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Who Will Pay for this Puny Defense Budget?

By Winslow Wheeler, Director, Straus Military Reform Project

This analysis first appeared in the Fort Worth Star-Telegram *on March 5, 2007.*

The new 2008 defense budget has been on the street for weeks. A consensus has emerged in Washington about its size. That consensus has little to do with the facts and much to do with political maneuvering, which has been orchestrated with brilliant success by the very same White House that everyone in Washington discounts as washed up.

President George W. Bush's request for a Pentagon budget for fiscal year 2008 (FY 08) is \$481 billion. To determine total U.S. security costs, add \$142 billion to cover the anticipated costs of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan; add \$17 billion requested for nuclear weapons costs in the Department of Energy (DOE); add another \$5 billion for miscellaneous defense costs in other agencies, such as the General Services Administration's National Defense Stockpile, the Selective Service, and some Coast Guard and international FBI costs, and you get a grand total of \$647 billion for 2008.

That considerable amount will strike some as incomplete. An inclusive definition of our defense budget might also include homeland security costs; for those expenses (beyond the ones already in the Defense Department) add \$36 billion. In addition, there are other essential U.S. security costs in the budget of the State Department for diplomacy, arms aid to allies, UN peacekeeping, reconstruction aid for Iraq and Afghanistan and foreign aid for other countries; add all or most of the International Affairs budget (\$38 billion). Some might want to include some of the human costs

CATEGORY	2006	2007	2008 (request)
"Peacetime" DOD Discretionary only	410.7	435.5	481.4
Mandatory Programs	59.3	1.7	1.8
Emergencies	123.8	163.4	141.7
Total DOD	593.8	600.1	624.6
DOE/Defense	17.5	17.0	17.4
Misc.	5.9	5.2	5.2
National Defense Budget Function	617.2	622.4	647.2
Homeland Security (non-DOD)	32.4	33.0	36.4
DVA	71.0	74.5	84.4
International Affairs	32.8	34.1	38.3
Grand Total	694.6	761.5	802.9

WHAT IS THE DEFENSE BUDGET? (\$ billions, Total Budget Authority)

Source: www.whitehouse.gov/omb/budget/fy2008/pdf/ap_cd_rom/27_1.pdf *Totals may not add due to rounding.

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A look back..

The next four issues of the *Defense Monitor* will highlight decades of contributions to U.S. defense policy.

First issue of the Defense Monitor SALT I accords signed in Moscow

of past and current wars; add another \$84 billion for the Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA). Still others might also want to add the share of annual payments on the interest of the national debt that can be attributed to the Defense Department; add another \$75 billion. There's more; various defense-related costs, such as costs to the Treasury for military retirement, are distributed all over the federal government.

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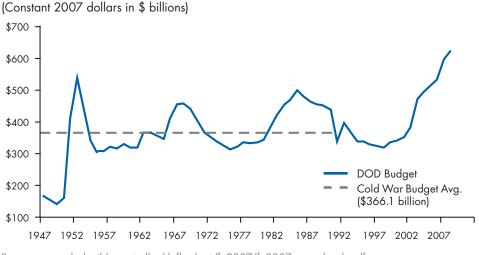
If the debt costs attributable to defense spending are included, the costs for 2008 in the table above rise to \$878 billion, but there will probably be even more. Many analysts believe the war costs will grow in the year ahead, especially if the tempo of fighting grows in Iraq or Afghanistan, which has been the pattern for both up to now. Moreover, if the White House and Congress have cut corners on the costs to repair and replace equipment worn out by war operations, which has been their routine all the way through 2007, there will be additional "reset" costs for 2008, probably in the billions of dollars.

There are also the costs estimated by the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) to actually execute the 2008 Pentagon budget. For many years, CBO has found that DOD underestimates its own costs to develop, produce, and maintain weapons and to support military personnel – beyond the other underestimations of war costs. If CBO is right (and just about every Pentagon budget analyst says it is), add somewhere between \$50 billion and \$100 billion, just for 2008.

The actual total for 2008 is unknown; it will not be the \$878 billion cited above.

