OMNI $COSTS$ OF WARS NEWSLETTER #5, December 31, 2012, Compiled by Dick Bennett for a Culture of Peace.  (Newsletter #1 January 14, 2011; #2 April 5, 2011; #3 June 30, 2011; #4 Dec. 6, 2011).

See on human costs of wars: Consequences of Wars, Civilians Killed,

My blog:  War Department/Peace Department
http://jamesrichardbennett.blogspot.com/

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Here is the link to all OMNI newsletters:  http://www.omnicenter.org/newsletter-archive/  See Newsletters on Consequences of US Wars, Pentagon

Occu'pie' the Military Budget! Flyers for Tax Day”

War Resisters League wrl@warresisters.org via uark.edu
to jbennet  April 6, 2012
Still Time to Order for Tax Day!
Where Your Income Tax Money Really Goes
Our 'Pie Chart' flyer for fiscal year 2013, 'Wall St=War St.', is available for sale or download
on our website. This year we look at the top military contractors and big corporations that are making a killing off of killing. Buy bulk color copies or download here. There's still time to order 'Pie Charts' for Tax Day (April 17). For rush orders email wrl@warresisters.org.

Hand out the 'Pie Chart' at your local Occupy, vigils and events before and on Tax Day. It's a great conversation starter. Most people in the US do not realize that approximately half of the income tax money pays for war. Check it out on our website. http://www.warresisters.org/node/1325

The 99% needs our tax money to work for us, not to enrich the war profiteers!

COSTS OF WAR CAMPAIGN

Brave New Foundation: Job Announcement: War Costs Campaign Director [Los Angeles], Greenwald

http://www.warcosts.com/job_opening_war_costs_campaign_director

From JustForeignPolicy May 14, 2012.

How will this spending help secure the Nation?

Dick,

Over the past three years you helped us create and distribute the Rethink Afghanistan series. The success of this project is outlined here: Rethink Afghanistan: Study of Effectiveness and Messaging Success. http://rethinkafghanistan.com/then-and-now.php

We need your support now for a new project to fight the pervasive, corroding effects of ongoing militarism and endless warfare. Our new campaign is called War Costs. We will highlight the Military-Industrial-Congressional Complex that wastes your tax dollars, encourages more violence and lines the pockets of a defense industry that has shamelessly profited from a decade of war all while asking for more money.

Please consider donating $25 to help us fight the profiteers and warmongers. https://warcosts-bravenew.nationbuilder.com/donation25

Your support will allow War Costs to mount a day-in-day-out assault on a Military-Industrial-Congressional Complex that insists we maintain 5,000 nuclear weapons that cost $54 billion a year total. http://www.ploughshares.org/sites/default/files/resources/What%20We%20Spend%20on%20Nuclear%20Weapons%20092811.pdf Our investigative films are currently in production. We plan to release the first of these in early next year; that film will examine how the government’s war on transparency and the whistleblowers that reveal waste and abuse in the system leads to a curbing of free press and First Amendment rights.

Donate $25 to help us produce more videos and push this content to the mainstream media. Your donations will also allow us to continue our investigations and to create more content holding the Pentagon accountable.

With your help and support, let’s show the profiteers and warmongers we have the power. As always, we cannot win this fight without you!
Thank you,
Robert Greenwald

“The Costs of War Project: Linda Bilmes and Andrew Bacevich,”
*Veterans for Peace* (Winter 2012).
The following reports are transcriptions of video talks by Professor Linda Bilmes and Professor Andrew Bacevich as part of the Eisenhower Research Group’s Costs of War Project based at Brown University’s Watson Institute for International Studies ([www.costsofwar.org](http://www.costsofwar.org)). The videos are available at [http://vimeo.com/27254292](http://vimeo.com/27254292) (Professor Bilmes) and [http://vimeo.com/27457922](http://vimeo.com/27457922) (Professor Bacevich; the transcriptions are reproduced here with the permission of Professor Bilmes and Professor Bacevich. Professor Bilmes’s full research paper is available at [www.costsofwar.org/article/caring-us-veterans](http://www.costsofwar.org/article/caring-us-veterans) The Editor.

