

# Women Against Military Madness

## Newsletter

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*Is it conceivable that a massive foreign military apparatus was created with intentions that were merely benign and solely in the interests of security for the African people?*

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### AFRICOM: Forging New Chains

by Naomi Maina

The U.S. has divided the entire world into military commands,<sup>1</sup> providing its military with missions in time of war or peace. Africa Command, or AFRICOM, is the newest of the six U.S. regional commands. When AFRICOM was formed in 2007, it joined five other U.S. commands: Northern Command, Southern Command, Pacific Command, Central Command, and the European Command.<sup>2</sup>

President George W. Bush ostensibly formed this new military agency to strengthen U.S. security cooperation with Africa and help to create new opportunities to bolster the capabilities of Africa's military. He indicated that it would enhance U.S. efforts to help bring peace and security to the people of Africa and promote common goals for development, health, education, democracy, and economic growth in Africa.<sup>3</sup>

While Bush gave these benevolent reasons for the establishment of this command (and, in

its web site, AFRICOM, itself, claims goals and functions that are unobjectionable), there has been public concern and skepticism about the legitimacy of these reasons. To understand this skepticism, one need only look at other instances of America's benevolent and charitable involvement in Africa.

Concern over the future of Africa is nothing new in the Western world. In fact, since the dawn of African independence, Western countries have been Africa's knight in shining armor, eagerly offering to ameliorate one perceived need after another. After independence from Britain and other European powers to the late 1980s, the supplying of these perceived needs by the West took the form of direct economic and military support. When it gave massive amounts of financial aid to Africa, in seeming acts of generosity, it was because it wanted to use African governments as proxies in its Cold War machinations against the Soviet Union.

When that approach reached its limits and failed to produce meaningful results, the West changed its focus, embarking in the 1990s on a plan to remake African economies through structural adjustment programs, i.e., economic reforms in which African countries were forced to privatize public companies, open their markets to the rest of the world, and reduce spending on critical services such as healthcare and education. That program, cooked up and designed entirely by experts in London, Paris, and Washington and imposed on powerless African governments, failed miserably as well.

In the above cases, the attitude of the U.S. and the West was one of concern, even solicitude, for the wellbeing of Africa and its citizens. Yet this attitude belied subtle—and sometimes crass—acts of self-interest. When it forced structural adjustment programs on Africa, it was because it wanted open markets for its goods and services—expanded markets naturally boosted business and profits for American corporations.

For decades, the West, especially the United

*continued on page 2*



*Contemporary sculpture in Tanzania, a departure point for the slave trade; the sculptor employed the actual historical chains in this work. Will Africa find itself in chains again, this time forged by "partnerships" under AFRICOM?*

# 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 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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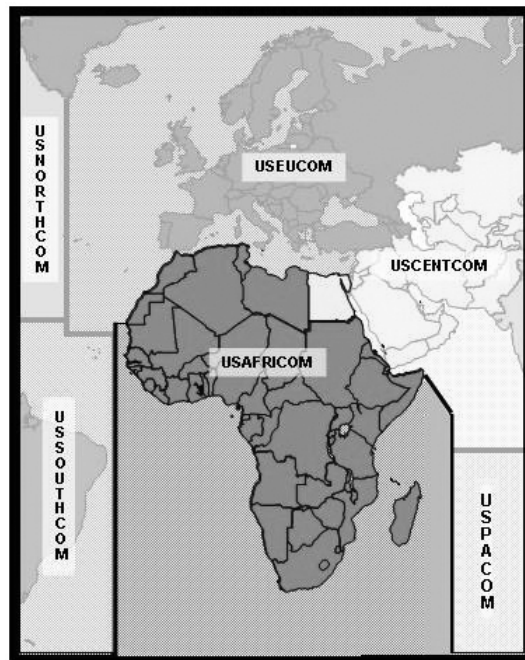
**AFRICOM,**  
*continued from page 1*

States, responded generously to acute famines and political instability in Africa, shipping tons of food and medicines to countries and refugee camps. In early 2000s, Africa was in the grip of the AIDS pandemic, and this too sent Western countries scurrying to Africa, with money and plans for containing the disease

The benefits of that are obvious: American corporations and businesses thrived in friendly countries, to say nothing of all the weapons that were sold to these regimes. Even the much-heralded AIDS program that pumped billions of dollars to African countries was designed in such a way that American pharmaceutical companies reaped a windfall—cheaper generic drugs were excluded from the program, thus making sure that the bulk of the money went to Big Pharma and their brand name drugs. It appears as if America's aid policy is designed with a “clawback” provision, where money that is given away is cleverly recovered—but by big business, not by U.S. taxpayers who pay for the aid.

If American policy towards Africa (including programs that effectuate those policies) is inherently designed to ultimately benefit American companies, is it conceivable that a massive military apparatus such as AFRICOM was created merely to serve the benign purposes of African security?

This question erases from our minds the issue of American benevolence and leaves one strong and defensible possibility: oil and imperialism as the motive forces behind AFRICOM.



Political analyst Michael Parenti<sup>4</sup> defines imperialism as the process whereby the dominant politico-economic interests of one nation expropriate for their own enrichment the land, labor, raw materials, and markets of another people. This helps to explain the concerns of Africans over the formation of AFRICOM.

