

The new form of global warfare alleges to “protect” by preemptively preventing mass atrocities. Dr. Aafia Siddiqui, a U.S.-educated academic and mother, is caught in its web and now serving 86 years in a federal prison in Texas.

The Extraordinary Case of Aafia Siddiqui

by Mary Beaudoin

She has become a symbol of the new form of global warfare that alleges it exists to preemptively prevent mass attacks and “protect” us from atrocities before they occur, but which operates without regard to borders or due process.

What do we know about Aafia Siddiqui? In photos and video she appears to be a healthy, bright-eyed, cheerful, young woman. She was a brilliant scholar at the top of her high school class in Karachi. In 1990, she moved to the U.S., studied at MIT, and received a doctorate in cognitive neuroscience from Brandeis University. Her principal interest was studying how children learn, and she particularly wanted to help dyslexic and children with special needs.

As a student in Boston, she volunteered at the Martin Luther King School, and worked in community service and on charity projects. While living in Boston, she married a Pakistani doctor with whom she had three children—the first two were born in the U.S. and therefore American citizens. But the marriage was troubled, her husband was physically abusive, and she returned to her family in Pakistan, where she gave birth to her third child.

After 9/11, Pakistanis who traveled to and from the U.S. were considered suspect.

In March of 2003, the FBI issued alerts about Dr. Aafia Siddiqui. Based on alleged associations with some Pakistanis who were detained and interrogated, she was sought for questioning about terrorist money-laundering. She was said to have had a second marriage to Amman Ali Balochi,



La Madre Infeliz! (The Unhappy mother!) from the series, Los Desastres de la Guerra (“The Disasters of War”). Etching by Francisco Goya, 1863

the nephew of “9/11 Mastermind” Khalid Sheikh Mohammed; she has denied even knowing him, much less being married to him.¹ But the U.S. media was quick to spread allegations and label her “Lady al Qaeda.”

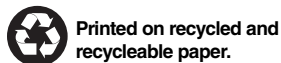
On March 30, she and her three very young children “disappeared” in Pakistan.

Nearly two months later, on May 26, 2003, Attorney General John Ashcroft and FBI Director Robert Mueller claimed that Al Qaeda was planning an attack on the U.S. Aafia was named as one of seven Al Qaeda operatives being sought.

In the years that followed, the FBI maintained that they didn’t know her whereabouts but that she was still being sought.

This assertion has been frequently contradicted. According to Victoria Brittain, former associate

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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.

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PM Believing in the Power of Love

by Polly Mann

I heard Fr. Elias Chacour, speak in the Twin Cities in 1984. He was one of the most moving speakers I have ever heard and yet his message was quite simple.

Elias Chacour, who describes himself as Palestinian-Arab-Christian, is a firm believer in the non-violent message of Jesus. It had been as ever-present in his home as the bread on the table. His father prayed for the Israeli soldiers who drove the family of mother, father and six sons from their modest home. Nor did Elias, himself, speak ill of the Israeli government that has usurped so much Palestinian land and wounded and killed so many Palestinians.

Today, it is inspiring to know of the courageous nonviolent resistance of Palestinian Mazin Qumsiyeh whose motto is "Stay human!" (<http://popular-resistance.blogspot.com>).

I am reminded that there have been and are Israelis, as well as Palestinians who hold similar beliefs. Several years ago Israeli Rabbi Arik Asherman spoke at Temple Israel in Minneapolis about his work with Rabbis for Human Rights, which is based on interfaith understanding and included the whole issue of Palestinian home demolitions. He has run into trouble with the Israeli government but his work continues. Also concerned about Palestinian rights is peace activist Uri Avnery, an Israeli writer and founder of the Gush Shalom peace movement. And then there are the Israeli military men and women called "Refusniks" who won't serve in the Occupied Territories.

New creative movements continue to spring up to prove that recognition of our common humanity can challenge the fear and hatred that are generated for power and profit. While it is difficult for Iranians and Israelis to communicate with each other—there is not even phone service between the two countries—Ronny Edry and Michal Tamir, a married couple who are graphic designers,

teachers and parents accidentally created an online movement by posting a Facebook image declaring "Iranians, we will never bomb your country. We love you!" Within 24 hours, messages began pouring in from Iran, "We love you, too!" and mutual love between people of both countries who did not even know each other sprang up to inspire the Peace Factory with a vision to expand peace to the entire Middle East.

