
Welcome To

NC PEACE ACTION NEWS



Find out...What we've been up to and what our interns think about military spending and police in schools...

**Special Features
from our Interns**

Shreya Kumar
"Military Spending
and Refugee Crisis"
Zhani Swailes
"Why more Police in
Schools is NOT the
Answer"

01

Actions and Events

ANNUAL BEYOND VIETNAM READING ON APRIL 4 TH

As we did hear Martin Luther King's diagnosis and cure that is painfully relevant today: "I am convinced that if we are to get on the right side of the world revolution, we as a nation must undergo a radical revolution of values.... we must rapidly begin the shift from a thing-oriented society to a person-oriented society.

When machines and computers, profit motives and property rights, are considered more important than people, the giant triplets of racism, extreme materialism, and militarism are incapable of being conquered." Watch and hear this year's reading here.

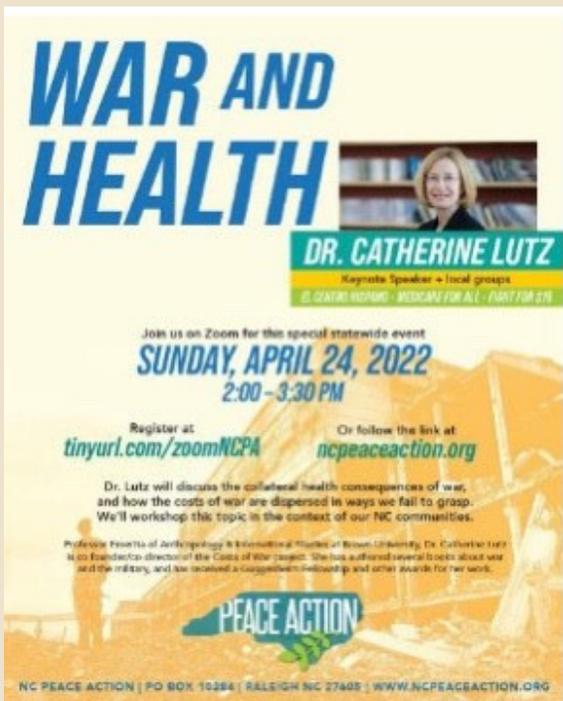




Statewide Zoom Gathering April 24th on War and Health



02



Ray McGovern's Incisive Briefing on Ukraine is highly recommended

LINK

Please watch or rewatch this webinar - Ukraine: It is Not What They're Telling You for an insider's view. We continue to watch huge funds allocated for weapons that prolong this war and heightened the threat of the use of nuclear weapons.

LINK

featured Catherine Lutz and the Costs of War Project, El Centro Hispano and NC Medicare for All. All were enlightening as we heard what is needed to advance their work. Watch the meeting here. LINK Catherine Lutz showed how the obvious health costs of war over a longer time frame come to include: toxic masculinity and abuse, toxic chemicals, PTSD, lost health opportunity from war spending and wars that continue inequality and colonialism.

Earth Day 8 Action in Asheville

It was a beautiful, sunny Earth Day Celebration and Action. We pulled off a three-part demonstration for the protection of the earth and its inhabitants and against the US military-industrial complex. We rallied, we paraded, and we performed a direct action, calling for an economy based on war to one based on meeting needs of our communities and our imperiled planet.

The rally was held in Bent Creek River Park, on the banks of the French Broad River in sight of the new bridge being built for the 1.2 million square foot Pratt and Whitney plant [a subsidiary of Raytheon] Across the river from the park is Old River Road, a dirt road being used by many trucks coming and going from the Pratt & Whitney construction site every day. On this morning, it was busy.



Earth day continued...



Over 50 people gathered around the theme: Windmills Not War Machines. Speakers describe the dangers of war corporations like Pratt & Whitney and help us imagine a better economic development plan for Asheville area, one that did not add to the climate emergency with more fossil fuel intensive jet engines... even if they are for commercial use and supposedly more efficient.

Speakers included Matthew Hoh, Iraq war veteran and a Green Party candidate for the US Senate, Bill Branyon, a historian and candidate for the Buncombe County Commission, and Adam Hall and Eliana Franklin, local leaders of the Sunrise Movement, Claire Clarke of the Party for Socialism and Liberation, Sara Wilcox, pastor of the Land of the Sky UCC, and Steve Norris, local climate activist. Local musician Saro Lynch lead us in song. The rally was followed by a festive Earth Day parade with signs, banners, and music provided by the Brass Your Heart Band.

GAP - What was the direct action? Our next court hearing will be Aug 31, for an arraignment



Some learn young... Hearing from our Interns.



