

... We know that we are called to be members of a new covenant of love. Love implies concern for all - especially the poor - and a continued search for those social and economic structures that permit everyone to share in a community that is a part of a re-deemed creation. (Rom 8:21-23)
Economic Justice for All, 365.

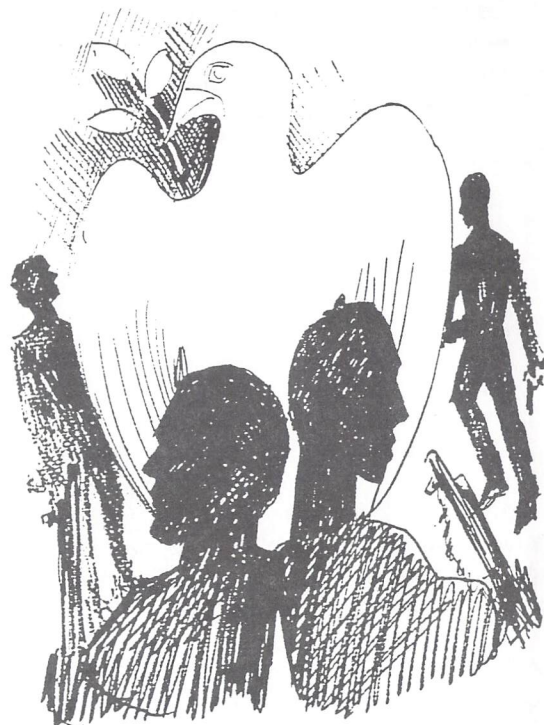
ACTION SUGGESTIONS

1. Create a place in your prayer life where you can focus on peace. Reflect on the contrasting visions raised in the *Backgrounder*.
2. Share this *Backgrounder* with others in your family, parish, workplace or school. Ask your parish to include it with the Sunday bulletin. Organize a reflection session using the questions provided as a starting point.
3. Use the *Backgrounder* as a resource for letters to the editors of your diocesan and local papers, as well as letters to your Congressional Representative and Senators.
4. Meet with your State Representative to begin a dialogue on the impact of US military spending on resources available to states to meet their new obligations under the Welfare Reform Act. Many states are examining legislation calling upon the Federal government to redirect military spending to State economic programs.

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Pax Christi USA Backgrounder

A Tumult Shall Arise



The Social Costs of US Military Spending

Because you have trusted in your chariots, and in the multitude of your warriors, therefore the tumult of war shall arise among your people, and all your fortresses shall be destroyed. (Hosea 10:13b-14a)

We live in a society which trusts in warriors. Every year, we spend billions of dollars on our military in the name of security. Scripture warns us of the consequences of a society which chooses to place its faith in weapons rather than in God. The infrastructure of our society crumbles as federal assistance for those who are poor is slashed. People cry out for jobs, decent food and housing, adequate health care, and safe neighborhoods. Our government responds through the barrel of a gun, increasing military spending even after the Cold War has ended. The number of those who suffer increases, and the tumult rises.

We are aware that the precise relationship between disarmament and development is neither easily demonstrated nor easily reoriented. But the fact of a massive distortion of resources in the face of crying human need creates a moral question... When we consider how and what we pay for defense today, we need a broader view than the equation of arms with security. The Challenge of Peace, 270.

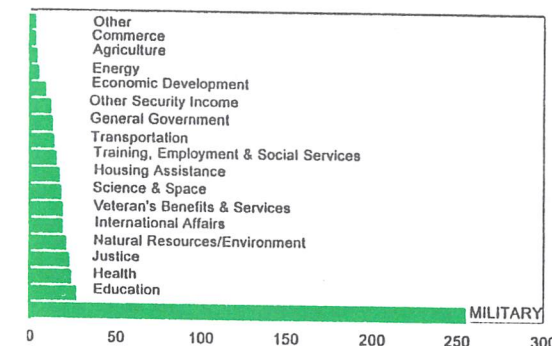
Although the Cold War ended years ago, the US continues to pour money into its military at a rate approaching Cold War levels. The average annual spending on the military between 1945-1996 was \$298.5 billion according to the Center for Defense Information. The 1997 US military budget is \$267 billion. That figure includes \$11 billion that Congress added to President Clinton's budget last year. For the amount that Congress added to the military budget last year, you could fund all

of the following federal programs (and then some) that were cut or eliminated for an entire year (at their previous levels).

Head Start early education (\$3.4 bil)
 Legal assistance for poor people (\$278 mil)
 School-to-work opportunities (\$190 mil)
 Vocational and adult education (\$1.2 bil)
 Low income home/energy assistance (\$1 bil)
 National Endowment for the Arts (\$131 mil)
 Goal 2000 education improvement (\$489 mil)
 Corp. for Public Broadcasting (\$275 mil)
 Research solar & renewable energy (\$296 mil)
 Arms Control & Disarmament (\$46 mil)
 Summer youth employment & training (\$635 mil)
 Nat'l Endowment for the Humanities (\$129 mil)
 US contrib. international peacekeeping (\$440 mil)
 AmeriCorps grants (\$381 mil)
 Promotion of safe/drug-free schools & communities (\$354 mil)
 Social service programs for children & families (\$567 mil)
-Compiled by the Center for Defense Information, July, 1996

The US spends more on its military than it does on nearly all other programs combined.

U.S. 1997 Discretionary Spending \$Billions in Budget Authority



Graph Prepared by Martin & Kathryn Schultz,
 Senior Research Analysts, March 25, 1996
 Sources: Office of Management & Budget, CDI.

