
Policy makers have announced plans to “rebalance” military presence by concentrating 60% of U.S. forces in the Pacific, offering vague rationales about defense. But U.S. military involvement in the Philippines enables exploitation by multi-national corporations and oppression of the Filipino people.

As the U.S. Moves into Southeast Asia, A Report on the Philippines

by Gary King

The U.S. and Philippine military have held some joint exercises for decades. Why? There is no likely external threat to that country. Yet, the U.S. is getting along better today than ever with the Philippine military. It is sending \$30 million worth of military hardware to the Philippines for “security”—and it trickles down to private armies. Seeking to “surround China,” the U.S. has spent \$507 million lately to improve Philippine military bases, according to Ambassador Henry Thomas Jr. last November (without accounting to our Congress).

Since 2012, the U.S. has maintained 600 troops in the island of Mindanao, long, long after the one pro-Al Qaida group, Abu Sayaf, mostly a haphazard kidnapping gang, was decimated. The reason for the troops to stay is not publicly disclosed. The U.S. administration has uttered vague phrases to the effect that the Philippines should prevail in its claims to many of the Spratly Islands, scattered in the South China Sea, rumored to potentially be near offshore oil fields. So, the U.S. imagines it can help oppose Chinese encroachment in this area.

But, the more likely solid reason for those troops and our military support involves strongly suspected oil and natural gas fields further south in Mindanao. There are salt marshes, not far from the U.S. troops, which might some day be very valuable. However, those lands are nominally controlled by two Moro groups, indigenous people seeking semi-autonomy. Each of these groups (with the acronyms MNLF and MILF) is highly armed and determined to not let more lands go to fruit plantations, foreign development, and resource depredation including strip mining and logging, as well as invading farmers from the north. There have been over 325,000 refugees created by conflicts between the Philippine military and these local armies.

Now the U.S. wants its troops able to work freely

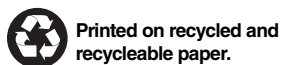


Photo: Reuters/Romeo Ranoco

More than 4,000 American troops joined Filipino troops in a series of military exercises this spring. Boris Volkhonsky, senior research fellow at the Russian Institute for Strategic Studies, called the Asia-Pacific region “the New Middle East.” The military exercise in this photo shows a mock retaking of an oil rig seized by terrorists.

out of many Philippine military bases, which is against the Philippine constitution. Recently a pair of 500-pound bombs were dropped on some houses in Basilan, a small Muslim-dominated island near Indonesia, targeted by U.S. drone intelligence. This was followed by the usual U.S./Philippine government bragging about killing three much-sought terrorists for the bombing in

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

Newsletter Editor

Mary Beaudoin

Newsletter Committee

Polly Mann, Carol Masters,
Patty Guerrero

Proofreader

Iize Mueller

Layout

Ginny Sutton



WAMM Staff

Kim Doss-Smith, Director
Vanessa Lawrow, Office manager

WAMM Office

310 East 38th Street, Suite 222
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55409
612-827-5364 (phone)
612-827-6433 (fax)
wamm@mtn.org (e-mail)
www.worldwidewamm.org (web)

WAMM Office Hours

Mon–Fri: 10:00 am–5:00 pm

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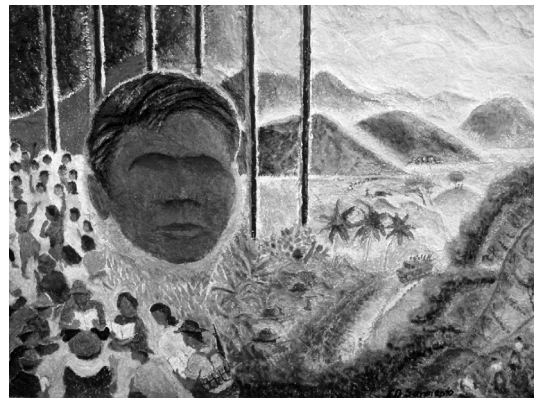
Philippines . . . *continued from page 1*

Bali. (This could not actually be confirmed, because Philippine soldiers, as usual, were unable to go there in daylight, due to small arms fire.)

