

War: Been There, Done That

Let's try something new!

- In both our lives and our stories, war has become too easy. It's ubiquitous on our news, in our foreign policy, and on our TV shows.
- But stories that support militarization as a solution to diplomatic problems can, in effect, act as propaganda for the military industrial complex.
- They don't need our help! They're doing great on their own!
 - The U.S. defense budget in 2021, \$801 billion, exceeded the COMBINED defense budgets of China, India, the United Kingdom, Russia, France, Germany, Saudi Arabia, Japan, and South Korea.
- One of the reasons we spend so much on defense is this narrative that violence is necessary to "keep the peace."

Violence = Peace (!?)

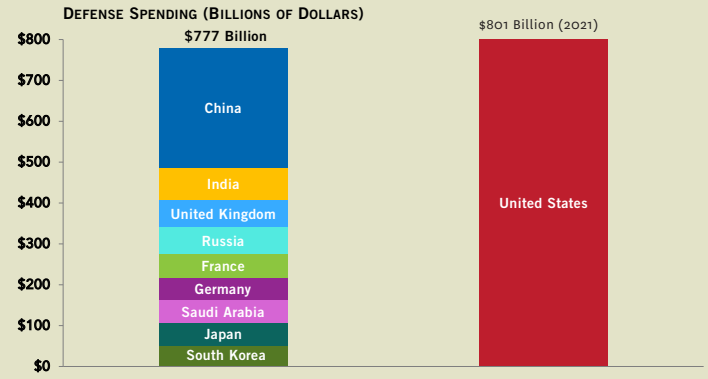
**That's Orwellian
 "Newspeak" that helps
 keep the machine
 whirring but doesn't
 match reality.**



The United States Spends More on Defense Than the Next Nine Countries Combined (2021)

The U.S. is spending more, even considering inflation, than was spent during the height of the Vietnam and Korean wars.

—Quincy Institute for Responsible Statecraft



SOURCE: Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, SIPRI Military Expenditure Database, April 2022.
 NOTES: Figures are in U.S. dollars converted from local currencies using market exchange rates. Data for the United States are for fiscal year 2021, which ran from October 1, 2020 through September 30, 2021. Data for the other countries are for calendar year 2021. The source for this chart uses a definition of defense spending that is more broad than budget function 050 and defense discretionary spending.
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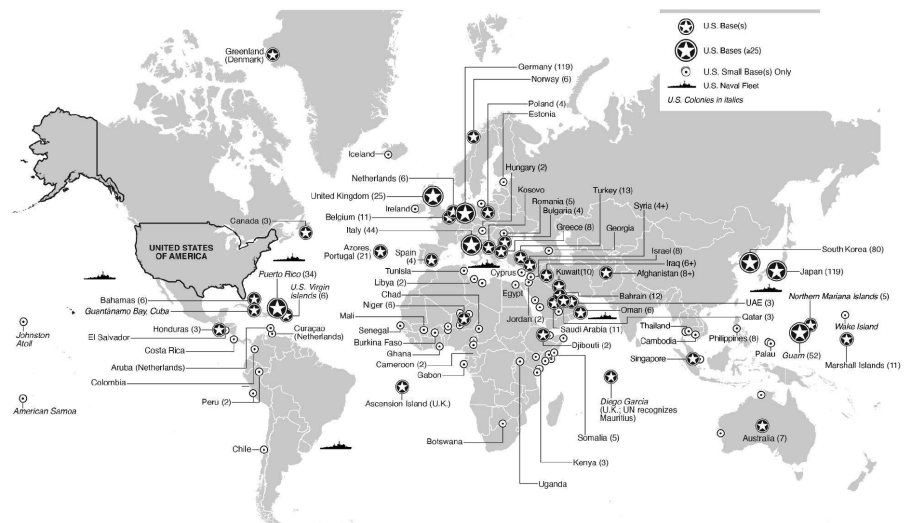
PGPF.ORG

Shocking Facts About Our Global Military Footprint

- The U.S. military footprint extends to approximately 750 military installations in foreign countries and U.S. territories. By comparison, Russia has two to three dozen and China five.
 - Quincy Institute for Responsible Statecraft
- Roughly two-thirds of current wars—34 out of 46—involve one or more parties armed by the United States.
 - Quincy Institute for Responsible Statecraft
- In the U.S. wars since 9/11:
 - More than 929,000 people have died
 - 38 million have been turned into war refugees or displaced persons
- The U.S. government has spent \$8 trillion and is conducting counterterrorism activities in 85 countries.
 - Watson Institute for International & Public Affairs / Brown University

U.S. Military Bases Abroad, 2020

In 2020, the United States controlled around 800 bases outside the 50 U.S. states and Washington, DC. Map reflects bases' relative number and positioning given best available data. For ease of comparison we use contemporary borders and a Mercator projection.

