

Women Against Military Madness

Newsletter

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Armies on the Move: Trident Juncture 2015

by Mary Beaudoin

Over the last few decades, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) has grown in strength to become a dangerous force in the world.

This was really brought home to the U.S. when the masters of war gathered at a NATO summit in Chicago in 2012 to renew their commitments to an ever-expanding military agenda, not long after NATO's destruction of Libya.¹ The summit was held over the objections of a mass mobilization of resistance on the part of the antiwar public, led through the streets by veterans of the U.S. wars on Iraq and Afghanistan, culminating in them throwing their medals back in the direction of the heavily fortified gathering of government officials and military brass, but the protests of these recalcitrant citizens were completely disregarded. At a subsequent NATO summit, held in Newport, Wales, in 2014, antiwar rallies were held outside a "ring of steel"—high, impenetrable walls keeping the enforcers of world power secure in their citadel and away from the people again.

Voices crying out for peace are not meaningful to war planners who claim that what they do is for the people's defense and the people's security; thus, NATO's newest training-for-war exercise, which is called Trident Juncture 2015, commenced on September 28 and proceeded through November 6. It was being conducted mainly throughout Italy, Portugal, and Spain, and involved the participation of 36,000 personnel from more than 30 allied and partner nations, almost 200 aircraft, and 60 ships and submarines.²

The U.S. played a leading role. The NATO Supreme Allied Commander in Europe is



always a U.S. general appointed by the President. Given this fact, it should come as no surprise that NATO's war training is consistent with the new national military strategy that the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff laid out in June.³ Planners believed that while chasing insurgents and violent extremists (that the U.S. helped create in Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Somalia, etc.), the West had neglected to have its Rapid Response Force practice more maneuver warfare—*"a variety of rapid, focused, and unexpected actions which create a turbulent and rapidly deteriorating situation with which the enemy cannot cope."*⁴

This sounds a lot like the "Shock and Awe" tactic that was used when the U.S. attacked Iraq

continued on page 4

Image Right:

"Armies of the Air,"

by Albert Robida,

French illustrator.

Cover art for the paper novel,

Guerre Infernale

(*"The Infernal War."*)

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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.

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Women Against Military Madness is a nonviolent, feminist organization, founded in 1982, 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.

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Saying 'No' to NATO

by Mary Beaudoin



Spanish protesters rally against NATO and the bloc's bases in the country during a march from Madrid to the Torrejón Air Base on April 25, 2015. (Image: Press TV)

It's evident that Europe is being used as a staging ground for threatening other regions. As European citizens protest U.S.-led NATO militarism, U.S. citizens can heed what they say and demand that our government stop intruding on their land with our military bases and machinery of war in what looks like a buildup to WWII. Referred to bitterly as "the Atlanticists," in other parts of the world, NATO nations have moved far from their supposed origins as organizing for defense. NATO has split apart Yugoslavia, bombed Libya relentlessly, instigated a literal tug of war over Ukraine with its partners, and is encircling Russia. It continues to incorporate compliant nations and divide the world into Allies and Others. Like their European counterparts, people in the U.S. can call out NATO's role in military madness.

It seems not everyone on the European continent is so enthusiastic about NATO's presence there.

Mladen Bojanic is the former president of Montenegro, one of the six original republics of the Federal Socialist Republic of Yugoslavia when it was torn asunder in NATO's landmark assertion of "humanitarian intervention." Bojanic, currently a member of the Montenegro parliament, is reported saying that citizens of Montenegro during NATO's 1999 bombing "have strong memories that NATO killed our people, including civilians and especially children, that it destroyed our country and poisoned our air and water." And that "NATO has to know that in Montenegro there are a huge number of people who consider this military alliance a criminal organization which contrary to the stipulations of international law, and far from reason, right and moral (sic), kills people across the planet and destroys numerous countries."¹



IMAGE: OLTRELETTI.ORG



Italian physicist Massimo Zucchetti (pictured below left) recalls that in 1999, most of the NATO warplanes that bombed the Balkans took off from Italian air bases. Zucchetti is the founder of No War, No NATO and says that Italy is violating the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty by allowing Americans to store nuclear bombs [tactical nuclear, mini-nukes, or bunker busters] in hangars at Aviano and Ghedi Torre air bases. He told *Sputnik News* on October 1 that NATO is the biggest threat to peace and that Italy should pull out of NATO, which is “at variance with the nation’s interests,” and instead become “a territory of peace, a link between various parts of Europe.”²

War Resisters League International (WRL-intl) describes the many reasons why Spain, another host nation to Trident Juncture 2015, is strategic for NATO: Spain represents the spearhead of NATO in Africa. Hence, it acts as the southern frontier of the European Union to control the migration of people fleeing poverty or war to “Fortress Europe.” NATO could launch an invasion of North Africa from there in the power struggle over Africa. But most of all, War Resisters League speculates that “the main message [that NATO is delivering with this exercise] might be for China, a country with strong economic and geo-strategic interests in Africa.”³ Various groups of Spanish antiwar activists are resisting NATO, including in the city of Zaragoza, where NATO has erected a large mobile command post for the exercise.