When you look at the costs of the Iraq and Afghanistan conflicts, the numbers published by the government are about $1.3 trillion, but this is just the tip of the iceberg because this is just money that has already been spent. There are other costs yet to come, one of the most significant of which is for providing medical care for the young Americans who have been deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan. There have been 2.2 million Americans who have fought in these wars, 1.2 million have come home
and are now veterans. Of these returned veterans more than 600,000 have been treated in veteran hospitals and facilities for a wide variety of ailments, ranging from mental health disorders, musculoskeletal disorders, skin disorders, hearing loss, and other injuries that were either sustained or exacerbated during their service. These are costs that we are just beginning to pay right now, but they are costs that will be growing over the next 20, 30, 40 years, and they will add another $600 billion to $1 trillion in cost just for caring for our veterans over and above what we’ve already spent.

It is important to look at the full cost of war because if you use poor accounting, which is what the government uses, you don’t get a real sense of what things cost. For example, if I sell you a car for $20,000 and when you look at the fine print it costs $40,000, you might have second thoughts about buying that car. That’s essentially what we’ve done with the Iraq and Afghanistan conflicts. Congress has voted on one quotation of how much it would cost, but the real cost is much larger. Particularly in the case of the care for our veterans we haven’t set aside money to care for them so we have incurred a long-term obligation to provide medical care and disability benefits for our wounded veterans without setting any provision for how we’re going to pay for it. What we need is an accounting system that is based on accrual accounting
that makes transparent the true costs of war.

It’s only with a fully transparent accounting
system and budgetary systems that those in
power can really make decisions because as
of now they don’t actually have the data to
understand how much we’re actually paying
on any military activity. There are two
decisions that have to be made in regard
to every conflict: one is whether to get involved
in it; the second is how to pay for it
if you do. In the case of Iraq and Afghanistan,
we have for the first time in United
States history since the revolutionary war
borrowed virtually all of the money that
had been used to pay for these conflicts.
This has added at least $1.5 trillion to our
national debt.

At this point, I think the questions that
we should be asking are whether if not for
the decision to invade Iraq, would we still
be mired in Afghanistan?, would oil prices
be what they are?, would the national debt
be as high as it is?, and would the financial
crisis be as severe as it was? I think arguably
the answers to all four of these questions
is no. The Iraq war has been tragic in
many respects but from a purely economic
sense it has been tragic in that we have
spent money that we could have invested
in education, in our infrastructure, paying
off our debt, and other activities rather than
on activities that have very low benefit economically
speaking and which have added
a great deal to our national debt.
Linda J. Bilmes is the Daniel Patrick Moynihan Senior Lecturer in Public Policy at Harvard University’s Kennedy School. She is the author with Professor Joseph Stiglitz of the book *The Three Trillion Dollar War: The True Cost of the Iraq Conflict.*

There is an immense and urgent requirement to learn from the experience of the past decade, to learn why the global war on terror has been such a costly disappointment, to learn why the Iraq war produced results so radically different from what was expected, to learn why the Afghanistan war is now the longest war in our history. It is crucially important to tally up the costs of war to properly assess the wisdom or unwisdom of the policies that landed us in war in the first place. At a bare minimum we’ve already spent $1 trillion, and there are reasonable projections that we will end up spending $2 trillion, $3 trillion, perhaps as much as $6 trillion. This at a time when the American economy is not performing well and when the debt is going through the roof.

Not to be lost of course is the question of the human costs paid by non-Americans, not simply by our allies but the people of Iraq, the people of Afghanistan, and the people of Pakistan, of Yemen, and many other places across the Islamic world. We know that there have been something on the order of two to two-and-a-half million Iraqis who are living in exile; a large
number of other Iraqis who have been displaced from their homes. Were something like this to happen in the United States, we would view it as a catastrophe of historic magnitude. The population displaced by the global war on terror is, for example, far larger than the population displaced by Hurricane Katrina.

