

Women Against Military Madness

Newsletter

Volume 31 Number 7 November/December 2013

A publication of
Women Against Military Madness

Lighting Candles in the Dark

by WAMM

Within Robert Shetterly's portrait of her in his series "Americans Who Tell the Truth," a quote from Coleen Rowley reads: "What if you lived in a country where, after the Administration negligently failed to prevent a major terrorist attack, they deliberately exploited everyone's fears and utilized shock doctrine to do INSANELY stupid and dangerous things: things like launching costly preemptive wars, subverting law, and destroying the checks and balances of the Constitution and common standards of decency by re-instituting torture?"

"Well, we do live in that country."

But Edward Snowden does not. Not any more. After working for a government contractor and blowing the whistle on the NSA's massive surveillance of Americans, he is living in exile in Russia. That's why Coleen, along with three other U.S. whistleblowers, all Sam Adams Associates for Integrity in Intelligence, had to travel to Moscow this past October in order to deliver an award to him. Together with Coleen, former high-ranking CIA analyst Ray McGovern, former senior NSA official Thomas Drake, and Jesselyn Radack, a former Justice Department professional responsibility official, awarded Snowden the Sam Adams Corner-Brightener Candlestick Holder. (Sam Adams was a CIA analyst whose efforts to expose truth about the Vietnam War were thwarted within official channels.)

Coleen commented on the visit with Snowden: "We had quite a bit of time to talk to him, even without his attorney present. I have not met anyone so squared away, so well grounded. He is solely focused on the issue of reform. He kept bringing the conversation back to how the massive spy operation can be fixed and about what efforts could be launched in Europe and in the United States. He had just given a statement that was read by proxy to the European Union Committee on Human Rights the week before and so there was discussion on how that could be built on and maybe how in the United States he could testify before Congress."

Early in November, Snowden sent a letter via a German parliamentarian, stating that he would like to testify before the U.S. Congress about surveillance activities. (In the wake of revelations that the NSA spied on German citizens, including the cell phone calls of German Chancellor Angela Merkel, he also

continued on page 3



Portrait of Coleen Rowley by realist painter Robert Shetterly in the series, "Americans Who Tell the Truth: Models of Courageous Citizenship."

WAMM

Newsletter

The statements and opinions reflected in this newsletter are the views of the author and not necessarily official positions of WAMM. We encourage a diversity of opinion to represent the range of perspectives that coexist under the banner of WAMM's mission statement.

Newsletter Editor
Mary Beaudoin

Newsletter Committee
Polly Mann, Carol Masters,
Patty Guerrero

Proofreader **Layout**
Ilze Mueller Ginny Sutton



Women Against Military Madness is a nonviolent, feminist organization that works in solidarity with others to create a system of social equality, self-determination and justice through education, action and the empowerment of women. WAMM's purpose is to dismantle systems of militarism, economic exploitation and global oppression.


WAMM Staff
Pepperwolf, Director
Elina Kolstad, Office Manager

WAMM Office
4200 Cedar Avenue South
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55407
612-827-5364 (phone)
612-827-6433 (fax)
wamm@mtn.org
WomenAgainstMilitaryMadness.org

WAMM Office Hours
Mon-Fri: 10:00 am-5:00 pm

WAMM is funded primarily through the generous contributions of our members. WAMM also receives funding from Community Shares Minnesota



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Brigid's Year End Rap Up

After trillions and trillions no war have we won.
What could have been done with all the war mon \$?

Each school child could have a free instrument.
Now wouldn't that be Money well spent?

Every mother and child we could be giving an adequate income for comfortable living.

All old folks could have a home healthcare aide and poor people's heat would always be paid.

Each playground at school would have fun play advocates. They'd get good pay for the cost of two jets.

And students in college would not need to fret. A free education is what they would get.

Beautiful bridges kept safe for billy goats to cross and cars, trucks and buses. No lives would be lost.

Sustainable farming would get subsidized dough. More youth could be farmers—healthy food they would grow.

Away with Monsanto and bad corporate greed. The farmers we speak of the world's hungry they'd feed.

Our dear soldiers coming home All bent out of shape would get care and attention Without the red tape.

And when all people on earth are in such a good place with the extra money we'll have we'll explore outer space.

For peace.
Keep Space for Peace
space4peace.org

Brigid McDonald is a long-time WAMM member and peace and justice activist.

Chicago Drone Action: Minnesota Women Are Strong

by Pepperwolf, WAMM Director

Activists from around the Midwest, including members of WAMM, gathered for a rally and march in Chicago at the end of September as part of a nationwide protest against drone warfare. Speakers from organizations involved in anti-drone work spoke to the crowd before marching to the headquarters of Boeing. Boeing is competing with two other bidders for a \$1.9 billion contract with the Pentagon to develop yet another type of weaponized military drone. Anti-drone activists held signs to educate the public about the indiscriminate killings from drone strikes, as the people in the crowded Millennium Park took videos and pictures of the chanting marchers.

Marchers ended their walk at Boeing with another rally, hoping to discourage Boeing from being awarded this lucrative contract. Speakers rallied the onlookers to be vigilant on the issue of drone strikes, now so prevalent in the news. Recently human rights groups have issued statements regarding the number of people killed and the illegality of such assassinations. When accounting for those killed in terms of civilians or combatants, it is important to note that all males who are 14 years old or over are automatically counted as militants by the U.S. military, whether they actually are or not. WAMM is opposed to violence,

and the use of drone strikes is particularly heinous because of their indiscriminate nature.