Include or exclude any of the incremental costs listed above according to your own biases of what you

SIX DECADES OF SPENDING: DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE



Source: www.dod.mil/comptroller/defbudget/fy2007/fy2007_greenbook.pdf

believe should be counted; by any measure, it is not puny. Spending just for Pentagon expenses in 2008 (\$625 billion) is today larger in inflationadjusted dollars than at any point since the end of World War II.

According to the International Institute for Strategic Studies in London, the rest of the world spent just over \$611 billion on defense in 2005 – the latest year available. That compares to the \$510 billion we spent on just Pentagon costs that year. And with most foreign defense budgets stagnant or shrinking and ours growing rapidly, we can be confident the United States now exceeds the rest of the world combined in defense spending.

According to the CIA's "World Fact Book," the next biggest defense spender in the world, China, spent \$81 billion in 2005 – a very poor second place; it's just 13 percent of the \$625 billion our Pentagon will spend in 2008. Other more immediate problem countries barely register in comparison to the United States: in 2005, Iran spent \$4.3 billion on defense (0.06 percent) and North Korea spent \$5.2 billion (0.08 percent). If one counts defense costs beyond just DOD, these unimpressive percentages spent by others shrink further.

The U.S. budget for security is not posed against a competing giant; it faces only pigmies in relative dollar terms.

And yet, the White House, Secretary of Defense Robert Gates, the military services, and some big defense 1972



David Johnson hired as one of CDI's first employees

oday Johnson continues as the editor in chief of Iohnson's Russia List - IRL)

Paris Peace Accord signed, ending U.S. direct involvement in Vietnam

spenders among Washington's think tank punditry would all have you believe the American budget colossus is puny and shriveled, desperately needing augmentation. The lens they apply to make the mountain appear a molehill is to describe the percentage of gross domestic product (GDP) that America spends on defense; the FY 08 Pentagon budget amounts to an inconsequential 4 percent. The figure is made to look even more anemic when these advocates compare today's share of GDP for defense to that spent by President Reagan in 1985 (6.1 percent) or better yet by President Kennedy in 1962 (9.4 percent). By using (rather misusing) this measure today, we appear to be strangling the defense budget, and clearly we should pay more, they argue.

These sentiments spring forth simultaneously from the White House, the Pentagon, and garrulous pundits as if telepathy had become practical.

Just as universally, these advocates do not point out that while our defense budget has grown since the Kennedy and Reagan administrations, the economy has grown much, much more, thereby making the percentage for defense smaller. These enthusiasts are literally arguing that our defense spending should be a function of the number of McDonalds' in the country.

They cook their arguments because they have plans to expand defense spending further. The chiefs of the military services are just now

SPOTLIGHT: Winslow Wheeler

Work In Progress:

Understanding 21st century warfare and military reform (book release in summer 2007), fostering congressional oversight, and comprehending defense spending

Background:

Current Position: Director, Straus Military Reform Project Previous Positions: Worked in U.S. Senate over a period of 31 years as a national security adviser to senators from

both political parties, specifically for Sens. Jacob K. Javits, R-N.Y., Nancy L. Kassebaum, R-Kan., David Pryor, D-Ark., and Pete V. Domenici, R-N.M.; also worked as assistant director at National Defense Programs, Program Evaluation and Methodology Division, U.S. Government Accountability Office.

Media Interviews:

Numerous broadcast interviews including NPR, CNN, NBC, BBC, History and Discovery channels, and Fox News; various interviews with major newspapers such as The New York Times, Washington Post, Los Angeles Times, Chicago Tribune, Denver Post, Army Times, and Defense News.

In-Depth:

Winslow Wheeler has been an analyst for the Straus Military Reform Project at WSI's Center for Defense Information since September 2002. With 31 years of experience working on national security and defense issues, Wheeler has become a valuable asset to CDI, the media, and to the public.

With the 2008 budget request released in early February, Wheeler has been working on commentaries and analyses of the request; on Feb. 1 of this year, he colead a panel briefing to journalists and scholars presenting several aspects of his defense budget research. Specializing in knowledge of pork issues and congressional oversight, Wheeler broke down the various parts of the budget and offered his views on defense spending trends and "earmarks" within the request.

