

THE US NATIONAL SECURITY SPENDING AND THE AMERICAN NATIONAL INTEREST: A SOUTHEAST ASIAN PERSPECTIVE

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ABSTRACT

This paper is the result of observations and qualitative analysis made during a six weeks programme organised by the US State Department, the Study of the US Institutes on the US Political Economy and the Global Economic Systems, from June 15 – July 29, 2006. During the program participants coming from 18 different countries across the globe were exposed to various levels of society in various locations which included Carlisle, Philadelphia, New York, Washington D.C. and Atlanta. These observations were based on interactions with locals, academics, professionals, government officials, politicians, and fellow participants. One of the issues highlighted in group discussions and presentations was the extend to which the US Budget is allocated for national security and the apparent incoherence of this spending if compared to the public interest of the American citizenry. This article will explore some of the reasons stated for the high level of national security spending and the incoherence or coherence of this spending with the American 'national interest'.

Keywords: National security, interest, budget, political economy, and American citizenry

INTRODUCTION

On the outset this paper was based on a series of assumptions and presumptions very much influenced by the US engagement in Iraq in particular as well as its wider engagements abroad. In addition to the common view that the US should recall its troops in Iraq, there is a related view that the US administration should also consider cutting back on national security spending. These views are shared not only by non-US citizens but also the US citizenry. In addition, there is also a perception that if the US is the champion of democracy and freedom as it claims then it should be more ethical, democratic and respectful of freedom in its foreign policy approach. After all, the US is the caretaker of the world's democratic values, a role that has at times been assigned to the US by others, while at other times it has been self-assigned.

Indeed, the US Defense Budget¹ and the US war engagements is the focus of much criticism. Unfortunately however despite Bush administration's realisation and acknowledgement of these criticisms, coming from both the international community and the American citizenry, US President Bush had announced, on January 9, 2007, his plans to send more troops to Iraq. Bush announced that 20,001 will be sent to Iraq, this decision was made despite the increasing death toll of American soldiers in Iraq, despite opinions from the battlefield stating that the

increase in troops will not overcome increasing sectarian violence; and despite increasing disillusionment amongst Americans with its leaders' appetite for force instead of diplomacy. When this recent announcement is analysed in line with the decision to increase the US 2007 Defense Budget to a 7% increase over 2006, which is a 48% increase over 2001², more accurately a 27% increase in real terms since Sept-11³, further criticisms creep to mind: Why was this decision made? What were the driving forces behind this decision? How is public opinion reflected in this decision?

NATIONAL SECURITY SPENDING: PRESIDENTIAL RHETORIC VS. PRESIDENTIAL ACTION

Before the 2007 budget was announced the Bush administration seemed ready to cut defence spending. Defence contractors likewise braced themselves when they were warned by the Department of Defense (DOD) in late December 2005 about the cut in spending.⁴ In addition, rhetoric used in the Bush administration's new National Security Strategy doctrine illustrates the intent of the administration to pursue national security by "championing aspirations for human dignity, strengthening alliances, defusing regional conflicts and expanding development."⁵ The commitment seemed to promise non-military solutions to conflicts. The importance it placed on the DOD was also rhetorically promising, as DOD only figured third on the list of "key national security institutions". Unfortunately, the budget released by DOD in January did not reflect the readiness reflected by the promise to cut defence spending nor did it effectively illustrate the aspirations relayed in Bush's strategic doctrine.

