

FACT SHEET –MILITARY SPENDING

No one wants to short-change the Department of Defense (DOD) at a time when the nation faces acute foreign threats. With Al Qaeda not yet defeated, fighting in Iraq, and tensions mounting with North Korea, many feel the U.S. needs to spend generously on defense. Our armed forces deserve decent pay, up-to-date equipment, and cutting-edge technologies designed to minimize their vulnerability and assure battlefield success. But is the proposed Pentagon budget economically sustainable? Does our spending on the military, now more than the rest of the world combined, bring security? Should we change priorities?

Military Spending:

- With 5% of the world's population, the US accounted for 43% of world military expenditure in 2002.
- Since the September 11th attacks, the annual defense budget has increased by roughly \$60 billion.
- The administration plans to spend \$2.2 trillion in FY'04.
- Pentagon planners expect the defense budget to grow to more than \$500 billion by FY'09, 32% above current levels.
- The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) project record federal deficits over the next few years.

Misconceptions About Military Spending:

- DoD budgeted funds, \$368 billion in 2002, are not spent for combat operations.
- Combat operations are considered "contingencies" along with natural disasters.
- "Contingencies" are funded by Federal Law by mechanisms outside the normal budget process.
- The wars in Afghanistan (\$20 billion) and Iraq (\$79 billion plus \$87 billion plus ...) are "contingencies."

Homeland Security:

- Higher military spending does not compensate for under funding for homeland security.
- Funds for our first responders, come from state and local government and federal agencies outside the DoD such as the FBI, FEMA, and the Coast Guard.
- DoD spends only about \$10 billion on domestic security: dissemination of intelligence information, preparations for biological and chemical attacks, and air defense combat patrols over the U.S.
- Federal agencies under the new Department of Homeland Security, will receive \$41 billion in 2004.

Domestic Priorities:

- National security is measured in terms economic strength, worker productivity, education and national well being rather than how many bombs, bullets and missiles we have.
- Military spending is the national equivalent of insurance: it is essential, but one must ensure against likely threats. One does not spend half of one's income on flood insurance in Arizona.
- The US spends as much on war as on education, public health, housing, pensions, food aid, employment, and welfare combined.
- Domestic health, education, and welfare budgets will continue to be cut in coming years.

Resources:

Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI): <http://www.sipri.org/>

SIPRI--Military Expenditure and Arms Production: http://projects.sipri.se/milex/mex_data_index.html

Center for Defense Information: <http://www.cdi.org/index.cfm>

Foreign Policy in Focus: www.fpif.org

Council for Livable World (CLW): www.clw.org

(CLW) Detailed Military Budget Analysis: http://64.177.207.201/pages/17_10.html

(CLW) Analysis of FY2001 Defense Budget Resolution in PDF format: <http://64.177.207.201/static/behindnumbers.pdf>