

An aerial photograph of a massive candlelight vigil at night. The scene is a large, open city square with a grid pattern on the pavement. A dense crowd of people is gathered, each holding a lit candle, creating a sea of warm, glowing light. The perspective is from a high angle, looking down on the square. In the background, some city buildings and streetlights are visible under the dark sky.

Waging Peace

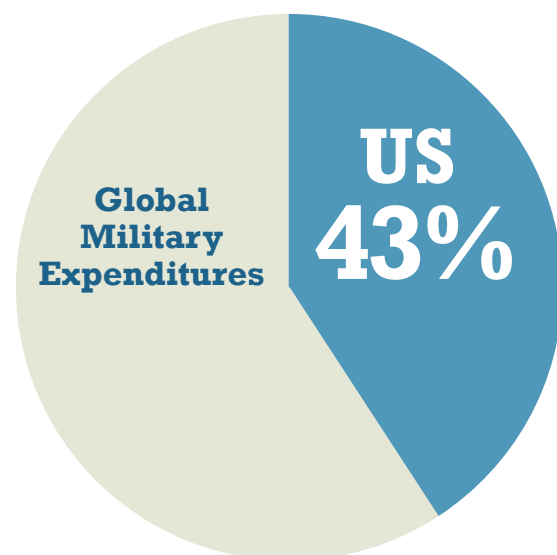
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A look at the numbers...

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The US accounts for **43% of total global military expenditures** annually, which is more than 7 times what China spends, the next biggest spender.



50%

Percentage less Britain and France spend per capita than the US on their military budgets, while still maintaining robust and able military forces with the most modern equipment.

\$1 trillion

Amount that could be saved over 10 years by implementing the Sustainable Defense Task Force's recommended spending cuts.

The US maintains over 800 military bases and outposts around the world, with a total price tag of **\$102 billion annually**.



Worldwide, the US has:

800 military bases and outposts

Costing over:

\$102 billion annually

392

Number of US bases and outposts located in Japan and Germany, countries with their own modern militaries.

200–300

Number of military bases that Donald Rumsfeld acknowledged that could easily be closed, saving at least \$12 billion annually.

The **unemployment rate for veterans aged 18 to 24 is 21.1%**, compared to 16.6% for that age group as a whole.

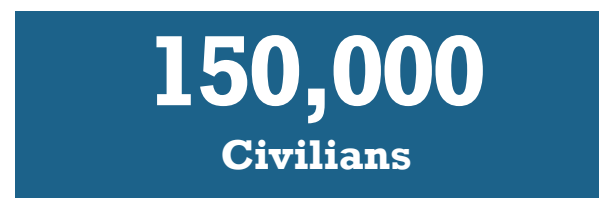


The federal government is starting to help... **25%** Percentage of new hires in 2010 that were veterans. 8% of new hires were disabled veterans.

Between 2001 and 2010, there were more than **7,000 US military fatalities** and an estimated **150,000 civilians were killed** in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Iraq and Afghanistan Fatalities

Between 2001 and 2010



76 years

Length of time that the concept of a federal Department of Peace has been considered, with more than 90 pieces of legislation introduced during that time.

71

Current members of the US House of Representatives who support the creation of a Department of Peace.

During his farewell speech to the nation, Republican President and Five-star General Dwight Eisenhower spoke sobering words warning the public of the “unwarranted influence, whether sought or unsought, by the military-industrial complex.” He saw the horrors of war, its effects on soldiers and innocent people, and he knew the tradeoffs that exist when we build up our military war chest at the expense of priorities like education and taking care of those in need. Although spoken over 50 years ago, his words ring true today as the United States maintains nearly 800 military bases around the globe and account for over 40 percent of global military expenditures (even though we represent 5 percent of the global population).

Albert Einstein said that peace cannot be kept by force; it can only be achieved through understanding. His words paint a picture of possibility that can inspire us to...

Come to terms with and change

our societal acceptance of war

Create a **military budget** that is **in line** with those of other developed nations

Re-allocate resources to provide more **opportunity for veterans** and invest in **critical domestic priorities**

Develop a national **Department of Peace** with important responsibilities and influence

Expand peaceful approaches to conflict in schools, communities and international relations

Do what it takes to lead the world in **eliminating all nuclear weapons** within years, not decades



War and Ending It

I always knew I would join the military. It was simply a matter of choosing the Marines or the Army. Growing up in the shadow of Fort Bragg and Fort Lee, in North Carolina and Virginia, I was highly influenced by the presence of the soldiers. I saw them everyday. Not just your regular run-of-the mill soldiers, Bragg is home of the Green Berets—the real John Waynes. In my mother’s house we were taught God, Family and Country. These beliefs guided me to crave and need to serve. I still have the need to serve, but now I see that there is no place for war and I serve to bring humanity to a peaceful coexistence.

As military service goes, mine was relatively uneventful. I spent time in the Army Reserve as an enlisted man and, after Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC), as an active duty officer. I served in combat during what many know as the 1st Gulf War; Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm in the 3rd of the 41st Artillery Battalion of the 24th Mechanized Infantry Division. But I was blessed not

• Michael T. McPhearson
• Veterans For Peace

**“There is no way to peace;
peace is the way.”**
➤ **A.J. Muste**



There is a process that conditions us to accept war. This process plays on a number of our basic instincts and uses our complex social and political systems to help us agree to war.

to have experienced the true horrors of war. I did not kill first-hand. I did not see the aftermath of a firefight, or the consequences of my battalion’s artillery shells. I contributed to the deaths of tens of thousands of Iraqis, some in a more direct manner than others. But it was from a distance and impersonal. For every US combat soldier on the ground, there is a system of troops providing a host of services working together to destroy and kill. That is war; stark and naked violence.

Why Do We Walk the Road to War?

Of course there are the practical reasons why wars happen, to gain access to resources and to protect one’s homeland. There are the base motivations of power and greed that drive what many call “the ruling class” who lead us to war. There is the belief that the patriarchal system is the fundamental building block for the social and political forces driving us to war. But none of these explain in full what allows humans to gather in large groups and attempt to kill each other.

I believe humans have a natural aversion to killing each other that must be overcome to participate in war. There is a process that conditions us to accept war. This process plays on a number of our basic instincts and uses our complex social and political systems to help us agree to war. There are three components to this process: the warrior myth, the creation of an encompassing identity myth and dehumanization of “the other.” One can take this process and overlay it on most any conflict between groups and see it at work, but let us look at the US to see why we walk the road to war.

