



Military Budgets and 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 budget issues as a peace organization: We are drawn to working on this issue for two main reasons. First, the enormous and dominant share of the US budget devoted to military spending overshadows nearly every social spending program: health care capacity, bridges, housing, care for veterans etc.

This budget priority encourages military "solutions" to international disputes, whether or not we intend that. Not much of the military is deployed for "defense," unless that means "defending" seventy other countries. Now that the US has bases in Bulgaria, Hungary, Poland, and Romania, for example, what the US calls defense looks like offense to Russia and others.

What resolution are we seeking in this area:

We seek to reduce the military portion of the US budget. Vast expenditures on our defective or archaic systems are avoidable waste. Vested interests maintain overseas and domestic bases; they represent an economy and society based on values contrary to peace. The money saved by military cuts, even merely reducing the national debt, would benefit Americans more than another redundant destroyer.

NHPA connects with this issue.

We educate on this issue by: We educate the public on this ongoing budget issue by producing pamphlets on Tax Day, for example, on what share of Federal taxes from New Hampshire goes to the Pentagon and what little New Hampshire receives in return.

Thus, we present alternatives about what our lives could be to fellow citizens parting with their hard-earned dollars. We write articles about the bloated military budget, and we often include it as a core issue at events and rallies. By contrast, we also point out that the conversion of the Pease Air Force base to Pease Tradeport is a great success, and might serve as a model for base closures elsewhere.

We organize on this issue by: We often ally with organizations that focus on particular domestic needs, or we amplify and extend their message, by showing how much damage the military establishment does to the people it purports to

protect. We get in touch with our Congressional representatives when votes on the budget come up, and we tell our members how representatives voted.

We mobilize on this issue by: From Tax Day pamphleting to demonstrating our discontent with a budget based on constant war preparation, we keep the prospect for peace front and center. If money speaks, we know it is capable of a change in language.

Our vision comes closer to being realized when we build a better budget because: Our goal is a smaller military and a smaller military budget. We prefer a transfer of much of the money saved to the health, housing, and education of Americans. We welcome any steps toward righting what is obviously a serious imbalance today; every step we take is one toward a more peaceful world.

We work with others on this issue: Our pro-peace-budget efforts happen alongside and in concert with that of other groups such as Mass PeaceAction, the Union of Concerned Scientists, and CODEPINK. For more on congressional budgeting priorities, you may wish to visit the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, at <https://www.cbpp.org/>

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