The U.S. has become increasingly dependent on Africa for its oil needs. At the time of the establishment of AFRICOM, the Middle East was in turmoil following the U.S. invasion of Iraq. The political and security environment in the Middle East was so precarious that U.S. policymakers were beginning to look at Africa as a safer, less radicalized alternative to the chaotic Persian Gulf. Africa is currently one of the largest suppliers of U.S. crude oil, with Nigeria being the fifth largest source. The U.S. National Intelligence Council has projected that African imports will account for 25% of total U.S. imports by 2015.<sup>5</sup>

Once the U.S. identifies a country or a region as a place with unique American interests, several things take place, none of which are necessarily good for the local people or their governments.

First, the U.S. organizes the country's affairs in such a way that its interests come first every time. American interests will override all other interests—be it peace, just governance, equity of resources, or whatever else may benefit the local population. It is always the case governments will not protect American interests *and* the interests of the country's citizens, for the interests of the two are mutually exclusive. We know from experience in the Middle East that the U.S. has protected dictators and regimes based entirely on how well they protect American interests, not how well they serve the welfare of their own people.

Second, the politics of dissent and competitive ideas will suffer as a result. Given that the American corporate and military wishes will always carry the day, there will be an attempt to squelch dissenters and their views. This will greatly hamper democratic space and will limit people's freedom, not just of expression but also of alternative policy ideas—especially those ideas that may challenge American dominance of the country's natural resources.

*continued on page 3*

*Map: U.S. DoD. A full-spectrum combatant command, U.S. AFRICOM is responsible for all U.S. Department of Defense operations, exercises, and security cooperation on the African continent, its island nations, and surrounding waters.*



## AFRICOM,

*continued from page 2*

Third, the presence of American military, whether in the form of boots on the ground or drones in the air, will exert such a coercive force that citizens and politicians who dare oppose American positions will be ostracized, or live in constant fear of imminent harm. As Menan Jangu,<sup>6</sup> an environmental activist in Tanzania, points out in *Social justice, peace, and environmental education*, “systems of domination and resource extraction cannot be imposed or sustained without force or the threat of force.” The presence of AFRICOM will be a constant reminder to dissenters that a powerful force, unaccountable to local laws and institutions, is always ready to make its presence felt.

This point should be a warning to all those who think that U.S. control, as well as that of its allies, is business as usual, and that Africa will survive the AFRICOM phase of foreign domination. But AFRICOM is not business as usual. It does what has not been done to date, which is to militarize aid and other humanitarian activities, including economic aid and delivery of medical care. AFRICOM then, more than any other form of U.S.-Africa cooperation, changes that relationship, which was unequal to begin with, into a coercive and supervisory one.

As Parenti puts it perceptively:

It is important to note that the U.S. does not “train” military personnel just for the purpose of safeguarding the people’s interests. It should be understood that since World War II, the U.S. government has given over \$200 billion in military aid to train, equip, and subsidize more than 2.3 million troops and internal security forces in some eighty countries, the purpose being not to defend them from outside invasions but to protect ruling oligarchs and multinational corporate investors from the dangers of domestic anti-capitalist insurgency.<sup>7</sup>

An awareness of this should definitely concern those who really do care about the continent and the welfare of its people.

### Endnotes

- 1 Bruce Blair, Brian Ellison et al, (2007) Military almanac prepared by the straus military reform project (Washington, DC: The World Security Institute’s Center for Defense Information).
- 2 Before AFRICOM was instituted, the U.S. military had divided Africa between three different commands: European Command which oversaw North Africa and most of sub-Saharan Africa; Central Command, which had responsibility for Egypt and the Horn of Africa; and Pacific Command, which administered the Indian Ocean and Madagascar. Tuckey B. (2009). Resist AFRICOM.
- 3 Whelan, T. (2011). *Why AFRICOM? An American perspective*.
- 4 Parenti, M. (1995). *Against Empire*. City Lights Publishers.
- 5 Okumu, D. W. (2011). Africa Command: opportunity for enhanced engagement or the militarization of US-Africa relations?
- 6 Butler, N. and Jangu, M. (2009). “A past is not a heritage.” *Social justice, peace, and environmental education: Transformative standards*. Andrzejewski, J., Baltodano, M., & Symcox, L. (Eds.) Routledge.
- 7 Parenti, M. (1995). *Against Empire*. City Lights Publishers.

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*Photo: U.S. Army Africa  
Wooing Women: In Botswana April 2013, the U.S. Army tries to persuade African partners to integrate women into their defense forces.*



### Independent Spirit

*100% sourced and made in Africa using traditional methods, acknowledging African history and inspired by African culture, the innovative, cutting-edge jewelry of Kenyan designer Adele Dejak exemplifies the creative spirit of independence. Interview with Dejak: Afri-love.com*

### Home Boys in Africa

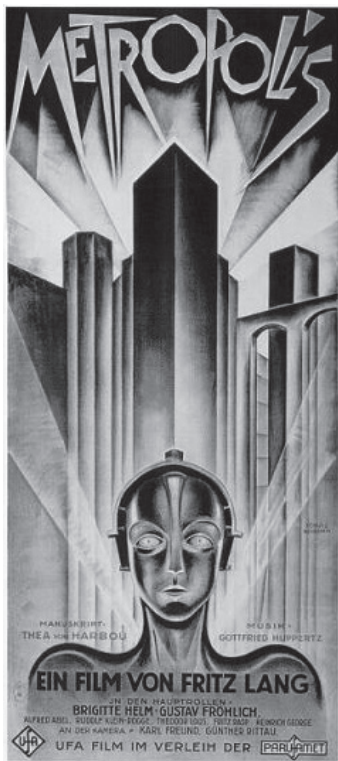
There are currently eight state partners [National Guard] in U.S. AFRICOM’s area of responsibility: Botswana and North Carolina; Ghana and North Dakota; Liberia and Michigan; Morocco and Utah; Nigeria and California; Senegal and Vermont; South Africa and New York; Tunisia and Wyoming.

