

## Coalition Against NATO/G8 War & Poverty Agenda

By Meredith Aby

Chicago will host the NATO/G8 summit from May 15-22, 2012. Simultaneously, the U.S.-financed 28-nation military alliance, NATO, is meeting with a summit of the G8 world powers, the main economic council of wealthy nations. The G8 includes the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, U.S., Canada, and Russia. NATO has been a leading force conducting war on Afghanistan and Libya. Similarly, the G8's austerity measures have been a recipe for poverty across the globe. Acting together—with NATO as the enforcer and G8 as the economic lever—these two entities work to control the distribution of the world's resources.

In response, the Coalition Against NATO/G8 War and Poverty Agenda was formed and gathered in Chicago to organize protests. More than 200 people representing 73 organizations from across the country met this past August to plan major protests to be held on May 15 and May 19, at the beginning and end of the NATO/G8 summit. Twelve activists from Twin Cities organizations participated in the conference, bringing experience gained and lessons learned from organizing protests at the 2008 Republican National Convention in St. Paul.

It is important for the antiwar movement to seize the opportunity of this historic NATO/G8 summit to demand that our public money be used for human needs, not war.

Let's respond to the call to organize Minnesotans to travel to Chicago in May to demand an end to NATO warfare and G-8 enforced poverty. We will march, with tens of thousands of people under the banner: "Jobs, Housing, Healthcare, Education, Pensions, the Environment—Not War!"

What to do right now: Say no to police repression now. Sign a letter to Chicago Mayor Rahm Emmanuel to demand that the City of Chicago grant us permits to rally and march to the NATO/G8 summit, guarantee our civil liberties, guarantee that there will be no spying, infiltration of organizations, or other attacks by the FBI or partner law enforcement agencies. See online.

Meredith Aby is a founder of the Twin Cities Antiwar Committee, long time participant in the Minnesota Peace Action Committee (formerly Iraq Peace Action Coalition) and was an organizer of the antiwar march during the 2008 RNC in St. Paul.