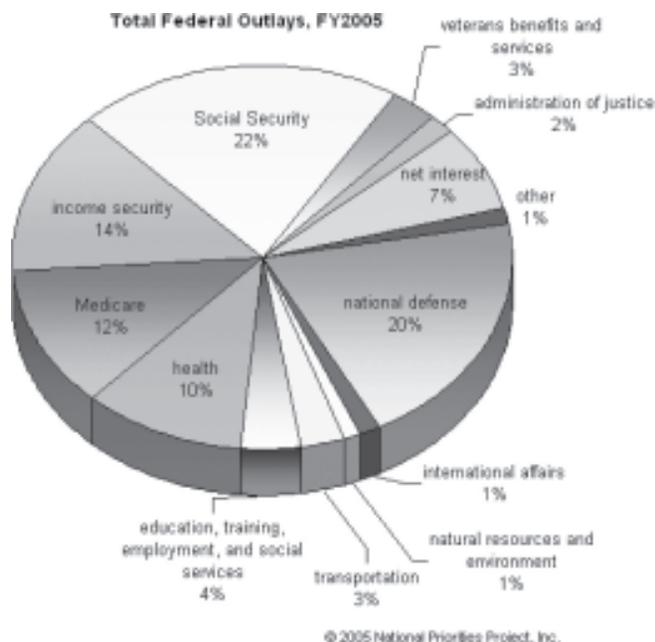
The irony was noted in the report of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) which stressed that a strong economy coupled with spending restraint was critical to reduce the country's deficit before noting the 7% increase. The same report also noted the proposed restraint on overall growth of discretionary spending by "...reducing non-security discretionary spending below the previous year's level and the elimination or reduction of programs not getting results or not fulfilling essential priorities"⁶. Ironically, however, the 7% increase in the DOD's base budget, totalling \$439.3 billion, was rationalised as well-allocated funds to maintain a high level of military readiness and to develop and procure new weapon systems to ensure U.S. battlefield superiority. The above rationalisation was made after the initial caution that there will be cuts in defence spending and the seemingly morally conscious doctrinal communication.

In practice, decisions made were a far cry from the rhetoric used. In addition to the base budget, the President's Fiscal Year 2007 Budget also includes the following:

- \$70 billion as an estimated 2006 emergency allowance to cover the military and other costs of the Global War on Terror.
- \$50 billion as a 2007 emergency allowance to carry the military's war efforts through part of 2007.
- \$50 billion already approved by Congress which will be allocated for changes in military posture, capabilities and mobilisation.
- \$21 billion DOD funding for the Department of Energy, which includes nuclear weapons and "other" which is not defined.⁷

IS IT REALLY THAT BAD?

Even with these extensive figures some still argue that national security spending is insignificant. After all, the national security spending is a mere 4% of the GDP, rather low, compared to other countries across the globe⁸. In terms of the proportion allocated for defence as opposed to other categories, the figure also does not look very alarming. The chart below, for example, illustrates that defence is only about 20% of total federal outlays for the 2005 fiscal year. The proportions illustrated in 2005 also resemble the 2007 percentage.



However, these figures do not tell the whole story. In addition to the mandatory spending allocation of the federal budget, the discretionary budget, funds under direct control of the President/Administration, provides a further resource for military spending. For the fiscal year 2007 budget request for discretionary spending is \$873 billion. \$460 billion or 52.7% of this is the military budget. This was an increase over the 2006 budget request which was \$840.5 billion, of which 52%, \$438.8 billion was military budget.

The additional figures recorded above, on its own, may not be a cause of concern but when compared against the amount spent on other things, the amount spent on defence is rather worrying. For example, the next two largest items on the 2007 discretionary budget request, education and health, each merely gets \$58.4 billion (6.9%) and \$51 billion (6.1%) respectively.⁹ With these in consideration I would argue that the US defence spending is worrying, first because of the extent of the spending in comparison to other spending, second, defence spending is incoherent with the general doctrine offered by the administration and third, the increased defence spending would lead to more conflict across the globe. This conclusion needs to be analysed against the US public opinion and its national interest. After all, the US is a sovereign nation, and being a democratic nation, the administration needs to behave in line with its national interest.

NATIONAL INTEREST: PUBLIC OPINION VS. PRIVATE CORPORATIONS

The question that keeps playing in mind is, how can one define the national interest. The national interest, linguistically, should remain 'national' in nature. If this is so, in the case of the US it includes the interests of the American people, hopefully well represented by the representatives who were democratically elected; it includes the individual representatives themselves, each with their own personal values and priorities; and it also includes the interests of businesses, corporations, which are effectively 'national' in terms of geography and more importantly resource distribution.

The Public Opinion

It is widely perceived that the US national security spending is not in line with the public opinion. Whether or not this is a fair perception needs to be analysed deeper. Recent polls conducted by various organisations gave a mixed reflection of whether or not the administration's decisions reflect the US public opinion.