The next day, participants attended a conference held at the downtown Chicago-Kent College of Law. Among the various workshops, the WAMM Ground All Drones Committee gave their Drones 101 presentation. Nationwide, the movement to discontinue the use of weaponized drones is growing.

For more information about drones and how to resist: groundalldrone.blogspot.com

*No More Minnesota Nice.
Participants from Minneapolis/St. Paul opposed death by drone in Chicago this September.*



Lighting Up the Dark,

continued from page 1

said he would testify in Germany.) But U.S. officials continue to reiterate that, though they would not torture or kill him, he will face felony charges for leaking classified information, making it obvious that they prefer to punish him for telling the truth rather than have him testify within government channels.

Coleen Rowley, as chief division counsel for the FBI in Minneapolis was allowed to testify before the Senate Judiciary Committee in 2002 on pre-911 failures. Since leaving the FBI, she has been an uber justice and peace activist for several years—and we are proud to make this full disclosure—serves on the all-volunteer board of Women Against Military Madness.

One of her concerns is that the NSA with both its government agencies and private contractors wants to listen in on everyone!

Edward Snowden blew the whistle so all of us could hear when he said, “I don’t want to live in a world where everything that I say, everything I do, everyone I talk to, every expression of creativity, or love, or friendship is recorded, and that’s not something I’m willing to support, it’s not something I’m willing to build, and it’s not something I’m willing to live under.”

Congress moved closer to creating that kind of world in November when legislation passed in the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence. Michelle Richardson, Legislative Counsel, ACLU Washington Legislative Office calls it, “Dianne Feinstein’s Fake Surveillance Reform.” She wrote that’s because:

the legislation would make clear in no uncertain terms that communication records like phone, email, and internet data can be collected without even an ounce of suspicion, pursuant to the so-called privacy rules already in place. . . . For the first time in history, Congress would explicitly and intentionally authorize dragnet domestic spying programs targeting everyday Americans.

The Feinstein bill also makes the current situation even worse. It gives the government a 72-hour grace period to warrantlessly spy on foreigners who enter the U.S., without even the attorney general approval that is currently required in emergency situations. It explicitly states that none of its provisions should be read to prevent law enforcement from digging through massive NSA databases for evidence of criminal activity.

Richardson calls for real NSA reform instead. So, too, do Coleen Rowley, Daniel Ellsberg, Glenn Greenwald, former U.S. Senator James Abourezk, Naomi Klein, Laura Flanders, Cornell West, David Swanson and others in the Roots Action Team who endorse the Leahy-Sensenbrenner bill—dubbed the USA FREEDOM Act (the Leahy-Sensenbrenner bill S1599/HR3361). They say that it is a real step toward fully ending the NSA’s outrageous abuses and quote Electronic Frontier Foundation, which also advocates for this legislation: “We know that no bill is perfect, but the USA FREEDOM Act could well be our best shot at fixing some of the worst problems with NSA surveillance. That’s why we’re urging members of Congress to support the bill, work to improve the bill through the amendment process, and above all to resist efforts to undermine the privacy protections offered by the bill.”

Edward Snowden said he did what he did to get the nation to focus on discussing massive surveillance of the public. It’s critical for citizens to engage now because the discussion is moving through Congress. Coleen Rowley, who lives in Minnesota and once ran for a congressional seat, comments that Minnesota’s senators Amy Klobuchar and Al Franken both sit on the Judiciary Committee, where the bill is as of the end of November, and they tend to follow Dianne Feinstein in voting. Let’s be sure that they hear from us about throwing light on the issue of surveillance.

ACTION: Call your senators today, or go to RootsAction.org to have an electronic message sent.

- **Bring in 2014, Not 1984!**
- **This Is the Good Bill:**
- USA FREEDOM Act (acronym for Uniting and Strengthening America by Fulfilling Rights and Ending Eavesdropping, Dragnet Collection and Online Monitoring Act). Senate File #1599/House of Representatives File #3361. 102 members of the House including Ellison and McCollum signed on as co-sponsors. 18 members of the Senate signed. At the end of October, the bill was referred to the Senate Judiciary Committee. Of the 17 members on that committee, Minnesota and Utah both have two that serve so these states could have more influence on the bills if citizens advocate for it.
- Capitol switchboard number is 202-224-3121.

- *Below: Edward Snowden receiving the Sam Adams Award [Corner Brightener Candlestick Holder] in Moscow. Coleen Rowley, Thomas Drake, Jesselyn Raddack, Edward Snowden, Sarah Harrison (WikiLeaks journalist), Ray McGovern*



Tackling Torture at the Top (T3) WAMM Committee works to end the U.S. policies of torture. Meets second Wednesday of each month. 10:00 a.m. at 4200 Cedar Avenue, Minneapolis. More info: Call 612-827-5364

“Ethics Abandoned: Medical Professionalism and Detainee Abuse in the War on Terror” Report by the Taskforce on Preserving Medical Professionalism in National Security Detention Centers. Institute on Medicine as a Profession web site: <http://www.imapny.org/>



Tackling Torture at the Top Video Contest

Still accepting entries. See: womenagainstmilitarymadness.org

As I entered Temple Israel Synagogue on Election Day, I walked through the reception area in the direction of the sign, with neat black arrows pointing to an open door straight ahead, and was greeted by a smiling man who was obviously stationed there to make voters like me feel welcome. My designated voting site was a wonderfully bright room about 20 by 50 feet with a wall of windows reaching from the ceiling to within three feet of the floor. Large tables with voting registrars were at one end of the room, labeled with letters of the alphabet. I found the “M” sign and after giving my name, date of birth, and residence, I was handed a ballot. There were not many offices to be filled and it took only a minute or two for me to enter the tiny booth, fill in the space by the name of my candidate indicating a vote, and be on my way.

