

# RESISTING U.S. IMPERIALISM AT COLUMBIA



1967 Anti Marine recruitment protest at Columbia

# **Columbia University is run by and serves the interests of the U.S. ruling capitalist elite.**

Columbia works hand in hand with the U.S. government, military, corporations, and big banks to oppress the people here in the U.S. and subjugate people across the world. As part of this, the university does research, produces technology, and funnels students into working for these nefarious corporations and agencies to carry out U.S. imperialism. Just look at:

**The revolving door between the U.S. government, military, and Columbia.** After Dwight Eisenhower was the Supreme Commander of the Allied Expeditionary Force During WWII, he was president of Columbia from 1948 until 1953, when he became President. **The Columbia Board of Trustees now includes Jeh Johnson and Victor Mendelson.** Jeh Johnson was the chief legal officer in the Department of Defense from 2009-2012, the Secretary of Homeland Security from 2013-2017, and is currently on the board of directors of Lockheed Martin, one of the biggest war profiteers in the world. Victor Mendelson is the Co-President of HEICO Corporation, which produces parts for military equipment including aircraft, rockets, and missiles.

**The Eisenhower Leader Development Program** is a joint program between Columbia's Teacher's College and the US Military Academy at West Point. Military officers study "social-organizational psychology" at Columbia to become better agents of US imperialism to terrorize people and wage wars abroad.

**The Department of Defense** funds millions of dollars of research and technology for military development at Columbia.

Of course Columbia **doesn't only develop military technology, it works to replenish the staffing of these agencies.** One of the major ways that this is carried out is through career fairs and recruitment events that host these agencies. Columbia promotes careers with the U.S. government, military, and companies who design and manufacture weapons and technologies such as Raytheon, General Electric, General Dynamics, and Lockheed Martin, all hosted on campus nearly annually. **Defense contractors all profit off of the ever increasing military budget, the savage invasions and attacks that have been carried out on 24 countries since WWII, and the American military presence in ¾ of countries across the globe.**

# But what can we do as students?

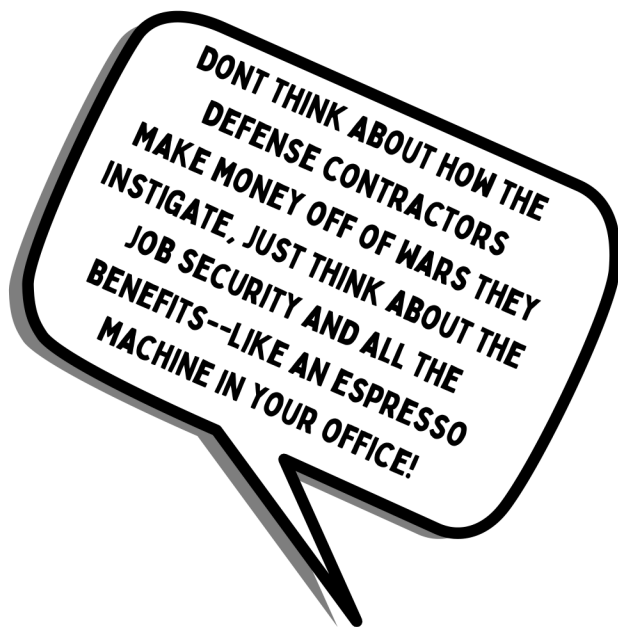
We come to university to gain knowledge, participate in college social life, and wind up with a degree in the end that secures a job. These are all reasonable desires and expectations to have when coming to college. But we can't let the aspiration to have job security and a well paying salary obscure our understanding of what these jobs are about. We should stand with the people to fight against oppression, not join the ruling elite of this country.



*Tufts Revolutionary Marxist Students protesting Raytheon*



We have to look beyond the title of any given job and think more critically about what the function of these government agencies and defense contractors. Overall, they work to support plunder abroad and repression at home, all of which preserves the wealth and political might of the ruling elite.



We are carrying the baton of student opposition to these defense contractors, government agencies, and our university's role in overall US imperialism: a baton that has been passed on through years of anti-recruitment, anti-imperialist organizing at Columbia. We hope through more serious organizing and protests that we can continue to expose the U.S. state and war profiteering groups for what they truly represent, and how our universities are complicit in the crimes of these corporations and agencies. In the 60's and 70's the CIA, military, and other war criminals couldn't openly recruit on campuses for fear of sparking a massive protest! It is time to bring that energy back to campuses.