Wheeler's work is also focused on military reform, especially researching and presenting ways to increase the effectiveness of the U.S. Armed Forces at lower cost in 21st century warfare. Also known as fourth generation warfare, it is a type of fighting with non-state actors much different than most previous wars the United States has been involved in. Our lack of progress in combating it is described by Wheeler as a "fundamental problem." His ideas on that problem, possible solutions, and military reform in general will be presented in a book he is co-authoring with Larry Korb, a senior advisor to CDI. The book will document the modern history of the military reform movement and its uncertain future; it is due out in the summer of 2007.



February 1975

The *Monitor* reports "30,000 U.S. nuclear weapons"

Monitor, "Lessons of Vietnam: Toward Post-Vietnam Foreign Policy"

September 1975

sending to Congress what they describe as their list of "unfunded requirements" (also known as "wish lists") for additional programs to be added to the FY 08 DOD budget. The Army has a list that totals \$10.3 billion; the Marines have one for \$3.2 billion; the Marines have one for \$3.2 billion; the Navy's comes to \$5.7 billion; the immodest Air Force has one for \$16.9 billion; even the Special Forces Command has one for \$400 million. The total is "only" \$36.5 billion.

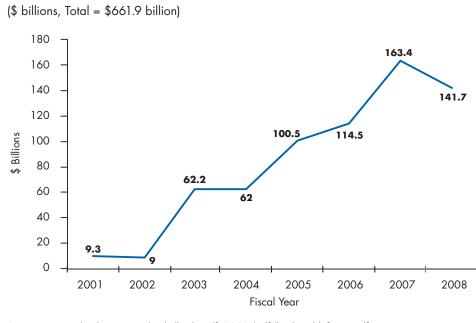
Although these considerable lists exceed what Bush and Gates permitted in the defense budget, neither will do anything to deter this bootstrapping. Indeed, Bush and Gates have already tacitly endorsed the end run around their own budget. They are both quite happy to have the addi-

EMERGENCY APPROPRIATIONS FOR WARS

tional spending; indeed, their budget anticipated the gambit, this game has been played every single budget year for the last 10.

Now in control of Congress and having made multiple promises to restore oversight of the war in Iraq and the executive branch in general, the Democrats have been successfully rolled by the White House, the military services, and the big spender pundits. For example, the new chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, Ike Skelton, D-Mo., has already said how sympathetic he is to the military service's "wish lists," and other Democrats are rushing to prove their stalwartness on defense by agreeing to the whole package.

Knowing a patsy when they see



Source: www.whitehouse.gov/omb/budget/fy2008/pdf/budget/defense.pdf

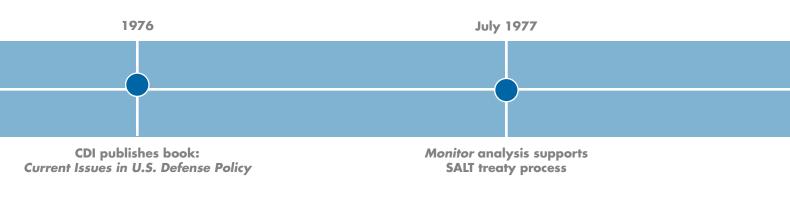
one, the defense contractors are now piling on: Boeing (with the Air Force's help) is already lobbying for 10-12 more C-17 transport aircrafts, at \$217 million each, to add to the budget. To understand why Boeing will get the enthusiastic approval of Democrats, one needs to look no further than the two senators from California, where the C-17 is built, Barbara Boxer (D) and Diane Feinstein (D).

Left completely unaddressed is how to pay for it all. The advocates of the GDP measure imply there are piles of loose cash laying around because the share of GDP is down and we should afford more. But, of course, there is no free money. Their rhetoric lacks integrity; they fail to say how or who should pay.

There are only three choices: increase taxes, cut domestic spending, or borrow more money from our grandchildren to pay it off.

The Democrats in Congress are unlikely to make any tough choices. Neither will the Republicans. None of them will tell us how they will pay for the gigantic national security budget. On the other hand, their decision will be very clear to our grandchildren.

Winslow T. Wheeler is the director of the Straus Military Reform Project of the Center for Defense Information in Washington. He spent 31 years working on national security issues for senators from both political parties and for the Government Accountability Office.



China's ASAT Test and Space Deterrence

Chinese scholars and experts analyze the Chinese space program, nuclear deterrence, and crisis management in the Winter 2007 China Security journal.