Portuguese antiwar activists have plenty of experience opposing NATO from the 2010 NATO summit in Lisbon to Chicago in 2012. Among other antiwar groups, the Portugal Council for Peace and

Cooperation was an organizer in the anti-NATO activities and continues to be active in 2015.

Trident Juncture 2016 is slated to follow Trident 2015. It’s building toward NATO 2020, the vision that it developed in Chicago in 2012, which has as its primary challenge to “align nations’ priorities with NATO’s priorities.”⁴ NATO priorities are aligned with U.S. hegemonic priorities to threaten nuclear war by installing in the year 2020, at its European bases within reach of Russia, B61-12 bombs with capacities four times that of Hiroshima.⁵ Paul Craig Roberts, formerly Assistant Secretary of the U.S. Treasury and former associate editor of the *Wall Street Journal*, commented that he knows many of the “insane ideologues” who control U.S. foreign policy and that they are “capable of defending U.S. hegemony with nuclear weapons.”⁶ “Allied” nation-states will be subsumed by such military madness, and Moscow says it will be forced to react with threatening weapons, as well.

In the meantime, Russia and China have been practicing joint military exercises. Although the shame of living in such a unipolar power may be reduced, and a peaceful multipolar world is to be hoped for, escalating power struggles between militarized forces are dangerous to all.

The crazy thing is that the major powers agree—whether openly or tacitly—not to clash directly while they are in the same vicinities as they conduct proxy wars against smaller, more defenseless nations, or while they practice war exercises aimed at each other. If that is possible, it has to be possible not to clash at all. Of course, people have to have the will to end war, and the weapons industry has to be gotten rid of.

It’s no time for the peace movement to relax.

ENDNOTES

1. “Say No to NATO, They Owe Us Blood—Former Montenegrin President,” *sputniknews.com*. October 16, 2015. See also: *Fool’s Crusade: Yugoslavia, NATO and Western Delusions* by Diana Johnstone (Monthly Review Press, 2002)
2. “NATO, not Russia, Poses Biggest Threat to European Peace,” *sputniknews.com*, October 1, 2015. Regarding nonstrategic, nuclear bombs that the U.S. maintains in Europe: “According to a recently unclassified report, the United States now deploys 160-200 bombs at six bases in Belgium, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands and Turkey. Some of these weapons are stored at U.S. bases and would be delivered by U.S. aircraft. Others are stored at bases operated by the ‘host nations’ and would be delivered by that nation’s aircraft if NATO decided to employ nuclear weapons.” “Nonstrategic Nuclear Weapons.” Congressional Research Service, prepared for Members and Committees of Congress. December 19, 2012
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4. “Summit Declaration on Defence Capabilities: Toward NATO Forces,” 2020, May 20, 2012 *nato.int*
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6. “The Fall of the Unipower.” Roberts, Dr. Paul Craig. and Engdahl, F. William. Global Research. *globalresearch.ca*.

ACTION

CALL TO BE ON THE STREETS EVERYWHERE No Bombs in the Air, No Boots on the Ground!

No advisors, trainers, Special Forces, no weapons, no proxies, no drones

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WAMM THANKS

In Memory of Gillian Furst:
Gillian Furst's four cousins



Image: SHAPE

*NATO's Response Force carry out a landing exercise
(Image: Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE))*

Armies on the Move: Trident Juncture 2015

continued from page 1

in 2003, and NATO attacked Libya in 2011. Now, through the coordinated efforts of NATO nations and partners, “battle staff readiness” is being brought up to date. At the same time, NATO is training in counter-insurgency. Together these types of warfare combined—maneuver and counterinsurgency—are described as the new “hybrid warfare,” a lively, lethal mix that “blends conventional and irregular forces to create ambiguity, seize the initiative, and paralyze the adversary.”⁵

While designed to sharpen military skills, this training exercise serves at the same time to ensure what NATO calls “high visibility.” Though NATO has openly professed hostility to Russia, General Hans-Lothar Domröse, Commander of Joint Force Command for Trident Juncture 2015, headquartered in Brunssum, Netherlands, announced, quite without irony, that Russia was invited as an observer, and that anyway (presumably if no Russian officials showed up), they were sure to hear about it.⁶ After all, intimidating Russia with NATO’s prowess was one of the purposes for this show of force.

However, on October 16, Russia stole the show before it went live⁷ by firing cruise missiles from the Caspian Sea 1,500 km (over 900 miles) away into Syria, hitting terrorist enclaves with what it claimed was “pinpoint” accuracy. This took NATO by surprise and demonstrated that Russia had the technological capability to reach distant targets while eluding detection. It also proved hardly believable that

the U.S., with its enormously powerful surveillance and military equipment chasing terrorists in Toyotas and tennis shoes for months and years across Iraq and Syria, was as unsuccessful as bumbling Keystone Cops—even when those terrorists of the many monikers were aided by—or perhaps it would be accurate to say—*because* those terrorists were aided by “trainers,” “advisors,” and weapons donations from some NATO members and partners.

