

The Delray Democrat

POGO — the Project on Government Oversight¹

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Among the things I inherited from my mother were subscriptions. Many I already had, like the Southern Poverty Law Center, People For the American Way, FAIR, and the Washington Spectator. But others were things I usually read at her house, The Nation, The New York Review of Books, and Americans United. But I picked up one that I don't recall reading called POGO – the Project on Government Oversight, and that's what I wanted to write about.

Talking about government oversight isn't the most sexy of subjects, but it's the most expensive one. The overwhelming waste of tax dollars that go to the military causes us to fight over the rest. And it isn't just Republicans that cause this problem, we have plenty of Democratic representatives and senators that are bought off. For the Littoral Combat Ships program, which are ships designed to operate close to shore, costs tripled over initial estimates, but it was kept alive by Richard Shelby (R-AL) and Tammy Baldwin (D-WI) because the ships were being built in their states.

It's hard to vote against programs that benefit your voters so defense contractors and the Pentagon use “political engineering” to spread the cash around. The first Littoral ship was commissioned in 2008 and was decommissioned, along with at least one more, because it would cost too much money to keep them in service. They cost over \$600 million each.

Other articles cover National (in)Security and the Pentagon Budget, a study of how defense companies made out like bandits during COVID but still get huge bailouts. Racism in the Ranks discusses how the military, composed of 43% minorities, has only two black officers out of 41 4* generals, and took until 2020 to have Air Force General Charles Brown Jr. become the first Black officer to head a military service. Poisoning Our Police discusses the militarization of our police forces resulting in threats to our constitutional rights and public safety.

POGO's website is www.pogo.org, and is well worth making it a part of your reading time.

¹ *The Delray Democrat*, August 2021, p. 2.