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The antiwar movement must counter media demonization in the midst of a war mobilization and must focus on the outrageous crimes being committed, refusing to accept or give weight to any justification for them.



The War Octopus. This image created by H. Pieck of Amsterdam, 1939, depicts expanding empire seeking to conquer the world.

Demonization, War Crimes and the Task of the Antiwar Movement

by Sara Flounders

When U.S. imperialism engages in an attack on any government or movement, it is cowardly to be neutral, and rank betrayal to stand on the same side as the imperialist octopus, which seeks to dominate the world. This has been an ABC for workers' movements and serious antiwar movements for over a century.

Currently, the corporate media in the U.S. and its allies can demonize the leader of a country targeted by the Pentagon to the point that the consequences of using the most deadly weapons against a totally defenseless population are hidden and dismissed. How does this monopoly of ideas impact the antiwar movement in the United States regarding intervention in Syria, and the war against Libya?

Some alleged antiwar groups and even liberal and progressive media unfortunately spend more time cataloguing the real, or alleged, shortcomings of the demonized leader, in the current cases of Bashar al-Assad and Muammar Gadhafi, than rallying people to respond to a criminal intervention and attacks by the U.S. and NATO "great" powers. The influence of this kind of critic coincides with the opinions of U.S. ruling powers. They are like the voices who said "neither NATO nor Milosevic" in 1999, "neither Bush nor Saddam" in 1991 and 2003, and "neither Israel nor Hizbollah" in 2006. This approach played into the warmongers' motives and weakened the antiwar forces.

Thus, it is important to thoroughly answer their arguments and point to the antiwar movement's main tasks.

Since March, NATO forces have carried out more than 20,000 sorties in Libya, hitting 8,000 targets selected by U.S. Military Intelligence and the CIA, killing many civilians, in what is described as implementing a "no-fly zone." No other armed

force in history has had the capacity to wreak such havoc, using cruise missiles, bunker busters, drones, depleted uranium and dense inert metal explosive bombs, antipersonnel razor shredding bomblets, and antipersonnel mines.

What should be the response to this terror?

Whatever one's evaluation of the leadership of a small, underdeveloped country facing U.S. sanctions, sabotage, and assassination attempts, their leaders are not the reason the U.S. is hell-bent on intervening to try to overthrow the Syrian government and is destroying Libya today.

The U.S. and all the old regimes tied to it in the region are trying desperately to manage and contain the social explosion that is shaking the mostly Arab countries from Morocco to Saudi Arabia, highlighted by the tremendous popular revolutions in Tunisia and Egypt. They want to hold this still unfolding mass upheaval in channels where it doesn't threaten neocolonial domination of the region. Replacing the Ba'athist government in Syria with an openly client regime and gaining military bases in Libya—which lies between Egypt and Tunisia—would serve this purpose.

What is also at stake in Libya is that U.S., French, British, and Italian regimes are determined to lay hold of Libya's now well-developed infrastructure of oil refineries, pumping stations, gas lines, ports, and pipelines directly into Europe, as well as billions of dollars in gold reserves, oil reserves—the largest in Africa—and Libya's other rich assets. All of this has been built up over the four decades since the Libyans expelled colonial and neocolonial domination by the U.K. and the U.S.

These imperial powers are especially determined

continued on page 2

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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.



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A MEMBER OF



Antiwar Movement, from front cover

to stop Libya's assistance in the development of other African countries. Libya planned a United Federation of Africa and backed it with \$90 billion in investment funds. This move toward independence deeply threatens the continued multinational corporate looting of the continent.

Corporate media sells the war

In preparation for a war of conquest, the role of the corporate media is to endlessly repeat every charge and statement made by the institutions of U.S. power. An almost frenzied level of lies, wild fabrications, racist stereotyping, and ugly caricatures saturates all political discussion.

The corporate media spread the demands that the Pentagon death machine must act in the name of "humanity" in order to "save lives." The war itself is cloaked in neutral terms. Demonization is meant to disorient and put the massive, criminal destruction planned by the U.S. and NATO beyond debate. Enormous pressure is placed on every level of the U.S. population to accept the premise that the targeted country and its leadership are to blame. The attacks are presented as if Assad is the only person who lives in Syria and Gadhafi is the only one who lives in Libya.

As the Libyan people continue to resist, Western media continues to distort this reality. The Libyans have endured more than five months of nonstop aerial assault. More than one million

Propaganda from World War II, remixed by Micah Ian Wright. A NATO-instigated coup was portrayed as a popular, mass uprising in Libya. Even some usually liberal and progressive media joined the chorus.