Somehow I had never been struck with the beauty of voting. So much depends upon it and it is carried out so easily and simply. The system runs so smoothly with this local voting process. It could be a metaphor for democracy. Your vote is private. Nobody knows how you vote and you do not know how anybody else votes. And it is a right. You are a citizen entitled to this right.

I came home from voting to read *The New York Times* online and learn about a task force about professional involvement in the treatment of prisoners at Guantánamo begun under G.W. Bush. I had just participated in a local election, but I recalled how impressed I had been during the Obama campaign when he declared that if elected, he would close that prison. Was his lack of action on this issue a failure of democracy or of the President himself? Closing Guantánamo had been one of Obama’s campaign promises, part of the package people had voted for when they voted for him. I suspect that most—maybe all—of us voting at my polling place would be horrified if we could actually see what has been happening at these prison camps.

How is it that democracy can work so well in some instances and fail so badly in others?

The New York Times revealed that a group of experts in medicine, law, and ethics—the Institute on Medicine as a Profession based at Columbia University, and George Soros’s Open Society Foundations, as well as others from a 19-member task force—have issued a blistering report that accuses the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) and Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) of

directing doctors, nurses, and psychologists to ignore their professional codes of ethics and participate in the abuse of detainees in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Guantánamo Bay, Cuba. Steven Miles, professor of medicine and bioethics from the University of Minnesota, who has long been studying the issue of torture and advocating against it, was among those on the task force.

Among the abuses cited by the task force are: 1) doctors’ force-feeding of hunger strikers by pushing feeding tubes into their nose and down their throat; 2) doctors’ ignoring their duty to report evidence of beatings and torture, and 3) doctors’ acceptance of DoD edicts to illegally use their professional skills to interrogate detainees as military combatants. In addition, the report says that the CIA called for medical personnel to be present during interrogations “to prevent any serious or permanent harm. For instance, exposure to cold was to be stopped before hypothermia set in and loud noise was to be halted before permanent hearing damage would occur.” The report claims that CIA medical personnel were present during waterboarding and resuscitation equipment was available for an emergency tracheotomy.

Taking patients to the brink of death by freezing or drowning, and threatening them with an involuntary tracheotomy and near hearing loss sounds like torture to me.

The report states that the military adopted some of the interrogation techniques that the CIA developed. It is especially critical of the American Psychological Association (APA) for having allowed psychologists to participate in interrogations. Although psychologists are forbidden to perpetrate or support torture and are obligated to report torture and abuse, the APA did not prohibit them to assist in all interrogations. (The issue of the presence of psychologists at interrogations has been criticized for several years by the group Psychologists for Social Responsibility.)

Both the CIA and the Defense Department dismissed the task force report as unsubstantiated. Lieutenant Colonel Todd Bresseale of the DoD defended the force-feeding of strikers via nasal tubes “as legal and necessary to prevent suicide.” (If life is so cruel in the camps, perhaps suicide by refusing to eat could be considered a human right? But the prisoners shouldn’t be reduced to that as the only option in the first place!) Dean

continued on page 5

First Do No Harm?,

continued from page 4

Boyd, a CIA spokesman, also criticized the report: "The task force report contains serious inaccuracies and erroneous conclusions."

The CIA claims not to have any detainees in custody now, and in 2009 President Obama issued an executive order terminating the Rendition, Detention and Interrogation Program. But Dr. Gerald Thomson, Columbia University professor of medicine emeritus, told the *Guardian* on November 3, 2013, that "these unethical practices by medical personnel, required by the military, continue today. The DoD continues to follow policies that undermine standards of professional conduct." These include doctors and nurses participating in force feeding, forced bodily restraints, and giving interrogators medical and psychological information on detainees to exert pressure on them. He stated: "The American public has a right to know that the covenant with its physicians to follow professional ethical expectations is firm regardless of where they serve."

The *Guardian* reports that the Institute on Medicine as a Profession "wants a full investigation into the involvement of the

medical profession in detention centres. It is also calling for publication of the Senate Intelligence Committee's inquiry into CIA practices and wants rules to ensure doctors and psychiatrists working for the military are allowed to abide by the ethical obligations of their profession."

The U.S. makes an exception to human rights for the prisoners at Guantánamo. After torture and 12 years with no trials, some of them will be put on trial soon. Usual criminal trial procedures are an exception for them, as well. There are problematic negotiations ongoing to try to release to Yemen other prisoners who were cleared long ago. But their ordeals are hardly over. Nor is the problem going forward of medical ethics in regard to prisoners. As the *Guardian* article states, "Although the DoD has taken steps to address concerns over practices at Guantánamo Bay in recent years, and the CIA has said it no longer has suspects in detention, the task force says that these 'changed roles for health professionals and anemic ethical standards' remain."

