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http://web.mit.edu/ssp/

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A Safer America?

Are Americans safer? Is the security strategy that the Bush Administration and Congress are pursuing the right one? Could our tax dollars be more wisely spent and achieve greater security?

These are the types of questions the following pages attempt to answer. In this booklet several military policy experts respond to Congress and the Bush Administration's current military and homeland security policies. The papers include their thoughts on military strategy, homeland security and other related issues which are published together in a separate, longer briefing book, Security After 9/11: Strategy Choices and Budget Tradeoffs, that can be obtained from the Center for Defense Information. This report summarizes some of the most important ideas contained in their papers so that advocates, policymakers and citizens can join the conversation. The answers aren't all here – but the start of the debate is.

Framing the Debate

September 11 showed Americans that international terrorism could happen at home. Cindy Williams, of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's Security Studies Program, offers us an overview of the possible responses to the threat of terrorism so we can determine the best use of federal dollars and whether they achieve greater national security.¹

International options include military measures such as invading other countries or non-military measures such as rewarding foreign governments for their cooperation in the fight against terrorism, or providing assistance to improve the economic conditions that can create a breeding ground for terrorism.

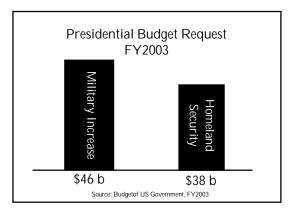
Homeland security represents the domestic response, including prevention, protection, and emergency response measures. Preventive measures include actions that would stop attackers from reaching the United States. Protective measures include the safeguarding of buildings, people and infrastructure from attacks such as guarding the airspace above and around nuclear facilities. Finally, emergency response measures include preparing and equipping the public health infrastructure and emergency responders for disaster.

International Responses	
Military Operations	DeterrenceRetaliationInvasion
Non-military Options	 Solicit International Support Economic Aid Reward Governments
Homeland Security	
Prevention	Law EnforcementBorder SecurityAviation Security
Protection	Guards at Nuclear Facilities
Emergency Preparation and Response	Public Health InfrastructureStockpiles of VaccinesFirst Responder Training

Federal spending choices since September 11 reveal a strong preference for military solutions above other options. For example, the Bush Administration's budget proposal for FY2003 included \$10 billion in spending for development and humanitarian assistance while the mili-

tary received \$397 billion. Proposed military spending would outpace international assistance 40 to one.

But even the choices made between the military and the homeland security reveal the reliance on military operations. The Administration requested a \$46 billion increase in the military budget while the entire budget request for homeland security measures totaled \$38 billion.



If September 11 teaches anything, it teaches that spending large sums on the military cannot itself guarantee security. Nonetheless, the immediate response to the terrorist attacks was the largest increase in Pentagon spending since the Reagan era. But is spending on the military the right strategy? In the next section on military options, Carl Conetta of the Project on Defense Alternatives offers some answers.²

Military Options

On the morning of September 11, 2001, the United States had the most powerful military on earth. Its margin of superiority over other nations — friend and foe alike — was greater than ever before in its history. Americans had paid dearly for this strength: \$3.3 trillion (in 2002 dollars) during the 1990s alone — or \$30,000 for every American household. In 2001, the Pentagon's annual budget was \$326 billion — or \$890 million per day.

All of this spending supported:

- 1.4 million full-time military personnel deployed at home and in 140 countries abroad
- Almost 10,000 front-line armored combat vehicles, artillery systems and tanks
- More than 2,100 fighter and attack aircraft and bombers
- Over 200 major surface combat ships, aircraft carriers, and submarines
- More than 700 ships and planes devoted to rapid worldwide deployment of the US military
- An intelligence establishment employing over 100,000 people and costing \$30 billion per year

Wrongly Prepared

What preceded the September 2001 attack was a decade-long failure to adapt US security and military policy to new conditions. America's intelligence agencies and armed forces were not "asleep at dawn" on September 11 – as is often said about our defense establishment before the 1941 surprise attack on Pearl Harbor. But they were preoccupied – fixated on a variety of threats, real and hypothetical, that resembled those of the Cold War era. America's military and intelligence establishments were not unprepared. They were wrongly prepared.

