



# W.A.M.M. NEWSLETTER

Women Against Military Madness

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Women Against Military Madness

## Nuclear Weapons on Hair Trigger Alert

by Polly Mann

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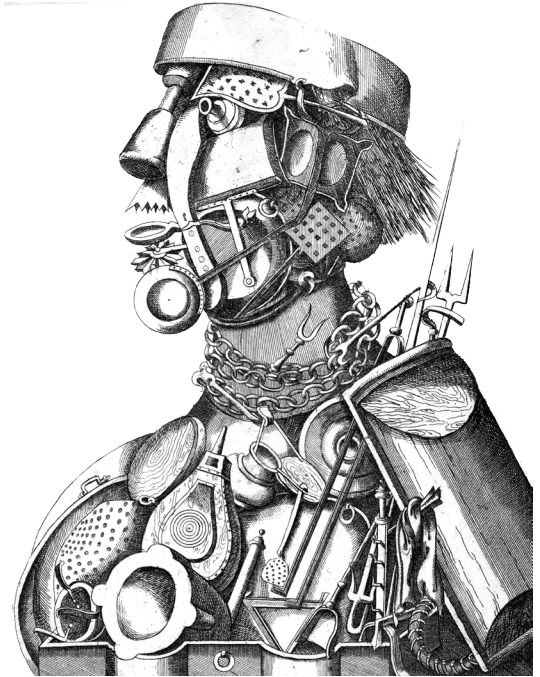
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It's a subject presidential hopefuls are not willing to talk about because the question cannot be answered without an examination—perhaps denunciation—of U.S. nuclear policy. (If there is an exception of one candidate making a statement, you will need to discover it for yourself.) The truth is, of course, that the use of nuclear weapons could be the beginning of the end of all life on earth.

Despite his initial public commitment to build a nuclear weapons-free world, what the President has proposed would cost \$1 trillion over 30 years to “modernize” the U.S. nuclear arsenal, according to the Arms Control Association (cost from three independent estimates). And here’s what the Union for Concerned Scientists’ Winter 2016, “Final Analysis” report says about the Obama administration’s plan to extend the life of the U.S. nuclear stockpile: “What we don’t agree with is the administration’s plan for a suite of new nuclear warheads—which would undermine the treaty.” In other words, “modernizing” would undermine Obama’s attempt to get the U.S. Senate to finally ratify the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty.

Worldwide nine nations possess more than 15,000 nuclear weapons: the United States, the United Kingdom, Russia, France, China, India, Pakistan, Israel and North Korea. Most of the nuclear weapons are many times more powerful than the atomic bombs dropped on Japan in 1945. However, this spring U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry, along with foreign ministers from France, Germany, Italy, Britain, Canada, and Japan, visited Hiroshima during a Group of Seven (G-7) gathering.



President Obama may come to Hiroshima, as well, in May and offer respect for the bombing victims but no U.S. apologies have been or are expected. Still, it is widely reported that the top western officials’ visit to the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park and Museum, dedicated to remembrance of the bombing, has sparked hopes among people in Japan for nuclear disarmament amid rising tensions between China and the U.S. over maritime control in the Asia Pacific. (In response to the increased U.S. presence in the region, China is now said to be considering placing *its* nuclear weapons on hair trigger alert.)

Tensions are also high between the U.S. and nuclear-armed Russia, which both maintain nuclear weapons on high-alert status—ready to be launched within minutes of a warning. A single nuclear warhead, if detonated on a large city, could kill millions of people, with the effects

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*Image right: The Instruments of Human Sustenance (Humani Victus Instrumenta). Etching, 16th cen. Italy. Humanity is inseparable from its tools, which can be invented to destroy life—or to create things for our benefit instead.*



# 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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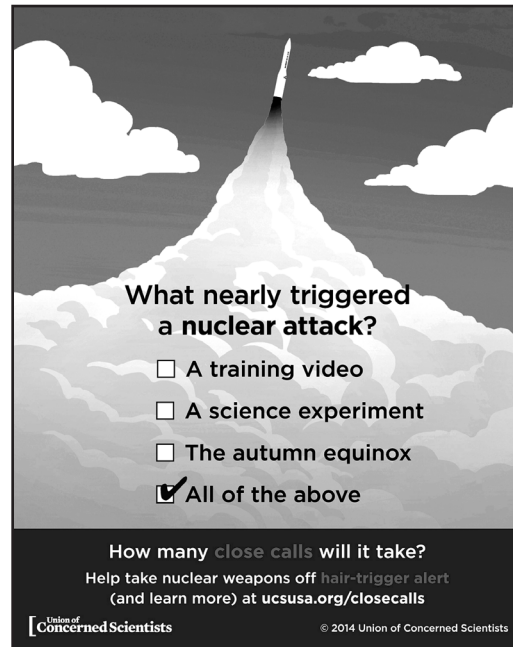


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## Nuclear Weapons on Hair Trigger Alert

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persisting for decades.