Polly Mann is a co-founder of Women Against Military Madness and a regular contributor and columnist for the WAMM newsletter.



Congratulations to Sami Rasouli

2013 recipient of the Vincent L. Hawkinson Honorary Award for Peace and Justice. Sami Rasouli inspired the founding of the Iraqi and American Reconciliation Project (IARP) in Minneapolis, partnering with the Muslim Peacemaker Teams in Iraq. He has initiated and provided leadership in many people-to-people peace and friendship programs between Americans and Iraqis.

LOOKING FOR LAST MINUTE GIFT IDEAS?

How about a membership to WAMM? It's never been more important than now for people to be informed about the world and our country's role in it. With a WAMM membership your friends and relatives can be part of an organization knowing it's working to make a better world. She/he or they will receive 8 issues of the WAMM newsletter throughout the year.

Women Against Military Madness

The Gift of a WAMM membership will last well beyond the holiday season. Your recipient(s) will be mailed our highly acclaimed newsletter for an entire year.

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Breaking Bad Chemistry *by Polly Mann and Mary Beaudoin*

The Trench

Recalling where science, industry and military art converge. Challenging Entrenched Positions. History of chemical warfare beginning with WWI trench warfare. Contemporary articles on chemical weapons. Commentary including Syria. <http://www.the-trench.org/>

*Photo: U.S. Army Chemical Materials Agency
Student training for chemical destruction at the Aberdeen Proving Ground, Maryland. This chemical production facility has since been destroyed.*



The government of Syria has to get rid of its chemical weapons and soon, under threat of a military strike by the U.S. A timetable was developed by the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and endorsed by the U.N. after a freinemy agreement between Russia and the U.S. According to this plan, the most critical of Syria’s weapons must be transported out of Syria by December 31 of this year and destroyed by March 15 of next year. All other chemical materials must be eliminated by June 30.

So what is the process? One might ask the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers currently involved in getting rid of some chemical weapons here in the U.S. They are working just four miles from the White House in the affluent Washington, D.C. neighborhood of Spring Valley where a city environmental expert made a stunning discovery—evidence of several buried pits of toxic chemical weapons from World War I. According to a Northwest Washington

community paper, The Northwest Current, the Army discovered “literally thousands of chemicals, vials, shells and mortar under Spring Valley.” One house in the residential area was destroyed by a wrecking crew in order to excavate the soil beneath it. Seven houses in the area are considered in “the danger zone.”¹

An Army Corps of Engineers public service video explains the complex process with which the chemicals are being removed. Work is not expected to be completed until late next year. Even observing extreme caution, especially considering the location, the Corps felt compelled to state that alarms will “sound if deadly poisons should leak” and that ambulances will be at the ready to “take workers to the hospital.”²

It is estimated that there are 250 such sites in 40 states. Before chemical weapons were banned, the United States buried, burned or dumped such munitions into the sea. In the early 1970s an international agreement outlawed dumping into the sea. In its 2012 report on dealing with these weapons, the National Research Council Board on Army Science and Technology stated: “Of greatest concern for the future are sites in residential areas and large sites on legacy military installations.” The chemical weapons at these sites are classified by the army as Nonstockpile Chemical Weapons—the detritus of earlier wars and research no longer considered useful which have been buried in caches around the country.

The New York Times reported that getting rid of U.S. chemical weapons “has been more complex, more time-consuming, more costly and more environmentally fraught than anyone imagined.” The cost of all clean-up so far has been \$35.4 billion and there is no end in sight.³

Chemical weapons and their use as WMD are narrowly defined by the Chemical Weapons Convention. Commonly mentioned are sarin, mustard gas and VX, all of which could be used as WMD. (The nerve agent VX is a member of the organophosphate family, similar to present day insecticides.) Exception has somehow been mysteriously made for the US using depleted uranium and white phosphorous in violation of the convention after it went into effect in 1997.

Other than Nonstockpile Chemical Weapons, the U.S. has had to deal with another category of weapons—Stockpile Weapons whose storage may be more analogous to the storage in Syria. These weapons were manufactured and

continued on page 7

Breaking Bad Chemistry,

continued from page 6

stockpiled at U.S. Army warfare production facilities in North Carolina, Alabama, Colorado, Arkansas, Indiana and Maryland. The responsibility for their destruction was the U.S. Army Chemical Materials Agency (CMA) which states:

From the 1920s to the early 1990s, the United States produced an inventory of rockets, bomblets, land mines and other munitions capable of delivering nerve, blister and hallucinogenic chemical agents. The United States ended its chemical warfare program after entering into international agreements that led to a worldwide chemical weapons ban.⁴

The Chemical Weapons Convention calls for the destruction of production facilities, as well as weapons, themselves. Syria, which signed the treaty, destroyed its facilities in approximately one month, meeting the November 1 deadline set by OPCW and the UN.⁵ AlJazeera reported inspectors saying that the destruction “could include smashing mixing equipment with sledgehammers, blowing up delivery missiles, driving tanks over empty shells or filling them with concrete, and running machines without lubricant so they become inoperable.”⁶ In the haste to stop Syria from having the capacity to produce weapons by a strict deadline, the necessity of employing crude methods indicates that political expediency was valued over the safety, health and environmental issues that could affect the Syrian people.