The Creation of the Warrior

The creation of the warrior begins when we are children. Boys are taught that combat is the ultimate test of manhood. The female inclusive version teaches us that war

tests our mettle; our mental toughness and our ability to succeed. “Be All You Can Be,” “An Army of One” and, today, “Army Strong” are self-esteem-building catch phrases that convey this message. With this in mind, we are given the toys to practice war; the slingshot, the plastic sword, the bow and arrow, the repeating cap guns and machine guns with authentic sound. We are taught to play the role of the warrior with miniature replicas of combatants; a hundred green men to a bag or the multi-colored cowboys and Indians. The GI Joes, Transformers and various video simulations make the act of war possibly fun, exciting and tempting.

Still this is not enough to build a warrior. It takes more than toys and the TV screen. I believe a basic instinct of the human mind is to have a sense of meaning. Our

The US was born in a struggle for liberation, thus creating a national character of a people who hold in the highest regard the ideal of freedom, and war is accepted as a means to attain it.



Photo courtesy Jez Coulson

Since the American Revolutionary War, the US has been involved in nearly two dozen wars that have resulted in millions of casualties.

society reinforces the acts we learn at play by giving the function of a warrior meaning. The purpose of the warrior is to serve. It is the opportunity to commit the most altruistic act; to make the ultimate sacrifice. The soldier is prepared to give one's life for family, tribe or country. This is the base of the ideal warrior. Called to serve and prepared to give all for little or nothing in return.

War as Part of Our Identity

The warrior's purpose is to protect the larger group. However, warriors do not go to war alone. A nation goes to war. The warrior must see the larger group or the protection of it worth the service and possible ultimate sacrifice. The group must believe itself worth the possible death of the warrior so that it will send its sons and daughters to the horrors of war. This meaning is provided by the identity myth. Every nation develops a narrative that provides an identity to its people. This identity binds the group members together and, on whole, demands a subservience to the will of the group for the glory of the group. The United States was

born in a struggle for liberation thus creating a national character of a people who hold in the highest regard the ideal of freedom and the acceptance of war as a means to attain it. Because this is so engrained in our national fabric, those that question the road to war are branded unpatriotic.

Dehumanization and the Creation of "the Other"

War is the ultimate example of dehumanization. In the rhetoric espoused before wars, the enemy is juxtaposed with the image and values of this myth and is always found wanting, alien and evil. Evil places the enemy beyond salvation and allows for easier dismissal of the killing of both the enemy combatants and innocent civilians. The deaths of millions are worth the sacrifice of ensuring that our manifest destiny is fulfilled. In my estimation, the creation and dehumanization of "the other" is the heart of why people are able to participate in war: "I, the warrior, must defend my group, my myth against you, the evil other. You are not

While it is true that there are millions of armed soldiers ready to do battle across the planet, there are also hundreds of thousands of organizations around the world with millions of people diligently working to bring about a vision of human cooperation.

Photo courtesy World March for Peace and Nonviolence

Our most basic task as peacemakers and justice seekers is to cut through the politics of the moment with the undeniable truth of our common humanity.



Photo courtesy Christian Briggs

like me. You never will be and if there is a possibility of change it must be through violent redemption."

The Path of Peace

I believe that to travel the path of peace our efforts must work to accomplish many things, but the first is to end the use of war as a means to solve conflicts. I believe this task, which is also the mission of Veterans For Peace, is most central to achieving peace. The absence of war does not constitute peace. However, while I am not sure what peace looks like, I know there cannot be peace in the presence of war.

There is a growing world consciousness via religion, science and philosophy recognizing the unity of humanity. Herein lays a portion of a strategic framework to build a world free of war. We must clear away the artificial walls that lead to hate, indifference and greed. We must do this work both in domestic and international settings. Most crucial, we must do this work in our personal lives and spheres of influence. We need to engage in activities that connect people in efforts to help us to accept differences and highlight our common

humanity. These actions also build a sense of a collective destiny, therefore undermining the human tendency to wage war. These challenge individual societal identity myths and replace them with the truth of our human identity. Peace requires fundamental transformations. In how we see ourselves and others and peace, as an ideal, needs to be elevated and integrated into every facet of society and strategically planned for and resourced.

While it is true that there are millions of armed soldiers ready to do battle across the planet, there are also hundreds of thousands of organizations around the world with millions of people diligently working to bring about a vision of human cooperation. Most soldiers, just like most people, at their core want this too. Our most basic task as peacemakers and justice seekers is to cut through the politics of the moment with the undeniable truth of our common humanity so that over time a majority can see that it is in our universal interest as humans to live in a world free of war. Then we will begin to see what peace really looks like.

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Reallocating Military Spending, Taking Care of Soldiers, & Increasing National Security

The saying goes, “Rome was not built in a day.” It did not fall in one day either. An economic, cultural and military powerhouse, the Roman Empire once seemed unassailable, permanent and omnipotent. Confident in their enduring supremacy, emperors pushed expansion, putting more gold into spears, fleets and cavalries while neglecting the day-to-day needs of their subjects, which led to the fall of the Roman Empire according to historians.

Today the US is the world’s sole superpower, enjoying huge economic and cultural sway, with interests and influence in every corner of the globe. Our military might is unparalleled. However, as history shows, in time a rising nation becomes preoccupied with national security, diverting profit into war and preparations for war. Economic strength wanes, industrial capacity atrophies and the great power falls. George Washington once said, “Overgrown military establishments are, under any form of government, inauspicious to liberty, and are to be regarded as particularly hostile to republican liberty.” Our own “liberty” is in danger, and we must learn from history, instead of repeating mistakes of the past. This begins with acknowledging the imbalance of resources invested in the military, broadening the definition of “security” and reallocating some of these resources to better support the strength of our nation.

• Frida Berrigan
• New America Foundation



“Rome was not built in a day, it did not fall in one either.”

