

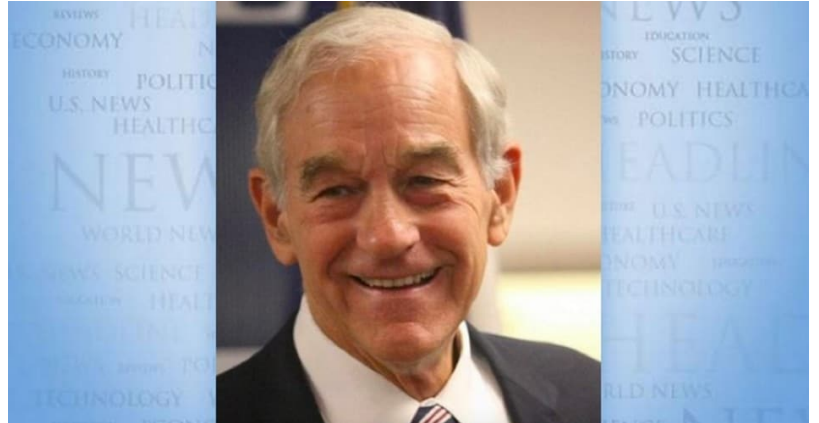


Written by [Ron Paul](#) on February 17, 2025

## Can We Really Cut Half of The Military Budget? You Bet!

The wailing sound you heard last Thursday was the chorus of the Beltway warmongers shrieking in despair at President Trump's suggestion that there was no reason for the United States to be spending one trillion dollars on "defense."

"...[O]ne of the first meetings I want to have is with President Xi of China and President Putin of Russia, and I want to say let's cut our military budget in half. And we can do that, and I think we'll be able to do that," the President told reporters.



Ron Paul

With this statement, President Trump blew up one of the biggest myths of our time, particularly among Republicans, that spending more on the military is essential to keeping us safe. There is a vast and well-funded network of political and industrial interests that depend on maintaining that myth, from the weapons manufacturers to the mainstream media to the think tanks and beyond. Why? Because most of what is called "defense spending" has little to do with defending this country and a lot to do with enriching the politically well-connected.

Maintaining that global military empire has bankrupted the United States while making us less safe and less free. President Trump seems to understand this. But the military-industrial complex and its cheerleaders have for decades pushed the idea that we could not survive without continuously increasing their budgets.

Thanks to the work of the "Department of Government Efficiency" we are learning that much of what has been sold as "essential spending" is nothing of the sort. Take USAID, for example. We were led to believe that this agency was feeding the poor while promoting the best kind of American values overseas. Thanks to DOGE, we learned that the money was going to absurdities like funding transgender puppet shows in Peru.

We are also learning that a great deal of USAID money was going to actually overthrow democratic governments overseas - as well as manipulate foreign media and promote censorship of "dissident" voices at home and abroad. Not only was USAID not helping countries overseas - it was actually harming them!

Just as with USAID, when we are able to see just where that one trillion military budget is going Americans are going to fully realize that they have been lied to for decades. That is why we need a full audit of the Pentagon and full transparency of the results.

We also need a change in policy. Americans are beginning to understand the economic costs of maintaining a global military empire. US taxpayers are forced to cover more than half of the entire NATO budget while European countries rattle sabers at Russia and threaten war. If Europe feels so threatened by Russia, why don't they cover the costs of their own defense? Why do poor Americans have to pay for the defense of rich Europeans? Haven't we had enough of this?

I very much hope that President Trump follows through with his plan to drastically reduce our bloated



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military budget. We can start by closing the hundreds of military bases overseas, bringing back our troops from foreign countries, and eliminating our massive commitments to NATO and other international organizations.

We will be richer, safer, and happier.

*Ron Paul is a former U.S. congressman from Texas. This [article](#) originally appeared at the Ron Paul Institute for Peace and Prosperity and is reprinted here with permission.*



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