—U.S. Africa Command  
Fact Sheet: State Partnership Program, May 2013

### Depend on Us

... [the West] has also persuaded some Africans that—in contrast to their united rejection of AFRICOM not long ago—they do, after all, now need to call on the West for ‘protection’ ... Like a classic mafia protection racket, the West makes its protection ‘necessary’ by unleashing the very forces from which people require protection.

—The West’s War Against African Development Continues, Weekend Edition, Counterpunch, February 15-17, 2013



Poster from Director Fritz Lang's 1927 film *Metropolis*. Set in the year 2026, it presents a dystopia of exploited workers who labor underground to keep the technological machinery running that powers a glittering city-state of elites above.

#### Raise the Welfare Grants

More than 70,000 Minnesota kids are living in extreme poverty. A family of two receives only \$437 in cash grants, the same as in 1986, though costs of living have doubled. Demand raising grants, no more cuts. Protest see calendar page. FFI: 612-822-8020. WelfareRightsMN.com

## PM The Illusion of Safety

by Polly Mann

How the book ended up on my coffee table is a mystery. I don't remember ordering it and the density and complexity of the material is such that I would never pick it up off the shelves of a bookstore to even peruse. Yet, I'm glad I read it. Eric Schlosser's *Command and Control*, subtitled, *Nuclear Weapons, the Damascus Accident and the Illusion of Safety* (Penguin Press, 2013) should be read by all literate Americans and its message acted upon. It convinced me, as nothing else I have ever read, of the need to eliminate all nuclear weapons and, if necessary, engage in a campaign urging all the nations of the world to do likewise. It tells the story of the fatal and could-have-been fatal accidents involved with nuclear weapons, either in silos or being transported, and the personal stories of the individuals responsible for the safety of the missiles.

The numbers of fatal accidents appear to be far greater than I could have imagined, but who knows the full extent? To date the complete count is unknown. The victims have been military and civilian and mostly young.

Simple accidents such as dropping a wrench or failing to pull a switch could produce disastrous results. For example, at a reactor in Virginia, a worker cleaning the floor of a reactor got "his shirt caught on the handle of a circuit breaker on the wall. He pulled the shirt off it, tripped the circuit breaker, and shut down the reactor for four days." In another incident: "A lightbulb slipped out of the hand of a worker at a reactor in California. The bulb hit the control panel, caused a short circuit, turned off sensors, and made the temperature of the core change so rapidly that a meltdown could have occurred."

My favorite nuclear acronym is MANIAC which stands for "Mathematical Analyzer, Numerical Integrator, and Computer," an early electronic, digital computer used at Los Alamos to help design the first hydrogen bombs. LOX which ordinarily one might have thought had a relationship with cream cheese and salmon, refers to "liquid oxygen, a propellant that was used as an oxidizer, in combination with rocket fuel to launch Atlas and Titan 1 missiles." To protect themselves against deadly radiation any military in direct contact with missiles, the crew wore RHFCO suits—a liquid-proof, vapor-proof, outfit with an air pack and a bubble helmet that looked like a space suit, commonly known among Titan crews as a "ref-co."

The most dramatic and compelling story is about an accident that occurred in 1979 at a

missile site near Damascus, Arkansas, necessitating the evacuation of the population in a large surrounding area. The system's warning of an eminent Russian Attack had been compromised by a technician's misplacement of a tape in a computer at NORAD (North American Air Defense Command created in 1958 by the United States and Canada to defend against a Soviet attack). The Damascus incident had all the components of a mystery drama but without a happy ending. The two enlisted men who were the heroes of the near catastrophe—Jeff Kennedy and David Livingston—were never actually recognized as such. (Livingston died of radiation poisoning. Kennedy sued Martin-Marietta corporation, received a small sum and never reenlisted in the Air Corps.) A couple of months after the incident 27 security officers "protecting the nerve center of America's command-and-control system" were stripped of their security clearances for using LSD, marijuana, cocaine, and amphetamines."

In his closing comments, *Command and Control's* author, Eric Schlosser, states that through the Freedom of Information Act he was furnished a 245-page document that listed the "Accidents and Incidents Involving Nuclear Weapons" from the summer of 1957 until the spring of 1967.

As of today the U.S. has approximately 4,650 nuclear weapons. In 1996, the United States became the first country to sign the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and since then more than 180 other nations have also signed it. But in 1999 the Senate refused to ratify it. The U.S. now plans to spend as much as \$180 billion over the next 20 years to maintain its nuclear weapons, run its weapons laboratories, and up-grade its uranium-processing facilities.

As a reader of this book I have to conclude that the safeguarding and protection of this country is tied to the country's wealth, not its people. Today a record-breaking 46.5 million American people live in poverty and the U.S. has the highest rate of childhood poverty in the world. Why should U.S. citizens be paying billions for nuclear weapons which can endanger lives, while at the same time so many people go without adequate food, housing and medical care? So my conclusion about the above is WHY? WHY DO WE TOLERATE NUCLEAR EXPENDITURES AT THE COST OF HUMAN WELL-BEING? WHY?

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



# Women Saving the Future

by Carol Masters

“We withdraw our consent.” With these stirring words, women from many cultures, in many venues have come together to declare an end to the business of destroying this planet. The founding mothers of Women Against Military Madness (WAMM) did it 30 years ago. They declared that U.S. militarism threatened not only this nation but countries around the world and the well-being of future generations. The mission of the Minneapolis-based organization continues to be to dismantle systems of militarism, economic exploitation, and global oppression.