Defense policies must be evaluated and assessed in light of their real contribution to freedom, justice, and peace for the citizens of our own and other nations... When weapons or strategies make questionable contributions to security, peace, and justice and will also be very expensive, spending priorities should be redirected to more pressing social needs. *Economic Justice for All, 20.*

The US has the world's largest military budget. It is four times that of the second largest spender, Russia (\$63 billion). It is nine times that of China (\$29 billion). And it is nearly seventeen times as large as that of the combined spending of the six countries often identified by the Pentagon as its most likely adversaries: North Korea (\$6 billion), Iran (\$2 billion), Iraq (\$3 billion), Libya (\$1 billion), Syria (\$3 billion), Cuba (\$340 million).

Center for Defense Information, 1500 Mass. Ave, NW
Washington, DC 20005 (202)862-0700

When trying to understand the costs associated with maintaining such a large, modern military, it can be helpful to examine how program costs in the military budget compare to other non-military programs in the federal budget. The following figures represent budget authority for FY 1997.

| | |
|--|---------------|
| Solar and renewable energy research | \$363 million |
| Cost of one C-17 cargo aircraft | \$343 million |
| Immunization for children | \$957 million |
| Cost of one AEGIS destroyer | \$1 billion |
| HIV/AIDS treatment grants | \$807 million |
| Request for Seawolf sub program | \$920 million |
| Nunn-Lugar Program | \$328 million |
| Request for four F-15E aircraft | \$339 million |
| Arms Control & Disarmament Agency Budget | \$48 million |
| Cost of one Trident II missile | \$61 million |
| Community Policing | \$2 billion |
| Cost of one B-2 bomber | \$2.2 billion |

| | |
|--|---------------|
| Pell college student grants | \$6.4 billion |
| Cost of next aircraft carrier | \$6.3 billion |
| President's Medicaid savings over 7 years. | \$59 billion |
| Total cost of building 523 V-22 Osprey aircraft | \$53billion |
| President's middle-class tax cut (over 7 years) | \$107 billion |
| Cost of deploying national and theater missile defenses | \$111 billion |
| -compiled by Council for a Livable World, 110 Maryland Ave, NE, Suite 409 Washington, DC 20002 (202)543-4100 | |

The results of these extraordinary levels of military spending are in fact decreasing the security of US citizens. In an era of government downsizing, budget deficit reduction, and federal abandonment of social safety-net guarantees to the most vulnerable citizens, the military budget has completely escaped the budget-cutters axe.

Consider these facts:

- In a 1995 poll, 72% of Americans said that Congress should cut defense spending by 20% and spend the money to improve education, fight crime, and cut the deficit. (Program on International Policy Attitudes-University of Maryland)
- Prior to the enactment of the Welfare Reform Act, the combined costs of Food Stamps, Housing Assistance, Aid to Families with Dependent Children, and child nutrition programs had a combined cost of \$60 billion a year. Each year all American taxpayers paid an average of just \$15 for all social welfare programs. (Florida Impact)

- While the US commitment to military spending remains at nearly \$300 billion, the Welfare Reform legislation of 1996 is expected to:
 - increase child poverty nationwide by 12% and make more than one million additional children poor, a majority of them from working families.
 - Reduce the incomes of one-fifth of all families with children in the US by an average of \$1300/year.
 - Deny assistance to more than 300,000 children with disabilities. These children will lose cash aid, and some will also lose Medicaid coverage.
 - Cut food stamps to 14 million low income children and their families by \$27 billion over six years.
- Children's Defense Fund, 25 E. St., NW
Washington, DC 20001 (202)628-8787

In this same spirit, we urge negotiations to halt the testing, production and deployment of new nuclear weapons systems. Not only should steps be taken to end development and deployment, but the numbers of existing weapons must be reduced in a manner which lessens the danger of war. *The Challenge of Peace, 204*

The US will spend an estimated \$34 billion on its nuclear force in 1997. In addition, the US plans to invest nearly \$40 billion over the next six years in the development and testing infrastructure for its nuclear weapons complex. This includes \$4.5 billion on the National Ignition Facility to enable weapons designers to simulate nuclear weapons tests using supercomputers and giant lasers in the laboratory, violating the spirit of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. This renewed investment in nuclear weapons capabili-

ties supports US plans to rely on nuclear weapons as the cornerstone of US military policy indefinitely.

...The end of the Cold War still provides an opportunity to reduce substantially military spending...Diverting scarce resources from military to human development is not only a just and compassionate policy, but it is also a wise long-term investment in global and national security. *The Harvest of Justice is Sown in Peace, p. 14*

The trend in military spending is toward bigger military budgets in the coming years. The Budget Authority for military expenditures for FY '97-2002 are as follows:

| | |
|---|-----------------|
| FY 1997 | \$262.3 billion |
| FY 1998 | 265.3 billion |
| FY 1999 | 269.2 billion |
| FY 2000 | 275.0 billion |
| FY 2001 | 281.5 billion |
| FY 2002 | 289.1 billion |
| Five year total Budget Authority \$1.4 Trillion from FY 1998-2002 | |

Questions for Reflection

- 1) Reflect on the bishops' words contained in this brochure. What are the bishops calling us to do and be as people of faith?
- 2) Reflect on the relationship between military and social spending in the factual information contained in the brochure. What are the consequences of this type of spending?
- 3) What signs of tumult do you see arising in your community? In your state? Our country?