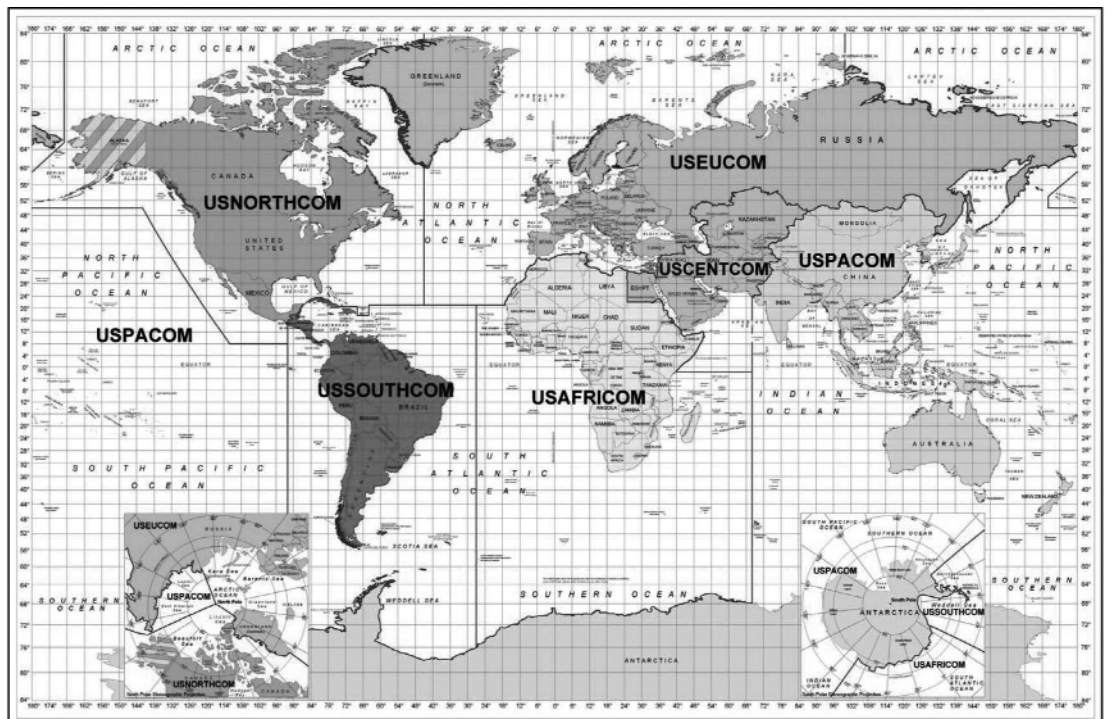
people have held pro-government, anti-NATO rallies in Tripoli. Libya's government has distributed more than 3 million weapons in a country of 6.5 million people to enable them to resist occupation, something no government does if it considers its citizens to be hostile.

What antiwar forces should do

The response to colonial wars of aggression should be the same as the response to a racist mobilization, a racist lynch mob or a police attack on an oppressed community: Mobilize all possible forces to stand up to the crime and say "no!" Refuse to take part in the orchestrated campaign of vilification that blames the victims.

However difficult it may be, it is essential to reject the racist political onslaught that accompanies the military onslaught on Libya and intervention in

continued on page 3



The U.S. Department of Defense Unified Combatant Command divides the world into regions to be controlled militarily. Map from U.S. Army Logistics University.

Antiwar Movement, from page 2

Syria. The responsibility of progressive intellectuals and groups in the United States is to explain the corporate interests behind the latest “humanitarian” war, and never to echo in left terminology the charges made in the corporate media. The antiwar movement must counter media demonization in the midst of a war mobilization and must focus on the outrageous crimes being committed, refusing to accept or give weight to any justification for them.

The good news is that despite an ocean of propaganda, poll after poll has confirmed that from 60 percent to 65 percent of the U.S. population is against the U.S. war on Libya.

The Cynthia McKinney tour

People were able to begin to build resistance to aggression toward Syria and Libya, as former U.S. Congresswoman Cynthia McKinney engaged them on a 17-city national speaking tour, sponsored by International Action Center. More than 500 people packed the historic Shrine of the Black Madonna in Atlanta’s West End community on July 24.

McKinney had risked her life to visit Libya with a U.S. delegation in the midst of the U.S./NATO bombing. She deserves nothing but respect from the movement.

McKinney was first a target of national media condemnation as a young, first-term state representative in the Georgia Assembly, when she dared to speak out against the U.S. war on Iraq. The entire chamber of representatives stood up, turned their backs on her and walked out.

