

Essay I

By Daniel Hinojosa

President Bush sent his proposed budget for 2002 to Congress Monday with big increases in spending for education and defense and cuts in transportation, agriculture and environmental protection. The proposal figures would bring the administration's total 2002 defense request to \$343.5 billion. That is 10.3 percent more than the \$311.3 A far larger increase than President Bush had first planned for domestic programs.

His spending plan sets the stage for turmoil over the president's proposed tax cuts and defense budget agenda. The president's decision to "put strategy first, then spending" clearly makes sense and should be commended. However, the approach also appears to be in tension with the president's recent enactment of tax cuts by some \$1.35 trillion over the next decade. The conflict is that the administration passed a large tax cut before it has determined exactly how the outcome will be after its new defense strategy. The administration clearly contradicted itself by spending first before planning their strategy. The challenge is set for the House and Senate members appointed to the budget resolution conference will be to close the gap between the Senate's \$1.2 trillion tax cut it approved last week and the \$1.35 trillion cut the House passed in March.

This strategy by Bush administration is directing the taxpayer's attention by providing them with the tax cut then implementing their outrages defense spending. Most Republicans are going to approve of this proposal as expected.

The real decision will be placed on the hands of pro-defense Democrat's. So more than likely this defense proposal will be passed.

A major question in the minds of many Americans is, "Where is this money coming from?" Will the Medicare and Social Security surpluses be needed to fund the Bush agenda? The Bush administration just launched a massive tax cut, is proposing a budget to increase defense funding, still provide for the nation's needs, not dip in Medicare and Social Security trust funds and still have money left over. Who are these guys kidding! It is obvious that the administration is not thinking of the economic consequences our country will face in the near future. Even if the Bush administration does not dip into the Medicare and Social Security surpluses now, they will eventually have to.

President Bush's future will be determined as a failure if he leads our country back into deficit. His administration's miscalculated plans are going to ruin what our previous president accomplished. The budget surpluses created under the Clinton administration will all be diminished after Bush's budget plans are all said and done. Taxpayers will be affected by these budget spending plans in a couple of years. This will be a major factor during the next presidential election.