Wars create distortions, in our politics, in our economy. War concentrates power; war delivers profit to certain people and imposes sacrifices on others. I think those distortions have happened in the global war on terror launched after 9/11. To some degree, they have been hidden or concealed; they’ve been hidden in part by our unwillingness to actually pay for many of the costs, at least the economic costs of the war. The willingness to simply go ever deeper in debt, to shove off the economic costs onto future generations, that’s one of the things that actually blind us to the actual impact of the wars we’ve been conducting.

I would like to see the equivalent of the 9/11 Commission be undertaken and focus on what we might call the long war: The Commission to Study the Long War. Public hearings; testimony by officials, participants both soldiers and civilians, by people who lost loved ones on 9/11, by historians and journalists. There should be a comprehensive effort to understand what’s happened since the United States went to war against so-called terrorism. I think
The Costs of War Project could make an important contribution to the larger effort to divine the truth.

Andrew Bacevich is a graduate of West Point, a retired US Army Colonel, a Professor of History and International Relations at Boston University, and author most recently of *Washington Rules: America’s Path to Permanent War*.

**All War IS Local By S. Brian Willson**


“A nation that continues year after year to spend more money on military defense [sic] than on programs of social uplift is approaching spiritual death.”

– Martin Luther King, Jr., “A Time To Break Silence,” April 4, 1967, Riverside Church, New York City

**Introduction**

On a recent visit to my neighborhood library in SE Portland, Oregon, I was asked outside the entrance if I would sign a petition to place a public school bond measure on the fall ballot. Though I support full funding of public schools, I balked. Knowing that Portland libraries are also planning to place a taxing district on the same ballot, I felt fury building up inside of me at how obscene, lawless military spending is sucking our nation’s resources dry. I told the person asking for my signature that I would only sign such petition when and if the Portland School Board, Portland City Commissioners and Mayor, and all other City and County entities become part of an active anti-war movement to stop the looting of our Commons by the Military-Industrial-Banking-Congressional-Presidential Complex.

**DIRECT costs are FELT only by a small percentage of the public**

The US wars in Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Yemen, Somalia, etc., are, in reality, only viscerally experienced by a small percentage of the US American people. No direct taxes on the people have been assessed to fund the wars. They are funded instead by debt. And the absence of general conscription (a military draft) relieves the vast majority of the population from the emotional burden of worrying whether a family member will be forced into military service.
A *de facto* economic draft exists whereby those unable to find adequate employment in our economically depressed society are offered a subsidized job track in the military, and trained as combatants or placed in any number of supportive roles in imperial adventures around the globe.

But most members of US society have gone about their lives business as usual, experiencing little anxiety or hardship, indeed, hardly "feeling" the wars.

**INDIRECT costs severely affect the 99 percent**

However, even though the direct, experiential costs of US wars have been largely absent in popular discussion and politically unaccounted for, the resulting residual costs are enormous. The national resource base has been so severely drained by war costs that we are in domestic “austerity” budgeting. An audit of the Federal Reserve has revealed $16 trillion in secret loans to bail out US American and foreign banks and businesses during the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression. That is equivalent to our National Debt. That amounts to more than $50,000 for every man, woman and child, enough to revive a healthy main street. Meanwhile four million homeowners lost their homes to foreclosures due to massive collusion between Wall Street and banks in granting fraudulent mortgages. Every foreclosed homeowner could have been publicly refinanced instead.

As of September 11, 2012, the [National Priorities Project](https://www.nationalprioritiesproject.org/) (NPP) estimates the actual cost of US wars since September 2001 in Iraq and Afghanistan at nearly $1,372 Trillion dollars [also see: Cost of War.com](https://www.costofwar.com).

Other studies estimate total war costs will reach $4.4 Trillion ["Cost of war at least $3.7 trillion and counting," by Daniel Trotta, *Reuters*, Jun 29, 2012] or even $6 Trillion ["American Freefall" by Paul Craig Roberts, *CounterPunch*, July 09, 2012].