It was perhaps predictable that they would be denounced as naïve and simplistic, as people who want peace inevitably are. It's hard to break through the walls that power, supported by a military machine, has built in national psyches. But it wasn't long before people from other countries joined the project, including people from the U.S., which funds and supports Israel's military and weapons, and conducts cyber and economic attacks on Iran.

In Afghanistan, the Afghan Peace Volunteers asked for two million friends to join them around the world with the dual purposes of memorializing the two million Afghans who had died since the wars began and ending the present war in Afghanistan. You may see people on U.S. streets wearing beautiful aqua-blue scarves, a project they initiated, to symbolize that people everywhere share our common humanity under the blue sky.

The Iraq American Reconciliation Project in the U.S. is a partner with the Muslim Peacemakers in Iraq and has held several delegations of visitors, art and water projects to create healing and friendships between the two countries in people-to-people exchanges, principally between the Sister Cities of Najaf, Iraq, and Minneapolis, Minnesota, USA.

People exist who reach beyond their own lives to spread love to others, even those they have never met. This proves that peace really is possible. More people simply need to join in.

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



**New re-designed
WAMM website:
www.worldwidewamm.org**

foreign editor for the *Guardian*, “The Pakistani media have always claimed that the ISI [Pakistani Inter-service Intelligence] was responsible for her disappearance and the Americans were involved, too.”²

In their 30-plus page report, “Aafia Siddiqui: Just the Facts,” the International Justice Network states that “all available evidence indicates that Dr. Siddiqui, along with her three small children, were initially arrested in March 2003 with the knowledge and cooperation of local authorities in Karachi, Pakistan, and subsequently interrogated by Pakistani military intelligence (ISI) as well as U.S. intelligence agencies, including the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI).”

British investigative journalist Yvonne Ridley, who is with the organization CagePrisoners, commented: “The FBI put out a story at the time that she had, in fact, gone on a jihad to Afghanistan—it was a ludicrous tale without foundation and, as every mother of young children knows, a journey to the local corner shop with toddlers is a monumental challenge, so heading off to fight in Afghanistan with a pram, pushchair and toddler in hand is simply inconceivable.”

Human rights organizations, and Pakistani and international reporters believed that Aafia was being held in CIA secret prisons. A February 2008 Asia Human Rights Commission report states that Aafia had been brought to Karachi and severely tortured to secure her compliance as a government witness against Khalid Shiekh Mohammed.

In 2007 and 2008, awareness and outrage were building regarding Aafia’s disappearance and stories about her captivity and her children’s. Pakistani lawyers filed a writ of *habeas corpus* (which means literally “you should have the body”), requiring a person under arrest be brought before a judge or into a court to ensure against unlawful detention.

Yvonne Ridley, dripping with sarcasm, described the following scene which took place on July 17, 2008, as a set up: “The FBI has now moved into the realms of fantasy land with the news that Dr. Siddiqui was ‘conveniently’ found outside the governor’s office in Ghazni, Afghanistan, with her 12-year-old son FIVE years after her disappearance in Karachi. [She and her son had not seen each other before this from the time they were abducted when he was seven years old. They were reported not to even recognize each other.] According to the FBI, she was in possession of ‘numerous documents describing the creation of explosives, as well as excerpts from the *Anarchist’s Arsenal*, descriptions of various landmarks in the

United States, including in New York City’—you know, all the regular stuff a female terrorist would carry in her handbag.”

Aafia was taken into custody by the police in Ghazni, together with her son, with whom she had just been reunited in this bizarre setting. FBI agents, U.S. Army officers and Afghan interpreters appeared on the scene the following day. What happened next was just as bizarre. Aafia was held in a 300-foot square room with them in the Ghazni police station and was said to have picked up the three-foot-long rifle belonging to one of them, and attempted to murder one or more of them. However, none of them was shot, or even injured, and the frail, 100-pound woman was, herself, shot twice in the stomach at close range supposedly because the men needed to defend themselves against her.³

In a *Harpers Magazine* article, “The Intelligence Factory,” November 2009, Petra Bartosiewicz gave an account of how Aafia, nearly dead, was then taken to Bagram Air Force Base, where the bullets were dug out of her. Here, she was interrogated while under sedation, all the while in four-point restraints. She was not allowed a lawyer and was flown to New York.

