pay bribes to lower-level government officials to let their goods pass through customs inspections.
- c. Because the American military, specifically the Navy, stands guard over the world's shipping lanes
- d. None of the above.

<https://spectator.org/securing-the-worlds-commercial-sea-lanes/>

Securing the World's Commercial Sea Lanes

by Robert Zapesochny

March 15, 2017, 12:00 AM

One main reason America is a superpower is that our Navy is still the strongest in the world. Since a majority of the world's commerce passes through our oceans, whoever has the world's strongest navy can protect — adversely impact — the global economy.

The Chinese and Russian navies today represent the greatest threat to our navy since the Soviet threat in the late 1970s and early 1980s. In 1980, the United States Navy had 434 ships. Reagan promised a 600-ship navy to counter the 775 ships in the Soviet Navy.

He managed to build 592 ships by the end of his tenure as part of his military build-up. We didn't have to match the Soviets ship for ship because we had allies and we also had more aircraft carriers.

Early in his presidency, Reagan knew, from his intelligence reports, that Soviet defense spending was straining the Soviet economy to its limits. Ronald Reagan reasoned that if we could push the Soviets to the brink of insolvency, they would eventually come to their senses and negotiate an end to the arms race.

For that reason, President Reagan doubled the defense budget from \$157.5 billion in 1981 to \$303.6 billion in 1989. By the end of his first term, Reagan built a military that could keep the peace and control the world's sea lanes.

In 1986, the USS *Yorktown*, a Ticonderoga-class cruiser, and USS *Caron*, a Spruance-class destroyer, entered the Black Sea and were six miles off the southern coast of Crimea before returning home. In 1988, the *Yorktown* and *Caron* entered the Black Sea again.

Only this time, the Soviet sent their frigates on a collision course to push the U.S. ships back into international waters. Both sustained minor damage, but stayed on an even course.

After the incident, both governments sought to improve relations and to avoid any future attacks. With Reagan, the days of American retreat under Carter were over.

In 1986, the United States protected Kuwaiti oil tankers from Iranian ships. When the USS *Samuel B. Roberts* was hit by an Iranian mine, the United States launched Operation Praying Mantis.

In just one day, the United States Navy destroyed two Iranian oil platforms, and sank an Iranian frigate, a gunboat, and three armed speedboats. Another Iranian frigate, the IS *Sabalan*, was crippled, but the ship and crew were spared destruction in order to prevent any further escalation.

In the 1980s, Colonel Muammar Gaddafi was a menace in the Middle East. Reagan knew that he had to defend the general principle of freedom of navigation against this bully.

In 1973, Gaddafi claimed more of the territorial waters in the Gulf of Sidra. He called this a "line of death" and warned foreign ships and planes not to cross it.

International law claims that international waters begin 12 nautical miles from a country's shore. In 1973 and 1980, Gaddafi fired on American planes that crossed his line of death.

It was not until the Reagan administration that there was any response to Libya's flagrant disregard for international law. In 1981, two Libya Su-22 fighters fired on two American F-14A Tomcats. The American pilots returned fire and quickly shot down both planes.

In March 1986, three aircraft carriers, more than twenty other naval vessels, and over 200 airplanes conducted exercises in the Gulf of Sidra. When the Libyans opened fire, the American navy sank two of their boats and damaged two others.

In April 1986, Libya was responsible for a terrorist attack on a Berlin discotheque. Three people were killed (two of them were Americans) and 229 people were wounded (79 Americans). Ten days later, the United States bombed Libya.

Just two weeks before Reagan left office, the Libyans staged one more incident in the Gulf of Sidra. In January 1989, the Libyans sent two MiG-23 Floggers to intercept two American F-14A Tomcats. The F-14s shot down both Libyan planes with no casualties on the American side.

In the 1980s, our military was able to dominate the sea and keep Iran and Libya from disrupting the freedom of navigation. Today, China is threatening to build a navy that could make it difficult for us to uphold the right of safe passage through the South China Sea.

More than \$5 trillion in cargo goes through the South China Sea. Van Hipp, who once served as Deputy Secretary of the Army, and later as the Principal Deputy General Counsel of the Navy, wrote only a few months ago:

The U.S. must instead reengage itself with real leadership and a proactive strategy demonstrating American strength and resiliency to its allies in the region. The U.S. must bolster its strategic partnerships with the Alliance of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) and implore regional leaders to work cohesively against the common Chinese aggressor.

I couldn't agree more. The world is a dangerous place. Like President Reagan before him, President Trump and Congress will need to see to it that our Navy is given what it needs to sustain American control over the world's sea lanes.