David Andersen, a retired engineer in Minneapolis, is incredulous at the need for the U.S. to have twelve nuclear aircraft carriers when two would be enough to support large-scale, long-term invasions from the sea. He has an idea for how to put U.S. nuclear carriers to better use: They could be modified to rescue refugees in the Mediterranean Sea. Indeed, he pointed out, such carriers were used for civilian disaster relief in Indonesia and Haiti.

John LaForge, of Nukewatch, Wisconsin, co-editor of *Nuclear Heartland, Revised*, a new book about the land-based Minuteman III missiles (ICBMs), commented on elimination of land-based intercontinental missiles:

*High-level military and civilian authorities have called for the complete elimination of the remaining 450 land-based ICBMs on hair-trigger alert. They include Col. B. Chance Saltzman, chief of the U.S. Air Force's Strategic Plans and Policy Division (2010); Gen. James Cartwright, former Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, in a commission report signed by Senator and future [then] Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel (2012); and Secretary of Defense (1994-1997) William Perry who said Dec. 3, 2015, 'ICBMs aren't necessary ... they're not needed.'*

As David Krieger, of the Nuclear Peace Foundation, stated last December in a Truthout opinion piece:

*The mere possession of nuclear weapons and the prestige in the international community associated with such is an inducement to nuclear proliferation. . . Where is the humanity in seeking to devote resources to improving nuclear weaponry and delivery systems WHEN THERE ARE SO MANY HUMAN NEEDS THAT ARE GOING UNFULFILLED? . . . Instead of relying on nuclear deterrence and pursuing nuclear arsenals, we need to press our political leaders to fulfill our moral and legal obligations to negotiate in good faith for the prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons. That is, we need to break free of our acidic complacency and commit ourselves to achieving a nuclear zero world.*

Instead of modernizing our nuclear warheads, we could be using scientific skills and human ingenuity to beat swords into plowshares for the benefit of humanity. ☺



## Go Fly a Kite! Kites, Not Drones!

June 18, 1:00 to 3:00 p.m.  
Lake Calhoun, northeast side,  
near the Pavilion

Join the WAMM Ground All Drones Committee for high-flying, drone-free fun. Create, decorate, and fly a kite. All materials provided.

Free, open to the public.  
Bring family and friends!

# The Pentagon's Foreign Military Aid

by Polly Mann



## W.A.M.M. Committees

### Issues Committees:

- Book Club
- End War Committee: Acting Against War and the Threats of War Middle East
- St. Joan of Arc/W.A.M.M. Peacemakers
- Ground All Drones Committee
- Tackling Torture at the Top
- Monday Night at the Movies

### Administrative and Other Committees:

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

### W.A.M.M. 2016 Board

- Pepperwolf
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- Marie Braun, Treasurer
- Sally Kundert
- Vanessa Lawrow (on leave)
- Polly Mann
- Sarah Martin, Co-Chair
- Brigid McDonald
- Carla Riehle
- Margaret Sarfehjooy
- Lucia Wilkes Smith, Secretary
- Carol Walker, Co-Chair