A brief summary of the poll conducted by the Pew Research Center for the People and the Press shows that a large majority¹⁰ of 58% said they opposed the war compared to 39% who said they favoured it. The most interesting finding of the poll was the contradictory figures between the level of military presence abroad and the level of national security spending. By a 45% to 32% margin, respondents said they believed that the most effective way to reduce the threat of terrorist attacks on the US was to decrease rather than increase Washington's military presence abroad. On the other hand, the Pew poll findings found 43% of respondents believed that 'military strikes' against nations that were trying to develop nuclear weapons was a very important way to reduce future terrorism. This was a reduction of 15% compared to a poll taken in October 2002, but it is still a high percentage. Furthermore, despite suggesting a general desire to reduce US involvement in the Middle East compared to four years ago when asked to identify what would be a 'very important' step in reducing terrorism, 67% favoured decreasing dependence on Mideast oil, 52% favoured increasing defence spending and 43% favoured attacking nuclear facilities. With this combination of results the administration can say that overall analysis shows that their decision has been a wise one and are in-line with national politics. The same poll shows that 42% of respondents said they believed Washington should mind its own business internationally and let other countries get along the best they can on their own.

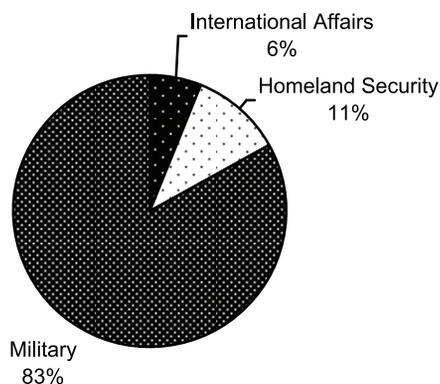
The poll results do not immediately look promising in terms of possible reductions in defence spending in the immediate future and a more morally conscious and democratic outlook in the US foreign policy. Indeed one may argue that the survey strengthens the administration's point of view that there is a need to increase defence spending.

In addition to public opinion polls, observations made based on interactions with the population also provide an illustration of general public perception on the issue of defence spending and the so called 'war on terror'. Public perception can be divided into three, first that there is a real threat to their security, second, it is the US' responsibility to bring freedom and democracy across the globe and third, the 'we support our troops' mentality, but we are against war. The observation made while attending a community meet organised by one of the NGOs in Carlisle,

Pennsylvania, provides strong evidence for the above conclusion. While discussing the logistics and organisation of a community event, a member of this organisation raised the question of security, that is, whether necessary precaution has been taken as preventive measures to terrorist attacks, and what can be done in case there is one. From the perspective of an 'international' outsider the question seemed rather absurd as Carlisle was a small town. The thought of a terrorist attack on the town was highly unlikely as opposed to the possibility of a mad gunman on the loose. On the other hand, these 'town folks' were seriously discussing the issue. Their worldview was of course coloured by the news they read and watch on TV. The security threat card played by the administration had definitely impacted greatly on the general American public.

As a general observation, the American taxpayers still expect the federal government to provide national security. What can be deduced from the observations made and an analysis of data derived from The Pew Research Center poll is that, in order for the US administration to fulfil this expectation, three broad strategies are needed: First, preventive measures or international affairs, which include securing nuclear materials abroad and participating in multi-lateral diplomatic and peacekeeping operations; second, defence or homeland security and finally offense or the military forces. The problem with these broad strategies however, is that it is still heavily concentrated on the military hence overemphasising on the offense capacity. This is apparent in the breakdown of National Security Spending as seen below. Between 2005 and 2006 the change in military spending was a mere reduction of 3% from 86% in 2005 to 83% in 2006.

Chart 2: Breakdown of National Security Spending, 2006¹¹



The tension and contradiction which exist in the public realm between the US policy of increasing national security spending and the protection of American interest is a continuous problem which recurs. The same debate has been going on since the end of the Cold War, indeed a study conducted in 1995, published in 1996, reflects the present environment of the American public opinion on defence spending very well. The findings from that study are still applicable to the current situation despite the decade gap.