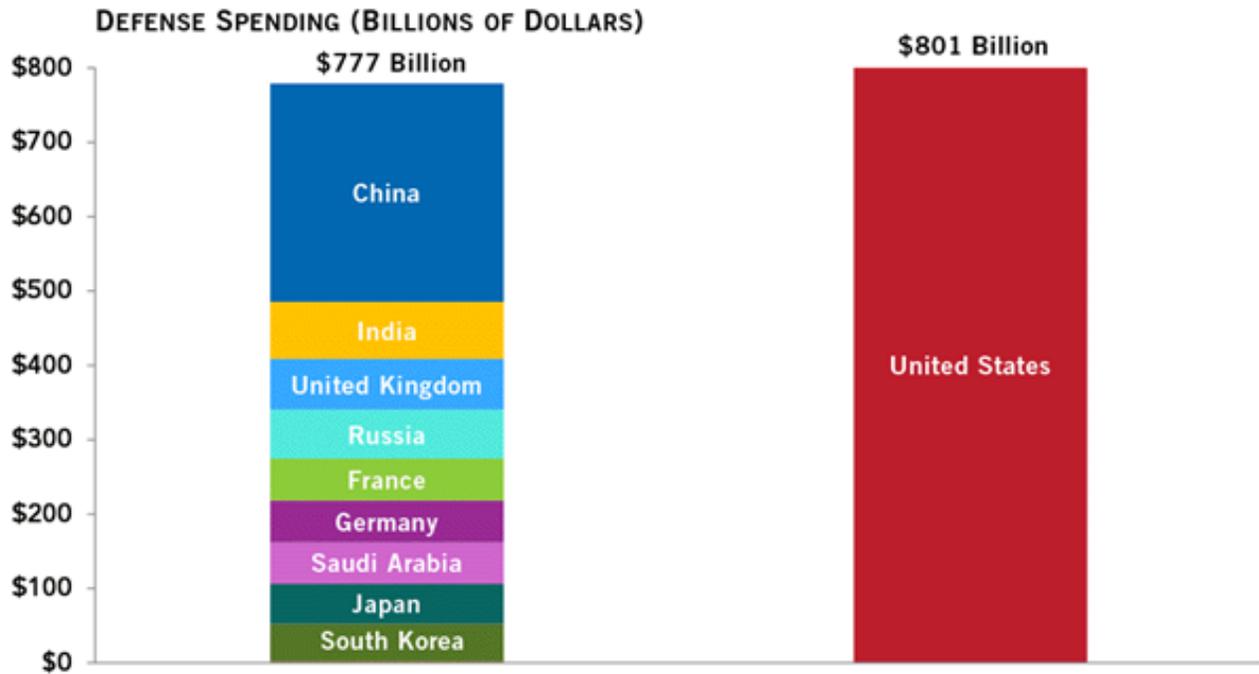
Military Spending and the Refugee Crisis by Shreya Kumar

The President's fiscal year 2023 defense budget amounts to \$813.3 billion for national defense, \$773 billion of which is for the Department of Defense (DoD). \$56.5 billion is allocated for air power platforms and systems, \$40.8 billion for sea power, \$12.6 billion to modernize Army and Marine Corps fighting vehicles, and \$130.1 billion for research and development—an all time high. As the years 2020 and onward have shown, a large military budget does little to protect a nation from a pandemic. A good portion of the \$773 billion would be used by the DoD to test weapons with unproven technology, overpaying defense contractors, and the creation of a currently unnecessary faction such as Space Force. nuclear weapons testing and missile launches. It is no secret that the U.S military budget is enormous relative to other countries, and the war Russia has waged on Ukraine does nothing to mitigate such expenditure.

Continued...



The United States spends more on defense than the next 9 countries combined



SOURCE: Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, SIPRI Military Expenditure Database, April 2022.

NOTES: Figures are in U.S. dollars converted from local currencies using market exchange rates. Data for the United States are for fiscal year 2021, which ran from October 1, 2020 through September 30, 2021. Data for the other countries are for calendar year 2021. The source for this chart uses a definition of defense spending that is more broad than budget function 050 and defense discretionary spending.

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The increased spending that contributed towards endless wars could instead be reallocated to the healthcare system, allowing it to better deal with the current pandemic and future ones. It could be used to provide more free covid rapid tests, provide healthcare workers with the tools and support they need, pay for hospital stays, and more. The money hurts rather than reduces our climate catastrophe -- widely agreed as an imminent threat to mankind, yet only a relatively small portion of the proposed budget, \$3 billion, is assigned to address the effects of climate change.