## W.A.M.M. THANKS

### In honor of his birthday:

**Don Irish in Minneapolis on his (belated) birthday**

**Bob Jones in Washington, D.C., on his birthday**

**Both have provided us with important clippings and articles for years**

**From Mary Beaudoin and the W.A.M.M. Newsletter Committee**

Military spending cards available from the W.A.M.M. office: 612-827-5364

## President's Proposed \$1.15 Trillion Discretionary Spending (FY 2017)

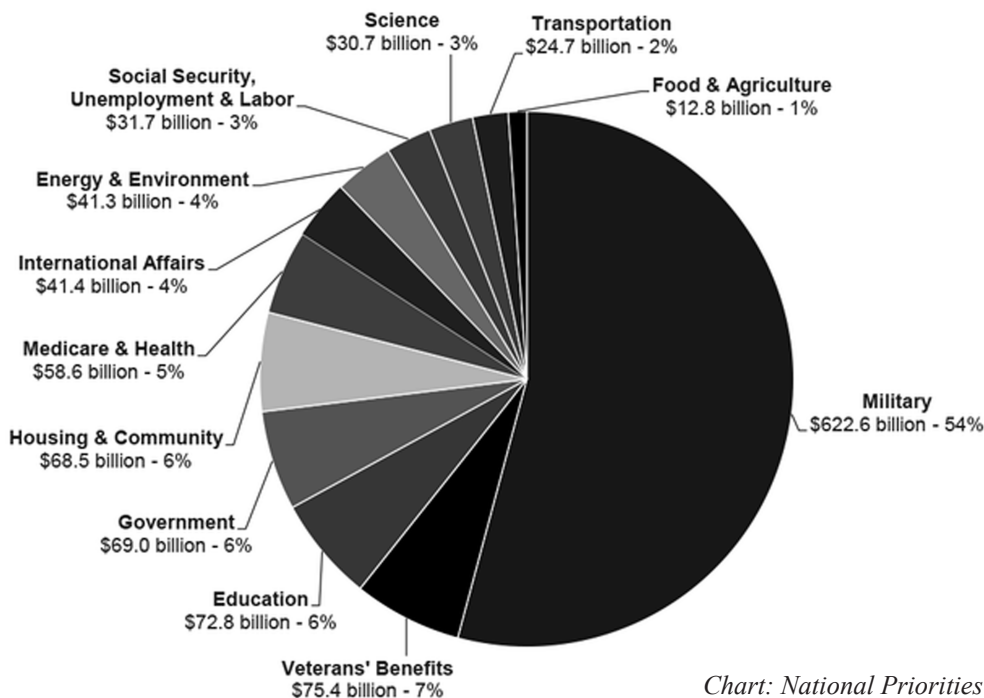


Chart: National Priorities Project

While people are in need in the U.S., another weapons issue of vital concern is the nearly \$623 billion discretionary funds allocated for the Pentagon (see the pie chart above, from the National Priorities Project). This includes foreign military aid programs. Known as Building Partners Capacity (BPC), these programs are designated for arming and training foreign partners. In addition to questions about fiscal responsibility, BPC programs appear to undermine U.S. national security. Counter-terrorism efforts in Afghanistan, Somalia and Yemen suggest that U.S. military assistance programs have created substantial blowback by exacerbating the central forces fueling insurgency and violence, thereby strengthening the enemies they are intended to combat. Current, comprehensive and specific public information

on the Pentagon's spending is available from the Security Assistance Monitor.

According to policy analyst, Lora Lumpe of Saferworld, a London-based grant program that studies foreign aid, "the Pentagon's opaque foreign aid budget also undermines our partner governments' capacity to govern. In many fragile democracies, governments struggle to provide civilian oversight of their militaries. Congress only weakens its counterparts by supplying local forces with undisclosed amounts of money, weapons and training." ☺

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

***Here's how to take some steps for the elimination of weapons: Join or support W.A.M.M. in the Walk Against Weapons. Show your opposition and raise public awareness of the weapons of war. See back page for more information.***

# Parallel Paths: The CVE Program and U.S.

For 15 years the United States military has pursued a war on terror halfway across the world. This unprecedented campaign, which former president George W. Bush called “the task that does not end,” [1] has led us into direct warfare in countries such as Afghanistan, Iraq, and Pakistan. In support of this mission we find proxy wars and U.S.-backed insurgencies in even more places—and informants in our own communities.

In April 2015, Zacharia Yusuf Abdurahman, aged 19, became one of what would be six Somali-American youth to be arrested by the FBI in Minnesota on charges of conspiracy to provide material support to terrorists affiliated with the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant.[2] These arrests came about as a result of a 10-month investigation into the targeted recruitment of young Muslims by terrorist organizations such as ISIL.[3] This is familiar terrain for the FBI Counter-Terrorism division, as well as local law enforcement, which are increasingly involved in aiding domestic terrorism investigations. However, despite the length of the thorough investigation into the six, intelligence officials and their local law enforcement counterparts failed to uncover shadowy ISIL recruiters, sleeper cells, or radical propagandists lurking in the Minnesota neighborhoods and suburbs in which many Somali families have created community.

Lacking strong evidence of any capability to carry out acts of extremism, Yusuf’s case has become indicative of many things. Muslims across the country have been targeted as a religious community under baseless suspicions. These conditions are being readily exploited and legitimated by programs such as the benign-sounding Building Community Resilience, a recent public-private partnership based in Minneapolis, which promises to “bring together community-based organizations and local partners, including interfaith organizations, nonprofits and NGOs, and state, county, and local