But no such haste was required for the U.S. to destroy its manufacturing and mixing facilities. Although the U.S. ratified the Chemical Weapons Ban Treaty that went into effect in 1997, it was given until 2007 to destroy its own production facilities. (The last one of several was demolished at Aberdeen Proving Ground, Maryland on December 28, 2006.)⁷ The situation isn't the same as in Syria because the U.S. had more and larger facilities—however, it still shows how countries are treated differently. And Syria is operating under extraordinary conditions. The next rush will be to destroy its weapons stockpiles.

The U.S. has yet to remove all of its stockpiles. Two stockpiles of deadly chemical weapons remain. The military says it will destroy them there but not by incineration as it has before. The Blue Grass Army Depot in Kentucky, according to the U.S. Army Chemical Materials Agency, “comprises 523 tons of nerve agents GB and VX, and mustard agent in projectiles, warheads and rockets.” The

chemicals there are to be destroyed through a process of neutralization and water oxidation and the Army has until the year 2023.⁸ The other site is the Pueblo Chemical Depot in Colorado where chemicals are to be destroyed through a process of neutralization followed by biotreatment. The *Denver Post* reported last year that the Pueblo Depot “holds 700,000 munitions, some of which are prone to leak.” The Colorado Department of Health and the Environment tried to hold the Army to a deadline to destroy the waste, as well as to comply with state environmental regulations for handling and storing hazardous waste. However, courts ruled that the federal government has jurisdiction over states in regard to weapons.⁹

Citizen concerns over the dangers inherent in weapons disposal reveal U.S. hypocrisy in that a.) it lays bare the fact that the U.S. had these chemical weapons for use; b.) the U.S still has chemical weapons like sarin, mustard gas and VX stockpiled and it has not yet gotten rid of in spite of being subject to the Chemical Weapons Convention Ban treaty; c.) the difficulty of getting rid of chemical weapons, and perhaps most of all; and d.) Syria, while dealing with 80+ foreign groups working to tear it asunder and existing under crippling sanctions is being held to a tight deadline when the U.S., which has plenty of funding and domestic stability, has been taking many years to destroy its own weapons.

The first solution proposed for getting rid of Syria's chemical weapons shows the lack of foresight with which the demand was made. The plan for getting them out of the country and into a NATO country. It was suggested that Albania take them, but the Albanian people protested passionately. Norway, claiming not to have the technical expertise to dispose of such chemicals, offered a ship to transport them out, but there was nowhere to transport them to as no country wants to take them. As of November 19, the latest discussion about how to deal with the weapons-without-a-country involved neutralizing them and disposing of them at sea on a ship or on an offshore rig.¹⁰ Given the difficulties, it is astounding that the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons on November 20 was actually advertising on its web site for volunteer funding and opening bids for private and state contractors to destroy Syria's chemical weapons.¹¹ You might wonder if the shame of placing an impossibly onerous burden on besieged Syria was too embarrassing for the U.S. because on November 29, OPCW

continued on page 8



Photo: U.S. Army

Demolition of the house at 4825 Glenbrook in the Spring Valley neighborhood, Washington, D.C.

The Ghost of Chemicals Past

This property is part of the Spring Valley Formerly Used Defense Site (FUDS), which consists of approximately 661 acres in the northwest section of Washington, D.C. During the World War I-era, the U.S. government used the site, known as the American University Experiment Station, for research and testing of chemical agents, equipment, and munitions. Today, the site encompasses approximately 1,600 private homes, including several embassies and foreign properties, as well as the American University and Wesley Seminary. The Army Corps of Engineers has been actively investigating and cleaning up the Spring Valley FUDS for almost 20 years. This work includes the identification and removal of arsenic-contaminated soil, a groundwater investigation, and the search for additional munitions, both in burial pits and isolated items on residential properties.

WAMM THANKS

Mary and Angelo Percich in memory of Bob Heberle

Iraqi and American Reconciliation Committee (IARP) in honor of Steve Clemens for his most recent "over-the-top" hosting of visitors from Najaf, Iraq.

Thank you to all who donated to WAMM on Give to the Max Day and the anonymous matching donor.

Thank you to all the Silent Auction donors. WAMM advocates patronizing these businesses. Their names can be found online at womenagainstmilitarymadness.org

Breaking Bad Chemistry,

continued from page 7

announced that the U.S. offered to contribute "destruction technology, full operational support and financing to neutralise Syria's priority chemicals."¹² But then a cynic might say offers of "help" and contractors always go hand in hand with occupiers entering countries.

Yet in the short term, with a change in focus to the removal of chemical weapons, U.S. bombing of Syria, which could have been worse for the people, was avoided. Dr. Jean Pascal Zanders, a Senior Research fellow at the EU Institute for Security Studies and a specialist who participates in working groups on chemical, biological and toxic weapons disarmament takes a long range view of recent developments with regard to Syria. He explains the hope he finds in recent developments:

In the end, this international effort would strengthen the norm and international agreements against CW and their use in armed conflict much more than any military strike might be able to achieve.