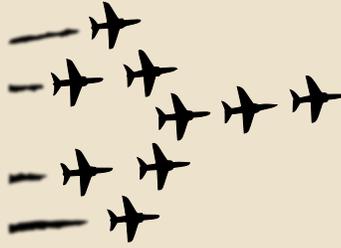
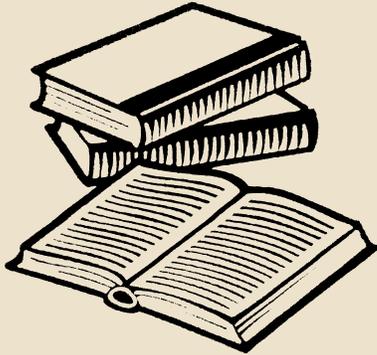
The climate phenomena has already displaced countless people at home and abroad due to droughts, lack of clean water, extreme temperatures, and food shortage. In fact, a study found that carbon emission in developed Mediterranean countries is not only affected by domestic military expenditure but also foreign military expenditure in the same region.

Refugees Created by War and Military Spending A refugee crisis is one of the most measurable ways to determine the human cost of war. The greatest refugee crisis of the 21st century is the result of the war in Syria along with the U.S led war in Iraq.

Refugees often suffer from mental health issues such as anxiety, depression, and PTSD, all of which are due to their exposure to the horrors of war and violence. Along with such mental disorders, refugees also face issues such as economic difficulties, poor resources to improve their mental health, lack of social support from the governments, etc. Accessing legal work permits and social services in host countries also remains a hurdle for refugees, along with the threat of having to return to their home countries. With a growing number of refugees, anti-immigrant sentiments also tend to rise in the host countries or countries of resettlement. Refugees are also vulnerable to crime such as assault, domestic violence, etc.

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Some academics insist that the best way to deal with the refugee crisis is to stabilize their home countries and incentivize them to return to those countries. The U.S withdrawal from Afghanistan and the Taliban's subsequent takeover has served as a glaring point as to how difficult stabilizing a country can be and how expensive it might be to undo the damage of our military spending and war.



Military Presence in neighborhoods and schools with the lack of police training may be more harm than good.

By: Zhani Swalles

On May 24th, 2022, the deadliest mass shooting in an elementary school occurred in Uvalde, Texas, leaving nineteen children and two adults killed. After multiple phone calls to 9-1-1, it took police over an hour to arrive and breach the elementary school. When police finally arrived, Border Patrol was also in attendance, causing fright to the predominantly Latinx and immigrant community of Uvalde. This tragedy has led many citizens to push for more military and police presence in our schools and neighborhoods. Our right to bear arms has led to easy access for numerous individuals to obtain guns by 18. The solution is not to take away guns but enforce heavier gun restrictions in every state to make owning a gun a privilege. Mentally ill citizens with racial bias should not have access to firearms, which has repeatedly led to massacres across the country. The United States has more school shootings than any other country. Some would agree with allowing our teachers to bear arms during the school day. This solution sounds ideal, but the reality for black and brown students could be more harmful than good.

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According to an article from the University of Brown, "Teacher treatment of students factors into racial gap in-school suspensions," a 2018 U.S. Government Accountability Office report shows that black K-12 students are 3.2 times more likely than white students to be suspended or expelled from school (Owens, Jayanti). In this instance, children from two different racial groups can be misbehaving in the same way, but the Black child would face a more significant punishment than the white child. In many ways, our classrooms experience racial biases creating an unsafe environment. Increasing military and police in our classrooms and neighborhoods in populated areas for minorities would create a power struggle. A National Violent Death Reporting System report found that "Black people are killed at a rate higher than their proportion to the national population (2019)." According to CATO Institute, "Two-thirds of black and half of Hispanic respondents do not believe that police officers treat racial and ethnic minorities equally (2019)."



The police and military presence in neighborhoods and schools allow for an alarmingly high rate of a school-to-prison pipeline. A finding by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights shows that more than 70% of students who are arrested or handed over to law enforcement officials from school are youth of color (2013). Law enforcement officers are not trained in fields such as education, psychology, and mental health, making officers ill-equipped to respond to a child needing help. The increase of law enforcement in schools and neighborhoods can cause a threatening environment based on the lack of social awareness and education. According to CBS News, 69% of officers have a racial bias resulting in the people who are supposed to protect us end up hurting us instead.

The school-to-prison pipeline analogy should be mandatory courses for teachers and law enforcement. Police officers' training should be more than three months. They must go to a college/university to major in criminal justice with courses in psychology, sociology, mental health, education, and history. Schools need to enforce more mental health courses and psychologists and sociologists working in schools to ensure our students are mentally stable. To protect and serve should be a privilege, not a right.

Embed references here REFERENCES

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