But there are many more implications to the Russian action than what it reveals about the War on Terror/War on ISIL. The power dynamic in the Middle East and the world has changed with Russia’s entry into Syria. The struggle over Syria embodies the struggle over how power in the world is determined. It is a struggle between international law based on the sovereignty of nation states, which Russia says it adheres to, and the destabilizing, usurping of national sovereignty for globalists of the New World Order, which NATO adheres to while attempting to make the concept of nation-states appear antiquated (except when it wants to reinvent the concept of sovereignty as it does in the case of Crimea and Ukraine). Russia’s President Putin told the UN General Assembly in his speech on September 28 that Russia is in compliance with international law in Syria because its involvement has been by invitation of the sovereign nation-state of Syria, unlike that of the U.S. and some NATO nations which had been sending advisors and trainers and weapons, uninvited by the government; this while the U.S. and NATO refer to the Syrian government as a “regime,” which, dispensing with international law, can more easily be overthrown than an actual state government.

Russia wants to stop the spread of terrorism in its own region, and the U.S. is concerned about maintaining hegemony.

ENDNOTES

Both U.S./NATO and Russia have been conducting war exercises near their borderlands throughout the year, looking like part of a growing “action-reaction cycle in terms of military exercises.”⁸ Russia has had its own show of force: in the Barents Sea in the high north off its coast last March, it conducted an exercise involving 38,000 troops, 41 ships, 15 submarines, 110 planes, and more than 3,000 vehicles.⁹ You have to wonder if these drills would have been held if it weren’t for the fact that the U.S. has been planting, in several European countries within reach of Russia’s interior, tactical nuclear weapons and antiballistic missile systems which can also act as launch pads.

NATO brought out the big guns for Trident Juncture 2015 to demonstrate that it “means business.” And that included military-industrial business with splashy exhibitions of some of the latest hardware in the air, on land, and sea, as well as some equipment not to be seen, but nevertheless included, because the exercise involved simulating surveillance and cyber, chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear warfare. NATO has something to control all aspects of going into battle—in other words, to create full spectrum dominance.

Trident Junction 2015 offered the opportunity to observe lethal products tested in live simulations to determine, as much as is possible, how they could deliver more bang for their buck. Defense procurement experts were certain to be interested in seeing what manufacturers like Lockheed Martin, Boeing, and Northrop Grumman prominently showcased for when it’s time to Buy American.

Oh, but wait, there is more—the weapons industry hasn’t just created products. It is actively participating in the exercise:

*For the first time we’ve also invited a large number of defense industries to take part in the exercise and to observe evolutions, with the aim of generating exchanges and to bring insights and perspectives for the future and to accelerate military innovation.*¹⁰

So said Lieutenant General Phil Jones, with the sci-fi-like title: Chief of Staff Allied Command Transformation on the exercise of Trident Juncture 2015.

The titles of military commanders wasn’t the only thing that conjured up fiction. The entire exercise, Trident Juncture 2015, was actually conducted based on NATO’s invention of a fictitious geographical area known as SOROTON (which, for some reason, NATO always presents in capital letters). The scenario described sounds oddly familiar:

This fictitious but realistic setting sees a crisis unfold beyond NATO’s borders in a fictional country that is the victim of internal tensions, natural hazards and a neighbor’s aggression. This out-of-the-area setting in NATO terms has been designed to allow enough scope, depth and flexibility to really challenge our forces in the pursuit of an ambitious strategic and operational civilian and military campaign. Events in the exercise will range from subversion and terrorism to grand military maneuver on a large scale from the conditions of chemical warfare to the backgrounds of cyber and information, from the intricacies of tribal rivalries to the challenges of unpredictable and autocratic leaders...¹¹

Bearing in mind that this fictitious scenario was a dress rehearsal for an actual plan, shouldn’t some serious questions be asked—for starters: Doesn’t NATO going “beyond its borders” foretell attack, invasion, and imperial expansion?

Trident Juncture 2015 did not only involve the military. From its inception, civilian groups have had a role to play, too. After all, you can’t suddenly fill the skies and the Atlantic Ocean and Mediterranean Sea around Italy, Portugal, and Spain with bombers and battleships without these countries’ cooperation. Besides that, the soft power of international organizations, NGOs and agencies complemented the hard power of NATO militarism. Hence, such assistance “has become standard in NATO’s training and exercising and philosophy.”¹² And anyway, you need somebody to prepare the ground, and mop up the blood afterwards.

It takes a lot of cooperation for an exercise on this scale to take place. But not everyone does cooperate.