When she was elected to the U.S. Congress, her outspoken opposition to and questioning of the orchestrated national frenzy surrounding the Sept. 11, 2001, attack; her clear opposition to the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq and passage of the North American Free Trade Agreement; her defense of

political prisoners; and her support of the Palestinian people generated reactionary campaigns that poured funds into opposing candidates in her small Georgia congressional district. Again and again the district lines were redrawn in an attempt to disqualify McKinney from the U.S. Congress. But she has earned international acclaim for her candidacy for president on the Green Party ticket, for participation in humanitarian convoys to Gaza and for being jailed by Israel.

It was expected that McKinney’s tour would be attacked politically by reactionaries and militarists. What was unfortunate was that some of the “neither Gadhafi nor NATO” people have also criticized her, some saying she must echo the imperialist demand that Gadhafi “must go.” Even more arrogant and insensitive are their attacks on the Nation of Islam and Pan-African voices opposing the war, simply because these forces for more than three decades have followed developments in Libya with great interest and enthusiasm.

Whatever one’s attitude toward the Libyan or Syrian governments, the worst thing would be for the U.S. and NATO countries to increase their influence in these countries and in the region. Leave it to African, Arab, and especially Syrian and Libyan people to discuss, debate, and decide their own future, without outside interference and U.S./NATO bombs.

The slogans of the antiwar movement should be: No intervention in Syria! Stop the U.S./NATO war on Libya! ♪

Sara Flounders is a longtime antiwar organizer, the co-director of the International Action Center, and currently on tour with Cynthia McKinney. She will be speaking in Minneapolis on September 28. See calendar on page 6 for details.

Corrections July/August 2011 newsletter: Actual Grand Jury process is as follows: Federal Grand Jurors are selected pursuant to the Federal Jury Selection Act that provides for the random selection of jurors from voter and/or driver license lists subject to specified qualifications. In a criminal trial, if a witness who is called by the prosecution has testified before the grand jury that indicted the witness, a transcript of testimony the witness gave before the grand jury would normally be furnished to the defendant’s attorney. Among the exceptions to this rule that cause the greatest concern arise when the witness is a government agent and the prosecution claims that revealing the full testimony would affect government security.

The last lines omitted from “A Message from the October 2011 movement” should have included the web site: october2011.org

WORD UP!

History-Making Propaganda

Four powers—the United States, France, the UK and Qatar—have combined their technical means... These are mainly CNN (which, although private, interacts with the Pentagon’s psychological warfare unit), France24, the BBC and Al Jazeera. These media are being used to falsely attribute to the governments of Libya and Syria crimes they did not commit while not covering the crimes that are committed by the secret services of the aforementioned powers.

—Thierry Meyssan,
Voltaire Network of Independent
Journalists, reporting from
Tripoli, August 2011

Real Reporting from Libya

Cynthia McKinney sent “Updates from Libya,” International Action Center at iac.org; Mahdi Darius Nazemroaya at globalresearch.ca; Thierry Meyssan, Mathieu Ozanon and Julien Teil at voltaire.net or reported from Libya.

Kucinich Asks

The American people get myths, rhetoric and unemployment while war profiteers get the gold. Can you imagine what the people of Libya will get?

—Congressman Dennis
Kucinich, August 24, 2011

Telling Tales about Syria

Western press and analysts did not want to recognize that armed elements were becoming active. They preferred to tell a simple story of good people fighting bad people... One only wonders why that story could not have been told without also covering the reality—that armed elements, whose agenda was not peaceful, were also playing a role.

—Joshua Landis,
Director, Center for Middle East
Studies and Associate Profes-
sor, University of Oklahoma



Cynthia McKinney. The former Congresswoman and former Green Party presidential candidate is on tour with the International Action Center. She spoke about Libya in a talk sponsored by the WAMM Middle East Committee this past July.



Schwimme, wer schwimmen kann, und wer zu schwach ist, gehe unter
 "Whoever can swim does. Whoever can't goes under." Drawing by German artist George Grosz. Published by *Der Malik*, Berlin, 1923, when the middle class was disappearing and the gulf between rich and poor grew increasingly wide.

The enormous 2011 military budget of \$733 billion is not helping the U.S. prosper or even maintain well. Look at the facts provided in one of the informative cards of the Inter-Faith Peacemakers of Edina. Here is how the U.S. ranks in the industrialized world: 25th in infant mortality, 37th in overall health care, and 17th in life expectancy. It has the highest rate of childhood poverty and is the only industrialized country without universal health care. The \$170 billion for the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan could have provided, for one year: 2.6 million elementary school teachers or 22.3 million Head Start slots for children or three million firefighters.