The operation, more than anything else under the present circumstances, could lay solid foundations to build a Middle East free from non-conventional weaponry, as desired by the 2010 Review Conference of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).¹³

Sara Flounders of the International Action Center went on a delegation to Syria with former Attorney General Ramsey Clark and former U.S. Congresswoman Cynthia McKinney in October. She said that Israel, which occupies the Golan Heights only miles from Damascus and is a proxy for U.S. interests, has bombed Syria several times. At the same time, she has something empowering to say for the U.S. peace movement: "Before

the threatened U.S. bombing, Congressional offices were overwhelmed with calls opposing any bombing. Rep. Nancy Pelosi knew she'd pay the price for supporting the Obama proposal for cruise missile attack, so Congressional leaders avoided a vote. This gives hope regarding the power of citizen pressure."¹⁴

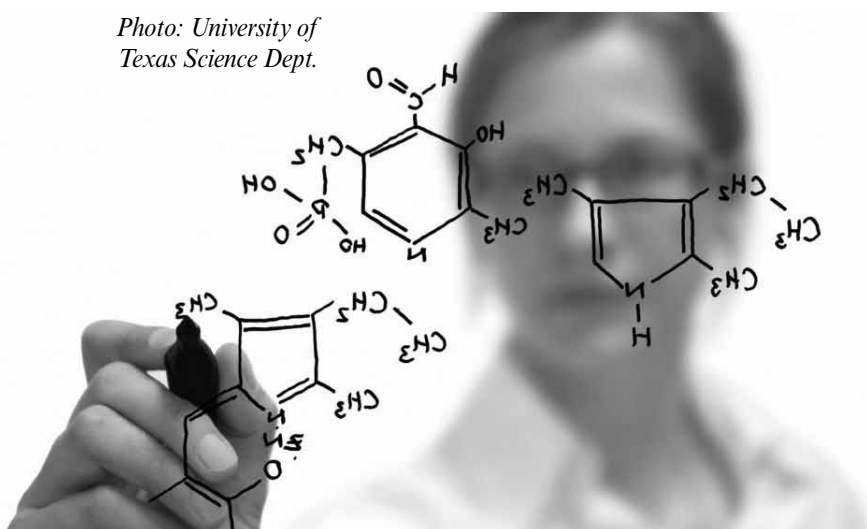
Our collective empowerment can work to put an end to our country's hypocrisy about weapons and can fuel our efforts to stop future wars and occupations, directly or through partner countries.

Polly Mann is a founder of Women Against Military Madness and writes regularly for the newsletter. Mary Beaudoin is the newsletter editor and a writer.

Endnotes

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Photo: University of Texas Science Dept.



Dr. Strangelove Part Duex

by Mary Beaudoin

part duex: a superficial, unnecessary or overly bad sequel to a classic film

—from the *Urban Dictionary*

In 2013, the nuclear security of the country came to sound like something out of director Stanley Kubrick's brilliant 1964 Cold War satire, "Dr. Strangelove or How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb."

In May, the *Associated Press* revealed that 17 Minuteman-3 launch control officers at the Minot Air Force Base in North Dakota were "taken off duty"; Congress was informed that it was because they lacked "proper attitude." In August a colonel in charge of security forces was fired after the Intercontinental Ballistic Missile (ICBM) base in Montana failed a safety and security inspection.¹

More recently—at the end of September and beginning of October—two top ranking military brass in charge of U.S. nuclear weapons were relieved of their commands

Media reports announced that Major General Michael Carey who was responsible for 450 intercontinental ballistic missiles at three different locations was fired for "personal misbehavior" that took place at "an unspecified location." According to *NBC News*, the Air Force said that the firing was "due to a loss of trust and confidence in his leadership and judgment."² The *Los Angeles Times* reported that a U.S. official told them that the misbehavior involved alcohol. The *AP* reported hearing this from senior defense officials, as well.³

The second high-ranking military officer relieved of his duties was Vice Admirable Timothy M. Giardina, whose title, in his particular case, may give added meaning to the word "vice." Mainstream media reported the fact that he was under criminal investigation for using fake poker chips, but the most detailed reporting came from the staff at *PokerWorks*, an online poker publication: "According to Pottawattamie County Attorney Matt Wilbur, the vice admiral 'put at least \$1,500 in counterfeit poker chips into play at the Horseshoe Council Bluffs [a casino in Council Bluffs, Iowa], which is just across the river from Omaha, Nebraska.'"⁴ The online periodical *omaha.com*, working together with *World-Herald*, followed up on the story reporting that the Iowa Division of Criminal Investigation [passing fake poker chips is a felony in Iowa] decided not to press charges due to the fact that the accused had no previous record; the case was turned over to the U.S. Defense Department.⁵

What's a naval officer doing in the Great Plains so far from sea in the first place? The USN's ballistic missile submarine force is part of U.S. Strategic Command. Offutt Air Force Base near Omaha, where Giardina was the deputy commander, is the headquarters of U.S. Strategic Command, which has responsibility for U.S. global strike and nuclear deterrence.

continued on page 11



WORD UP!