The study carried out by the Program on International Policy Attitudes (PIPA) looked at public attitudes on defence spending in general, as well as the specific question of budget cuts. The survey was based on a nationwide poll of 1,207 adults

conducted November 18-25, 1995 (margin of error +/-3-4%) focus groups in Atlanta, Philadelphia, and Kalamazoo, Michigan. The key findings of the study were as follows:

1. A large majority of Americans favors a strong defense. This majority feels that the US has global interests that need to be protected with a world-wide military presence, and wants to maintain existing US commitments to protect other countries. Most Americans have a positive feeling toward the US military.
2. When Americans think about US defense preparation in the context of potential threats, most Americans propose a level of preparation far lower than the present US level. Asked to prescribe US defense spending levels relative to its potential enemies, an overwhelming majority sets levels far below actual spending levels. A majority rejects the notion (central to current US force planning) that the US needs to be prepared to fight two major regional wars simultaneously without the help of allies.
3. When Americans think about defense preparation in a budgetary context, a modest majority favors significant cuts in the defense budget—the median respondent feels that the defense budget can be cut 10%. The majority feels that defense should be cut as part of efforts to balance the budget. If the President and Congress decide to make deep cuts of up to 20% in defense spending, a very strong majority would support them.
4. Support for cuts in defense spending is sustained by the belief that the US military is adequately prepared for existing threats, a lack of concern about Russia, suspicions that the defense establishment and Congress are promoting excessive defense spending, the belief that the current level of defense spending weakens the US economy, and opposition to the US carrying the burden of a ‘world policeman’ role.
5. To reduce US defense spending, while still maintaining US security commitments and its global interests, very strong majorities want to put more emphasis on multilateral approaches to security. Strong majorities would like to strengthen the UN’s collective security role and feel that doing so will diminish demands on the US. They are also generally willing to contribute US troops to UN-sponsored collective security efforts.

Source: *Americans on Defense Spending – A Study of US Public Attitudes: Report of Findings*, Program on International Policy Attitudes, January 19, 1996.

Another study conducted by PIPA in 2006¹² provides an additional spectrum to the American mindset, according to the poll the current Congress and the Bush administration has a strong mandate/demand from the American public for major changes in the way it relates to the rest of the world. In 2000, the poll recorded a 65% combined majority among Republicans, Democrats and Independents who were satisfied with the US position in the world. In May 2003 as the Iraq mission was declared accomplished the figure recorded an increase to 67%. In 2006, PIPA recorded a reversal of the percentage where 68% registered dissatisfaction with the US position in the world. In addition, 60% believe that current approach has increased the likelihood of terrorist attacks against the United States. 70% of American said they would be more likely to vote for a candidate committed to

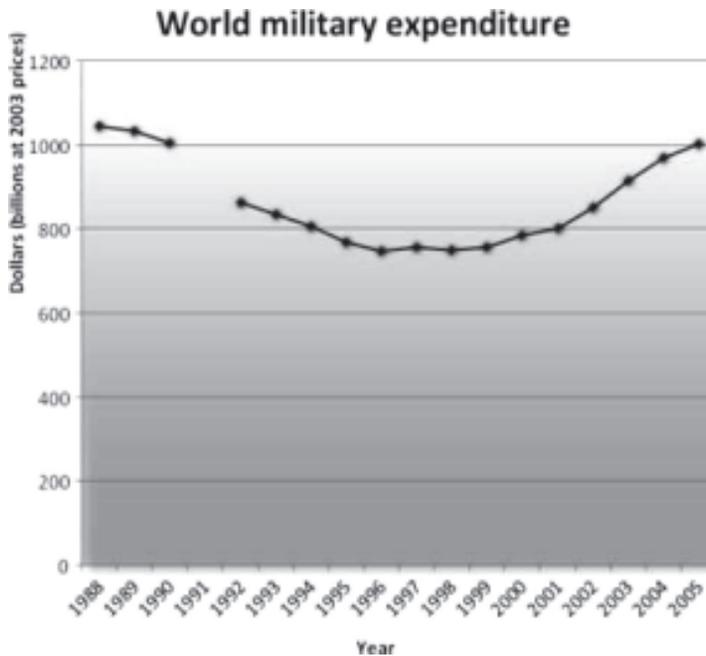
pursuing a new approach to US foreign policy. A broad outline of favoured approaches are as follows:

- A shift in emphasis from military force. 60% say that the US has been too quick to get military forces involved. A majority wants the US to put more emphasis on diplomatic and economic methods in combating terrorism.
- A creative and multilateral approach to foreign policy. 72% believes that the US should do its share in efforts to solve international problems together with other countries. A 69% majority supports working through multilateral institutions and 61% believes that “the US should be more willing to make decisions within the UN, even if this means that the US will sometimes have to go along with a policy that is not its first choice.”