At the present time there is no country in the world that can seriously threaten the United States militarily. But there is growing enmity against our country for its interference in the internal affairs of other countries. Interference may take the form of military force or, when countries experience natural or man-made disasters, it may take the form of aid. If they receive aid a country's leaders find that there will be a price of some kind to pay—it may be the establishment of a U.S. military base, or it may be a trade or other policy that will have a detrimental effect on their country's economy and independence.


The corporations that determine U.S. policy to a great extent are especially interested in obtaining resources. Those resources could be oil, natural gas, lumber, minerals, and/or cheap labor unhampered by U.S. minimum wage standards and trade unions. They also want markets for U.S. products. At one time in the Philippines it was cheaper to buy chicken imported from the U.S. than raised locally. Countries that had been growing beans and corn for their own local markets are instead now growing flowers or soybeans for corporate interests in the U.S. and elsewhere.

These kinds of changes in economies caused huge numbers of people in other countries to leave their homes in search of employment. The North America Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), signed by President Clinton in 1993, brought devastation to many Mexicans, who for years became immigrants hoping to find work in the

United States—the country whose policies contributed to their own country's economic downfall. In the struggle to survive, so many of these immigrants were forced to become underpaid, unprotected, and exploited workers. However, this July 5, many years later, the *New York Times* reported that a growing body of evidence suggests Mexicans are staying in Mexico due to a mix of developments, including expanding economic and educational opportunities there and a slowdown here in the United States as our economic situation declines.

But U.S. corporations continue their predatory quests around the world. There are approximately 268 U.S. embassies and consulates worldwide. Many of them have commercial attachés who promote the economic interests of U.S. corporations with little consideration as to their effect upon local economies or on workers in the U.S. The irony is that as the corporations, and the military that protects them, expand beyond the U.S., our ability to live with material comfort and even a sustainable infrastructure is increasingly threatened. Unemployment rates increase and purchasing power declines.

If the United States could envision its role as that of sharing its technology and know-how instead of acting as a wealthy predator feeding on the resources, cheap labor, and land of other nations, I believe it could greatly reduce its military presence and enjoy genuine friendship from the peoples of the world. Instead of creating justifiable anger and resentment, we could share our knowledge and wealth and learn to be a good neighbor.

New 2011 Military Spending Postcards, illustrating the vast disparity between military spending and spending on growing domestic needs, are available from Inter-Faith Peacemakers of Edina in quantities for distribution. Contact Tom White: e-mail tdwhite62@earthlink.net or phone: 952-922-3401. The Minnesota Arms Spending Alternatives Project draws on the National Priorities Project to reveal what Minnesota taxpayers pay for the wars on Iraq and Afghanistan and presents alternative actions that can be taken on grassroots level. See mnasap.org 

Polly Mann is a co-founder of Women Against Military Madness and writes regularly for this newsletter.



Für die Reichen ist die Beute —
 Für das Volk die Not der Kriege

"For the rich, the booty. For the people, the misery of war." Drawing by German artist George Grosz. Published by *Der Malik*, Berlin, 1923, when people suffered the results of war while profiteers flourished.

flyer goes here--sent separately

September 2011 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 the War on Iraq:

Every Wednesday, 5:00 to 6:00 p.m. on the Lake Street/Marshall Avenue Bridge spanning the Mississippi River between Minneapolis and St. Paul. FFI: Call WAMM, 612-827-5364.

Vigil Outside of Weapons Merchant Alliant Techsystems: Every Wednesday, 7:00 to 8:00 a.m. at 7480 Flying Cloud Drive, Eden Prairie. "Who Profit\$? Who Dies?" Sponsored by: Alliant ACTION. FFI and directions: call 612-701-6963 or visit www.alliantaction.org.

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.

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

Ongoing WAMM Committee Meetings

Board Meeting: Third Tuesday of each month, 6:00 p.m. at the Sabathani Community Center, 310 East 38th Street, Minneapolis. FFI: Call WAMM, 612-827-5364.

Book Club: Second Saturday of each month, 10:00 a.m. FFI and Location: Contact Suzy, 651-451-8627 or suzykoch@comcast.net.

Iraq Committee: First Monday of each month, 5:30 p.m. FFI: Call Marie, 612-522-1861.

Middle East Committee: Second Monday of each month, 9:30 a.m. at the Sabathani Community Center, 310 East 38th Street, Minneapolis. FFI: Call WAMM, 612-827-5364.

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

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 and fourth Wednesdays of each month, 10:00 a.m. at Afro Deli and Coffee, 1939 5th Street South (Riverside and 20th Avenue), Minneapolis.