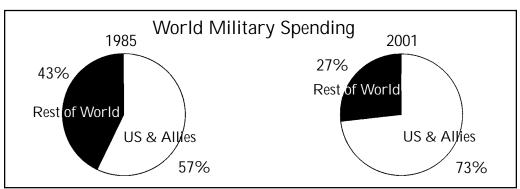
It has become commonplace to say that the world changed on September 11. Actually, it had changed 13 years earlier – in 1989, when the Berlin Wall fell and the Cold War order began to crumble worldwide. With this, the types of threats that had shaped the US military and intelligence establishments since World War II began a precipitous decline – and a different set of challenges rose to prominence in their place.

America's Cold War military was built to fight big, infrequent wars against large, nation-state foes. The list of potential foes ranged from peer adversaries, like the Soviet Union, to less capable ones like Iraq in 1990. In the 1980s, these foes typically possessed large numbers of armored vehicles, combat aircraft, artillery systems, and missiles. Today, however, these powers are hollow shells of their former selves. Most of the so-called "rogue" nations such as Iran and Syria rapidly lost the capacity to maintain large, capital-intensive armed forces in good fighting shape.

Outspending the World

Between 1985 and 2001, world military expenditures declined by one-third. Former and potential adversaries of the United States accounted for most of the reduction in spending. As a group, their military spending declined 72 percent between 1985 and 2001 – even though one member of this group, China, actually increased its spending during this period.³

By contrast, US military spending declined by only 17 percent between these years. US spending as a percentage of world military spending rose from 31 percent in 1985 to 41 percent on the eve of September 11. And, for every dollar spent by the rogue nations as a group, the US spent \$20. Currently, the US and its allies together make up almost three-quarters of total military spending in the world.



The United States and allies also dominate the world's military research, development and production. Today the United States accounts for almost 60 percent of all military R & D spending worldwide. US allies account for another 25 percent. China and Russia account for less than 12 percent. Regarding military production, the US presently accounts for more than half of the worldwide total. Adding European NATO and Japan brings the military production share of the allies to almost 90 percent.

The post-Cold War changes in military trade and investment patterns paralleled developments in the political and economic spheres. Together they implied a sharp and progressive reduction in the number, magnitude, and intensity of traditional military threats to the West.

New Era, New Threats

Among the new and rising concerns were failed states, ethnic and religious violence, refugee and other humanitarian crises, and uncontrolled traffic in illicit drugs and light military weapons. Feeding on all these things was another rising threat: the new "transnational" terrorism, exemplified by Osama bin Laden's "Al Qaeda".

Al Qaeda and similar organizations are more like criminal enterprises than traditional military foes. Typically, they are decentralized, relying on irregular "troops", who operate in small groups. Their technological level is low and their logistic footprint, small. Defeating them depends more on cooperation among the world's intelligence and law enforcement agencies than it does on regular military units and large-scale military operations. Similarly, mitigating the conditions in which organizations like Al Qaeda thrive depends more on non-military initiatives than military ones.

While the world changed rapidly and radically after 1990, America's armed forces did not. Rather than fit new conditions, the Pentagon mainstream has tended to view the new era in terms of the types of tools it had on hand at the Cold War's end.

Catalysts for Change

The number of "traditional" threats to US security has diminished considerably. New threats have emerged. A number of factors gave rise to this transformation in international relations.

- Economic marginalization of many developing nations
- Collapse of the Soviet empire and Yugoslavia
- Sudden termination of bloc support for many former allies in the South

How Much for Combating Terrorism?

The significant increases in military spending have given the appearance that the Bush Administration is doing something about combating terrorism.

Steven M. Kosiak, of the Center on Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, points out that since FY2001, which ended shortly after the September 11 attack, US funding related to defense, homeland security, and combating terrorism has been increased by some \$145 - \$160 billion. For FY2003 alone, the growth in spending will be about \$68 billion.

He also calculated that military spending since the FY2001 budget has increased by \$56 billion, over and above inflation. This represents a real increase of 15 percent.

How much of this increase is actually going towards combating terrorism and homeland security? According to Kosiak, both the Office of Management and Budget and Department of Defense's (DOD) own estimates suggest that the DOD will spend perhaps \$20-\$30 billion on these activities in FY2003.

Out of the entire Pentagon budget, only around 5 – 8 percent will actually be spent on combating terrorism and homeland security.

In spite of the increased prominence of smaller-scale contingencies during the 1990s, the lion's share of the military's time and resources was devoted to "traditional" activities and threats. Even today, military preparations for conventional air-land wars absorb at least 70 percent of the Pentagon budget. This allocation of resources reflects the continued influence of the dominant military arms: aircraft carriers, piloted fighter aircraft, and heavy mechanized ground forces.