Across the world in the continent of Africa, ten years ago women of Liberia, Christians uniting with Muslims in reaction to a raging civil war, joined social worker Leymah Gbowee to speak out for peace. Many internally displaced women joined the campaign. Wearing all white clothing the women gathered at a fish market, sat, danced, carried signs, and sang for peace. The fish market land was visible from President Taylor’s residence, and his motorcade had to pass it daily. Thousands joined the campaign, agreeing to go on a sex strike, denying their partners intimacy until the war ended. Peace did not come in a day, or a year, and the women found it necessary to continue their mass action campaign until the elections of 2005, but the disarmament process began earlier, in December 2003.

More recently, in Moab, Utah, in the fall of 2012, women community leaders came together

to draft a “living” document that calls for an end to ecocide and for “new institutions, ideas, and laws that recognize the rights of nature and future generations.” They envision an emerging human rights movement for future generations.

The idea for the first Women’s Congress for Future Generations emerged from mostly Western conversations among longtime environmental activists and academics in political arenas and on the frontlines of civil disobedience who have been protesting fracking, nuclear power, and mountaintop removal. The original Congress planners were women “from across the diverse spectrum of womanhood—women of all ages and cultural groups, women from all places, backgrounds, and walks of life, women with diverse talents and interests, vocal leaders, and those still finding their voice.” Men could participate as “sacred witnesses” to the event. The planners recognized “the double layer of oppression for women of color, indigenous women, lesbians, transgender individuals, and women living on the frontlines of the environmental and social struggle.” They sought and seek inclusion of these voices.

Moab was chosen because the beautiful landscape, the Colorado River, and ancient sacred sites that were threatened with fracking and a proposed nuclear power plant. Over the four-day conference, the focus was on:

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## WAMM THANKS

James T. Coleman in memory of Connie Fuller

Frieda Gardner in Memory of Sandra Mansfield (Americus, GA) and Arlem Carr (Montgomery, AL)

Angelo and Mary Percich in memory of Bob Giesen

Marjorie Wunder in memory of Marilyn Jones

Mary Sylvester and the Melvin Giesen Family in memory of Bob Giesen

Lisa Knazan and Dennis Levendowski in honor of Nan Swift and her daughters

Photo: Susu Jeffery

Solstice returns, as seen through a linden tree.

Minneapolis, Minnesota



## • Christian Zionism and U.S Policy

by Florence Steichen

### Misguided Tourism

Group tours to the 'Holy Land' are still very much part of the culture of practising Christians but are primarily organised by Israeli travel agents. Documentary about obstacles facing pilgrims visiting sacred sites today, particularly Bethlehem and Nazareth. Also: recent history of discrimination against Palestinian Christians generally—and the wider problems threatening their survival.

—Promotion for "Forbidden Pilgrimage," *Al Jazeera World*, December 19, 2013  
(The documentary is not available in the U.S.)

### A Divine Real Estate Agent

... twice as many white evangelical Protestants as Jews say that Israel was given to the Jewish people by God (82% vs. 40%)...even Jews who do believe in God are less likely than evangelicals to believe that God gave the land that is now Israel to the Jewish people (55% vs. 82%).

—Pew Research, October 3, 2013. Full report, see: *Pew Research FactTank, News in Numbers*

• Christian Zionism, a powerful force in American politics, is one of the expressions of Zionism, a secular ideology.

• Zionism can be dated to the first Zionist Congress, which met in 1897 in Basel, Switzerland, and set as a goal the creation of a Jewish homeland in all of Palestine and beyond, according to a map presented to the Paris Peace Conference in 1919. This was a political rather than a religious endeavor. Well aware that the land was inhabited, the Zionist colonization plan included use of military force to control the land. Ben Gurion, who was to become the first prime minister of Israel, wrote to his son in 1937, ten years before the partition plan, that the Arabs would have to go, and would need an opportune moment, such as a war, to make that happen.

• The term "Christian Zionism" was popularized in the mid-twentieth century, following the coining of the term "Zionism" in 1890. Christian Zionism is by no means monolithic, including those who support Israel and its expansion into occupied Palestine and those who promote "the ingathering" of the Jews that they see as a prerequisite for the coming of the Messiah. According to this latter group, when the battle of Armageddon takes place, faithful Christians will be raptured into heaven, and Jews who have not converted will be destroyed, as depicted in the *Left Behind* series by Tim LaHaye and Jerry B. Jenkins, and *The Late Great Planet Earth* by Hal Lindsey.

In spite of this dire prediction, the government of Israel welcomes the help of Christian Zionists, and counts on them to promote legislation in the U.S Congress favorable to Israel.

Christian Zionists base their religious beliefs on a literal interpretation of select biblical texts such as *Deuteronomy*, which includes the promise of God to give the land to the descendants of Abraham; *Genesis* 12:3, which says God will bless those who bless the Chosen People and curse those who curse them; and the *Book of Revelation*, which is not about the End Times, as they mistakenly believe. (The *Book of Revelation* was written to encourage Christians suffering persecution in the late 1st century to persevere because good will eventually overcome evil. There will be a new heaven and a new earth, according to *Rev.* 21, and God will wipe away all tears from their eyes.)

Christian Zionist theology, based on literal biblical interpretation, has been discredited by contemporary biblical critics who study the textual, compositional, and historical environment of the Old and New Testaments.