Bartosiewicz continued: “Siddiqui finally appeared before a judge in a Manhattan courtroom on August 5. Now, two weeks after her capture, she was bandaged and doubled over in a wheelchair, barely able to speak—she had been shot in the stomach by one of the very soldiers she stands accused of attempting to murder.”

After her arraignment, Aafia was held without bail until her trial began in January 2010.

She was never accused of or tried for terrorism, though throughout coverage of the trial, U.S. media irresponsibly persisted in insinuating or alleging that she was affiliated with Al Qaeda. She was tried only for the attempted murder of U.S. army personnel, a charge she denied. She also said she had been tortured in a secret prison, forced to copy incriminating pages from a book under threat of her missing children being tortured, and that she was forced to carry a handbag with unfamiliar contents. All of this was dismissed, but the copied notes were admitted as evidence against her in the trial.

Of the men who testified against her, only an Afghan interpreter, who immediately received a visa and green card and moved to New York, stated that she had actually shot off the rifle, though no forensic evidence was ever produced in court. Nevertheless, she was convicted and sentenced to 86 years in U.S. federal penitentiary in Fort Worth, Texas.

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WORD UP!

In Case of Emergency: Call for Truth and “Justice,” Not 9-11.

We are called to speak for the weak, for the voiceless, for victims of our nation and for those it calls enemy

—Martin Luther King



Aafia Siddiqui, the hopeful young woman, as she is remembered in Pakistan.



Aafia Siddiqui received her Ph.D. in cognitive neuroscience. Characterized as a chemical or biological terrorist capable of creating mass atrocities, her actual area of study was in how children learn, particularly children with special needs.



Aafia Siddiqui’s suffering entered a new phase when she was brought to the United States for a show trial.

WORD UP!

Do As I Say, Not As I Do

The American-led [NATO] coalition said that it had asked the Afghan government to investigate allegations of torture by Afghan Local Police units that have been trained and advised by American Special Operations forces.

—New York Times,
January 16, 2013

The Terrible Truth

On January 23, 2012, Khurshid Kasuri, former foreign minister of Pakistan under General Musharraf, admitted handing over Dr. Aafia to the US and expressed his regret. In a twitter message he said: "I'm so sorry for handing over the innocent Dr. Aafia Siddiqui to the Americans. It was my biggest mistake ever. Khurshid Kasuri."

Tellingly, General Musharraf admits in his book (*In the Line of Fire*, page 237) that his government captured and handed over 369 'al Qaeda militants' to the U.S. He also writes that Pakistanis received 'millions of dollars' as prize money from the CIA for capturing those militants.

—Abdus Sattar Ghazali, chief editor, Journal of America
www.journalofamerica.net

In August 2009, the [U.S.] Justice Department released a long-secret report chronicling abuses inside the Central Intelligence Agency's overseas prisons, showing how interrogators choked a prisoner repeatedly and threatened to kill another detainee's children.

—New York Times
"Topics: CIA Interrogations,"
regarding a report about the Bush years that may or may not be declassified by the Senate in mid-February

Aafia Siddiqui, continued from page 3

Senator Gravel, a former member of the U.S. Congress, subsequently traveled to Pakistan, as did former U.S. Congresswoman Cynthia McKinney, to advocate for Dr. Siddiqui's repatriation to that country. He stated that Dr. Aafia's trial in the United States was illegal. He added that "the U.S. government had no moral or legal justification for their actions . . . Dr. Siddiqui is not a U.S. citizen, so the U.S. government should not be left to determine her fate, she should be returned to Pakistan so that she can begin to recover from the horrible torture and abuse that she has suffered." (the *Express Tribune*, with the *International Herald Tribune*, September 19, 2012)

Former U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clark, who also went to Pakistan to advocate for Aafia's repatriation, said regarding Aafia's extradition, trial and sentencing, "I haven't witnessed such bare injustice in my entire career."

And what became of Aafia's children? Aafia's young daughter was found wandering on a street in Karachi with a tag around her neck stating who she was. She was returned to the extended family. Her son was returned to the extended family, after being kept and interrogated following his mysterious appearance with his mother in Afghanistan. The children spoke English with an American accent and were traumatized. They had been separated from each other and their mother and were believed to have been held in prisons for children for the five years that they were disappeared. And they were U.S. citizens! The youngest child, who was a baby at the time Aafia disappeared, is still missing and presumed dead.