Ongoing Events

Committee to Stop FBI Repression. Every other Thursday, 7:00 p.m. at Walker Church, 304 16th Ave. South, Minneapolis. 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 new location: 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.justview-point.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: Call 651-696-1642 or see www.mepn.org

MN 9/11 Truth: Second Tuesday of each month, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. at Rondo Community Outreach Library, 461 North Dale Street, St. Paul. Meets to educate and discuss the events of 9/11/2001. FFI: Visit www.mn911truth.org.

Active Nonviolence Training: Interactive session (non-lecture and non-reading) in social change analysis, community-building and project planning to strengthen our group for action. FFI and to register, visit www.creatingacultureofpeace.org

Special Events

Grand Jury Indictment Emergency Action: 4:30 p.m. at the U.S. Federal Building, 4th St & 4th Ave, Downtown Minneapolis. If the Federal Grand Jury indicts Sarah Martin, Ahn Pham or Tracy Molm, or if other activists are re-subpoenaed, there will be an emergency action held. Watch for action alerts. FFI: See stopfbi.net and mnStopFBI.wordpress.com, or call (612) 379-3585.

WAMM's 27th Annual Silent Auction, Sunday, Sept. 25, 5:00 to 8:00 p.m., St. Joan of Arc Church, 4537 Third Ave. So., Minneapolis. Called "the best silent auction in town." Suggested donation: \$10 to \$30 (no one turned away). Payment by cash and check preferred, but credit cards accepted. FFI: Call WAMM at 612-827-5364.

Changing Realities in the Middle East and North Africa: Will the U.S. Deny the Arab Spring to Palestinians? Wednesday, Sept. 28, 7:00 p.m., Walker Community United Methodist Church, 3104 16th Ave. S., Minneapolis. Sara Flounders, co-director of the International Action Center speaks. Sponsored by the Middle East Committee of Women Against Military Madness (WAMM) FFI: See flyer this newsletter and 612-827-5364

Courage for Peace in Afghanistan, public talk by Kathy Kelly. Thursday, September 29, 7:00 p.m. at St. Luke Presbyterian Church, 3121 Groveland School Road, Minnetonka. Hear the founder of Voices for Creative Non-Violence who has traveled to Afghanistan. Effects of the U.S. war and the work for peace by ordinary Afghans.

Rally and Witness to Nonviolence on the Birth of Mahatma Gandhi. Sunday, Oct. 2, 1:00 p.m. Outside Alliant Techsystems, 7480 Flying Cloud Drive, Eden Prairie. Directions and FFI: alliantaction.org or 612-701-6963. Sponsored by AlliantACTION

The Arab Spring, European Summer, American Autumn. Talk by Kathy Kelly. Monday, October 3, 7:00 p.m., Macalester Plymouth United Church, 1658 Lincoln Avenue, Saint Paul. Kathy Kelly of Voices for Creative Non-Violence who has traveled to Afghanistan. Sponsored by: Macalester Plymouth United Church Peacemakers, Twin Cities Peace Campaign, Women Against Military Madness

OCTOBER: MONTH OF PROTESTS AGAINST 10 YEARS OF WAR ON AFGHANISTAN: See back page.

"Who Killed Emmett Till?" Thursday, Oct. 6, 7:00 p.m. and Sunday, Oct. 9 at 12:30 p.m. Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, 2730 E. 31st St., Minneapolis. Social justice film series begins with documentary on a 14-year-old African-American boy murdered in Mississippi. Discussion led by: Till family member, Emmett Till Legacy Foundation founder Deborah Watts. Community co-sponsors: Holy Trinity, VFP, WILPF, WAMM

Stop the FBI Witch Hunt! Update & Free Dinner: Thursday, October 27th from 5:30 to 7 p.m. at Walker Church basement, 3104 16th Ave. S., Minneapolis. Update on the case. Vegan, gluten free options. MN Committee to Stop FBI Repression meeting.

Annual Vigil to Shut Down the School of Assassins (SOA Watch): Converge at the doors of Ft. Benning, Georgia. Friday, Nov. 18-Sunday, Nov. 20. The annual struggle to close the School of the Americas (School of Assassins) and end the U.S. militarization of our hemisphere continues. SOAW.org or call 202-234-3440.

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.

Freedom Flotilla II: A Successful Failure

by Sylvia Schwarz

I woke up Sunday, July 3, to the news that the European Union (EU) had approved Greece's bailout. Greece, in a deep financial crisis, had coincidentally been preventing several of the ships of the Freedom Flotilla II from leaving the Greek ports where they were docked, ready to depart for the Gaza Strip, in an attempt to break the four-year siege. Greece had used different ploys to prevent the ships from sailing, first claiming that they were not seaworthy, and finally arresting the captain of the U.S. ship. (He was later released without charges.) Only one small ship had been able to set sail for Gaza, and it had departed from a port outside of Greece.

