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# Trends. National Security and the United States Government 2004 Federal Budget: Is It Good For Security?

Editor

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Abstract: This Trends article discusses the (under)funding of homeland security and defense in an Executive Branch proposal for the United States Government 2004 federal budget.

An Executive Branch proposal for the United States Government (USG) 2004 federal budget is under fire by political opponents for its alleged underfunding of homeland security and defense. Many of these opponents base their case on the dollars that would be allocated for security-related personnel, materiel, and research and development to be used on or within the borders of the US.

There are two significant problems with the opposition's case. First, some are too quick to assume that homeland security resources must be formally labeled as homeland security resources. Yet the kinds of resources that apply de facto to homeland security can range far beyond what is officially labeled as such. Second, there is a stops at the water mentality about what constitutes homeland security. The proactive and global application of military, law enforcement, and intelligence assets is discounted--a puzzling phenomenon when prosecuting a war on terrorism with global reach.

The goodness of the Executive Branch's proposed budget for homeland security can be legitimately debated based on the nature of the threat and the best ways of meeting it. To employ conceptual constraints on the nature of terrorism and how to counter it is illegitimate indeed. (See Chen, J. (2001). Urban Chinese perceptions of threats from the United States and Japan. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 65, 254-266; Freeman, D., Garety, P. A., Kuipers, E., & Fowler, D., & Bebbington, P. E. (2002). A cognitive model of persecutory delusions. *British Journal of Clinical Psychology*, 41, 331-347; O'Connor, R. E., Bord, R. J., & Fisher, A. (1998). Rating threat mitigators: Faith in experts, governments and individuals themselves to create a safer world. *Risk Analysis*, 18, 547-556; Shenon, P. (February 4, 2003). Ridge says request for homeland security is enough. *The New York Times*, p. A22.) (Keywords: Federal Budget, Homeland Security, National Security.)