The National Security Spending and the National Debt

Thus far we have looked at public opinion trends and its impact on national security spending. Another factor which needs to be considered is the relationship of the national security spending with the nation’s economic interest. In this context, it is important to note the role of the US military industrial complex, those to which a large proportion of the national security spending is directed for the production of offensive artillery and further research and development. Unveiling the defense budget, Rumsfeld argued that the increase and extent of military spending was crucial to avoid losing superiority to other military powers. Another argument commonly used is that proliferation is a form of deterrence from future threats. How acceptable are these arguments?

It is a fact that the current trend in the world’s military spending displays a general upward trend in military spending.



However, it is insufficient to accept this as a valid reason for the US arms race and increasing military spending. The next step is to differentiate the trendsetters

from the trend followers. A probe into the top spenders in military spending around the world reveals that the US is indeed the highest spender, by far. Information gathered by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) reveals that the use makes up 48% of total world military spending. The US, contrary to Rumsfeld's concern, is not under threat of losing its military superiority if dollar measures are used. The following considerations must also be included when assessing the apparent need for the US to increase military spending:

- The US military spending was **almost two-fifths of the total**.
- The US military spending was **almost 7 times larger than the Chinese budget, the second largest spender**.
- The US military budget was **almost 29 times as large as the combined spending of the six "rogue" states** (Cuba, Iran, Libya, North Korea, Sudan and Syria) who spent \$14.65 billion.
- It was more than the combined spending of the next 14 nations.
- The **United States and its close allies accounted for some two thirds to three-quarters of all military spending**, depending on who you count as close allies (typically NATO countries, Australia, Canada, Israel, Japan and South Korea)
- The **six potential "enemies," Russia, and China together spent \$139 billion, 30% of the U.S. military budget.**¹³

Military Spending in 2005 (\$Billions, and percent of total)

Country	Dollars (billions)	% of total	Rank
United States	420.7	43%	1
China *	62.5	6%	2
Russia *	61.9	6%	3
United Kingdom	51.1	5%	4
Japan	44.7	4%	5
France	41.6	4%	6
Germany	30.2	3%	7
India	22	2%	8
Saudi Arabia	21.3	2%	9
South Korea	20.7	2%	10
Italy	17.2	2%	11
Australia	13.2	1%	12
Brazil	13.1	1%	13
Canada	10.9	1%	14
Turkey	9.8	1%	15
Israel*	9.7	1%	16
Netherlands	9.7	1%	17

Spain	8.8	1%	18
Taiwan	8.3	1%	19
Indonesia*	7.6	1%	20
Myanmar	6.9	1%	21
Ukraine*	6	1%	22
Singapore	5.6	1%	23
Sweden	5.6	1%	24
North Korea*	5.5	1%	25
Poland	5.2	0%	26
Iran	4.9	1%	27
Norway	4.7	0%	28
Greece*	4.5	0%	29
Kuwait	4.3	0%	30
Colombia*	3.9	0%	31
Switzerland	3.8	0%	32
Pakistan	3.7	0%	33
Vietnam	3.5	0%	34
Belgium	3.4	0%	35

Source: US Military Spending vs. the World, *Center for Arms Control and Non Proliferation*, February 6, 2006.

The above considerations provide a poor support for the argument that the US needs to increase its military spending in order to strengthen its military might and to avoid losing military superiority. However, it can be deduced that the US is setting the trend to military spending around the world instead of reacting to the trend of military spending elsewhere. Furthermore, what is developed by the US is purchased by the rest of the world creating a steady increase in further spending around the world. But to serve the purpose of looking at the US national interest, focus needs to be given to the interest of the corporations and individuals involved in the so-called military industrial complex.