Image: Ridwan Adharni

*The targeting of Muslims and Middle Easterners within the U.S. after 9/11 increasingly has extended to Somalis.*

governments.” Building Community Resilience is part of a larger program developed by the FBI and the U.S. Department of Justice. The program is nationally known as “Countering Violent Extremism” (CVE). The program was launched in 2011 in Boston, Los Angeles, and Minneapolis as a way to prevent terrorism.[4] According to the FBI, “one of the key strategies to Countering Violent Extremism is to reach out to communities to build trust and rapport.”[5] To use the words

of St. Paul Police Chief Tom Smith, these programs promote engagement between community and law enforcement, and have the potential to prevent “isolated communities” of East African immigrants from becoming “breeding grounds for violent extremism and radicalization.” This argument reinforces the racism inherent in these programs. By no standard of truth can the Somali people’s experiences as survivors, as refugees, and as advocates for themselves be deemed as potential catalysts

# Foreign Policy in Somalia

by *Dominique Diaggio-Cash and Nick Theis*



*Twenty-six organizations endorsed a march through a Minneapolis neighborhood in support of the Somali community on February 20. Photo: Meredith Aby-Keirstead*

for violent militancy. Such assumptions can only be articulated in a climate ruled by extreme demagoguery and fear, and by no means should this give our government license to implement policies based on such a climate.

Last February, a delegation from Minnesota took part in a White House summit on Countering Violent Extremism (CVE). It was there that the blueprints for the current programs were first presented. The plan called on policymakers and funders to manipulate the resources available to existing Somali-American community organizations and provide impressive sums of money to certain organizations that appeared to fit in with the program.

In Minneapolis, U.S. Attorney Andrew Luger oversaw the transfer of this grant money into the Building Community Resilience effort. According to Luger, his office held interviews and public information sessions with leaders from the Somali-American community to better suit these programs to their needs and to be responsive to their culture.

But not all members of the Somali community agree with the characterization of these meetings as “public”. Burhan Mohamed, a young Somali com-

munity organizer from Minneapolis, says they were “behind-closed-door meetings,” and that “the only people invited were nonprofits and leaders.” When asked if these leaders represent the whole of the community’s interests, Burhan disagreed: “They have a track record of not standing up for their people.” Indeed, fifty Minnesota-based Muslim organizations condemn the Building Community Resilience and other programs related to CVE. For Burhan and others in the Somali community of the Twin Cities, these programs are counter-productive. “They create walls in the community,” he says. Indeed, the very idea that the programs provide funds to select organizations, rather than making funding for other needs available to all Somalis, is a divisive act in itself.

Several community organizations such as CAIR (the Council on American-Islamic Relations) and the ACLU have voiced concerns that CVE will also further stigmatize and marginalize the Somali community. When suspicion becomes policy, it casts a shadow on a vulnerable community, inhibiting independent or traditional means of addressing particular problems. CAIR-MN director Jaylani Hussein welcomes efforts to “empower youth to make the right decisions,” but warns that “it needs to be a community-based, grassroots effort free of intelligence-gathering disguised as community outreach.”[6] Many organizations and community members feel that this endeavor is the institutionalization of Islamophobia. With xenophobia, racism, and anti-Islam hatred being espoused by extremists within the nation, conditions are already ripe for distrust of Somalis in Minnesota who are a minority in a White majority population. Now exaggerated reports about nonexistent recruiters for terrorist organizations legitimize the fear that is generated through media, thereby granting immunity to experiments in law enforcement techniques such as this one.

*continued on page 6*



**Come see  
WAMM at  
the Midtown  
Farmers  
Market this  
summer!**

Hiawatha Avenue &  
Lake Street, Minneapolis

May 7  
July 16  
August 13  
September 3  
October 8

8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

When you get your fresh food, get fresh info, and nourishing inspiration to end war. Fun activities for children and all ages, too.



June 4, 1963, U.S. Postal Service; National Postal Museum



## CALL TO ACTION

**Display a Poster:** Rochester Peacemakers of Rochester, Minnesota created a poster with the image above, which can be used anywhere. The Peacemakers state: "We encourage all **FILL IN THE BLANK FOR YOUR COMMUNITY** businesses and institutions to prominently display messages of welcome to people of all cultures and heritage, regardless of race or religion. We want every one to feel welcome here." In the Twin Cities, posters are available at the WAMM office 612-827-5364, or see below.