So after 10 years of being a partner in the “Coalition of the Willing” in the U.S. worldwide war on the tactic of terror, and after almost two years of governance by a new president, Benigno Aquino Jr., what is the status of human rights today in the Philippines?

My wife Glen, who was born in the Philippines, and I just finished a month-long trip there—my 26th since 1975 [February 2012]. I have been working on human rights in the Philippines since a chapter of Amnesty International started in the Twin Cities in 1976. We’ve helped mourn and publicize those activists murdered by extrajudicial execution, and worked to get more than 40 Prisoners of Conscience released from prisons. This trip, I had five days in Manila to work on pressing human rights issues, and a few weeks in the central island of Cebu to see relatives and to work on local human rights issues there. I am helped by very, very brave persons in Karapatan, the people’s rights alliance, which helps find prisoners, stop torture, and promote fair and just trials. I have met four persons who were later murdered by the Philippine military, which had been stalking, harassing and threatening them.

Most of my work is to visit prisoners and bear witness to gross human rights violations. In Manila, we interviewed and filmed two women whose



Painting by current Filipino political prisoner, Ed Sarmiento

loved ones were victims of Enforced Disappearances back in 2006, under then-President Gloria Arroyo. These are heart-rending stories. We interviewed and filmed one woman who spent six years imprisoned, after her initial torture and sexual molestation.

We interviewed another woman whose husband, artist, poet and songwriter Ericson Acosta (details at www.freeacosta.blogspot.com), was arrested in the province Samar while gathering data on human rights and environmental abuses in the countryside. He had been grabbed, without an arrest warrant, because a military patrol found a laptop in his knapsack. I participated in a press conference in Manila on January 23, with five others, to protest his treatment. Our chapter of Amnesty International is protesting his initial 44 hours of torture, which included death threats, as well as his one year in jail, without proper court progress and no sign of a trial.

This is routine: Prisoners are held extra-legally by the military—e.g., in the case of 43 health care workers—in spite of pleas by President Aquino and rulings by the Philippine Supreme Court. The military today also threatens nuns in Davao City, a large metropolis south of Manila, for holding a banner about the murder of Italian priest Fr. Faustino Tentorio.

The trial of 193 suspects for the political abductions and massacre of 58 persons in one infamous incident two years ago drags on at a rate that will take 200 years! It happened in Maguindanao, a province in the western part of the large southern island of Mindanao. The victims were traveling in a car convoy to register a candidate for an election of provincial governor. The convoy consisted of the candidate’s female family members, because there were many death threats to the male candidate and it was believed that the women and girls, who were accompanied by lawyers and journalists, would not be attacked. However, police stopped



Photo: Reuters/Romeo Ranoco

A U.S. soldier carries a Filipino soldier playing a “communist insurgent” and feigning death during a joint Philippine-U.S. military exercise in April.

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the convoy, and turned the people over to the son of the provincial governor, Andal Ampatuan Sr., the head of a political dynasty that controlled the area and was a favorite of then-President Arroyo. (The province had supported her with 100% of the vote in the prior election.) Ampatuan's private army then murdered the people in brutal, sadistic ways. A world record was set in this massacre—33 journalists were killed. One witness in the trial has since been murdered, and several are missing.

Despite numerous appeals from Amnesty International and other groups, current President Aquino cannot bring himself to outlaw private armies, which have no formal training or oversight. Even the murder of Aquino's own father in 1983, during the Marcos dictatorship, remains to be solved. And yet now he wants private armies to provide security for foreign mining operations, too!

Other than occasional harsh sentences for sex traffickers and lowly drug dealers, justice continues to be quite elusive. Foreigners spend money on sex and drugs but never go to jail. Over 900 street criminals, including children, have so far been killed by motorcycling hit squads in Cebu City and Davao City, the two large cities south of Manila, and there hasn't been single prosecution of perpetrators. The mayors of these cities brag about the death squad work over the past ten years, and still get reelected.

One small gem of possible justice is that the current Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, Renato

Corona, is facing impeachment. He has single-handedly reversed court rulings, e.g., one in favor of the largest carrier, Philippine Air Lines, which now wants to outsource all of their workers to destroy their unions. Easier to prove, he is in bigger trouble for amassing a fortune of about \$20+ million in land and investments. Perhaps his biggest sin is that he was appointed by prior President Gloria Arroyo, and likely would intervene to prevent her pending prosecution for incredible corruption and election fraud dating back to 2004.