Mary Beaudoin is the editor of the Women Against Military Madness Newsletter, and an antiwar activist who participated with WAMM and many others in the 2012 action against NATO.

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2. “Press briefing on NATO exercise Trident Juncture 2015,” NATO Media Center, July 15, 2015, nato.int
3. *The National Military Strategy of the United States of America 2015*, subtitled *The United States Military’s Contribution to National Security*. Joint Chiefs of Staff. June 2015
4. “The Conduct of War,” *Warfighting*, U.S. Marine Corps Handbook, 1997
5. “The Military Environment: Continuity of Conflict.” Ibid, endnote no. 3
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7. Trident Juncture 2015 is divided into two parts: the live exercise involving tactical training and a joint operation from October 21 through November 6 were preceded by a computer-assisted command-post exercise beginning September 28.
8. Cycle description from Frear, Thomas; Kulesa, Lukasz; Kearns, Ian. “Preparing for the Worst: Are Russian and NATO Military Exercises Making War in Europe More Likely?” Policy Briefing. European Network. August 2015
9. Ove, Torsten, “Army Intel chief with Pittsburgh ties assesses Russia might,” *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, October 20, 2015; Tass Russian News Agency, tass.ru/en/search?query=Barents+Sea+drill
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Oops, Did We Forget about U.S. Nuclear Weapons?

A Warning from Modern Day Prophets

By Polly Mann

The U.S. population wasn't always so complacent about nuclear weapons. There have been mass mobilizations against nuclear weapons in decades past. Today, far fewer people are involved in antinuclear activity or even very aware of the danger posed by nuclear war.



*Above: Michael Walli, Sr. Megan Rice, and Greg Boerje-Obed
(Photo: Transform Now Plowshares)*

However, an action conducted by three individuals garnered some national attention and shook things up a bit a few years ago. They were briefly in the news again when, on September 15, 2015, Sister Megan Rice, an 85-year-old Catholic nun who belongs to the order of the Society of the Holy Child of Jesus, and Michael Walli of Washington, D.C., together with Greg Boertje-Obed of Duluth, Minnesota—both men Catholic Workers—were resentenced for damaging a storage bunker at the Y-12 Nuclear Weapons Complex in Oak Ridge, Tennessee, in 2012.

The complex contains the world's largest repository of highly enriched uranium—enough to make 10,000 nuclear warheads.

The three activists with the antinuclear group, Transform Now Plowshares, had originally been sentenced to three to five years in federal prison. They refused to accept a plea bargain and insisted on a trial by jury. A federal grand jury found them guilty on two felony accounts: sabotage (“The intent to injure, interfere with, or obstruct the national defense of the United States”—a vague definition that can be used to punish dissent); and depredation of government property (depredation is characterized as the act of

plundering, robbing, pillaging, or laying waste to government property). All three defendants were handcuffed, shackled, led from the courtroom, and sent to serve time in prison. Fellow Plowshares activists said that “they received a harsh and unjust sentence, in part, we think, for embarrassing authorities about the lax security.”

John LaForge of the Wisconsin-based Nukewatch commented about excluding evidence in the defense at the trials of antinuclear activists who commit actions intended to reveal the danger of nuclear weapons. Violations of morality and international law are omitted: “Judges and prosecutors have, in fact, placed nuclear weapons and war planning beyond the reach of the law—unlike assault rifles, poison gas, or other contraband—as if H-bombs were sacrosanct, unquestionable, and too precious to be addressed by mere mortals.”

Last May, the Plowshares Transform Now activists had already served two years in prison when the 6th U.S. District Circuit Court of Appeals threw out the sabotage charge and released them. The September resentencing resulted in counting time served for the lesser offense of depredation, or damaging of government property—the three had already served more time than guidelines recommended for that. The resentencing also prohibited them from entering the grounds of any nuclear facility and, as in the original sentencing, demanded that they pay approximately \$53,000 in restitution for damages to the Y-12 property.

The action by Transform Plowshares Now revealed how three senior citizens carrying only bibles, roses, a wire snipper (to cut fencing), hammers, and spray-paint could so easily breach a facility which describes itself on its website as “the ‘Fort Knox’ of uranium.” The fact that one of these people was a nun in her eighties drew particular attention.

The New York Times referred to the break-in as “the biggest security breach in the history of the nation’s atomic complex.” *The New Yorker* magazine of March 9, 2015, carried a 15-page article by Eric Schlosser, “Break-In at Y-12.” It reported that the Y-12 National Security Complex cost half a billion dollars in taxpayer money (according

to Nukewatch New Mexico, the U.S. nuclear weapons complex, composed of eight key facilities, exceeds \$8 billion annually to maintain). The article described in detail the antinuclear action: Security at the Oak Ridge structure is provided by 500 officers, five armored vehicles, Carling guns, video cameras, motion detectors, four perimeter fences, and rows of concrete blocks. On July 28, 2012, the three activists, dedicated to nonviolence, overcame these obstacles and violated the security of the complex.