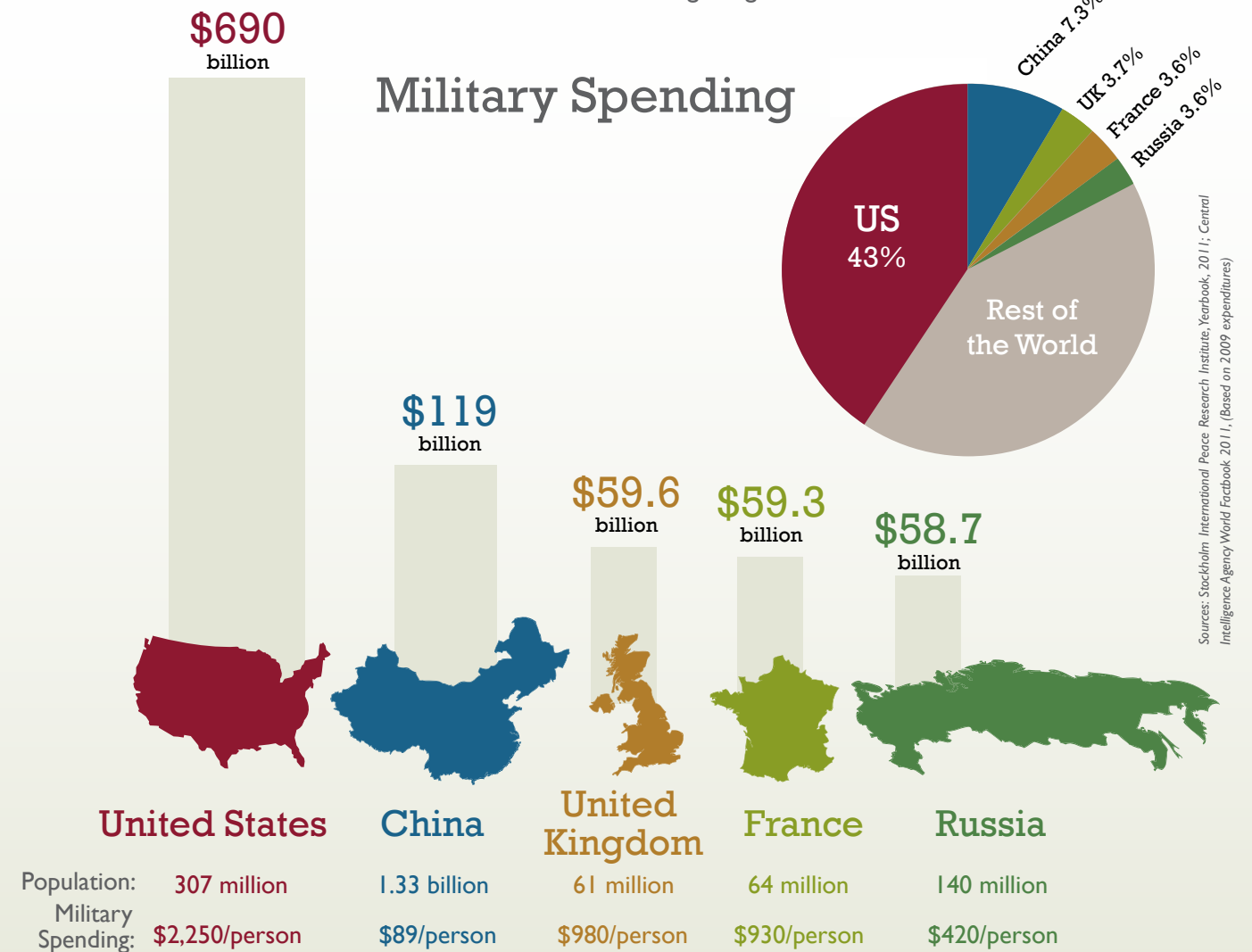
Out of Step: US Military Budget

The US’ 2010 military budget was over \$690 billion, including funding for military personnel, research and development, new weapons procurement, as well as operations and maintenance. Also included in this figure is \$128 billion for military operations in Iraq, Afghanistan and elsewhere. Of the \$690 billion military budget, 87 percent of it goes to defense spending while only 8 percent for Homeland Security and 5 percent for preventative measures. For comparison, in 2010 the federal government spent \$108 billion on services for veterans, \$93 billion on education, \$23 billion on community and regional development and \$19 billion on foreign aid.¹

To understand these huge numbers, it is helpful to look at the US military budget within the context of the rest of the world. The US outspends China, the next biggest military power, almost seven times over. According

to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, global military expenditures passed \$1.6 trillion in 2010. When the costs of US military operations were added to the defense budget, US spending was nearly half of the global total.²

Many individuals and organizations are advocating for spending reductions, including the Sustainable Defense Task Force, a newly formed ad hoc advisory panel. Commissioned by a bipartisan group of five congressional representatives, the Task Force outlines nearly \$1 trillion in cuts to defense spending through 2020. The 16-member panel of individuals from non-profits, non-governmental organizations, think tanks and a private college identified measures that remove inefficiencies and redundancies within the Pentagon’s budget. The strategy is intended to convince Congress and the deficit reduction commission to include a reduction in military spending among the solutions for the nation’s rising budget deficit and debt.³



Two Military Budgets in One: The Legacy of the Military Industrial Complex

The US military budget is two military budgets rolled into one: one for national security, the other for industry. Despite the fact that the Cold War ended in 1991, tens of billions of dollars in outdated, irrelevant and expensive systems—ballistic missile defense, trident submarines and ships such as the Zumwalt class destroyers (\$3.9 billion per ship)—remain barnacled in the budget, bloating it to such an extent that it eclipses a host of other priorities that are central to the notion of security.⁴



The DDG-1000 Zumwalt Class Destroyer, a \$3.5 billion ship conceived during the Cold War, isn't relevant to our national security strategy any longer.

These Cold War-era systems endure not because they are critical to national security but because of the influence from the weapons industry.

These Cold War-era systems endure not because they are critical to national security but because of the influence from the weapons industry. This warning was offered to the nation by two-term President and Five-star General, Dwight Eisenhower. In his 1961 farewell address, he stated, "In the councils of government, we must guard against the acquisition of unwarranted influence, whether sought or unsought, by the military-industrial complex. The potential for the disastrous rise of misplaced power exists and will persist."⁵

Reallocate the Military Budget to Increase National Security

Britain and France both spend about \$1,000 per person on their military budgets, have robust and able military forces with the most modern equipment and

plenty of money left over for a strong social safety net, generous pensions, enviable health care and a modern infrastructure. The US spends over \$2,200 per man, woman and child on the military while budgets for education, housing, health and infrastructure repair barely keep up with the rate of inflation.

Reallocating the US military budget could make us more secure as a nation. If half of the military budget was reallocated to provide more benefits to veterans and to pay for other domestic needs, for example, the US would still have the largest military budget in the world three times over. But, we would also have the funds to invest in the education and even better services and opportunities for veterans, infrastructure and building a green and sustainable energy platform, which would ultimately create hundreds of thousands of well-paying jobs to power prosperity and ingenuity into the 21st century.