Supporters in Pakistan number in the thousands in the general population, and include people in high-ranking government positions, but she continues to represent an unresolved political issue between Pakistan and the U.S. Activists groups International Action Center, United National Antiwar Coalition, National Veterans for Peace, the Fellowship of Reconciliation and Code Pink have traveled to Pakistan to advocate for her repatriation.

An appeal of Aafia's case was filed, but her conviction and 86-year sentence were upheld by the 2nd U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals on November 6, 2012. She remains in a U.S. federal penitentiary in solitary confinement, which we know is a form of torture. Hidden away as she is, she cannot be seen as living proof of the crimes perpetrated against her—crimes that existed within the context of war, crimes that were the result of war—exacerbated further by terrible injustices and cruel mistreatment from a politicized "legal" system.

It's horrifying to think of what has been done to

this young woman and her children. In the continuing war of terror, how many more Aafias will there be? We need to use our civil liberties to free her and ourselves, before we lose them all. See page 7, "U.S. and Pakistan: Free Aafia!"

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

Footnotes:

- 1 On October 7, 2008, a delegation of senators was sent by the parliament and the Government of Pakistan to meet with Dr. Siddiqui where she was being held pending trial. During the visit, she denied even knowing Balochi, who had been sent to Guantanamo. She also said she did not want retaliatory violence done for her incarceration. "Report of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs Meeting with Dr. Aafia Siddiqui." Carswell Federal Prison Medical Center, Fort Worth, Texas. Her family also denies there was such a marriage and there has been no evidence to prove it.
- 2 Victoria Brittain, "The Siddiqui Case," February 14, 2011, *Counterpunch*.
- 3 Yvonne Ridley went to the Ghazni to investigate the scene, and documented facts that demonstrate the U.S. government's case against Aafia is unbelievable. Petra Bartosiewicz also attempted to recreate the scene of the alleged crime, as presented to the court, and found it impossible. Aafia denies shooting at anyone.

A few of many sources for this article:

"Report of Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs on meeting with Dr. Aafia Siddiqui at Carswell, Fort Worth, Texas, USA October 7, 2008

"The Powerful Testimony of Dr. Aafia Siddiqui." El-Hajj Mauri' Saalakhani. Report from the trial, Muslim Matters, muslimmatters.org, January 2010

"Intelligence Factory" Petra Bartosiewicz, *Harper's Magazine*, November 2009

CagePrisoners: Giving a Voice to the Voiceless
cageprisoners.com

International Justice Network report: "Aafia Siddiqui: Just the Facts" February 2011

International Action Center, iacenter.org

Free Aafia freeaafia.org

Aafia Movement aafiamovement.com

War is a Crime warisacrime.org

Interview with Guardian journalist Victoria Brittain, "A Deeper Look," KBOO Radio, Portland, Oregon, April 14, 2011

"Aafia's Trial," Asia Pacific Forum. Guest: Tina Foster, International Justice Network. WBAI Radio, New York, New York. April 14, 2011

"Letters to Washington." Guest: Tina Foster, International Justice Network. KPFA Radio Berkeley, California, January 26, 2010

"Ignoring Torture Claims and Questionable Evidence, New York Jury Convicts Pakistani Scientist Aafia Siddiqui." Democracy Now. February 4, 2010

Connie Fuller (1948-2012)

Connie Fuller left us on Christmas Eve, December 24, 2012.

She had been extraordinarily generous with all of her resources—her time, energy, professional services, skills, etc. A certified public accountant (CPA), with a masters in business from the University of Minnesota, she volunteered in the WAMM office for several years, working on our bookkeeping, taxes and other financial issues.

Connie was a regular at the peace vigil on the Lake Street/Marshall Avenue Bridge, antiwar demonstrations, and events, participating with Women Against Military Madness, even when she became ill.

It was always uplifting to see her. She caused us to feel good, even when the world was in bad shape.

There are many things to remember about Connie—this is just one: Among Connie's strongly held beliefs was her opposition to young people being steered into the military where they were trained to kill or could themselves be killed. At the time of one incident, the military was finding it particularly difficult to get them to enlist. While U.S. military personnel were dispersed over hundreds of bases in other countries around the world,* many new recruits were sent to fight hot wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. The military considered inner city and minority neighborhoods to be good areas to recruit in, as the youth in these areas were expected to have more limited employment options and so be easy pickings.

