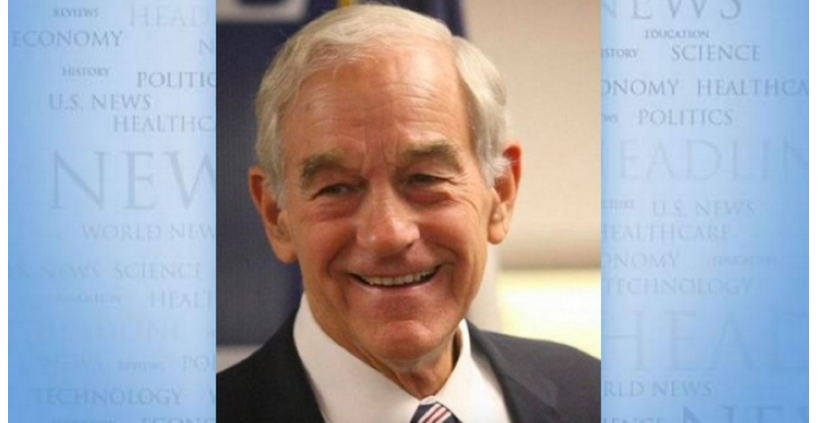




Written by [Ron Paul](#) on July 17, 2017

Big Military Spending Boost Threatens Our Economy and Security

On Friday the House overwhelmingly approved a massive increase in military spending, passing a \$696 billion National Defense Authorization bill for 2018. President Trump's request already included a huge fifty or so billion dollar spending increase, but the Republican-led House found even that to be far too small. They added another \$30 billion to the bill for good measure. Even President Trump, in his official statement, expressed some concern over spending in the House-passed bill.



According to the already weak limitations on military spending increases in the 2011 "sequestration" law, the base military budget for 2018 would be \$72 billion more than allowed.

Don't worry, they'll find a way to get around that!

The big explosion in military spending comes as the US is planning to dramatically increase its military actions overseas. The president is expected to send thousands more troops back to Afghanistan, the longest war in US history. After nearly 16 years, the Taliban controls more territory than at anytime since the initial US invasion and ISIS is seeping into the cracks created by constant US military action in the country.

The Pentagon and Defense Secretary James Mattis are already telling us that even when ISIS is finally defeated in Iraq, the US military doesn't dare end its occupation of the country again. Look for a very expensive array of permanent US military bases throughout the country. So much for our 2003 invasion creating a stable democracy, as the neocons promised.

In Syria, the United States has currently established at least eight military bases even though it has no permission to do so from the Syrian government nor does it have a UN resolution authorizing the US military presence there. Pentagon officials have made it clear they will continue to occupy Syrian territory even after ISIS is defeated, to "stabilize" the region.

And let's not forget that Washington is planning to send the US military back to Libya, another US intervention we were promised would be stabilizing but that turned out to be a disaster.

Also, the drone wars continue in Somalia and elsewhere, as does the US participation in Saudi Arabia's horrific two year war on impoverished Yemen.

President Trump often makes encouraging statements suggesting that he shares some of our non-interventionist views. For example while Congress was shoveling billions into an already bloated military budget last week, President Trump said that he did not want to spend trillions more dollars in the Middle East where we get "nothing" for our efforts. He'd rather fix roads here in the US, he said. The only reason we are there, he said, was to "get rid of terrorists," after which we can focus on our problems at home.



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Unfortunately President Trump seems to be incapable of understanding that it is US intervention and occupation of foreign countries that creates instability and feeds terrorism. Continuing to do the same thing for more than 17 years — more US bombs to “stabilize” the Middle East — and expecting different results is hardly a sensible foreign policy. It is insanity. Until he realizes that our military empire is the source of rather than the solution to our problems, we will continue to wildly spend on our military empire until the dollar collapses and we are brought to our knees. Then what?

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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