

The Last Racketeers - Part 1

Written by Alex Baer

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Meet someone worthy of as much awe, respect, admiration, and allegiance as it is possible for mere mortals to muster: *Marine Corps Major General Smedley D. Butler*. He was under fire 120 or so times, and won the Congressional Medal of Honor -- *twice*.

Butler also stepped in to save this nation, first-handed, and personally, from slipping into the cesspool of fascism at the hands of scheming, traitorous bankers and financiers who had plotted to overthrow the United States government and take over power in a coup.

The plotting bankers' peers, overseas, pushed Adolph Hitler to the head of the line; here, they had Butler to contend with: he stopped them dead cold, stopped them dead in their tracks.

If you've made the shift here, in your mind, from "regular hero," and shifted into a whole new universe of gears, into "super-hero," you are not at all wrong. Butler, an extraordinary man, led an extraordinary life. He was a Quaker, loyal to the Constitution and the rights, freedoms, and duties he saw contained in that document, held out for all.

You have now met something of the man, by way of his actions. Now, meet the man, in his own words, from a book he wrote:

"I spent 33 years and 4 months in active military service and during that period I spent most of my time as a high class muscle man for Big Business, for Wall Street, and the bankers. In short, I was a racketeer, a gangster for capitalism."

Butler wrote, "War is a racket. It always has been. It is possibly the oldest, easily the most profitable, surely the most vicious. It is the only one international in scope. It is the only one in which profits are reckoned in dollars and the losses in lives."

He went on, "A racket is best described, I believe, as something that is not what it seems to the majority of the people. Only a small 'inside' group knows what it is about. It is conducted for the

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benefit of the very few, at the expense of the very many. Out of a war, a few people make huge fortunes."

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Now, consider the Founders of our country -- they would welcome Butler right in, offer him a seat, a place of honor by the fire, would welcome him aboard, make him feel right at home in the clubhouse of democracy, present again among American patriots. They would thank him, the Founders, for all he had done.

Columnist Will Rogers wrote of Butler, "He is what I would call a natural born warrior. He will fight anybody, any time. He carries every medal we ever gave out... I do admire him."

* * * * *

In Butler, as in us all, stepping up to the plate as just one person, and doing all you could -- that really mattered back then, and it still does. If your opinion is much different from that, go argue otherwise with Butler, be sure to let us all know how you make out.

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Pop Quiz: Compare and contrast the actions, drives, motivations, and purposes of Maj. Gen. Butler and any patriot or political personality in the modern era.

Bonus Points: Highlight any Republican candidate for president in the last 50 years; triple bonus points are available if you select a Republican candidate from the field in the last 15 years.

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Research, Consider, Discuss.

You have the rest of your life: ☐ You may begin.

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Resources:

"The Plot to Seize the White House: ☐ The Shocking True Story of the Conspiracy to Overthrow FDR," by Jules Archer

- and -

"War is a Racket: The Antiwar Classic by America's Most Decorated Soldier," by [then] Brigadier General Smedley D. Butler