

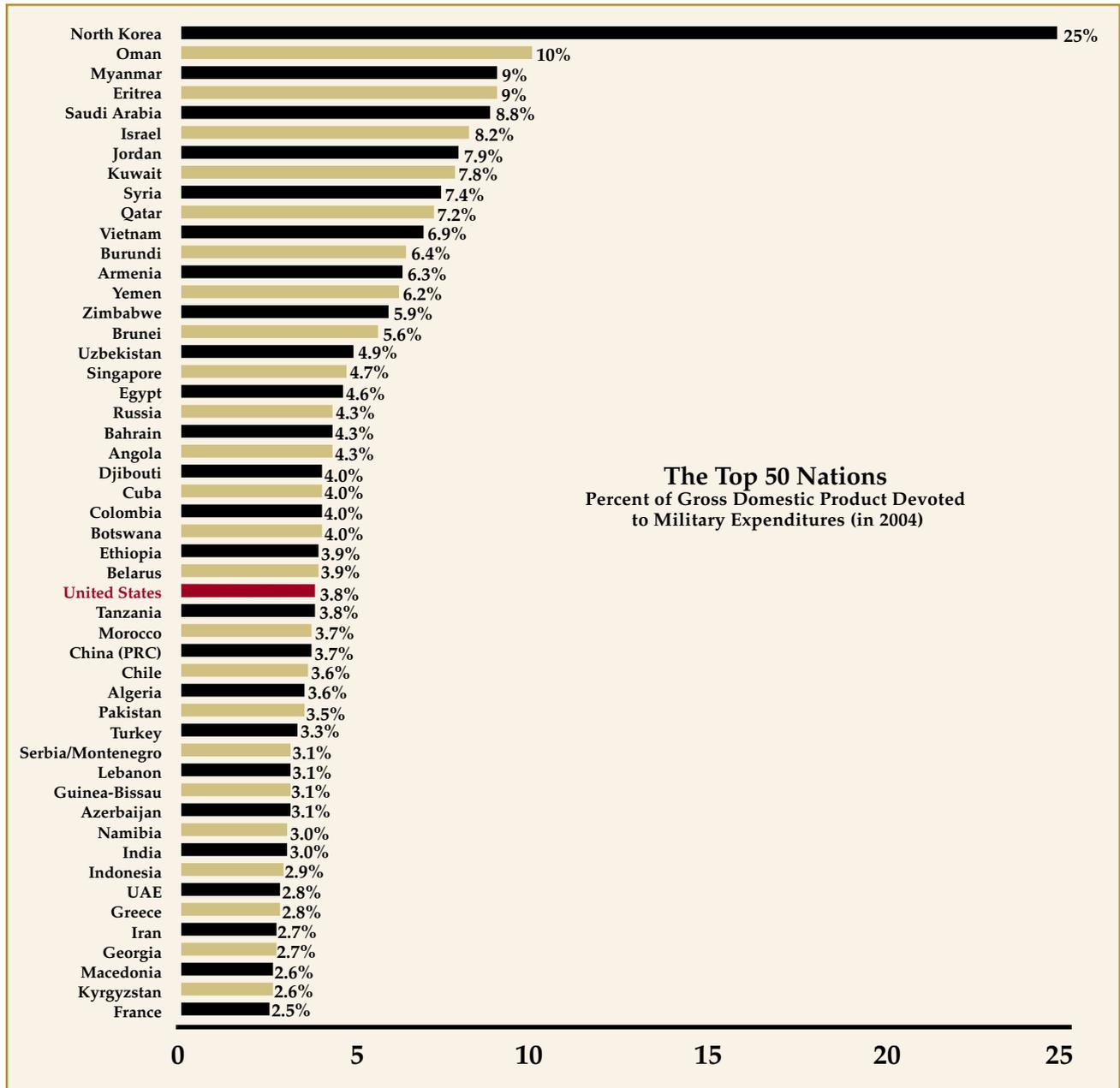
# The Chart Page

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## America's Defense "Burden"

How "affordable" is US military power? Put a different way: How big is the economic "burden" of defense? To hear critics tell it, you'd think the Pentagon is driving the country to the poorhouse in a Cadillac ("record defense budgets!"), but that's far from true. The best measure of national

burden is not total dollars spent but the share of Gross Domestic Product—the national economy—that Americans devote to troop pay, weapons, and operations. This chart shows that the US, with a defense "burden" of 3.8 percent of GDP, lags behind many other nations.



Source: Data from International Institute for Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance, 2005-2006*