

LEYM MINUTE ON DEFENSE SPENDING

The seemingly impossible dream of a world without war became a nightmare with the United States' invasion and occupation of Iraq and Afghanistan. These wars so far have ended the lives of thousands of U.S. servicemen and women and hundreds of thousands of residents of Iraq and Afghanistan (military and civilian), created extensive on-going suffering for many survivors, and consumed an estimated \$1 trillion in U.S. treasure.

Grounded in our Friends' testimony on peace and the uniting love of the Holy Spirit, we are deeply grieved by the futility of war and by the continued funding of conflicts with other countries. We seek signs of hope.

Now bipartisan support is forming behind the recent "Sustainable Defense Task Force" report submitted to Congress by Barney Frank. It calls for a \$960 billion decrease in U.S. defense spending over the next 10 years. Issued in June 2010, the report states: "Years of effort in Iraq and Afghanistan, 5,500 American fatalities, and \$1 Trillion have not brought reliable peace or stability to either country." It concludes that deep cuts are needed, not only in battlefield budgets but also in nuclear and conventional arms and in the size of the military footprint in terms of personnel, mission and infrastructure. These recommendations dovetail with the goals of FCNL's "Nation's Checkbook" campaign.

Lake Erie Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends commends Democratic and Republican sponsors of this bold initiative. We ask that our member Monthly Meetings acquaint themselves with the Sustainable Defense Task Force report and the FCNL "Nation's Checkbook" campaign that seek to reverse this country's reliance on military solutions to complex world problems. Friends are urged to contact their members of Congress and ask them to support legislation implementing the Task Force recommendations.

<http://www.comw.org/pda/fulltext/1006SDTFreport.pdf>

www.fcnl.org