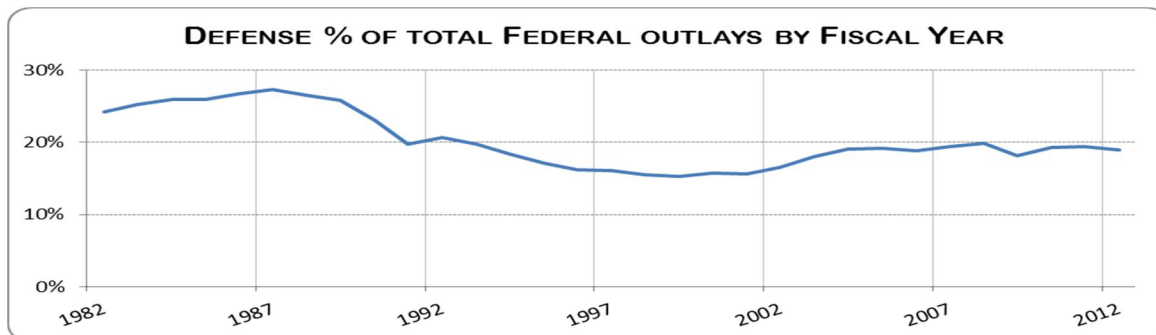


THE DEFENSE BUDGET

- National defense is a constitutional responsibility of the Federal Government
- Defense now consumes ~\$700 billion, or about 18% of the federal budget annually
- This is less than Cold War outlays, but more than during the Clinton years, '92-'00



- The Defense Department has about 1,422,600 active uniformed military and 748,000 civilian employees (President's Budget 2012)
- Combat operations in Iraq and Afghanistan depend primarily on the individual soldier
- But threats from China, Russia, and Iran demand a high-technology response: thus our forces must simultaneously prepare for both types of warfare.

Any reduction in defense spending must be done with full consideration of the threats facing our nation. Most of us lack the information required to make defense budget decisions, but we can ask the appropriate questions.

1. Can we close bases in Korea, Germany, Italy, Japan and other Cold War locations and garrison those troops in the US?
2. Is there anything more to be accomplished in Iraq- is it time to depart?
3. Don't we have redundant bases in Japan, Korea, Italy, the UK, and Germany that could be consolidated without affecting our ability to project national power?
4. Because our budgetary problems are a greater threat to our nation than any military threat, can't we delay upgrading weapons systems like the F-35 JTF, the Army's FCS, and the Marine's EFV and end production of the Osprey and C-17 aircraft? (see b, below)
5. Is our defense establishment bloated with too many civilians, too many contractors, and not enough combat soldiers?

We can not only ask the questions: we can require answers.

- a. Brookings Institution
http://www.brookings.edu/multimedia/video/2011/0930_at_brookings_podcast.aspx
- b. CATO Institute Handbook for Policymakers, Cha 19:
<http://www.cato.org/pubs/handbook/hb111/hb111-19.pdf>
- c. The President's Budget: Historical Table 4.2.
<http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/budget/Historicals>