These are *non-human* costs. The *human* costs in Iraq and Afghanistan lives, not to mention public and private military forces and mercenaries from the US, is immense. The website [Unknown News](https://unknownnews.com) estimates total Iraqis killed (murdered) since the US invasion in 2003 at about 895,000, with another 1,646,000 injured (maimed). The comparable figures for Afghanistan are 17,400 killed (murdered) and 41,625 injured (maimed). US public and private military and mercenaries, plus “Coalition” troops and journalists killed in Iraq is slightly over 5,800, with nearly 45,000 injured. The comparable figures for Afghanistan are 2,230 killed, and 8,164 injured. Thus, **total war casualties are nearly 2,670,000** – over 920,000 killed; nearly 1,750,000 injured.

In the last ten years nearly 2.5 million US soldiers have been deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan. They come from every town, city and rural area in the country, but reports suggest a disproportionate number of the dead and wounded come from small town USA. Up to 50 percent of those deployed to Afghanistan and Iraq have been diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), traumatic brain injury (TBI), or have been victims of military sexual trauma (MST). Treatment costs for returning veterans are immense. Over one million have applied for compensation for injuries.

Suicide among soldiers and veterans is staggering. In 2012 alone, as of early June, 154 active duty soldiers committed suicide, more than were killed in combat during that same period. ["Suicides Outpacing War..."](https://www.thedailybeast.com)
Deaths for Troops,“NYT, June 8, 2012]. The suicide rate is 38 per 100,000 Iraq and Afghanistan veterans, compared to 11.5 for the general public. Eighteen veterans of all wars commit suicide on average every day [“18 veterans commit suicide each day,” Rick Maze, Army Times, Thursday, April 22, 2010].

War IS a local issue

War drains domestic financial and mental capacity to address critical needs for health care, education, social security, etc., in every community. The outrageous amount of money being siphoned into the military industrial complex, with wars feeding obscene profits to its architects, seriously threatens assurance of resources for a healthy society. US citizens should be assured of a social safety net for all. Instead, US Americans are guaranteed a debt in perpetuity. Meanwhile, the rich get richer; the poor get poorer.

Despite the lack of national discourse on military spending, war is always on our minds. It is promoted in holiday festivities such as Memorial Day, Armistice Day (now called Veteran’s Day), Independence Day and Patriots Day. There are fund drives for soldiers, homecomings, recruitment ads, military band concerts, war video games in every town and city, army-sponsored race cars, war movies and television shows, and war toys. Numerous colleges and universities receive millions in funding from the Department of War (euphemistically called “Defense”) for academic research.

And money for the military and wars totally dominates the entire national budget which in turn deleteriously impacts every political jurisdiction and local economy in the country. Ironically, our extravagant military budget is rarely questioned but cuts for domestic programs are constantly discussed.

The argument that military spending creates jobs is a red herring. A report conducted by the Political Economy Research Institute reveals that every billion dollars of government spending on the military creates 12,000 jobs. But a choice to create tax cuts for the poor would stimulate personal consumption and create 15,000 jobs. The same billion dollars would create 18,000 jobs in assuring health care, 25,000 jobs in education, 27,700 in mass transit.

In effect, grotesque war spending means less money for:

1. elementary & secondary education;
2. grants in aid to states and localities;
3. home energy assistance for low Income households;
4. HIV/AIDS;
5. community block grants;
6. special education and assistance for the disadvantaged;
7. school improvement;
8. loss of funds for vocational and adult education;
9. supplemental nutrition WIC program;
10. children and family Services;
11. Head Start;
12. rental assistance vouchers;
13. children served by childcare assistance;
14. etc.

The National Priorities Project estimates of actual cost of recent US wars at over $1,372 Trillion dollars can be broken down for each community.