Regarding biblical literal interpretation, Archbishop Michel Sabbah, the Latin patriarch of Jerusalem, wrote a pastoral letter in 1993, entitled "Reading the Bible Today in the Land of the Bible." He addressed the Christian community in Palestine, concerned that the Bible seemed to mandate that Israel control the whole land of Palestine.

Sabbah emphasized that "the Word of God can be used *only* in the struggle for truth. . . . If it fosters division or hatred among us, this would mean that we have deformed the divine Word, making it a weapon of death, not of truth."

But Christian Zionists have held a variety of beliefs. In 1818, President John Adams wanted the Jews in Judea to be an independent nation because he believed that they would gradually become Unitarian Christians.

William Eugene Blackstone, author of *Jesus Is Coming*, published in 1878, illustrates the diversity among Christian Zionists. He believed the Jews did *not* need to convert to Christianity either before or after the return of the Messiah. Blackstone advocated strongly for the

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*Artist's depiction of the Rapture, a literal interpretation of the Book of Revelations.*



## Christian Zionism and U.S. Policy,

*continued from page 6*



*Image: Mcnameel/Getty.*

*President George W. Bush at the 2005 National Day of Prayer, which U.S. presidents, while in office, attend.*

resettlement of the Jewish people in Palestine, because he believed that Palestine rightfully belonged to the Jews.

Harry Truman was a Christian Zionist devoted to reading the Bible and also a political Zionist concerned about the 1948 election. Against the advice of his advisors, Truman promoted the UN partition of Palestine vigorously, to ensure Jewish votes in the 1948 election, especially in New York, Pennsylvania, and California.

In March 1948, the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff listed Zionist objectives, including the extension of Jewish sovereignty over all of Palestine, and the expansion of Greater Israel into Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria, leading to Jewish military and economic hegemony of the entire Middle East. This agenda would ensure armed clashes in which the U.S. was destined to become embroiled. That would be welcome news to the Christian Zionists anticipating the battle of Armageddon.

In American politics, Christian Zionists and political Zionists pursue the same agenda, and their combined influence is immensely powerful. K.C. Boyd reports in "God's Foreign Policy" (Alter.net.org August 8, 2013) that John Hagee, founder of the million-member Christians United for Israel, can deliver the support of 50 million evangelical Christians to advance the Zionist agenda in Washington.

Whenever issues regarding the division of Jerusalem or the return of land in

*Photo: Debbie Hill, UPI/Newscom*

*Texas A&M Chancellor John Spencer Sharp, Israeli Education Minister Shai Piron, Israeli President Shimon Peres and Texas Governor Rick Perry meet in Jerusalem on 23 October 2013.*

the disputed (sic) territories come up, John Hagee and other leading Christian Zionists call on an army of ready foot soldiers to exert immediate pressure on their political representatives . . . There are more than enough demographic reasons for politicians to support Israel.

John Hagee is currently involved in plans by Texas A&M University to take over a college in Nazareth, the city in present-day Israel with the highest number of Palestinian citizens. Texas A&M, the sixth largest university in the United States, is working at raising \$70 million to assume control of the Nazareth Academic Institute. Texas Governor Rick Perry and Texas A&M Chancellor John Sharp announced the plans to establish an international "peace campus" there.

Omar Barghouti, founding member of the Palestinian Campaign for Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel, calls it "another project by Israel to further colonize whatever space is left of the Palestinian space within the state of Israel." (Stickland, Patrick O., "U.S. Christian Zionists plan to take over Palestinian university in Israel." *Electronic Intifada*. November 6, 2013)

Whatever the motive for unconditional support of Israel, the results have led to a military build-up by the U.S. in the Middle East. Among other things, the U.S. pre-positions weapons in Israel to have in the region when desired. And more importantly, on behalf of the U.S., Israel has tested the effectiveness of its weapons in Palestine and also in Southern Lebanon where Palestinian refugees live. These

*continued on page 8*



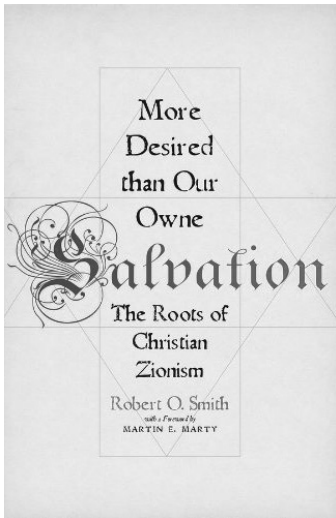
## • No Separation of Church and Fate?

• WASHINGTON – Former US president George W. Bush spoke at a fundraiser Thursday night hosted by the Messianic Jewish Bible Institute, an organization that works to convert Jews to Christianity.

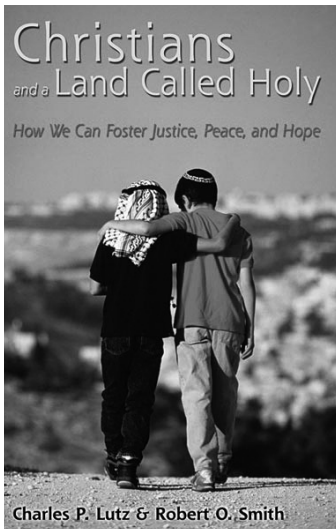
• The former president—a Texan and a Methodist, born-again Christian – made religion a priority throughout his eight years in the White House. Bush founded the White House Office of Faith-based and Community Initiatives during those years, as well as centers for faith-based initiatives in 11 federal agencies, promoting the general benefits of faith through government.