Another small gem of possible justice is that there is an arrest order for retired General Jovito Palparan. In his commands in the provinces of Mindoro, Samar, and central Luzon, he was called "The Berdugo" (The Butcher). There were high levels of killings, abductions and torture everywhere he went. He was given steady promotions and praise by Gloria Arroyo when she was president. He even led the 2,000 troops sent to fight in Iraq. Now, he may face justice for one incident where two University of Philippines co-eds, a 22-year old sociology student doing research about the plight of Bulacan farmers and a 29-year old human kinetics student and community organizer for a farmers' group, were taken, held for more than a year, raped and molested repeatedly, and now are Disappeared. Palparan is hiding, probably in the province of Bulacan where he was setting up military intelligence groups to profit by protecting foreign-owned mines. Although the Philippine Justice Department is working on this,

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Free Trade to Enslave

While I am talking to you now, the U.S. is sending drones, nuclear warships, nuclear submarines to the Philippines for increased military exercises in the South China Sea. They say it is because they must contain the threat of China, but what they will not tell you is the real reason for this pivot. The real reason is the U.S. economy is dependent on its investment in the Asia Pacific region and because of this the U.S. government needs to push a new free trade agreement in the region to ensure economic dominance and to survive this crisis. This new free trade agreement is called the TransPacific Partnership Agreement . . . U.S. out of the Philippines!

— Bernadette Ellorin, Bayan USA, center for Filipino democratic movement, at the May 20, 2012 NATO Protest, Chicago

Owning an Ocean and a Century, Too.

Given Washington's distraction, Beijing calculated that it might enjoy a window of roughly two decades in which the pressure would be largely off. In those years, it could focus on a break-neck version of internal development, while the U.S. was squandering mountains of money on its nonsensical "Global War on Terror."

Twelve years later, that window is being slammed shut as from India, Australia, and the Philippines to South Korea and Japan, the U.S. declares itself back in the hegemony business in Asia. Doubts that this was the new American path were dispelled by Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's November 2011 manifesto in *Foreign Policy* magazine, none too subtly labeled "America's Pacific Century." (And she was talking about this century, not the last one!)

—Pepe Escobar, correspondent for Asia Times, "The New(er) World Order," TomDispatch.com, April 26, 2012



PHILIPPINE RESOURCES

The Philippine Study Group of Minnesota

Keeps well informed and educates Minnesotans about current events in the Philippines. Partnerships with several grassroots organizations in the Philippines. More info: <http://www.psgm.org> or call 763-571-7696

Philippine UPR Watch

Universal Periodic Review of the Philippines (May-June 2012). Executive summary with submissions of civil society groups, including Karapatan, Banyan, eight others in the Philippines to the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHR). <http://philippineuprwatch.wordpress.com/>

WORD UP!

If You Liked NAFTA, You'll Love This:

The TransPacific Partnership: Via closed-door negotiations, U.S. officials are rewriting swaths of U.S. law that have nothing to do with trade and in a move that will infuriate left and right alike have agreed to submit the U.S. government to the jurisdiction of foreign tribunals that can order unlimited payments of our tax dollars to foreign corporations that don't want to comply with the same laws our domestic firms do.

— Lori Wallach, director of Public Citizen's Global Trade Watch, June 13, 2012

Philippines . . . *continued from page 3*

President Aquino has yet to directly order the military to give him up. [*Update: Chief Justice Corona was convicted, but General Palparan has remained untouched.*]

However, in general, the military and police conduct illegal arrests, detentions, and torture as always, dating back to dark days of the Marcos Martial Law.