**For Community Groups and Individuals:** Join Minnesotans Against Islamophobia. To get on a listserv for community organizers and/or one for individual participants and receive notices about meetings and events, contact: mn.against.islamophobia@gmail.com

### Need Help Countering Islamophobia?

Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR, National)  
Website: CAIR.com  
Phone: (202) 488-8787

CAIR-Minnesota (CAIR-MN)  
Website: CAIRMN.com  
Phone: (612) 206-3360

## Parallel Paths

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While the FBI claims the CVE is not primarily purposed to provide intelligence on the community, CVE is often viewed as the newest installment of a long-standing FBI tradition of "mimicking community outreach to exploit it for intelligence purposes," according to former FBI agent Michael German. The FBI's 2009 "Special Community Outreach Team" (SCOT) program was ultimately canceled amid concerns that it was being used as an intelligence-gathering tool. Numerous cases of FBI field agents employing the tactics of entrapment and surveillance of Muslims across the United States only increase these concerns.[7]

That same year, the St. Paul Police Department was awarded a grant from the U.S. Justice Department for an outreach program whose stated purpose was to strengthen ties between law enforcement and the largely Somali Muslim population of the Twin Cities, but text of the grant proposal obtained through an FOIA request reveals the aim of "addressing terrorism utilizing the criminal justice system." [8]

At the same time the FBI was being upgraded to fight terrorism post-9/11, the entire military was also being restructured at the highest levels. A case in point is the establishment of AFRICOM, "a military command responsible for all U.S. military activity in Africa" in 2006, one year after the new National Security Branch (NSB) structure for the bureau was implemented.[9] AFRICOM, or United States Africa Command, was (so far) the final installment of the Department of Defense's "Unified Combatant Command," which has the entire planet divided into six geographical regions (South America, Europe, the Middle East, etc.) and three functional groups (such as Special Operations Command) to streamline global warfare.

Strong parallels exist between AFRICOM and the new National Security Branch (NSB) structure of the FBI.

Both are designed to create stronger and more capable military agencies, as well as further incorporate each agency within the U.S. intelligence community in an effort to fight terrorism. The NSB states its mission as "integrating intelligence and operations to protect America," [10] while AFRICOM offers a slightly more nuanced mission objective: "in concert with interagency and international partners [AFRICOM] builds defense capabilities, responds to crisis, and deters and defeats transnational threats in order to advance U.S. national interests." [11] In either case, U.S. interests, whether they are the security of the homeland or the security of natural resources halfway across the world, do not always align with the interests of ordinary U.S. citizens or the people of Africa.

Right around the time the NSB was implemented, the FBI had eight priority program areas. Not surprisingly, number one was to "protect America from terrorist attack." Number five was to "protect civil rights." While the FBI does conduct legitimate civil rights work, to what extent is this area deprioritized or even completely dismissed in service of the counter-terrorism mission? Concerns for violations of civil rights mount as FBI officers employ illegal methods such as entrapment and warrantless wiretapping to implicate vulnerable youth or other individuals.[12]

If domestic agencies routinely kill, entrap, and spy on American citizens or immigrants with impunity for the sake of national security, how far will the military go to impose "security, stability, and prosperity" in Africa? [13] Given the abhorrent human rights under the purview of older regional command units, such as SOUTHCOM, there is good reason to be skeptical about the intentions of AFRICOM, just as skepticism about the CVE programs is founded on a history of FBI abuses of similar programs. Additionally, in light of abuses of community programs like the CVEs in U.S. cities, reports that AFRICOM "will have an unprecedented number of interagency civilians in leadership roles" are gravely concerning.[14]

While AFRICOM's missions of combating terrorism continue to bring U.S. military personnel into conflict in Somalia, our engagement in the nation and in the whole Horn of Africa is not a recent development. As part of U.S. Cold War strategy, Somalia was seen as critical to countering the spread of the Soviet Union's political influence. It was then that former Somali head of state Siad Barre gave the U.S. license to Somalia's military bases and access to ports on the Gulf of Aden. In return, the U.S. poured millions of dollars in military aid into the Somali government.[15] This arrangement gave the United States the strategic privilege of safe harbor in the Horn of Africa, while granting Barre economic clout, and brutal military rule, much of the latter directed against Somalis. As internal armed conflict engaged many groups in conflict with Barre's government, the U.S. began to pivot away from its support of Barre. During this period of failed insurrections and violent reprisals, militarism forced hundreds of thousands of Somalis to flee. In the diaspora, a large number settled in Minnesota (estimates range from 30,000 up) while Somalia became a failed state.

The control of shipping routes along Somalia's coastline and access to resources within the region remained the primary concern of outsiders. U.S. presence in Somalia persists today, most recently taking the form of drone strikes and special operations against ISIL affiliate Al-Shabaab. The results have brought a devastating toll in the civilian population and increased the spread of Al-Shabaab's cause, and possibly with it their method of retribution.

A military solution will not magically work in Somalia after decades of war. The persistence of the internal armed conflict in Somalia is the result of continued support for the violence from outsiders. For more than two decades, the West and neighboring East African nations alike have been able to profit from a conflict that would never be reaped from a stable, sovereign nation.