I despaired at the news that the Greek bailout had been approved. Even though it seemed clear that Israel was calling the shots, and that the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the EU, and even individual governments all seemed to obey Israel's orders, the announcement seemed to be a message directed specifically to international Palestine solidarity activists. The message was: "You who dare to go up against Israel, see how we always win? You may have growing numbers, but we have all governments on our side. We will continue to have our way; we will continue to act with impunity, and there is nothing that you can do to stop us."

The history does indeed indicate that Israel always wins: In 2006, in an election deemed free and fair by international observers, Palestinians in the Israeli-occupied territories had overwhelmingly elected the political party Hamas, and rejected the Fatah party. Fatah had been widely seen as corrupt and collaborationist, while Hamas had set up infrastructure, food distribution, orphanages, and schools. Ironically, even though Israel, itself, had played an important part in the genesis of Hamas (believing that a religiously based political party would be a good balance to the secular Palestine Liberation Organization, the PLO),² it would not accept the outcome of the elections. Israel declared Hamas a terrorist organization and would not allow it to be legitimized. After fighting among factions from the two parties, Hamas and Fatah, the major players in Fatah left Gaza and set up headquarters in the Palestinian city of Ramallah, in the Israeli-occupied West Bank.

What followed was that, in an effort to induce Palestinians to reject Hamas, Israel imposed a severe siege on Gaza. Although Israel claims that the siege is legal under international law, it is impossible to come to that conclusion by any even casual reading of the international laws and covenants. For example, the Fourth Geneva Convention clearly spells out that civilians are to be protected by an occupying power. Because Israel controls all the borders, the sea and air space,

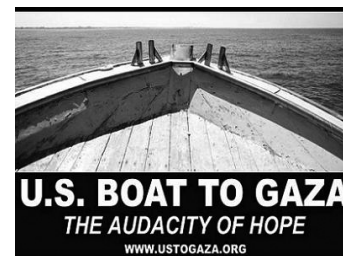
imports, exports, and commerce, and conducts frequent military incursions and extrajudicial killings, it is the occupying power—yet none of the Palestinians within Gaza are afforded basic protections.

The siege collectively punishes all Gaza's residents (another violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention) and has resulted in the devastation of Gaza's economy with 45 percent unemployment, loss of fishing and farming rights, 80 percent of residents dependent on humanitarian aid, and a housing crisis³ (during Operation Cast Lead, the three-week incursion in December 2008–January 2009, Israel destroyed 11,000 homes, and Gazans were not able to rebuild because Israel prevented sufficient building materials from entering), but this is not a humanitarian disaster. This is intentional on Israel's part. Dov Weisglass, Israeli government advisor, said in February 2006: "The idea is to put the Palestinians on a diet, but not to make them die of hunger."⁴ Israel can thus claim that there is no humanitarian crisis in Gaza and that therefore there is no reason for internationals to "violate Israeli waters." (The flotillas have no intention of entering Israeli waters. According to the Oslo accords of the 1990s, Palestinians have the right to fish within 20 miles off the coast of Gaza, but the Israeli sea blockade effectively restricts this distance to three miles. However the situation is viewed, ships entering from international waters into Gaza territory are not within Israeli jurisdiction.)

Even without a humanitarian crisis, the siege is crippling. Necessary material goods come in insufficient quantities from Israel, and therefore many are smuggled in through tunnels (which Israel periodically blows up, claiming they are used to transport weapons).

Perhaps the most crippling of the deprivations is the lack of freedom of movement. Israel controls all movement in and out of the Gaza Strip. Many of the 1.5 million residents of Gaza, including students, people seeking medical treatment, and those with spouses in the West Bank, cannot go outside the Strip's 140 square mile area (from north to south, Gaza is about the same distance as St. Paul to Minnetonka, and it is only about 6 miles wide). This restriction of movement is in

continued on page 8



The U.S. flagged boat, The Audacity of Hope, was refused permission to sail from a Greek port. Other boats in the flotilla were sabotaged. But activists continue their determination to break the siege of Gaza and end the suffering of the people.



Code Pink's Medea Benjamin and former U.S. diplomat Ann Wright on the Audacity of Hope. Kathy Kelly of Creative Voices for Nonviolence and the writer Alice Walker were also passengers on the ship that never set sail.