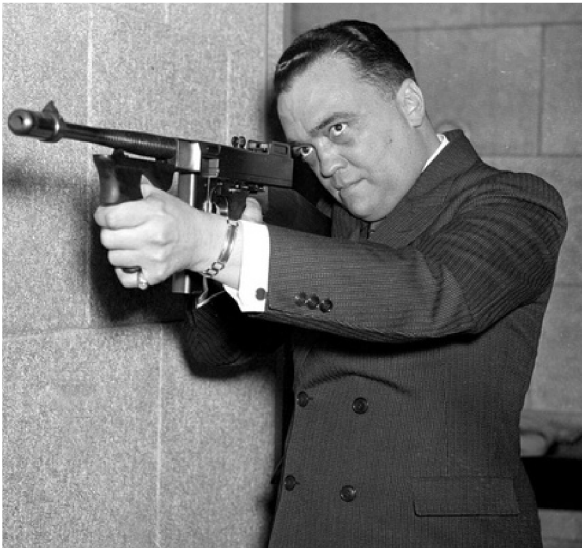


# Who's recruiting students at Columbia today?

## The FBI

Of late, the FBI has enjoyed a resurgence in popularity due to rebranding itself with the aid of corporate media as part of the #Resistance. However this is one of the most brutal and bloody institutions in U.S. history. The FBI assassinated 21 year old Black Panther leader Fred Hampton in his sleep, and murdered many other Panthers as well. They sent letters to Martin Luther King Jr. trying to get him to commit suicide. They spied on, harassed, and imprisoned a huge number of students and anti-war activists. More recently the FBI coordinated with local police departments during Occupy Wall Street on a "contingency plan" to use snipers to simultaneously assassinate Occupy leaders around the country if things "got out of hand." They carried out assassinations of leaders in the Ferguson Uprising in 2014. The fundamental goal of this institution is to keep down people's movements by any means they can. They have resorted to the most heinous acts of violence, torture, and psychological manipulation and will continue to do so with impunity in the future.

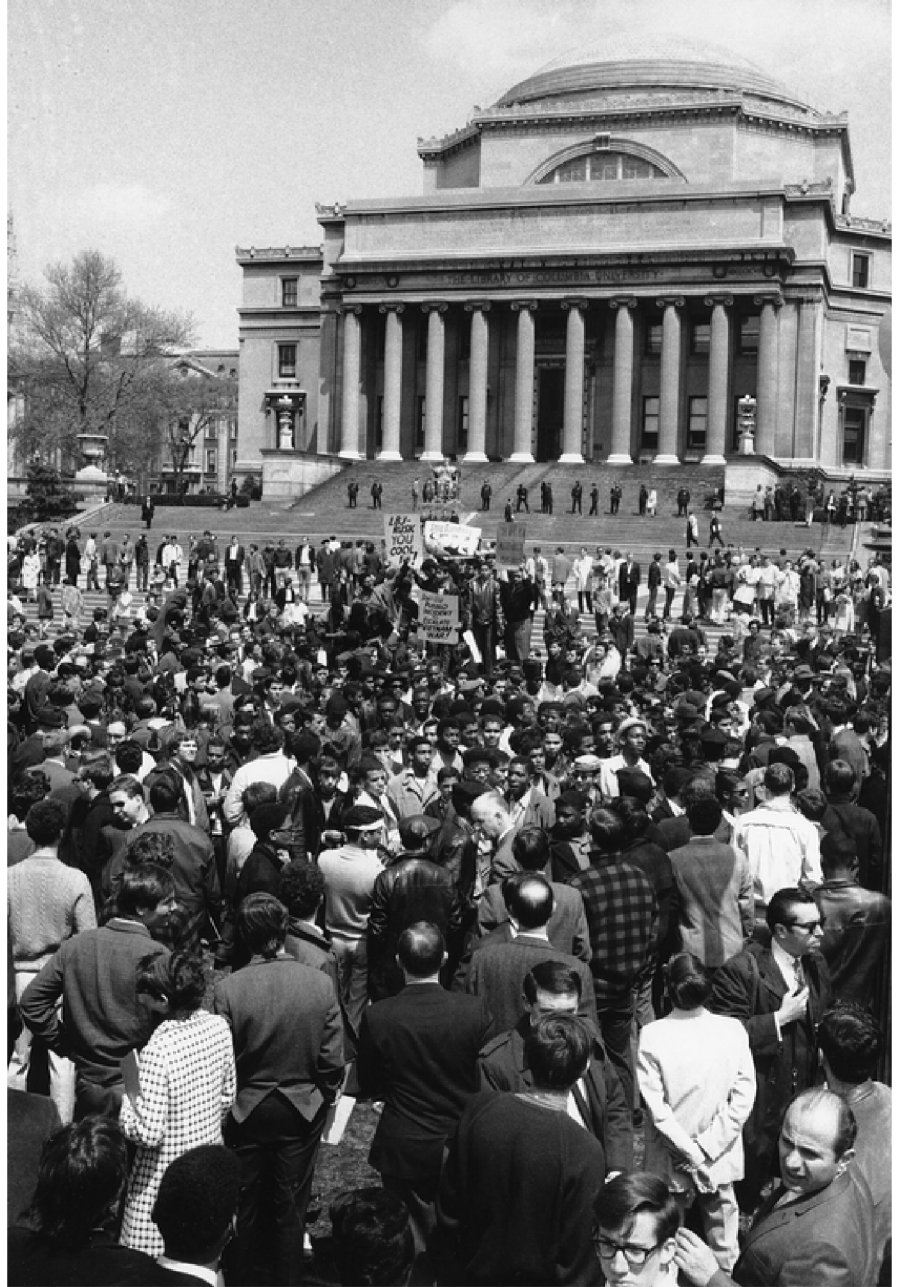
*FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover's Counterintelligence Program (COINTELPRO)'s directives included: "pinpoint potential troublemakers and neutralize them before they exercise their potential for violence."*



