

How would you spend £40 billion?

War, Security, and the Cost of Peace

The UK defence budget is £40 billion, the fourth largest in the world; over the coming year £100 billion will be spent on renewing the Trident nuclear weapons system. This workshop asks if there is a more effective way to spend this money in pursuit of peace?

Think...

What do you think the government should spend its money on to keep this country, and the people in it, safe and secure?

Give each group seven post-it notes and invite them to think what they would spend the money on... what would their priorities be? Why? How do their choices keep you safe?

Display the post-its and group similar ideas. Ask some of the young people to volunteer why they opted for spending the money in each different way.

With more time the young people could use

www.gov.uk/government/organisations in order to research the sort of things various government departments spend their money on and inform their choices.

Watch and Discuss...

Watch the Pax Christi film *Give Peace a Budget: Seven ways to spend \$1.7 trillion*

<http://youtu.be/MBGeBIsSMU>



How did the people in the film want to spend the money?

Do you think that spending the money on these things rather than weapons and military would bring security?

The UK defence budget is £40 billion. We have also committed £100 billion over the coming years to the renewal of the Trident nuclear weapons system. Are you happy that the money is spent in this way? Would you prefer the money elsewhere? Why?

In light of what you have seen and discussed would you change any of the spending priorities you decided upon earlier?

Reflect...

How do these quotes, from scripture and church teaching, encourage us?

“He shall judge between the nations, and shall arbitrate for many peoples; they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.” (Isaiah 2:4)

“Countries squander cash to boost their pride while millions starve. The money spent on arms is scandalous while schools, and homes, and hospitals remain unbuilt.” (Populorum Progressio #53)

Act...

These students in East London had concerns about the arms trade and weapons being sold in their area... <http://youtu.be/KsB0YZk-VrY>



What can you do to let people know your concerns?

For more information and ideas about campaigning against military spending...

Campaign Against Arms Trade

www.caat.org.uk

Global Day of Action on Military Spending

www.demilitarize.org.uk

Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament

www.cnduk.org