
Defense Report

AUSA



Wanted: Military Muscle To Counter The Threats We Face

Somewhere along the line our government seems to have allowed the cart to get before the horse when it comes to planning for the security of the United States. We permit fiscal considerations to dictate what is required to "secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity."

When the President sends a budget request to Congress, it is based on the potential threats we face. Our national security policy, unchanged since the 1940s, determines what people, armaments and resources are needed to counter specific threats to our democratic freedoms. Unfortunately, Congress frequently declares the defense budget "dead on arrival." Too often that declaration is based solely on political expediency and has no bearing on whether or not the budget is tailored to our defense needs.

Unquestionably, our major defense need today is the strength to deter Soviet expansionism. The Soviet advantage over the U.S. is very real and will continue unless the U.S. perseveres in strengthening its deterrent. At the same time, we live in a world where more than two dozen active aggressions are ongoing and terrorism is on the increase. It is thus abundantly clear that we have little choice but to maintain the capability of responding anywhere in the world to aggression of varying degrees of severity.

The question should not be how much defense can we afford, but rather what are the risks to our freedom and what will be needed to counter them?

Congress should cease dancing to the tune of some fiscal pied piper and base its consideration of the defense budget on the risks we see now and in the immediate future. Our defense must be based on a full and unconditional appraisal of the perils we face. We should spend no more on it and can afford to spend no less.

The first business of our government is the defense of our freedom. What is needed is a common sense determination of exactly what must be done to protect that liberty, given the threats facing it, and then apply the necessary resources to match that determination.