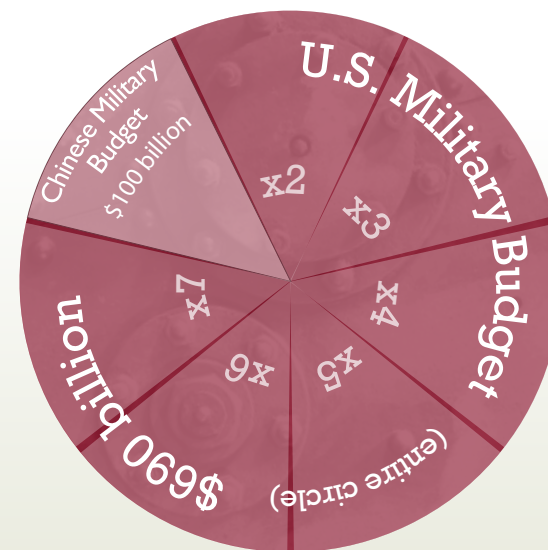
How do we get there from here? There are concrete ways to revise the size and mission of the US military that will make us more stable and secure as a nation and, at the same time, add new resources to invest in national revitalization.

Reduce US Military Operations Abroad:

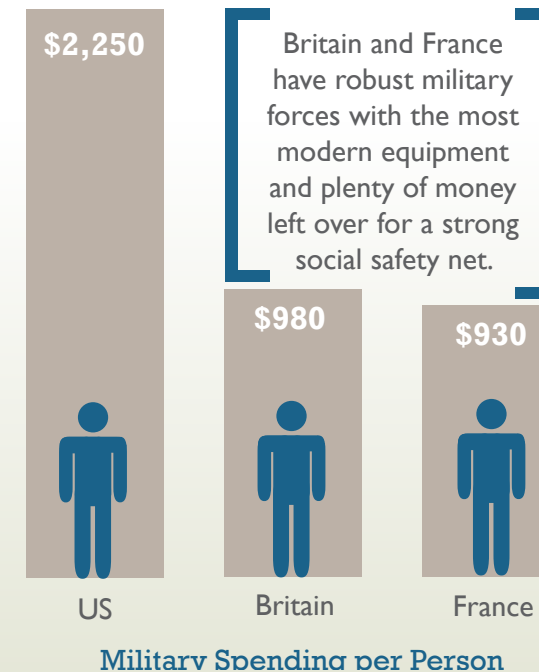
Between 2001 and 2010, the US

spent more than \$1 trillion on military operations for the occupation of Iraq and Afghanistan. Looking forward through 2019, additional costs for continuing these wars could total as much as \$867 billion.⁶ These military operations have emptied the US treasury and resulted in thousands of war casualties, while the resulting increase in national security is questionable at best. Despite stabilization progress, remaining troops must be withdrawn, occupation ended and real reconstruction commenced in order to restore America's place in the world and ensure lasting peace.

Cut Back on Bases: The US maintains military bases and outposts in more than 800 locations around the world, and the Pentagon spends about \$102 billion a year to run these overseas bases (not including the facilities in Iraq or Afghanistan). More than half a century



The US' 2010 budget was \$690 billion in military spending, over 7 times that of China, the next highest military spender.



after World War II and the Korean War, we still have 268 bases in Germany, 124 in Japan and 87 in South Korea.⁷ Are they really necessary today? In 2004, Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld suggested shuttering about one-third of US overseas bases; a move he estimated would save \$12 billion.

Nuclear Disarmament: The US possesses about 5,200 nuclear warheads, and an estimated 1,000 of those are ready to launch at a moment's notice.⁸ President Barack Obama presented his vision of nuclear disarmament to the world, saying, "I state clearly and with conviction America's commitment to seek the peace and security of a world without nuclear weapons." Since then, his administration has ratified important arms control treaties and engaged Russia in nuclear reductions.

As the Obama administration pursues this commitment to disarmament, billions of dollars will be available for building real security in the form of programs for jobs, education and opportunities for veterans and all citizens. In a Carnegie Endowment report, analysts estimated that nuclear weapons activities throughout the federal budget totaled at least \$52 billion annually. Of this, only about \$14 billion was for non-proliferation, waste clean-up and nuclear incident response.⁹

Eliminate Waste: In a recent report on Pentagon weapons acquisition, the Government Accountability

The US spends over \$2,200 per man, woman and child on the military while budgets for education, housing and health barely keep up with the rate of inflation.

Office identified \$295 billion of cost overruns on 95 major weapons systems.¹⁰ Some of which had doubled or tripled original cost estimates and were years behind schedule. Because of the way contracts are written, the Pentagon is still obligated to award billions of dollars' worth of performance bonuses to private contractors regardless of the results of their work. The Pentagon's procurement budget is about \$100 billion annually, much of this going to weapons systems for the last or the next war, rather than systems relevant to today's security environment. Renovating this system so that it only purchases what it needs from manufacturers able to deliver a product on time and at budget is a huge undertaking—but without significant change, the Pentagon's purchasing will remain a form of socialized support for a military-industrial complex that has far too much influence.

The V-22 Osprey is a telling example. Although the program is being phased out, nearly two decades ago, then-Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney called the V-22

If we didn't waste **\$295 billion** on weapons systems overruns we could:

Provide healthcare for the 42 million the 46 million Americans with no healthcare coverage.¹

OR

Increase the average \$40,500 salary of the 4,180,000 teachers in the US by 25%, and do so for approximately seven years.²

OR

Build enough wind turbines to power 52 million homes, which accounts for 40% of the country's home energy needs.³

And this is **not cutting a dime** from the military budget; it's simply sticking to the (already enormous) budget.

from the editor

"a program I don't need," and cited it as one example of how Congress "forces me to spend money on weapons that don't fill a vital need in these times of tight budgets and new requirements."¹¹ An estimated \$54 billion has been spent on the program since its inception even though the aircraft was reported to be unsafe, overpriced and completely inadequate.¹²

What's Our Mission? Redefining National Security:

Currently the US has a very broad and encompassing definition of what constitutes a threat to national security, but that must be scaled back so that US territory and significant interests can be robustly protected. Just because the US can project power to any corner of the globe, at any moment in time, should it do so? Carl Conetta of the Project for Defense Alternatives suggests that a more narrow and sustainable role for the US's armed forces would focus on "containing, deterring and defending against actual threats of violence to critical national interests."¹³

A New Blueprint: The Path Forward

These are just a few of the steps that we need to take to halve the US military budget and increase national security. But that is only part of the work. If the US military is smaller and has a more limited mission, what is the role of military personnel—especially given the fact that economic necessity and job scarcity have driven many men and women into the military?