In Cebu, I visit political prisoners in local jails, to report to Amnesty International in London. Like my visits in 2007 and 2009, I tried to again visit Ramon Patriacha, accused of being an officer of the New People's Army (NPA), a locally grown communist-like rebellion of the poor—mostly farmers—that has been simmering since WWII. He was arrested three years ago, and was seen being taken to a military camp. Fearing he would be tortured, the Filipino human rights group, Karapatan, persuaded a judge to issue a writ of amparo (a special court-ordered protection and habeas corpus) to personally go on a Sunday to the military camp to see him. She was refused access for eight hours. She said, "I am a judge. This is a writ of amparo. You must let me see him!" Nevertheless, military officers blocked the entrance with a fire truck, and refused to bring him to the entrance, giving the rationale that he might escape or that the NPA might kill him. Later, on his first day in court, Ramon lifted his shirt and showed the severe contusions on his chest. (He now has filed a 1.4 million peso lawsuit against the military for his torture.)

My daughter and I went to a jail to visit him, but we were denied entrance despite my showing my Amnesty International Leadership card. The governor of the province had told newspapers that her jails are "rebel free," so Ramon was now to be held incommunicado. Considering he has not yet been convicted of anything, this violates his rights. The warden and assistant warden drove right past us to get away, not wishing to hear from AI or to disobey the governor! A few days later, he was transferred to the very same military camp where he had been tortured three years earlier. Luckily, this time I was allowed to enter that facility after showing my AI card, and we talked for an hour in front of two dour-faced, fully-armed soldiers. Ramon was supposed to be released last August, according to ongoing negotiations taking place in Norway between the National Democratic Front (the political arm of the New People's Army) and the Philippine government but all negotiations are on hold since the military grabbed 17 consultants for the National Democratic Front just before the renewed start of talks.

So it goes for our "Coalition of the Willing."

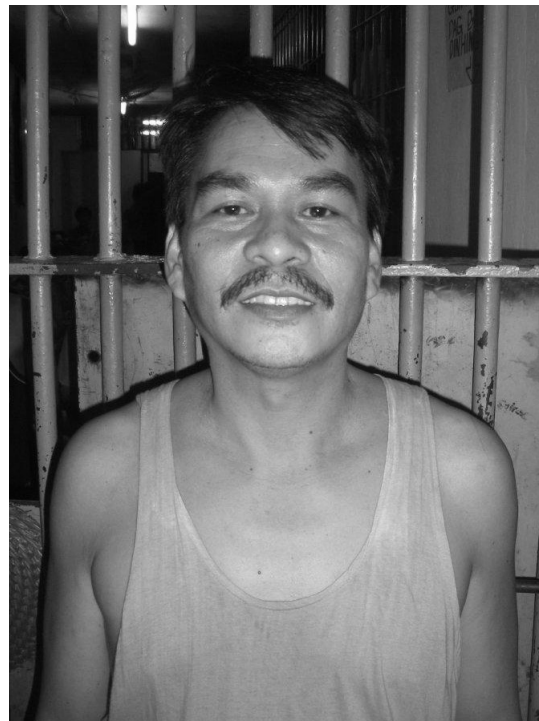


Photo: Gary King

Ramon Patriacha was held incommunicado and tortured. He is suing the Philippine military.

Gary King, Ph.D., is a retired neuroscientist and the leader of Amnesty International Chapter 37, Minneapolis. He and his wife Glen King, a retired public-school math teacher, who was born in Cebu, Philippines, are active in numerous Filipino groups in Minnesota, including the Philippine Study Group of Minnesota.

PM War Crimes: The Comfort Women

by Polly Mann

A *New York Times* article of May 18th carried an article about a New Jersey monument to the so-called “Comfort Women,” of World War II: those tens of thousands of women and girls who were forced into brutal sexual slavery by the Japanese military. Many of them were teenagers and most were from the Philippines and Korea.

The article caught my attention because in the mid '80s, WAMM members Sarah Martin, Marianne Hamilton, and I were in the Philippines protesting some aspect of President Bill Clinton's foreign policy. While there we visited an agency that supported the Philippine Comfort Women. We met about fifteen to twenty so-called Comfort Women who were, by then, in their sixtieth or seventieth decade of life. For entertainment the women had hired an instructor to give us all dancing lessons. Sounds rather bizarre but it was actually a lot of fun.

The sad history of Comfort Women had its root in 1937 when the Japanese Imperial Army invaded China. Japanese soldiers raped at least 20,000 Chinese women during the first four weeks of the conflict. This event was known as the “Rape of Nanjing.” It is said that the Japanese military sought a solution to avoid a similar situation in World War II. This was to send women along with the troops to provide sexual services for them.