No doubt that's why Army recruiters set up shop at a table in the lobby of Sabbathani Community Center in Minneapolis.

But Women Against Military Madness had its office in the building. When we saw that the recruiters had stationed themselves in the reception area, we quickly set up a counter recruitment table across from them with our literature, explaining the hazards involved with enlistment. Connie dropped everything to make sure the table was staffed.

Seeing they had competition, the two military recruiters staffing their area went into action using what appeared to be the military tactics they were trained in. When Connie tried to encourage young people wandering by to come to our table, sometimes calling out or motioning, the soldiers got a huge, extremely loud fan to situate right next to us and drown out our voices (*control communications*). It was too heavy to move, but we succeeded in getting it turned off. Unable to block the sound of us, the recruiters tried to block the sight of us by putting up a screen around a chair where a potential recruit could sit (*secure the location*). The smoother of the two recruiters explained to

Photo: Tom Bottolene
Connie Fuller
at an antiwar
demonstration, 2007



us that the military had been a great career for him and he had never had to go to Iraq (*try to get "the locals" to work with you*).

None of this prevented Connie from motioning and calling out to the young people—mostly men—passing by, vigorously warning them about the hazards of enlistment.

Eventually, we WAMM staff needed to go back upstairs to work in our office. The community center staff were at the reception desk and Connie said she felt confident remaining at the table by herself.

A little while later, the door of the WAMM office burst open and there was Connie.

I caught a glimpse of camouflage and combat boots coming up behind her as, once inside, she slammed the door. Catching her breath, wide-eyed, as though she had astonished even herself this time, she explained that a soldier had chased her up two flights of stairs and down the hall.

It was instantly clear what had happened: Connie, alone, had proven too much for a recruiting officer. The soldier had given pursuit to what he perceived as "the enemy."

Soon after that, the recruiters folded up, left the building and dropped any overt attempts at recruitment efforts there. Apparently, they decided that it was not worth it to try to take Connie on. In the end, it was she, in fact, who succeeded in chasing them away.

We in WAMM will miss her terribly. Her plucky spirit will always continue to inspire us.

*According to an estimate by Chalmers Johnson, who embarked on the difficult task of calculating the number by studying official sources, there were 737 American military bases in other countries in 2005. *Nemesis, the Last Days of the American Republic* (American Empire Project). Metropolitan Books, Henry Holt and Company, LLC. 2007

by Mary Beaudoin

WAMM THANKS

Lisa Knazan and Dennis Levendowski in honor of Sherry Knazan and Ron Kelmenson.

Sr. Helen Jones in honor of Jonathan, Erin and Sam Jones.

Tom Dooley in memory of Connie Fuller.

Jim Coleman and Jody Huber in memory of Connie Fuller.

Joyce Alwin in memory of Sylvia Siggelkow.

Lynn Fuller and Craig Kent in memory of Connie Fuller.

Bob Jones in memory of Nikola Tesla.

Norman Dewitt in memory of Connie Fuller.

Jan Scofield in memory of Connie Fuller.

Tami Swiggum in memory of Connie Fuller.

Ray and Carol Bergeson in memory of Connie Fuller.

Mary Eggen in memory of Connie Fuller.

Vanessa Lawrow in memory of Connie Fuller.

Wayne Wittman in memory of Connie Fuller.

Robert and Lorraine Christen in memory of Connie Fuller.

Gene Herrick and Clarice Thorwick in memory of Connie Fuller.

Lucia Wilkes Smith in memory of Connie Fuller.

Denis Leigh in memory of Connie Fuller.

Steve McKeown and Joan Johnson in memory of Connie Fuller.

John and Elizabeth Miller in memory of Connie Fuller.

Michael and Katherine Fleming in memory of Connie Fuller.

Carol Walker in memory of Connie Fuller.

Mary Beaudoin in memory of Connie Fuller

February 2013 WAMM Calendar

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

Ongoing WAMM Vigils for Peace

Vigil to End War:

Every Wednesday, 4:30 to 5:30 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.

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

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 WAMM, 4200 Cedar Avenue South, Suite 3, Minneapolis. FFI: Call WAMM, 612-827-5364.

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

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

Ground All Drones. First Thursdays of every month, 4:30 p.m.-6:00 p.m. at Cedar Center, 4200 Cedar Ave., Minneapolis

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

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

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

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

Tackling Torture at the Top (T3):

Second Wednesday of each month, 10:00 a.m. at 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.