The other part of charting a new path forward is caring for our veterans and building a stronger and more

sustainable US economy. There are about 440,000 US military personnel stationed or deployed overseas right now. Of that number, almost half are engaged in combat operations and more than 30,000 have been wounded in action. As these men and women return from battlefields and bases around the world, they will need long-term care and services, and they will require jobs and stability.

The annual budget in 2010 for the Veterans Administrations (VA) was close to \$108 billion. While that might sound like a lot of money, it equates to only about \$4,700 per veteran—for health care, education, pension programs and job training.¹⁴ Making an unequivocal commitment to veterans and their families by augmenting the budget and improving services is nothing more than fair compensation for their service.

Then there is the question of jobs for veterans. The unemployment rate for veterans aged 18 to 24 is almost 5 percent higher than for that age group as a whole. In addition to the recession, veterans groups attribute the high jobless rate to a lack of education, job experience and job training in the years before entering the service.¹⁵

Vocational training for veterans should focus on emerging industries that have the potential for well-paying jobs. For example, there are about 3,400 companies in the solar energy sector in the US, employing 60,000 people. The Solar Energy Industries Association is bullish about growth, estimating 110,000 direct solar jobs by 2016.¹⁶ Policies supporting both renewable energy and jobs for veterans are in the very early stages,



Making an unequivocal commitment to veterans and their families by augmenting the budget and improving services is nothing more than fair compensation for their service.

and the expansion of them could lead to more employment opportunities for veterans and a sustainable economy creating a new kind of national security, one with clean energy and good jobs.

The potential for jobs is vast, and Congress seems to agree. The new Energy Jobs for Veterans Act calls for the establishment of a pilot program to encourage the employment of eligible veterans in energy-related positions. Under the Veterans Energy-Related Employment Program, the Department of Labor will award competitive grants to three states for the establishment and administration of a state program to reward energy employers who employ eligible veterans.¹⁷ Instituting this and other similar programs in every state in the nation would go a long way towards offering more opportunities for veterans in all areas of the US while benefiting the national economy.

In an effort to increase sustainable development and reduce our dependency on foreign oil, the Apollo Alliance proposes \$10 billion in investments to develop and expand public transit systems and fund infrastructure repair on those systems, creating a total of 172,500 jobs in construction and repair work.¹⁸ Retraining returning soldiers and Marines for jobs in

public transit would offer union representation, a steady paycheck, job security and a visible and respectable job for men and women accustomed to collaborative work that is of service.

These are just a few ways in which money reallocated from the Pentagon can be invested with confidence for a high-yield gain. Clearly some progress is being made; through existing and new programs. A comprehensive strategy to reallocate money from the military budget will go a long way toward bolstering needs in education, foreign aid, infrastructure, healthcare and a range of other national priorities.

We know where we will end up if we follow the trajectory set by the military industrial complex of ever-rising military budgets and ever-new enemies: we will fall as Rome fell, as all great powers fall. But, we are also learning that there are new paths forward. With foresight and thrift, diplomacy and cooperation, the US can be a great and powerful nation, a strong and secure nation, an enduring and exemplary nation.

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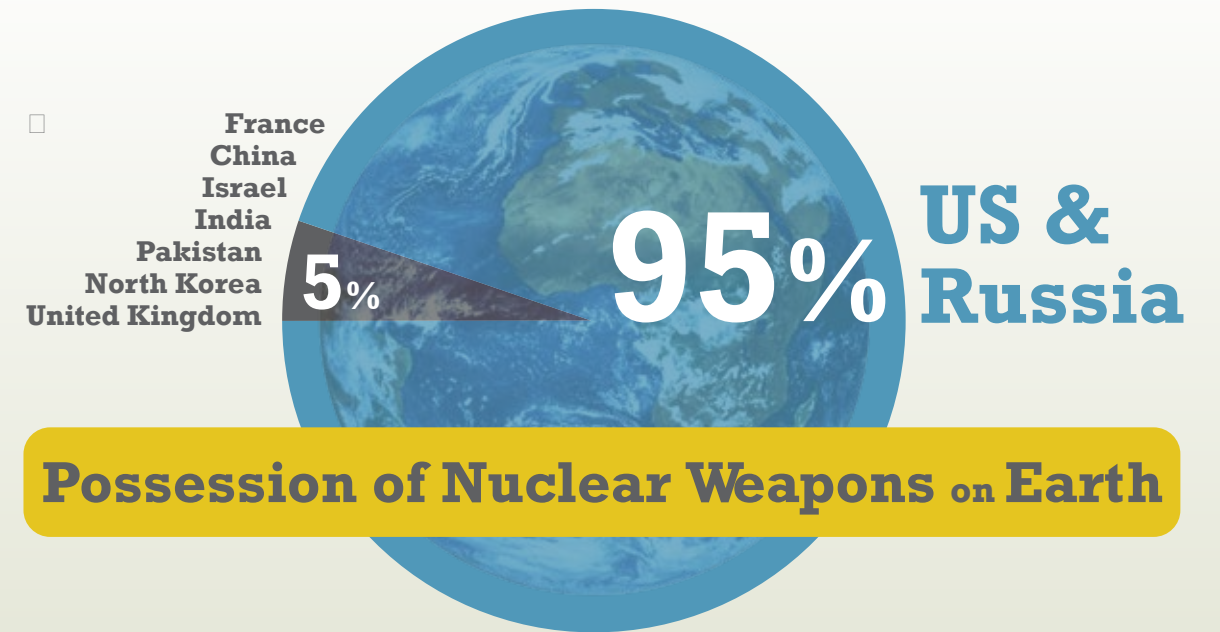
Creating a World Without Nuclear Weapons

David Krieger
Nuclear Age Peace Foundation

We are in the seventh decade of the Nuclear Age. With the capacity to destroy civilization and end life on the planet, more than 20,000 nuclear weapons remain in the arsenals of nine nuclear weapon states.

The United States and Russia head the list of countries with nuclear weapons, and together have more than 95 percent of the total on the planet. These two countries still maintain over 2,000 nuclear weapons on hair-trigger alert, ready to be fired within moments, raising concerns for accidental launches. The UK, France, China, Israel, India, Pakistan and North Korea hold the remaining 5 percent of nuclear weapons.

Nuclear weapons endanger the future of our species along with all other forms of life. The only safe and stable number of nuclear weapons on the planet is zero. Achieving zero will require political will, which in turn will require strong public support. It will also require an effective means to verify honesty. As Ronald Reagan, a nuclear abolitionist, said, "Trust, but verify."