• —*Jerusalem Post*, November 15, 2013

## GOOD BOOKS



**More Desired Than Our Own Salvation: the Roots of Christian Zionism** by Robert O. Smith (Oxford University Press, 2013) Traces American identity with Christian Zionism from its roots in colonial days to its presence in U.S. foreign policy today.



**Christians and a Land Called Holy: How We Can Foster Justice, Peace and Hope** by Chuck P. Lutz, an active member of Middle East Peace Now, and Robert O. Smith. (Fortress Press, Minneapolis 2006). Fair-minded and sympathetic to Jewish, Muslim, and Christian concerns. Israeli-Palestinian situation; historical, religious roots of the problems; how Christians can engage now. Maps, photos.

## Christian Zionism and U.S. Policy,

*continued from page 7*

weapons include white phosphorus and DIME (dense inert material explosives).

*A Clean Break: A New Strategy for Securing the Realm*, written by American neocons in 1996 for Israel, contains strategies for getting American cooperation on a missile defense system, which would “*broaden Israel’s base of support among many in the United States Congress*, who may know little about Israel, but care very much about missile defense.” [emphasis supplied]

*A Clean Break* includes the recommendation that Israel “remove Saddam Hussein from power in Iraq. This is an important Israeli strategic objective in its own right since Iraq’s future could affect the strategic balance in the Middle East profoundly.” The Project for a New American Century produced a similar document written by some of the same people, emphasizing the necessity of a strong military buildup by the U.S.

A conservative estimate of total direct aid to Israel from 1949 to 2013 is \$130.2 billion. This does not include the costs of the wars on Iraq, widely believed to have been undertaken for the benefit of Israel, and additional costs hidden in the U.S. defense budget.

In addition to the financial costs, U.S. Zionist policies toward Israel negatively impact U.S. security in the Middle East. In January 2010, General David Petraeus voiced concern to Joint Chiefs of Staff chairman, Admiral Michael Mullen, that the “stymied Israeli Palestinian peace process was directly responsible for a rising number of U.S. casualties and setbacks in Iraq and Afghanistan.” (Americans for Middle East Understanding, *Lest We Forget*, June 2011)

Professors John Mearsheimer and Stephen Walt, co-authors of *The Israel Lobby*, state: “The combination of unwavering support for Israel and the effort to spread ‘democracy’ throughout the region has inflamed Arab and Islamic opinion and jeopardized not only U.S. security but that of much of the rest of the world.”

In recent years, Israel invited active U.S. intervention in Israel’s domestic and foreign policy to overcome domestic opposition to “land for peace” and to lure Arabs—through money, forgiveness of past sins, and access to U.S. weapons—to negotiate. This strategy, which required funneling American money to repressive and aggressive regimes, was risky, expensive, and very costly for both the U.S. and Israel, and placed the United States in roles it should neither have nor want.

One of the most far-reaching effects of U.S. policy influenced by Zionism—Christian and political—is the demise of the two-state solution, independent Palestine and Israel living side by side. Ariel Sharon, architect of the settlement project in occupied Palestine, stated that Israel would build settlements across the West Bank so that in 25 years no one could separate Israel and the West Bank. That’s the situation now.

Where do we go from here? The Boycott, sanctions and divestment (BDS) campaign is intended to compel Israel to confront the reality that the international community condemns its continuing occupation and denial of human rights of the Palestinians. BDS is a way that we can promote equality as a basic human right. As Israel becomes increasingly isolated, it will find it must change course and grant basic rights to all. *It worked in South Africa.*

Then it will be time for negotiations to determine the political configuration: one democratic state with equal rights for all, or perhaps a regional confederation.

*Florence Steichen, a Sister of St. Joseph of Carondelet, is a past president of Middle East Peace Now (MEPN), and is a current member of MEPN and the Middle East Committee of WAMM. She holds a master’s degree in theology from the University of Notre Dame and was the registrar for Bethlehem University, Bethlehem, in Occupied Palestine (West Bank) from 1987 to 1992. She writes and speaks on the Palestinian/Israeli conflict.*

## What Is Really Happening in Syria Today?

Mother Agnes via Skype.

*Sunday, February 16 • 2:00 p.m.  
4200 Cedar Ave. S.,  
Minneapolis.*

Free and open to the public.



# New Year, New Hopes

*"The arc of the moral universe is long, but bends toward justice"*

—Martin Luther King

## Arc of Moral Universe Bends

On December 13, anti-nuclear activists stood trial for entering a property managed by Honeywell in Kansas City, Missouri, where nuclear weapons parts are manufactured. Judge Ardie Bland, who had earlier sentenced activists to prison, allowed this group to make presentations in court, explaining their positions. He found them guilty only of trespassing and sentenced them to write a one-page essay. According to the *National Catholic Reporter*, the judge told the activists: "I think you're educating because every time I learn something."

## A Victory: Attorney Lynne Stewart Released from Prison!

Lynne Stewart, the people's attorney, was released from federal prison and returned home to New York on January 1st. Stewart was given compassionate release from her 10-year sentence on the grounds that she has late stage breast cancer and less than 18 months to live. She was unjustly accused of "material support for terrorism" for helping in the legal defense of the "blind Sheikh," Omar Abdel-Rahman. Women Against Military Madness joined peace and civil liberties groups across the country to demand Stewart's release this year and is awarding her with an honorary membership. More on her case: [lynne-stewart.org](http://lynne-stewart.org)

## 2014 the International UN Year of Solidarity with Palestinian People

Proclaimed by an overwhelming majority in the UN General Assembly. Only the U.S., Israel, Canada, Australia and a handful of Pacific island nations (former U.S. Trust Territories) voted against it. For more information, see: Dept. of Public Information, United Nations 68th General Assembly Plenary, 58th Meeting

## Iraqi Baby Arrives Healthy

In spite of the tragically high percentage of babies born with birth defects in Fallujah and southern Iraq, healthy babies continue to be born in Iraq. Essa, the son of Suad and Sami Rasouli arrived on December 27 in Najaf. Mother and child are reported doing well. See photo at right. (Essa is recognized in the Quran as an esteemed teacher and is the Arabic name for Jesus.)