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

WAMM's 7th Annual Valentine's Party: "Love, not War"

Saturday, February 16, 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. Polly Mann's Party Room, 1425 West 28th Street, Minneapolis. Bring your friends, family or someone new! Lots of fun, all are welcome! Wine, punch, coffee, hors d'oeuvres. Suggested Donation: \$10.00 to \$25.00. FFI: Call WAMM, 612-827-5364.

The Gospel of Rutba: War, Peace and the Good Samaritan Story in Iraq:

Thursday, February 21, 7:00 p.m., Hospitality Hall, St. Joan of Arc Church, 4537 Third Ave. S., Minneapolis. Speaker: investigative journalist and author Greg Barrett, who went to Iraq with American Christians who were injured during the 2003 "shock and awe" bombings and returned 7 years later. Organized by Twin Cities Peace Campaign, WAMM. Co-sponsors: Community of St. Martin, Iraq & American Reconciliation Project, Minnesota Peace Action Coalition. FFI: 612-522-1861.

Palestinian Activist Hatem

Abuyayeh Speaks: Two Events. Saturday, February 23.

• 9:30 a.m. Refreshments. 10:00 a.m. to noon Program and discussion. At Hennepin County Library, 7001 York Ave. South, Edina. Sponsored by Middle East Peace Now

• 3:00-5:00 p.m., 4200 Cedar Ave. S. (formerly American Nordic Center) Childcare provided. Sponsored by the Committee to Stop FBI Repression, AntiWar Committee.

Both events are co-sponsored by WAMM. Hatem Abudayyeh, Exec. Director of Arab American Action Network-Chicago, founding Advisory Board member of National Network for Arab American Communities, speaks on the struggle to end the occupation of Palestine, repression of Palestine solidarity activists in the U.S., including those raided by the FBI in Sept. 2010 and called to a Chicago grand jury investigating "material support for terrorism."

WAMM's 2013 Annual Meeting:

Saturday, March 23, 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. St. Frances Cabrini Church, 1500 Franklin Avenue Southeast, Minneapolis. Good Music! Good Program! Good Brunch! WAMM Action! Meet old friends. Make new friends. Win raffle prizes. Support WAMM. FFI: Call WAMM, 612-827-5364.

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.

Correction: In the Dec. 2012/Jan. 2013 WAMM newsletter article, "Honor Veterans! Stop Making Them!" in the photo caption of the statue, "The Unknown Confederate Soldier," the flag identified as "Confederate" is actually a North Carolina State flag.

U.S. and Pakistan: Free Aafia!

by Sara Flounders

In support of efforts to pressure the U.S. government to repatriate Dr. Aafia Siddiqui to Pakistan, former U.S. Congressperson Cynthia McKinney and International Action Center Co-Director Sara Flounders traveled to Pakistan last December. Cynthia McKinney has been a courageous and outspoken opponent of U.S. wars at every step. The IAC has a 20-year history of organizing opposition to U.S. wars, racism and repression.

When Cynthia McKinney and I landed at the airport in Karachi at 4:00 a.m., hundreds of people greeted us with showers of rose petals. Later that same day there was a huge motorcade and we spoke at a mass rally of many, many thousands of people calling for the U.S. to return Aafia Siddiqui to her native country. What overwhelmed us on the first day was repeated in city after city, and in small towns—for eight days.

Our trip focused on solidarity with the people in demanding the repatriation of Aafia Siddiqui to Pakistan. Her case exposes the U.S. government's violations of due process and justice and also its practices of secret renditions, illegal confinement, and torture.

The millions of Pakistanis who support Aafia Siddiqui want to bring pressure upon the Pakistani government as well, so that it, too, demands that the U.S. return her to Pakistan. There is deep anger at the Pakistani military, which has collaborated and profited off decades of U.S. war in Afghanistan.

All political currents—and there are hundreds of parties—say they support her return. This includes even those who worked with the U.S., in addition to those opposed to U.S. imperialism. It includes labor, religious forces, and the masses in the street, which are for her release in a powerful way. When we were on the road, young people came out in thousands. Our car was surrounded by youths on motorcycles carrying flags with Aafia's picture on them. We saw signs on the walls all over, "Free Aafia," "Free sister Aafia," and the reference to her sentencing, "86 years, b—s—."

