

US Military Budget Creates more than Wars in Future

The White House unveiled its budget request for the 2024 fiscal year, with the largest ever proposed spending on the military. It is a nearly \$1 trillion budget for world war. The Biden administration wants the resources to fight Russia in Ukraine, intensify its buildup towards war with China in the Far East and sustain US military aggression in the Middle East.

Total spending on national defense – including work on nuclear weapons at the Department of Energy – comes in at \$886 billion. Adding in likely emergency military aid packages for Ukraine later this year, plus military-related programs in the State Department, CIA and other agencies, the potential tens of billions of dollars in Congressional add-ons could push total spending for national defense to as much as \$950 billion or more for FY 2024. The result could be the highest military budget since World War II, far higher than at the peaks of the Korean or Vietnam Wars or the height of the Cold War.

Since Biden took office, the budget for the Pentagon alone has jumped from \$718 billion in fiscal 2022, the first full year of his administration, to \$816 billion last year. The \$842 billion requested for this year could rise past the \$900 billion mark once Congress and lobbyists for the weapons manufacturers have their say. Congressional Republicans have already denounced the budget for providing too little funding for the military.

The name “Department of Defense” is itself a gross distortion since there is not an inch of American soil that needs to be defended against an external enemy. It is rather the world which is under threat from the Pentagon. The ultimate driver of that enormous spending spree is a seldom-commented-upon strategy of global military overreach, including 750 U.S. military bases scattered on every continent except Antarctica, 170,000 troops stationed overseas, and counter-terror operations in at least 85 countries.

The department should be renamed the Department of Maintaining America’s Global Empire, or perhaps more simply, the Department of World Destruction. Some \$38 billion of the Pentagon budget will go to nuclear weapons modernization, bringing the total spending this year on the US nuclear arsenal, to carry out the worldwide annihilation of civilization and perhaps all life on the planet, to more than \$60 billion.

Much of the “non-military” budget also contributes to the US capacity to wage war around the world. One White House statement declares that the budget “invests in key technologies and sectors of the U.S. industrial base such as microelectronics, submarine

construction, munitions production, and bio-manufacturing.” It also includes “the recapitalization and optimization of the four public Naval Shipyards to meet future submarine and carrier maintenance requirements.”

Much of last year’s \$250 billion CHIPS Act was funding routed through the Department of Commerce to underwrite the transfer to the United States of production of key semiconductor chips that are vital for high-tech weapons.

There are billions more in the budget for police repression, including \$25 billion for Customs and Border Protection (CBP) and Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), and \$14.5 billion for other anti-immigrant activities of the Department of Homeland Security, including immigration courts and the vast network of detention facilities. Tens of billions more go to the FBI and other Justice Department agencies, and in grants that go directly to state and local police departments. Military violence and police repression constitute the bulk of the \$1.7 trillion in discretionary spending, the amount that Congress must authorize and appropriate each year.

The United States has been using warmongering and military tactics for a few decades in order to loot the natural resources of other countries, seize the markets, and maintain its superiority in order to escape the economic depression and crises that it is currently experiencing. For this every year it increases its military budget and commits military aggression, wars, attacks and atrocities on the countries of the world. Therefore, the US defense budget is being used by countries that are being oppressed by imperialism and the world peace seeking working class has to oppose it strongly.