*Above: 26 organizations endorsed a march through a Minneapolis neighborhood in support of the Somali community on February 20. Photo: Meredith Aby-Keirstead*

With the same logic of summary justice that the United States military uses to justify the occupation of foreign soil, its counterparts in the national intelligence community have been suspected of entrapping people with acts of terrorism as serious as bomb making, or as vague as material support, the latter being the plea accepted by Yusuf Abdurahman. These same intelligence officials today find threats to justify targeted spying.[16] Even as the people of Somalia have emigrated across the world to flee terrorism in their country, the war on terror pursues them. One is indeed forced to question the very motive of a war, with its national security implications, whose casualties have so often proven to be guilty of nothing more than their race, their nationality, their religion, or their beliefs. ☺

*Dominique Diaggio-Cash is an associate with the American Friends Service Committee Healing Justice program. As an independent writer, he focuses on resistance to oppression. Nick Theis is a member of Students for a Democratic Society, a graduate student at the University of Minnesota, and an independent writer and researcher who writes about resistance to war.*

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# Peace in Colombia: Is it Near?

by Meredith Aby-Keirstead



Former Colombian Senator Ms. Piedad Cordoba leads an April 2012 march for the *Marcha Patriótica*, a mass movement demanding Colombian society open up and democratize. Photo: Kevin Neish/kevinneish.wordpress.com

*The WAMM Newsletter presents this information in an effort to report on the furthering of sincere peace negotiations in Colombia.*

For more than 50 years, Colombia has suffered a civil war between the right-wing government's military and its off-the-books paramilitary forces and rebel armies, of which Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) is the largest. Its civil war has given Colombia the dubious distinction of having "the world's second largest population of internally displaced persons"[1] and of leading the world in anti-union violence.[2]

The U.S. has played a consistent role by providing military aid and advisors in supporting the Colombian government in their 50-plus-year war. This is consistent with the history of U.S. interventions frequently being sold to the American public as part of the "war on drugs" or the "war against

terrorism." But, despite U.S. efforts to support the government of Colombia, there is actually a hopeful peace dialogue occurring right now. After years of civil war in Colombia, many activists are hoping that 2016 will start a new chapter and bring peace.

## **The Peace Process in Motion**

In October 2012, the Colombian government and the FARC met in Norway and began negotiations for an end to the war. The negotiations then moved to Cuba the following month. More recently, in September 2015, the two sides set March 23rd of this year as the deadline for reaching a peace agreement. While no agreement had been reached as of that date, international media and social movement leaders seem confident that an agreement could be reached before mid-year.

Two groups have been working in the U.S. to promote call-in days to pressure the Obama Administration to

play a more positive role in the Colombian peace talks: the Alliance for Global Justice and the National Committee to Free Ricardo Palmera (who went by the name "Simón Trinidad").

James Jordan from the Alliance for Global Justice leads solidarity work in the U.S. in solidarity with Colombian unions and political prisoners. Jordan explains the importance of the 2012 peace accord talks in Cuba:

*More than anything, it's because it's what the majority of people in Colombia want. Everyone from the FARC to the Catholic Church had been calling for a peace process for years before the Colombian government finally agreed to come to the table. That they are there is because of two things: One is that neither side of this war could achieve a clear military victory. The other factor has been the huge mobilizations of popular movements for negotiations. Some significant concessions have been achieved that, if implement-*



ed, could return many displaced people to their homes, or at least give them some recompense for their losses. Most important is that space is being opened up for safe participation of Colombia's left in the political process. Of course, all these gains are at this point just promises and aspirations. Will they be implemented? That's the burning question, and U.S. solidarity activists have a role to play in changing U.S. policies that promote war and repression.

Unfortunately, despite President Obama's statements of support for the peace process, he is holding up the process by not releasing the FARC's lead negotiator (Ricardo Palmera) from a U.S. supermax prison. Jordan continues:

*Right now we should all be calling for the release of Ricardo Palmera aka Simón Trinidad from the maximum security prison in Florence, Colorado. He is being held in solitary confinement on trumped-up charges. He is one of the FARC's most knowledgeable negotiators and the Colombian government, itself, has said they support his release so that he can be at the negotiating table. The obstacle is the United States government and, particularly, the White House.*

Tom Burke of the National Committee to Free Ricardo Palmera concurs with Jordan on the importance of these negotiations:

*The Colombian peace accords are important because they guarantee land reform, so the nearly 6 million rural people displaced by the U.S.-sponsored war can return to their farms and lives. The accords matter because they guarantee with UN backing that trade unionists, community organizers, and Leftist political candidates will not be murdered by the Colombian military or their death squads. The armed struggle will end and peaceful forms of struggle will replace it. We are going to see marches of hundreds of thousands of workers and farmers for higher wages, democracy, and progressive reforms. The peace accords require huge reforms to the government and society. There will still be struggles over defining the peace.*

