Nuclear Weapons, military & climate overheating

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http://www.sgr.org.uk/
Military spending hits record levels, while climate finance falls short

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) warns that climate heating can destabilise societies, increasing the risk of violent conflict

Many examples: eg Syria, Afghanistan
Global military spending 2020

- Just under $2 trillion – ($2000 billion) (SIPRI)

- Climate investment required: $1000 billion

- Actual climate spending $400 bn

- Shortfall = 1/3 of military spending
Scheming for dollars: the nuclear weapons complicity cycle

Worldwide spending on nuclear weapons
$72.6 Billion

Tax money pays for private companies to build nuclear weapons.

Companies get $27.7 Billion

Lobbyists get $117 Million
Think Tanks get $5–10 Million

Lobbyists encourage politicians to spend even more tax money on nuclear weapons.

Companies hire lobbyists to argue that nuclear weapons are necessary and fund think tanks.
UK Military/ climate – spending

• November 2020, UK PM Boris Johnson announces extra spending for military & climate – quotes two prominent numbers...
  • Extra **£16.5bn** for Ministry of Defence
  • **£12bn** for ‘10 point plan for a Green Industrial Revolution’
• Sound similar - but numbers misleading...
UK: The reality...

- Ministry of Defence
  Total extra spending over 4y: £24bn (£6bn/y)

- 10 point plan for ‘Green Industrial Revolution’
  Total spending over 4y: max. £11bn (£2.8bn/y)
What climate spending do we need?

- Transition to net zero UK carbon emissions requires investment of ...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Current annual spending</th>
<th>Total necessary annual spending</th>
<th>Target date for zero emissions</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Whole economy (govt, business, individuals)</td>
<td>£10bn</td>
<td>£50bn</td>
<td>2050</td>
<td>Committee on Climate Change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Govt spending</td>
<td>£5bn</td>
<td>£10bn</td>
<td>2050</td>
<td>Committee on Climate Change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Govt spending</td>
<td>£3.1bn</td>
<td>£15bn+</td>
<td>2030</td>
<td>This presentation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Military v climate: total govt spend

Main sources: HM Treasury (2020); CCC (2020); Guardian (2021)

- Military total does not include Trident contingency fund, military pensions etc
- No official govt figures for annual climate spending
Military v climate: UK govt spend

Main sources: HM Treasury (2020); CCC (2020); Prime Minister’s Office (2020); BEIS (2020); Guardian (2021)

- Military total does not include Trident contingency fund, military pensions etc
- Extra needed for Net Zero 2030 is minimum value
Global nuclear weapon spending 2020

- In 2020 the nine nuclear-armed countries spent $72.6 billion on 13,000+ nuclear weapons,

- $137,666 every minute

- $1.4 billion increase over 2019

- Source: ICAN report ‘Complicit’ (June 2021):
UK nuclear weapons 2020

- $6,200 million / year
- 225 warheads
- Submarines, warheads, US missile leasing, reactor programme
- Plan to increase warheads to 260!
- New subs etc – $42,000m – construction
- $270,000m – lifecycle cost

Sources: 2018 National Audit Office, CND, ‘Complicit’
UK military contribution to climate crisis

• UK military carbon footprint
  – At least 11 million tonnes CO2 equivalent
  – Comparable with annual use of 6 million cars

• UK deployment of nuclear weapons
  warheads carried by one Trident submarine could cause catastrophic climate cooling due to smoke from explosions/fires blocking Sun’s warmth (‘nuclear winter’). Similar to ‘regional’ scenarios. 10m blast, radiation, burns casualties…
Job creation: govt projections

• Extra £24bn of military tech spending
  – 40,000 jobs in 4y
• Extra £11bn spending for 10 point climate plan
  – 90,000 jobs in 4y
• So climate spending will create about 5x as many jobs per £bn of govt investment
• A similar ratio applies to funding social care
UK govt has chosen...

• Extra £6bn per year on...
  – Deploying aircraft carrier group to South China Sea
  – Playing leading role in robot arms race
  – Exporting weapons to fossil fuel dictatorships
  – Deploying nuclear weapons, creating risk of *accidental* catastrophic nuclear war & nuclear winter
  – Failing to tackle climate emergency, fuelling rise in instability and war

• ...rather than extra £7bn per year/ £12bn+ per year on hitting 2050/ 2030 net zero climate target
References