China's anti-satellite (ASAT) weapon test on Jan. 11, 2007, was a defining moment for the security of outer space. Three articles in the current issue of *China Security* explore China's motivations behind the test, U.S. and international reactions, and implications for the delicate strategic balance in space. Complementing these analyses, this issue also discusses the rationale for China's robust deterrence in space.

U.S. Nuclear Primacy and China's Nuclear Challenges

The global strategic nuclear environment is rapidly changing. A senior colonel from the People's Liberation Army surveys the threats that China faces and its future choices in meeting those challenges. A second analysis by Keir A. Lieber and Daryl G. Press revisits the issue of U.S. nuclear primacy with the debate shifting to its consequences for China's minimum nuclear deterrent and the future stability of China-U.S. strategic nuclear relations.

Crisis Management in China

China's domestic crises are rising. From SARS, avian flu, and HIV/ AIDS, to coal-mining accidents and social unrest, these non-traditional security challenges will play a critical role in defining the future of China's stability. A Chinese scholar closely examines how China has fared in undertaking this monumental task and the path ahead to better crisis management strategies.

Deterrence Revisited: Outer Space, by Bao Shixiu

"China cannot accept the monopolization of outer space by another power." Bao Shixiu is a senior fellow at the Academy of Military Sciences.

U.S.-Sino Relations in Space: From "War of Words" to Cold War in Space? by Theresa Hitchens

"If the intent of the Chinese test was to deter the United States from building space-based missile defenses, it may well backfire." Theresa Hitchens is the director of the World Security Institute's Center for Defense Information.

China's ASAT Test: Strategic Response, by Eric Hagt

"The ASAT test itself implies that the military option is beginning to win out over a diplomatic one in China as a solution to head off U.S. space control ambitions." Eric Hagt is the director of the China Program at the World Security Institute.

Nuclear Challenges and China's Choices, by Wang Zhongchun

"China should avoid sacrificing its interests to satisfy U.S. nonprolifChina Security is a policy journal that brings diverse Chinese perspectives to Washington on vital traditional and nontraditional security issues that impact



China's strategic development and its relations with the United States. visit www.wsichina.org

eration requests." Wang Zhongchun is a professor at the National Defense University and senior colonel of the PLA.

U.S. Nuclear Primacy and the Future of the Chinese Deterrent, by Keir A. Lieber & Daryl G. Press

"America's drive for nuclear primacy is primarily driven by concerns about future relations with China, rather than Russia." Lieber is an assistant professor of political science at the University of Notre Dame. Press is an associate professor of government at Dartmouth College.

Crisis Management in China, by Zhong Kaibin

"Crises increasingly spill over national borders and affect regional and international actors." Zhong Kaibin is a Ph.D. candidate at the School of Public Policy and Management at Tsinghua University.

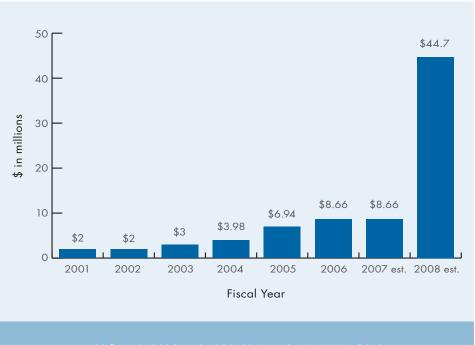


Huge Spike in Small Arms Destruction Budget

By Rachel Stohl, Senior Analyst and Rhea Myerscough, Research Assistant

After only six years of coordinating small arms destruction efforts, the U.S. government is a world leader in confronting the threat of small arms and light weapons (SALW) proliferation. The State Department's Office of Weapons Removal and Abatement, within the Bureau of Political-Military Affairs (PM/WRA), is the primary office that addresses the dangers of uncontrolled small arms and light weapons, including man-portable air defense systems (MANPADS). PM/WRA provides both technical and financial assistance for the destruction of surplus and obsolete weapons and works in partnership with the Defense Department's Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA) to counter the small arms proliferation threat.