One of the Comfort Women told us that, after the war, when she had explained to her family what had happened to her, they totally rejected her. Each woman's story was different, of course, but all were tragic and the women wanted apologies and atonement reparations from an unwilling Japanese government. The Japanese had decided that the supplier of funds would be a private agency, acting in lieu of the Japanese government.



Comfort Women memorial, Seoul, South Korea, across from the Japanese embassy, which wants it removed.

Most of the women refused the funds, stating that they wanted the government, itself, to issue an official statement and reparations.

The *Times* article deals solely with the Korean Comfort Women who have been memorialized in a monument in New Jersey, the only one of its kind in this country. However, because of this recent action many other Korean groups in the United States have shown interest in erecting similar monuments.

The idea had also taken root elsewhere—there is memorial in the Philippines and one in South Korea. But tensions between Japan and South Korea were ignited in December when the bronze statue in honor of these victims was installed across the street from the Japanese Embassy in Seoul. According to *Asia Times*, May 22, 2012, the Japanese refusal to pay atonement to Korean Comfort Women jeopardized recent military-intelligence and supply sharing pacts between South Korea and Japan and became a major setback for the strengthening of the U.S.-led alliance in the Asia-Pacific region meant to counter the military expansion of China.

There were also tensions in New Jersey. Mayor James Rotundo of

Recognition and Remembrance

The War and Women's Rights Museum commemorating the Comfort Women opened May 5, 2012, in South Korea. In 2005, a private foundation created the Women's Active Museum on War and Peace to house a collection of stories of the Comfort Women and wartime sexual violence in Japan.

Friends of Lolos supports the mission of Lila Pilipina, and all comfort women.
<http://labanforthelolas.blogspot.com>

The Past Teaches the Present

If we ignore this issue, we grant these acts permission to occur, we justify the past and give reason to reenact these crimes against ourselves...It's still happening [war crimes]. We must stand up as people and acknowledge and learn and promise to stop war and to stop crimes against humanity. In the end we are all people and we need to respect each life.

—M. Evelina Galang, *Friends of the Lolos, advocating for comfort women*



A protest in the Philippines demanding justice for Comfort Women. They want a formal apology and atonement reparations.

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

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May 2012 WAMM Calendar

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

Ongoing WAMM Vigils for Peace

Vigil to End War:

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

Vigil to End the Occupation of Palestine:

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

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.

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

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, wammmmedia@gmail.com.

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

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

Tackling Torture at the Top (T3): Second Wednesday of each month, 10:00 a.m. at Afro Deli and Coffee, 1939 5th Street South (Riverside and 20th Avenue), Minneapolis.

Ongoing Events

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

People of Faith Peacemakers

Breakfast: Second and fourth Wednesdays, 8:00 to 9:30 a.m. at 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.justviewpoint.org or call 763-784-5177

Grandmothers for Peace:

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

Tea Time Conversational Salons:

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

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: www.creatingacultureofpeace.org

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 Lutheran Church of the Redeemer, 285 North Dale Street, St. Paul. Meets to educate and discuss the events of 9/11/2001. FFI: www.mn911truth.org.

Dignity, Not Detention Vigil: Every first Sunday, 2:30 to 3:00 p.m. at 425 Grove Street (Ramsey County Law Enforcement Center). Vigil for civil immigrant detainees in jail at request of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). Sponsored by: Interfaith Coalition for Immigration, Advocates for Human Rights and others. FFI: Email interfaithonimmigration@gmail.com

Special Events

Save the Date: WAMM's 28th Annual Silent Auction Sunday, September 23, 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. St. Joan of Arc Church, 4537 Third Avenue South, Minneapolis. Details: TBA FFI: WAMM, 612-827-5364

Torture Awareness Movie Night:

Thursday, June 28, 7:00 p.m. St. Joan of Arc Church, Education Building, Upper Room, 4537 Third Avenue South, Minneapolis. Two films: "Solitary Confinement: Torture in Your Backyard" and "Reckoning with Torture." Organized by: the WAMM Tackling Torture at the Top (T3) Committee. FFI: Call WAMM, 612-827-5364.