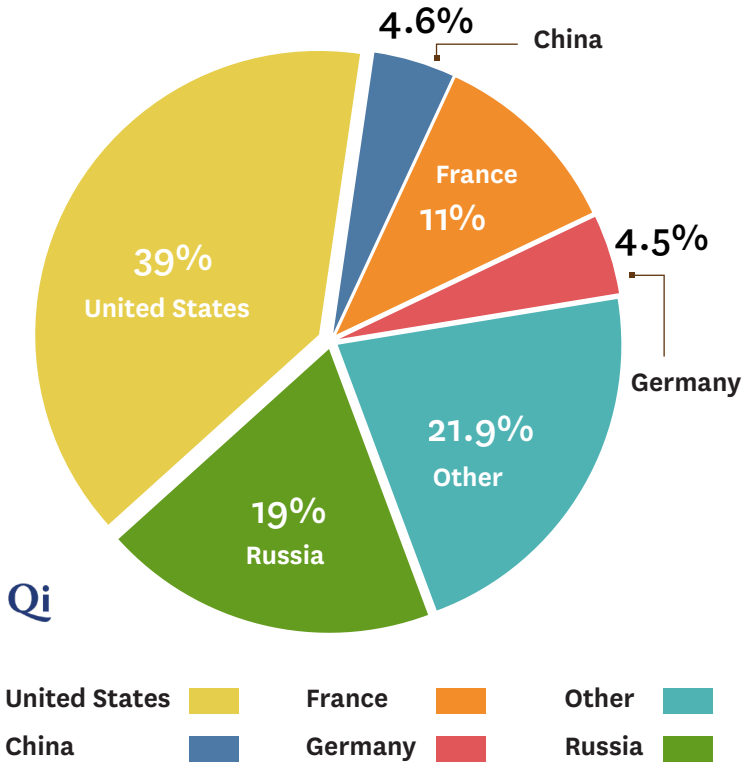


Map by Kelly Martin / kmartindesign.com for David Vine, *The United States of War: A Global History of America's Endless Conflicts, from Columbus to the Islamic State* (University of California Press, 2020).

Note: This 2020 map depicts approximately 800 US military bases worldwide. Due to recent closures related to the end of the war in Afghanistan, the authors revised their estimate down to 750.

Diplomacy Instead of War

U.S. Has Cornered the Market as Arms Seller 2017–2021



Source: Stockholm International Peace Research Institute

War Profiteering

- Not everyone has paid the same price. Some have profited.
- Defense stocks outperformed the stock market by 58% during the Afghanistan War.
 - \$10,000 invested in weapons stocks the

day President George W. Bush initiated a U.S. military response to the 9/11 terrorist attacks would now be worth \$97,295.

–The Intercept

- The Pentagon spent over \$14 trillion since

the start of the War on Terror. Between one-third to one-half of those tax dollars went to for-profit Pentagon contractors.

–Watson Institute for International & Public Affairs / Brown University



The 2015 Iran Nuclear Deal is an example of how diplomacy can prevent war.
The compromise—in which both sides made significant concessions—prevented an international catastrophe and provided a model for peaceful conflict resolution that keeps countries secure without the cost of lives on either side.

Big D* Energy

- Statecraft makes for great drama. And so does every one of the facts listed above.
- Pro-aggression stories that are “ripped from headlines” or that mimic “real world” scenarios only act to recycle status quo ideas about the benefit of military violence.
- By showing audiences alternative solutions in the stories we write, we can flip the script, help broaden the

discourse and break the cycle of endless war.

- Stop treating characters who push for more war as heroes. It’s equally or more heroic and interesting to prevent unnecessary death and destruction.
- Let’s stop telling stories of consequence-free acts of war.
- Always remember, militarization is the Molotov cocktail of solutions:



Destroying the Climate

U.S. military emissions are about 51 million metric tons, CO2 equivalent, annually in the last two years, larger than the emissions of most countries, and the largest user of fossil fuels and energy in the U.S. government.

–Mother Jones