For Portland, Oregon (http://costofwar.com/state/OR/city/portland/) the cost is nearly $1,794,000,000 (Billion). The 2012 US Census estimates Portland’s population at 600,000. Thus the cost of the wars for each man, woman, and child in Portland is about $3,000, with costs continuing to escalate. If the estimated, projected higher national costs reach $4.4 Trillion, or $6 Trillion are calculated, costs to Portland could reach $5,700,000,000 ($9,500 for each Portlander), or perhaps nearly $7,800,000,000 ($13,000 for each Portlander).

Fifty million US Americans now live in poverty with one on every seven requiring food stamps to survive each month. Over 125,000 of Portlanders, or over 20% of the city’s population, are on food stamps. Over 15,000 people in Portland experience homelessness during the year.

The National Debt now stands at nearly $16 Trillion, or $50,000 for every man, woman and child. Each of us is in perpetual debt.

And the disparity between Haves and Have-Nots is felt globally as Occupy has protested austerity measures being felt by much of the world. A study by the Green Party of England discloses that the same global capitalist economic policies that are polluting the planet while depleting its finite resources, have allowed a mere 400 billionaires to acquire assets equal to the combined wealth of 45% of the world’s population.

**Immoral and illegal wars created by a corrupt political economy**

In addition to direct and indirect costs, these US-led wars are illegal on their face. They make a mockery of our moral and legal authority as a nation, and reveal that in fact we are a nation of (lawless) men, not of law. Over 2,670,000 human beings have been killed or maimed as the consequences of these recent criminal wars in violation of international law, staining further our national character.

The illegality and immorality of these wars, conducted with no accountability or plausible justification, breed a corruption at the top political levels of society that permeates into every aspect of society. Our corrupt economic institutions are profiting obscenely from policies of mass murder.

No war was declared as required by the US Constitution. The United Nations (UN) Charter to which the US is a signatory, allows military action in only two instances: (1) if authorized by the UN Security Council, or (2) if undertaken in self-defense against an existing or imminent armed attack. Neither of these conditions were met or sought. Under Article VI, Clause 2, of the US Constitution, the provisions of the UN Charter are
incorporated into the Supreme Law of the Land of the United States, and therefore the US violated both the UN Charter, and its own Constitution.

UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan in 2004 publicly declared that the US invasion of Iraq was and remains an illegal act contravening the UN Charter. [“Iraq war illegal, says Annan,” BBC, Thursday, 16 September, 2004]. Richard Perle in 2003, when a senior advisor to the Department of Defense Policy Board, admitted that the Iraq war was illegal because the U.S. had broken international law, behavior not consistent with the rules of the UN [“War critics astonished as US hawk admits invasion was illegal,” Oliver Burkeman and Julian Borger, The Guardian, November 20, 2003].

In fact they are Nuremberg-type crimes, meaning they are the worst of the worst in terms of national and political criminality.

I know a bit about this criminal pattern. In 1969 I was commander of a US Air Force combat security unit in Viet Nam where I witnessed a series of atrocities wiping out entire inhabited and undefended fishing villages. These were international crimes committed by both US and South Vietnamese forces under US command. That war cost US taxpayers nearly $740 Billion in today’s dollars [http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/natsec/RS22926.pdf] as it diabolically claimed more than 5 Million lives, 99 percent of whom were innocent Southeast Asia peasants.

Additionally, torture and inhumane treatments have been well documented in US-run prisons in Iraq (Abu Ghraib), Afghanistan (Bagram) and Guantanamo (located in Cuba against the wishes of that country). This behavior constitutes grave breaches of the Geneva Conventions; the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ); the Nuremberg Principles; and the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.

The seven leaked confidential British Downing Street Memos, dated from March to July 2002, disclose a US and British drive to war a full year before the March 2003 invasion. “War was now seen as inevitable,” while “intelligence and facts were being fixed around the policy” seeking “regime change” without any “basis under international law.” The memos also declared: “There is no recent evidence of Iraq complicity with international terrorism...There is no credible evidence to link Iraq with Usama Bin Laden.” Regarding Iraq’s possession of WMD, the “intelligence is poor.” [“The Downing Street Reader: A cheat sheet on the memos behind the scandal,” The Rolling Stone Blog, June 22, 2005].