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

Grand Jury Indictment Emergency Action: 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 at 4:30 p.m. at the U.S. Federal Building, 4th St & 4th Ave, Downtown Minneapolis. Watch for action alerts. FFI: See stopfbi.net and mnStopFBI.wordpress.com, or call (612) 379-3585.

Iraq: After 20 Years of War and Occupation:

Thursday, July 5, 7:00 p.m., St. Joan of Arc Church, 4537 Third Ave. S., Minneapolis. Sami Rasouli, an Iraqi-American, lived in Minnesota for many years before returning to Iraq after the U.S. invasion and occupation and now works with the Muslim Peacemaker Team. As the U.S. and NATO threaten other countries, it is very important to learn what Iraq is like today after 20 years of war, sanctions and occupation. Sponsored by WAMM End War Committee and Women Against Military Madness. FFI: 612-522-1861, 612-827-5364

Peacestock 2012: Saturday, July 14, all-day event begins 9:00 a.m. Windbeam Farm, N2934 750th St., Hager City, Wisconsin. 10th Annual. Workshops, food; beautiful gardens; free camping; music. Speakers: Talk Radio Nation host David Swanson, author of "War is a Lie" and "The Military Industrial Complex at 50," presents "Abolishing War: One Last Step to Take." Sponsored by Veterans for Peace, Chapter 115, Red Wing. FFI: www.peacestockvfp.org or Bill Habedank: 651-388-7733, 651-764-1866; David Harris: 651-388-5963

Three Decades of Daring Deeds: WAMM's 30th Year Anniversary Celebration: Sunday July 22, 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. Program at 5:00 p.m. Carondelet Center Dining Room, 1890 Randolph Ave., St. Paul. Friends, relatives, supporters are invited to attend. FFI: See back of newsletter.

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.

Choose Your Weapon: Military Metaphor

by Carol Masters

As peacemakers, we try to avoid militaristic language and metaphor when it nudges or bullies its way into everyday speech: call the shots, spearhead the discussion, attack an argument, look daggers, choose ammunition for a campaign. Such metaphors are borrowed from the “excitement” of military life to enliven common speech and as such may or may not be harmless. Conversely, military metaphorical transformation of the ordinary often has a hateful, even inhuman objective: “light up” human beings, or referring to an Afghan woman in traditional dress as a “bullet.”

The culture critic, Cynthia Haven, decries the use of war itself in a metaphor (war on women, war on terror). Such usage, she says, is a marketing tool, intended to manufacture outrage. War is a bloody, grievous, scarifying evil, and it is dishonest and manipulative to adopt it as a buzzword. Her argument is that “the word should be reserved for the real thing.”¹

As an aside, Haven references past conflicts when wars were given other names to cleanse them of objectionable policy implications: “Vietnam wasn’t a war but a ‘police action.’” That label also has been given to the Korean War, military incursions into Iraq and Afghanistan, and drone attacks on Pakistan. Secretary Gates called Libya a “limited kinetic action,” whatever that might be.²

Whether it is euphemistic, militaristic, or manipulative, we need to pay attention to the language of policy makers as it acquires authoritative standing. Policy language is of great consequence — especially when it is crafted to prepare us for war. Spit and shine phrases are kitted out with care to make their appearance on *The News Hour* or whatever communication venue policy makers have chosen to manufacture public approval. The Responsibility to Protect is one such formula currently used to appeal to public emotions and U.S. self-understandings or delusions.

Clinton and R2P

Mary Beaudoin of Women Against Military



Madness points out in “The Myth of Humanitarian Intervention” (*WAMM Today*, May 17, 2012), the concept Responsibility to Protect has been given broad sanction by western powers and their allies after a relatively short history as an “emerging” international norm. At the 2005 World Summit of the United Nations (High-Level Plenary Meeting), an initiative was introduced that called for all governments to accept responsibility to protect populations from acts of atrocity: genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. One hundred thirty-three countries objected because the model undermined the concept of the sovereign nation-state and provided a rationale for stronger nations to interfere with weaker ones. The danger to weaker nations was most evident in that R2P asked for the willingness to use collective action through the Security Council “when peaceful means prove inadequate and national authorities are manifestly failing to do so.” In other words, it gave the green light for the use of military force.