The Pentagon's "mix" of conventional weapons changed very little during the 1990s. The military did not have enough of those things it needed most for new contingencies, including reconnaissance and intelligence-gathering aircraft; special operations and intelligence units; communications and public affairs units, as well as other types of specialized support units.

The Pentagon's failure to alter its mix of tools cannot be attributed to a shortage of funds. Among the \$3.3 trillion spent on defense during the 1990s was \$716 billion devoted to equipment purchases. Although this sum is one-quarter less than what was spent during the 1980s, it was meant to outfit a

Military Pay and Benefits

Winslow Wheeler, of the Center for Defense Information, offers a critique of military budget increases as they relate to military pay and benefits.⁵ For example, legislation passed prior to 2001:

- Increased pay across the board for civilian and military personnel
- Implemented a new health system, "Tricare for Life" for all military retirees over 65
- Changed military pensions

Wheeler argues that there are more effective ways of improving retention and recruitment such as already enacted selective re-enlistment bonuses.

force one-third smaller than its Cold War predecessor. All told, between 1989 and 2001, the US armed forces bought 45 major surface combatants and submarines, more than 900 combat aircraft, and more than 2000 armored combat vehicles while upgrading another 800.

Alternatives that Work

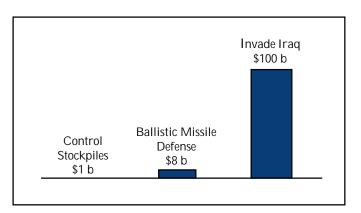
The Cold War thinking pervades a number of areas in which better alternatives may exist. William Hartung, of the World Policy Institute, offers one example in his study of the US response to threat of nuclear weapons.⁶ US policy stresses a preemptive strategy rather than a preventive one.

The preemptive strategy includes such endeavors as ballistic missile defense and invading Iraq. Ballistic missile defense is a program referred to initially as "star wars" when set in motion by the Reagan Administration. In theory, under this program, nuclear missiles fired at the United States would be intercepted and destroyed before reaching the country. The research on this system continues at a pace of \$7 - \$8 billion a year, even though tests indicate that implementation is far off, and developing the system violates at least one treaty signed by the US.

The Bush Administration has been planning for the possible invasion of Iraq, which could cost as much as \$100 billion. The given reason is that Iraq has or may be able to develop weapons of mass destruction.

According to Hartung, overthrowing Saddam Hussein will have virtually no impact on the future ability of Al Qaeda or some other terrorist group to get its hands on a nuclear weapon.

Bribing an underpaid Russian security guard or infiltrating the Pakistani nuclear program are far more likely avenues for terrorists seeking a nuclear weapon than cutting a deal with Saddam Hussein's regime, which does not currently possess a nuclear weapon and would be extremely unlikely to share it with an Islamic fundamentalist group if it had one.



As the bipartisan task force headed by

former Senate Majority Leader Howard Baker and former White House Counsel Lloyd Cutler noted in 2001, "the most urgent national security threat to the United States today is the danger that weapons of mass destruction or weapons-usable material in Russia could be stolen or sold to terrorists or hostile nation states..."⁷ The task force recommended the development of a \$3 billion per year, ten-year plan to safeguard, destroy, or neutralize Russia's vast nuclear stockpile.

Federal spending on stopping the spread of nuclear weapons has paid off already. For example, federal funding financed:

- Destruction of 4,400 Russian strategic nuclear warheads
- Airlift of 600 kilograms of poorly-guarded, highly-enriched uranium from Kazakstan
- Removal of two and a half bombs' worth of highly enriched uranium in Yugoslavia

This effort has also been managed at a low price. Currently, only around \$1 billion is spent on this approach. Yet the Bush Administration's first budget proposal (for FY2002) included a \$100 million cut from levels proposed by the outgoing Clinton Administration. It took action from a bipartisan coalition to restore funding up to its current levels.

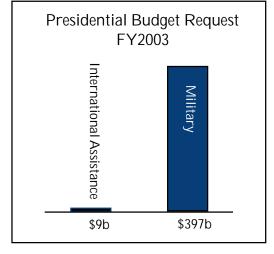
Non-Military International Options

The war in Afghanistan revealed the weakness of the current military "mix" as described by Conetta. Using 24,000 bombs, the US was able to topple the Taliban within ten weeks – but it could not corral Al Qaeda or control subsequent developments on the ground. Indeed, victory in Afghanistan entailed handing over most of the country back to warlords.

