

FACTS AND FIGURES

- Total global military spending in 2005: \$1,118 billion¹
- The 15 countries with the highest military spending account for 84% of the global total.²
- Number of people killed in armed conflicts in the 20th century: 109.7 million³
- Total U.S. arms sales abroad, 1950–2005: \$366 billion to 177 countries.⁴

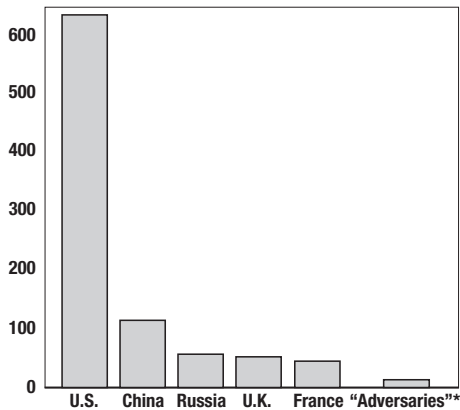
Sources: 1. and 2. Stockholm International Peace Research Institute; 3. Newsday; 4. Federation of American Scientists.

Top 10 Companies Awarded Defense Department Contracts in 2005 (in billions)

1. Lockheed Martin Corp.	\$19.4
2. The Boeing Co.	18.3
3. Northrop Grumman Corp.	13.5
4. General Dynamics Corp.	10.6
5. Raytheon Co.	9.1
6. Halliburton Co.	5.8
7. BAE Systems PLC	5.6
8. United Technologies Corp.	5.0
9. L-3 Communications Holdings, Inc.	4.7
10. Computer Sciences Corp.	2.8

Source: U.S. Department of Defense

U.S. Military Spending vs. The World—2008 (in billions)



*Combined budgets of Cuba, Iran, North Korea, Syria and Sudan

Adapted from the Center for Defense Information (for some countries, latest figures available are for 2005)

More on the Internet

- The Center for Arms Control and Non-Proliferation
www.armscontrolcenter.org
- The Center for Defense Information
www.cdi.org
- The Council for a Livable World
www.clw.org
- Federation of American Scientists
www.fas.org
- Friends Committee on National Legislation
www.fcnl.org
- Physicians for Social Responsibility
www.psr.org
- 20/20 Vision
2020vision.org
- Women's Action for New Directions
www.wand.org



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The Mennonite Central Committee U.S. Washington Office is a Mennonite and Brethren in Christ presence on Capitol Hill, providing and encouraging prophetic witness to the way of Christ on matters of U.S. public policy.

U.S. Militarism

Since Sept. 11, 2001, the Bush administration has declared a “war on terror,” adopted a preemptive military strike policy, started two wars, deployed first stages of a national missile defense shield and announced plans to build new nuclear weapons. The United States now accounts for roughly half of all global military spending.

What is driving such momentous policy and spending shifts?

- *Fear.* Since Sept. 11, many Americans feel vulnerable. A vocal group within the administration promotes a policy of U.S. military dominance as the best way to eliminate all major potential threats against the United States.
- *Dependence.* Defense contracts by design reach their tentacles into nearly every congressional district—creating jobs and making military spending a politically popular issue. However, research shows that the same money could create even more civilian jobs focused on producing life-enhancing goods and services.

As the world’s only superpower, the United States too often acts unilaterally and discounts other points of view. Increasingly, the United States refuses to join international treaties, while urging other nations to do so.

Do military dominance and double standards make the United States more secure or less? Many would argue that the empire-like actions of the United States actually increase the ranks of those committed to attempting terrorist attacks on U.S. targets. Christians believe that our security is ultimately rooted in God and in our commitment to act justly, love kindness and walk humbly.

Faith reflection

Increasingly, the United States has placed its trust in weapons of war, not in God, as U.S. money proudly boasts. The wood and metal-crafted idols of biblical times have been replaced by sophisticated metal-twisted technology—cruise missiles, “smart” bombs and stealth fighter jets.

Isaiah mocks those who make and trust idols. “Half of [the log the idol-maker] burns in the fire,” he ridicules. “Over this half he roasts meat, eats it and is satisfied. He also warms himself and says, ‘Ah, I am warm, I can feel the fire!’ The rest of it he makes into a god, his idol, bows down to it and worships it; he prays to it and says, ‘Save me, for you are my god’” (44:16–17).

But isn’t idolatry harmless folly? Hardly. Building idols is poor stewardship of resources that God intends for sustaining life. While military spending has increased, many human needs programs are at risk. Additionally, many of the best human minds of our generation are focused on designing weapons capable of unimaginable chaos rather than on solutions to global warming or cures for diseases.

How can Christians respond?

Jesus taught and modeled love for one’s enemies. (Matt. 5:43–48, I Pet. 2:21–23). Loving enemies expresses our trust in God (Ps. 31:14–15). Paul writes that loving enemies is the only way to overcome evil (Rom. 12:19–21).

Christians can choose to build mutual friendships with persons in nations that our government defines as “enemies.” This provides a powerful example to the nations that bridges of understanding and trust are possible. U.S. Christians can also choose to live in just and life-sustaining ways that do not require U.S. military dominance.

Christians can also call governing authorities to develop more just and compassionate policies toward other nations. To learn more about effective advocacy, visit the Washington Office website at www.mcc.org/us/washington.

How should public policy respond?

Paul says government is to protect the good and punish the wrongdoer (Rom. 13:1–7). This text does not authorize war, but suggests a policing and judicial role. Militarism cannot create the long-term conditions for peace. Human and global security is enhanced by:

1. *Emphasizing diplomacy, modeling mutual-ity and upholding human rights.* The United States should build consensus in international forums, lead the way toward nuclear disarmament and consistently respect international law and human rights.
2. *Building equitable economies.* Policymakers should cancel the debts of poor countries, create just and equitable trade relationships and provide aid to eradicate the worst levels of poverty.
3. *Developing renewable energy.* U.S. dependency on foreign oil has led to inconsistent and harmful policies, especially in the Middle East. Lawmakers should support renewable energy policies and practices.