CLASSIFIED ADS

Not a Nursing Home

Sheridan House provides 24-hour care for five elderly in a home setting. Private rooms, loveable dog, fellowship and community. Licensed. Operated by WAMM member Sally Kunderd. Dementia and general care. County funds or private. 612-866-4637.

Marla Kennedy, M.A., L.M.F.T.

Licensed marriage and family therapist, parent educator, speaker on parenting for peace and justice. Call 651-645-3303



Being deprived of freedom of movement is difficult to bear for the people of Gaza. In spite of this violation of international law, the U.S. gives Israel \$3 billion a year.

HEAR THESE TALKS!!

Will the U.S. Deny the Arab Spring to Palestinians?

Sara Flounders, co-director of the International Action Center will address this and other issues in her talk, "Changing Realities in the Middle East and North Africa" Wednesday, Sept. 28, 7:00 p.m., Walker Community United Methodist Church, 3104 16th Ave. S., Minneapolis. Details: Flyer Page 5.



The Arab Spring, European Summer, American Autumn

Kathy Kelly of Voices for Creative Nonviolence (vcnv.org), who returned from Afghanistan and had hoped to set sail on the Audacity of Hope to break the Siege of Gaza, speaks Monday, October 3, 7:00 p.m., Macalester Plymouth United Church, 1658 Lincoln Avenue, St. Paul.

Freedom Flotilla II, continued from page 7

violation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 13(2), which states that "everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country."

With these clear violations of human rights and international law, the Gaza Freedom movement was organized to break the siege of Gaza. One year after Operation Cast Lead, the Gaza Freedom March, in which I participated, intended to reach Gaza by land, but was stopped by the Egyptian government. Only former Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu know what transpired during the talks at that time, but as the recipient of the second largest amount of U.S. military aid in the world, Mubarak, unwilling to put that at risk, did the bidding of Netanyahu. (Incidentally, even now, with the Arab Spring overthrow of the Mubarak regime and the Egyptian people's overwhelming support of the Palestinian cause, the Rafah crossing between Egypt and Gaza, highly touted as opened, seems to be just as tightly shut as previously.)

In 2008, five ships managed to sail to Gaza before Israel stopped further ships, disabling and destroying them and arresting passengers. Far more damaging to Israel than allowing humanitarians to bring in a few meager supplies was the prospect of having international media shine its spotlight on the conditions in Gaza.

And shine they did, though under tragic circumstances, and in spite of Israel's attempts to prevent journalists access. In May 2010, Freedom Flotilla I was the next to set sail. It included six ships with international passengers, and was another attempt to break the siege. This time the results were lethal. Eight Turkish and one U.S. citizen were shot dead when the Israeli navy violently boarded one of the flotilla ships, the Mavi Marmara, in the middle of the night. Very efficiently, the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) confiscated all video equipment, computers, and cell phones. Only one passenger succeeded in smuggling out one video. Israel made its own video and released that, but passengers dispute that it was taken during the actual attack on the Mavi Marmara.

So, this past summer, when Freedom Flotilla II was prevented from sailing from a Greek port, the pattern appeared the same—yet another country not at liberty to act on the conscience of its citizens.

But it is the citizens, not the governments, that will effect change. The movement for justice is active in the West Bank, Gaza, and around the world, and has gained enormous strength and attention recently. In 2005, Palestinian civil society issued a call for the international community to boycott, divest from, and sanction (BDS) Israel until Israel

complies with international law. Using the BDS movement against South African apartheid as a model, the movement against Israeli injustices has taken off, with divestment initiatives at universities and states (including the Minnesota Break the Bonds Campaign) and boycotts against such Israeli exports as Ahava beauty products and Sabra food items, and heavy equipment manufacturer Caterpillar, which makes bulldozers to use specifically for the demolition of Palestinian homes.

In conclusion: Was I right to be initially dispirited by the apparent control that Israel is able to exert over other countries? No. With every solidarity action like the Freedom Flotilla, Israel has to expend enormous energy to counteract it. It is no longer possible to stem the tide of solidarity activists all around the world who are now able to see Israel's actions for what they are—colonialism, apartheid, and oppression. As Israel institutes ever more restrictive, undemocratic laws,⁵ more internationals are certain that BDS is the way to compel Israel to comply with international law. Just as the campaign of BDS against the South African apartheid regime was successful in ending that regime, so, too, will the campaign of BDS, coupled with all the other nonviolent measures, be successful in ending Israel's apartheid and its oppression of Palestinians. ♡

Sylvia Schwarz is a Jewish resident of St. Paul, and the daughter and granddaughter of Holocaust victims and survivors who believes that "Never Again" means "Never Again for Anyone." She is a member of the Core Team of Minnesota Break the Bonds Campaign and a member of the International Jewish Anti-Zionist Network. When she is not working on Palestine solidarity activism she is a water and wastewater engineer.

