

The War Economy: Militarism and the Proliferation of Gun Violence

Quotes about the Military & Poverty

“A nation that continues year after year to spend more money of military defense than on programs of social uplift is approaching spiritual death.” **Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., 1967**

“Fighting militarism means not just stopping one war, but taking on the underlying social structures of racism, poverty, and policies that enabled the Iraq and Afghanistan wars to continue, while politicians and defense contractors get rich, [and to see] the militarism in our police. The militarism of our public lands. The militarism of the borders. The militarism in our schools. And virtually all of our institutions.” **Rev. Shawna Foster, 2017**



War Economy and Militarism

Did you know that currently 53 cents of every federal discretionary dollar goes to military spending and only 15 cents is spent on anti-poverty programs?

Military Spending Facts

- Military spending in 2017 was \$668 billion and out of federal discretionary spending only \$190 billion was for anti-poverty programs.
- By 2017, military spending was more than three times the investment in people's lives at home—\$668 billion for the military versus \$190 billion for education, jobs, housing and other basic human needs. (All figures are adjusted for inflation.)
- Under the budget President Trump proposed in February 2018, almost two-thirds—65¢ of every discretionary dollar—would go to the military, and just 12¢ would go to antipoverty programs by 2023.

- The latest research finds that \$1 billion in military spending creates approximately 11,200 jobs—but the same amount of money would create 26,700 jobs if invested in education, 16,800 jobs in clean energy, or 17,200 in health care.

Sexual Assault Facts

- According to Stars and Stripes, in 2011 there were 333 reports of sexual assault by U.S. Marines on Marine bases. The highest number was at the huge Camp Lejeune base in Florida and the second highest, with 67 assaults, was Okinawa.

Environment Facts

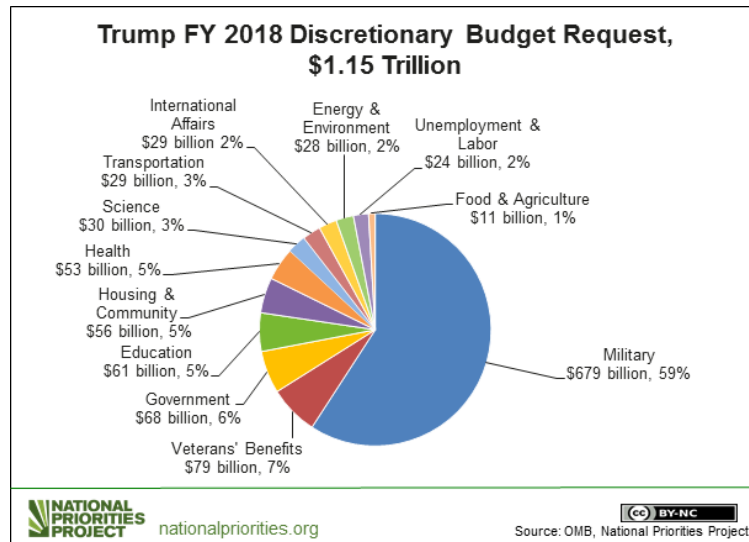
- The military also uses huge amounts of energy to air-condition, heat, and power its bases' tens of thousands of buildings and structures.
- The military's thirst for petroleum is so great that on a worldwide basis, the U.S. armed services consume more oil every day than the entire country of Sweden.

The Effects of War and Militarism

Despite broad spending on the military, war negatively effects all that are involved.

- In 2012, a disturbing trend emerged where suicide was claiming more military deaths than military action.
- By September 2017, the VA was still reporting an average of 20 veterans dying by suicide each day.
- The streams of desperate people seeking refuge across the sea or around the world have become a flood. In the United States more than anywhere else, those people have been met with racist attack, xenophobic rejection, and three Muslim bans.

Source: "The Souls of Poor



The problem goes beyond the false claims that the hundreds of billions of dollars in the U.S. military budget are somehow all necessary to protect our troops. The Pentagon, the White House, Congressional armed services committees, and military contractors all rely on public support for the troops to justify military spending that actually has nothing to do with protecting or supporting soldiers. In fact, they do a kind of "bait and switch" to justify spending on nuclear weapons, high-tech advanced weapons systems, and new warplanes that sometimes even the Pentagon itself does not want. In the meantime, there are cost overruns, and hundreds of billions every year go straight from Pentagon procurement offices to giant corporations. None of that goes to the troops.

Poverty and the Military

The truth is that instead of waging a War on Poverty, we have been waging a War on the Poor, at home and abroad, for the financial benefit of a few. It is morally indefensible to profit from perpetual war.