To gain access to the facility, they walked through woods and security fences into the brightly lit nuclear area. Once there, the intruders spray-painted onto the building in large black letters such phrases as “WOE TO THE EMPIRE OF BLOOD,” “WORK FOR PEACE NOT WAR,” and “THE FRUIT OF JUSTICE IS PEACE.” The activists hammered on the wall of the building. They placed bibles and roses on the ground and sang religious songs. A patrol car approached at about 4:30 in the morning as they were singing “This Little Light of Mine, I’m Gonna Let It Shine.” The security officer who discovered them recognized that they were not terrorists but protesters, and they were handcuffed and brought to jail and charged.

Congressional hearings were called in regard to the break-in. Investigations of the Oak Ridge Y-12 National Security Facility proved that security was extremely faulty at the site. Security cameras did not work and communication between the two companies who provided security was poor. However, the intent of the Ploughshares Transform Now activists



Above: The Y-12 National Security Complex, whose website describes itself as “the ‘Fort Knox’ of uranium”, was compromised by an 82-year-old nun. (Image: DoD)

was not to reveal how poorly the site’s stockpile was protected. Their intent was to interfere with the potential for nuclear war that is threatening humanity.

These three are modern-day prophets. The late Rabbi Abraham Heschel would have agreed. He is quoted as having said: “The major activity of the prophet was interference. To interfere with the way things are going; whether in terms of militarism among nations, sexism in churches... The prophet criticizes and places himself/herself in opposition and therefore in a position of interfering with what is happening.”

In the meantime, the U.S. is calling for an upgrade in nuclear weapons.

As Sister Megan Rice told the *Knoxville News Sentinel* when she was released from federal prison:

This secrecy has predominated this industry. This is why the whole country and the whole world has not stopped it, it’s gone on for seventy years. We have the power, and the love, and the

strength and the courage to end it and transform the whole project... We will together respond and keep our planet sacred, alive, whole and healthy by transforming this into sustainable alternatives—which exist. To create better jobs! A cleaner environment! And a future for the seventh generation.

Isn’t it time to heed the warnings these three prophets have issued to us and demand an end to all nuclear weapons again? As Sister Megan Rice said in a *Democracy Now* TV and radio interview on May 19, “It isn’t just Congress. It’s not just the President. Every one of us is equally responsible to end the escalation.”

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

The New York Times reported that nuclear experts called this action “the biggest security breach in the history of the nation’s atomic complex.”

Make contact with other peace activists working on the anti-nuclear issue:

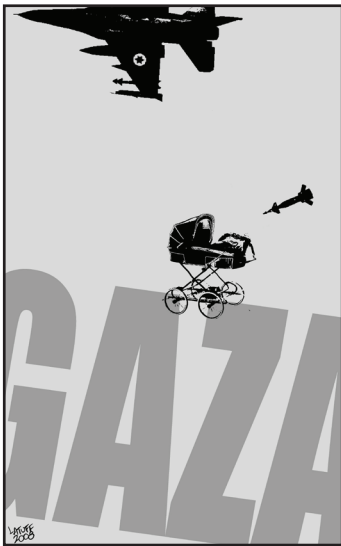
Ploughshares Transform Now - transformnowploughshares.wordpress.com

ICAN - icanw.org

Global Zero - globalzero.org

Eyewitness: Gaza

by Elaine Bradley



Little is known by the general public—especially the U.S. public—about the extremely dire situation in the Gaza Strip today, and how it has fared in the wake of “Operation Protective Edge,” the 51-day Israeli assault which began on July 8, 2014, and included bombing and soldiers on the ground.

The Israeli government is the largest recipient of U.S. aid, receiving \$3 billion per year, and the U.S. also approves massive arms sales to Israel. Through its PR apparatus and its military control over the Gaza Strip’s border crossings, the Israeli government has enormous power to shape outside perceptions of what takes place inside Gaza, which continues under siege for the eighth year. Thus Israel has denied access to reporters, doctors, humanitarian aid workers, and international observers, including Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International.

Elaine Bradley is one of the few “outsiders” who was actually able to enter Gaza. Having recently returned from eight months in Israeli-occupied Gaza and the West Bank, she gave a first hand account of the lives of the 1.8 million people in Gaza one year after Israel’s assault, which she also delivered in a Skype talk to the Middle East Committee of Women Against Military Madness.

—Margaret Sarfeyjooy

For 51 days in the summer of 2014, Israel pitted its state-of-the-art military machine against a people with no formal army, air force, or navy.

The fourth largest military power on the planet conducted a murderous campaign against 1.8 million people, more than half of them children, living in one of the most densely populated areas on earth.

These people are locked-in due to Israel’s crippling eight-year siege, described by the UN as a continuing collective penalty against the population of Gaza. Collective punishment is a crime under the Geneva Conventions.