Possession of Nuclear Weapons on Earth

The Limits of Deterrence

Weapons of mass annihilation have been used throughout the Nuclear Age to threaten retaliation. But the threat of retaliation, known as deterrence, is not defense. Nuclear deterrence is meaningless when it comes to terrorist groups, which, without territory, cannot be subject to retaliation. No matter how powerful a country's nuclear arsenal, it cannot deter a determined extremist group in possession of a nuclear weapon.

For deterrence to work, the country's leaders must believe in the intent, as well as the opponent's capacity, to retaliate. Without that belief, such a threat may be doubted or dismissed, rendering the deterrence effort useless. Deterrence also relies upon rationality, and history proves that all political leaders do not act rationally at all times.

The more countries that have nuclear weapons, the greater the danger that these weapons will be used by accident, miscalculation or design.

Weapons of the Weak

Nuclear weapons may provide *perceived* security for a weaker country in relation to a stronger one. Iraq, Iran and North Korea were branded as an "axis of evil" in the early days of the Bush administration. The US then proceeded to attack Iraq on the false charge that it had a nuclear weapons program, overthrow its leadership and occupy the country. With North Korea, a country suspected of having a small arsenal of nuclear weapons, the US was much more cautious and engaged in negotiations. This sent the message to Iran that they would be more secure with a nuclear arsenal, which is surely not the message that the US wishes to send to the world.

Thought of as "military equalizers," nuclear weapons may make a country think twice about attacking. But this is a dangerous game of Russian roulette. And the more countries that have nuclear weapons, the greater the danger that these weapons will be used by accident, miscalculation or design.

Today's nuclear weapons, many times more powerful than those that obliterated Hiroshima and Nagasaki, have the capacity to destroy cities, countries, civilization, the human species and most life on our planet. As Mikhail Gorbachev has said, "It is my firm belief that

Every year, on the anniversary of the Hiroshima atomic bombing there are memorials like this one seen at the A-Bomb Dome, the site of the bombing. They serve as a remembrance of the victims of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and a reminder of what these very powerful weapons can do.

TSAR BOMBA (USSR)
50,000 Kilotons of TNT
 (50 million tons)

Castle Bravo (USA)
15,000 Kilotons of TNT
 (15 million tons)

Ivy Mike (USA)
10,400 Kilotons of TNT
 (10.4 million tons)

Nagasaki: Fat Man
20-22 Kilotons of TNT
 (20-22,000 tons)

Hiroshima: Little Boy
12-15 Kilotons of TNT
 (12-15,000 tons)

Image from National Archives Photo No. 209-N-43888

Today's nuclear weapons, many times more powerful than those that obliterated Hiroshima and Nagasaki, have the capacity to destroy cities, countries, civilizations, the human species and **most life on our planet.**

The new Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (New START) re-establishes an inspection regime and could be a foundation for deeper reductions later.

the infinite and uncontrollable fury of nuclear weapons should never be held in the hands of any mere mortal ever again, for any reason." Nuclear weapons could cause irreversible damage, not only to humanity and to the human future, but also to all life.

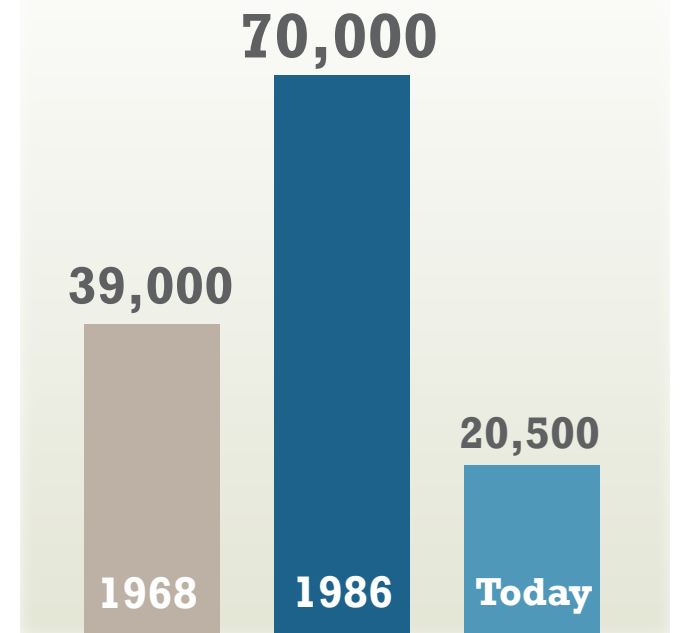
The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty

The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) was signed in 1968 and entered into force in 1970. The NPT requires the nuclear weapon states that are parties to the treaty—the US, Russia (formerly Soviet Union), UK, France and China—to engage in good-faith negotiations for nuclear disarmament in return for other countries agreeing not to acquire nuclear weapons. Obviously, this agreement has not been kept. The number of nuclear weapons in the world grew from some 39,000 in 1968 to a high of over 70,000 in 1986, before coming down to some 20,000 today, still enough to destroy civilization many times over.

Many world leaders believe that the United States has been the principal obstacle to nuclear disarmament. Under the leadership of President Obama, the United States has been playing a more constructive role and

negotiated a new Strategic Arms Reductions Treaty (New START) with Russia. Under the treaty, which entered into force on February 5, 2011, each side must reduce the number of its deployed strategic warheads to 1,550 and the number of its deployed delivery vehicles to 700 by the year 2017. In actuality, due to counting rules and past reductions, neither side would have to eliminate large numbers of weapons to meet the new limits. But the treaty re-establishes a lapsed inspection regime and could be a foundation for deeper reductions later.¹

Number of Nuclear Weapons in the World



President Barack Obama attends a New START meeting hosted by Vice President Joe Biden in the Roosevelt Room of the White House, Nov. 18, 2010.



Public domain photo courtesy Pete Souza, White House Photographer

Nuclear weapons are immoral weapons.... They are the enemy of humanity and the future, and we must rise up and make our voices heard for the total elimination of these weapons.

Although it's not a pledge to zero, it is a small step in the right direction. However, the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty refers to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy as an "inalienable right." This moves the world in the wrong direction in terms of nuclear proliferation and nuclear waste. Nuclear energy provides a pretext for the creation of fissile materials for nuclear weapons through uranium enrichment and plutonium reprocessing technologies. Once commerce is established in such bomb materials, the prospects of nuclear proliferation, even to terrorists, increase dramatically. In addition, there is still no good answer to the problem of nuclear waste, which will remain dangerous to human health and the environment for many times longer than human civilization has existed.

Changing Our Thinking

We need to shift our thinking if we are to confront the serious dangers to the human future posed by nuclear weapons. As Albert Einstein warned early in the Nuclear Age, "The unleashed power of the atom has changed everything save our modes of thinking, and thus we drift toward unparalleled catastrophe." The needed changes in thinking will require a major shift in our orientation toward nuclear weapons, in our willingness to imagine possible alternative futures and in our empathy for others.