The findings of The Task Force on a Unified Security Budget for the United States, 2007 highlights the damaging effect of the increasing military spending on the nation's economy. It claims that the trend is unsustainable, as the United States is already running a budget deficit of \$427 billion (in 2006) just five years after the country ran a surplus. In addition, the previous Congress had voted to raise the debt ceiling for the fourth time in five years. The Bush administration had, by 2006, increase the national debt by \$1.1 trillion. Effectively military spending is sustained by the national debt. The increasing military spending would add to the increasing cost spin-offs and add on to the pressure on the budget deficit. In addition, the lack of transparency of defense spending also means that there is a "vast difference between DOD's budgeting plans and the reality of the cost of the systems"¹⁴. A further problem cited, is the failure of DOD to correct the conditions of "fraud, waste, abuse and mismanagement" in military acquisition¹⁵. An independent

analysis by the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments (CSBA) estimated that the long term implications of the failure will mean that funding current defense plan may cost \$735 billion more over the next 10 years than the actual estimated budget. By adding in the interest costs of \$185 billion on this debt, the estimated gap between these projections by DOD and the actual costs would amount to about \$920 billion.

The Military Industrial Complex and the Shape of Policies

In the initial discussion I have included the role of businesses in the national interest spectrum. Just how extensive is the influence of the MIC in the shaping of US policies, to be specific, foreign and military policies. J.W. Smith outlined six basic points criticising practices and impacts of the arms industry:

1. That the armament firms have been active in fomenting war scares are in persuading their countries to adopt their countries to adopt warlike policies and to increase their armaments.
2. That armament firms have attempted to bribe government officials, both at home and abroad.
3. That armament firms have disseminated false reports concerning the military and naval programs of various countries, in order to stimulate armament expenditure.
4. That armament firms have sought to influence public opinion through the control of newspapers in their own and foreign countries.
5. That armament firms have organized international armament rings through which the armament race has been accentuated by playing off one country against another.
6. That armament firms have organized international armament trusts which have increased the price of armaments sold to governments.¹⁶

Smith cited the above from the League of Nations in the post World War I world and at that point his citation was directed to the post-Cold War world. But, the irony is that it sounds familiar. It summarises quite well the problems we face today. In today's world defense contractors and those in the MIC in general, has created a state of the art method for justifying arms and creating the market for arms expenditure. Their method is based on the ruthless creation of the climate of fear. Senator Dale Bumpers, once a popular Democrat Senator illustrates an accurate picture of the role of the MIC and defense contractors.

"I don't know anybody who ever tries to kill a weapons system or bring some sanity to defense spending that ever wins. I can only remember two or three weapons system in my 23 years in the Senate that we have ever stopped. They take on a life of their own, and the minute Congress starts looking at them, the manufacturers start running full page ads in every newspaper and magazine in the United States, giving the American people the impression that we will be so seriously threatened if we don't build that particular weapons system."¹⁷

Hence, despite the promising numbers illustrated in opinion polls, the public mindset can be severely influenced by a well oiled propaganda machine which bases its rationale on the 'climate of fear'. Some of the more subtle ways in which the MIC ensures that this climate is sustained is via the military contractors support for commercials, journalists and even to the extent of pouring tax payer's money heavily into Hollywood.

The following are some important observations made on propaganda techniques of the defense industry which were outlined in a show called "Marketing Tomorrow's Weapons" produced by the Center for Defense Information:

- **Major defense contractors own CBS and NBC, two of the largest US television networks.**
- A Lockheed advertisement **actually claimed that "the perception of peace means less jobs for Americans"**. And yet, for example, Turkey builds all F16s, not Americans.
- An ad even claimed that **the F22 was an anti-war plane!**
- Many advertisements emphasized that a better fighter plane would ensure loved ones can come back home.
- **Arms contractors contributed at least 12 million dollars to Congress who actually vote on how much to spend on major weapon systems.**
- **The ads and propaganda are about minimizing casualties to make us believe that in future wars no one will be killed.** [In the Gulf War in 1991, a huge number of Iraqi's were killed, civilian and military. All we heard in the media was only the Allies' side and how the number of casualties was ever so small. There was nothing about the large number of Iraqi casualties — military and civilian — which resulted from the Allied bombing. And even if there was a mention in mainstream media, it was very distorted. For more about some of the recent issues concerning Iraq, go to this web site's look at the Iraq Crisis.]
- Amazing, **breath-taking air shows leave us in awe** at the wonderful technology - almost making us forget the purpose of such aircraft.
- Boeing and Lockheed are major advertisers and contractors.
- Some contractors even sponsor NBA events, while the **US Army co-sponsored the 1998 Soccer World Cup!**
- Recruitment ads show us the "brotherhood of man" using "emotional manipulation" making us forget that the military is about killing people.
- Students **as young as eight years of age** were asked what it would be like to fly an F22 and what it means for the protection of the country (USA) and economy (of USA).
- The F22 is all **paid for by the US taxpayer - with no enemies in sight.**¹⁸