No Mojo in Minot
There is very much an acknowledged knowledge at the top level of the Air Force that there are problems in the nuclear field. The issues though, are difficult for many reasons. The largest problems that I have found, purely through conversations with peers in nuclear career fields and at Minot, are related to the extreme strain that nuclear weapons impart on personnel with their relatively limited support and recognition. Nukes have three issues associated with them from a personnel standpoint. 1. They require constant attention, with a high level of stress associated with them. 2. They necessitate relative distance from populated areas. Submarines can move to ports occasionally. Missile silos cannot. 3. Nuclear weapons are best used when they are not actually used. There is no glory in constantly being at the ready. There is little pride in taking part in events that didn't happen. There are limits to pay incentives, the remoteness of bases is an intractable issue and the lack of concrete wartime accomplishments cannot be fixed...we have a workforce that is responsible for our nuclear arsenal that is variously bored, underappreciated, banished to the middle of nowhere or left without the support they need. The Air Force is trying to fix the issue...That being said, there is unlikely to be a way to satisfactorily make a place like Minot a desirable base or help the nuclear mission regain the mojo it had during the cold war.
—Comment made online by military man, responding to article, "Air Force Nuclear Missile Officers: bored, cranky, frustrated and courtmarshalled," November 22, 2013, FB, foreignpolicy.com

General Buck, played by actor George C. Scott, at the table in the War Room. Scene from the 1964 film Dr. Strangelove.

November/December 2013 WAMM Calendar

Please note that WAMM's provision of information on other group's events is not meant to convey or endorse any action contrary to public policy that would be inconsistent with exempt purposes under Internal Revenue Code Section 501(c)(3) i.e., charitable purposes.

Ongoing WAMM Vigils for Peace

Vigil to End War:

Every Wednesday, 5:00 to 6:00 p.m. (Changes to 4:30 to 5:30 on Nov. 1) on the Lake Street/Marshall Avenue Bridge spanning the Mississippi River between Minneapolis and St. Paul. FFI: Call 612-522-1861 or WAMM 612-827-5364.

Vigil to End the Occupation of Palestine:

Every Friday, 4:15 to 5:30 p.m. at Summit and Snelling Avenues, St. Paul. FFI: Call WAMM, 612-827-5364.

Peace Vigil: Every Tuesday, 5:00 to 6:00 p.m. on the Eastside of the Franklin Avenue Bridge, Minneapolis. Sponsored by: Prospect Hill Neighbors for Peace. FFI: 612-379-7398

Grandmothers for Peace Vigils

50th St. and Halifax (1 block w. of France) 4:45 p.m. to 5:45 p.m. FFI: Marian Wright, 612-927-7607

For information on additional peace vigils in Minnesota and Wisconsin, call the WAMM office at 612-827-5364.

Ongoing WAMM Committee Meetings

Board Meeting: Third Tuesday of each month, 6:00 p.m. at WAMM, 4200 Cedar Avenue South, Suite 3, Minneapolis. FFI: Call WAMM, 612-827-5364.

The WAMM Book Club. Third Saturday of each month, 10:00 a.m., AFRO Deli: 1939 S. 5th St. Minneapolis (Riverside and 20th Avenue). Meet in the rear left room, behind the Deli. FFI: Suzan Koch: suzykoch@comcast.net

End War Committee: Acting Against War and the Threats of War. First Monday of each month, 5:30 p.m. FFI: Call Marie 612-827-5364

Ground All Drones. First Thursdays of every month, 4:30 to 6:00 p.m., 4200 Cedar Ave., Minneapolis. FFI: 612-827-5364

Middle East Committee: Second Monday of each month, 9:30 a.m. at WAMM, 4200 Cedar Avenue South, Suite 3, Minneapolis. FFI: Call WAMM 612-827-5364

Media Committee: FFI: Email the committee, wammmedia@gmail.com.

WAMM Occupy: FFI: Call WAMM, 612-827-5364.

St. Joan of Arc/WAMM

Peacemakers: Fourth Tuesday of each month, 7:00 to 8:00 p.m. at St. Joan of Arc Church, Parish Center, 4537 Third Avenue South, Minneapolis. FFI: Barbara, 612-722-4444

Tackling Torture at the Top

(T3): Second Wednesday of each month, 10:00 a.m. at 4200 Cedar Avenue, Minneapolis.

Ongoing Events

Committee to Stop FBI Repression. Stand with the people subpoenaed in a witch hunt, defend civil liberties. Learn what you can do. All who stand up and act for justice and solidarity are welcome. FFI: See stopfbi.net and mnStopFBI.wordpress.com, or call (612) 379-3585.

People of Faith Peacemakers Breakfast: Second and fourth Wednesdays, 8:00 to 9:30 a.m. at African Development Center, Riverside and 20th Avenues. A resource and support group for those concerned about peace with justice from a faith perspective. FFI: www.justviewpoint.org or call 763-784-5177

Grandmothers for Peace:

First Wednesday 12:45 p.m. at Edina Public Library, 5280 Grandview Square, Edina. Program around justice issue that helps us to understand our role in changing unjust systems. FFI: 952-929-1566

Tea Time Conversational Salons:

Most Tuesdays, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. at Mad Hatter's Teahouse, 943 West Seventh St., St. Paul. Salons are open to all. Suggested donations \$3-\$5 include tea, treats. FFI: 651-227-2511 or 651-227-3228.