During these final months of negotiations the international community has been watching to see if Colombia's human rights record would improve. Jordan goes on to say:

*There are less labor leaders being killed—but that's because the movement has been so severely decimated, and union membership so low, that there just aren't that many people left to kill. Many unionists are being imprisoned for political reasons. And while the peace process has been going forward, assaults against human rights defenders, the political opposition and environmentalists have been going up. Just between February 27 and March 11 of this year, the Unión Patriótica political party reported that 29 leftist leaders had been killed. Forced displacements have also continued to rise. All this is in the context of an April 2nd march against the peace accords being called for by ex-president Álvaro Uribe, the "paramilitary in chief." The situation is so bad because the extreme right is trying its best to derail the peace process.*

Despite these difficulties, Jordan believes the peace accords will be signed:

*Both the FARC and the Colombian government negotiating teams want this to happen. I got to visit Havana in April as part of a delegation that met with the negotiating teams, and the people we met with all seemed sincere. There are serious differences, of course, however, the progress being made had everyone hopeful. Certainly the same oligarchs that support the process want a peace that enshrines injustice, domination and inequality. But they have had to make some real concessions. But right now, what I'm most concerned about is not what's happening in Havana, but in Colombia.*

### **How U.S. Citizens Can Help the Peace Process**

Burke, too, has his eyes on Colombia. He feels now is an important time for U.S. solidarity to defend the Colombian peace process:

*We can show solidarity with the Marcha Patriótica, the new mass movement demanding Colombian society open up and democratize. We can support all the unions, groups, and political parties whose members are targeted by assassins by calling and protesting to the White House and State Department. There should not be one more death of an activist or organizer once the peace accord is signed, but that unfortunately has not been the history of Colombia.*



Jennie Eisert (pictured above), a Colombian American activist with the Anti-War Committee in Minneapolis, is going to Colombia to participate in an Alliance for Global Justice delegation in May. She explains the significance of this crossroads for Colombians:

*The time is now to be in Colombia during this momentous event—the signing of the peace accords. I'm excited to be among the people during this exciting time. I'm concerned that President Uribe (the previous Colombian president) is organizing a protest against the signing of the accords. More and more assassinations have been ramping up. If more Americans, like myself, go and bear witness to what is happening and come back and speak out we can end U.S. military aid. We, here in the U.S., can pressure in certain areas for change, but the hardest work is for and by the Colombians who live in Colombia.*

Eisert will return in June and plans to organize for local report backs so that Minnesotans can hear about the potential for peace in Colombia.

*continued on page 10*

**Peace in Colombia**

*continued from page 9*

Both the Alliance for Global Justice and the National Committee to Free Ricardo Palmera are planning to continue organizing call-in days to pressure President Obama to increase support for the peace process and, if the accords are finalized, to pressure the U.S. to ensure that there are free and fair elections and that the right to organize is protected. The next year will be a critical one for Colombia and the peace movement in the U.S. will need to be ready to take action to defend human rights like the right to organize and to run for office in the post-peace accords period. ☺



*“Masacre en Colombia,” Fernando Botero, 2000.*

*Meredith Aby-Keirstead has led human rights delegations to Colombia. She is a member of Women Against Military Madness and the Anti-War Committee.*

**Endnotes**

1. Human Rights Watch: Colombia [tinyurl.com/z43qoc6](http://tinyurl.com/z43qoc6)
2. WOLA: Advocacy for Human Rights in the Americas [tinyurl.com/hrnq4m6](http://tinyurl.com/hrnq4m6)

**Resources**

- Alliance for Global Justice, [afgj.org](http://afgj.org)
- Support Peace for Colombia Facebook [tinyurl.com/jylszeo](http://tinyurl.com/jylszeo)
- National Committee to Free Ricardo Palmera (Simón Trinidad) [freericardopalmera.org](http://freericardopalmera.org)
- Washington Office on Latin America [wola.org](http://wola.org)
- School of the Americas Watch [soaw.org](http://soaw.org)

**Activist Organizations in Colombia**

- Websites are in Spanish*
- Marcha Patriótica (the social movement organizing for the peace accords & a political transition), [marchapatriotica.org](http://marchapatriotica.org)
  - FENSUAGRO (the largest Campesino Union in Colombia), [fensuagro.org](http://fensuagro.org)
  - USO (the Oil Workers Union in Colombia), [usofrenteobrero.org](http://usofrenteobrero.org)

No one has to go it alone in the pursuit of peace!