Pakistanis can't believe what happened to this American-educated Pakistani woman. Every time we met them they asked: How could she and her very young children be kidnapped and the U.S. government or some secret agency, hold her and the children in prison for years, all of them separated from one another? Why was a Pakistani citizen held in Afghanistan and then brought to the U.S. for a "show trial"? How it was possible that someone who injured no one could be sentenced to 86 years in the U.S.? The average Pakistani is outraged.

The average American should be, too. The case of



Photo: Altaf Shakoor

Sara Flounders, Fowzia Siddiqui, Cynthia McKinney flash the peace sign in Karachi. They were showered with rose petals on their arrival. Aafia Siddiqui supporters turned out in hundreds and thousands wherever they went throughout Pakistan.

Aafia Siddiqui has exposed crimes committed in their name.

Solidarity of Women Resonates

We were extremely impressed by the role of women in the movement to free Aafia Siddiqui. You could really feel their rage at Siddiqui's humiliation by the U.S. government.

The years of imprisonment, of solitary confinement and isolation, the horrendous prison conditions for Aafia today, the daily, abusive, invasive strip search for her trial in New York City—this abuse must become a deeply felt issue for the women's movement in the U.S. Aafia's name should be raised across the country on International Women's Day and every day. Here is a real women's issue, as opposed to the propagandists' use of women's issues in the service of empire providing a rationale for invading other countries to protect and liberate their women.

Far from protecting and liberating Aafia, the U.S. abducted and imprisoned her.

People in Pakistan consider the extrajudicial killings with the drones to be an extension of the U.S. policy of secret renditions, and the kidnapping and imprisonment of Siddiqui.

There is also boiling opposition across the whole political spectrum in Pakistan to the daily U.S. use of drones to carry out what the U.S. military calls "targeted assassinations." These Hellfire missiles have killed thousands of civilians and are an affront to the sovereignty of Pakistan.

Throughout the country, far from being the quiet and submissive Muslim women stereotyped in U.S. media and entertainment, we found women

WORD UP!

This is What Post-Democracy Looks Like

Today, both Pakistan, the country of my origin, and the U.S., my adopted homeland, are in deep turmoil. Yet there is one major, substantial, significant and consequential difference between the two. To paraphrase Prof. Ali Mazrui, one of the most profound thinkers of this age, while Pakistan is a "pre-democratic" country that is slowly transforming itself into a fledgling democracy, the U.S. is fast becoming a "post-democratic" country, a country that is beginning to shed the foundational features of democracy, namely, *habeas corpus*, due process and equal justice.

— Dr. Agha Saeed,
founder/president of the
Pakistani American Democratic
Forum, December 16, 2012,
Countercurrents.org

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Close Guantanamo and ALL U.S. secret prisons! End the drone wars!

According to UN investigations in 2010 there are more than 27,000 prisoners held by the U.S. in more than 100 secret prisons around the world and on 17 ships as floating prisons. These are almost entirely Muslim prisoners. According to Center for Constitutional Rights 92% of the prisoners held just at Guantanamo are not "Al-Qaeda fighters" by the U.S. government's own records, and 22 were under 18 years of age when captured.

President Obama had promised to close Guantanamo Prison as one of his first acts as president in 2009. Yesterday it was decided instead to close the office and eliminate the special envoy Daniel Fried whose role was to close the prison at Guantanamo. Daniel Fried's role will now be to intensify the sanctions on Iran and Syria.

—Sara Flounders' interview
RT News, Jan 29, 2013

Amnesty International Spring Action Guide 2013:

Facts and actions to take about Guantanamo & Drones
www.Amnestyusa.org/security

WORD UP!

The Ripple Effect

People say, what is the sense of our small effort? They cannot see that we must lay one brick at a time, take one step at a time. A pebble cast into a pond causes ripples that spread in all directions. Each one of our thoughts, words and deeds is like that.

—Dorothy Day,
American social justice activist

Free Aafia!, continued from page 7

to be passionately involved in these issues.

I want to give just one example of how our actions can create solidarity with them and resonate to counter the horrific impressions that they have of the U.S. I had attended Dr. Aafia Siddiqui's trial in New York City, where she was charged with grabbing a gun and attacking U.S. soldiers while in U.S. custody at an Afghanistan police station. At her trial, I saw the prosecution's inability to present any evidence of her guilt—no forensic evidence—not a fingerprint, shell casing, or injury to any of the soldiers or FBI agents she was accused of trying to murder, though she, herself, had been shot.