Samantha Power is usually credited with, if not the invention, at least the popularization of the doctrine in her 2002 book *A Problem From Hell: America and the Age of Genocide*. After reporting during the Bosnian conflict, she has for many years been a champion of military interventions to guard against genocide. She was considered, along with Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and U.S. Ambassador to the UN Susan Rice, to be an important voice in the Obama administration calling for the president to intervene militarily in Libya. President Obama named her as chair to the newly established Atrocities Prevention Board, whose goal is to formally recognize that genocide

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Did You Say Protect?

The scale of the ongoing tragedy visited on Libya by NATO and its allies is becoming horribly clearer with each passing day. Estimates of those killed so far vary, but 50,000 seems like a low estimate; indeed the British Ministry of Defence was boasting that the onslaught had killed 35,000 as early as last May. But this number is constantly growing. The destruction of the state’s forces by British, French and American blitzkrieg has left the country in a state of total anarchy—in the worst possible sense of the word. Having had nothing to unite them other than a temporary willingness to act as NATO’s foot soldiers, the former ‘rebels’ are now turning on each other.

—Dan Glazebrook, “An Ongoing Disaster: Libya, Africa and Africom,” *Counterpunch Weekend Edition* May 25-27, 2012

WAMM Today

News, views,
commentary.

Also on Facebook.

wammtoday.wordpress.com

Coup d'Etat, Post Modern Style

Their narratives in public policy and for public consumption are deceptive and persuasive. Often they specifically target and co-opt progressive thinkers, media and activists. The product is almost invariably a post-modern coup d'etat . . . The tactics can be so subtle, involving human rights organizations and the United Nations, that they are difficult to comprehend.

—Christof Lehmann, "The National Counsel of Syria and US Unconventional Warfare," *nsrc.wordpress.com, breaking the embargo on truth*

With Friends Like These

"Save the Afghan Women from the Taliban" led to the bombing and destruction of Afghanistan; "Save the Iraqi People from Sadaam" led to the bombing and destruction of Iraq. As the U.S. and Israel draw closer to open warfare against Iran, those who want to prevent another war must look carefully at who is funding "peace" groups who claim to be concerned about human rights in Iran, but whose ulterior motive is regime change by any means necessary, including an attack on Iran.

—Margaret Sarfehjooy, WAMM Middle East Committee

The Set Up

The scheme works like this: arm and train opposition groups within the "unfriendly" country, instigate violent rebellion with the help of covert mercenary forces under the guise of fighting for democracy; and when government forces attempt to quell the thus-nurtured armed insurrection, accuse them of human rights violations, and begin to embark openly and self-righteously on the path of regime change in the name of "responsibility to protect" the human rights.

—Ismael Hossein-zadeh, "How the Arab Spring Was Sapped Dry," <http://www.just-international.org>

Choose Your Weapon, continued from page 7

and other mass atrocities committed by foreign powers are a "core national security interest and core moral responsibility." It's worth noticing which "core" is listed first.

While Power's relationship with Hillary Clinton has not always been smooth—her criticisms of Clinton during the 2008 campaign led to her resignation—their united focus on the "humanitarian" basis for U.S. military dominance is laser-like. R2P is a rallying cry for leaders who need to justify a probably bloody intervention and a public who wants to believe it is necessary.

Hillary Clinton used the phrase long before it was introduced at the United Nations World Summit. In an address to the Beijing Women's Conference in 1995,³ she stressed that the conference's goals, to strengthen societies and empower women, could not be met unless all governments "accept their responsibility to protect and promote internationally recognized human rights." No doubt her reference to human rights was intentional, a broad diplomatic hint to the host country.

The moral tone was undercut, ironically, during her presidential campaign when she promised to "operationalize" the responsibility-to-protect doctrine and "adopt a policy that recognizes the prevention of mass atrocities as an important national security interest of the United States, not just a humanitarian goal."⁴ Her caveat suggests that U.S. interests, not human lives, should take primary place in foreign policy.