## Nuclear Bomb Fuel Decreases

According to *The New York Times*, January 9, 2014, the Nuclear Threat Initiative, a group that advocates for safekeeping of nuclear materials, states that the number of nations with enough fuel for atomic bombs decreased from 32 to 25.

## Mother Agnes, Mussalaha Peace and Reconciliation Movement Nominated for 2014 Nobel Peace Prize

In the words of Noble Peace Laureate Mairead Maguire: "Mussalaha, which translates as reconciliation, is a community-based non-violent popular initiative stemming from within Syrian civil society. Founded at a community level, it includes members of all Syria's ethnic and religious communities who are tired of the war. Mussalaha fills a void created by the noise of weapons; it does not side with any of the warring parties, rather it embraces all. The movement says no to the continued loss of life, and yes to a nonviolent solution. . . . In making this nomination for the 2014 Nobel Peace Prize, I believe that there is no military or paramilitary solution to the Syrian conflict and only through dialogue and negotiation can peace be reached. We urgently need a peaceful solution to the crisis in Syria. Mother Agnes Mariam and the Mussalaha Initiative in Syria exemplify all that is remarkable about the resilience of humanity when faced with unbelievable adversity." More information at: [peacepeople.com](http://peacepeople.com)

## RESOURCE

### End All War

All individuals and organizations, all over the world, are invited to sign a short statement in support of ending all war, and to join in the planning of a new movement to be launched on September 21, 2014. This is the whole statement:

*I understand that wars and militarism make us less safe rather than protect us, that they kill, injure and traumatize adults, children and infants, severely damage the natural environment, erode civil liberties, and drain our economies, siphoning resources from life-affirming activities. I commit to engage in and support nonviolent efforts to end all war and preparations for war and to create a sustainable and just peace.*

To see the case against war explained, sign the statement, get more involved in the process: See [worldbeyondwar.org](http://worldbeyondwar.org)

### WAMM End All Wars

**Committee:** Interested in working with others on a committee in the Twin Cities area to end all wars? Call 612-827-5364.



# January/February 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:** Suspended till further notice. FFI: Call WAMM office 612-827-5364.

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

**Grandmothers for Peace Vigils** 50th St. and Halifax (1 block w. of France) 4:45 p.m. to 5:45 p.m. FFI: Marian Wright, 612-927-7607

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

## Ongoing WAMM Committee Meetings

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

**The WAMM Book Club.** 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. FFI: Call WAMM 612-827-5364

**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 Military Drones Committee.** First Thursdays of every month, 4:30 to 6:00 p.m., 4200 Cedar Ave., Minneapolis. FFI: 612-827-5364

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

**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

**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 4200 Cedar 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 African Development Center, Riverside and 20th Avenues South. 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. 943 West Seventh St., St. Paul. Salons are open to all. Please come. Everyone welcome. Donations accepted. FFI: 651-227-3228 or justcomm.org/pax.salon

**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 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

## Special Events

**And the Desert Hid Many Secrets: Stories about Border Walks and Immigration Justice** Thursday, January 30 at 7:00 p.m. at 4200 Cedar Ave S, Minneapolis. Report back from WAMM Board member, BethAnne Nelson about her experience on the border. Sponsored by WAMM

**Unmanned: America's Drone Wars,** Documentary Screening, Discussion and Snacks Thursday, February 6 at 7:00 p.m., 4200 Cedar Ave S, Minneapolis. Sponsored by WAMM Ground Military Drones Committee

**WAMM's 8th Annual Valentine Party: Be a Peace Queen in 2014.** Saturday, February 15, 7:00-9:00 p.m. Kenwood Isles Party room at 1425 West 28th St, Minneapolis Wine, punch, coffee, hors d'oeuvres. Suggested donation \$10-25

**What is Really Happening in Syria Today? Mother Agnes-Mariam of the Cross Live via Skype.** Sunday, February 16, 2:00 p.m., 4200 Cedar Ave. S.,

Minneapolis. A main organizers of Mussahlaha (Reconciliation), a popular nonviolent movement in Syria that mediates disputes and organizes ceasefires between opposing forces. She organized an int'l delegation led by Nobel Peace laureate Mairead McGuire in Syria. Sponsored by WAMM's Middle East Committee.

**WAMM Meet Up! Saturday,** February 22, 3:30-5:00 p.m. in the backroom, Common Roots Café, 2558 Lyndale Ave S., Minneapolis. Have a cup of coffee or treat with WAMM. Get to know like-minded people of conscience. Everyone welcome, new supporters, members. FFI: 612-827-5364

**Black History Month Events: African-American Cultural Impact of the 1920s** "The Racial Divide during the Harlem Renaissance" Tuesday, February 18, 7:00 p.m., Open Book, 1022 Washington Ave. S., Minneapolis. Talk by Carla Kaplan, Wellesley College and Northeastern U, author and cultural historian. Reading, book signing by Carla Kaplan's book, *Miss Anne in Harlem: The White Women of the Black Renaissance.* Wednesday, Feb. 19, 7:00 p.m., Common Good Books, 38 S. Snelling Ave., St. Paul. Everyone welcome. Both events free, sponsored by WILPF. Co-sponsored by WAMM.