Israel’s siege of Gaza has led to an estimated 75% of children under five suffering from malnutrition, which has resulted in stunted growth and developmental delays. The siege has stripped Gaza and its people of capacity and rendered their living conditions intolerable.

Variouly described as the largest open air prison in the world, and the world’s largest concentration camp, Gaza constantly stands on the brink of a public health crisis due to the devastated infrastructure – the result of four major military offensives in eight years—and the siege.

In the days before the launch of the latest offensive, Gaza hospitals were reporting that they had all but run out of many essential stocks of medicines and supplies as a result of the siege.

Operation Protective Edge was the latest chapter of a campaign against Gaza that has been deemed genocidal by world leaders including Evo Morales, the Bolivian president.

2,251 Gazans were killed, 1,462 of them civilians, 299 were women and 551 of these were children. 11,231 people were injured—two thirds of them seriously. Of the 3,436 children injured over 10% will be left with a permanent disability. This is catastrophic at personal, familial and societal levels for a people already suffering dire poverty and living in dreadful conditions. 142 families lost three or more members. In some cases multiple generations of the same family were wiped out.

Almost half of Gaza has been laid to waste. There is no sewage treatment, little clean water, electricity for perhaps four hours per day and no means to generate it. 18,000 homes were destroyed with 80,000 homes damaged in need of rehabilitation. At the height of the offensive, half a million people were displaced, equating with 28% of the population displaced. About 100,000

remain displaced and homeless today.

During the offensive I was in the West Bank, documenting the process of medical evacuations from Gaza, interviewing doctors who worked with the injured and meeting some of the victims who had been evacuated. It was horrific – the injuries were complex due to the tactics and munitions used. Around 80% of those killed and injured were civilians—many were targeted in their own homes or while fleeing.



“Sad Sky” by Palestinian-American artist Manal Deeb, who spent her early years in Ramallah.

The use of controversial DIME [experimental dense inert metal explosive] bombs resulted in high levels of amputations; burns and neurological damage resulted from crushing or shrapnel injuries. There was little that could prepare me for the sight of Asraah, a 19-year-old mother who had burns and both her legs blown off, or Hala, the little girl found unconscious in an olive tree. Hala was making a steady recovery but didn’t know that her mother and siblings were all dead. The injuries I witnessed were but a drop in the ocean of Gaza’s suffering.

At the end of the offensive I went to Gaza and saw for myself what Israel had done. Standing in the formerly bustling neighbourhoods of Shujaiya, Beit Hanoun, Khuzaa and Johr Al Deek I witnessed utter devastation reminiscent of Hiroshima, Nagasaki, and Dresden. Everything was reduced to rubble, including

hospitals. People with nowhere to go lived in makeshift tents on top of the piles of rubble that had been their homes. The neighbourhoods were populated with sick, hungry, traumatised people in unimaginable numbers. To reiterate—more than 50 % of Gaza’s population are children—five babies died of exposure in a two-week period alone.

This suffering is all man-made and therefore avoidable.

As Gaza struggles with the latest catastrophe, compounding the effects of the previous offensives from which it has never recovered, the ongoing and



“Catatonia” by Palestinian-American artist Manal Deeb. See her work at manaldeeb.com

crippling siege instituted in 2007 by Israel continues. Deemed illegal by the UN as it constitutes a collective punishment, the siege is now ironically and disgracefully being administered by the very same UN under the Serry Mechanism, with Israel holding the ultimate control for what and who enters and leaves Gaza.* Meanwhile in the West Bank and East Jerusalem it is business as usual with the ethnic cleansing of Palestine continuing. Settlements expansion, expropriation of houses and land, home demolitions, and imprisonment, often without charge, of large numbers of the population, including children, are commonplace.

The history of the occupation has shown that as long as Israel continues to act as a state above the law, it will continue to violate international law with Palestinian civilians—the ‘protected persons’ of

the Geneva Conventions, continuing to pay the price. Impunity for Israel is the result of international collusion—a combination of indifference and political expedience. Indeed, the recommendations of the Goldstone Report, issued in the wake of Operation Cast Lead 2008-2009, were never acted on. According to *Wikileaks*, UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon played a direct role in quashing any action at the behest of the U.S. Dept. of State—Israel’s key friend and protector. More recently Israel has lobbied its allies to withdraw support from the International Criminal Court in an attempt to avoid investigations into its crimes in Gaza and the West Bank, thwarting Palestine’s bid for justice.

It is clear that the institutions responsible for upholding international law and human rights have failed the Palestinian people, and have therefore failed us all. Western governments have placed diplomatic relationships with the rich and powerful over their responsibility to ensure justice for the vulnerable and oppressed.

In this time, in these circumstances, it falls upon us—people of conscience, civil society—to act. The tools at our disposal are tools of non-violence that succeeded in bringing down South Africa’s apartheid regime. We must boycott, divest from, and sanction Israel until it complies with international law, ends the occupation, and observes the rights of the Palestinian people, including those dispossessed, to return to their homeland. We must insist on an end to Israel’s impunity and use all legitimate means at our disposal to ensure that this is the case. Civil society must stand in solidarity and insist on justice for the Palestinian people!

