



Written by [Thomas R. Eddlem](#) on April 10, 2009

## Obama Seeks More War Spending — Again

“We face a security situation in Afghanistan and Pakistan that demands urgent attention,” Obama said in an [April 9 letter](#) to House Speaker Nancy Pelosi. “The Taliban is resurgent and al Qaeda threatens America from its safe haven along the Afghan-Pakistan border.”

So these extra billions are just for Afghanistan, right? Wrong: “Nearly 95 percent of these funds will be used to support our men and women in uniform as they help the people of Iraq to take responsibility for their own future,” Obama informed Pelosi, adding, almost as an afterthought: “and work to disrupt, dismantle, and defeat al Qaeda in Pakistan and Afghanistan.”



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To be fair, Obama claimed this “supplemental” request was part of the plan all along. “As I noted when first I introduced my budget in February, this is the last planned war supplemental,” Obama told Pelosi. “Since September 2001, the Congress has passed 17 separate emergency funding bills totaling \$822.1 billion for the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. After 7 years of war, the American people deserve an honest accounting of the cost of our involvement in our ongoing military operations.”

But an “honest accounting” of Obama’s promises would point out that Obama did not request \$83.4 billion in the [fiscal 2010 budget proposal](#) he submitted on February 26. Here’s [what he wrote](#): “To address the costs of military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, the Administration requests \$75.5 billion for the remainder of 2009.”

That means his current request represents an increase of nearly \$8 billion — more than 10 percent — in a time span of just six weeks. That’s much more than a \$1 billion-per-week increase.

And this \$7.9 billion increase is on top of the Obama administration’s [four percent increase in ordinary military spending](#) in his fiscal 2010 budget proposal. The Obama budget proposal’s military spending increases were attacked recently as “cuts” by neo-conservative former-Bush-officials-turned-pundits and sympathetic sections of the mass media. After playing a montage of news organs who parroted the “huge cut” line on his Comedy Central “Daily Show” on April 7, comedian/host Jon Stewart [asked](#): “On what planet is a four percent spending increase a ‘huge cut?’”

It’s a good question. But it reveals that while Jon Stewart is a funny guy, he doesn’t understand how Washington and its compliant press accounts for government spending “cuts.”

A good way to explain Washington spending “cuts” is to provide an example from a family budget. Let’s say you plan on a family vacation this summer and that last year you spent \$3,000 you had saved for your family vacation. This year, you believe you can save and spend \$10,000 and that’s what you plan.



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But a little later you realize you can only afford \$4,000, and that's what you actually spend. In the real world, that's a \$1,000 increase. But in Washington it's a \$6,000 "cut" from your plan.

And it's this kind of "thinking" that enables neo-conservative warmongers and like-minded people in the press to say that Obama's spending increases are "cuts." They'd like to both send more U.S. soldiers abroad into unnecessary wars (as Obama is doing) and fund increases in expensive high-tech weapons programs. But because Obama is only increasing the number of soldiers going off to fight unnecessary wars in nations other than Iraq, neo-conservatives call this a "huge cut."

Obama is not the peace president. He's not even close. He's bringing more foreign wars to the United States military, along with more foreign military deployments and a larger overall military manpower to fight those wars. But he's not quite as lavish on funding for the military-industrial complex as the very worst neo-con elements of the former Bush administration would like.

The [Wall Street Journal noted on April 9](#) that Obama's recent actions for more war could alienate leftists who had backed him for president as the peace candidate. They should be alienated. All Americans, particularly constitutionalist-conservatives who support peace and freedom, should oppose more unnecessary war.



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