I had written articles and drafted petitions about this outrageous case. But what made the biggest impact in Pakistan was a small act of solidarity during the New York trial that was totally unnoticed in the U.S., though it became top of the news in Pakistan. During Aafia Siddiqui's sentencing to 86 years in prison for attempted murder, I stood up in federal court and shouted out: "Shame, shame on this court!" Everyone in Pakistan seemed to know about this. It means so much for Pakistanis to know that there are women in the U.S. who oppose the humiliation of this Pakistani woman.

Yes! The U.S. War Machine is Vulnerable

In Karachi we visited Aafia Siddiqui's home and met with her sister, Dr. Fowzia Siddiqui, her mother, who is ill, and two of Aafia's children, who have been returned to the extended family after years of captivity. One child, an infant son at the time Aafia was kidnapped, is still missing.

Dr. Fowzia Siddiqui, Aafia's sister, traveled with us the whole eight days and coordinates the Free Aafia movement, along with maintaining a medical practice and caring for her mother, her own two children, and Aafia's two returned children. Dr. Fowzia Siddiqui was also U.S.-educated and coordinated the epilepsy program at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, MD., before returning to Pakistan. She is now the main coordinator of the Free Aafia movement.

Aafia's home city, Karachi, is the center of support for her. Her name seemed to be on every wall and every overpass.

People in Pakistan continually say that Karachi, the major port city and a city twice the size of New York City, is key to the war in Afghanistan. This is a city that is crucial for an orderly U.S./NATO withdrawal from Afghanistan.

People often made the point that Pakistan taught the U.S. a lesson when just months ago the people and the government shut all passes and roads into Afghanistan to trucks carrying NATO supplies. They kept them closed for seven months, until the U.S. government formally apologized for a missile strike on Pakistani soldiers. Today there are lines of trucks going along the roads, south to Karachi, bringing U.S. equipment back from 12 years of war in Afghanistan.

Nothing shows more clearly the utter failure of U.S. drones than seeing how these totally criminal, extrajudicial tactics have turned a whole population so decisively against Washington. Ninety-five percent of Pakistan's population hates U.S. policies. But ordinary people can do something to demonstrate to Pakistanis that we don't support the harm being done to them.

Take Action!

One act that everyone can take that will resonate here in the U.S. and in Pakistan is to sign the petition for the repatriation of Dr. Aafia Siddiqui to Pakistan.

This e-mail petition goes to the White House, members of Congress, top Pakistani officials and, most important, to members of the media in the U.S. and Pakistan.

See: www.IACenter.org/SiddiquiPetition

Sara Flounders is the co-director of the International Action Center (IAC), founded by former Attorney General Ramsey Clark. IAC coordinates activism and information opposing domestic and international injustice.

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Commentary on the Movie “Zero Dark Thirty”

Torture, a characteristic normally associated with villains, is now associated with heroes. This shift is acceptable because all the brown men tortured in the film are guilty and therefore worthy of such treatment . . . A clear “us” versus “them” mentality is established where “they” are portrayed as murderous villains while “we” do what we need to in order to keep the world safe. . . . Pakistan, the country in which the majority of the film is set, is presented as a hellhole . . . What does not need re-viewing to confirm is the routine and constant use of the term “Paks” to refer to Pakistani people, a term that is similar to other racist epithets like “gooks” and “japs.” The film rests on the wholesale demonization of the Pakistani people.

—Deepa Kumar, “Rebranding the War on Terror for the Age of Obama,” *mondoweiss.net*, January 15, 2013

When we talk about torture “working”—in the context of al Qaeda, for instance—we presumably mean successfully extracting accurate information. But that’s not what torture is about, and never has been. Torture is about power, revenge, rage and cruelty. It’s about stripping people of their humanity. Throughout its history, its only reliable byproduct has been false confessions. And that’s why torture is almost universally condemned as a human rights violation and the mark of totalitarian regimes that want to control people, not get information.

—Dan Froomkin, “‘Zero Dark Thirty’ and Why It’s So Important to Rebut Claims That Torture Works,” *Huffington Post*, January 11, 2013



Photo: Ross Rowley

When the Oscar-nominated film *Zero Dark Thirty* opened in Minneapolis/St. Paul, the group *Tackling Torture at the Top* protested its justification of torture.

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