1 *Haaretz*, "Netanyahu's Big Fat Greek Wedding", by Barak Ravid, 1 July 2011

2 *Information Clearing House*, " Hamas History Tied to Israel", by Richard Sale, 18 June 2002

3 See the interview of the Deputy Head of the International Committee of the Red Cross, Mathilde De Riedmatten, at <http://www.icrc.org/eng/resources/documents/interview/2011/palestine-israel-interview-2011-05-19.htm>

4 See also *Haaretz*, "Defense Ministry ordered to release internal documents on Gaza policies", by Amira Hass, 30 March 2011.

5 In March 2011 the Knesset passed a bill prohibiting commemoration of the Nakba, the ethnic cleansing in 1948 which resulted in over 750,000 Palestinians becoming refugees. On July 11, the Knesset passed a bill making the calling for BDS a crime, and is debating another which does not allow human rights organizations to raise money abroad. Haneen Zoabi, an Arab woman member of the Knesset, said in a speech in Minneapolis on 20 May 2011 that there are at least 35 racially based laws in Israel, privileging Jews and denying privileges to non-Jews.

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Join Counter Recruitment: Public Schools Need You!

by Kim Doss-Smith

The "Truth in Recruiting" coalition of WAMM and Veterans for Peace is gearing up for another year of projects. Coalition members will continue to go to public school job fairs and talk about the rights youth sacrifice when they join the military. New this year will be a campaign to counter JROTC expansion in the public schools, and the offering of curriculum-based mini-modules for educators to enrich their classroom teaching.

The new focus on countering JROTC expansion in the schools is necessary because Rick Miles, who is not trained in education but has a very

heavy military background, as well as master's degrees in business and national security, has been hired by Superintendent Bernadeia Johnson in a newly named position, "Chief Executive Officer of the Minneapolis School District." Presumably he is here to do the same job he did in Chicago, which was to expand JROTC into the majority of Chicago's high schools and make Chicago one of the largest suppliers of kids to the U.S. military.

The other new project, "Teaching Peace," will involve updating a peace education course once taught in the Minneapolis schools. The project will design it to meet curriculum standards and establish mini-courses easily taught in a few days. This program will be developed for both junior and senior high levels.

Volunteers will be needed in all areas. Especially needed are teachers and former teachers who are familiar with current social studies, history, and English standards. Please call the WAMM offices to join a team and volunteer: 612-827-5364.

Kim Doss-Smith is the current director of Women Against Military Madness and a member of Veterans for Peace. She has had longtime involvement with counter-recruitment issues.



Cartoon by Kirk Anderson. The new Chief Executive Officer of the Minneapolis Public School District worked to militarize public schools in Chicago.

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October Month of Events to End 10 Years of U.S. War and Intervention in Afghanistan—and Other Countries!

- **October 3: St. Paul**
The Arab Spring, European Summer, American Autumn. Talk by Kathy Kelly, Voices for Creative Non-Violence. 7:00 p.m., Macalester Plymouth United Church, 1658 Lincoln Avenue, Saint Paul.
- **October 6: Washington, D.C.**
Stop the Machine! Peaceful Uprising Call to Action! Washington, D.C.

FFI: www.october2011.org. Interested in driving or riding from the Twin Cities area? Call Ross or Colleen at 952-465-2866.

- **October 7: Minneapolis**
Antiwar Protest & Vigil on the anniversary of the day the U.S. launched the war on Afghanistan, 4:30 to 5:30 p.m. sidewalks on Lyndale Ave. near Loring Park and the Walker Art Center.
- **October 8: Chicago**
Midwest Regional March for Peace and Justice: U.S. INATO Out of Afghanistan! Gather at 12 Noon. Michigan Avenue & Congress Parkway, Chicago, Illinois. 1:00 p.m. permitted march through downtown Chicago. FFI: www.chicagomassaction.org
- **October 12: Minneapolis/St. Paul**
Bridge Vigil: End U.S. War on Afghanistan! 5:00-6:00 p.m. Lake Street/Marshall Ave. Bridge over the Mississippi River between Minneapolis and St. Paul.
- **October 15: Minneapolis**
Bring All the Troops & War Dollars Home Now! Local protest to coordinate with national protests. Gather at 1:30 p.m. Lake Street & Hiawatha Ave., Minneapolis (On the sidewalk on Lake Street from Hiawatha to 22nd Ave. South). March at 2:00 p.m.