*Right: Chicago Black Panther leader Fred Hampton's body being carried by smiling Chicago police after the FBI ordered his assassination.*

# Institute for Defense Analyses

The Institute for Defense Analyses (IDA) is a corporation that works solely for the U.S. state. It was founded after WWII to do research for the U.S. military, and was overseen by elite universities including Columbia, MIT, and Princeton. The IDA works for countless arms of the rotten U.S. bureaucracy and military. It creates cutting-edge military technology to most effectively kill and torture people abroad and specializes in working on “counter-terrorism” programs with the National Security Agency, Department of Defense, and Department of Homeland Security to surveil and suppress anyone the U.S. government deems a threat. After militant anti-imperialist protests at Columbia and other



*Anti-war protest in 1968*

universities in 1968, the IDA was forced to cease its official university oversight and Columbia administrators resigned from the IDA Executive Committee. We should take up the spirit of the struggles of the 1960s and oppose the key role of corporations like the IDA in the U.S. state’s imperialist warmongering and domestic suppression.

# General Dynamics

General Dynamics is the fifth largest weapons manufacturer in the world, a fact that speaks for itself. In the past twenty years, General Dynamics and other American defense contractors have put over \$2.6 billion into the lobbying of politicians—and received one-third to one-half of the \$14 trillion dollars spent by the U.S. Department of Defense. Airstrikes from their clients—which along with the U.S. include Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Egypt, and Israel—have murdered and displaced millions of civilians and devastated infrastructure in Afghanistan, Libya, Iraq, Syria, Somalia, Iran, Palestine, Yemen, Ukraine, and more. Just a few weeks ago, they won a \$43 million contract to build nuclear-powered missile submarines for the U.S. Navy. With this sort of company, the pretense of respect for human life is shamefully transparent. In the brief for their 2022 shareholder meeting, the Board of Directors unanimously recommended voting against a proposal to require General Dynamics to prepare a human rights report.



*Israel used General Dynamics' 2000-pound MK-84 bombs to bomb Gaza in 2021. This photo is from Gaza City, May 21, 2021. The same month, the Biden administration authorized the sale of these bombs, which have a "30 meter kill radius", to replenish Israel's weapons stocks.*



# U.S. Navy

Just a single arm of the most endowed military in the world by more than \$500 billion per year, the United States Navy will have a budget of about \$180 billion dollars in 2023. The vast majority of this spending goes to purchasing, developing, and maintaining vehicles and weapons meant to inflict violence in the name of securing American global hegemony. Only a quarter of this budget goes to paying soldiers, and roughly half a billion dollars are allocated to recruiting and enlarging this military branch which already dwarfs all of its peers on the world stage. Though, along with the rest of the military, it paints itself as a benevolent police force protecting the globe from terror, the Navy itself is an agent of terror for much of the world. Members of the Navy SEALs have exposed a culture of intimidation where they are warned against reporting and preventing the numerous war crimes of their superiors and peers. We should oppose the goals and aims of the Navy and its role in imperialism abroad, as well as the shady practices it employs to lure well-meaning Americans into joining its ranks.