Nuclear weapons are immoral weapons; they are not just another, albeit more powerful, weapon of war. They

are the enemy of humanity and the future, and we must rise up and make our voices heard for the total elimination of these weapons. Countries with nuclear weapons must stop basing their security on the threat to annihilate vast numbers of innocent people.

The Need for Greater US Leadership

The United States, as the world's most powerful country, must lead in achieving a world free of nuclear weapons. In his speech in Prague on April 5, 2009, President Obama said, "...as a nuclear power—as the only nuclear power to have used a nuclear weapon—the United States has a moral responsibility to act. We cannot succeed in this endeavor alone, but we can lead it."²

To get to zero nuclear weapons in this lifetime, the leaders of the world's nations, particularly the leaders of nuclear weapon states, need to agree upon the phased elimination of all nuclear weapons, with provisions for effective verification and enforcement.

Each generation has a responsibility to pass the world on intact to the next generation. Those of us alive today are challenged as never before to accomplish this. Technological achievement does not necessarily make us stronger. It may simply make us more vulnerable, and our old ways of thinking may seal our fate. The alternative to waiting for another nuclear catastrophe to



On the 60th anniversary of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima, rallies and demonstrations around the world encouraged the ban of nuclear weapons and a peaceful way forward together.

To get to zero nuclear weapons, the leaders of nuclear weapon states need to agree upon the phased elimination of all nuclear weapons, with provisions for effective verification & enforcement.

occur is to join with others who are committed to assuring a human future, and act to rid the world of this most menacing of all human inventions. It is the power of ordinary people working in concert that has the potential to move political leaders to effective action. It is this power that must be mobilized on behalf of ridding the world of nuclear weapons.

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David Krieger is a founder of the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation (www.wagingpeace.org) and has served as its president since 1982. He is a leader in the global effort to abolish nuclear weapons. Among the books he has written or edited are *Nuclear Weapons and the World Court* (with Ved Nanda), *At the Nuclear Precipice: Catastrophe or Transformation?* (with Richard Falk) and *The Challenge of Abolishing Nuclear Weapons*.



Forty-seven heads of state gathered for the Nuclear Security Summit to discuss a plan for locking down nuclear materials.



Public domain photo courtesy Chuck Kennedy/White House Photographer



Establishing a US Department of Peace

⋮ Matthew Albracht
⋮ The Peace Alliance

I cannot tell you with what weapons mankind would fight WW3, but I can assure you that WW4 would be fought with sticks and stones.”
— Albert Einstein

At the center of the human spirit there is a great longing for peace. During this moment in our history, it is becoming imperative that we invest and prioritize in the work that can help bring about more of the peace we all desire. The possibilities of manifesting it, in contrast to the consequences of continuing down the current course of rampant violence, are both enormous. Thankfully, the heroic work and practices of the growing field of peacebuilding offer a prescription for our times, one that could make the great dream a reality.

The creation of a Department of Peace will augment our current problem-solving options, providing practical, nonviolent solutions to the problems of domestic and international conflict.

The Challenge We Face

From the personal to the collective, violence, in all its forms, has been the greatest and most devastating struggle we have ever faced. Current levels of violence in our nation and around the world are fiscally, environmentally and ethically unsustainable. There are a myriad of great challenges around the issue of violence in our homes, communities and world.

From the growing rate of domestic incarceration, to the crippling problems of community, school and gang violence, to conflict in our homes, relationships and at work, to the ravages of international conflict and war there is much to be addressed. Consider just a few sobering statistics:

- A World Health Organization report estimates the cost of interpersonal violence in the US at \$300 billion per year, excluding war-related costs.¹
- US youth homicide and suicide rates are more than ten times that of other leading industrial nations. Homicide is the second leading cause of death

for youth ages 12 to 24, and the number one cause for African American youth.²

- During the 20th century, more than 100 million people lost their lives to war—most were non-combatants.³

We can longer continue down this unsustainable path.

The Possibility

Hope is not only on the horizon, it's here now. Over the last few decades, we have begun to see the field and work of peacebuilding more strongly materialize. Its impact is helping to foster more peaceful solutions in many arenas of challenge we face. We are seeing a sophisticated, pragmatic, proven-effective, economically sustainable set of practices and models emerge that already are and can more greatly make a profound difference toward a more sustainable peace.

And yet the gap between what is possible and what is actually our collective priority is wide. We need to am-

What would the Department of Peace do?

Domestically:



Develop policies and allocate resources to reduce the levels of domestic and gang violence, child abuse and various other forms of societal discord.

Internationally:



Advise the president and Congress on the most sophisticated ideas and techniques regarding peace-creation among nations.



Photo courtesy Guðmundur Jónsdóttir

A memorial to John Lennon from Yoko Ono, the Imagine Peace Tower is a beam of light projected from stone structure bearing the words “imagine peace” in 24 languages. Located near Reykjavik, Iceland, the tower shines for two months every year—October 9 through December 8, the dates of John Lennon’s birth and death.

plify the already growing choir that is leading the charge to make this work a national and international priority. We must make solutions to violence a part of our collective everyday understanding and to help take programs to scale. If this burgeoning field of peacebuilding is to become what it needs to be, we must help catalyze and galvanize a movement behind it and create much stronger systems and infrastructure to support it.

Federal Infrastructure: Department of Peace

We currently do not have within the US government structures or priorities to make the kind of impact we desire. As a country, we have yet to place institutional

heft behind efforts to address the underlying issues of violence, diminishing their psychological force before they erupt into material conflict.

One solution to addressing the challenges we face would be through the establishment of the US Department of Peace. Whether it is a federal department, or other large-scale structure that will work to organize and prioritize the work of peacebuilding, we must seriously invest in peace infrastructure if we are to make the changes necessary to turn the tide. Along with reinforcing nonviolence as an ongoing value in our society, the creation of a Department of Peace would augment our current problem-solving options, providing practical, nonviolent solutions to the problems of domestic and international conflict.



Photo courtesy Seeds of Peace, Flickr

“By avoiding the contentious politics of official international cooperation, private citizens can often accomplish more than diplomats.”

Citizen Diplomacy: Everyday People are Building Peace Across Borders

Foreign diplomacy has long been among the most elaborate, formal and inaccessible functions of government.

In an increasingly globalized world, however, politically active citizens are throwing this historical model of international relations out the window, often with full approval of the Departments of State and Defense. By avoiding the contentious politics of official international cooperation, private citizens can often accomplish more than diplomats.

