Seventy-two years after the U.S. devastated Hiroshima and Nagasaki with atomic bombs, and 25 years after the end of the Cold War, the world still teeters on the brink of nuclear catastrophe. With the rising military tensions with Russia and China, former Secretary of Defense William Perry warns that U.S. nuclear weapons “modernization” makes nuclear war more likely than during the Cold War.

The detonation of even one nuclear weapon can kill millions of people. This explains why the International Commission of the Red Cross advocates the complete elimination of nuclear weapons. A Physicians for Social
Responsibility study warns that an exchange of 50–100 or the world’s more than 15,000 nuclear weapons could lead to the deaths of up to two billion people from the resulting global famine. And, from ISIS to Al Qaeda to climate change, nuclear weapons do nothing to protect us from the real threats we face.

Yet instead of pursuing negotiations for worldwide abolition of nuclear weapons, the Trump Administration is committed to a total overhaul of its nuclear weapons program, including new generations of nuclear warheads, bombers, land-based missiles, air-launched missiles and submarine. The cost? About $1 trillion over the next thirty years, or an average of $30 billion for decades.

Spending for the nuclear weapons upgrade is obscene. If even a tenth of the military’s 7,200 nuclear weapons were used, the result would be nuclear winter, ending all life as we know it. Trump’s right-wing allies and the Pentagon say that U.S. warheads need to be refurbished, and the delivery systems needed to launch them (missiles, bombers and submarines) are outdated.

Yet, even if we accept the flawed logics of deterrence and mutual assured destruction (MAD,) this spending is a boondoggle, a windfall for the military-industrial complex. Under the Pentagon’s stockpile stewardship program, all non-nuclear components of these weapons are routinely monitored replaced. The Pentagon’s JASON project reports that the nuclear components will remain stable for at least 50-60 years!

Under pressure from the military-Industrial-Congressional complex, including the nuclear weapons laboratories, the wasteful and dangerous nuclear weapons upgrade is moving forward, diverting essential financial resources from addressing the needs of the hungry, the homeless, and those who can’t afford health care. A quarter of the projected nuclear weapons spending could provide free college education, for all who are qualified. Funding to contain and reverse climate change and to repair the nation’s crumbling infrastructure would meet essential needs while creating jobs while creating jobs and security.

What’s being modernized?

New and more dangerous nuclear weapons, beginning with the B-61-12 warhead, are being created. As former Secretary of Defense William Perry testified, the ability to increase or decrease the explosive power of the new B-61 makes the weapons more usable, thus increasing the likelihood that nuclear wars will actually be fought.
New generations nuclear-armed missiles, submarines and bombers are being designed and constructed for nuclear warfighting. Estimates include:

- $120 billion for new intercontinental ballistic missiles
- $102 billion for Ohio class submarines to carry and launch Trident missiles
- $100 billion for the B-22 bomber to succeed the B-2 bomber
- $270 billion to maintain the existing nuclear triad: bombers, missiles & submarines

And from Oak Ridge in Tennessee to Kansas City and Los Alamos, new weapons facilities are being built for the design and production of the nuclear arsenal and to underwrite the training of a new generation of nuclear weaponeers.

THE COST TO AVERAGE AMERICANS:

In addition to the risk of nuclear annihilation and the failure to fund essential human needs, there is an additional personal cost: about $3,125 per person or $12,500 for a family of four. In Massachusetts, this is more than $20 billion, enough to rebuild the MBTA with $13 billion left over for housing, schooling, and fixing our roads, bridges and election financing.

Don’t mourn. Organize! Global Days of Action April 18 - 24

The Global Days of Action on Military Spending (GDAMS), initiated by the International Peace Bureau, is a time when people across the world join in collaborative actions to focus public, political, and media attention on the true costs of military spending and the urgent need for new priorities. We hope you will initiate actions in your community on Tax Day, April 18.

For more information contact: JGerson@afsc.org

Website: [http://demilitarize.org/global-day-action-military-spending/](http://demilitarize.org/global-day-action-military-spending/)