Join, renew, or give the gift of WAMM membership.

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Contributions are tax deductible to the full extent of the law.  
 Make checks payable to WAMM, 4200 Cedar Avenue South, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55407

# 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. Vigil time as of April: 5:00 to 6:00 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 612-827-5364.

### *Vigil to End the Occupation of Palestine*

Every Friday, 4:30 to 5:30 p.m., 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: Call 612-379-7398.

### *Grandmothers for Peace Vigils*

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



## Ongoing WAMM Committee Meetings

### *Board Meeting*

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

### *The WAMM Book Club*

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

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

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

### *Ground All Drones*

First Thursdays of every month, 4:45 to 6:00 p.m., 4200 Cedar Avenue South, Minneapolis.  
FFI: Call WAMM 612-827-5364.

### *Middle East*

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: Call Barbara 612-722-4444.

### *Tackling Torture at the Top (T3)*

Second Wednesday of each month, 10:00 a.m., 4200 Cedar Avenue South, Minneapolis.  
FFI: Call WAMM 612-827-5364.

## 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: Call 952-929-1566

### *Pax Salons*

Tuesdays, 6:30 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: Call 651-227-3228



### *WAMM Second Monday at the Movies*

Second Monday of every month, 7:00 p.m., 4200 Cedar Ave. South (enter on 42nd St.), Minneapolis. Projected on big screen. Free admission, popcorn. All welcome. Discussion follows film.

"The Wanted 18," May 9. True story: Israeli army pursues 18 cows, whose independent milk production on a Palestinian collective farm declared "a threat to national security."

"War on Whistleblowers," June 13.

Highlights stories of four whistleblowers who noticed government wrongdoing, turned to the media to expose abuse.

FFI: Call 612-827-5364 or email 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

### **9th Annual WAMM Walk Against Weapons**

Saturday, June 4, 10:30 a.m. See the back page of this newsletter.

### **David Swanson Talk: War is a Lie**

Saturday, June 11, 6:00 p.m. (Potluck); 6:30 p.m. (Presentation) Macalester Plymouth Church, Social Hall, 1658 Lincoln, St. Paul. Latest developments in the telling, debunking of lies about wars. Book signing of *War is a Lie*, which refutes every major argument used to justify wars, focusing on those most widely defended as just, good. Suggestions on what to do to end warmaking. Organized by WAMM End War committee, Veterans for Peace-Chapter 27. FFI: Call 612-827-5364 or 612-275-2720.

### **Fly Kites, Not Drones**

Saturday, June 18, 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. Lake Calhoun, northeast side, near Pavilion. Decorate, fly kites provided by WAMM. Sponsored by: the WAMM Ground All Drones Committee. FFI: Call WAMM at 612-827-5364 or visit WomenAgainstMilitaryMadness.org

**Correction:** Our deepest apologies to Liza Burr, the writer of the interview with Mazin Qumsiyeh in Spring I issue of the WAMM newsletter, whose name was misspelled. Each issue is thoroughly proofed several times and we sincerely try for perfection, but unfortunately mistakes still occur.

### **Congratulations Peacemakers!**

WAMM was voted a Favorite Peace & Justice Organization in Minnesota Women's Press 19th annual What Women Want survey of readers. See *Minnesota Women's Press* magazine (May edition) and/or womenspress.com

The Nonviolent Peaceforce has been nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize.



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**Women Against Military Madness  
9th Annual  
WALK AGAINST WEAPONS**

**Join WAMM in raising awareness  
of U.S. militarization  
at home and abroad!**



**Saturday, June 4**, rain or shine, 10:30 a.m. Check-in outside Perkins Restaurant, 901 27th Ave. South (Riverside Ave. off Hwy I-94. Please no parking in Perkins lot.) 11:00 a.m., Walk begins. 11:45 a.m., Short rally.

Horrific U.S. weapons of war are used on other countries and entities without “pinpoint accuracy,” as claimed. These weapons kill people—civilians, as well as foreign military—destroy life-sustaining infrastructure, result in irreparable environmental damage, and create enemies. U.S. weapons sales abroad foster regional instability. Increased militarization of police departments within the U.S. endanger people, particularly minorities, and foster a national security state here in the U.S.

**Walk or support the Walk. Pledge forms and donations: [womenagainstmilitarymadness.org](http://womenagainstmilitarymadness.org), call the WAMM office: 612-827-5364, or mail your donation to: WAMM, 4200 Cedar Ave. S., Ste. 3, Minneapolis, MN 55407. Sponsored by Women Against Military Madness**