The US has been in a virtual permanent war economy since World War II. Increasingly the political economy requires permanent enemies, and functions to assure their creation. Thus, the entire US American system has a vested interest in a permanent state of tension.

The citizens of the US, in their participation through their Congress, President, and their huge military industrial complex, spend more money on their military than any other nation – 45% of the entire world’s expenditures, more than the next 14 nations combined.
The dramatically increasing disparity between the Haves and the Have Nots in the US has become more grotesque since September 2001. As choices to commit outrageous monies for military and war spending have skyrocketed, choices to fund a healthy and just domestic society have disappeared:

1. The disparity between the Haves and Have-Nots, though historically high in the US with 1% owning 40-50% of the wealth, has once again become dramatic trending toward neofeudalism [G. William Domhoff, “Wealth, Income, and Power,” Who Rules America (accessed August 4, 2012)].

2. Four hundred US Americans now have more wealth than 155 million U.S. citizens combined. [David DeGraw, “The Richest 1% Have Captured America’s Wealth: What’s It Going to Take to Get It Back?” Alternet, February 17, 2010]

3. A mere six of the Walmart heirs themselves have wealth equal to that of the entire bottom 30%. [Joseph Stiglitz, “The 1 Percent’s Problem,” Vanity Fair, May 31, 2012: “Why won’t America’s 1 percent—such as the six Walmart heirs, whose wealth equals that of the entire bottom 30 percent—be a bit more . . . selfish?” Adapted from The Price of Inequality, by Joseph Stiglitz, to be published in June by W.W. Norton & Company, Inc. (U.S.), and in July by Allen Lane (U.K.).]


5. The top 10% possess fully half of all income earned in the US, as much as the bottom 90% combined. [“Why Obama’s Economic Plan Will Not Work—And a Better Plan,” by Robert Freeman, January 17, 2010]

6. Most astonishing, the top .1% (one-tenth of 1%, or 310,000 persons), have more combined pre-tax income than the poorest 120 million people. [G. William Domhoff, “Wealth, Income, and Power,” Who Rules America (accessed August 4, 2012)].

The impact of inequality on individuals and society is well established. Social epidemiologist Richard Wilkinson concludes that, “the quality of social relations in societies is related to the scale of income inequality –how big the gap is between rich and poor. More unequal societies tend to have higher rates of violent crime and homicide, and that people living in them feel more hostility, are less likely to be involved in community life, and are much less likely to trust each other; in short they have lower levels of social capital... Inequality is deeply corrosive...Greater inequality is perhaps the most significant obstacle to the development of an environmentally sustainable level of economic activity.” [Richard Wilkinson (a social
The Nation is Now Paying the Price; Localities Need to Become Part of Anti-War Movement

The US has doubled its national debt during these wars, making every US American alive today indebted in perpetuity. The domestic budget is being severely cut, requiring draconian cutbacks in education, libraries, medical care such as it is, all social safety net programs, fire and police departments, all city services, etc. Portland’s Fiscal Year 2012-13 budget is nearly $2.85 billion, 3.8% less than the previous year. “Austerity” budgets are being imposed all over the US (and the world) largely due to siphoning of national wealth into wars and the military industrial complex.

This is why every political leader, and all citizens in every jurisdiction – towns, cities, counties and states, and every functional entity within cities, counties and states such as schools and libraries, need to become ardent and loud opponents of the national war and military policy that is enriching the military industrial complex at everyone’s expense. Local communities desperately seek new funds through bond issues and new taxes as programs are being cut. The local people are being asked to pay for the war boondoggles of the rich – private profit, public decay.

Unless everyone gets behind a national popular movement to end the wars, and to severely restrict the Pentagon budget, we as a nation will simply keep eroding into what we call a “Third World” country where a very tiny minority control the lives of the vast majority. A neofeudalism, if you will. Fewer and fewer local residents will be able to afford increased property taxes imposed by bond issues or other local tax increases to keep local jurisdictions afloat as the war economy sucks the nation dry.

