

# Compassionate Conservative?

## Presidential Progress Report for 2003

The Bush administration has executed two wars in two years (and more wars are being considered.) The proposed 2004 Military Budget is \$399.1 billion, not including the requested \$79 billion for 6 months in Iraq. An estimated additional \$300 billion will be needed to "secure" Iraq over two years of occupation. At the same time Bush has instituted large tax cuts. These policies of continuous war combined with tax cuts have led to a disastrous economy, unprecedented budget deficits, and severe cuts in domestic programs, adversely affecting services for all U.S. women and children.

Subject	Comments
<b>Education:</b> <b>F</b>	ONE SECOND OF WAR IN Iraq (\$12,730 per second) = TWICE what the U.S. spends per year, per child in primary education. 71% of fourth graders read below proficiency. Some states have cut back their school weeks to four days and raised tuition for colleges. For \$304 billion, much less than half the cost of the Bush proposed tax cut, we could hire an additional 100,000 teachers, repair 6,000 schools and provide additional math and reading help for over nine million eligible low-income students.
<b>Job Security:</b> <b>F</b>	Since Bush was elected, more than 2 million people have lost their jobs. The unemployment rate has increased by 5 percent over all and by 74 percent for single mothers. Bush has opposed extensions of unemployment assistance for all affected workers, and has proposed cutting job training programs by \$530 million below last year. For the cost of about 10 days of the Iraq war, all jobless workers could get 26 weeks of unemployment benefits and low-wage and part-time workers who are disproportionately women could get unemployment insurance.
<b>Children's Well-Being:</b> <b>F</b>	9.2 million U.S. children are uninsured. A child in the U.S. is born into poverty every 45 seconds. 57% of eligible persons who receive food stamps are children. For less than the amount of the proposed 2004 military budget we could provide Head Start for all unserved eligible preschool children in addition to health insurance to all uninsured children. Instead, the President's budget eliminates child care and after-school services for about 600,000 children, narrows the scope of and dismantles Head Start, cuts several child nutrition programs, and weakens the Children's Health Insurance Program.
<b>Health Care:</b> <b>F</b>	33 million Americans are uninsured. A child is born in the U.S. without health insurance every minute. Latina and African American women are two to three times more likely to be uninsured. For about the same cost as the \$725 billion "tax cut" package, we could provide health insurance for all uninsured Americans with incomes below 300 percent of the federal poverty level (\$45,060 for a family of three). Instead, part of the Bush proposal for Iraq is universal health care coverage for Iraqis.
<b>Domestic Safety:</b> <b>F</b>	An estimated 1.5 million women are physically or sexually assaulted by their intimate partners every year, but emergency shelters are only able to help 300,000 women. For less than the cost of the first installment of the Iraq war, (\$59 billion) all women now turned away could be provided with transitional housing, job training, services for children, legal advocacy and community education.
<b>State Budget Crises:</b> <b>F</b>	States are facing their worst fiscal crises since WWII and women and families are paying a heavy price. To name just a few programs, states have cut school funding, services to the disabled, library funding, child care help for working parents and Medicaid eligibility, an important source of health coverage for low-income women and their children. Proposed new Bush tax cuts would cost states \$64 billion in additional lost revenue over the next 10 years, over and above the lost revenues from the 2001 tax cuts. For less than the \$104 billion cost of the President's proposal to accelerate the rate cuts in the top four tax brackets, Congress could help close the state budget gaps and provide women and children with the services their tax dollars should be paying for.
<b>Seniors:</b> <b>F</b>	Bush's 2004 budget freezes funding for Older Americans Act, services that help seniors stay independent. Four out of five elderly who live alone are women and nearly ¾ of unpaid caregivers for seniors are women. Half of the initial appropriation for the Iraq war would fund all Older Americans Act programs for seniors, including a 10 percent per year increase for 10 years.
<b>Social Security:</b> <b>F</b>	\$1.4 trillion is proposed by the Bush administration for "diversion" of Social Security to pay for other programs in the next 10 years. Women have less in pensions and savings and thus rely more on Social Security than men. For over 80 percent of non-married elderly African American and Hispanic women, Social Security provides over half of their income in retirement, and for over half, it represents 90 percent or more of their retirement income.
<b>Environment</b> <b>F</b>	Of the foods tested by the U.S.D.A., 55 percent showed detectable pesticide residue. About 8 percent of women of childbearing age in the U.S. have concentrations of mercury that are of potential concern to the development of their fetus. In 2001, 9 percent of all U.S. children had asthma (6.3 million children). Yet the Bush budget proposes a \$286 million cut in the Environmental Protection agency. (The above information was provided by public reports by the Children's Defense Fund, NOW, the EPA, the World Policy Institute, and the National Women's Law Center.)