Third Thursday Global Issues

Forum: 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. at Hennepin Ave. United Methodist Church, Groveland at Lyndale Ave., Minneapolis. FFI: globalsolutionsmn.org

Middle East Peace Now:

Usually 2nd or 3rd Saturdays, 9:30 a.m. Refreshments, 10:00 a.m. Program. Location may vary. FFI: www.mepn.org

Dignity, Not Detention Vigil:

Every first Sunday, 2:30 to 3:00 p.m. at 425 Grove Street (Ramsey County Law Enforcement Center). Vigil for civil immigrant detainees in jail at request of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). Sponsored by: Interfaith Coalition for Immigration, Advocates for Human Rights and others. FFI: Email interfaithonimmigration@gmail.com

Special Events

Additional upcoming events are listed at www.worldwidewamm.org, or you may call the WAMM office for more information: 612-827-5364. Other peace and justice events can be found on Minnesota Alliance for Peacemakers at www.mapm.org.

WAMM Annual Meeting

The annual meeting will take place in March. Call the WAMM office at 612-827-5364 or see the WAMM web site womenagainstmilitarymadness.org for date and location.

Application Open for WAMM Board

Now accepting applications for the 2014/2015 WAMM Board of Directors. If you are interested or would like additional information, please call the WAMM office at 612-827-5364.

WAMM Membership

___ \$15–39 Low Income/Student membership

___ \$40–59 Annual membership

___ \$60–199 Household membership

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Pledge for Peace

(WAMM will send a coupon book)

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WAMM Committees

Issues Committees:

- Book Club
- Counter Recruitment
- End War Committee: Acting Against War and the Threats of War
- Immigration
- Media
- Middle East
- St. Joan of Arc/WAMM Peacemakers
- Ground All Drones
- Tackling Torture at the Top
- WAMM Occupy

Administrative and Other Committees:

- Coordinating
- Finance
- Fundraising
- New Member
- Newsletter
- Personnel
- Program/New Issues
- Silent Auction

WAMM Board

- Meredith Aby
- Marie Braun, Treasurer
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- Sarah Martin
- Sue Ann Martinson (on leave of absence)
- JoAnn Maus
- Brigid McDonald
- BethAnne Nelson
- Coleen Rowley
- Margaret Sarfehjooy
- Lucia Wilkes Smith Secretary
- Sharon Rice Vaughan Co-Chair
- Carol Walker Co-Chair

Dr. Strangelove Part Deux,

continued from page 9

So these two high-ranking officers were relieved of duty, in quick succession, for conduct unbecoming? The firings have given rise to speculation from both the right and the left as to whether there is more to the story, whether Deep Government could be concealing something. It's hard to accept that life and death in the U.S.—and the world—have, in a big way, been in the hands of a problem drinker and a gambler who cheats.

The story points to the absurdity of maintaining a nuclear arsenal in the first place in the same way that *Dr. Strangelove* does. Integral to this “defense” strategy is a set of mind-boggling beliefs: blind faith in technology, disregard for the existence of Murphy's Law, acceptance of the concept of Mutually Assured Destruction, and trust that those in charge are infallible human beings capable only of rational, stable behavior.

The similarities to *Dr. Strangelove* go beyond generalities. The cast of characters in the black comedy includes an unhinged Air Force General. And poker is used as a metaphor for gambling with the fate of the world.

The set for *Strangelove* is described this way: “In the middle of the room there was a large circular table lit from above by a circle of lamps, suggesting a poker table. Kubrick insisted that the table be covered with green

baize (although this could not be seen in the black and white film) to reinforce the actors' impression that they are playing a game of poker for the fate of the world.”⁶

Endnotes

1. Burns, Robert. U.S. Nuclear Forces Face a Cascade of Missteps. Associated Press. October 12, 2013.
2. Usnews.nbc.com/_news/2013/10/11. Accessed Nov. 11, 2013-11-29
3. latimes.com October 21, 2013. Associated Press, Ibid footnote 1.
4. Pokerworks staff. Poker News/Gambling and the Law section. No. 2 Nuke Commander escapes being charged in counterfeit poker chip scandal. October 4, 2013. Pokerworks.com/poker-news 2013/10/04
5. As of October 1, 2013, Giardina remained under investigation by the Naval Criminal Investigative Service according to Liewer, Steve. World-Herald staff writer. omaha.com October 1, 2013 in “Iowa not pressing charges against StratCom officer regarding fake casino chips.”
6. Frayling, Sir Christopher interview with Sir Ken Adam. A Kubrick Masterclass, 2005. Excerpts published online at Berlinale talent capus and the Script Factory website, Wikipedia footnote.

Mary Beaudoin is the editor of the Women Against Military Madness newsletter.



4200 Cedar Avenue South, Suite 3
 Minneapolis, Minnesota 55407
 (612) 827-5364 FAX: (612) 827-6433
 e-mail: wamm@mtn.org
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**you can't hide truth
 you can't stop love
 the message escapes
 on the wings of a dove**

No War Toys R Us: Peace Day in Najaf

by Sami Rasouli, Muslim Peacemaker Team

On September 21, 2013 a group of local NGOs in Najaf, Iraq, lead by a group of young people called the Moja Team held an event. Youth collected hundreds of weapon-toys from local Iraqi kids in Najaf prior to the event.

The toy weapons were displayed in a main square in Najaf, so that the kids could destroy them. Many children, parents and government officials attended the event. The Muslim Peace Maker Team participated, led by Sameera Al Hallawi. Omar, Ayah and other kids helped operate the huge asphalt-paving steel wheel roller to destroy all the toy weapons in honor of the Global Day of Peace.



Photos:?????

Above: Toy weapons lined up.

Right: Omar and Ayah about to crush toy armaments.