But subsequent events in Afghanistan also reveal something about the balance between military and non-military operations. It showed how the US failed to adequately provide emergency

humanitarian aid and to assist in the building of institutions which could lead to a stable state.

David Gold, of the Economists Allied for Arms Reduction, takes a closer look at economic tools in foreign policy.⁸ The Bush Administration, like other administrations, has included economic considerations as a component of its national security strategy. However, the Administration does not have much to say about how these economic considerations affect national security. How does free trade, for example, ensure greater security for the US?



Countries like China may be less likely to take hostile military actions against the US if they are better

integrated in the world economy. Economic dependence implies that it is more difficult for integrated countries to sustain the economy necessary to engage in war. Or so the argument goes. It can, however, cut the other way. For example, critics of "free trade" argue that it is these very same free trade agreements – and lack of genuine integration – that have contributed to the economic marginalization of many developing countries. The marginalization of developing countries is one of the catalysts of change in the international system. If economic considerations matter, how do they matter, and how do they help national security?

The Bush Administration's Millennium Aid strategy, designed to underpin an expansion in US foreign aid, is not encouraging, argues Gold. Because of the requirements needed to be met in order to receive aid from the Millennium Aid fund, the states that need it the most are the least likely to receive it. Countries receiving aid from the fund must have in place a number of institutions which would guarantee that the money will be used effectively. While in theory this makes sense, in practice, it means that failed and failing states, the ones most likely to pose a threat to the US and who have the most dire humanitarian needs, are the ones who will not receive aid.

Homeland Security

The Homeland Security bill that was passed in November 2002, is actually the largest re-organization in government since the end of World War II. It establishes a new department and involves over 20 agencies and 170,000 federal workers. The budget will be \$38 billion and its mission is to prevent, protect and respond to acts of terrorism on American soil.

Waiting on the sidelines are the 50 States – the main agents for implementing several initiatives of Homeland Security. James Galbraith and Shama Gamkhar of Economists Allied for Arms Reduction pose the challenges Homeland Security creates for the states and the issues related to determining how best to distribute the funds to state and local governments.⁹

The fiscal situation of the states is the worst it has been since World War II. The National Council of State Legislatures found in its National Survey that states have an expected collective budget gap of \$17.5 billion for the fiscal year 2003. This comes on the heels of a \$37 billion budget shortfall in fiscal year 2002.

The key role for state and local governments in Homeland Security is in the first response programs. Federal funding allocations to states and localities, for first responder programs, provide a maximum of \$3.5 billion in fiscal year 2003 (roughly 9 percent of the federal budget for Homeland Security). There are smaller amounts set aside for state and local assistance for combating bio-terrorism and adoption information and communication systems of approximately \$2 billion.¹⁰

Estimates of state and local government spending on Homeland Security programs since the September 11 attacks are approximately \$9 billion.¹¹ Proposed federal funding for state and local programs for fiscal year 2003 cover only about sixty percent of the state expenditures in the previous fiscal year. Additionally, state and local expenditures are likely to rise in the current fiscal year, as they address the needs for Homeland Security more comprehensively.

Despite the limited federal funding commitment to state and local government responsibilities as first responders, how these funds are to be distributed across the country is crucial to the effectiveness in meeting the objectives of the Homeland Security initiatives. The issues are: (1) Which level of government (state or local) should receive the grants? (2) Should the grants be designed as matching grants or non-matching grants? (3) Should they be distributed by formulae or as project grants on a case-by-case basis? (4) What conditions if any, should the federal grantors impose on the use of grant money by the grantees?

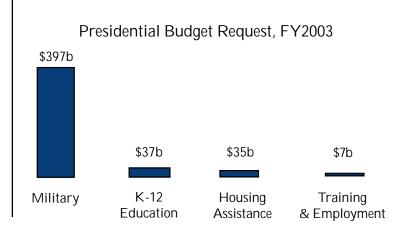
Considering which level of government should receive grants involves choices affecting more than 87,000 overlapping jurisdictions of federal, state and local authorities. Preparedness for terrorist attacks requires cooperation at all these levels of government.