Elaine Bradley is the former CEO of Volunteering Ireland and an organizational consultant who has worked with governments, the UN, and the EU. She co-wrote the Palestinian Center for Human Rights (PCHR) Strategy 2015-2017; is a member of the Organizing Committee and International Relations Consultant for the UN Year of International Solidarity with the Palestinian People Conference; drafted the National Disability Policy for nine government ministries of the General Union of People with Disability & TCC, Palestine, and has provided expertise on many other Palestine-focused projects. As a Ph.D. candidate at Trinity College, Dublin, Elaine’s research topic is “Incremental Genocide: Exploring Israel’s Policy towards the Gaza Strip within the Framework of the UN Convention of Genocide.”

• This Is What Deconflict Looks Like

• The current State Department buzz word is “deconflict” which has its origins in military jargon and means “reducing the risk of collision between aircraft and airborne weaponry”. But we should redefine the meaning by the bold actions these women have taken:

• North & South Korea

• Thirty women peacemakers from 15 countries made a historic crossing, walking the two-mile-wide De-Militarized Zone (DMZ), from North to South Korea on May 24th, International Women’s Day for Peace and Disarmament. They continue with a long-term, feminist civilian movement to challenge over 60 years of military standoff and reunite Korea. More info: womencrossdmz.org

• Palestine & Israel

• One thousand Palestinian women marched from the Qalandia Refugee Camp toward the checkpoint that separates Jerusalem and Ramallah, attempting to reach the Israeli side on International Women’s Peace Day. On the Israeli side, women marched toward the checkpoint and chanted to tear down the separation wall, but Israeli security forces stopped them and fired tear gas, stun grenades, and pepper spray at the Palestinians. Women on both sides are in solidarity against the occupation.— 972mag.com, Al-Arabiya.net

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 Committee
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

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Carol Walker



WAMM Seeking Director

Women Against Military Madness, a nonviolent, feminist organization that works to create a system of social equality, self-determination and justice through education, action and the empowerment of women, is seeking a new director with a progressive political analysis and commitment to peace and justice. 35 hours per week. Annual salary \$31,000 with excellent benefits. WAMM office hours: Monday-Friday, 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.; some evening and weekend hours based on the needs of the organization. Additional information and job description at

WomenAgainstMilitaryMadness.org

Take it on Faith: Militarism and Environmental Destruction Not an Option

by Carol Masters

Around the world, people of faith and concerned citizens are being asked to reflect on what corporate-driven global capitalism and greed are doing to our planet. In Turin, Italy, this past June, Pope Francis (pictured right) severely criticized arms manufacturers and those who profit from



Image: Reuters

such production. At a huge rally the pontiff declared that those who claim to follow Christ but also manufacture weapons are hypocrites. His criticism was not limited to the manufacturers; Francis also called out investors, saying “duplicity is the currency of today...they say one thing and do another” (*Time*, June 22, 2015). On September 24, in an address to the U.S. Congress, he urged an end to the arms trade:

...we have to ask ourselves: Why are deadly weapons being sold to those who plan to inflict untold suffering on individuals and society? Sadly, the answer, as we all know, is simply for money: money that is drenched in blood, often innocent blood. In the face of this shameful and culpable silence, it is our duty to confront the problem and to stop the arms trade.

Source: “Pope Francis Address to Joint Meeting of Congress,” *C-Span*, September 24, 2015

This past summer, his encyclical “*Laudato Sii: On the Care for Our Common Home*” was released, asserting that climate change is a moral issue. The encyclical covers global crises from the destruction of biodiversity to the unacceptable treatment of the poor, immigrants, and climate refugees. The paper offers an uncompromising indictment of free markets, accusing capitalism of plundering the planet, driving global inequality, and serving only the “very few.” These few beneficiaries also have obstructed desperately needed action.

Similarly, in August in Istanbul, Turkey, Islamic leaders from 20 countries launched a bold Climate Change Declaration to engage the world’s 1.6 billion Muslims on the issue of our time. At Istanbul’s International Islamic Climate Change Symposium the declaration urged the assembled governments to come to a strong, new international climate agreement in Paris when the nations of the world gather at the United Nations Climate Change Conference this coming December. The declaration presents the moral case, based on Islamic teachings, for Muslims and people of all faiths worldwide to take urgent climate action.

In Minnesota, Minneapolis Area Synod Lutherans passed a resolution focused on U.S. war policies, citing “harm to future generations in environmental destruction and genetic mutation” as well as great “public expense, removing resources from life-sustaining and vital social needs.” The resolution asks congregations to do “soul-searching” and faith leaders to call on Congress to remove consent for the Authorization for Use of Military Force, so that it is not applied indefinitely and indiscriminately to all countries and targets; and to call for a report and hearings evaluating the consequences of U.S. military action since 1990 on global violence and instability.