The same documentary also claimed that the only way to get public debate on this matter was to reduce the amount of money that the Pentagon gets. However, as

the documentary itself animatedly displayed, it is a vicious cycle, as the propaganda will ensure that this will not happen.

When hard figures are examined to do with defense industry related employment, the above point highlighted on employment on can't help but to share the same cynicism. Based on government data, defense related employment in the arms industry in 2004 and 2003 respectively are 3.465 million¹⁹ and 3.175 million, from 1991 to 2002, employment was under 3 million. Despite the marginality of this employment data however this argument was used several times in conversations with professionals, government officials and ordinary citizens in the US. This supports the argument provided by those who feel that it is this climate of fear that has been sustaining the ability of the government allocate as much money as the US administration towards military spending.

Another question that may be asked is how extensive is the influence of these defense contractors on politicians and members of the administration. Hard figures also illustrates that the influence is marginal given the billions that are spent on campaign contributions and lobby activities. The following shows total contributions to federal candidates and parties for political campaigns coming from the defense industry for the 2006 election cycle.

Contributions to Federal Candidates and Parties for the 2006 Election Cycle

Total contributions: \$13,470,735



In many cases, the organizations themselves did not donate; rather the money came from the organization's PAC, its individual members or employees or owners, and those individuals' immediate families. Organization totals include subsidiaries and affiliates. All donations were released by the Federal Election Commission.²⁰

CONCLUSION: NATIONAL INTEREST REVISITED

A reflection of the impression I had of the American people, it's political economy and analysis of hard figures available provided me with a strong belief that the American national interest may just be geared to help sustain high military spending, if one defines the national interest as the protection of every individual's freedom, liberty and way of life, in the context of the climate of fear referred to above. The climate of fear which has been created in the US is a real one. Or perhaps the national interest is the interest of the leader as cynically expressed by Herman Goering below:

“Naturally the common people don't want war: Neither in Russia, nor in England, nor for that matter in Germany. That is understood. But,

after all, it is the leaders of the country who determine the policy and it is always a simple matter to drag the people along, whether it is a democracy, or a fascist dictatorship, or a parliament, or a communist dictatorship. ... Voice or no voice, the people can always be brought to the bidding of the leaders. That is easy. All you have to do is tell them they are being attacked, and denounce the peacemakers for lack of patriotism and exposing the country to danger. It works the same in any country."²¹

As a Southeast Asian who has never experienced war, my first impression of the US as I stepped into the Atlanta airport came in this order: This is a busy country base on the amount of people milling about the airport's lounges. Second, I wondered if there was a war or an emergency going on somewhere as I saw soldiers in uniform also walking in the airport lounges. I later found out they were not on duty, some of them were on their way to the battlefield. I later got used to the sight of soldiers in uniforms around the US. This sense of urgency and the climate of fear is further enforced as I saw a recruitment center right in the middle of Times Square in New York. But to conclude, my final impression was that, the people are friendly. People were ready to help or answer your questions and each short conversation seemed to begin with "How are you today, ma'am" and ended with a sincere "Have a nice day" or something similar.

The responsibility lies on the US leadership to clearly refocus and redefine the shape of the national interest. The security risk card should not be played by leaders for their own political benefits. In the rest of the world people are criticising the US for being and irresponsible 'empire'. But the American leadership can afford to grin when such criticisms are held at them as these people are non citizens and to further discredit this criticism foreign nations are sustaining the growth of the US military spending as a majority of the arms manufactured by US companies are purchased by countries around the world. But if one would compare the US, a post-modern 'empire' with Rome, Rome's fall could be attributed to two factors it's over ambitious aspirations to conquer the world and Rome's crumbling center itself. The US should be weary of this if it does not want to suffer the same agony. It should pay attention to the falling confidence of its citizenry. It should pay attention to the definition of its national interest.