Edward Luck, appointed Special Advisor on the Responsibility to Protect by UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon, stresses that the strength of R2P is its "capacity to move and inspire people, and, over time, even governments and international organi-

zations. It will require discipline and vigilance to ensure that asset does not become a liability."⁵ Lots of controversy still exists about the doctrine among commentators. On the conservative side, think tanks warn that the U.S. may compromise its own national sovereignty by intervening in another nation's conflicts, and that the only test for involvement should be our national interest. Supporters argue that interventions are not to be carried out unilaterally, but by the "international community." But the United States and its allies use "international community" to designate themselves and whoever agrees with them at the time. Might the concept be a covering rubric for imperialism or neo-colonialism?

In the run-up to the attacks on Libya, Obama ultimately sided with Clinton and those like Powers and Rice pushing R2P—over the objections of others in his administration. And in the Syrian crisis, it is clear that Clinton's and Power's influence will be felt.

In mid-May, the *Washington Post* reported that Syrian rebels have begun receiving significantly more and better weapons in recent weeks, which includes antitank weaponry, "an effort paid for by Persian Gulf nations and coordinated in part by the United States, according to opposition activists and U.S. and foreign officials." Obama administration officials said that the United States is not supplying the lethal material, but "has expanded contacts with opposition military forces to provide the gulf nations with assessments of rebel credibility and command-and-control infrastructure."

No matter which words you chose to disguise it with, war by any other name is still war.

- 1 Cynthia Haven, *Orwell Watch #19 "End the War"* <http://bookhaven.stanford.edu/2012/04/orwell-watch-19-end-the-war/>
- 2 Doug Bandow, "The Libyan Itty-Bitty, Kind of, Sort of, Quasi War," *The National Interest*, Special Issue, May 24, 2011
- 3 <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/hillaryclintonbeijingspeech.htm>
- 4 Amitai Etzioni, *Foreign Affairs*, November/December 2011, <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/136548/amitai-etzioni-g-john-ikenberry/point-of-order>.
- 5 Edward Luck, *Freedom from Fear Magazine*, "The Responsibility to Protect Whom from What?" May 22, 2012 <http://www.freedomfromfearmagazine.org>
- 6 Karen DeYoung and Liz Sly, *Washington Post*, May 15, 2012

Carol Masters is a member of the WAMM Newsletter Committee, and has written articles, poems, and books on peace and justice, including You Can't Do That! Marv Davidov, Nonviolent Revolutionary with Marv Davidov, Nodin Press, Minneapolis, 2009.



Collage of words from presidents' speeches. —New York Times

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Comfort Women ..., continued from page 5

Palisades Park, reported that the Japanese consul general, Shigeyuki Hiroki, asked to meet with him. He presented two documents, claiming that the Japanese had recognized and apologized for the comfort women adequately. The women and their advocates do not believe that the Japanese government has, itself, ever provided sufficient formal recognition and issued sincere apologies. The counsel general said that Japan was willing to plant cherry trees in the borough, donate books to the public library, "and do some things to prove that we're united in this world and not divided." But the offer was contingent on the memorial's removal. Borough officials rejected the request.

A second delegation, this time led by four members of the Japanese Parliament, approached Mayor Rotundo asking that the memorial be removed. According to the Mayor, "They said the Comfort Women were a lie, that they were set up by an outside agency, that they were women who were paid to come and take care of the troops." Again, the Mayor refused the request.

The crux of the issue continues to be that the Japanese government refuses to officially acknowledge its role in its crimes by attempting to erase the history of the women, and also refuses to offer atonement reparations directly.

Who knows how this situation will be resolved? Of course, the country of Japan does not want to be known for this part of its history. This is one more nasty aspect of war that lingers on.

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



M. Evelina Galang, creator of Friends of Lolas, in recognition of Comfort Women

WAMM THANKS

- Carol and Ken Masters in memory of Marv Davidov.
- Lucia Wilkes Smith in honor of Pedalstory.
- Carol Walker in honor of Pedalstory.
- Delara and Patrick Sommerville in honor of Rosemary Ruffenach.



310 East 38th Street, Suite 222
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55409
(612) 827-5364 FAX: (612) 827-6433
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Parking: Between Cleveland and Fairview Avenues, next to St. Catherine University. Look for two driveways labeled with signs "CSJ—Sisters of St Joseph of Carondelet" Enter the building on the garden level through the west entrance.