Economic Security

Congress and the Administration have devoted an enormous amount of time, energy and money to military responses to security needs. Anita Dancs, of the National Priorities Project, argues that other needs of Americans – a stable job with a good wage, an affordable home, and a good

education for their children amongst others – have not received adequate attention.¹²

The unemployment rate is currently hovering around 6 percent with 1.5 million jobs lost in 2001 and another 150,000 in 2002. More indicative of current labor market conditions is growing long-term unemployment. By late 2002, more than 1.5 million workers had exhausted their benefits with many to follow.



Earlier in 2002, when Congress passed the first legislation extending unemployment benefits, it was voting for approximately \$8 billion for workers. This pales in comparison with the \$43 billion in business tax breaks that was also part of that package.

Seven million people in this country earn the minimum wage with another ten million earning just a dollar (or less) above the minimum wage. Legislation to raise the minimum wage was introduced in 2001 and 2002, but no action resulted.

Affordable housing also appears to be off the radar screens of Congress, explaining why the issue has reached such a crisis level. Spending on housing assistance and HUD are less than half of what they were 25 years ago. About 40 percent of renters across the country do not have affordable housing. More than 14 million American families have critical housing needs where housing costs consume at least 50 percent of their household income. 16

The list of community and family needs which Congress ignored while spending time on debating war and other military matters is considerable. Congress failed to pass legislation that would extend expiring funds for the State Children's Health Insurance Program. The OMB projected that if no action was taken, almost one million children would lose SCHIP coverage between

2003 and 2006.¹⁷ After an almost \$40 billion collective state fiscal crisis in FY2002 and more state budget gaps this year, Congress has done nothing to alleviate the burden. And, it implemented tax cuts which would decrease state tax revenues in most states. Almost half of state budget crises have been triggered at least in part by ballooning Medicare and other health expenditures. Congress and the Administration have not taken action on this issue, or on prescription drugs.

A trade-off has occurred between military issues and economic security. The almost exclusive focus on military spending and policy comes at a great cost to millions of people.

Recommendations

The experts who contributed to this booklet share a common agenda to ensure that federal policy and federal funds get us all closer to the goals of a safer America. Below is a summary of some of their recommendations to help us get there:

On the "Big Picture"

Cindy Williams of the Massachusetts Institute for Technology suggests:

 The possible responses to the terrorist threat, both military and non-military, international and domestic, should be reviewed to achieve the most effective security policy.

Steven M. Kosiak of Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments suggests:

• To determine how much funding is needed for homeland security and combating terrorism, the administration must provide substantially more detailed, comprehensive and clear data and cost estimates concerning these missions than it has to date.

On Military Spending and Reform

Carl Conetta of Project on Defense Alternatives suggests:

- Change the toolbox.
 Right now, less than 10 percent of the Pentagon budget serves counter-terrorism and homeland protection goals. The Pentagon's military procurement policy must change to acquire tools better suited for "non-traditional" activities and threats.
- Change the infrastructure.
 Streamlining the Pentagon, improving its business practices, and reducing overhead costs could save from \$10 billion to \$20 billion a year. Reforming the Pentagon's financial management system could reduce costs by \$15 billion to \$18 billion a year.¹⁸
- Change information technology.
 Restructure the armed forces in order to produce an "information age" military.

Bill Hartung of World Policy Institute suggests:

• Implement the bipartisan task force recommendation to allocate \$3 billion year on a long-term plan to safeguard, destroy or neutralize Russian nuclear materials and nuclear weapons.

Winslow Wheeler of the Center for Defense Information suggests:

• More targeted incentives should be used to improve recruitment and retention of key military personnel.

On International, Non-military Measures

David Gold of Economists of the Allied for Arms Reduction suggests:

• The Bush Administration must use its economic strength to develop tools that can complement or even substitute for traditional security tools. Foreign aid should recognize and address the many economic failures that plague countries and regions that are the main source of global security problems.

On Homeland Security

James Galbraith and Shama Gamkhar of the Economists Allied for Arms Reduction suggest:

- The state and local costs of first response and other programs administered and funded at state, local and regional levels need to be assessed comprehensively so that the federal government can evaluate the extent of federal involvement required to bolster spending on these programs to nationally desirable levels.
- An efficient system of federal intergovernmental grants is required to realize economies
 of scale, strategic coordination and to subsidize the state and local provision of public
 services for homeland security.

On Other Priorities

Anita Dancs of National Priorities Project suggests:

 The Bush Administration and Congress must attend to the issues of economic security impacting Americans right now, including job security, wages, housing, education, health care and hunger. Their near exclusive priority of military spending fails to address the critical economic and social needs of many Americans.