ENDNOTES

¹ The Defense Budget here is an interchangeable label for the national security spending. There is a tendency for think tanks to label what the US government defines as national defense as national security.

² Source: Office of Management and Budget, *Budget of the US Government, FY 2007*.

³ *Report of the Task Force on a Unified Security Budget for the United States, 2007*. May 2006, Institute for Public Policy Studies and the International Relations Center, pg. 3.

⁴ Wayne Leslie, "Defense contractors anticipate hits," *New York Times*, Dec. 27, 2005.

⁵ *Report of the Task Force on a Unified Security Budget for the United States, 2007*. May 2006, Institute for Public Policy Studies and the International Relations Center, pg. i.

⁶ Source: Office of Management and Budget, *Budget of the US Government, FY 2007*

⁷ Figures can be obtained from Center for Defense Information www.cdi.org or reports published by the OMB or the Center for Arms Control and Proliferation as cited by Anup Shah in "High Military Expenditure in Some Places", <http://www.globalissues.org/Geopolitics/ArmsTrade/Spending.asp>

⁸ CIA World Fact Book.

⁹ As above.

¹⁰ Results of the poll are based on telephone interviews conducted under the direction of Princeton Survey Research Associates International among a nationwide sample of 1,506 adults, 18 years of age or older, from August 13, 2006. Error attributable to sampling is plus or minus 3 percentage points. In addition to sampling error, one should bear in mind that question, wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of opinion polls.

¹¹ *Report of the Task Force on a Unified Security Budget for the United States, 2007*. May 2006, Institute for Public Policy Studies and the International Relations Center, pg. 2

¹² Miriam Pemberton, "Poll: Fewer Guns, More Talks", *FPIF Commentary*, October 27, 2006. FPIF – Foreign Policy in Focus is a think tank which was part of an advisory group for the PIPA 2006 poll.

¹³ Source: Center for Defense Information and the Center for Arms Control and Non-Proliferation used in Anup Shah, "High Military Expenditure in some Places", <http://www.globalissues.org/Geopolitics/ArmsTrade/Spending.asp>.

¹⁴ Statement of Katherine V. Schinasi, Managing Director, Acquisition and Sourcing Management, before the Senate Subcommittee on Airland, Committee on Armed Services, "DOD Acquisition Outcomes: A Case for Change," GAO-06-257T, Nov. 15, 2005, available at <http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d06257t.pdf>

¹⁵ Steven Kosiak, "Cost Growth in Defense Plans: Wars in Iraq and Afghanistan Could Add some \$900 Billion to Projected Deficits," Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, Dec. 23, 2005. as cited in *Report of the Task Force on a Unified Security Budget for the United States, 2007*. May 2006, Institute for Public Policy Studies and the International Relations Center, pg. 4

¹⁶ J.W. Smith, *The World's Wasted Wealth II*, Institute for Economic Democracy, 1994. pg.224

¹⁷ From the show transcript of "Modern American Patriot: Senator Dale Bumpers", produced February 1, 1998.

¹⁸ Anup Shah, "Military Propoganda for Arms Sales", <http://www.globalissues.org/Geopolitics/ArmsTrade/Spending.asp>.

¹⁹ This data is compiled from government sources by the SIPRI Military Expenditure and Arms Production Project. The data is also directly available from the US Department of Defense, Office of the Undersecretary of Defence (Comptroller), National Defense Budget Estimates for FY2005, March 2004; table 7-5; available at URL http://www.defenselink.mil/comptroller/defbudget/fy2005/fy2005_greenbook.pdf

²⁰ Source: Center for Responsive Politics, <http://www.opensecrets.org/industries/contrib.asp?Ind=D&Cycle=2004>

²¹ *General Herman Goering, President of German Reichstag and Nazi Party, Commander of Luftwaffe during World War II, April 18, 1946. (This quote is said to have been made during the Nuremburg Trials, but in fact, while during the time of the trials, was made in private to an Allied intelligence officer, later published in the book, Nuremburg Diary.)*