- As reported in a 2008 study on race, class, immigration status, and military service, "an important predictor to military service in the general population is family income. Those with lower family income are more likely to join the military than those with higher family income...the all-volunteer force continues to see overrepresentation of the working and middle classes, with fewer incentives for upper class participation."
- The poorest 30 percent of U.S. communities suffered 36 percent of the casualties in the Vietnam War and 38 percent in the Iraq War. The wealthiest 30 percent of U.S. communities had 26 percent of casualties in the Vietnam War and only 23 percent in the Iraq War.

Source: Poor People's Campaign and "The Souls of Poor Folk" report

Gun Violence

From 1968 to 2016, there were about 1.6 million gun deaths in the United States. U.S. homicide rates were 7.0 times higher than in other high-income countries, driven by a gun homicide rate that was 25.2 times higher.

The Facts:

- With 265 million guns, Americans own far more guns per capita than the residents of any other country.
- From 1968 to 2016, there were about 1.6 million gun deaths in the United States
- Of the 38,658 gun deaths in the United States in 2016 alone, almost 40 percent were homicides. Guns killed nearly 2,400 children 18 or under that year.

Source: "The Souls of Poor Folk" report

Our Demands

The entire list of demands for the Poor People's Campaign can be found on their website.

- We demand an end to military aggression and war-mongering.
- We demand a stop to the privatization of the military budget and a reallocation of resources from the military budget to education, health care, jobs and green infrastructure needs, and strengthening a VA system that remains public.
- We demand a ban on the proliferation of guns in our communities, including semi-automatic weapons.
- We demand the demilitarization of our communities on the border and the interior. This includes ending federal programs that send military equipment into local and state communities and bringing down the wall at the U.S.-Mexico border.
- We demand an immigration system that, instead of criminalizing people for trying to raise their families, keeps families together and allows us all to build thriving communities in the country we call home.

Overview of 40 Days of Moral Action Campaign

By engaging in highly publicized, non-violent moral fusion direct action, over a 6-week period in at least 30 states and the District of Columbia between May 13 and June 23, the Campaign will force serious nation examination of the enmeshed evils of systemic racism, systemic poverty, ecological devastation and the war economy during a key election year while strengthening connection informed and committed grassroots leadership in every state, increasing their power to continue this fight long after June 2018. During these 40 days of Moral Action, the Campaign will push forward a concrete moral agenda, and draw on art, music, popular education and religious traditions to challenge the nation's distorted moral narrative.

Source: Poor People's Campaign



Sources

- Poor People's Campaign
- "The Souls of Poor Folk" report
- National Priorities Project

40 Days Campaign Information

- **Week One (May 13-19):** Somebody's Hurting Our People: Child Poverty, Women, and People with Disabilities
- **Week Two (May 20-26):** Linking Systemic Racism and Poverty: Voting Rights and Immigration
- **Week Three (May 27-June 2):** The War Economy, Veterans, Proliferation of Gun Violence, Education and Our National Priorities
- **Week Four (June 3-9):** Ecological Devastation and Health
- **Week Five (June 10-16):** Everybody's Got the Right to Live: Jobs, Income and Housing
- **Week Six (June 17-22):** A New and Unsettling Force
- **June 23rd:** Mass rally in Washington D.C. and Global Day of Solidarity

Each Monday (we will gather on Tuesday, May 29th, the week of Memorial Day), people will gather at Trinity Episcopal Church in Columbus, Ohio to participate in training. We will then move to the Statehouse for a rally.

- 11:00 AM-12:00 PM: Pre-rally training and coordination meeting for Direct Action Participants, Peace Team and Marshalls at Trinity Episcopal Church
- 2:00 PM- 3:00 PM: Poor People's Campaign Action: Somebody's Hurting Our People at the Ohio Statehouse

Social Media

National:

- **Poor People's Campaign:**
 - Website: <https://www.poorpeoplescampaign.org/>
 - Email: info@poorpeoplescampaign.org
 - Press Request: press@poorpeoplescampaign.org
 - Twitter: @UniteThe Poor
 - Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/aneppc/>

Ohio

- **Ohio Poor People's Campaign**
 - Twitter: @OhioPPC
 - Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/OhioPPC/>

Cleveland

- **IRTF Cleveland**
 - Website: <https://www.irtfcleveland.org/>
 - Email: IRTF@irtfcleveland.org
 - Twitter: @IRTFcleveland
 - Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/IRTF1981/>
 - Instagram: @IRTFcleveland
 - Snapchat: @IRTFcleveland