*The U.S. military controls 750 bases in more than 80 countries around the world.*

# Naval Information Warfare Center Pacific (NIWC Pacific)



*The U.S. Navy has been deploying a series of unmanned, underwater drones, some of which will be armed with torpedos and even missiles.*

The Naval Information Warfare Center Pacific (NIWC Pacific) is a disturbing institution. It is really the main command center for the Navy, where they plan out fleet deployment, carry out global surveillance, do cyberattacks, and plan “intelligence operations.” This military institution is also central to the push to massively expand the Navy’s use of drone warfare and other dystopian “next generation” weaponry. As the US elites build up the military to new heights (both in terms of budget and overall forces), the NIWC Pacific is playing a central coordinating role. Recent months have seen dangerous escalations with Russia and China, and we are careening towards a potential Third World War. The NIWC Pacific is planning out WWII, they are literally conducting war games, and trying to figure out how to win a nuclear war. If this wasn’t bad enough, they also have worked to refine strategies for naval blockades, and ways in which the US Navy can aid and assist in the military subjugation of poor countries around the world. Given the recent embarrassing US military defeat in Afghanistan (where Naval Aircraft carriers played an important supporting role despite the country being landlocked), it’s reasonable to wonder how effective NIWC Pacific is at developing winning strategies. But win or lose, their history shows that they are quite effective at developing strategies which bring untold death and destruction to poor countries, especially those that are resource rich.

# Taking up the student struggle of the 60s

In the 1960s, students at Columbia rose up, inspired by people's struggles and revolutionary movements around the world. They fought against Columbia's classified military research and the Vietnam war, military and CIA recruiting on campus, and Columbia's construction of its racist "Gym Crow" in Morningside Park with a separate entrance for Black residents of Harlem. Students refused to obediently follow along the path set out for them by the university, which was to focus on their careers, live a comfortable life, and do nothing to join the people's struggles against the capitalist class and their agents of oppression.

## OUR DEMANDS

1. Disciplinary action against the six originally charged must be lifted and no reprisals taken against anyone in this demonstration.
2. Construction of the Columbia gym on Harlem land must stop NOW.
3. The University must use its good offices to see that all charges against persons arrested at the gym site be dropped.
4. All relations with IDA must be severed, including President Kirk's and Trustee William Burden's membership on the Executive Board.
5. President Kirk's edict on indoor demonstrations must be dropped.
6. All judicial decisions should be made in an open hearing with due process judged by a bipartite committee of students and faculty.



# How did Columbia respond?

"Our young people, in disturbing numbers, appear to reject all forms of authority, from whatever source derived, and they have taken refuge in a turbulent and inchoate nihilism whose sole objectives are destruction. I know of no time in our history when the gap between the generations has been wider or more potentially dangerous."

—Columbia University president Grayson Kirk, April 12, 1968



*The university called in the NYPD, who beat the protesting students.*

On May 6, 1968, Dr. Robert Fondiller, professor of the industrial and management engineering department, wrote FBI Director Hoover requesting assistance in fighting the SDS threat at Columbia.

"Please, please help me to show these SDS tactics up for what they are, by sending me copies or Xeroxes of the original Communist instructional material that these students are following to the letter in their disruptive activities. You are the acknowledged authority on matters Communistic, as well as our most vigorous champion of the American way. We need your help, now." wrote Fondiller.

According to an FBI memorandum, Fondiller was furnished with literature concerning the New Left, even though Hoover formally denied the request in a letter dated May 10.



*Left page: 1968 Columbia student protest demands. Columbia eventually cancelled its construction of the gym, and severed the institutional ties with the Institute for Defense Analyses. The university only did this because students forced it to. They didn't just ask the university nicely. They got organized, occupied campus buildings, and went on strike. This was a real struggle: over 700 students were arrested and many students were beaten by the police.*

**Join us to study revolutionary theory and history, and organize to put an end to U.S. imperialism and the entire rotten capitalist system oppressing people in the U.S. and abroad.**



**Columbia  
Revolutionary  
Marxist Students**

**Email us:**

[marxiststudygroupnyc@riseup.net](mailto:marxiststudygroupnyc@riseup.net)

**Website and publication *Red Horizon*:**

[marxiststudents.wordpress.com](http://marxiststudents.wordpress.com)

**Instagram:**

[@marxist\\_students](https://www.instagram.com/marxist_students)