War is a local issue! If and when people understand this we the people possess a political opportunity to reclaim our people’s republic. Short of that, we collapse while on our knees with hardly a whisper.

This entry was written by brian, posted on at 1:23 am, filed under Brian’s Blog, Challenging Traditional Patriotism, Pax Americana, The Most Dangerous of Rogue Nations: The United States. Bookmark the permalink. Follow any comments here with the RSS feed for this post. Post a comment or leave a trackback: Trackback URL.

2 Comments

1. Bea

Thank you for this excellent article.
I think it is very relevant to share this link here:

http://act.rootsaction.org/p/dia/action/public/?action_KEY=6573#

2.  John Keister

Posted November 4, 2012 at 7:26 am | Permalink

This is one of the most impressive reads I have ever come across; your knowledge and understanding of the facts is exceeded only by your courage. I am a christian lay minister and who also knows the complicit role that religion has played in the problem and continues to do so. The next step has to be for men and women like yourself to form the intentional communities made up of people who know the truth and are of the same mind. That call is the only thing I’ve found missing on this site. Please let me know if I have missed it; because I would love to participate.

The dollar cost of war is going up.

AP IMPACT: Almost half of new vets seek disability - Yahoo! News


America's newest veterans are filing for disability benefits at a historic rate, claiming to be the most medically and mentally troubled generation of former troops the nation has ever seen.


About Peace and Collaborative Development Network
A professional networking site for individuals & organizations worldwide involved in development, conflict resolution and related fields.

A fight we can't afford to lose
Dear James,

First, let me thank you for your actions and financial support over the past year. With your help, the peace movement succeeded at last in bringing our troops home from Iraq, and opposition to the terrible war in Afghanistan is growing stronger. And, with your support, Peace Action launched Move the Money, our campaign to build common cause with labor and other economic justice groups to reorder federal spending priorities, putting our tax dollars to work for jobs, not war.

Together, we’ve made sure our demands to end runaway military spending can no longer be brushed aside by Tea Party compliant Hawks simply uttering the words ‘threat to national security.’ While not nearly sufficient, Congress did cut military spending this year. We must now set our sights on making even more substantial progress in the year ahead.

I hope you will join me in achieving our goals for 2012 with a year end gift to Peace Action or a tax-deductible gift to Peace Action Education Fund.

The government we elect next November will likely set the economic and political agenda for decades to come. Make no mistake, sooner or later they will make a decision on how to deal with the economy. Will they decide to end the war in Afghanistan, cut runaway military spending, and make sure the super-rich pay their fair share, or will they cut Social Security and Medicare and balance the budget on the backs of working people? The gridlock and inaction will not last forever.

Our opponents are relentless and well funded. They’ve been trying for decades to unravel the social safety net and roll back the regulations that protect the air we breathe, the water we drink and the food we eat. This challenge, as daunting as it is, must be met with sufficient grassroots pressure to defeat this agenda and put our country on a path to a peaceful and just future.

**Peace Action’s campaign to Move the Money** will frame our issues on our terms, ensuring our elected representatives and candidates for office focus on the [human and economic costs of the war and the waste, fraud and abuse in the Pentagon budget](https://salsa.democracyinaction.org/o/161/p/salsa/donation/common/public/?donate_page_KEY=8137). Our Peace Voter activists are already at work in key states like New Hampshire and North Carolina, bird-dogging candidates and posing challenging questions about the corrupting influence of organized money in politics, an endless war and the $662 billion Pentagon budget Congress just approved.

This is a fight we cannot afford to lose.

You can support Peace Action’s work for SANE economic policies using our secure online giving portal.

Thank you again for your attention and work on these important issues and for your kind consideration of this request.

Humbly for Peace,

Kevin Martin

Executive Director

Peace Action

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Dick Bennett
My blog:
War Department/Peace Department
http://jamesrichardbennett.blogspot.com/
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