

May 24, 2008,

AFA Members, Congressional Staffers, Civic Leaders, and DOCA Members, I'd like to point out to you a couple of Op-eds written by some of our members. The first - by former Chairman of the Board of AFA - Pat Condon - can be found at: [http://www.afa.org/EdOp/edop\\_4\\_25\\_08.asp](http://www.afa.org/EdOp/edop_4_25_08.asp) In it, Pat takes issue with the idea that defense spending is discretionary spending and Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, etc constitute "mandatory" spending. For any Administration, job #1 is to keep our citizens safe. Without security, there is no freedom ... and I think Pat has done us all a service with his piece.

A second Op-ed ([http://www.afa.org/EdOp/edop\\_5\\_08.asp](http://www.afa.org/EdOp/edop_5_08.asp)) comes from Bill Croom, a long time AFA leader and member of our Aerospace Education Council. Bill posits defense spending is near historical lows - especially when measured in constant dollars. This past Feb - when the President presented his annual budget to the Congress - the press highlighted that he was asking for the most money **in history** for defense. But, measured on constant dollars, was that really accurate? Of course not. For the best information on this go to: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/budget/fy2009/pdf/hist.pdf> This is a very large document ... but if you look on PDF pages 123-130 or actual pages 119-126, you can find the data in constant dollars. What the press failed to point out is - Payment to individuals is over 3 times what we spend on defense ... and this category is climbing rapidly. **It really is the largest in history.**

Finally, I just finished a book by Douglas Feith called War and Decision. It tells what the Bush Administration was thinking and how they conducted their decision processes after 9/11. What I like best about the book is Mr. Feith doesn't just "remember" what was said when, but he actually documents and footnotes all of his references - many of which are still classified ... but will be released over time. This will allow historians to review in detail what decisions were made and why they were made. In a short op-ed, Senator Kyl (R-AZ) comments on what he believes is a key fact from the book - that there were links between Saddam Hussein and Al Qaeda. You can find Sen Kyl's piece on our website at: [http://www.afa.org/EdOp/edop\\_5\\_2\\_08.asp](http://www.afa.org/EdOp/edop_5_2_08.asp)

Suggest you forward this note to your friends and colleagues who support airpower and a strong national defense.

Mike

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President/CEO