Carol Masters is a writer, editor, antiwar activist, and member of the WAMM Newsletter Committee.

WAMM Calendar

Please note that WAMM's provision of information on other groups' 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. Time from now through Nov.: 4:30 to 5:30 p.m. Lake Street/Marshall Avenue Bridge, signs available at St. Paul side. Also brief circle up for announcements after the vigil on St. Paul side. FFI: Call WAMM at 612-827-5364.

Vigil to End the Occupation of Palestine

4:30 to 5:30 p.m. every Friday, corner of Summit Avenue and Snelling Avenue, St. Paul. FFI: Call WAMM 612-827-5364.

Peace Vigil

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

Grandmothers for Peace Vigils

50th Street and Halifax (1 block w. of France) Wednesdays, 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, Minneapolis. FFI: Call WAMM, 612-827-5364.

The WAMM Book Club

10:00 to 11:30 a.m. Afro Deli, 1939 South 5th Street, Minneapolis. Third Saturday of the month. FFI: Call 612-827-5364.

End War Committee Acting Against War and the Threats of War.

First Monday of each month, 6:00 p.m. at WAMM, 4200 Cedar Avenue South, Minneapolis. FFI: Call Marie 612-827-5364.

Ground All Drones Committee

First Thursdays of every month, Now begins 15 min. later: 4:45 to 6:00 p.m., 4200 Cedar Avenue South, Minneapolis. FFI: 612-827-5364.

Middle East Committee

Second Monday of each month, 10:00 a.m. at WAMM, 4200 Cedar Avenue South, Suite 3, Minneapolis. 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 South, 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.

People of Faith Peacemakers Breakfast

Second and fourth Wednesdays, 8:00 to 9:30 a.m. at African Development Center, Riverside and 20th Avenues S. A resource and support group for those concerned about peace with justice from a faith perspective. FFI: www.justviewpoint.org or call 612-333-4772.

Grandmothers for Peace

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

Pax Salons

Tuesdays, 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. 943 West Seventh Street (St. Paul Gallery), St. Paul. Please come. Topics vary. Call for details. Small donations accepted. FFI: 227-3228

WAMM Second Monday at the Movies

Second Monday of every month, 7:00 p.m. 4200 Cedar Ave. South, Minneapolis. Projected on big screen. Free admission, popcorn. All welcome. Discussion follows film. FFI: 612-827-5364 and wamm@mtn.org

Middle East Peace Now

Usually second or third Saturday. Refreshments 9:30 a.m., Program 10:00 a.m. Location may vary. FFI: 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. Sponsored by: Interfaith Coalition for Immigration, Advocates for Human Rights. FFI: Email interfaithonimmigration@gmail.com or call Michele 612-341-3302 (x117)

Special Events

Ten Thousand Villages Fair Trade Shopping Night for WAMM

Thursday November 19, 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., 867 Grand Ave. St. Paul. Ten Thousand Villages is a nonprofit, fair-trade retailer of artisan-crafted home décor, personal accessories, gift items made by more than 130 artisan groups in 40 countries. Artisans receive fair price for their work. WAMM receives percentage of profits. FFI: tenthousandvillages.com, WAMM 612-827-5364

Sabeel Conference: "Action and Advocacy for Palestinian Justice."

Friday, Nov. 20 to Saturday, Nov. 21, St. Stephen Lutheran, 8400 France Av. S., Bloomington. Addresses how advocacy, economic sanctions can help achieve Palestine/Israel just peace. Education, empowerment in non-violent activism, Palestinian liberation theology, justice advocacy. FOSNA support for faith-based advocacy, BDS. Link Palestinian justice with struggles of other victimized, marginalized communities. Partner with local peace and justice groups. Sponsored by Friends of Sabeel North America. FFI, registration: fosnapgh@gmail.com

SOA Watch Vigil

November 20-22. Gates of Ft. Benning, Georgia. People power resistance to empire and militarization at military base where notorious School of the Americas (SOA/WHINSEC) is. Commemorate those murdered in the struggle. Powerful speakers, musicians, massive street theater, solemn funeral procession. March to Stewart Detention Center. FFI: SOA Watch website, soaw.org In the Twin Cities, email vfsoaw@yahoo.com, or Wayne Wittman phone: 651-695-5297

Twin Cities SOA Watch Vigil

Sunday, November 22, 1:00 p.m., St Paul side of the Lake Street/Marshall Ave. Peace Bridge. Reading of martyrs' names, pledge to nonviolent resistance, prayers for peace led by St. Joseph Worker Alumnae, a ministry of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet. All welcome. Please bring signs, wooden crosses. Dress for warmth. FFI: Marilaurice at 612-701-7558 or marilaurice@hotmail.com.

For WAMM membership and gifts, see back page.



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