The growth of the U.S. government's small arms destruction program is impressive. To date, the United States has spent \$27 million to destroy approximately 900,000 small arms and light weapons and over 80 million pieces of ammunition in 25 countries. The Bureau of Political-Military Affairs began its small arms destruction efforts in fiscal year 2001 (FY 01), with a budget of \$2 million that funded destruction projects in four countries. The weapons destruction programs conducted by PM/WRA are funded primarily through the Nonproliferation, Anti-



PM/WRA SMALL ARMS AND LIGHT WEAPONS DESTRUCTION FUNDING

terrorism, Demining and Related Programs (NADR) account in the Foreign Operations budget. Beginning in FY 04, PM/WRA's budget increased to reflect a new emphasis on MANPADS. By FY 06, the PM/WRA budget had increased to \$8.7 million – more than triple the initial FY 01 budget – with \$8.6 million requested for FY 07. The recently-announced FY 08 budget request, however, increases the small arms destruction budget astronomically with \$44.7 million requested for the upcoming fiscal year. The FY 08 increase is due primarily to increasing MANPADS detruction efforts. WRA-funded programs have destroyed over 18,600 MANPADS in 17 countries thus far. The additional funds requested for U.S. destruction programs represent a welcome and necessary step toward ridding the world of this devestating scourge.



CDI convenes first Nuclear War Conference CDI produces the film War Without Winners

SALT II Treaty signed by President Carter and Leonid Brezhnev

Exaggerations Galore Missile defense's budget request promises much, delivers little

By Victoria Samson, Research Analyst and Hon. Philip Coyle, Senior Advisor

The Missile Defense Agency (MDA) released its budget request for fiscal year 2008 (FY 08) on Feb. 5, 2007. If supported by the U.S. Congress, the \$10.85 billion request would result in more money being spent annually on missile defense than on any other Pentagon weapon system.

To justify this level of spending, MDA tries to use real-world situations that fall apart under further examination.

For example, North Korea's series of ballistic missile flight tests in July 2006 were used by MDA officials as justification to put the Ground-based Midcourse Defense (GMD) system on alert. But this was "for show" since the systems being deployed in Alaska and California have no demonstrated capability to defend the United States from an enemy attack under realistic operational conditions. Furthermore, this slowed down the system's progress, as we can see from the overview MDA released with its budget request: "Unfortunately, this necessary action impacted the availability of the Ballistic Missile Defense System [BMDS] for continued spiral development, and testing and fielding because we currently do not have a capability to concurrently maintain the BMDS in full operational mode while simultaneously developing, testing

or training on the system."

What an incomplete system could have done to protect the United States against a theoretical missile attack is anyone's guess, since MDA itself states in its FY 08 budget request overview, "This initial capability is not sufficient to protect the United States from the extant and anticipated rogue nation threat."

In this budget request, a particularly fear-mongering justification for missile defense is used in discussing last summer's other major rocketry event. MDA states, "During the summer and fall of 2006 Hezbollah launched thousands of long-range rockets into northern Israel from Lebanon. Over 40 Israeli civilians were killed in the attacks and as many as 500,000 were displaced." It is downright misleading to claim that missile defense can protect a population against a rocket attack. Nothing in the U.S. BMDS is planned to defend against short-range rockets: the systems are incapable for the job.

One thing that stands out are justifications for the proposed third GMD interceptor and radar sites in Europe: "Because we must protect

"This initial capability is not sufficient to protect the United States from the extant and anticipated rogue nation threat." these radars or risk losing the 'eyes' of our system, we are planning to field ground-based interceptors and an associated ground-based midcourse radar site in Europe." This is the first time that this explanation of needing a site in Europe to defend already-established early warning radars has been used, and it too is an exaggerated statement that has little factual basis.

Most worrisome is the appearance of the Space Test Bed, now receiving new congressional support following China's first test of an anti-satellite capability on Jan. 11. If Congress grants MDA funding for this test bed, it will be home to space-based interceptors, the first official space weapon system of the Bush administration. Projected funding levels through the scope of the document's timeframe are: FY 08, \$10 million; FY 09, \$15 million; FY 10, \$15 million; FY 11, \$25 million; FY 12, \$101 million; FY 13, \$124 million. This would establish a precedent for putting weapons in space, a highly destructive policy that the United States managed to avoid doing during the worst of the Cold War. Before deciding to weaponize space, the U.S. Congress should have a long and frank discussion as to the consequences of a costly new arms race in space, and the less costly and more effective alternatives.



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