Notes

- ¹C. Williams, 'Assessing the tradeoffs: choosing among alternative responses to global mass-casualty terrorism,' Security After 9/11: Strategy Choices and Budget Tradeoffs, Center for Defense Information, 2003.
- ²C. Conetta, '9-11 and the meanings of military transformation,' Security After 9/11: Strategy Choices and Budget Tradeoffs, Center for Defense Information, 2003.
- ³ The group of actual and potential US adversaries during the Cold War includes the Soviet Union, the other members of the Warsaw Treaty organization, China, North Korea, North Vietnam, Iran, Iraq, Syria, Libya, and Cuba. For the post-Cold War period the Soviet Union and member states of the Warsaw Treaty are replaced by just Russia, Belarus and Ukraine. In addition, the other Cold War adversaries are all counted as potential adversaries during the post-Cold War period.
- ⁴S. M. Kosiak, 'Funding for defense, homeland security and combating terrorism since 9-11: where has all the money gone?' Security After 9/11: Strategy Choices and Budget Tradeoffs, Center for Defense Information, 2003. ⁵ W. Wheeler, 'Indiscriminate DoD pay and benefits undermine US defenses,' Security After 9/11: Strategy Choices and Budget Tradeoffs, Center for Defense Information, 2003.
- ⁶ W. Hartung, 'Prevention, not intervention: curbing the new nuclear threat,' Security After 9/11: Strategy Choices and Budget Tradeoffs, Center for Defense Information, 2003.
- ⁷ H. Baker and L. Cutler, co-chairs, Russia Task Force, A Report Card on the Department of Energy's Non-proliferation Programs with Russia, Secretary of Energy Advisory Board, US Department of Energy, January 10, 2001.
- ⁸ D. Gold, 'Using the economy for security,' Security After 9/11: Strategy Choices and Budget Tradeoffs, Center for Defense Information, 2003.
- ⁹ J. Galbraith and S. Gamkhar, 'Homeland security and the states: a guide to the issues for citizens and policy planners,' Security After 9/11: Strategy Choices and Budget Tradeoffs, Center for Defense Information, 2003. ¹⁰ Federal budget proposals for fiscal year 2003 are extracted from the White House Report, Securing the Homeland Strengthening the Nation, 2002.
- ¹¹The National Governor's Association (NGA) and the U.S. Conference of Mayors (USCM) are the official nonpartisan organization of states and cities (with population of 30,000 or more) in the U.S. The estimates of costs provided by NGA and USCM were mentioned in the White House document, The National Strategy for Homeland Security, 2002, p.65.
- ¹² A. Dancs, 'Homeland insecurity,' Security After 9/11: Strategy Choices and Budget Tradeoffs, Center for Defense Information, 2003.
- ¹³ E. Rasell, J. Bernstein and H. Boushey, 'Step up, not out. The case for raising the federal minimum wage for workers in every state', Economic Policy Institute Issue Brief, #149, February, 2001.
- ¹⁴ Although opponents to minimum wage laws claim that employment will decrease since labor costs rise for firms, economists generally believe that the increase in disposable income and the jobs it creates would off-set any tendency for firms to lay off workers.
- ¹⁵ Congress and the Dept. of Housing and Urban Development define 'affordable housing' as having to pay no more that 30% of household income for housing costs. According to Census 2000, over 40% of renter households pay out at least 30% of their income, not including 'not computed' households which changes the calculation to slightly fewer than 40%.
- ¹⁶ Center for Housing Policy, America's Working Families and the Housing Landscape, 2002.
- ¹⁷ E. Park, and R. Greenstein, 'Congress fails to approve bipartisan legislation to extend expiring funds for children's health insurance,' November 21, 2002.
- ¹⁸ G. Martin, "Base closure savings total billions; Auditors add up GI shutdowns," San Antonio Express-News, 6 April 2002; William Owens and Stanley Weiss, "An Indefensible Military Budget," New York Times, 7 February 2002, p. 29; Mortimer Zuckerman, "The Price of Power: The Military Should Spend More on Forces and Less on Facilities," US News and World Report, 6 September 1999; Lt. Gen. Thomas McInerney, "Defense Reform: More Smoke Than Fire," Strategic Review (Fall 1998); and, Congressional Budget Office, "Paying for Military Readiness and Upkeep: Trends in Operation And Maintenance Spending" (Washington DC: CBO, Sept 1997).