Journalist John Wallach gathered together 45 Israeli, Palestinian and Egyptian teenagers in 1993 and sent them to a youth leadership camp in Maine. Away from the conflict and constantly interacting with their peers, the young people quickly came to make friends with “the enemy.” Wallach named the camp Seeds for Peace, and his project made headlines when all the campers attended the signing of the Oslo Accords later that same year. Today Seeds of Peace has empowered over 4000 more young people from the Balkans, Cyprus, Afghanistan and numerous other conflict zones to lead the reconciliation process in their home countries.

Others go straight to the conflict zones themselves. In 2003, California dentist James Rolfe traveled to Afghanistan to provide a rural village with care. But Afghanistan had just 137 trained dentists in a population of 27 million, and Rolfe quickly discovered that peoples’ needs far outpaced the amount of care he could provide. Shocked by this inadequacy, Rolfe started the Afghanistan Dental Relief Project, which has provided the Afghani people with over 120,000 pounds of dental supplies and a mobile training center to build capacity in rural villages.

The Fellowship of Reconciliation has used this approach since the 1920s, sending delegations to Europe in WWII to rescue Jews fleeing Nazism, to China, Vietnam, and the former Soviet Union during the Cold War, and to the Middle East today. Currently the Fellowship is focused on protecting protestors and non-violent revolutionaries in Iran. With small delegations of American citizens in the crowd, the Iranian military will be less likely to suppress peaceful protests with violence.

Most importantly citizen diplomacy promotes a global understanding that people around the world may have different values and ways of life, but will happily cooperate to build a better world when political tensions are pushed to the side.

from the editor

Peace Is a Strategy

Domestically, the Department of Peace will develop policies and allocate resources to reduce the levels of domestic and gang violence, child abuse and various other forms of societal discord. Internationally, the Department will advise the president and Congress on the most sophisticated ideas and techniques regarding peace-creation among nations.

A Department of Peace will be led by a secretary of peace, who will advise the president on peacebuilding needs, strategies and tactics for use domestically and internationally. The Department will create and expand upon proven domestic peacebuilding programs in our communities, such as nonviolent communication programs in public schools and mediation training for police, firefighters and other emergency services personnel. In partnership with our military service academies, the Department will train a faculty of peacebuilding experts who will analyze peacebuilding strategies, advise government and facilitate the training of peacebuilding for domestic and international service.

If we can avoid one war, end any war even one month sooner or reduce our need for criminal adjudication, investing in a Department of Peace or other large-scale infrastructure, will ultimately save the nation and the taxpayers money. A study by the Institute for Economics and Peace estimates that if the US had the same

levels of peacefulness as Canada, then over 2.7 million additional jobs could be created while reducing state and federal government expenditures. This improved state of peacefulness would have a positive economic effect of around \$361 billion per year.⁴ Additionally programs that reduce juvenile delinquency and prison recidivism rates are expected to save us more than the entire Department will cost. Much greater investment in the work of prevention and intervention is an economic stimulus and a taxpayer savings measure.

The sole focus of a US Department of Peace will be to reduce and prevent violence. Thus it will augment and support other efforts such as the US Institute of Peace (USIP) by working proactively to provide nonviolent strategies and solutions to the many complex issues we face.

The USIP is doing powerful work internationally to expand the effective application of nonviolent conflict resolution. Unlike the plan for a Department of Peace, USIP has no mandate to do violence prevention work domestically. Although funded by the government, it operates much like any other nongovernmental organization and thus has no voice in policy creation. For the US to truly master nonviolent alternatives to dealing with conflict and crises, we need structures directly within our government's highest offices and agencies, as well as independent bodies, all working together to make peace a priority.

People gather in Maryland to show their support for the establishment of a Department of Peace.



“It isn’t enough to talk about peace. One must believe in it. And it isn’t enough to believe in it. One must work at it.”

➤ **Eleanor Roosevelt**

The idea for a cabinet-level Department of Peace is not a new one. Carrie Chapman Catt, the founder of the League of Women Voters, first publically suggested it in 1925. Senator Matthew M. Neely (D-West Virginia) introduced the first official legislation in 1935. Since then, legislation proposing the creation of a US Department of peace has been introduced nearly 100 times.

The ongoing movement is supported by several members of Congress, the late former *CBS Evening News* anchor Walter Cronkite and author Marianne Williamson. This movement has a list of bipartisan endorsements from city councils in California, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Michigan, New Mexico and Ohio.

Internationally, campaigns for peace-oriented government departments are underway in 32 countries, including the United States, but only Costa Rica, Nepal and the Solomon Islands have been successful.⁵

Costa Rica’s tradition of peace dates back to 1877, when the president abolished the death penalty. In 1948, Costa Rica became the first country to formally abolish its armed forces; its constitution still forbids a standing military. By law, peace education is offered in every school and the legal system encourages peaceful conflict resolution, such as mediation.⁶

Conflict Is Inevitable, Violence Is Not

Violence is one way to respond to conflict, and like virtually all behavior, is learned. Just as we learn to be violent, we are equally able to learn to use nonviolent tools and techniques. We do not lack the ability,

but the systems and structures to teach those tools. A Department of Peace will help fill this void. Over the last decade we have spent trillions in developing our capacity to fight by developing new weapons and the strategic plans for using them. It is time for us to invest attention and resources to cultivate a Department of Peace, save lives and reduce human suffering at every level of society.

While addressing the federal government’s responsibility to adequately meet our national security needs in today’s world, Defense Secretary Robert Gates said, “[n]ew institutions are needed for the 21st century, new organizations with a 21st century mind-set.” A Department of Peace is part of this new mind-set.

Peace is far from a utopian ideal. It is a possibility that becomes ever more likely as we invest time, energy and resources into its strategic use. Experts consider “peace” a concrete strategy that provides measurable results rather than an unattainable ideal.

We have no illusion that having a Department of Peace, or something of its stature, will be the panacea that brings forth a violence-free society. What is certain is that if we don’t try, we will never even get close.

It isn’t enough to talk about peace. One must believe in it. And it isn’t enough to believe in it. One must work at it.

➤ Eleanor Roosevelt

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Matthew Albracht is on the board and staff of The Peace Alliance. (www.thepeacealliance.org) The Peace Alliance empowers civic engagement toward a culture of peace. We are an alliance of organizers and advocates throughout the United States taking the work of peace-building from the margins of society into the centers of national discourse and policy priorities. Our network includes volunteer grassroots teams in hundreds of cities, towns, colleges and high school campuses.