**WAMM 2014 Annual Meeting** Saturday, March 1, For details: Women AgainstMilitaryMadness.org

**Welfare Rights: State Capitol Protest** Tuesday, Feb. 25, 12:00 noon. University Ave. & MLK Blvd., St. Paul. Opening day for legislature. Quit stealing poor kids' \$, no more cuts, raise grants. FFI: 612-822-8020.

**Tar Sands Oil in Minnesota** Saturday, March 8, 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon. Van Cleve Community Center, 901 15th Ave. SE, Minneapolis. Free refreshments, public welcome. Sponsored by WLF-Metro Branch FFI: 612-922-7993

*Additional events listed at WomenAgainstMilitaryMadness.org or call the WAMM office: 612-827-5364. For Minnesota Alliance of Peacemaker events, see: mapm.org*



## WAMM Membership

\$15-39 Low Income/Student membership  
 \$40-59 Annual membership  
 \$60-199 Household membership  
 \$200-349 Sustainer (amount above membership)  
 \$350+ Major Donor (amount above membership)  
 This is a new membership.  This is a membership renewal  This is a gift membership  
 Check enclosed.  Please charge my VISA Mastercard  Total amount enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Credit Card # \_\_\_\_\_ Expiration Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone (H) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Phone (W) \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Contributions are tax deductible to the full extent of the law.

Make checks payable to WAMM, 4200 Cedar Avenue South, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55407

## Pledge for Peace

(WAMM will send a coupon book)

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Monthly

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Quarterly

I want to volunteer for WAMM

## WAMM Committees

### Issues Committees:

- Book Club
- Counter Recruitment
- End War Committee: Acting Against War and the Threats of War
- Immigration
- Media
- Middle East
- St. Joan of Arc/WAMM Peacemakers
- Ground Military Drones Committee
- Tackling Torture at the Top
- WAMM Occupy

### Administrative and Other Committees:

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

### WAMM Board

- Meredith Aby
- Marie Braun, Treasurer
- Polly Mann
- Sarah Martin
- Sue Ann Martinson (on leave of absence)
- JoAnn Maus
- Brigid McDonald
- BethAnne Nelson
- Coleen Rowley
- Margaret Sarfehjooy
- Lucia Wilkes Smith Secretary
- Sharon Rice Vaughan Co-Chair
- Carol Walker Co-Chair

## Women Saving the Future, *continued from page 9*

acknowledging what human beings have done to destroy the future and agreeing on a plan of reconciliation; gathering in caucuses to listen and speak on behalf of the future ones and draft a Bill of Rights for Future Generations; convening the caucuses as a Congress of Women to ratify the Bill of Rights planning action and reconciliation. The final day, called Day of Direct Action, they released a Declaration and Bill of Rights for Future Generations.

For the full document, see: [wcfg.org](http://wcfg.org)

Topics in the present Bill of Rights (for the full text and the Bill of Responsibilities, see [wcfg.org/declarationfortherightsoffuturegenerations.cfm](http://wcfg.org/declarationfortherightsoffuturegenerations.cfm)):

- Right of individuals to a clean and healthy environment
- Right of nature to exist
- Right of Future Generations to whole, biologically diverse, unpolluted ecosystems
- Right to peace
- Right of Future Generations to have ecosystems restored
- Right of communities to self-representation and self-determination

- Right to return or remain in place of origin, heritage or ancestors
- Right not to be coerced into or implicated in harm.
- Right to environmentally sustainable economies
- Corporations do not have inherent rights

The 2nd Women's Congress for Future Generations will be held in Minneapolis, Minnesota, on November 6 to 9, 2014. Stay tuned for more information on registration in the coming months. The planners welcome your thoughts, input, and suggestions.

To contribute to the draft of the Declaration of the Rights Held by Future Generations: [celebratewcfg.wordpress.com](http://celebratewcfg.wordpress.com) to make suggestions and comments.

*Carol Masters is long-time environmental and antiwar activist and a member of the WAMM Newsletter Committee.*

## Application Open for WAMM Board

Now accepting applications for the 2014/2015 WAMM Board of Directors. If you are interested or would like additional information, please call the WAMM office at 612-827-5364.

## WAMM Annual Meeting

March 1, 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Location: TBA.  
See: [womenagainstmilitarymadness.org](http://womenagainstmilitarymadness.org)

- **Correction:** The correct address for the WAMM Ground All Military Drones blog is [Groundalldrones.blogspot.com](http://Groundalldrones.blogspot.com)



4200 Cedar Avenue South, Suite 3  
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55407  
(612) 827-5364 FAX: (612) 827-6433  
e-mail: wamm@mtn.org  
WomenAgainstMilitaryMadness.org  
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**war disguised as soft power  
is the tactic of the hour  
women can play the game  
but the rules remain the same  
that's why we still say:  
end all wars today!**

## WAMM's Eighth Annual Valentine's Party



Bring friends, family or someone new! Lots of fun, all are welcome!  
Wine, punch, coffee, hors d'oeuvres.

Saturday, February 15th. 7-9 PM.  
Kenwood Isles Party Room  
1425 West 28th Street, Minneapolis

More info contact the WAMM office 612 827 5364. Suggested Donation: \$10-\$25.