



Poverty: A
Barrier to Peace

NH Peace Action

As an organization, we work on several issues, topics and problems in our world. We'd like you to understand the relationship we see between our peace work and the issues/topics/problems that we connect with.

Why we are drawn to working on Poverty: Poverty is a barrier to peace at home, and a side-effect of conflict abroad. Poverty and income inequality are direct impacts of an economy that prioritizes militarization and a US corporate interest-based foreign policy. Such a foreign policy targets nations that are weak, or are pursuing policies independent of U.S. control, who possess resources and/or are located where U.S. corporate interests are present are at the greatest risk.

As the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. made clear, the triplets of evil (Racism, Materialism, and Militarism) are the greatest evils we face as a nation. Only by confronting these three simultaneously will we have the ability to make systemic change. Part of this systemic change is working to end the social policies that make poverty thrive.

Poverty is a barrier to peace because the struggle for economic survival prevents people from having the physical and mental space to work at their best abilities for a better world.

What resolution are we seeking in this area: Reversing poverty in the United States and globally will take a reprioritization of values and redirection of where governments currently invest revenues and expenditures. As one example, the global arms industry led by the U.S. robs funds for social spending and feeds military conflict all over the globe.

The NH economy currently, needlessly, relies on the defense industry. Greater economic cooperation, de-escalation of nuclear and conventional arms races with other countries. And building a domestic economy that provides a more equitable distribution of wealth can reverse poverty and grow in sustainable and peaceful ways.

Here in NH, dominant but reversible local pressures have led to our position as having the lowest minimum wage in New England, to becoming a "right to work"

state, and to maintaining the status quo in state budgets that rely on property taxes.

In addition, our NH economy is characterized by tax breaks offered to defense contractors and other large employers but a stark lack of liveable wages. We can change this toward an economy and budget that benefits many more people and reduces needless hardship.

NHPA connects with this issue.

We educate on this issue by: We work to oppose the nearly 1 Trillion dollar annual Pentagon budget and highlight the destructive role New Hampshire-based defense contractors play in feeding the war machine. We help taxpayers and voters understand what weapons systems and policies pose the greatest danger to our security and the lives of millions in countries where the U.S. deploys its military might. We host speakers on these issues and share information on economic challenges like changes in property laws for collective ownership of home neighborhoods, homelessness, etc.

We organize on this issue by: We partner with The Poor People’s Campaign, the American Friends Service Committee, unions, and other allies to fight for a living wage, universal healthcare, strengthening organized labor, the Green New Deal, voting rights, affordable housing, and immigration rights.

We support the work of international peace organizations that expose anti-democratic regimes and work to serve the needs of refugees, non-combatants and other populations caught in the crossfire of conflicts.

We agitate on this issue by: We mobilize rapid response calls to our elected officials when policies or US military interventions target poor countries and those who seek self determination in opposition to dictatorships or foreign interests propped up by US arms and funding.

We point out the overlap in US policies that disproportionately affect the poor, and the connection between militarism and poor living standards in New Hampshire.

In addition, we target weapons manufacturers who produce nuclear or conventional weapons which we see as immoral and which corrode the fabric of international cooperation and peace.

Our vision comes closer into being when this [poverty] lessens or is resolved because: Among other results, less poverty brings a higher quality of life and more political engagement.

Better standards of living are associated with less strife, and translate to a transformed civic life with active citizenship.

According to Article 25 in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, “everyone has a right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well being of him/herself and their family including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security...”. A world which centers peace on mutual prosperity is achievable and possible.

Organizations that NHPA works with on this issue include, but may not be limited to):[The Poor People’s Campaign](#),[AFSC](#),[RAD](#), and [GSOP](#).

If you and/or your organization would like to pursue partnerships in this area, we invite you to contact us at info@nhpeaceaction.org .